



lift up your hearts

SURSUM CORDA
CLASSICAL SCHOOL

a ministry of



PROSPECTUS

Updated May, 2023

TENTATIVE DATES

May 2022 – Proposed Prospectus Drawn Up

June 2022 – Exploration Committee Formed

July 2022 – Pr. Hendrix and family (and others??) attend CCLE Conference in Ft. Wayne

Fall 2022 – Regulatory Issues Researched (Is the facility adequate? What improvements need to be made?)

Winter 2023 – Tentative Teaching Model Selected (2-day; 4-day; Adjunct model; full-time called worker; etc.)

Winter 2023 – School Board / Incorporation Logistics Researched

Spring 2023 – Fundraising begins

Spring 2023 – Website Launched

Summer 2023 – Promotional Material (for awareness, admissions, and fundraising purposes)

Fall 2023 – Classical Co-Op begun at Faith

Late Fall 2023 – Review of curriculum and program

Winter 2023 – Promotion Ramped up in Preparation for 2024 (Printing of Magazine?)

Winter–Spring 2024 – Teacher called for Fall of 2024

PROSPECTUS

Name: *Sursum Corda*: “Lift Up Your Hearts.”

This phrase heard weekly in Christian churches across the world perfectly sums up our purpose: to provide an education that allows students to lift up their hearts. St. Augustine, the renowned 4th-century bishop, rhetorician, and one of the most influential figures for classical education, was of the opinion that the phrase “Lift Up Your Hearts,” was the most succinct definition of the church’s calling. His most famous work, *Confessions*, explores the questions that are central to humanity about our identity and relationship to God, whether we are slaves to things created or free subjects of our Creator. As the phrase “Lift Up Your Hearts” will be recognizable to Christians of all classical varieties, our school is not just for Lutherans, but for any who desire a classical Christian education. Nevertheless, as catechesis is intricately linked to classical education, and since classical education is historically Lutheran, everything will be taught in accordance with the Lutheran confessions.

Purpose: The school will provide a classical Lutheran education to children. By using the classical approach within the framework of a confessional Lutheran character, the school will aim to allow students to “lift up their hearts.” Through the nurturing of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, students will rise above simply learning a set of skills, to rather be free to discover what is true, good, and beautiful. By engaging with the greatest of literature and wisdom from the past to the present, students will be freed to think above the issues of the modern world. With a schedule that includes parents in the education of their children, families will be freed for service in their highest and most important vocations. Finally, with the Gospel of Christ and the forgiveness of sins forming the foundation of the school, students’ hearts will be truly lifted up – free from sin and the worries of the world.

Need: For generations, the priorities of modern education have bound individuals to an increasingly consumerist and polemical society, instructing them *what* to think on both the right and left, rather than giving them the knowledge of *how* to think freely. Furthermore, as society becomes more polemic, public institutions tend to feel the need to instruct children in areas that would naturally be the responsibility of parents. The return to a classical model, which hands down both traditional morality and clear thinking through study of grammar, logic, rhetoric, and the best of ancient literature and wisdom, will prepare students for life in home, church, and community. Parents are invited again to be the primary influencer in their child(ren)’s life.

Prospective Opening: Fall 2024 (or Fall 2023 if financing and enrollment exceeds expectations)

Size: The school will begin purposefully small, not placing growth above providing an excellent and beautiful education. A fire that has too many logs put on will be smothered, so too we will seek to grow naturally. We seek to initially provide a classical Lutheran education to children in the grammar

to logic ages. The goal is to open with 10 students in a grammar school cohort (K-2nd grade), adding logic school grades and cohorts (3rd-5th, and 6th-8th) in future years at a natural pace.

Hybrid Schedule:

Two Day School/Two Day Homeschool.

We believe parents are their children's first and best teachers, no matter the child's age (or the parents' mastery of Latin nouns). Parents will be asked to teach for two-three days at home, giving them an even greater opportunity to influence their children, with our professional guidance.

This schedule may also allow for more flexibility for teachers, or potentially allow a greater number of students to receive a highly personal education.

Location: Oregon is a growing community with a population of over 11,000, but no option for schooling other than the public school system. The south side of Madison also has no current confessional Lutheran schools. Oregon would be a hub for Lutherans and other classically-minded Christians in the communities of Verona, Fitchburg, McFarland, Stoughton, Brooklyn, Evansville, Belleville, as well as the south side of Madison.

Setting: The school will begin in the lower level of Faith Lutheran Church, Oregon, WI. The large fellowship hall can be divided into at least two classrooms. As the Lord wills and as the school grows, the school board will look into suitable options for the school.

Classical Lutheran Education: Classical education has seen a renaissance in popularity in recent years. However, it was the Lutheran Church that was responsible for not only what is understood today as classical education, but also historically (at least up until around WWII), the education of the Western world.

The classical principle of studying original sources (*ad fontes*) rather than relying on someone's interpretation led an Augustinian monk by the name of Martin Luther to study the Scriptures, sparking the Protestant (Lutheran) Reformation and the guiding principle of *Sola Scriptura*. The Reformers wanted everyone to have access to the Word of God, the source of faith and life.

Under the guidance of men like Philip Melancthon, the author of the *Augsburg Confession*, they opened schools with the goal of universal education. Yet, as Dr. Gene Edward Veith points out, "the schools they opened were not just Bible reading schools. Rather, they were Renaissance classical schools, offering an education for freedom, which soon led to unprecedented social mobility and, eventually, to political freedom."¹

¹ Veith, Gene Edward, Jr. "Why Lutherans Need Classical Colleges." Christian Culture Magazine, Issue 2, Summer 2021. <https://www.cc.lutherclassical.org/summer-2021/why-lutherans-need-classical-colleges/>

Lutherans insisted on liberal education (“Liberal” in the sense of the Latin *liberalis*, “freedom”) combined with Christian catechesis. The liberal arts include the trivium (three arts of language) and the quadrivium (four arts of mathematics). These “arts of freedom” were designed so students would not merely be trained how to perform a task, but prepared to think about great ideas for the noble service of others. They free a person to live, study, think, and serve in any vocation. Catechesis, in the Lutheran tradition, asks the truly classic question of “what does this mean?” (logic) after students have been taught the grammar of something. Again, students are not taught *what* to think, but *why*.

The method developed by the Lutheran Reformers was responsible for cultivating the brightest and best thinkers of the last 500 years, and was the primary method of education in the Western World until the 20th century. Enlightenment Rationalism had already begun to reduce education to a science – highly specialized programs meant to fit students into categories, but it was John Dewey in the early 20th century who succeeded in removing the remaining freedom from education. Dewey was the architect of American Governmental Schools, who stated that it was his goal to replace the outdated Christian religion with a “religion” modern man could actually believe and carry out. Ironically, what people today call “secular,” he called “religious,” and we have seen the results of this secular religion taught now for generations in our public schools.

We believe it is time for Faith Lutheran Church to reclaim the beautiful and freeing education that once began in the Lutheran Church.