Module 4 -- Lutheranism, the LCMS and Education

Introduction

Now we have our last lesson.
This week we shift our focus to history.
We will see how the Lutheran Reformation impacted education.
And we will look at Lutheran church schools in the LCMS.

Why look at those topics?  Two reasons.
First, the Lutheran Reformation had a big influence on public schools.
And second, the LCMS has a long tradition for establishing Christian schools.

Christian schools really are a big concern for ministry in many LCMS congregations.
We use those schools for giving our children the Lutheran faith and traditions.
And we use those schools for sharing faith in Christ to people outside of the church.

While you read through this lesson, pay careful attention to how the LCMS uses schools to pass on the Christian faith and reach out to unbelievers.

Also, when German families moved to America, Lutheran schools influenced their blending with American culture.

Your important question for this lesson.
How does Christian education influence the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod?
Answer:
Martin Luther and the Reformers emphasized Christian education.
They had a big influence for public schools.
And LCMS congregations have long used Christian schools for teaching our faith.
preparing good citizens.
continuing our Lutheran culture and tradition.
and helping children in German families learn the American culture.

Module 4 Unit 1 Reading

This chapter is named “European Antecedents of Lutheran Education.”  Before Lutheran education began here in U.S., there were events happening in the Lutheran Church in Europe.  Those events inspired, led to, and influenced Lutheran education here.  When you understand the history of Lutheran education, then you better appreciate and understand Lutheran education today.
Background Factors of the Protestant Reformation
Where does the history of Lutheran education begin? In the Lutheran Reformation in the 1500’s. We will look at Martin Luther himself in a moment. First, we will look at the Reformation in general. There are 7 things that are important about the Reformation.

1. Individual. Before the Reformation, institutions, meaning the church, were most important. The individual person was not very important. Now, during the Reformation, the individual person’s rights became more important.

2. Criticism. Before the Reformation, there were problems in the church, but church leaders ignored them. Now, people saw church problems, they criticized the church, and the church had to pay attention.

3. Secularism. People began doing things apart from the church, and they even began doing things against all religion.

4. Religious abuses. Church leaders and priests often lived rich and sinful lives. They used the church to get money and power for themselves.

5. Rise of secular political power. If the pope lost power, that meant local kings, princes, rulers, could increase their power and wealth. They liked that, so they encouraged the Reformation and tried to make the pope weak.

6. Popular unrest. Before the Reformation, rulers were rich, but poor people were stuck; they would always be poor and working. The Reformation message said the poor are important, too. So that message was popular with the poor.

7. Printing press. Moveable type was invented in 1450. That meant papers, Bibles, or anything could be printed and distributed quickly.

Principles of the Protestant Reformation Affecting Education
There were 3 principles of the Reformation that affected education. 3 important changes.

1. The Bible’s authority surpassed the church’s authority. Before the Reformation, the church told people what to believe and do, and people had to accept it. The Reformation meant that now people themselves can learn the Bible. Now people recognized that the Bible has authority, and the church had less authority. The Reformation meant it became more important to teach the Bible.

2. Individuals can decide for themselves what the Bible means. Church councils, priests, etc., don’t tell me what the Bible means. I have that right myself to see what it means.

3. Who is responsible for my salvation, me or church? Before the Reformation, people said the church is. After the Reformation, people said we are individually responsible.

All this means people need to learn what the Bible says. Luther translated Bible into German so people could study the Bible themselves. But most people couldn’t read. So education became important, to teach them to read. The Reformation made education and reading more important.
**Martin Luther**
Luther knew education was important both for Christian life and life in world. He told parents they must educate their children and send them to school. He encouraged city and state rulers to make schools and educate all children. He said the government is responsible for schools and education. Also, he did much for religious education. He noticed pastors weren’t skilled to teach children. Luther wrote the Small Catechism to help parents teach the Christian faith to their children. He also said it was important not to hurry through the lesson, but to carefully explain everything so the children understand fully.

**Johannes Bugenhagen**
Bugenhagen had an important role in education because he created a school system in Northern Germany. In each area, he helped town rulers create schools, one for boys, one for girls. He planned different kinds of schools, basic reading and writing schools like elementary school, higher-level Latin grammar schools, and some adult education. These schools helped teach the Christian faith to all students and to spread the gospel.

**Philip Melanchthon**
Melanchthon agreed with Luther. He thought the government should run schools. He surveyed schools and wrote “The Saxon Code.” He recommended 3 levels of school.

The first level of school was named Volksschule, required school for all children. This was like elementary school. It taught the basics – German, Latin, reading, writing, and religion.

The second level was named Gymnasium. Students studied grammar, dialectic (logic), rhetoric (speaking to convince), and Greek and Latin. That education taught students how to defend the Christian faith.

The third level was the university. That level taught pastors and teachers, or doctors, lawyers, etc.

**Johann Sturm**
Sturm and Melanchthon together created the second level school, Gymnasium. Sturm went on to make that level more intense, including a lot of Latin. The Gymnasium emphasized the old kind of education. Students studied religion, Greek, Latin, and logic.

**Missouri’s Educational Roots in Germany**
In Germany in the 1800’s, the government forced Lutheran and Reformed churches to work together. Often in schools, pastors were responsible to make sure religion was taught right. That meant Lutheran pastors were stuck. They wanted to teach only the Lutheran faith, but the government ordered them to teach both Lutheran and Reformed beliefs. When Lutherans left Germany and came to Missouri, that German conflict influenced their ideas about education here.
Module 4 Unit 1 Reading  

This chapter explains the history of LCMS schools and education.

**Colonial Beginnings and Early Nationhood**  
In the 1600s and 1700s, Lutheran Germans and Scandanavians came to America. They began many schools on the East coast. Later, in the 1820s, German and Scandinavian Lutherans began coming, and they lived in the central U.S., Ohio and Michigan, over to Illinois and Minnesota. They also set up schools, usually taught in their own language, and continued their own culture. This was the beginning for LCMS schools.

**Forging Synodical Schools**  
The group of Lutherans who came to Missouri in 1839 made their own school. They made it like the Gymnasium schools in Germany.

**Sowing and Spreading Synodical Schools**  
The LCMS began in 1847. By 1872, the synod had 446 congregations and 472 schools. When people started a new congregation, the LCMS required that they also have a school for children. The schools followed the German system with 3 levels of education. Each level strongly emphasized religion.

Schools were an important way the church worked with non-Lutheran Germans. In some schools, 50% of the students were Lutheran and 50% were non-Lutheran. The church’s goal was to give the students a good general education, but also to give them good religious and cultural instruction.

More schools means the church needed more teachers. In 1855, the church began a school in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, which eventually moved to the Chicago area. There was also a college established in Nebraska to train teachers.

At that time, the Civil War ended. Now the slaves were free. The LCMS began mission work to them and started several schools in South.

Schools were important for doing mission work among other German and Scandinavian people, keeping their language and culture, and helping the church grow. But there were challenges.

**An Era of Challenges**  
**Immigration.**  
Many Germans came to America. They wanted more opportunities. Some wanted to keep their culture and language, but some wanted to become Americans and learn English. Many thought that confirmation means their church education was finished. All of that caused problems.

**Language.**  
In Lutheran schools, the students learned English. But in church, the worship was only in German. There were several reasons why, but mainly they thought English was not a good language for theology. They thought if they used English, they will lose the pure truth of the Gospel.
Theological Attitude.
The LCMS was very strict and avoided fellowship with other churches. They taught the LCMS is the only true church. The church used schools to continue that teaching about fellowship.

Social and Political Attitudes.
The same as the LCMS avoided other churches, they also avoided society and politics.

Attitude toward public schools.
The church knew that public schools have a responsibility to teach, and we have responsibility as citizens to support public schools. But public schools can’t teach Christian faith, and that can hurt faith. So the church was against public schools and supported Lutheran education.

Legislative battles.
There was a movement in U.S. that said all the different groups in the U.S. should unite as Americans. One result was that some people wanted to force all children to attend public school, no private schools allowed. Legal battles went to the Supreme Court and the church won. But the number of students in school didn’t increase much. Some people thought Sunday School was enough religious teaching. The church continued to resist changing their culture and language to follow American society.

The Adaptation of Synodical Schools
Eventually, though, schools adapted. They began using English, they used non-Lutheran books, and some of their teachers started getting trained in non-Lutheran colleges. After WWII, the number of schools, teachers and students increased. But the number of non-Lutheran students also increased.

Lutheran Schools and the New Millenium
Today, Lutheran schools must know why they are here. In the past, schools always taught the Lutheran faith to students and taught them to keep the conservative values of church. But now, society is changing, and there are many non-Lutherans in school. Is the school’s main goal still to pass on those values? Or is the goal now missions, reaching out to non-Christians? That is the challenge for schools today.

Summing Up
In past, schools were always an important part of the LCMS. The church was committed to teaching children the true faith. School was the place to do that. The church adapted slowly to society, but that slow change was difficult for the schools. Today, the church must understand why we have Lutheran schools.
Module 4  
Weekly Assignment

Answer four questions about your reading:

1. How do LCMS Schools give children our Lutheran faith? (Write about 100 words)

2. How did LCMS Schools preserve culture? How did Lutheran Schools help Germans become Americans? (about 100 words)

3. Throughout LCMS history, many congregations used schools for an important part of their ministry. Describe that in about 100 words.

4. You and your mentor meet, and discuss: Could your congregation use LCMS schools in your area for making your congregation stronger? Write about 200 words, summarizing your discussion.

Type your answers, then send them to your teacher through Blackboard.

__________________________________________________________

FINAL ASSIGNMENT --  PORTFOLIO ESSAY.

The topic of your paper is:

“Now that I have finished this course, I think that this course will help my ministry, how?_______________________________________________”

1. Type your paper, using Microsoft Word. or Word Perfect -- double space, 12pt, 2-3 pages.

2. Save the document on your computer hard drive.

3. Go to Blackboard, and click the link to PORTFOLIO ESSAY

4. Click the button that says "Upload File."

5. Browse for your saved document and click "Upload" again.

6. Click on “Submit Assignment.” Your assignment will go to the EIIT office to download, print and include in your portfolio.

7. Then go to back Blackboard and send your file to your teacher.