

Question #1: What have you heard so far?

Group 1

Assets, creativity, pride, energy, well kept secrets, culture of congregational education in ELCA not very strong, low level of clergy use of CE, struggle with a future vision, seminaries seen as primary agents for theological education, hunger for learning beyond seminary programs, similarity of lay schools, there is so much, mutual interest in what others are doing, concern about Christian Knowledge in congregations, low level of adult understanding of basic Christian Knowledge, low teaching on part of pastors in congregations

Group 2

Proliferation of programs in Cluster is stunning, realization that the seminaries can be resources to this enterprise of theological education, lots of energy and passion here, how are seminaries connected to all the other providers of theological education, we had demonstrated the power of curriculum for lay people involved in theological education, accreditation is an important ingredient in continuing lay education.

Group 3

Cornucopia, filled with possibilities, tantalizing and confusing, does it fit?, opportunities, What are the opposing forces? Nebulous, amorphous, so much is going on that we don't know about – like dark matter, difficulty communicating back to seminary boards, expanding neural networks, everybody has their connections in their little clumps (sufficient within clumps), how to make sure information flows both ways? So much that we are hearing is relational, knowledge that there IS someone to call!

We have so much going on – how can we better use what is already going on? And not duplicate them. Part of the needed vision: stewardship, energy and resources.

Stewardship of Ideas! This is good for stealing from each other.

Technology is built on little steps.

Considering:

Tensions and divisions within the church at large, individualism/parochialism in all that mix: because of our segmentation. Marketing to our own membership.

Need to cultivate a way to get people to take the church “brand” as something they have already paid for.

As we conceptualize the church as a purveyor of resources, what is the relationship with Augsburg Fortress (AF)?

What kind of endorsement process? (for a particular course/resource) Content?

Beth Lewis will come and talk about publishing ministry of ELCA.

“Spread the stress” (In response to sense of stress within the institution and incredulity within at possibility of wider organization.

Group 4

Lots of things going on! All have the same goal. Colleges have a different goal – to serve all people, not only the baptized God has called ALL people to vocation.

This question may be framed too narrowly. There are differing vocations represented here.

Seminaries are the heart of the church. Colleges are the fingertips delivering God's grace to all of God's creation and not just the baptized.

***Have not heard that the congregations are the resources. Congregations are not represented here. I'm hearing how many people have been enriched by this thing called education. Words mean nothing – this is an experience shared by people serving in our colleges.

*Seminaries don't see themselves as the center of the Covenant Cluster – rather they are part of the whole “constellation.”

“I have to get used to that idea.” Might be hard to grasp.

Trying to discount the sense of being top down.

It is exciting to hear how lay schools have popped up.

IN the Western Cluster the colleges took things over for a while.

The seminaries are hubs of a theological network in the Covenant Cluster (CC)

That Lay education and vocation needs to come through from where they are.

Group 5

Teaching office shifting from pastoral office to laity.

Education moving beyond local congregations to clusters and other providers.

Group 6

Variety, depth, commitment already going on. What we have NOT been doing in and for communications. How do you awaken the hunger for learning in congregations?

Group 7

Presentations were impressive with high energy, diverse exciting happenings in the church. Language of insiders not meaningful to others. We have much to communicate – how do we market it? Heritage of goodness but not of marketing.

Questions #2

What Vision do we have for the education of all the baptized?

Group 1 (Group one didn't have the third question in their notes)

Trinity Seminary – produce “Christian Rabbis” grads who see selves as teachers, first call follow-up education, failed at all levels to have accountability. Why isn't it) a violation of “expectations?” if a pastor encourages of congregation to leave the ELCA?

Give option for transferring studies at Lay School to seminaries for credit, but may not be hour for hour equivalent.

We don't have to invent new wheels. We have plenty of resources among us to share.

Reformation Mall concept.

Need a network of Life Long Learning Partners! (Editors note: we already have one!)

Strengthen the network with seminary and colleges.

45 of 65 synods have some form of lay schools of ministry/theology/mission.

Keep it connected but fluid – “not institutionalize” so it can grow and evolve to meet emerging needs.

Emerging Vision for Cluster – More contact to build more trust i.e. Give seminary credit for college level work. Let students test out. More networking to know/share resources.

Group 2

Preparing persons for leadership in church and society. Network whereby people can connect resources with needs. Should the cluster be concerned about doing more when there is so much good going on already – should we be trying to connect and strengthen instead?

We've heard from the providers who are here – but we need to hear from the customers about theological education.

People of God are equipped to share the Gospel wherever they are.

To utilize effectively the modern technology to extend community beyond face to face learning.

Group 3 (no number three)

First let's see that we are doing what we do well. Then the partnerships can unfold.

“Does it fit?” We each have different constituencies. Seminaries: professional preparation oriented. Colleges: pluralistic. Working with this 18-22 age group. What about the younger kids?

Response to a vision: Boldly claim: Lutheran confessional core identity = ecumenical “Educating Theologically” for everybody.

We are teaching for the “church catholic” not a sectarian but a reforming movement.

Spiritual development vs. theological education - from baptism through life.

Q:How is the “vocations” program affecting, say, science class question?

A: Haven't established a center, but: experiential education, interfaith dialogue, and partnerships with seminaries.

Can we integrate concept of vocation regardless of content?

Study tour to Wittenberg etc also open to faculty and staff with the students. Outside of religious staff. IE. IT guy.

There are not only people who need something deeper, but something basic.

Don't get too full of yourself!

What about intergenerational learning vs. segmenting people off by ages?

Theologically we are equal,

I don't have a sense of what the synod needs so I'm not sure how the college can meet it.

Theology is important. Reflecting on faith is important.

Can't forget the peripheral objects (asteroids) in our galaxy. I.e. Colleges and universities in other denominations. Hope college vocation center. Fruitful cross-fertilization with campus ministry.

I.e. Western Seminary (RCA) adjunct faculty, Mark Rich, who teaches online.

Covenant Cluster Board – crystallized purpose.

We are all college educated – but what about those who are not? We're not even looking at them...are we? Particularly young men.

Lay Schools – provide training and theological education for those who have never had the chance?

Survey lay schools – who would they love to have back to teach? Or whom would they never have back?

Example – Martin Luther who was “bilingual” writing for the academic and for the regular people.

****How do we help academic people to value scholarship for ordinary people!

We’re so geared toward formal education – what happens for people who come to the Lay schools? Intentional – we are called to do what you do!

Faithful witness – empowering to discover that you can be a mentor.

Meatpacker who mentors 20 something workers and auto mechanic who enrolls in lay school because he is interested in the faith.

How about course work in mentoring?

People with eyes and ears open to where their ministry is.

The need to self organize into content providers and program delivery mechanisms.

Matching resources with content? What is available, what is best fit, how?

Group 4

How do the colleges work with young people to help them see and understand their vocation? This does not necessarily mean Lutherans or Christians.

We have something to deliver to someone who doesn’t have it. To grow in our faith by learning from gifts given to us by the laity baptized or not.

To enable folks to be raised up and to strengthen their faith journey.

We are in relationship together with someone to give and something to receive.

Use these words in the vision statement: “church is God’s mission; to the church and the church is God’s mission to the world.”

How do we help the laity see their role “vocation” in the world?

Nurture the baptized until the day we die.

To wrestle with what this means “to be in the world.”

Group 5

Needs: address the fear of small town issues. Biblical Literalism. What is happening in the ELCA? 9/11 stuff.

Address broader regional issues, regionally.

Observation: The grass roots are addressing the local contextual issues. OR Material Specialists/providers.

Use some Lay School pastors as adjunct college faculty.

Lay Schools can be providers.

Identify and develop a cadre of teachers for teaching ministry.

Observation: Theological momentum for education of the baptized.

Help congregations be center of theological reflection.

Conference for Lay School educators.

Connect with people doing the same things we are.

A living network with ongoing informal connections.

New ways of delivering education – cluster. “Technology.”

Work together on a common project. Or Educational communities gathered to enrich each other’s mission.

Don’t forget the role of the younger person’s mission of the baptized.

Group 6

As an institution of learning we can translate as Luther translated. What does Reformation mean? To become or be a missional church and spiritual renewal and formation.

Perhaps through convening pastors and healthy congregations to covenant with each other to learn and grow.

Learn to study the culture for the sake of missions.

Group 7

Being Called into Community and being sent in the world.

Equipping our own and building up the baptized.

Preparing persons to act in their own context

Preparing pastors to go where people need the gospel.

To de-professionalize ministries to speak to those on the economic edge.

Question #3

Implications of this vision.

Not separated by groups, since many included these items as part of question #2.

If the cluster doesn't come up with a metaphor for itself it will be in trouble.

This whole idea is larger than three seminaries working together.

The vision was challenged because it couldn't fulfill the vision as it was first given.

There are a huge variety of things happening. The cluster may become the filament that joins the network together. Each component must come up with its own metaphor for what it is.

We have a lot going, but there is a lot of ground to cover.

The idea of using a technological mall to access resources is attractive, but where can the person offer gifts to share? What forum can we offer?

There is a lack of humility in our institutions: seminaries to colleges, colleges to pastors, and pastors to people who ask for learning.

We are not using well enough the gifts of this assembled group. We need to begin to do this.

The raising of skills and tasks is a difficult thing.

The seminaries provide the occasion for conversation on theological education.

Next time bring into the conversation: all the campus ministry folks or all the camp and outdoor ministry folks should be invited next time.

Communication to all "how?"

Engaging the newest technology "new public speaking and writing skills."

People want instant responses. Make sure resources are easily findable and immediately engageable.

This discussion helps us to understand the entrepreneurship here.

How to speak our Gospel message without seeming to hawk membership?

Include all involved in theological education – a broadening of the concept.