SUPPORT FOR PROFESSIONAL CHURCH WORKER EDUCATION: A CRISIS
Support for Professional Church Worker Education: A Crisis

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A story is told about a young couple who had been married for several years. One day the husband and wife were discussing the fact that they were no longer sitting close to each other while traveling in their automobile as they had before they were married. The husband, who did most of the driving, is supposed to have said, "Well, dear, who moved?"

In looking at the relationship between The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and its colleges, universities, and seminars, the same type of question might be asked: "Who has moved?"

There have been tremendous changes in the funding of church worker education programs in Synod's institutions of higher education, especially in the last decade.

This edition attempts to address the current crisis in the funding of professional church worker education programs in the Synod. Why is there a crisis? How did all of us, walking together as a Synod, get to where we are today? Included in the three articles is a case study from one of Synod's premier institutions in the preparation of full-time church workers, Concordia College, Seward. It is excellence to be maintained in the future, what changes need to be made in support of church worker programs as The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod faces the challenges of this decade and the start of a new century only eight years away?

The three articles in this edition are not light, recreational reading. As you read what the authors have shared, there may be a brown or two forming on your forehead. Some of the projections and scenarios are frightening. Furthermore, some of the suggested solutions to the challenges before Synod may not win wide support. In fact, some reactions may be quite negative.

As the 1992 Syndical Convention approaches, it is hoped that this edition of ISSUES in Christian Education will provide some important background as the funding of church worker education programs is discussed and resolutions are voted upon in Pittsburgh next July.

Orville C. Walz, President
Support for the Education of Church Workers

It may come as a surprise to the membership of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod that the financial support the Synod provides for its ten colleges/universities is not even about $12.5 percent of the educational and general funds they need. Common with 23 percent in 1984-1985 and 30.1 percent in 1980-1981. The Synod does allocate some funds for capital construction on the campuses. But it is a strange turn of events that the colleges which were established originally to assure a supply of professional church workers for the various parishes of the Synod must now depend nearly 90 percent upon tuition and other money-raising for their operations. From the Synod's point of view this is unwise, and from the college/university's outlook, it is unfortunate.

Accompanying the reductions in synodical funding of these institutions is a decline in the number of students planning to enter church work programs. There were 3,200 church work students at the ten schools in 1980-1981, compared with 3,561 in 1984-1985 and 3,313 in 1980-1981. Several factors help to explain this decline.

One prime reason for the shortfall is that the number of students entering college relative to high school graduates has been steadily declining in the post-war era. Between 1960 and 1970, the percentage of high school seniors who went on to college for the first time increased more than 150 percent. Between 1970 and 1980, the percentage increased another 50 percent. By 1980, the number of college students was at its highest level ever. Since then, the number of college students has declined, but at a rate of about 2 percent per year. The net result is that the number of college students has remained relatively constant since 1980.

Another reason for the fall-off in church work student enrollment is the increasing competition for students among smaller universities. The number of students enrolled at smaller universities is increasing faster than at larger universities. As a result, smaller universities are able to attract more students, and larger universities are facing greater competition for students.

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The Synod's President, Dr. John Herrmann, is particularly concerned about the decline in church work student enrollment.

During the 1980s, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod's share of the income budget for CentraAmerican-Swedish Synod's colleges has been the subject of much debate. The Synod's share has been reduced from 50 percent in the mid-1970s to 25 percent in the mid-1980s. This decline has been attributed to several factors, including the rising cost of education, the increasing competition for students among smaller universities, and the increasing competition for students among larger universities.

Regardless of the cause, the Synod's share of the income budget for CentraAmerican-Swedish Synod's colleges has been reduced. This has resulted in a decrease in the amount of support the Synod provides to the colleges, and a decrease in the amount of support the colleges receive from the Synod.

The Synod is concerned about this trend, and is taking steps to address it. The Synod is working with the CentraAmerican-Swedish Synod to develop a plan for the future, which includes increasing the Synod's share of the income budget for the colleges, and increasing the amount of support the colleges receive from the Synod.
Consequences of Reducing Synodical Support for Professional Church Worker Education

A CASE STUDY

Orville C. Walz

Introduction

Today, The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod is faced with a paradox: while overall contributions by congregational members and investments in financial portfolios are increasing, at the same time allocations of resources for professional church worker education are being reduced. The availability of resources in the church is not the issue; the question centers in the value placed upon professional church worker education. A continuing reduction of synodical support for church worker education has far-reaching consequences, which means it is time for a larger segment of the church to engage in analysis, discussion, and debate concerning this crisis in the education of called ministers of the Gospel. This article focuses on one of Synod’s twelve institutions of higher learning, Concordia-Seward, as a case study to highlight some of the consequences resulting from the continued erosion of synodical support for professional church worker education.

Members of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod have increased their contributions for the work of the church for the past decade. Total congregational receipts in the Synod for work at home, in the districts, and by the Synod-at-large now total in excess of $800 million annually (Graph 1). Diminished support for the church at large, and as a result for professional church worker education, however, has created a crisis, because many congregations of Synod are using more and more of their increased receipts for work at home. In recent years this has begun to affect negatively the receipts received by the 35 districts of the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, but this has been a problem for the Synod-at-large for over a decade (Graph 2). Unrestricted contributions received by the Synod for national and international programs have remained between $25 million and $30 million for over a decade, and this makes no allowance for the inflation factor.

As a consequence, Concordia-Seward has been receiving less synodical subsidy for its professional church worker programs for ten consecutive years, a result of budget cuts made by the Board of Directors of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. For example, in the 1991–1992 fiscal year, the Board of Directors has again reduced the Board for Higher Education Services budget, this time in an amount of $644,488. In addition to synodical subsidy cutbacks, Concordia-Seward in recent years also has been required by the BHES to pay for all audit expenses and costly insurance premiums. Previously such expenses were covered by The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.

One of the major causes of a cumulative operating deficit in excess of $1 million that Concordia-Seward experienced in the three fiscal years, 1988–1988, was a result of decreased synodical subsidy. Nor is this synodical institution unique in facing this type of crisis. For example, in November of 1990 Concordia-Seward received a letter of commendation from the Board for Higher Education Services, thanking the institution for meeting all six standards of fiscal viability established by the BHES. However, the letter indicated that this institution was one of only three synodical institutions of higher education which met or exceeded all six BHES criteria for fiscal viability during the 1989-1990 academic year.

Orville C. Walz is the President of Concordia College, Seward, Nebraska. The writer gratefully acknowledges the assistance of Edward Dollase, Dean of Operations, Concordia College, Seward, Nebraska, who provided the statistical data.

Is there a crisis in the support for professional church worker education in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod today? If not, is a crisis on the way? If the crisis has arrived, is it manageable? Acceptable? Tolerable? Using Concordia-Seward as a case study, we examine in closer detail some of the consequences of a reduction of synodical support for professional church worker education programs.

What Will be the Amount of Synodical Subsidy For Concordia-Seward by the Year 2001?

Late in 1990, only months after having returned to Concordia-Seward, I expressed my concerns about declining synodical subsidy for its colleges, universities, and seminaries to a long-time colleague in higher education in Synod. During the conversation I said, “At the rate we are going, by the year 2001 synodical institutions will receive no subsidy and instead will be asked to pay for a membership in the Board for Higher Education Services, to continue serving in its supervisory role.” My friend was unaware that what I had said was meant to be “tongue in cheek.” He responded, “I disagree with you. At the rate we are going it will not take until the year 2001 for this to occur.”
In 1980, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod provided $127,323 in the form of subsidy to Concordia-Seward—nearly 73 percent of the educational and general income needed to operate the institution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>UNRESTRICTED GIFTS</th>
<th>SYNDICAL SUBSIDY</th>
<th>PERCENT OF INCOME NEEDED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>6,488</td>
<td>1,185,750</td>
<td>15.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>6,488</td>
<td>1,185,750</td>
<td>15.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>6,488</td>
<td>1,185,750</td>
<td>15.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By 1960 the percent of educational and general income provided by the Synod had dropped below 70 percent, and by 1970 the percent of subsidy was slightly above 50 percent. In the last two decades the portion of educational and general income provided by the Synod for Concordia-Seward dropped from under 40 percent in 1980, to less than 16 percent in fiscal year 1990.

Graph 3 shows the percent of educational and general income provided via annual synodical subsidy for the years 1970–1991. One does not need a degree in mathematics to note the drastic decrease of annual synodical subsidy during these two decades.

For the current fiscal year, the Board for Higher Education Services has developed a formula whereby each synodical college and university will receive a subsidy of slightly less than $1,500 per church work student enrolled in the fall of 1990. At first glance this may seem a fair and equitable manner in which to disburse scarce synodical subsidy funds. However, Concordia-Seward is unique in that during the 1990–1991 academic year two-thirds of its students were enrolled in professional church work programs. By comparison, the synodical college/university with the second largest percent of professional church work students counted only 38 percent of its total enrollment in these programs. These synodical colleges and universities, with much lower enrollments of church work students, can use income generated by non-church work programs to finance the professional church work programs on their campuses. The fact that these synodical colleges and universities are all located in urban areas, compared to the rural setting of Concordia-Seward (The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod's lone remaining rural institution of higher learning), provides yet another challenge for this institution.

If the current trend in annual decreases of subsidy for professional church worker programs continues, what will be the synodical subsidy for Concordia-Seward by the year 2007? The next table provides three scenarios: projections based on subsidy decreases of 10 percent per year, 8 percent per year, or 6 percent per year.

### Subsidy Projections from the LCMS for Concordia-Seward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>10% DECREASE</th>
<th>8% DECREASE</th>
<th>6% DECREASE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>$1,046,011</td>
<td>$1,046,011</td>
<td>$1,046,011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>$947,410</td>
<td>$921,390</td>
<td>$905,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>$847,269</td>
<td>$821,246</td>
<td>$795,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>$747,542</td>
<td>$721,521</td>
<td>$695,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>$648,288</td>
<td>$622,266</td>
<td>$596,245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>$549,024</td>
<td>$523,003</td>
<td>$497,982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>$449,760</td>
<td>$423,740</td>
<td>$397,719</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>$349,496</td>
<td>$323,476</td>
<td>$337,457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>$249,232</td>
<td>$223,212</td>
<td>$197,193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>$148,968</td>
<td>$122,948</td>
<td>$96,929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>$36,704</td>
<td>$10,684</td>
<td>$14,665</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Fiscal year 1992 figure is actual BHSSE subsidy.

### How Will the Reduction in Synodical Subsidy Affect the Concordia-Seward Budget and Student Tuition and Fees?

That question can be answered simply: in a very negative manner! As the following table shows, the annual cost of tuition for a full-time student at Concordia-Seward has risen from $760 in fiscal year 1970 to $8,000 in fiscal year 1991, with an additional $600 tuition increase in effect for the 1991–1992 academic year.

### Annual Tuition at Concordia-Seward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>ANNUAL TUITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>$760.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>$1,600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>$3,400.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>$5,300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>$6,600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>$6,600.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 4 shows a comparison of educational and general income versus the annual synodical subsidy. The subsidy line is, at best, flat, and actually decreases...
dramatically when inflation is considered. Educational aid is given to students in need, based on factors such as financial need.

Another portion of the gap between synodical and educational aid is provided through gifts received from constituents and friends of Concordia College. The table on page 8 indicates that the institution received a total of $3,058 in unrestricted gifts in the year 1980. Unrestricted gift income has increased dramatically in recent years, going from $128,027 in 1980 to $89,531 in fiscal year 1990. As the synodical subsidy has decreased, the need for major gift income, restricted and unrestricted, has increased on a corresponding basis.

The resources needed to operate an institution of higher learning which offers an excellent Christian education continue to increase. A formula frequently quoted in higher education circles is that an institution should have an endowment twice the size of its annual operating budget. At the present time that means Concordia-Seward should have an endowment of approximately $21 million. Instead, its total endowment is approximately $4 million. Furthermore, Concordia College needs approximately $750,000 for replacement of our dated equipment and purchase of new equipment.

New buildings are needed: an educational ministry building, a wellness center, speech and drama facilities, and a food services building. Salaries of Concordia College faculty and staff are very low compared to other synodical institutions.

The table on page 8 exhibits one example of a total fees projection at Concordia-Seward for the years 1992-2002. Included in the comprehensive figure are tuition, room and board, and other fees. If there is no change in the current trend toward decreasing synodical subsidy for professional church worker programs, these projections suggest that by the year 2001 it could cost a student $89,800 to enroll as a full-time student for one year. This could happen despite the fact that Concordia-Seward is in a rural setting, one in which costs are kept to a minimum. By comparison, during the 1990-1991 academic year, tuition and room-and-board fees at Concordia-Seward were second lowest among Synod's four-year colleges/universities.

Another source of student financing is loan programs. Here at Concordia College, at the conclusion of the 1990-1991 academic year, the average graduating senior who had federal government loans had a total loan to repay of $8,944. This total included only government-backed loans of which the Concordia College Financial Aid Office was aware. Those students represented approximately two-thirds of the graduating class.

Some of these students have an additional four-year seminar program to consider, which will undoubtedly add to their total loan indebtedness. In addition, government financial aid and loan programs, especially for middle income families, have been cut in recent years.

Most Concordia-Seward students presently work, as they attempt to earn sufficient financial resources to pay for their college education. While no statistics are available indicating precisely how many are working, during the summer it would appear that well over 90 percent of students have jobs, and many also work during the school year. Furthermore, a greater number of Concordia College students are working more hours per week than previously. For example, of last year's sophomores surveyed, only 30 percent indicated they did not have a job during the academic year. Students also appear to be working more hours today than earlier. In 1986, 10 percent of the sophomores surveyed worked 11-20 hours per week during the school year; in 1990-1991, 26 percent were working this number of hours. Recently I had the opportunity to talk with one of our students who had two jobs for the summer, and he was looking earnestly for a third job. Students working during the school year also find that there are frequent conflicts with particular programs in which they are enrolled. For example, it is not unusual for a student in a program to have a field experience assignment, an experience which must be completed during a specific time of the day. Too often, it seems, the field experience conflicts with a part-time job responsibility.

How Might Reduced Synodical Support for Professional Church Worker Education Programs Affect the Staffing of Congregational Ministries?

In the mission hymn, "Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling," Daniel Marsh wrote:

Hark, the voice of Jesus calling,
"Who will go and work today?"
Fields are white and harvests waiting,
Who will go and work today?

Lend an ear, the Master calls you;
Rich reward He offers free.
Who will answer, gladly saying,
"Here am I, Send me, send me"? (LW 318)
Ministry within The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod has a singular goal: to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. As the hymn writer said, fields are white and the harvest is at hand. In the spring and summer of 1990, Concordia College’s Placement Office was contacted to assist parishes/school associations in filling over 670 different positions in educational ministries. With the semester completed, 92 young men and women had been placed. The large discrepancy between position vacancies and the number of people placed was not the result of graduates being unwilling to accept placements. For example, 100 percent of the male and female candidates accepted placement, and 94 percent of mobile male candidates accepted placement. Rather, the discrepancy occurred because there were insufficient numbers of students graduating to send out into the harvest fields.

Christian education is extremely expensive, both in time required and dollars necessary to achieve excellence. The full-time professional church workers in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod are not being overpaid in their ministries. Instead, remuneration is on the low side. For example, in the spring of 1990, over 300 synodical college/university graduates were placed into educational ministries, and the average salary they received was $15,743. In light of this, the loans some of these individuals acquire while attending college, it becomes apparent that repayment of the loans is a major obstacle to ministerial work. Because of the shortage of synodically trained educational leaders, more and more congregrations and schools are employing non-ordained teachers, and some schools are even using non-Lutheran teachers. How and why to see some full-time church workers attempt to live on salaries that border on the poverty level, as defined by the government. Furthermore, the words of Jesus in Luke 10:7 remind us, "The laborer is worthy of his hire." Often, the morale of the minister suffers when working under such conditions, and the joy of serving one's Savior is greatly diminished.

Conclusion

Support for professional church work in a crisis: What a challenge there is before us all in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. Is this a time to throw up our hands and give up? Absolutely not! Twenty-five years ago, in the summer of 1966, during the oral examination for a candidate’s master’s degree at Moorhead State College in Minnesota, the principal of a Lutheran elementary school was asked whether Lutheran schools were on their deathbed, since it seemed there was little interest in Christian education in the United States at that time. How well I remember the challenges facing our church then, and yet in reflecting on those twenty-five years, I must smile and respond, "God is so good!" While the challenges of a reduction of synodical support for professional church work education are serious, they are not impossible. As The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod looks to the future, I suggest three thoughts to consider in its vision of church work education for this decade and beyond:

1. The crisis before us is our problem. It is not a synodical staff problem, nor their challenge, nor the problem of the colleges/universities/universities. The sooner all of us in our beloved Synod accept the challenges before us as ours, collectively, as sisters and brothers in Jesus Christ who are walking together, the sooner we can work toward addressing the issues of this crisis.

2. While analogies are never perfect, I cannot help but think of what occurred in A Christmas Carol. As Scrooge was being visited by Marley’s ghost, at one point in the conversation the ghost said to Scrooge: “I am here tonight to warn you that you have yet a chance and hope of escaping my fate.” Indeed, the projections for continued decreasing synodical subsidy for professional church worker programs, the trend toward higher and higher tuition and fees, and the negative consequences upon ministry in our congregations need not necessarily occur. Something can be done about those trends, and the solutions begin with each member of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.

3. Finally, answers to the dilemma can be found in God’s Holy Word. If every member of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod could understand and practice what stewardship of life means, there would be no-crisis in the support for professional church worker programs today.

Concordia-Seward will soon be celebrating by God’s grace, one hundred years of service as an institution of higher learning, striving for excellence in Christian education. With God’s continued blessings we can look forward to the next one hundred years, as Concordia College carries out its mission of Gospel proclamation.

Footnotes

1 Letter from Dr. Michael J. Stulmacher, June 14, 1991.
2 Letter from Dr. Michael J. Stulmacher, November 19, 1990.
3 Letter from Dr. Michael J. Stulmacher, June 14, 1991.
4 Concordia-Seward Financial Aid Office.
6 Concordia-Seward Placement Office.
7 Concordia-Seward Placement Office.
8 Concordia-Seward Placement Office.

Rudolph Block is the Director of Curriculum Services of the Board for Higher Education Services of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.

Those of us who have been serving as pastors and teachers in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod for 30 or more years find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to understand what in fact has happened with synodical support for the education of church workers. Those of us who attended what was then called a "preparatory school" in the 1940's and 1950's received basically a free education. This fee-collected from students then barely covered the cost of room and board. Only general students paid a small tuition charge; church work students really received their education free.

Things are quite different today. Although church work students are eligible for some designated grants and scholarships, they and their parents must bear the major burden of the cost of their education. Tuition costs today range from four to ten times the amount students would pay at a nearby state university, in nothing of the relatively negligible tuition charged by local community colleges.

Given the high tuition costs students have to pay to attend one of our colleges or universities, coupled with the prospect of receiving proportionately meager salaries when they accept calls to serve our congregations, it is a wonder that we have as many church work students as we do today. In fact, the number of LCMS confirmands who four years later enroll in a church work program at one of our schools is proportionately about the same as it was ten years ago. We are grateful to the Lord for the dedication and commitment of these young men and women who plan to serve the Lord as professional church workers.
Changes in the Level of Support for Colleges/Universities and Seminaries

Now let us look at the level of synodical support for the education of church workers and how this has changed over the last 20 years. Graph 1, based on the Statistical Yearbook, shows that congregational contributions for all purposes increased from $241 million in 1970 to $820 million in 1990. Over these same years unrestricted funds available to the Synod increased from $24 million to $30 million. In other words, while total congregational contributions increased 338 percent, over this same 20 years the Synod's budget increased only 25 percent.

The problem becomes even more acute when we factor in inflation. The following table shows that the cumulative percent change in the Consumer Price Index from 1970 to 1990 was a staggering 236.9 percent. So while total congregational contributions were well ahead of inflation, funds available to Synod seriously lost out to the ravaging increases in the cost of living.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>CPI</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>82.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>107.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>130.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Put another way, the 1970 dollar was worth only 29.7 cents in 1990. So the $24 million in income to Synod in 1970 should have grown to $56.9 million just to stay even with rising costs due to inflation. However, unrestricted synodical funds coming from congregations through the districts amounted to only $30 million, a little over half of what was needed to maintain the status quo. Meanwhile, congregations desire new programs and services from the Synod.

Graph 2 shows student enrollment at colleges and seminaries from 1970 to 1990. While there was a sizable decline in 1975 and 1980, the 1990 enrollment (which no longer includes the three institutions in the Lutheran Church Canada) is around 300 students ahead of the 1970 enrollment. Probably the most significant data for this article appears in Graph 3. Inflation caused a 570 percent increase in combined income needed for LCMS colleges and seminaries, from $23 million in 1970 to $85 million in 1990. Since higher education is labor intensive, it is no surprise to see college/university and seminary costs climbing faster than the rate of inflation. Our LCMS schools reflect what has occurred in the higher education community in general.

Examining Graph 3 more closely, we note that student fees have gone from $10 million in 1970 to $47 million by 1990, while the synodical subsidy actually has dropped from $9.2 million to $8.5 million during these same 20 years. The percent of total income to the colleges/universities and seminaries coming from synodical subsidy dropped from 40.6 percent to 9.9 percent during this period of time.

The seriousness of the decline and its impact on the colleges/universities is much more severe than it appears. Facts and figures supplied by the Manager of Financial Services of the Board for Higher Education Services show that while subsidy to the seminaries has remained relatively stable from 1980 to 1990, actual subsidy dollars to the colleges/universities have declined by $2.6 million during this decade. Approved synodical budget figures for Fiscal 1992 show another $600,000 plus reduction for college subsidies. In recent years Synod's Stewardship Department has raised more money for operating expenses at the seminaries through the Joint Seminary...
Fund than they received in subsidy. At the same time the development offices of the colleges/universities have had to work on their own to secure third-source income. Fortunately, many Christian people have given substantial sums of designated funds directly to the colleges/universities, some for capital improvements and endowments, and some for current operations. We thank God for the generosity of an ever-increasing number of donors who have helped our higher education institutions remain solvent.

**Factors Contributing to this Trend**
Possibly the key factor that has been responsible for the precipitous decline in sympathic support for higher education has been the changing style of giving. More and more of our LCMS members, like in many other denominations, are unwilling to increase substantially their personal contributions to the church in plate collections and offering envelopes. Instead, they prefer to make substantial contributions as designated funds to a cause or a project dear to their hearts. Thus, capital fund drives by a seminary or college/university for building new structures or enlarging their scholarship endowment fund can gather millions of dollars, but it is almost impossible to add one million dollars for the unidentified synodical operation.

At the same time we see constant growth of budgeted expenditures by the 35 LCMS district offices. Twenty years ago only a few districts had full-time presidents. 20 years ago all district presidents served only part-time. As the services of the offices expand, districts hire more executives and supporting personnel. This increases expenditures at the district level. A glance at Graph 1 confirms this dramatic change. Contributions for work-at-large (which is primarily district and Synod) doubled from 1970 to 1980, then rose 800% from 1980 to 1990. Most of this increase stayed in the districts. As mentioned earlier, money coming to Synod increased only 25 percent, or 36% inflation adjusted.

One might ask some hard questions in this regard. Does the LCMS really need 35 district offices in the 1990s? Could not the work be done in six or eight regional districts much more efficiently and with less money? Why can't we change the flow of money so congregations give to Synod when they pay their seminaries? Could we get rubber stamped to make it official. Just maybe that is why more and more members reserve increased unrestricted money for mission and gifts where they feel they have control. In the end, proportionately less and less money comes to Synod, and more and more of general contributions are given locally by the churches. While the Synodists had 37.3 cents out of every dollar contributed in congregations came to St. Louis, Synod is far away while local funds are held in the collective mind of the budget planning committee.

At the district level, the delegates to the District Convention may discuss the proportionate share of funds contributed by congregations that each congregation sends to Synod. However, the District Board of Directors, in concert with the president and other executives, develops the budget for the coming year. They do not, however, have responsibility for their own projected needs. No uniform percentage or formula applies to the districts, so each district makes its own determination.

In 1990, districts committed to Synod ranged from 13.4 percent to 74.3 percent, averaging 45.8 percent. The synodical office depends on the districts' goodwill and their willingness to share some of the early 1970's had its negative consequences. The 100 congregations that left the Synod included many sizable congregations.

The social and cultural changes in recent years have also contributed to this trend. The church is no longer the major social center that it was a generation or two ago. More and more of our congregations serve people who are in urban congregations and must compete with the attractions of the city. As we think about these and other factors that have changed our society, we might expect an impact on our church. We certainly cannot turn back the clock a generation or two. Therefore, it behooves us to address intelligently these problems and make the changes necessary to capitalize on these conditions rather than succumb to them.

**How are Financial Decisions Made? By Whom?**
Two generations ago the man or woman in the pew, for all practical purposes, made the decision on what and how much. Practically all of our congregations had a dual envelope system then: one for the local congregation and the other for work-at-large. Some communicant persons personally made this decision.

It was not uncommon for a mission- and education-minded church to collect more money for outside work than it did for work at home. Before World War II, this was the case with the writer's home congregation.

It is a different story today. With the single envelope system, the decision is likely made by the elders or committee of the local church. The Synodical Council, maps out the congregation's income and expenditures. The completed and council-approved budget is then presented to the Synodical Convention. The Synodical Convention as a whole then ratifies or rejects the budget. The Synodical Convention has the final say on the budget. It is not something a person or senior pastor can just do. As one synodical official put it, 'It has become a political issue. The Synodical Convention votes by party lines.'

**Impact of Added Church Work Programs**
These added church work programs added since World War II have confused our membership. The membership is not sure what it is being asked to fund, and we would not be faced with such serious financial problems. In fact, a large majority of today's church work students are still preparing to become pastors and teachers in the church. Only one of the added programs (Director of Christian Education and Lay Minister) have attracted a growing number of students. Enrollment in the other six church work programs are minimal.

Another common misunderstanding among the LCMS community is that the colleges are experiencing financial problems because they are no longer single-purpose institutions; they are now comprehensive liberal arts universities with many majors, even though each emphasis is on church work programs. The hidden message is: eliminate the programs in business, nursing, computer science, commercial art, social work, and other fields, and there will be adequate money to educate church work students. In fact, subsidy provided by

At the national level, the Council of Administrators (COA) oversees the various departments of the various departments that wrestles with the budget for several months. After they receive word from all the districts concerning their financial contributions, the COA must ensure that there is a balanced budget. Therefore, when six to a dozen districts fail short of their pledges, budget adjustments and further reductions must be made in the middle of the year.

Synod's Board of Directors has the fiscal responsibility in the LCMS; they ultimately set the budget. This usually happens in their May meeting after long and painful discussions and negotiations. They understand quite well how frustrating it is to the various departments at the International Center to have programs, to say nothing of personnel, reduced or eliminated. However, they cannot disperse money they do not have.

For fiscal 1992, higher salaries and missions each are scheduled to receive 30 percent of unrestricted funds sent in by the districts. As mentioned earlier, this will again means a sizable reduction (more than $600,000) for higher education. The BIES staff is painfully aware that subsidy to our colleges/universities has now dropped to below 10 percent of operating funds, in spite of the fact that well-intentioned delegates to the 1981 Synodical Convention voted almost unanimously that subsidy support should not be allowed to go below 10 percent.

An interesting footnote to this action was the defeat of an amendment to authorize the Board of Directors to borrow money in order to keep this promise.

**Are LCMS Members Aware of the Problem?**
The author of this article and many of his colleagues in higher education are absolutely convinced that a large majority of the LCMS constituency is not aware of what has happened to the church's system of higher education in the last 20 years. We are equally convinced that we have a membership that heroically responds to needs. Over the generations, our church membership has responded dramatically to highlighted needs. They respond.

Time after time we have witnessed a heart-warming response by the membership to serious problems that have been honestly shared with them. This has prompted the editor and publisher of Issues to address this crisis. The case study points out the impact on a single college. This article has attempted to address the impact on the whole system. The third article in the series will look at various options. We must face the problem and point the way to solutions. The negative trend line is unmistakable. Are we ready to face the challenge and take corrective measures?
Support for Church Worker Education in the LCMS

A PERSPECTIVE

Vance Hinrichs

Introduction

Individuals who have attained the age of 60 will remember regular gasoline selling for 35 cents per gallon, eggs costing 10 cents per dozen, and annual college tuition rates below the $200 threshold. The fact that prices have changed is apparent to us all, but more subtle are the changes in attitudes and priorities. Those who can recall the above prices may also recall the effort made by congregations in Kansas and Nebraska to keep costs low for students planning to enter a church vocation. Truck loads of potatoes and other food stuffs were delivered to the comissary on a regular basis and stored in campus storage cells. Districts recognized the service role of colleges by sponsoring the 10-hour per week work load guidelines, such as Nebraska Hall. Yes, the grass roots of the church took pride in the preparation of professional church workers, and not only supported that preparation through the traditional “mission budget,” but also found ways of channeling their support directly without solicitation. Is it their attitude toward Christian higher education also changing? Have the ministry priorities changed over the decades? Perhaps. Probably.

To develop strategies for evaluating the support of professional church worker education and to consider properly the steps necessary to provide adequate support, and reverse the current trend, it should be helpful to consider the factors that have impacted negatively on that support over the decades.

Negative Factors and Potential Solutions

1. Shrinking Grass Roots Commitment Results in a Shrinking Support Base. Rather than being regional or even synodical in scope, the interest now tends to focus on the needs at the parish level. More and more

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would be an efficient vehicle to inform and share this kind of information. Once the service role of our colleges is recognized and the need is known, a positive response should emerge.

Correspondingly, our Christian higher educational institutions should renew and expand recruitment efforts for those church vocations that are experiencing a limited number of graduates. The word at the parish level is that there is a limited number of pastors and DCEs, so we need to look for non-church vocation people to meet our staffing needs. Thus the advent of ministry “move” positions, by recognition and recruiting for it, our colleges/universities and seminaries will be supported at a higher level by the laity of the church.

2. Competition for the Synodical Dollar is More Pervasive Than at Any Point in the History of Higher Education. At the New Orleans Convention of the LCMS and at subsequent conventions, special status was given to the support of the pastoral ministry programs over other ministry programs of the church. Recognizing that the synodical dollar is only so large and that the educational dollar within the synodical budget would remain relatively static, the end result had to be that institutions emphasizing teacher education, preparation of Directors of Christian Education, Ministers of Music, and other ministries would receive less synodical support. Although not every one will agree with that simplistic explanation as the cause, there is a recorded fact.

Coupled with this multi-level support program is the changing composition of our campus enrolments. Many of our synodical colleges are changing from church vocation colleges to church-related colleges where a strong emphasis on Christian teaching and Christian practice is found but where church worker vocation has become a minority component. This means that synodical dollars are being directed more and more toward non-church worker preparation rather than the promotion of church vocation. I must acknowledge that such a statement may not be very popular in some circles, but when only 20-25 percent of a campus enrolment is labeled “church vocation,” the program of that college/university has changed. Although it is important to acknowledge the value of a good program of teacher education and that this shift creates more competition for the available synodical dollar, since the partial support of non-church vocation students by the Synod is a major source of financial support, this can put a pressure on students preparing for church vocations.

SUGGESTED STRATEGY FOR CHANGE. A special task force has been established by the Synod to evaluate objectively the Synod’s support of church vocations. This task force should be made up primarily of lay and pastoral leaders, but not those at the parish level, other efforts will fall short. Educational institutions should utilize an effective video which emphasizes the purpose and program as well as the needs related to church work vocation. Pastoral conferences

3. The “GOOD-OLE DAYS” are gone. One brokerage house suggests its credibility is achieved in the financial world by saying that their approach is more like the old-fashioned way: they earn it. Colleges/universities, and seminaries have come to expect the church at large to support them for what they were, not what they are. Gone are the days when support is based on budget needs or even the total full-time equivalent students enrolled. As institutions become more like community colleges and liberal arts institutions, their claim to the synodical support dollar diminishes. We have arrived at the era when the synodical dollar will need to be allocated primarily on the basis of their contribution to the Synod as determined by the number of graduates entering church careers or entering one of the ministries of the church.

Not too many years ago a formula was established to allocate available synodical dollars for the support of higher education. Various factors were included in the formula, and a transition period was established so that the new formula will not be in effect until the current subsidy had time to adjust for it. A new formula could appropriately be established that gives greater recognition to those institutions that have demonstrated a commitment to professional and seminaries. When this happens, and it will likely will, our colleges will have greater responsibility for funds directed toward the synodical budget.

SUGGESTED STRATEGY FOR CHANGE. To find solutions for this problem will require at least two strategies. The first is to evaluate once again the entire system and re-examine the formula that determines the distribution of synodical dollars. This would involve colleges and seminaries with comprehensive programs designed to integrate the various ministries on each of the approved campuses. This would reduce the number of colleges and seminaries and expanded the church vocation programs on the remaining campuses. (This is not a popular recommendation at the time it was made.) The task force’s concept is probably still valid and needs to be revisited. The last time this was done, there was enormous pressure to retain all of the
colleges of the Synod, and only a few colleges fell victim to the task. The task is easy in that the problem may be more difficult since the programs at many of our colleges and universities have been modified and expanded in their structures.

The second strategy is perhaps the most obvious. Our colleges and universities are a late entry to the current educational and social development activities. College and seminary presidents and their respective controlling boards saw their presidents as spiritual leaders and academic leaders. To survive today institutional leadership needs to be much more than that. The president needs to be heavily involved in fund raising and church and community relations. The difficulty will be the late entry into a heavily populated arena. Second, it is not only important for the college/university and seminary presidents to engage in this effort, but our colleges and universities will be well advised to inform, educate, and interest regularly our Synod's deployed development staff. This en- couragement of estate planners has access to people and places that many of our higher education development staff may not even know. The district estate planning representatives need to be prepared to represent our educational institutions with the same confidence and clarity as other programs. Once again, information is the essential ingredient.

4. Conflict and tensions within the church have not been helpful. Several decades ago the Synod expe- rienced tension that is still not erased. Conflict tends to divide and causes people to redirect their resources in support of factions and special issues. Even today one of the entities (not synodically approved) involved in the conflict is receiving excess of ten million dollars per year. Most of these dollars are diverted away from the primary mission of the church and are used for purposes not focused on the Great Commission obligation of the church. Multiply this over and over again, and it is easy to see that our colleges and seminaries suffer as a result of re- directed support.

SUGGESTED STRATEGY FOR CHANGE. Once again, in order to solve this problem, the faculty and students need to exercise the initiative and place ministry as well as ministry support in its proper perspective. To help our church workers in this task, it will be necessary for our colleges and univer- sities and seminaries to provide resource information and a new focus on ministry. People at the grass roots need not hear only the Good News of the Gospel but also need to experience and be aware of the joys associated with the task of sharing that Good News as a professional church worker. Throughout the church we also need to set aside conflict and be about the task of ministry, the real purpose for the existence of the church. When that happens, a new level of support will emerge and more effective ministry can happen.

5. CONCORDIA IS "THEIR" COLLEGE. Syndrome. As my 80th birthday approaches, I reflect on the fact that my physical needs expand, shows less interest in other people and their activities and needs. This is very disturbing for the UC&I's who substitute circum- stances his response to life around him is very natural. The same can be said about people and things. The point is that some students need to be informed of these needs, including our institutions of higher education. It is easy for people to have a diminishing interest in an institution, primarily because of the circumstances. It is easy to understand why interest in a college/university is a down day the list of priorities in many homes. Where that happens it becomes "their" college/university. To change that, a significant task, but one that needs to be attended to.

SUGGESTED STRATEGY FOR CHANGE. The most obvi- ous strategy is involvement. When people have stu- dent attending a college/university, they have an inter- est. When they bake cakes for students having a birthday, they have involvement. When they come to the Concordia Singers choir concert, they develop an inter- est. The greater the involvement, the greater the inter- est and the greater the support. The result is "Concor- dis is MY college." The same is true for congregations. Encourage congregations to establish a church education scholarship fund not only to help the student planning to enter a church vocation, but to make the congrega- tion support of the students who are students the norm. The college/university might consider providing char- tered bases for congregations of surrounding districts that provide a means to raise educational funds and parents to Concordia for a tour day. Such participation will result in ownership as time passes and certainly will result in support.

In general, a new and an enthusiastic spirit toward ministry needs to be cultivated. All the ministries of the church need to be connected. It will be necessary for the Synod to focus on this need. It is not for the Great Commission obligation of the church. Multiply this over and over again, and it is easy to see that our colleges and seminaries suffer as a result of re- directed support.

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6. COMPARED TO MANY INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION, ALUMNI SUPPORT IS LOW. Although this may appear to be a criticism of the alumni, it actually is not. I am impressed with the sacrificial giving of the alumni, but the fact that the dollar level of support is down is something that the church needs to address. Church workers, especially teachers and directors of Christian education, are not in a position to support our colleges and universities at a significantly higher level. Their sala- ries are very low, and the gap between their salaries and the average income in our community or state is widening. This differential between the salaries of the teachers and the CEOs of the same companies is significant. But the church ministry within the church because of these salaries. The same attention that has been given to increasing salaries of the CEOs should be given to increase teacher and DCE salaries. When this happens, a new level of support from the alumni can be expected. If we are not doing this, perhaps even inappropriate, for the parish worker to stand up and say, "You should give me a better salary!" But what do we do? Perhaps the key to change in this area is the district president and his district staff. This will not be easy since a significant change will involve not only support for the district, but reduced support will impact on the amount of money available for synodical use. But that does not justify failure to act. "The laborer is worthy of his hire." The same can be said for the faculty and administration at our synodical colleges/universities. It should cause outrage among the laity to know that pastors of mod- erately large congregations receive much higher salaries than members of college/university and seminary faculties who have just as much service experience and usually significantly more academic preparation.

7. THE SYNOD NEEDS TO LOOK AT A DIFFERENT STRUC- TURE FOR ITS CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS. A new structure exists to serve the grass roots of the church in its task of ministry. Over the decades the needs, the programs, and the priorities of the grass roots have shifted, and little recognition has been given to that subtle shift or change. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has changed. The church money is not at the congregational level. The districts exist as an arm of the Synod and their role is to provide support of the church, independent of the Synod. Change often comes when there is concern about control and conformity and our allegiance to tradition. It seems appropriate for the church to examine those entities that recognized the need for change and the impact or results of that change. For example, the old Church Extension Fund operated much like the Synod. There were parallel and overlapping programs, and the net result was a struggling branch of the church that had difficulty being effective in its service role in the church. Approximately 10 years ago the CEF became the LCIF, and a new structure emerged placing the programmatic emphasis at the district level and the technical coordination at the synodical level. This re- structuralization was an act of trust, an act of faith, but note the results. Ten years ago the combined resources of all the LCIF programs (synod, district and diocesan) were approxi- mately $250,000,000. Today that total is approaching the billion dollar mark. The significance is not the dollar aspect. The income has increased, but the significant change involved to the people closer to the grass roots level, the response was dramatic. When people see the need and are able to participate a part of the structure, they respond favorably. Today more ministry can happen because change was allowed to happen in LCIF. For our colleges/universities to become more effective in their service role to congrega- tions, a similar change should be considered, and the result will be greater interest and in some cases a greater support for higher education, and a total minis- try that people will accept as their own.

SUGGESTED STRATEGY FOR CHANGE. This will be a major undertaking but one that can and should happen. Some leaders within the International Center have attempted to rally support without much success. To change large and complex structures requires not only the amount of the structure to only support for the district, but that reduced support will impact on the amount of money available for synodical use. But that does not justify failure to act. "The laborer is worthy of his hire." The same can be said for the faculty and administration at our synodical colleges/universities. It should cause outrage among the laity to know that pastors of mod- erately large congregations receive much higher salaries than members of college/university and seminary faculties who have just as much service experience and usually significantly more academic preparation.

What a timely book! We have heard or said that frequently when a new book arrives just the right time to meet a particular concern, issue, or topic. This book is one such timely book.

Each day the news media seem to be dealing with another moral dilemma for our times. Whether it is the sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church or the moral decay of society, it is all over the news. It was just a few years ago that President Ronald Reagan stated the government’s position in the continuing debate over the issue of abortion. This book provides a clear and concise guide to the complex moral issues facing society today.

Arthur H. James begins by defining the term "character" and explaining its importance in moral education. He then goes on to discuss the different approaches to moral education, including the natural law approach and the virtue ethics approach. He argues that a balanced approach is necessary in order to effectively teach moral values to students.

The book is divided into seven parts, each focusing on a different aspect of moral education. The parts are: Theological Foundations, Theological and Cultural Issues, Psychological and Social Issues, Theological and Cultural Issues, Theological and Cultural Issues, Theological and Cultural Issues, and Theological and Cultural Issues.

The book is written in an accessible manner, making it suitable for both professors and students. It is a valuable resource for anyone interested in moral education, especially those working in the field of education, theology, and religious studies.

The book reviews the current state of moral education in the United States and offers suggestions for improving it. The author's insights are based on his extensive experience in the field, and his advice is grounded in a deep understanding of the complexities of moral education.

In conclusion, this book is a must-read for anyone concerned with the future of moral education. It is a comprehensive guide to the issues and challenges facing society, and is a valuable resource for anyone seeking to understand and address them.
advantageously so that the Great Commission task can be carried out. When we let tradition, personal biases and concerns redirect our thinking we probably are not really being good stewards of available resources. New approaches and ideas need to be considered, adapted and eventually tested so that ministry can be more effective. If this is not the way to achieve that goal, perhaps it will help us see a preferred plan of action.

**Concluding Remarks**

Concern about the support of the professional church worker is universal. It is not just a matter of generating more dollars or reallocating the dollars we already have, but it is a question of mission and ministry. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, our colleges/universities and seminaries, and those who graduate from these institutions exist to serve the Lord and to carry out His Great Commission. To retain that purpose, objectivity is difficult when jobs are at stake, when programs are brought into question, and when traditions are challenged. But being good stewards may demand precisely that.

Beyond the matter of stewardship is the question of quality. We all need to ask if we can maintain a quality product with declining support and waning interest on the part of the constituency. We need to find a better way of doing what needs to be done. For many of us, the *Sabre Tooth Curriculum* was required reading during our college years because it reminded us as future teachers to not necessarily do things the way they have always been done, but rather to be sensitive to the present and the future needs and potentials. Our colleges and our Synod must also do that. Colleges/universities can expand their development staffs, cuts can be made in the budget, and other extreme actions taken, but if we do not adequately consider change in light of the present and the future, we tend only to mess up things more and more.

Colleges/universities might learn from successful congregations within our Synod. Traditionally, church growth programs were limited to the pastor and a few service oriented members of the congregation. Today we learn that as more and more people are involved and the more we utilize the extended family and the networking of many people, the more effective we become. The same will be true of our institutions of higher education. Information dissemination, awareness, and broad participation at many levels should also impact on the support of higher education. We have a product that is easy to sell (preparing people for the professional ministry of the church and preparation for life experiences) and a base that is eager to support and encourage that ministry. Once that network is assembled, results will occur. Along with that, a revised operating structure will be helpful and make an institution’s task much easier. May God bless our colleges/universities and seminaries as they strive to meet that challenge.