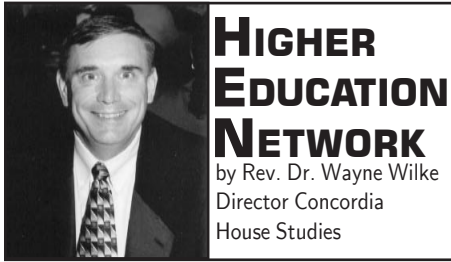


CONCORDIA HOUSE OF STUDIES

Take this Test!



**HIGHER
EDUCATION
NETWORK**
by Rev. Dr. Wayne Wilke
Director Concordia
House Studies

There is a challenge for you: please take this test as a mind exercise.

Question 1: How many pastors have served your congregation since it was founded? If you have a Lutheran school, add in the number of teachers who are synodically certified. What is that number?

Question 2: How many members of your congregation have become pastors since the congregation was founded? If you have a Lutheran school, add in the number of teachers who are Synodically certified who have come from your congregation. What is that number?

If your congregation has "produced" more pastors and/or teachers than you have "received," praise God! If your congregation has "received" more pastors and/or teachers than you have "produced," then you "owe" the church some workers.

We don't usually think of church workers as commodities that put a congregation into a positive or deficit situation, but I believe it is a helpful analogy as we think about INTENTIONALLY recruiting workers for the kingdom. We know that God provides workers by giving some the gift to become professional workers in the church. In Ephesians 4:11-12, the list includes "Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers." These full-time workers are called "to prepare God's people for service, so that the body of Christ may be built up . . ."

Further, the people with those gifts are boys and girls, men and women who grow up in congregations just

like yours. You find them in Sunday school classes, confirmation classes, Bible Study groups, Youth groups; and serving as elders, deacons and trustees throughout the church.

I would like to challenge each congregation to become a "SENDING" congregation. By that, I mean a congregation that is very intentional about "SENDING" congregational sons and daughters into full-time service in God's kingdom. There are at least five activities related to being a SENDING congregation.

Activity #1: A SENDING congregation is involved in "choosing" or identifying, those who might have the gifts of a professional church worker. This is an intentional process, and the responsibility for identifying future workers for the church must lie not only on the pastor and the teachers, but also on all the members of the congregation. It includes recognition of those who have enthusiasm for sharing the Gospel, love and compassion for others, gentleness, patience, humility along with a sense of humor and a sense of responsibility.

Activity #2: A SENDING congregation is involved in "praying over" those who have been identified. This can begin with regular prayers in worship services that God will raise up workers for His kingdom. It can include personal prayers for those known, and not yet known, that their gifts might grow to fruition. You might want to take a young person whom you have identified aside and pray with him or her about the possibility of full-time work in the church.

Activity #3: A SENDING congregation is involved in "equipping" those who have been identified. This might include providing opportunities for both youth and potential second-career church work students to actively participate in the activities of the church. You can also encourage their participation in the life of the congregation youth group.

Activity #4: A SENDING congregation is involved in "encouraging" those

who may have gifts for full-time service. Encouragement can take the form of acknowledging their gifts and talents. It may include a note or a brief word of appreciation for their service. It also certainly includes regular reports and updates in newsletters and bulletins about church worker students and former members who have gone into church work.

Activity #5: Finally, a SENDING congregation is active in "supporting" those identified. In addition to encouragement as emotional support, it is also important to provide financial support. Financial support is an opportunity for the entire congregation to participate in providing an ongoing stream of workers in the ministries of the church. To accomplish this most effectively, it is recommended that the congregation develop a scholarship endowment fund to support students in preparation for ministry.

I would like to challenge every member of a Florida-Georgia District

congregation to work to make their congregation a SENDING congregation. The suggestions above are only a beginning, but a beginning must be made. The life of the church is distinguished by the quality and competency of its workers. To achieve the level of excellence desired, a church must intentionally search out and identify individuals with the characteristics that provide for good church leadership.

As you begin this process, please feel free to share with me what is working for you so that I can share that information with other congregations.

For additional information about how the Concordia House of Studies can assist in preparing church workers locally, or about having someone from CHS speak in your congregation, please contact Dr. Wayne Wilke, Director of CHS. You can call him in Orlando locally at 407-857-5556, ext 5, toll free at 877-457-5556, ext. 5, or via e-mail at wwilke@flga-lcms.org. □



"WELCOME BACK" BARBEQUE AT FIRST LUTHERAN — Vicar Jay Winters and the Anti-Gravity Lutheran Student Ministry at First Lutheran-Gainesville, FL, hosted a barbecue to welcome students to the University of Florida and share what campus ministry offers. More than 40 students braved the rain to attend the August 26 gathering. "We would like to express our thanks to all of the members of First Lutheran who helped make this event a success," said Vicar Jay. "Much of the planning and preparation was completed by the students, including setting up the tent and all of the publicity. But we couldn't have done it without the help of First Lutheran members who provided much of the food." He especially thanked those who cooked the food, Tag Grant and Jack Halabrin. Student officers for Lutheran Campus ministry at UF for 2005-06 are: President - Aaron Wessling; VP of Spiritual Life - Kelley Schumacher; VP of Outreach - Amy Schumacher; Treasurer/Secretary - Lisa Buenrostro; Social Events Coordinator - Jessie Worrell; Service Events Coordinator - Mark Adrian; Publicity Officer - Jessica Riffel. □



CAMPUS MINISTRY FOCUS — The Florida-Georgia District has plans to double the number of campus ministries serving its members by 2010. Training events were held this summer in Orlando and Fort Lauderdale for those interested in beginning a new campus ministry. The workshops were conducted by Pastor Jason Boetcher of Grace Lutheran-Merritt Island; Dr. Wayne Wilke, Director of the Concordia House of Studies; and Rev. Doug Kallesen, District Director for Outreach. Shown here are those attending the workshop in Davie (left to right) Dave Giesecking, DCE at Gloria Dei-Davie; Vicar Jeremy Lucke, St. Paul-Boca Raton; Rev. Boetcher; Rev. Darrel Stuehrenberg, Gloria Dei; Rev. Kallesen, Rev. Dan Czaplowski, Shepherd of the Coast-Fort Lauderdale. □

