

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

Bachelor of Divinity

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

5-17-1948

A Survey of the Confirmation Instruction of the Children within a Pastoral Conference

Robert T. Koehler

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir_koehlerr@csl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/bdiv>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Koehler, Robert T., "A Survey of the Confirmation Instruction of the Children within a Pastoral Conference" (1948). *Bachelor of Divinity*. 220.
<https://scholar.csl.edu/bdiv/220>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bachelor of Divinity by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

**A SURVEY OF THE CONFIRMATION INSTRUCTION OF THE
CHILDREN WITHIN A PASTORAL CONFERENCE**

**A Thesis Presented to
the Faculty of Concordia Seminary
Department of Religious Education**

**In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Divinity**

**By
Robert T. Koehler**

May, 1948

Approved by: Arthur C. Papp
Alex. W. Schubert

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Outline	iii
I. Introduction	1
II. Results of the Questionnaire	13
III. Evaluation of the Results	39
Appendix. The St. Croix Conference	67
Appendix. Letter mailed to the pastors	69
Appendix. Catechism texts	70
Appendix. The Questionnaire	71
Bibliography	74

A SURVEY OF THE CONFIRMATION INSTRUCTION OF THE
CHILDREN WITHIN A PASTORAL CONFERENCE

(Outline)

Controlling Purpose: To make a survey and evaluation of the confirmation instruction of today in a part of the Lutheran Church.

I. Introduction.

- A. Past history of the catechetical instruction in the Church shows periods of decay.
- B. In the United States, Lutheran catechetics have suffered periods of decay.
- C. Institutions of the world have had climaxes and decay.
- D. Especial purpose of the paper.
- E. Make-up of the St. Croix Conference.
- F. Methods of the survey

II. Results.

- A. Aims.
- B. Home cooperation
- C. Separation of the classes.
- D. Requirements for juniors, for confirmation, and one-year attendance.
- E. Time.
- F. Instructor.
- G. Curriculum
 - 1. Catechism.
 - 2. Bible Stories.
 - 3. Bible.
 - 4. Worship.
 - 5. Miscellaneous
- H. General methods
- I. Teacher preparation.

III. Evaluation of the Survey

- A. Aims seem to put too much emphasis on intellectual believers.
- B. Home cooperation could be improved.
- C. Age and educational requirements appear low.
- D. Length of attendance is fairly good.
- E. Qualifications of teaching staff; of texts are good.
- F. Methods of teaching bear study.
- G. Amount of memory work required very large.
- H. Bible and Bible History Curriculum is fair.
- I. Worship training needs study.
- J. Secondary subjects deserve more attention.
- K. Visual aids and the use of tests could be improved.
- L. Discipling on the main good.
- M. More efforts for personal improvement.

A SURVEY OF THE CONFIRMATION INSTRUCTION OF THE CHILDREN WITHIN A PASTORAL CONFERENCE

1. Introduction

Confirmation instruction of children is the foundation of the work of the pastor. During his period of contact with the catechumens he can strengthen the personal Christianity of the children. He has the children in the time of their lives when their minds are eager and susceptible. A good catechist through his instruction lays a solid foundation for a congregation of staunch believers in future years. Good confirmation instruction makes the preaching more efficient, makes the work with troubled souls easier, and increases the spirit of love between pastor and catechumens.¹ A bad catechist will usually produce contrary results. The purpose of the paper is to make a survey of the confirmation instruction which the children of a pastoral conference are receiving today.

From the very earliest times candidates for admission into the Christian church have been duly instructed and prepared

1. E. Miller, "Catechisation: The Relation it sustains to the work of the Pastor and how it is to be conducted", Lutheran Quarterly, V (1875), p.202 ff.

before their reception into the church. In the early days such instruction was to prepare them for Baptism. Baptism was the sacrament of initiation for adults, and the ancient churches' prime concern was to gain the millions of adults. This instruction seems to have shown various degrees of thoroughness. The instruction during the apostolic age was, without a doubt, very thorough. A glimpse into the Book of Acts suffices to illustrate the zeal of the early fathers for catechisation: Philipp's work in Samaria, followed by the visitation of Peter and John, as recorded in Acts, chapter eight; the same evangelist's instruction of the Ethiopian eunuch²; Peter's work in the house of Cornelius³; Aquila's and Priscilla's work with Apollos⁴; and the frequent admonitions of Paul to strengthen the faith and knowledge of the christians is evident even to the cursory reader⁵. We must remember that these converts, as all converts from the Jewish Church, had a thorough knowledge of the Old Testament and only lacked the linking of the Old Testament with its culmination in Christ and the New Testament. Yet the disciples gave them thorough instruction in Christianity. The zeal and thoroughness of the disciples will always stand before us as an example and goal of thorough instruction worthy of our most zealous imitation.

Although the apostolic period was a model of religious education, the standards of education gradually weakened and finally gave way as the years progressed. This weakening was

2. Acts 28, 26-40.

3. Acts 10, 44-48.

4. Acts 18, 24-28.

5. Titus 2 & 1 Timothy 2, 2.

not evident at first; on the contrary, for the three hundred years immediately following the apostolic era the church exhibited a zeal for catechisation of its neophytes⁶ akin to the zeal of the Apostolic Fathers. An elaborate system of catechisation and confirmation rites evolved. Training schools for the preparation of catechists were developed to cope with the problem of instructing the ever-increasing numbers of converts. Cyril of Jerusalem has left us a series of catechetical sermons from this period⁷. In the first eighteen discourses he explained the general doctrines of christianity, and in the last five he explained the mysteries of the Sacraments for those who were ready to receive them. Included in these discourses were treatments of the Apostolic Symbol, Baptism, and Ethics. The church perfected a method of disciplining to be administered to the audientes⁸ before Baptism. With the passing of years the preparatory catechetical course was discarded, the time of the catechumenate was dangerously shortened, and customary time for preparation was growing briefer and briefer. The Council of Bracara in 610 even cut down the time of instruction of the competentes⁹ to twenty days. Finally nothing remained but the memorization of certain formulas. While the mainstay of the church - instruction - fell by the wayside, that which had been adopted from heathenism remained, namely, the ceremonies and formulas. The members of heathen nations

6. Applicants who wished to become members of the congregation but had not had any instruction.

7. Gerberding, The Lutheran Catechist, p.6.

8. hearer - catechumens who could only attend the first part of the service. They had received preliminary catechisation.

9. catechumens who were candidates for Baptism and in closer communion with the congregation than the audientes.

who streamed into the boundaries of the church, who needed thorough education and training, were not provided with regular and sufficient instruction. The church, spiritually enervated, while able to bring them into the fold, was not able to renew them inwardly.¹⁰ From the bright glare of the zealous instruction of the post-apostolic age we sink into the dull gloom and spiritual blackness of religious indifference, formality, and absence of indoctrination. True, there were times of reawakening, such as under Charlemagne, times when greater stress was laid upon instruction. But as the pallor of the Papacy settled over the church in ever greater intensity, this phase of Christian activity suffered the same atrophy as involved every other endeavor which had to do with the truth and the cause of truth at that time.

The beginning of the Reformation brought an intense revival - a new spirit - into this work, a revival which the church had perhaps not experienced since apostolic times. It was a campaign of instruction. Confirmation was not in vogue as much as today. It was a work primarily of instruction in the catechism. There was great diversity in the methods used, the time devoted to instruction, and so forth; but nevertheless, the great importance of the work was grasped and a deep appreciation was evidenced. Instead of long memorizing of large penums of material, new educational aims came into being. Luther stressed understanding the material.¹¹ Other reformers came out

10. Reu, Catechetics, pp. 43-44.

11. Ibid. p.93.

with books of instruction, but Luther's books blazed the trail for new aims and standards of instruction, new methods, and new zeal.¹² However, the fresh breezes of living faith as proclaimed in the original vital catechism were weakened and finally stifled through the periods of dead orthodoxy and later rationalism. Pietism brought a brief revival of better catechisation. Rationalism extended down into the latter part of the last century.

This same turn of events has been experienced in our own country. Zeal for the confirmation instruction of the young folks was taken for granted among the early Lutheran settlers in the continent. Who could not do well to emulate the labors of Pastor Boltzius and Mr. Springer of the Old Swedes, or Muehlenberg among the Germans of Pennsylvania or Velthusen and Nuessman among the German settlers in the Carolinas?¹³ At the turn of the nineteenth century parish schools and later Sunday schools and summer schools became the indispensable aids for the instruction of the young for confirmation. Sad to say, the young Lutheran Church in America did not remain unaffected by the currents of rationalism and indifference which were so rampant in Europe and flowed over to the colonies from the homeland. Perhaps, too, the awareness of the Lutherans of their small numbers, the feeling of being strangers among other nationalities added to this decay.

In later generations our church, which had made the fatal mistake of not planting her own institutions of learning, became affected by the rational-

12. Ibid. pp. 93-103.

13. Ibid. p.202.

ism and emotionalism that abounded in the American Reformed churches. Luther's Catechism fell into into disfavor and disuse. Substitutes were offered in its place. So-called explanations, which explained away Luther's sense, were circulated. Such a substitute for Luther's was Quitman's Catechism, published with consent and approbation of the New York Ministerium in 1814. It was rationalistic throughout and removed the very foundations as well as the essence of the faith of the church of the Reformation. In circles where there was spirituality enough to be repelled by such subtle and soul-destroying forms of unbelief, emotionalism under the form of so-called "New Measurism" or Revivalism, took the place of catechisation. Indifference to doctrine fostered indifference if not hostility to catechisation. In many places in the Lutheran churches that wanted to be like the churches around them, it went entirely out of fashion. It was no rare thing to find people who had grown up in the English Lutheran church who had not seen a copy of Luther's Small Catechism. The results, as may be imagined, were disastrous. When people know of no difference between the Lutheran church and others, why should they love or sacrifice for her? If one is as good as the other, it is foolish, it is wasteful, if not sinful, to build up Lutheran missions where there are other churches.

It took some liberal Lutherans a long time to learn these self-evident truths. Some indeed, have not learned them to this day. This diminishing class is careless to thorough catechisation. They do not build up strong Lutheran churches. If all would accept these principles and follow these methods, the Lutheran church would have no future, and she would deserve none.¹⁴

Thus certain parts of the Lutheran church in America fell into the consuming morass of indifference during the middle and latter part of the last century. This was caused by the neglect of confirmation instruction. At the turn of this present century the prospect has changed and confirmation instruction of the catechumens has begun to receive again its rightful amount of emphasis. Confirmation has been revitalized and the

14. Gerberding, op. cit. pp. 119-120.

catechism is again coming into its own.

Thus the reporter at a Conference of Catechetics reported about twenty years ago:

For several decades there has been a growing emphasis on religious education. The complete collapse of the high-pressure and high-power emotional evangelism as a method of building the Church of Christ led to a search for a better way.... Boards and committees were arousing the churches to the need and were planning curriculum reconstruction to meet the need.... All that was needed in the Lutheran church was a new appreciation of the method it already possessed - a new appreciation - and then possibly a wider application.... All that was needed was a new realization of the need and the possibilities of the educational method....

"Statistics show" this report says, "that about two-thirds of the congregations have already instruction and confirmation. About one-third only biennially. An average of 31 hours is given. Some report as high as 100 hours devoted to catechetics, a few as low as 10 or 15 hours.... This report shows that there is room for improvement in this matter."¹⁵

Not only does a resume of the past experience of catechetical history in the Christian Church and especially in our own Lutheran Church give evidence of periods which were deserts of religious instruction, but also a fleeting glance at the general history of institutions in the world seems to point to the same conclusion. It seems that men have never been able to retain a good thing in its pristine vigor. Witness the rise and fall that marks the history of the ancient Hittite, Assyrian, and Babylonian empires, the dissolution of the Greek civilization with its great appreciation for beauty and philosophy, the Roman civilization with its great achievements in government and law. Even the church in Germany has exhibited signs

15. Paul Hoh, op. cit. pp. 39 & 53.

of rot and decay when compared to its original vigor. It seems that familiarity with the benefits of an institution, government, even church breed a contempt for it and has a debilitating effect on its constituency. Perhaps this paper may offer some gleam to the answer of this question in the church: "Is our church receding in its education of the young for confirmation, or are we still succeeding in retaining a vigorous infusion of christian faith and life into the hearts of the children."

Then too, an institution is the product to a great extent of its age, of the environment from which it grew and in which it lives. This perhaps, is an important reason for the sapping of the vigor in instruction in the early Lutheran Churches, combined with the harmful effects of a delayed language transition. We are also surrounded today with similar problems which confronted the early vanguards of Lutheranism, problems of a different outward manifestation, but nevertheless the same in essence. A writer on Christian education remarks aptly concerning the present trends in religious education.

Men are forgetting to guide their actions by the sectarian quarrels of the past.... There is less asking what a professed Christian believes and more asking what he does, and in what spirit he does it.... The Young women's and Young Men's Christian Associations, the modern charities movement enlisting in its membership people of widely different religious ancestry, the Red Cross, and a host of other organizations not so generally known - these all, both in membership and in the type of leaders they have attracted, betray a gathering impatience with mere creed, and a ripening conviction that service and true spirit are the true pearls of great price.... More and more evangelical

leaders are convinced that the methods of earlier days must be supplemented by an educational evangelism, which first lays foundations and prepares the way for decision and, after decision has come to pass, continues to counsel and aid to the end of earth's pilgrimage.¹⁶

The pragmatist breaks so completely with what has all along been considered to be a priceless heritage and makes religious education to center wholly on present individual and social experience.¹⁷

It is hoped that the results of this paper may help to discover what concessions, if any, our churches, or to be more specific, our catechists have made to the influence of modern trends in the religious education field.

This paper may also help to show trends existing in the methods of modern confirmation instruction compared to the standards of confirmation instruction in the Lutheran church of the past. It may bring some evidence that we have lived up to our standards or even surpassed the standards of the past. A complete and positive answer to these questions would entail an examination on the spot of all the instruction of all the children of the various synods and would entail an almost insurmountable wall of obstacles. This study merely aims to make a survey in a small unit of synodical organization, a pastoral conference. The purpose of the paper is narrowed down to the confines of one conference.

16. Emme and Stewick as quoted by Kretzmann, The Religion of the Child, p.31.

17. Squires as quoted by Kretzmann, Ibid. p.32.

The conference chosen was the "St. Croix Conference of the Minnesota District of the Wisconsin Synod". This group comprises twenty-four pastors situated in the middle-eastern section of Minnesota, in and around the Twin Cities, and the western fringes of Wisconsin. The group was not selected because it had outstanding pedagogical problems with which to cope in its midst, or because of some brilliant catechists, or some poor catechists in its midst. This conference is a random example of the work done among the youth of our Synodical Conference for the preparation for confirmation. One might call it a "Middletown", speaking from a religious-education point of view. The writer selected this group because he was somewhat familiar with both the pastors and their congregations and environments. This fact of acquaintance seems to have increased the percentage of questionnaires returned. This conference might be considered average in that it does not have an unusually large mission field within its midst. Consequently, the possibility that the pastors have become over-zealous in the face of mission opportunities and lowered the standards of instruction is rather negligible.

Both large and small churches are found in the conference. There are small missions and congregations numbering over 1,500 communicant members. There are congregations right in the heart of metropolitan areas, in small rural towns, and in rural areas removed from villages. About fifty per cent of the pastors are stationed in rural and rural areas, and about fifty per cent are stationed in the midst of or in the

outskirts of metropolitan areas. About fifteen percent of the congregations maintain christian day-schools.

The usual methods of a survey were employed. A six-page questionnaire together with a personal letter was sent to each one of the pastors.¹⁸ Although personal observation of classroom work would have increased the efficiency and results of the survey immeasurably, this was not possible. Of the twenty-four questionnaires that were mailed out, sixteen were returned. The majority of the pastors who did not answer are stationed in metropolitan areas. This means that the paper is based on the facts indicated on the returns from sixty-seven per cent of the pastors. The conference comprises twenty-four pastors.

Although there have been a wealth of surveys made on social, economic, and education trends and standards in our country, there have been very few surveys made in the field of religious education, especially within the Lutheran church. We have not produced the amount of catechetical material in English which we might expect nor have we kept a finger on the pulse of Lutheran educational trends. Since the turn of the last century there are only two well known books in English available on Catechetics, namely, Keu's Gatechetics and Gerberding's The Lutheran Catechist. There seems to be a need for books in this field. It must be admitted that the standards of the Lutheran church are far different from the standards commonly found in

18. Copies of each will be found in the appendix.

among the Reformed churches. They seem to be interested only in moralizing. Happily, the last decade or two have shown an awakened interest on the part of many Lutherans in confirmation instruction and christian education in general.¹⁹

19. Paul Hoh, op. cit. p. 37ff.

II. Results of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire comprised six pages of questions. The questions naturally divided themselves into eleven sections. These sections were: 1. General information, 2. Aims, 3. Home cooperation, 4. Attendance, 5. Requirements, 6. Time, 7. Instructor, 8. Place, 9. Curriculum, 10. General Methods, 11. Teacher preparation.

AIMS

Since aims are among the most important parts of instruction, the answers that each one gave to the question, "What are the results you wish to achieve in the children" will be indicated:

A pastor who is in a small town and has a medium-sized congregation writes:

Commit to memory six chief parts with explanation, Christian Questions and parts of the Table of Duties, all Books of the Bible, some selected hymn verses, about 150 Bible verses - selected from the Catechism. Ability to answer (not necessarily memorized) the questions under the Explanation of Luther's Catechism (Mo., new)¹

Familiarity with the Bible and ability to use the same (find books and verses. Read it. Meaning and use of cross-references).

Instill in them the conviction that they are sinners and that Jesus is the only Savior. Salvation is by faith alone, but that faith without works is dead. Convict of the idea that God has given us only three means of Grace - must continue to use them.

1. ¹ Short Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism, published by Concordia Publishing House in 1943.

Encourage them to stand on their own feet after confirmation as to Bible reading, church attendance, and support, especially attending and registering for Holy Communion. Be an example to others, even to parents. ←

The pastor who has a small, new mission in the outskirts of the metropolitan area of the Twin Cities says:

The results that I wish to achieve are these
 1) a sound Biblical Doctrine 2) a Bible-educated Christian 3) a church that has indoctrinated confirmands. The aims bind in with the results of the course. 1) to educate the child for his later church life, 2) to prepare child to meet the three great enemies of his faith, 3) to prepare child to do mission work of his own and thus aid the pastor in his work.

A pastor who has a fairly large church in a completely rural area writes:

To have them learn the majority of Scripture passages and Bible stories. Try to interest them in order that they will be interested to continue their religious education following confirmation. We aim to instruct them in Walther League meetings after confirmation.

A pastor who has built up a fairly large congregation in a northern Wisconsin town states:

1. To impart to them the fundamental truths of Christian religion.
2. To strengthen their faith in Jesus Christ their Savior.
- 3) To prove that faith by a life of godliness and holiness to the glory of God and the salvation of their souls.

This pastor who has an established congregation in a small town states:

To bring children to Christ through the teaching of God's Word.

A pastor who is in a small, old congregation in a small, settled community says:

My chief aim is to teach the children to know the Savior and that we are saved through faith in Him alone. I tell them that their lessons are not the end of their learning the Bible, but only as an introduction to the wonderful truths, and that on the basis of what they have learned they should now listen to the sermons and search the Scriptures so that they can learn more of the Bible and then stand up for the truth at all times. I want to keep them steadfast in the faith through the operations of the Holy Ghost, and keep them in the church.

A pastor in a medium-sized, growing church in a mid-western town writes:

Not only to indoctrinate sufficiently for intelligent and active communicant membership in the congregation, but also to instill a desire to grow in such knowledge and understanding by continued private reading and church attendance, etc.

A pastor in a fairly large metropolitan church says:

Indoctrination. Preparation for Holy Communion. A love for the Word preached at public services.

The pastor who is in a small congregation in a completely rural area writes:

As comprehensive a knowledge of the Bible and its chief doctrines as possible as the foundation and the basis of their faith and the assurance of everlasting life.

A pastor who has a very large metropolitan church says:

To deepen the transforming knowledge of Christ in the heart and bring it into action in the life of the child. To keep the instruction as unmechanical as possible, so as not to convey the impression that Christianity is a matter of rules but of life under the freedom of the gospel, even for children. To impart and create a love for the Bible, an understanding and intelligent, as well as

heartfelt participation in public and private worship. To lay the foundations for a life-long adherence to the faith and fellowship of Jesus Christ.

A pastor in a small congregation in a small community writes:

To instill in the child a proper fear, love, and trust in God. That this may be, they must learn to use, believe, where possible understand, and apply to themselves God's Word. Since the time is so short, they must be set on the right path with the hope and prayers that they may continue in it even unto death. The minimum aim must be to prepare the child so it can partake of the Lord's Supper to its benefit and be an active communicant with all the privileges and duties involved.

The City Missionary in the metropolitan area writes:

At Gillette (Hospital) children in three different wards are being prepared for Confirmation. Results desired: Sufficient knowledge of the fundamental teachings of the Christian religion, especially giving the Holy Spirit an opportunity to work through the Word on the hearts of the children. Since the children are handicapped, they usually have not received a minimum of religious instruction, or even Sunday school attendance has been irregular or impossible in the children's respective home churches. Sunday school classes at Gillette, conducted by women from our Lutheran Mission auxiliary and several students from Concordia College, help augment the knowledge of Bible stories.

At the Boy's school (Totem Town) the older boys are taught once each week by the institutional missionary. Since these boys frequently come from broken homes, or have been handicapped by poor environments, it is evident that they have little knowledge of things spiritual. Results desired: To lead them into God's truth and to give the Spirit of God an opportunity to influence their hearts and minds. If the knowledge of the teachings of the Christian religion in certain boys is sufficient and we are con-

vinced that they may receive the Sacrament of Communion with blessing, they are confirmed in a public service in the institution in June.

A smaller group of boys, listed as Lutheran, are taught by a Primaner....Results desired: Bring knowledge of bible stories and teach most important chief parts of the catechism. Bringing Christ to the boys is the aim.

The pastor in a very large metropolitan church with a parochial school writes:

An increased knowledge of Christian doctrine. A treasure of Scripture passages committed to memory. Ability to examine oneself preparatory for holy Communion. Regular and attentive church attendance.

The pastor in a small congregation in a completely rural area writes:

To indoctrinate thoroughly enough that the child may know himself to (be) a sinner, whose only hope of salvation is in Christ Jesus, his Savior, whom he is to serve with a godly life, that he may know that a diligent use of the means of grace is the only thing that may keep him in the faith and help him to serve his Lord as he ought. In addition the child is to understand the work and worship and heritage of his church sufficiently for his age to induce him willingly and gladly to promise faithfulness to the Lutheran Church of the Synodical Conference.

A pastor who has a small mission in a small community writes:

To bring them to the point where they understand the plan of salvation as much as possible.

A pastor in a fairly large metropolitan church left the section on aims entirely blank.

The aims perhaps divide into two sections, knowledge and instilling a love for christian living. Knowledge has the preponderance of the attention and the concern of the pastors and is stated generally as "indoctrinate for intelligent and active communicant membership", or "for preparation for Holy Communion", or "as comprehensive a knowledge of the bible as possible", and "sound Bible doctrine". Only two have gone to greater length in defining this knowledge as "memory.... familiarity with the Bible.... conviction that sinners". The instilling of a living faith active in good works, or a zeal, is described generally as, "encourage them to stand on own feet after confirmation as to Bible reading, etc." or "prepare the child for three great enemies", and "to prove faith by a life of godliness". Only one has clarified his aims with regard to the christian life by stating his purpose in the words "to keep the instruction as unmechanical as possible so as not to convey the impression that Christianity is a matter of rules, but of life under the freedom of the Gospel, even for children". Compared to the aims concerning knowledge, the aims concerning the christian life are rather skimpy. Of course, in the case of the children in the hospital and school, the aims are somewhat lower.

HOME COOPERATION

To solve the problem of home cooperation one pastor holds a meeting with the parents as a group. This pastor is in a city congregation. Four pastors speak to the parents of the confirmation children when they come for communion announcements. Eleven of the pastors state that they visit the parents

individually in their homes. One pastor stated that he visited the parents "when necessary". Another stated that he visited "some of the parents" in their homes. Other methods that the pastors mentioned are: the Church paper, letters, Sunday bulletins, announcements in sermons, Sunday school teachers present the names of those of confirmation age. "Through emphasis on the duties of parents in sermons and our church paper" was mentioned by one. The city missionary states that he visits the homes of parents of children to secure their consent in confirming the eligible. Cooperation is enlisted with the Superintendent and the teachers of the Boy's school.

One pastor uses report cards Grades are by percentage.

"Three things are graded: Behavior, Effort, Achievement.

ATTENDANCE

In the congregations of thirteen pastors the children attend two years. In one congregation children attend one year if they have attended parochial school, two years if they have attended public school. In two rural parishes the children attend for two or more years.

The two classes do not meet separately in ten congregations. In one congregation the classes are separated one day of the week, but meet jointly on Saturday. One reports divided classes only when there is a larger group of children.

REQUIREMENTS

Minimum age requirements for juniors varied within three years. The youngest age, which was mentioned by three, was ten years old or its equivalent in grade school, the sixth grade. Six stated that the minimum age they required was eleven

years. Five did not mention the age eleven, but stated that the pupil was to be in the seventh grade, indicating that they base more on the natural abilities of the child as evidenced in school work than on chronological age. Several mentioned the age of twelve or the eighth grade as the minimum age requirement. Two pastors left this question blank, probably indicating that there is quite some leeway as to age, or that they took the age they had in mind as self-evident.

A little over one-half of the pastors indicated that Sunday school attendance by the pupils was also required. At least some of those who indicated that attendance was required indicated by the words as "they usually do" that pupils customarily attended. The length of required Sunday school attendance was stated rather generally and vaguely. Some stated "at least two years" or "at least to the conclusion of the eighth grade" or "through confirmation". Two require attendance from age six through the Bible classes.

Most of the pastors did not state any other requirements. One stated, "attendance at Junior Choir rehearsals". Another required "fair knowledge of Bible History and Catechism text" as one of his prerequisites. A city pastor remarked, "must have attended Mid-week Released School. Here they memorize main facts of the catechism." Phrases like "not all cooperate", "it is not a law", "with exceptions", and also the fact that two pastors left age question blank seems to indicate that these requirements are not adhered to rigidly, but that the child is expected to be about of the age group in the seventh grade and have a foundation of Christianity

received in Sunday school or parochial school and church services. All pastors but one required parochial school children to attend the senior class.

Confirmation age and date

To the question "what is the minimum age requirement for confirmation" six pastors answered thirteen years, two answered fourteen years, twelve answered the seventh grade, two answered the eighth grade, and one answered "usually the ninth grade". Remarks such as "not determined by age but by ability" and "no iron-clad rule" seem to indicate that these ages are only the usual minimum requirements and that children are confirmed below these ages.

To the question "do you have a set date for confirmation" nine answered yes. Of that nine only four have confirmation on Palm Sunday, a rather interesting fact. Mother's Day came second with two pastors regularly holding their confirmation services on that day. One added, "This obviates celebrating Mother's Day". One pastor holds confirmation on the first Sunday in June. One holds confirmation on the third Sunday in June. Those who do not have a fixed date answered the question, "How do you decide", as follows: "when course is completed; when ready in June; when I consider the child ready for confirmation, i.e., he must know his catechism thoroughly; near the close of classes (school) near the middle of June. Thirty-eight per cent of the pastors usually have confirmation in June. Thirty-eight per cent of the pastors confirm their classes when they feel that the children are ready for confirmation.

Prerequisites for one year attendance

A question concerning the prerequisites for those who attend for only one year was asked. Seven pastors filled in the question. Since only a few of the congregations have parochial schools, only three pastors indicated parochial school instruction as a prerequisite. One merely indicated that parochial attendance was required, and two indicated that two years of parochial school was required. Only three indicated that Sunday school attendance was required. One indicated that merely Sunday school attendance was required; one stated that attendance of two years was required; and one stated "as long as we can get them". One stated that children attend Sunday school, "as a rule". One stated, "No prerequisites. If the child comes to us, we accept him in his age group". Two pastors answered, "Must be familiar with catechism and Bible stories" and "a thoroughly satisfactory knowledge of the material". One stated, "two years required unless a very exceptional case arises". One stated, "previous (religious) instruction, otherwise no exceptions".

TIME

Three pastors answered the question, "Do parochial and Sunday school pupils attend together". Two stated that they do attend together. One stated that they meet separately until about one month before confirmation.

Juniors - length of instruction.

September to May - 6
 September to April - 3
 September to June - 3

October to April - 1
 September to January - 1
 October to May - 1
 January to July - 1

Juniors - time of periods.

Saturday morning (9am - 12m) - 7
 Saturday afternoon (2pm - 4pm) - 2
 Monday and Thursday (4:00 - 5:30) - 2
 Tuesday and Friday (4:00 - 5:30) - 1
 Monday, Wednesday, and Friday (4:00 - 5:30) - 2

The congregations that have three classes a week are city congregations. One pastor remarked, "Our parish consists of both rural and town members. The only day that we can get them is Saturday. Both classes are together. The second year is a repeat of the first. Much improvement can be seen in the second year."

Seniors - length of instruction.

September to May - 6
 September to April - 3
 September to June - 3
 January to July - 1
 October to April - 1
 October to May - 1
 October to March - 1

Seniors - time of classes.

Saturday morning (9:00 - 12:00) - 5
 Saturday afternoon (2:00 - 4:00) - 2
 Monday (4:00 - 5:30) - 1
 Friday (3:30 - 4:30) - 1
 Monday and Thursday (4:00 - 5:00) - 2
 Tuesday afternoon and Saturday morning - 1
 Monday, Wednesday, and Friday (4:00 - 5:00) - 2
 Monday, Tuesday, and Friday (4:00 - 5:00) - 1

The parish programs of the pastors line up like this:

Numbers of hours of instruction -

180 & over - 5 (One has also twelve weeks summer school)
 160 - 179 - 2
 140 - 159 - 1

120 - 139 - 3 (One has four weeks summer school)
 100 - 119 - 1
 80 - 99 - 2
 50 - 79 - 2 (One has eight weeks summer school)

These courses are taught as:

one-hour lessons - 6
 one- and two-hour lessons - 1
 one- and three-hour lessons - 2
 two-hour lessons - 1
 three-hour lessons - 3
 one-hour lessons and summer school - 1
 two-hour lessons and summer school - 1
 three-hour lessons and summer school - 1

It is interesting to note that none of the pastors have the same set-up.

Instructor

Instructors for all junior classes except one were the pastors. The other class was instructed by a college student from Concordia, St. Paul. All senior classes were instructed by the pastors.

Location

Ten of the congregations hold junior confirmation classes either in the church basement or the parish hall auditorium. Three hold them in class rooms, four in the parish hall, and three in the study. Of the senior classes ten are held in either the basement or parish hall auditorium, two in class rooms, and four in studies.

CURRICULUM

The study of the curriculum was divided into the following sets of questions: Bible, Catechism, Bible Stories, Worship, and Miscellaneous.

Curriculum for the juniors -

Catechism

Twelve pastors used the New Synodical Edition² for the juniors. Of these one also used Kurth's Catechetical Helps.² One used Kurth's Catechetical Helps alone. The other two used the Drewes edition² and the Gausewitz edition². One class used as textbooks the pamphlet edition of Luther's Six Chief Parts and the work-book, "Learning and Living For Jesus".²

Methods of Instruction

Methods used in the junior class did not show a very great variation. Ten pastors used the "lecture and question" method. Of these, five used the "lecture and question" method exclusively. Two each used a combination of the "lecture and question" method and the "topic discussion" method, and a combination of the "lecture and question" method and the "question and answer" method. One used a combination of the "lecture" method and the "problem-solution" method. This means that sixty-three per cent of the pastors use the "lecture and question" method, thirty-two per cent using the "lecture and question" method exclusively and thirty-two per cent using the "lecture and question" method in conjunction with other methods. Of the remaining thirty-seven percent, twelve per cent use the "question and answer" method exclusively, twelve per cent used the "question and answer" method with the "topic discussion" method, and six per cent used a combination of "topic discussion" and "problem-solution" methods. One pastor did not answer.

To the question, "Do you follow the order of the text",

2. See the appendix for information.

thirteen of the pastors replied that they followed it exactly. One, who uses Gausewitz edition, stated that he began first with the introduction, then inserted the First Article before continuing with the regular order of the text. One pastor leaves the Lord's Prayer to the last.

Method of Exposition of the text

Fourteen of the pastors first explain the answer to the question and then the proof passages, using the deductive method. Two of the pastors occasionally study the proof passages first and derive the answer to the question from the proof passages, using the inductive method. One pastor uses the inductive method exclusively.

Of the fifteen pastors answering the question, "Before assigning material to be memorized I make certain that they understand it", fourteen answered yes. One answered, "not always".

Proof Passages memorized by the juniors were:

Less than 5	- 2
25	- 1
35	- 1
60	- 1
75	- 1
100	- 4
150	- 1
300	- 2
400	- 1
700	- 1
Not indicated	- 2

Parts of the Catechism which each pastor required the juniors to memorize were as follows:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
All Chief Parts	- 15	1
(One omits sections on The Lord's Prayer and Baptism)		
Christian Questions-5		11

Table of Duties	yes	no
(One assigns parts of the Table of Duties)	3	13
Morning and Evening Prayers -	12	4

Number of Questions in the catechism which pastors expected the juniors to memorize were:

Few - 4
 10 - 1
 50 - 1
 100 - 1
 300 - 1
 Those found in the Creed - 1

Five stated that the juniors were required only to give the sense of the answers. Six did not answer the question.

Curriculum for the seniors-

In fifteen of the congregations the pastors used the same catechism text as the juniors did. One pastor changed from "Learning and Working for Jesus" to "Kurth's Catechetical Helps"

Teaching methods for seniors remained the same in fifteen of the congregations. One dropped topic discussion for the seniors and used the "problem - solution" method and the "lecture and question" method.

The same order of the text was followed with the senior class as had been followed with the junior classes. The same methods were used in the exposition of the text, whether deductive or inductive, and the same number of pastors explained the materials to be memorized.

Memory work

Differences manifested themselves in the number of proof passages and parts of the catechism to be memorized.

Thirteen required the same number of proof passages to be mem-

orized. The three others increased them from 100 - 125, from 15 - 135, and from 400 - 500. The pastor who had his juniors omit the third and fourth chief parts for memory work had his seniors memorize the fourth chief part, although he still omitted the third chief part. Four pastors added the Christian Questions to the memory work of the seniors. This means that fifty-six per cent of the pastors require the seniors to memorize the Christian Questions and Answers. One pastor added the Table of Duties and Luther's morning and evening prayers. This means that thirty-two per cent require the seniors to memorize the Table of Duties and seventy-five per cent require the seniors to memorize the morning and evening prayers.

Thirteen of the pastors required the seniors to memorize the same questions from the catechism as they required of the juniors. The three others increased the number from 100-250, from those in the Creed to all the questions, and from no questions to all the questions.

BIBLE STORIES

Juniors

Every pastor stated that he expected the juniors to know most of the Bible stories in the text. Every pastor with the exception of one expected the child to tell the story in his own words, not verbatim. The one pastor who did not expect his juniors to tell the story at all stated that the juniors used a work-book in Bible History. Seven pastors used Bible History text-books. Of these, three used Albrecht and Hagedorn, "Stories from the Bible", three used "Advanced Bible

History" from Concordia Publishing House, and one used "Bible Stories for Lutheran Sunday School, Senior".³ One pastor stated that he did not use a Bible History text-book but that the children of Junior confirmation age attended Released Time classes and used "Concordia Bible Stories" with work-books.

Seniors

Every pastor except one stated that the seniors are expected to know most of the Bible stories found in the text. Again, seven pastors used Bible History text-books. They used the same ones that they had used with the juniors. One pastor stated that the children of the senior class age (seventh and eighth grades) in released time classes used the "Advanced Bible History"³ and worksheets. Again, all pastors with the exception of one required the seniors to tell the stories in their own words. The pastor who did not expect them to tell them at all uses a workbook in Bible History.

BIBLE

Juniors

Reference Seven pastors expected the juniors to refer to the Bible for the stories. One expected the pupils to refer to the Bible for the stories only at times. Eight did not expect the juniors to refer to the Bible for the stories.

Drill Seventy-five per cent of the pastors gave the juniors drill in finding various passages in the Bible.

Readings Eight pastors assigned readings to supplement the lesson. One assigned the stories and texts in the catechism

3. See appendix for explanations of these books.

text for Bible readings. Eight did not assign such readings. Four pastors expected the juniors to read portions of the Bible unrelated to the lessons during the year. Twelve did not assign such readings.

Memory work Five pastors expected the juniors to memorize some psalms and other portions of scripture. The number of psalms assigned were: one, two, five. One stated that memorizing psalms was optional after other memory work. One pastor did not indicate the number of psalms and scripture selections to be memorized. All pastors expected the juniors to name all of the Books of the Bible.

Seniors

Reference Nine pastors expected the seniors to refer to the Bible for the stories; six did not, but did expect it occasionally.

Drill Fourteen pastors gave the seniors drill in finding Bible passages, and two did not.

Readings Ten assigned Bible readings to the seniors to supplement the lessons, one assigned the references in the text, and one pastor assigned Genesis, 1-18, one of the Gospels, the the Acts.

Memory Nine pastors expected the seniors to memorize psalms. Seven did not. The number required were:

1 - 1
 2 - 2
 5 - 1
 6 - 2
 some - 3
 optional - 1

Fourteen did not require the seniors to memorize other portions

of scripture. Two did require other sections to be memorized, but did not state which sections. All the pastors required the seniors to name the Books of the Bible. Eleven pastors require the seniors to remember where various passages are found. One required four to be remembered. Others indicated by remarks as "in some cases" or "a few" that the number was small. The largest amount required was "all passages found in Graded Memory Lessons for Lutheran School". A pastor remarked, "Am instituting this method at present, would like it, wish I had had it". Another said, "It depends on the individual, also whether there is a parochial school".

WORSHIP

Junior classes of twelve pastors were urged to attend church services. Four pastors (twenty-five per cent) obligated the juniors to attend church. Devotional life was encouraged by three pastors through assigning prayers to be written. Thirteen did not assign the writing of prayers. None of the pastors had the juniors select the Bible selection for confirmation devotion. Thirteen percent allowed the juniors to select the hymn for confirmation devotion. Three pastors allowed the juniors to read the scripture selection. One had them read it in unison. Twelve did not have the juniors read the scripture selection. One of the sixteen allowed the juniors to lead in prayer. Nine of the sixteen expected the juniors to give brief reports on the sermons. Frequency of the reports was:

Occasionally	- 3
Every week	- 1
For one month	- 1

During the course - 1
 Not indicated - 3

Written reports were required by three pastors, oral reports by six.

Other ways of encouraging devotional life which were mentioned are: "having them use their own daily devotional", "Sunday school teachers urge them to stay for services", "worship at home with parents, majority of whom are not members of the church", "acquaint the children with missions and let them send their own contributions", "frequent admonition to read, hear, and live by God's Word", "We open or close, as case may be, classes with morning and evening suffrages, litany, and psalms", "each was presented with a New Testament and encouraged to use it regularly".

The seniors received quite similar instruction. Nine pastors urged the seniors to attend church, one strongly. Six (thirty-eight per cent) obligated the seniors to attend. This is two more than the juniors. Twelve per cent of the pastors assigned to the seniors the writing of prayers. Eighty-eight per cent did not. None of the pastors allowed the seniors to select the Bible readings for confirmation devotions. Twelve per cent of the pastors allowed the seniors to select the hymn for confirmation devotion. Eighty-eight per cent did not. Twenty-five per cent had the seniors read the scripture selections, one occasionally. One pastor had the seniors lead in prayer. Other methods mentioned to increase devotion were: "read chapters in unison", "having and using their own devotional".

Forty-four per cent of the pastors expected the seniors to give brief reports on sermons. Fifty-six per cent did not. The number of times reports were required were; occasionally, weekly, and five to ten. Four pastors did not say how often they required sermon reports. Eighteen per cent of the pastors required written sermon reports. Thirty per cent require oral reports. Other ways mentioned to increase the spiritual life of the seniors were the same methods mentioned under the juniors.

MISCELLANEOUS

For the juniors-

homework Only one of the pastors required the juniors to read extra books at home. Three pastors complemented the junior's program with projects and workbooks. Answers given were: "special home_work", "workbooks", "memory work stressed mostly". One mentioned the books used, "either Learning and Living or a Bible History Workbook". Another stated that he used workbooks in the summer school.

Secondary material To the question, "Do you include lessons or a part of a lesson on liturgical practice" thirty-eight per cent answered yes. Number of lessons mentioned was: three, references, in connection with other lessons, and "I explain".

To the question, "Do you include lessons or a part of a lesson on church history" Thirty per cent answered yes. Frequency of lessons was: references, a few, One stated that he presented Luther's Life.

To the question whether lessons were presented on Synodical Organizations and their work, forty-two per cent answered yes. The frequency mentioned was: two hours, three hours, and a part of an hour here and there.

Concerning missions and mission methods, forty-two per cent indicated that they devoted time to it. One stated that he spent two hours on it, another one to five hours. Other answers were: as the occasion arises, few, and three.

Eighteen per cent of the pastors include other things to enrich the curriculum. Their answers were: field trips - observatories, museums; and, we have two children's days when the children take over the services, ushering - taking offerings - singing individual stanzas. The pastor teaching in the boy's school stated, "Have the young people from the Walther League societies present a program especially at Christmas. Occasionally show slides to the whole school".

For the seniors

Homework The seniors of one confirmation class were required to read books at home. The books were the Augsburg Confession and the Life of Luther. Fifty-four per cent of the pastors did not require any books to be read at home. Thirty per cent complement the program of the seniors with projects. Projects stated were: workbook; prepared material from the Publishing House - for the catechism; workbook in the summer school; Bible History workbook; special home work.

Secondary material Eight of the pastors devote time to the study of liturgical practice (twelve per cent more than for the juniors). Eight did not devote any time to it. Answers

to the question, "How many lessons" were: two or more, three (stated by two), one, I explain, and, incidental in the course of discussions.

Thirty-seven include lessons or parts of lessons on Church History. Sixty-three per cent do not. Answers concerning the number of lessons were: six on the Life of Luther, etc.; few; incidental in the discussion; Life of Luther; references; six or more; five.

Thirty-seven per cent of the pastors include lessons on Synodical Organizations and their work. Frequency of the lessons varied from "part of an hour here and there" through two (given by two) to three or more.

Thirty-seven per cent of the pastors include lessons or a part of a lesson on missions and mission methods. Here, again, the number of lessons varied. One to five, two, depends on the pupils, incidentally, as the occasion arises, were the answers given.

Forty-three per cent of the pastors included lessons on church practice. Two stated that they devoted two classes to it. Three stated that they spent an incidental amount of time on it. Two did not indicate the amount of time they spent on it.

Other things which the pastors include in the curriculum are: some work in the confessions - perhaps the Augsburg Confession is read and explained; field work - observatories, museums, churches. The pastor in the boy's school stated that he had Walther Leaguers present a program for

the seniors and he showed religious slides occasionally.

GENERAL METHODS

Tests Fifty per cent of the pastors use written tests. In testing the pupils' knowledge thirty-seven per cent of the pastors use only the catechism. Thirty-seven per cent use the new-type tests. One mentioned that he used W. A. Foehler's "Progress Tests". Thirteen per cent use essay-type tests.

Fifty per cent of the pastors help the pupil begin with the recitation of his memory work. One qualified his answer with the words, at times - poorer pupils. Fifty per cent did not help the pupils begin the recitation.

Visual aids The pastors used blackboard, maps, pictures, slides, movies, and bulletin boards. Significantly, only fifty per cent have blackboards. Fifty-six per cent have maps. Forty-three per cent use pictures. Twelve per cent use movies. One uses slides. One uses a bulletin board.

Discipline When the lesson is not studied, all the pastors discipline the pupil by having a heart-to-heart talk with the pupil, relying upon the Word as the power. One added the remark, "best of all". Forty-two per cent also kept the pupil after school to study the "forgotten" lesson. Of these forty-two per cent, two qualified their affirmation by the words, seldom, and, once in a while. Forty-two per cent had the pupil write the "forgotten" lesson. One of these said that he did this very infrequently. None of the pastors used corporal punishment. Thirty per cent also report of the parents. One does it frequently, one if necessary, and one in the final

analysis only. One stated that he had the pupils review the lesson until known.

Teacher preparation One pastor merely indicated that he had read books on christian education the past year. Twenty-five per cent read one book. Six per cent read several books this past year, and six per cent read three books. This adds up to forty-two per cent who read books on christian education during this past year.

Thirty percent subscribe to at least one christian educational journal. There are three subscribers to the LUTHERAN SCHOOL BULLETIN, and one each subscribes to the CHRISTIAN PARENT, SCHOOL JOURNAL, CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, and the QUARTAL SCHRIFT. One pastor subscribes to three of these periodicals, and two to one periodical. One remarked, "Would be more if my salary would cover". Another stated, "I read current bulletins and articles in the church papers".

Interestingly enough, one pastor remarked at the end of the questionnaire, "All of these questions were fine, but there are some that will not or cannot be put into actual practice when you are limited to Saturday school, a little study in the parsonage, and absolutely no facilities as a blackboard, desk or anything for work. I am for visual aids, but have no way to obtain them, since the congregation is working on such a limited budget. I hope some day to have a heated room in the church with all facilities.

To inquire concerning the pastors' feelings of the present status of religious instruction the question was

asked, " Do you feel that there is any area of the christian education of the child in which we as a church are deficient or falling down". Two considered the post-confirmation and Bible class ages as weak periods. One felt that we were falling down in the pre-confirmation period. Other remarks were: application to life - practical christianity - stewardship, charity, witnessing; where there is no parochial school, as among many of us, I fear that confirmation instruction is not sufficient unless backed up by good home training; not enough parochial schools in the state. Strikingly, one felt that memory is a weak spot. Two felt that visual aids could be used more extensively, especially in smaller churches. One felt that we are falling down in family worship. He states, " The greatest bane is getting the youngster to attend church with his parents. The children seem to regard Sunday school as their church, while the parents attend service alone. So many parents seem to be content when the child has attended Sunday school. In this way Sunday school is a nuisance. I sometimes wish that we could have religious education on Saturdays, so the whole families might attend services together."

III. Evaluation of the results

A perusal of the aims as expressed by these pastors shows that they are vitally concerned in their aims to produce doctrinally educated laity. Practically all of them begin the statements of their aims by stating that they aim to give the children a good knowledge of the fundamental truths of the christian religion. To the furtherance of this aim the pastors also aim to give the children a good treasury of Bible doctrine. It appears that this conference is keeping the high standards of the Lutheran church in striving for a well-indoctrinated laity. Yet it is a question whether the methods they employed really achieved these ends. Unfortunately, a number of pastors were quite vague in stating their entire aim in confirmation instruction. One pastor left the entire section blank. An answer as, "To bring Christ to the child", although very true, does exhibit a lack of clear thinking or a lack of crystallization of the particular aims of confirmation instruction.

While the intellectual aims as expressed by the pastors did receive much emphasis, the personal relation of the child - the personal desire to be in communion with the means of grace and live a holy life - did not receive as much emphasis. A good number of the pastors showed that they were concerned about it, but only a small number showed by their aims that they clearly knew what they were aiming for. That few mentioned the instilling of love for the scriptures,

and familiarity with the Bible, that few mentioned a desire to hear the word of God and participate fully in public worship, that few mentioned as an aim the desire to grow and the conviction of sinfulness, seems to indicate that the aims of a personal, emotional life of the catechumens are not what they should be.

A good number of the pastors show that they are interested in influencing the will of the child. They seem to be interested only in influencing the future life of the child, very little stress is on the present. There was no uniform way of stating the aims. A good number of the pastors aim to encourage the child to stay with the church, support it, and attend services. Several pastors stress the instilling of the desire to stick to the church. The stress by a number of the pastors in instilling the desire to use the means of grace diligently is also a fairly good indication. Church attendance and communion attendance are mentioned frequently. Willingness to give time and effort to the church is also mentioned. But is this all there is to sanctification? It seems that the pastors really are not thinking of the sanctification of the heart, but only a few outward manifestations of church attendance. Perhaps it is significant that prayer life was not even mentioned once. There also could be more stress on the means of grace, since their use is the only thing which is able to keep the Christian faithful. There is a definite lack of clear thinking on the training in Christian living. With a few good exceptions, a lack of aims in instilling social ethics, duties of Christian parenthood, and an exemplary life, is painfully evident,

Aims for training in mission work, a point stressed almost fanatically by the Baptists and Seventh Day Adventist, is also conspicuously absent. Of the pastors only one mentions that he aims to prepare the children to do also mission work of their own.

One writer has divided confirmation aims into these categories: Christian conduct, Christian character, Christian conviction, and Christian confession.¹ The aims which the pastors stated were good on the last two, but poor on the first two. Most of the pastors stated that their aim was by the help of God's Spirit, who exercises His power in the Word, to deepen, instill, lead into the knowledge of the Savior and their own sinfulness or to indoctrinate them as good church members, able to examine themselves, but they were not so sure what their aims were in causing the children to be of service to their Savior, their church, and their fellowmen.

Their aims were more intellectual than functional, the functional was limited quite often merely to more indoctrination, more passages, more doctrines to use than applications and a more thorough use of the Word and what the children had received. What were functional aims did not seem to strike at the heart of the matter - sanctification of the heart - but was satisfied with emphasizing worship, the means of grace, contributing to the church, all which makes for an outward,

1. Paul J. Hoh, Op. Cit., p. 50.

formal christianity. The right attitude of the heart was barely mentioned. It sounds as though the pastors were emphasizing only the outward matters of support of the church in order to support the ministry. It could be a vicious circle if the pastors stress only these things and give the children the impression that the pastors only want to perpetuate those policies in order to continue the church and the need for their office. Again, the aims impress one as being intended for the distant future instead of the present. The pastors want catechumens who will be good church members, who will have a good foundation for life, who will contribute, and so forth. They say nothing about striving for catechumens who are good members. All is future, not present. One must work on the present habits of the child before he can hope to influence future conduct.

Dr. Reu states the aims as follows:

1) Faithfully to imbed and anchor in the intellect of the rising generation all the holy truths upon which the life of the mature congregation is based fundamentally, and by which alone it is constantly renewed, and without the knowledge of which there is no possibility of an all-sided participation in the life of the church. 2) to stir their emotions to a vital "interest" in these truths. 3) to bend the will so that it may run in paths in which the Holy Spirit, turning to account these truths, in his own time and hour, lifts them into personal faith and, as a corollary thereto, into the life of the mature congregation.²

It might be well to mention another set of aims worked out:

2. Reu Op. Cit. p.312 .

The first (aims) divide into two parts, one dealing with the catechism itself and the second with the life of the catechumen. In the first group: A realization that 1) the catechumen is a child of God, sealed through Baptism, and that he receives benefits from God accordingly, 2) as a child of God, he may speak with God as a father and ought to do so habitually, 3) he must experience and then confess this God before men, 4) this confession assumes tangible form in the life that he live (the commandments serving as a guide and also as a measuring rod indicating where he falls), 5) because of his failure he must be assured of God's forgiveness and continued love (the seal and sign of this forgiveness and love being provided in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper) The second group: 1) An understanding and appreciation of the Bible and a devotional study of it. 2) an attitude of reverence; a habit of worship in church, the home, and in private. 3) an understanding and appreciation of the development through which the church has passed. 4) a desire to express Christian principle in life. 5) a habit of contributing regularly to the needs of the church, both current and benevolent. 6) an active participation in the general and specific activities of the church.³

One cannot expect that any of the pastors would have a statement of aims comparable to any of these well-thought-out statements of aims. Comparing the results of the questionnaire, we find that the pastors are good, perhaps too good in their aims under Dr. Reus's first aims and in the first sections of Rev. Nolde's aims. However, according to the way that some of the pastors stated their aims, it sounds as if they were only interested in making the children christian and that they were teaching heathen.

As a summary evaluation of the aims of the pastors these

3. Paul J. Hoh, Op. Cit., p. 45. The aims are by Rev. Nolde.

points seem to be evident; 1) in regard to indoctrination - the intellectual life of the confirmant, the aims of the pastors are quite profuse and perhaps rather high. 2) In regard to training for personal Christianity, the standards of aims were not uniformly so high. Answers indicated vagueness and foggy thinking. The aims were usually for a formal Christianity. 3) In regard to stirring up the will for intelligent Christian membership, the aims were lower than before. This seemed to be especially true of the ministers who had small rural parishes. The aims for functional Christianity were even much lower in the rural churches than they were in the city congregations. Aims in the use of the means of grace were fair. Aims in Christian ethics, duties of Christian living, and in mission obligations were almost uniformly low.

The question of the aims in confirmation instruction is of fundamental importance both from a theoretical and practical view. If one has no idea of the aims of instruction, one has no way of settling the question as to educative means or material or correctness of method. Without clarification of aims religious instruction proceeds haphazardly and often taken on an automatic character, while on the other hand, clarification of aims settles the problems of methods and material and raises the whole educational and disciplinary task to a high degree of system, comprehensiveness, and purpose.

Some cooperation between parents and pastors seems to be fair. By far the majority of pastors visit the parents of the confirmation children in their homes. If this means that they have visited home during the periods of instruction in order to talk over confirmation with the parents, this is

good. If this means merely that they have been in the homes of the child since it was born, it is not so good. Several use the time of communion announcement to speak to the parents about the child. There seems to be much room for improvement in using other methods for enlisting the parents cooperation. Only one pastor meets with all the parents to discuss with them the seriousness of proper catechising, the pastor's need of the parents' cooperation, and so forth. Most of the pastors use rather impersonal means of the church paper, Sunday bulletin, and the sermon. These, of course, will do much, especially if the sermon on Christian education is preached every fall. None invites or urges the parents to attend the confirmation class in order to know how the children are trained. We can learn much from the public school with their organizations for enlisting the aid of the parents for improvements in the physical plant and in cooperating with the homework.

An important means of cooperating with the parents and keeping in touch with the home is through report cards. Only one pastor makes use of report cards. This may mean that the other pastors may feel that the children will consider their grades as the chief thing if they receive report cards. Perhaps the pastors feel that report cards would take the emphasis away from the lessons and place it on getting good grades. On the other hand, this could be interpreted as being not so good if these returns mean that the pastors have never tried using report cards. This matter, it seems, could be

the object of some thorough study.

In all the congregations the standards of attendance are good. All require the children without parochial school training to attend at least two years. This tallies favorably with the writers on catechetics, who advocate attendance for two years if the children do not attend parochial school. Even those who do have parochial schools require attendance for at least one year.

Separation of junior and senior classes is only a rare exception. This could be improved. Perhaps the small number of children in the average class gives them the same advantages which larger classes gain by dividing, that is, more individual attention. Nevertheless, separation for the purpose of differing the instruction is good. There could be improvements in the conference.

The age requirements for the juniors, that they be at least eleven, shows rather low standards in the conference. Standards are not improved by the pastors who allow children of the age of ten to enter the confirmation classes. The age of ten usually indicates the fifth grade and the age of eleven usually indicates the sixth grade. This is rather low for confirmation. If the pastors meant when they stated eleven the equivalent to the seventh grade, the standards would not be so low. If this can be taken to mean that the age level is being lowered, and if the fact that two pastors left the question a blank can be taken to mean that they did not consider the age of importance, then the age standards are not so good.

Religious knowledge requirements do not appear to be so good. Only about one-half expect the child to attend Sunday school previous to confirmation, and many of those who do expect them to attend only request them to do so. The phrases as, "it is not a law" seem to indicate that standards of those entering confirmation are in many instances very vague. Of course, many of the children do receive instruction before confirmation as a matter of custom, even though the pastor does not require it. Perhaps, too, many pastors did not want to say that it was required because they did not expect children who are gained shortly before confirmation to measure up to the standards of children whose parents have brought them to Sunday school for a long period of time. It may be a matter of being realistic in this field. Perhaps the pastors wish pupils to attend educational agencies as long as possible previous to confirmation, but it is better to accept a child for confirmation and gain him into the church even though he has had little instruction than refuse to accept him until he has had previous instruction and lose him for the church. Writers do state that the child should by all means have at least a thorough instruction in Sunday school, Saturday school, and summer school, but this is not possible in many cases. Several of the pastors do operate long summer schools in connection with confirmation. Rev. Stæge remarks that without a parochial school there is not time to study Bible History and Catechism. He feels that his thirty years of experience have shown that children without parochial school training are always working under severe handicaps due to deficiencies in

the earlier training.⁴

The minimum age for confirmation mentioned by the majority was thirteen years. This is fair. According to usual standards this is only the seventh grade. If those who mentioned thirteen were thinking of the eighth grade, the standards are not quite so low. The eighth grade or fourteen years of age, as mentioned by a number, is a better choice of age for confirmation. The children are more mature then. There have been some authorities who preferred the ages between 15-17 because the child's mental processes have matured more, and the child has a better grasp of the problems.⁵ None of the pastors prefer the latter age.

If the constant changing of the date of confirmation depreciates the solemnity and importance of the day in the eyes of the people and depreciates the importance of the confirmation study, and if changing the date encourages the loitering along of the pastor in his class work, then the practice of the conference is not good. However, the instruction is more important than the date. Holding confirmation in June also increases the length of instruction. If the pastors are utilizing all of their time to the utmost and change the date only when they feel that it is unavoidable, holding confirmation in June may be better than on Palm Sunday. It is interesting that very few of the ministers still have confirmation on Palm Sunday. It would not be well to stick slavishly to the relatively short period between September and Palm

4. H. A. Steege, "The Preparation of Confirmands", Concordia Theological Monthly (May, 1932), Vol. 3, p.353.

5. Reu., p. Cit. , p.682.

Sunday if it were to the detriment of the children's instruction. Pentecost would seem to be the best choice both for allowing a longer period of instruction and for keeping one customary date for confirmation. If the practice of many of the pastors of not having a set date means that they are concerned primarily with the fitness of the child, it is good; if this practice means that the pastors are careless concerning the instruction during the year and continue instructing as long as they have the whim, this is not so good.

There appears to be no uniform course of action when a child wishes to be confirmed in one year. Only a small minority indicated that if the child wishes to be confirmed in one year he must have attended parochial or Sunday school for some time previous and have a fair knowledge of the catechism and Bible History. For many pastors, the standards seem to be somewhat low, unless they tacitly do expect a certain amount of knowledge in the child. If many children attend confirmation class for only one year, the level of education in the church would be visibly affected. There should be clarification of practice in this area.

The length of attendance appears to be fairly good. Most of the classes meet for approximately nine months, and only one class does not meet for at least two hours a week. The amount of instruction considered necessary by Rev. Steege is from ninety to one-hundred instruction hours.⁶ Dr. Reu states that "catechumenal instruction should be given four

6. Rev. Steege, Op. Cit., p. 395

times a week for two years, unless incalculable injury is to be inflicted upon the congregation.⁸ This amounts to about 240 hours. The average of the conference measures up fairly well to these standards. The average of the conference is about 140 hours for two years.

Early morning hours, as well as several periods of instruction a week are recommended.⁹ Periods in the afternoon are not considered so good because the children are fatigued, and they are in danger of identifying the instruction with ennui and fatigue. Also, if instruction is imparted merely as an appendage to public instruction, the children may fall victim to the idea that religion is of less importance. The classes that do meet on school days meet after school hours. The classes that meet on Saturday meet only on Saturday. This situation is difficult to remedy, unless the churches have parochial schools or make different arrangements with the public schools. Conditions in the rural parish militate against more than one instruction period a week. The pastors are doing well in selecting Saturday morning in the rural parish, for on Saturday morning they can keep the children longer and accomplish more.

The qualifications of the teaching staff seem to be good. All the classes except one junior class are taught by the pastor. Our pastors are the best formally qualified and for-

8. Reu, Op. Cit., p. 184.

9. Rue, Op. Cit., p. 442. Gerberding, Op. Cit., p. 174.

mally trained teachers of religion available.

A large majority of the classes are held in church auditoriums and basements. Usually meeting in a large room as this is not conducive to good classwork. There should be more churches with instruction rooms than there are now. Only twenty per cent have classrooms now.

The conference shows good standards in the selection of catechism texts. Only twelve per cent do not use the New Synodical Catechism. These use simpler texts. The children are receiving instruction from the standard catechism textbooks at present.

With respect to the methods of teaching which are being employed, most of the pastors are using the lecture method, many of them exclusively. Although the lecture method can be used very effectively by a good teacher, it is a very tedious method when used exclusively with younger children. Others use the question and answer method exclusively. If they took the question to mean that they plied the children with thought-provoking questions and by doing so drew out of the children the answers from the children's religious knowledge and spurred the children to a deeper study of the catechism, then they are doing a good job. The question and answer method can be intensely interesting. If they took it to mean a mere repetition of the questions in the textbook with the children orally in class, they are using a very dry method. Their practice of teaching is then very poor. The term in the questionnaire was not clear enough on this point.

It is a moot question whether one should follow the exact order of the text. Some shifting around in the book during the course of the instruction may be very good in order to increase interest. In fact, we do this very thing in teaching reading and arithmetic. We skip sections and come back to them. The pastors who do follow their own order may be showing originality. Perhaps they have found on the basis of pedagogical experiences that their order produces much better results. Perhaps the other pastors have not given the order of the catechism much thought. The need of changing the first Article, which one pastor who uses an old edition does, is obviated by the new edition. Perhaps the pastor who leave the Lord's Prayer to the last finds time spent on the last two chief parts more fruitful. From the other side, it may be better to remain with the exact arrangement of the text when the children have not been familiar with the catechism before confirmation instruction. This matter needs more study.

The pastors practically always explain the answer to the question in the catechism text before taking up the proof passages. It would be well if they varied this procedure to increase the interest of the children and also to tacitly keep reminding the children that their faith is based on the Bible and not on the text of the catechism as such.

The pastors are following sound pedagogical rules in making sure that the pupils understand the material assigned to them as memory work. Only two of the pastors did not make this common procedure in their classes. Yet this practice does not seem to fit with the number of Bible passages that

they require to be memorized. Explaining all of those Bible passages would take up most of the time of the class. Perhaps the intentions of the pastors are good but their practice does not measure up to their standards. One is inclined to question their answers here.

The number of proof passages which the pastors require the children to learn appears to be rather high when one considers that the children only have a Sunday school training. Almost one-half of the pastors require 300 or more passages to be committed to memory. Since most of the children are not attending parochial school, they should not be required to learn more than 250 passages.¹⁰ It seems very improbable that a child can learn over 250 passages, that is over two a lesson, and be able to digest and remember them. If too many are required, there is little if any time to review them and incorporate them into the child's life. Perhaps it would be better for those asking above 200 Bible passages to concentrate on a smaller number. On the other side, those pastors who only ask two or three Bible passages are not giving the children a proper foundation.

The standards of memorizing the catechism are good. All of the classes, with the exception of one, learn the six chief parts. Standards of memorizing the Christian Questions, the Morning and Evening prayers, the Table of Duties, are very high. When the children are confirmed they will have a memo-

10. Reu, Op. Cit., p.410.

rized knowledge of all of the catechism. Yet one questions whether it is good to have the children learn all of this material in two years. It is doubtful that they can remember it two years later. When one learns a large amount of material hastily, it seldom remains in the memory long. The question also comes up whether such large memory work encourages good thinking in the minds of the children. Memorized answers only serve to increase formality. It would appear better for the sake of the child to encourage him to think the answers out for the questions instead of encouraging him to memorize the answers. All do require the catechumen to know the sense of the answers.

Glancing over the whole question of memorization, it appears that, although some are very low in their standards of memory work, many load too much memory work on the children. Learning the whole catechism, the Christian Questions, the Table of Duties, and the Prayers, all the Bible passages, and many of the questions in the catechism places a tremendous load of memory work on the shoulders of the child to be done in 140 class periods. Broken down, this means that the child would have to recite several Bible passages, several memorized questions, and a good chunk of the catechism every period. That leaves little or no time in each period for anything else other than checking the memory work. Fortunately, this situation does not exist in the majority of the congregations.

Bible History provides the basis of the exposition

of the catechism to the child. The Bible stories provide a wealth of illustrations, examples, heroes, and warnings to buttress the truths of the catechism. They help the child to bring what he has learned into practice. The catechumens receive a good foundation of bible stories on which to build, in that every pastor requires his catechumens to be familiar with all of the Bible stories cited in the catechism text. The selection of Bible Histories is also good. Bible History books which familiarize the children with the words of the Bible and also explain them to the children are used. They also add pictures and questions. Here the pastors do not stress mechanical memorization, but rather require the student to give the gist of the stories in his own words. If more pastors used the Bible History texts, they could require the children to learn bible stories outside of class. The text books obviate the necessity of the pastor using class time to explain the meaning of words and phrases.

According to the questionnaire the average child after confirmation will have a fairly well developed familiarity with the Bible. More bible work and familiarity with the Bible is required of the seniors in most cases. The pastors give the seniors more drill in Bible passages. They assign more sections for memory work to them. It appears that the pastors do not have the children use history books but prefer to have them refer directly to the Bible for the stories. While methods of familiarizing the child with the Bible by direct readings and practice work were utilized by a number of pastors, the

method of assigning Bible readings could receive more use. Many of the pastors are also neglecting to familiarize the children with some of the psalms. The child who knows four psalms when he is confirmed is a rare specimen. Evidently the pastors have the children do all of their memorizing in the catechism. This appears to detract from the Bible. The children should learn things from the Bible in order to realize the importance of the Bible itself.¹¹ Memorizing from the catechism is not the same as memorizing from the Bible. This lack of stressing the Bible itself is also shown by the fact that only in the exceptional case does the catechumen know where the passage memorized is found in the Bible. While it is not necessary for the child to know where a number of these passages are found, yet it is very important to know where a number of these passages are found, both to familiarize himself with the Bible and to be able to argue from the Bible when talking to mission prospects. A former soldier stated that his utter failure in arguing religion with friends was because he could not quote exactly from the scriptures. He could quote passages. He knew why he believed what he believed. But because he could not tell where the passages were found in the Bible, his arguments meant nothing to his buddies.

Although the conference stresses the church attendance very strongly as a part of the worship training of the catechumens, the other areas of worship are to a great extent

11. Rev. Op. Cit., 594.

neglected. More pastors could encourage the worship life of the children by teaching them to form their own free prayers. More could increase the devotional life by having them read the scripture in class. More could increase the appreciation of our wealth of hymns by encouraging members in selecting their choices for opening devotions. There can be a large measure of improvement in training the child to listen attentively to the sermon. A small minority makes a systematic effort to see if the children are getting anything out of the sermons or if they are profiting from the sermons. There are a number of pastors who encourage it, about fifty per cent, but even the efforts among the seniors is very sporadic. Most of the other ways of encouraging worship are merely hortatory, instead of instructive. This area of training in worship needs to be studied and the methods of training improved and augmented.

It appears that the pastors are not making full use of the opportunities open to them for enriching the curriculum. Only one junior and one senior class are assigned any extra-curricular reading outside of the Bible. Confirmation class offers a wonderful opportunity to have the children read biographies of missionaries, histories of the church, and church papers. Here is the means of instilling in the children an appreciation of their church heritage, of the sacrifices and efforts of their spiritual ancestors, of creating in them a love for missions, and of giving them an insight into christian living. Evidently these opportunities are almost entirely neglected.

The use of written materials to enrich the curriculum - workbooks, and so forth - is not being explored to its fullest possibilities. Writing in the Bible stories and with Bible materials is a very good way of planting the christian life in the child. This method will make those christian concepts and attitudes stick for life. These means are not being explored at all by the majority of the pastors. Good materials and methods are being used by those who do have workbooks. The opportunities in this field deserve greater exploitation.

The prospects look somewhat brighter concerning training in liturgical practice. About one-half of the pastors spend one lesson on liturgical practice. A somewhat smaller number spend time on it with the juniors. Still, the standards here could be higher. Ours is a liturgical church, and the only way the members can derive meaning in the liturgy is through instruction.¹² The children need help in appreciating the many gems of hymns which our church possess. It is feared that most of our people have little appreciation or knowledge of the many hymns which we possess. Certainly the little training some of them receive even in the best of the classes where a period or two is spent on liturgical practice is not nearly enough. None of the children are expected to receive any training in the chorales before confirmation because they are not expected to attend any instruction before confirmation. One is forced to the conclusion that, generally speaking, our

12. Reu, Op. Cit., p. 415.

church members know very little about the liturgical heritage of our church and receive little instruction in it. The hymn book should also receive some attention in the class-work.¹³ The incidental attention given the subject by most pastors reveals a deficiency here.

The field of Church History also needs wider attention, if only for the sake of familiarizing the children with Martin Luther.¹⁴ A few of the pastors are doing this. Here, too, this subject is barely given fleeting attention by most of the pastors, although more time is spent on Church History than on liturgical practice. Church History is an important means of impressing upon the children the eternalness of Christ and His Church, an appreciation for the Lutheran Church and the differences which separate it from the other churches. These means are a valuable aid in developing a love for the true church.¹⁴ It appears, again, that this field is not being utilized as it should be.

Synodical organizations fared better. About one-half of the pastors spend up to three lessons informing the children of synod and its organizations. The children who are in those classes appear to receive adequate information. The picture is considerably darkened by the fact that a large number of the pastors do not devote any time to it.

Church practice did not fare so well. Although some of the pastors did devote time to it, some of them devoting

13. Reu, Op. Cit., p. 422.

14. Reu, Op. Cit., p. 417, & 427, & 426.

considerable time to the subject, yet many of the pastors do nothing about it. This field needs more attention from the pastors. After all, church practice, the customs of the Lutheran church, have great importance in the eyes of the people and deserve more treatment than they have been receiving.

An even smaller number give attention to missions and mission work. This field should definitely receive more emphasis. Here is the place where a large part of our membership can be given preparatory training in lay evangelism and can be imbued with an enthusiasm, if not through time expended in the classroom, as least through assigned readings.

It is a question as to what would be a golden mean in teaching these secondary subjects in the confirmation class. One can not stress them to the exclusion of catechism work. The time in confirmation class is so limited as it is. Yet, it seems that more effort could be expended in these fields by the conference members. While these matters are not indispensable to a course, they do much to increase interest and activity, as the field trips given by one pastor. Very little effort was expended in adding other outside activities to make the course more inviting and interesting. These methods of augmenting the learning process, coupled with Liturgical practice, Church History, Synodical organizations, Church practice, and missions could receive more emphasis.

The survey of general methods also reveals deficiencies. While it is laudable that over one-half do use written tests, some of them quite systematically, the other one-

half are not making use of the advantages offered by the written test. A pastor's experience shows that the written test is of value to the child and the pastor. Every child is given a chance and has an opportunity to write down an answer calmly and give a true picture of its comprehension.¹⁵ Evidently a good portion of the pastors have found the written test useful.

Another deficiency is the lack of blackboards, maps, and pictures. It is a definite hindrance to the pupils and teacher not to have the benefit of these visual aids. Many churches are very meagerly equipped with these aids. The use of motion pictures and slides by several shows that there is definite progress in the field of visual aids. The problem of lack of visual aids seems to be localized in the small rural churches. There is need of a higher standard of visual aids provided the average confirmation class. Present day incomes make the purchase of these aids relatively simple.

A large number of pastors help the children begin their recitations of memory work. This is not a pedagogically good practice, since it encourages laziness and sloppiness in the memory work on the part of the children. It would be well if all the pastors helped the children begin their recitations only on rare instances.

Pastoral practice in discipling the children who forget their memory work was generally good. All the pastors had private talks with the guilty child, encouraging and

15. Steege, Op. Cit., p. 364.

admonishing him, relying on the Word as the motive power. This tallies well with pedagogical practice. Ordinarily an appeal to the common sense and good-will of the pupil will be a sufficient corrective. This is particularly true if the spirit of the class has been kept on a high plane. Especially with the first offenders a rebuke will produce the desired results. However, if the offense is a product of persistent willfulness, the offender must receive his just punishment, otherwise his willfulness will only encourage the same trait among the other members of the class.¹⁶ The pastors in accord with pedagogical principles do often have the pupils write the lesson, thus giving them a task as punishment. It is a question, though, whether it is a good thing to make them write out the lesson as a punishment. The pupil can too easily transfer his disgust at being punished into his lessons and christianity. Punishment through writing the lesson may cause disgust towards the lesson. This method should be used sparingly, at best. Perhaps other methods of disciplining as cleaning could be utilized instead. About one-half of the pastors do keep pupils after school occasionally to study the "forgotten" lesson. Such methods if used judiciously do impress the children with the severity of their misdemeanor. Deprivations and corporal punishment are not used by the pastors. Pedagogical authorities also agree that these means of punishment should be used only with caution, or never at

16. Smith, Constructive School Discipline, p. 182

all, although sarcasm can be more painful when administered by a vengeful teacher. The one place where the discipline problem could be handled better is with the home relations. Only a relatively small number of pastors report to the parents. Lack of communication between parents and teacher can easily give rise to misunderstandings and accusations. Generally speaking, though, the discipline problem is handled quite satisfactorily.

Personal improvement in teaching methods by the reading of pedagogical books was not carried out by many of the pastors. It seems that there should be more reading done for the purpose of keeping up teaching standards and guarding into falling into well-worn ruts. With two exceptions comparatively no reading was done. Similarly, subscriptions to educational periodicals was very low. Although money may be the determining factor in a number of cases, subscribing to one journal cannot be considered an excessive burden in the view of benefits derived in new outlooks, information on improved materials, and other trends.

Finally, there are several general impressions which one gathers as he surveys the results of the survey.

There seems to be fuzziness in the minds of many pastors as to what the exact aims of confirmation are. There is need for rethinking and crystallizing the aims in the minds of the clergy and considering the aims of functional christianity.

The average child when confirmed is expected to have

a thorough memorized knowledge of the catechism and Bible passages. Yet there seems to be almost an overloading of memory work, especially in view of the number of classes the average child attends in a confirmation course. Emphasis is on quantity instead of quality. In a few years even the quantity leaves, and nothing remains.

Other areas of christian training are not receiving the thoroughness that the catechism indoctrination itself has received. There is need for studying our methods of Bible training and worship. We seem to have very little use for instruction in the practical areas of christianity. Perhaps the little time available in the course is a factor contributing to this neglect. We need to restudy this field and arrive at some workable system, instead of the makeshift methods worked out by each pastor.

While the intellectual portion of the curriculum is very good, we are not taking full advantage of all the many educational aids at our disposal. True, in the hands of a skillful teacher the lecture period, combined with questions and illustrations, can be very effective without the aid of complementary aids. However, these materials have a definite place in the educational program. Our use of extra projects, workbooks, reading, and classroom facilities is not up to par. No longer is poverty a deterrent to acquiring proper teaching aids in the classroom and for the hands of the pupil. No one can deny that there has been a vast amount of improvement along this line in the past years. This trend

will continue in the future, it is hoped.

It is apparent that, while there are noticeable trends toward improvement in the use of complementary materials, improvement in an enriched curriculum, while there is some uniformity in textbooks and the amount of memory work required, there is very little uniformity in the aggregate of confirmation standards in each parish. They vary profoundly. Each program depends on each local pastor. Programs vary from those that are very simple to those that are very complete. It would be better if we had some kind of standard in the various areas of the curriculum that could serve as a guide to the pastors and bring about a certain amount of uniformity. Individual conditions in each parish must be taken into consideration, but that cannot account for the great variety which we have today. A standard would help.

In conclusion, the questionnaire shows that the confirmation standards in our church, considering the handicaps imposed by public school systems and the small parish, are good. In many areas there is no semblance of uniformity in practice. What standards we do have are usually good. We need to put them more uniformly and fully into practice. The child who is confirmed in one of our churches has accumulated bases of faith which compares very favorably with what the other churches in our country can produce.

The Lutheran Church has in its catechetical class a great opportunity thoroughly in harmony with the best educational thought of our time. Larger use ought to be

made of this precious heritage. The catechism ought to find a more central place in all its educational activities. And above all, pastors should appreciate anew the vast importance of those hours spent in the confirmation class! The pastoral office carries with it many sacred privileges and responsibilities. And not the least of these is the pastor's relation to his catechumens. Here the pastor comes into contact with members of his flock and such as do not belong to his flock, children and adults, not simply as an instructor, not as a preacher, but in a very special sense as a shepherd. He has the opportunities to instruct, to guide, to witness, to inspire his catechumens so that they may know the great facts and truths of God's Word, so that they may know God's plan of salvation, so that they may recognize their personal relationship and responsibility to their God and their Savior, in order that they may find the way that leads to eternal life.

A

Appendix. The ST. Croix Conference

<u>Pastor</u>	<u>Congregation</u>	<u>Address</u>
Ave-Lallemant, R. C.	Christ	No. St. Paul, Minn.
Bade, Im.	Immanuel	Woodville, Wisc.
Bolle, Carl	St. James	St. Paul, Minn.
Bruns, Ed.	Mt. Olive	Delano, Minn.
Dowidat, Paul	St. John's	Minneapolis, Minn.
Frey, A. E.	City Missions	St. Paul, Minn.
Haase, A. C.	Trinity	St. Paul, Minn.
Henke, Howard	St. Andrew's	St. Paul Park, Minn.
Kock, C. P.	Mount Olive	St. Paul, Minn.
Kurth, P. R.	St. John's	Hastings, Minn.
Leerssen, A. H.	Trinity and Grace	Osceola, Wisc.
Medonwald, O. P.	Redeemer	Amery, Wisc.
Meyer, L. W.	Zion	Osceola, Wisc.
Palmer, R. J.	Pilgrim	Minneapolis, Minn.
Penk, E. W.	St. Matthew's & St. John's	Stillwater, Minn.
Pieper, J. W. F.	Salem	Stillwater, Minn.
Plocher, John	St. John's	St. Paul, Minn.
Saremba, A. W.	----	Spring Valley, Wisc.
Schaller, W.	Grace	So. St. Paul, Minn.
Spaude, Dr. P.	Salem	Newport, Minn.
Tabbert, F. H.	First English	St. Croix Falls Wisc.
Thiele, G.	Emmanuel	St. Paul, Minn.
Werner, F. A.	St. John's	Centuria, Wisc.
Zehms, F. J.	St. Paul's	Prescott, Wisc.

B

Appendix: The letter mailed to the pastors.

Concordia Seminary
Jan. 14, 1948
St. Louis 5, Mo.

Dear Rev.

I wish that I could bring you this questionnaire personally and speak with you; but since that is impossible at this time, this letter must suffice.

Undoubtedly you are also vitally interested in Christian education, especially in the religious education the children of your congregation receive in confirmation instruction. The purpose of this questionnaire is to make a survey of the confirmation instruction that Lutheran pastors, as a whole, are giving their children. The results of this survey will form the basis of a B. D. thesis which I hope to write this year. The theme of the thesis will be "A Survey of the Confirmation Instruction of the Children Given in a Pastoral Conference". Unfortunately, there is little material on the subject in book form, so one must go to the sources.

I inquired of Rev. Koch concerning the feasibility of making a survey in the St. Croix Conference. He stated that he felt that the members of the conference would be well-disposed to help.

Would you fill out this questionnaire (It isn't as long as it looks), and have it in the mail if at all possible by January 27? The larger the return, the more accurate the survey.

If you wish a tabulation of the survey, which will be factual, I shall be happy to send you one.

Thanking you for your consideration, I am,

Sincerely yours,

Robert Koehler

C

Appendix: Catechism texts.

A Short Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism, A Handbook of Christian Doctrine, St. Louis, Mo., Concordia Publishing House, 1943. Often called the new synodical catechism.

Kurth, Erwin, Catechetical Helps, Brooklyn, N.Y., Leininger, Lutheran Publishers and Printers, c. 1935.

Drewes, C. F., "Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism Explained, by authority of the mission board of the Synodical Conference." St. Louis, Volkening, 1928.

Gausewitz, C., Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Northwestern Publishing House, published by the Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States.

Appendix D
QUESTIONNAIRE

Purpose: To make a survey of the confirmation instruction of the St. Croix Conference.

Section I

Name of Congregation: _____ Location: _____
Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Section II Aims

What are the results you wish to achieve in the children through confirmation instruction? What are your aims?

Section III Home Cooperation

- A. Do you establish contact with and cooperation of parents by:
- 1) holding a meeting with the parents as a group? _____
 - 2) speaking to them when they come for communion announcement? _____
 - 3) visiting them individually in the homes? _____
 - 4) other efforts used to enlist cooperation. _____
- If 4, please elaborate.

- B. Do you keep in contact with the home by report cards? Yes ___ No ___
 If yes, how are pupils judged? _____
 How graded? by marks, percentage, essay report, _____,
 (Please underline)
 If possible, please enclose a report card.

Section VI

- A. How many years do pupils attend confirmation classes before they are confirmed? _____
- B. If they meet for more than one year, do they meet separately? _____

SECTION V Requirements

A. For the Junior Confirmation Class.

- 1) What is your minimum age? _____
- 2) Are parochial school children required to attend? Yes ___ No ___
If no, do they attend All ___ Some ___ None ___
- 3) Are children required to attend Sunday School for any designated period? Yes ___ No ___
If yes, please state period. _____
- 4) Are there any other requirements to be met before the children are accepted? _____

B. For Senior Confirmation Class.

- 1) What is the minimum age required for confirmation? _____
- 2) Do you have a set date for confirmation? Yes ___ No ___
If yes, when? Palm Sunday, Pentecost, _____
If no, how do you decide? _____
- 3) For those who attend confirmation instruction for only one year, what prerequisites are necessary?
 - a) Attend parochial school _____ How long? _____
 - b) Attend Sunday School _____ How long? _____
 - c) Other: _____
- 4) Do Parochial and Sunday School children attend as one group? _____

Section VI Time

A. For Junior Confirmation Class.

1. Class meets Jan. Feb. March Apr. May June July Aug. Sept. Oct. Nov. Dec.
2. Class meets on Sun. Mon. Tues. Wedn. Thurs. Fri. Sat.
3. Class begins at ___ o'clock (AM) (PM); class ends ___ o'clock (AM) (PM)

B. For the Senior class.

1. Class meets with the Juniors. Yes ___ No ___
If no,
 - a) Class meets Jan. Feb. March Apr. May June July Aug. Sept. Oct. Nov. Dec.
 - b) Class meets on Sun. Mon. Tues. Wedn. Thurs. Sat. Fri.
 - c) Class begins ___ o'clock (AM) (PM); ends ___ o'clock (AM) (PM)

Section VIII Instructor

- A. The ^{Jr.} class is taught by pastor, assistant pastor, teacher, student, laymen, _____.
- B. The Senior class is taught by the pastor, assistant pastor, teacher, student, layman, _____.

Section VIII Place

- A. Jr. class meets in church auditorium, class room, parish Hall, study, room in home, _____.
- B. Sr. class meets in church auditorium, class room, parish Hall, study, room in home, _____.

Section IX Curriculum

A. Catechism

1) For the junior class

a) I use the text: Gausewitz, Schwan, New Synodical, Kurth's Catechetical Helps, Drewes, _____.

b) I conduct the confirmation instructions according to:

- 1) Question and answer method. _____
- 2) Topic discussion method. _____
- 3) Problem and solution method. _____
- 4) Lecture and question method. _____
- 5) Combination of _____ and _____.
- 6) _____

c) In teaching I follow:

- 1) the order of the text. _____ If any omissions _____
- 2) An order closely following the church year. _____
- 3) An order of my own choosing _____ if so, please explain:

d) In exposition of the text I:

- 1) First explain the answer to the question and then the proof passages (Deductive). _____
- 2) First study the proof passages and then derive the answer to the question (Inductive). _____

e) Before assigning material to be memorized I make certain that they understand the meaning of it. Yes _____ No _____

f) Before assigning material I show the purpose and value of it. Yes _____ No _____

g) I require approximately _____ proof passages memorized.

h) I require the following parts of the Catechism to be memorized.

- 1. Chief Parts, First Second Third Fourth Fifth Sixth.
- 2. Christian Questions and Answers
- 3. Table of Duties
- 4. Luther's Morning and Evening Prayers

i) I require about _____ answers in the catechism to be memorized.

2) For the Senior class.

a) I use the text: Gausewitz, Drewes, Schwan, New Synodical, Kurth's Catechetical Helps, _____.

b) I conduct the confirmation instruction according to:

- 1) Question and answer method. _____
- 2) Topic discussion method. _____
- 3) Problem and solution method. _____
- 4) Lecture and question method. _____
- 5) Combination of _____ and _____.
- 6) _____

- c) In teaching I follow:
- 1) The order of the text. ___ If any omissions _____
 - 2) An order closely following the church year _____
 - 3) An order of my own choosing _____ If so, explain, _____
- d) In exposition of the text I:
- 1) First explain the answer to the question and then the proof passages (Deductive) _____
 - 2) First study the proof passages and then derive the answer of the question (Inductive) _____
- e) Before assigning material to be memorized I make certain they understand the meaning of it. _____
- f) Before assigning material I show the purpose and value of it. _____
- g) I require approximately _____ proof passages memorized.
- h) I require the following parts of Catechism memorized:
1. The chief parts First Second Third Fourth Fifth Sixth
 2. Christian Questions and Answers
 3. Table of Duties
 4. Luther's Morning and Evening Prayers
- i) I require about _____ answers to the Bible to be memorized .

B. The Bible Stories

- 1) For the Junior Class
 - a. They are expected to know most of the stories found in the text. Yes ___ No ___
 - b. Do you use a Bible Story Textbook? Yes ___ No ___
If so, state which. _____
 - c. Pupils are expected to tell any of the Bible stories:
 - 1) verbatim _____
 - 2) In their own words _____
 - 3) not at all _____
- 2) For the Senior Class.
 - a. They are expected to know most of the stories found in the text. Yes ___ No ___
 - b. Do you use a Bible Story Textbook? Yes ___ No ___
If so, state which, _____
 - c. Pupils are expected to tell any of the Bible stories:
 - 1) verbatim _____
 - 2) in their own words _____
 - 3) not at all _____

C. The Bible

1. For the Juniors
 - a. Pupils are expected to refer to the Bible for the stories? ___
 - b. Pupils are given drill in finding various passages in the Bible. Yes ___ No ___
 - c. They are assigned Bible readings to supplement the lesson. ___
 - d. They are expected to read designated portions of the Bible (unrelated to the lessons) during the year. Yes ___ No ___
 - e. They are expected to memorize _____ psalms; _____ other portions (as Isaiah 53).
 - f. They are expected to name the books of the Bible. Yes ___ No ___

2. For Seniors.

- a. Pupils are expected to refer to the Bible for the stories. _____
- b. Pupils are given drill in finding various passages. Yes ___ No ___
- c. They are assigned Bible readings to supplement the lesson. _____
- d. They are expected to read designated portions of the Bible (unrelated to the lessons) during the year. Yes ___ No ___
- e. They are expected to memorize _____ psalms; _____ other portions of the Bible (as Isaiah 53). _____
- f. They are expected to name the books of the Bible. Yes ___ No ___
- g. They are taught to remember the places of _____ passages, as Jn. 3, 16 : God so loved....

D. Worship

1) Juniors

- a. They are urged, obligated, _____ to attend church. (Underline)
- b. They are encouraged in devotional life by:
 1. assigned the writing of prayers _____
 2. allowed to select Bible selection for Conf. devotion _____
 3. allowed to select hymn for Conf. devotion _____
 4. leading the prayer _____ reading scripture selection _____
 5. _____
- c. Expected to give a brief report on sermons. Yes ___ No ___
If so, app. how many? _____ Oral or written? _____
- d. Other ways to encourage worship life: _____

2) Seniors

- a. They are urged, obligated, _____ to attend church.
- b. They are encouraged in devotional life by:
 1. assigned prayers to write _____
 2. allowed to select Bible selection for Conf. devotion. _____
 3. allowed to select hymn for confirmation devotion. _____
 4. Leading the prayer _____ reading scripture selection _____
 5. _____
- c. Expected to give a brief report of sermons. Yes ___ No ___
If so, app, how many? _____ Oral or ritten? _____
- d. Other ways to encourage worship life _____

E . Misc.

1) Juniors.

- a. Do you require extra books to be read at home? Yes ___ No ___
If so, which _____
- b. Do you complement the program with projects (scrapbooks workbooks)? If so, please explain. _____
- c. In addition to Bible History and Catechism, do you include lessons or part of a lesson on:
 1. Liturgical practice _____ How many? _____
 2. Church History _____ How many? _____
 3. Synodical organizations and their work _____ How many? _____
 4. missions and mission methods _____ How many? _____
 5. church practice _____ How many? _____
- d. Do you include anything else to enrich the curriculum? _____

2) Seniors

- a. Do you require extra books to be read at home? Yes ___ No ___
If so, which
- b. Do you complement the program with projects (scrapbooks, workbook)? Yes ___ No ___ If so, please explain.
- c. In addition to Bible History and Catechism, do you include lessons or portions of lessons on:
 - 1) Liturgical practice, _____ How many _____
 - 2) Church History _____ How many _____
 - 3) Synodical organizations and their work, _____ how many _____
 - 4) Missions and mission methods _____ How many _____
 - 5) Church practice _____ How many _____
- d. Do you include anything else to enrich the curriculum?

Section X General methods

1. Do you use written tests? Yes ___ No ___
2. In testing pupils knowledge do you:
 - a. use only catechism, Yes ___ No ___
 - b. Your judgment of the pupils ability? Yes ___ No ___
If yes, what type of test do you use? Essay, New type (true and false, multiple choice) (underline)
3. In recitation you do not help the pupil begin.
4. What visual aids are in use?
 - a. blackboard
 - b. maps
 - c. pictures
 - d. slides
 - e. movies
 - f. recordings
 - g. objects and models
 - h. bulletin boards
5. If lesson is not studied, the discipline used is:
 - a. keeping after class to study _____
 - b. writing the "forgotten" lesson _____
 - c. corporal punishment _____
 - d. report to parents _____
 - e. heart to heart talk with the pupil, relying on the Word as the power _____
 - f. none _____

Section XI Teacher preparation

- A. I have read _____ books on christian education this past year.
- B. I subscribe to _____ periodicals on christian education.
Please list if you are subscribing.

Section XII

- A. Do you feel that there is any area of Christian education of the child in which we as a church are deficient or falling down?

Bibliography

- Reu, M., Catechetics or Theory and Practise of Religious Instruction, first English (revised) edition, Chicago, Wartburg Publishing House, 1918.
- Gerberding, G.H., The Lutheran Catechist, Philadelphia, Lutheran Publishing Society, 1910.
- Kretzmann, P.E., The Religion of the Child and Other Essays, St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House, 1929.
- Smith, Constructive School Discipline, Chicago, American Book Company, 1924.
- Home and School Cooperation III Education and Training New York, Century Company, 1932.
- Falk, H.A., Corporal Punishment, New York, Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1941.
- Louis Birk, First Things First, Talks on the Catechism, St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House, 1925.
- Wiegand, The Catechist and the Catechumen, Benziger Bro., New York, 1924.
- Fehner, H.B., Outline for Catechises and the Technique of Questioning, St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House, 1926.
- Steege, H.A., "The Preparation of Confirmands or the Instruction of Catechumens", Concordia Theological Monthly, III, pp.351-368. (May, 1932)
- Miller, E., "Catechisation: The Relation it Sustains to the Work of the Pastor and How it is to be Conducted", Lutheran Quarterly, V, (April, 1875), pp. 201-223.
- Albert, C.S., "Care of the Young", Lutheran Quarterly, XIV (January, 1884), pp. 1-25.
- ✓ Hoh, P.J., "Conference on Catechetics", Lutheran Church Quarterly, I (January, 1929), pp. 37-54.
- Barkey, "Catechisation", Lutheran Quarterly, XIV (July, 1884), pp. 355-368.
- Bergstresser, "Catechisation and Confirmation in the Lutheran Church", Lutheran Quarterly, XXI (October, 1891), pp.515-524.
- Stump, A., "The Evangelical Element in Catechisation", Lutheran Quarterly, XXI (October, 1891), pp. 582-591.