

Pathways: theological focus

Freedom encounter



Lutheran
EDUCATION
Australia



Central understanding

- God's revelation of sin and grace is the theological basis for our understanding and practice of Christian freedom

Key question

- do Lutheran schools have a distinctive approach to behaviour management?

Biblical narrative

- the father and his two sons (Luke 15:11-32)

Theological perspective

- sin and grace
- law and gospel
- saint-sinner
- freedom *from* and freedom *to*

Response

- to issues specific to the encounter

Facilitator theological notes

Focus questions

- How do we work with law and gospel, sin and grace in a Lutheran school?
- Does seeing people in the tension of 'sinner and saint' lead to a particular approach to behaviour management in Lutheran schools?
- What do we mean by 'the freedom of the Christian'?
- What is the goal of a behaviour management program in Lutheran schools?

A real life scenario

Scenario 1

Cathy was involved in parent/teacher interviews for her class. Rachel Martin had indicated to Cathy that her parents were pleased that the interviews were happening because they had a concern which they wished to raise with her. Cathy wondered what it might be since Rachel seemed to be a very conscientious and attentive student who was always helpful and courteous and did not seem to be having any particular problems.

When Mr and Mrs Martin arrived, they very quickly outlined their concerns. Rachel had told them that she had heard a group of girls talking about a scheme which they had developed of stealing items from the local supermarket. It seemed that it had turned into a bit of a competition to see who could take the largest item without getting caught. Mr and Mrs Martin had been horrified to hear about this. Their main concern, however, was that they were paying fees for Rachel to attend the school and were not getting what they had expected. 'We thought that in a Lutheran school there would be no problems with stealing or any such behaviour. Surely the students would be expected to live by the Ten Commandments! Can you assure us that this sort of behaviour is not what one can continue to expect from a Lutheran school?'

Scenario 2

Jessica had once again been rude to Mr Dowell in class and refused to cooperate in the task he had set the group to complete. 'It's a stupid exercise!' was the mildest of the comments she had made. Jessica was prone to such outbursts and Mr Dowell knew that when he confronted her after class, she would simply do what she had done on a number of previous occasions. She would simply smile very sweetly and say, 'I'm so sorry! I won't do it again.' And she expected that Mr Dowell would simply say, as he had previously done, 'That's alright! I forgive you. Just don't do it again.'

However, Mr Dowell knew that this approach was not going to work and that he would have to consider another approach. It was also clear to him that some other students in the class were aware that he was having difficulty in dealing with Jessica's outbursts.

Facilitator theological notes

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Scenario 3

Richard and Fiona were walking back to their classrooms after the morning chapel service. The school pastor had given a short address that morning dealing with the topic of 'sin'. 'This whole thing about sin really bothers me', said Richard. 'I hear it too in our local church. Isn't it a bit old fashioned and not very helpful to speak about people in this way? It seems to suggest such a negative way of looking at people. Surely we should be stressing how valuable people are and all of the good things which they are capable of doing.' Fiona agreed. 'I have problems with this 'sin stuff' too. My God is a loving caring God and I don't see how sin fits into that picture. Surely he only expects us to do our best in being like him and showing love and care for others without all this talk about 'sin'!'

Scenario 4

The senior staff were meeting to discuss the situation with Danny. He had been dealt with on a number of occasions for quite severe cases of bullying. This had resulted in discussions with the school counsellor and a couple of periods of suspension. There had also been discussions with his mother who had been trying to deal with Danny's violent behaviour on her own since the break up of her marriage some years earlier. She seemed to be at the end of her resources as well. A number of teachers were now agitating for the school to expel Danny. It seemed that he didn't really want to be at the school and was making life very miserable for his victims.

However, Darren felt that to expel Danny was an admission of failure by the school. 'Surely a Lutheran school should find some way to deal with the situation and try to help Danny deal with his problems. Didn't Jesus say that we should go after the lost sheep and try to bring it back into the flock? If we don't show love and care for Danny, where will he get to know love and forgiveness?'

A biblical insight

Preamble

As we saw in *Encounter 4: Caring relationships encounter*, the Bible has a major focus on relationships, particularly the relationship between God and human beings and the consequences of that relationship. In this *Freedom encounter* we will be looking at this more fully from the perspective of sin and grace and the concept of freedom. There are many stories, incidents and passages in the Bible which deal with this. One such story is the parable which Jesus told about the father and his two sons.

Narrative: The father and his two sons [Luke 15:11-32]

Since this parable has often been referred to as 'the prodigal son', and since the second part of the story is often omitted, the full impact of Jesus' teaching is subsequently lost.

There are two sons in this story. Both of them are bound up in their own way. Both of them need the freedom which the father has to offer if only they will recognise it and turn to him and allow him to provide it for them. And the father wants both of his sons to share with him in that freedom.

Facilitator theological notes

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The younger son is controlled by his desire for what he sees as 'freedom' – the opportunity to travel and live the high life and do whatever he wishes. To do this, he is willing to treat his father as if he was already dead and he demands his inheritance. He does not recognise the normal family relationships and the cultural customs and thinks only of himself.

But he soon found out that this isn't freedom. Having wasted his inheritance, he was forced to hire himself out to some stranger and to compete with the pigs for his food. From his cultural perspective, he would have regarded both of these things as even more degrading than others would. This was completely the opposite from what he had hoped his life would be!

He had sunk as low as he could go. But he remembered the generosity of his father towards his servants. He also recognised that he no longer had any right to claim more than those servants since he had squandered his sonship. He now acknowledges his sin and is ready to admit his guilt and throw himself on his father's mercy.

But the father's compassion takes over completely. He is looking out for his son to return and runs to meet him – exposing himself by his actions to ridicule from those who saw what was happening because, in his culture, no respected older male runs in public! And he reinstates his son completely to the status not only of a son but an honoured guest, which according to the custom of hospitality was the highest status possible.

But the older son is hurt and angry when he sees what is happening. His lack of freedom is the result of another attitude. Even though he was enjoying all of the benefits of living within the family and sharing with his father all that the father owned, he saw his life as one of slavery. He was concerned with obeying his father – not as a loving and caring son, but as a resentful slave. And he certainly had no love towards his younger brother. He was enslaved in his resentment.

But the father reaches out to him, too. He wants this son to also know the freedom of the relationship of acceptance and love and to live in that freedom and not in the slavery of trying to please the father from a sense of duty. He wants this son to share, too, in the joyful feast of celebration as the whole extended family rejoices in restored relationships between the father and the two sons – a relationship of grace and freedom.

Aspects of the theology of sin and grace and Christian freedom

Introduction

The story of the father and his two sons leads us to consider our relationship with God and with our fellow human beings. As already seen in *Encounter 4: Caring relationships encounter*, this relationship is a broken relationship until, as in the story, our heavenly Father does something about it and sets us free from the slavery in which we find ourselves. And he does this purely through grace.

Facilitator theological notes

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The reality of sin

We are by nature in broken relationships [*Encounter 4: Caring relationships encounter*]. We are born in a broken relationship with God [Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:12] and hence with each other and the whole of creation. This means that by nature all human beings are opposed to God [Romans 8:7-8; Ephesians 2:1-3]. The state of sin which we inherit from our parents as part of the sinful human race means that we are not just neutral towards God, but set against God. We are all born into this state of sin which enslaves us and condemns us in the eyes of God, not because of what we DO but because of what we ARE.

And there is nothing we can do by ourselves to get out of this predicament of sin. While we are able to exercise our free will in all sorts of ways in our lives [whether we go here or go there, what we choose to do or not to do, with whom we make friends, etc] as far as our spiritual lives are concerned, we no longer have free will. In fact, the Bible speaks of us by nature as spiritually 'dead' [Ephesians 2:1-3]. We are unable to choose to turn to God unless we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. As Luther says in his explanation to the third article of the creed in his Small Catechism: 'I believe that by my own understanding or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but the Holy Spirit has called me by the gospel.'

God's two responses

God has two possible responses to the reality of sin. Because God is holy and just, he cannot simply ignore sin. God can respond either in justice or in mercy. We see God operating in these two ways as he deals with sin and evil in the world through the law or through the gospel [cf the 'two hands of God' in *Encounter 2: Two ways God cares encounter*]. Through the law God tells us what he requires or demands of us: through the gospel God reveals what he has done for us through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The law of God

Through the law, God works to keep sin and evil in check. God operates through justice. This is called in Lutheran theology the 'political use' of the law. In this way God ensures that creation functions in the way it was created to function. The law is God's 'instruction book' to describe how God has intended us to live and work together in peace, harmony and justice in the world. God's law in this sense is therefore for our good as through the law God protects what is important for our life and happiness in the world. For example in commandments four to ten God protects family relationships, life, sexual relationships, property, a person's reputation, etc. To do this, God operates through human reason and custom, through the government and other agencies using, if necessary, coercion, reward and punishment [cf *Encounter 2: Two ways God cares encounter*].

Because of sin, God's law also operates in our lives in another way, the so-called 'theological use' of the law. Since we do not follow God's law, through the law God can bring us to recognise our sin. The law exposes that we do not live as God intended and that we need to turn to God for forgiveness as the only way out of our sinful rebellion [Galatians 3:24]. We are bound in our state of sin until God frees us through his forgiveness and gives us peace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Facilitator theological notes

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The gospel

Through the gospel, God declares that our sins are forgiven and that our relationship with God is restored. Through faith, given as a gift by the Holy Spirit, we are freed from our sin and can live at peace with God, ourselves, our fellow human beings and the whole of creation. God's grace given to us in Jesus Christ is totally undeserved and free. Jesus takes our sin on himself on the cross and gives us in exchange his holiness [Romans 5:8-11].

Faith as 'gift'

Human nature can find it difficult to accept God's grace. By nature we want to contribute something towards restoring our relationship with God. Even the faith by which we receive God's gift of forgiveness is a gift of the Holy Spirit. Our faith is not a 'good work' on our part which contributes to our forgiveness. All is grace. Grace sets us free.

Misuse of the law

As indicated above, human beings want to try to find ways to please God and earn forgiveness. By nature we don't want to leave it entirely in God's hands. Instead, we try to follow the law as a rational way of pleasing God. However, these attempts lead us to losing the freedom we have in the gospel. The following are some of the ways we try to do this:

- dogmatism: when we give the impression that our relationship with God depends on our knowledge of theology and on accepting 'correct' doctrinal formulations ['right understanding and knowledge']
- moralism: trying to earn God's favour through 'acceptable' patterns of behaviour or trying to follow the example of Jesus as a 'good teacher' ['right behaviour']
- legalism: giving the impression that we can earn God's approval through obeying the law – using the law as motivation, especially through the use of rewards and punishment ['right will and intentions']
- emotionalism: having the 'right feelings' about our faith, especially in relation to worship ['right feelings']

In themselves being concerned about our understanding of our faith, our behaviour as a Christian, our will and intentions and our emotions and feelings are an important part of living as a Christian. The problems begin when we feel that somehow these things will earn us favour with God and contribute to our salvation.

Saint and sinner at the same time

As Christian people we live our lives in this world in a tension of 'saint' and 'sinner'. When God looks at us through Jesus Christ, God sees us as a 'saint' [forgiven sinner]. However, as long as we continue to live in this world, Christians also remain sinners [Romans 7:14-25]. Only at the end of time will sin be finally destroyed in our lives.

However, the Holy Spirit is active in the lives of Christians helping them to live in the way God intends them to live [the life of sanctification]. The Holy Spirit helps to produce the 'fruit of the Spirit' in their lives [Galatians 5:22-25; Colossians 3:12-17] and to help them to grow and mature as Christians [Ephesians 4:13-16].

Facilitator theological notes

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Freedom from and freedom to

In speaking about Christian freedom, we need to distinguish carefully between 'freedom from' and 'freedom to'.

As Christians, through the grace of God in Jesus Christ we are free *from* the law since Jesus has fulfilled the law for us [Galatians 3:23-29]. 'For freedom Christ has set us free' [Galatians 5:1]. We no longer have to try to keep God's law in order to be free from the punishment of the law. Christ has taken that punishment for us.

And since we are free from the law, we are now free *to* serve Christ instead. St Paul speaks about no longer being 'slaves to sin' but 'slaves of righteousness' [Romans 6:17-19]. God's law now takes on an entirely different function [sometimes referred to in Lutheran theology as 'the third use of the law']. It can be a guide for us about how we can live under the power of the Holy Spirit. We can live the commandment to love God and to love our fellow human beings [Romans 13:8]. And living as Jesus' disciples we can be confident that whenever we fall short, we live under the umbrella of God's forgiveness which we have by grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Free to serve

In his classic 'The freedom of the Christian' Martin Luther combines these two statements which seem to contradict each other:

1. Christians have complete freedom and power over everything, and are under no obligation to anyone.
2. Christians are servants of all, and are under complete obligation to everyone.

Luther explains:

Although these statements seem to contradict each other, we'll see how they fit together. Both statements come from the apostle Paul. He says in 1 Corinthians 9:19, 'I am a free man, nobody's slave; but I make myself everybody's slave' (TEV). He also says in Romans 13:8, 'Be under obligation to no one – the only obligation you have is to love one another' (TEV). Love by its very nature is ready to serve and to do whatever the loved one wants. [Schubert 2004:9]

Since we are made right with God by grace through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we are no longer under the obligation of the law. We are free from trying to earn our salvation. However, on the other hand, because we have received forgiveness and live in that forgiveness, we are free to live out our love for God in love and service for others.

Responding to issues relating to Christian freedom in Lutheran schools

1 Pastoral care and behaviour management

In *Encounter 4: Caring relationships encounter* we considered caring relationships in a Lutheran school. In exploring these caring relationships we touched on the role of law and gospel in pastoral care. We now go more deeply into an important aspect of pastoral care, the area of behaviour management and how law and gospel inform this area of school life.

Facilitator theological notes

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The term behaviour management can immediately conjure up a negative reaction of rules, expectations, penalties and punishment rather than the concept of freedom. However, the goal of this aspect of pastoral care is to help an individual to develop positive attitudes, self-respect, consideration of others, and ultimately self-discipline in order to live free from external restraints.

2 Discipline

The word 'discipline' has its roots in the Latin word for learning. It is closely related to the concept of 'disciple'. Disciples are 'learners'. Jesus' disciples spent their time with Jesus learning from him as he revealed things to them, teaching them in parables, in examples, and by direct teaching. At times, in love for them, Jesus also had to correct them and point out where they had not listened carefully or where they had not obeyed his teaching.

Disciples are also 'followers'. Jesus' disciples literally followed Jesus as he moved around the towns and countryside. They identified with him and the things he was doing and saying, even though they often misunderstood him. But by being with him [Mark 2:14], they learned to trust him and to obey his instructions. They grew to the point where, once Jesus had given them the gift of the Holy Spirit, they were ready to go out and disciple others.

3 The reality of sin

Lutheran theology recognises the reality of sin, and we can expect the effects of sin to be obvious in the Lutheran school context. The expectation of some parents that 'these things shouldn't happen in a Lutheran school', is unrealistic. On the other hand, we need to ensure that within the Lutheran school community people feel safe and protected and that bullying and harassment and other forms of inappropriate behaviour are confronted and addressed. The attitude that 'I should be free to behave as I like' is not in fact an expression of freedom, but the response of an individual who is caught up in their own self-centredness. Based on the doctrine of 'original sin', Lutheran anthropology gives a very realistic and liberating approach to dealing with behaviour problems as it allows the behaviour to be addressed rather than judging the person. We can love the person while we deal with the inappropriate action.

4 The 'political use of the law' in the Lutheran school context

As discussed in *Encounter 2: Two ways God cares encounter*, Lutheran theology sees God's law in its 'political function' as creating a safe, secure, supportive environment in which the Lutheran school can carry out its responsibility of education. In using the law in this way, teachers can carry out their vocation as teachers and students can pursue their vocation as students. The school also draws on insights from psychology, sociology, and other avenues of research and educational experience to develop an approach to behaviour management which is theologically appropriate and which enhances the educational experience.

However, seeing God's law as a way to maintain peace and good order in the school in no way excuses inappropriate forms of discipline, especially any approach which is humiliating or damaging to the student. It is important that creating a sense of guilt is not used in order to try to modify behaviour.

Facilitator theological notes

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5 Proclaiming the gospel

Lutheran theology also sees God's law in its 'theological use' in the Lutheran school context. Through the law, the Holy Spirit brings an individual to realise their state of sin and their need for the freeing message of the gospel. The proper use of law and gospel is crucial for the Lutheran school to keep the freedom of the gospel at the centre of the school community. Not all members of the community will share in this freedom, but the call to repentance and faith through the proclamation of the gospel is essential for God's 'right hand' work in the Lutheran school [*Encounter 2: Two ways God cares encounter*].

In this regard it is important that the misuse of the law in terms of legalism, moralism, dogmatism and emotionalism does not impinge on the freedom of the gospel. There can be pressure at times from both within the school and also from parents and others outside of the school, to expect certain specific behaviour as indications that the school is 'really Christian'.

6 The tension of 'saint and sinner'

All Christians in the Lutheran school community, students and staff alike, experience the tension of 'saint and sinner'. While they live in the freedom of the gospel, knowing that their sin is forgiven, that they are in a right relationship with God, and that the Holy Spirit is working in their lives to help them produce the 'fruit of the Spirit', yet they still experience the presence of sin in their lives. The Lutheran understanding of baptism is an important comfort in this situation. This is also where the clear distinction between freedom *from* sin and freedom *to* live the sanctified life in Christ is critical.

7 Approaches to behaviour management

It is important to recognise that there are those in the Lutheran school community who do not share faith in Jesus Christ. This means that a 'one size fits all' approach to behaviour management is not always possible and may cause difficulties with an appearance of inconsistency in dealing with situations in the school. For example, the practice of confession and absolution will not be appropriate for those who do not recognise that their behaviour also includes sin against God as well as against another person. However, such processes as 'restorative justice' can be used in such cases as with those who do profess faith in Jesus Christ.

Another important consideration is not to misuse the 'theological use' of the law when dealing with a discipline situation. There are various 'levels' of problems which may occur in a school. Some are simply thoughtless behaviour or lack of common sense. Some may be more serious like deliberate disobedience, or undermining of authority. There may also be moral matters which emerge or situations which place the community at risk. These different levels will require different responses. What is important is that not all situations are made into occasions for the use of law and gospel or of confession and absolution, or similar processes. To do this can lead students to look on God as the ultimate disciplinarian in the school who is to be feared and avoided, rather than the God who loves and accepts and forgives. It is also important that offenders realise that dealing with a behavioural problem does not indicate a judgement on that person's status as a Christian. Again, these issues can relate to staff as well as to students in the school.

Facilitator theological notes

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8 **Communication with parents and carers**

There may be significant differences in the expectations of appropriate behaviour between the home and the school. Parents or carers may have different expectations of students from those of the school. Some students may experience real difficulties in cooperating with adults or sharing with other students. It will be important for clear communication of school policy at the time of enrolment so that misunderstandings are minimised. This is particularly important if major differences exist between the expectations of school and home.

9 **Repeated offences, suspension and expulsion**

There are a number of issues when dealing with repeated offences by the same student or with some major breaches of the rules of the school such as flouting of authority, or deliberate disrespect for worship in the school, or with behaviour which places the school community at risk.

In the case of repeated offences, can prior instances which have resulted in a process leading to forgiveness be taken into consideration in dealing with a new instance of the same offence? Can there be an increasing level of penalty in the policy for dealing with such situations especially if counselling and advice has been given to the student?

If a very serious offence occurs in the school, are suspension and expulsion options for dealing with the offending student? Is the school simply recognising that the student has rejected the school and all for which it stands, and formalising that situation? What is the responsibility of the school towards a student who has been suspended or expelled? Should there be a rite of restoration for a student who has been suspended and who is again taking his or her place in the school community?

In all these situations, how can a Lutheran school keep a focus on God's forgiveness and love and care for the individual?

Discussion questions

- 1 How do you see the relationship between pastoral care and behaviour management?
- 2 In what ways do you identify with both brothers in the biblical narrative?
- 3 Some Christians see the emphasis on sin in Lutheran theology as negative and even depressing. They feel it devalues the individual. How could you respond to this? Is the 'saint and sinner' perspective a helpful anthropology?
- 4 How successful is the practice of 'restorative justice' in helping to deal with behaviour such as bullying? How does it show loving concern for both the victim and the offender?
- 5 Review the LEA 'Policy for Behaviour Management in Lutheran Schools'. Are there any changes which you feel could be necessary or helpful?
- 6 How can we continue to show loving concern and care for students who repeatedly offend?
- 7 How do we make rules about classroom behaviour without falling into legalism or moralism?
- 8 Is it appropriate to set up a system of 'rewards' (eg stickers, early minutes, treats, etc) in order to help to encourage appropriate behaviour?
- 9 How can we respond to parents who complain: 'I didn't expect to find such bad behaviour in a Lutheran school?'
- 10 For what situations is it appropriate for a Lutheran school to have a zero tolerance policy?
- 11 What, if any, might be grounds for the expulsion of a student?
- 12 Luther spoke about the 'complete freedom' and 'complete obligation' of the Christian. How helpful is this in discussing 'service learning'?

References and further reading

Bartsch, M. (2001). *Why a Lutheran School?: Education and theology in dialogue*, (pp 49-54; 64-72; 98-102; 110-118) LCA North Adelaide: BLS.

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BLS (2001). Session 2 Salvation in a school context, *Theological Orientation Program for Staff (TOPS)* 2nd edition (pp. 4-7) Adelaide: BLS.

BLS (2001). Session 8 Behaviour management, *Theological Orientation Program for Staff (TOPS)* 2nd edition (pp. 4-5) Adelaide: BLS.

LEA (2005). *Christian Studies Curriculum Framework: Theological Notes* (pp 13-14; 42-43; and 46-47). Adelaide: LEA.

Samiec, G. (1999). To expel or not to expel! Exclusion policy and related issues in Lutheran schools, *Lutheran Theological Journal* 33/2, 79-85.

Schubert, D. (2004). *Christian faith and freedom: Martin Luther's The freedom of a Christian paraphrased for today, plus A simple way to pray condensed*, Magill SA: D Schubert.

Purposes of the *Freedom encounter*

The purposes of this encounter are for participants to:

- explore the question: do Lutheran schools have a distinctive approach to behaviour management? through understandings of law and gospel, sin and grace, and sinner-saint
- consider what is meant by 'the freedom of the Christian'
- propose what might be the goal of a behaviour management program in a Lutheran school

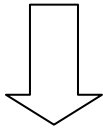
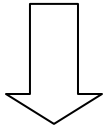
Plan for the *Freedom encounter*

- welcome and introductions
- orientation to the encounter (setting out)
- exploring information, developing understandings (gathering pace)
- sharing perspectives, discussing questions, developing understandings (multiple views)
- reflecting on learning (in a quiet place)
- prayer and close

Facilitator encounter preparation checklist

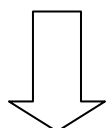
- ☐ read *Facilitator theological notes*
- ☐ read *Workshop*, select and prepare handouts and resources needed
- ☐ have copies of handouts and resources participants may need on tables ready for them
- ☐ prepare a pre-recorded interview or invite staff for interview if using that *Setting out* option
- ☐ make adjustments to Slide 4 if necessary
- ☐ organise a place/places where participants can access the internet
- ☐ have weblink live and ready, and be familiar with it
- ☐ find music to play during *In a quiet place* phase
- ☐ have available coloured highlighters, coloured textas, chart paper for *Gathering Pace* and *Multiple views* options
- ☐ collect materials and items needed for *Short Trails*, ie school behaviour management policy, school restorative justice documents

Workshop

<p>Welcome and introductions (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Welcome participants to the <i>Freedom encounter</i>. Introduce any participants who may be new to the group. Ensure everyone has the material for the encounter.</p>
<p>Setting out (15 minutes)</p> 	<p>Show Slides 2 and 3 Share the purposes of <i>Freedom encounter</i> with participants and briefly outline how the workshop will run.</p> <p>Show slide 4 Invite participants to choose from the following options:</p> <p>Option 1: Walk and talk Participants set off in pairs, taking turns to talk about a behaviour management issue experienced or observed that was tricky to handle (see <i>Handouts: Walk and Talk</i>).</p> <p>Option 2: Interviews Watch a pre-recorded interview with principal and/or staff members who reflect on the complexities involved in developing policies like behaviour management. or Invite principal and/or staff members to share thoughts on behaviour management with participants at the workshop.</p> <p>Option 3: Pair and share Participants read <i>A real life scenario</i> in <i>Participant theological notes</i>, then pair up and talk about similarities and differences with their own experiences.</p>
<p>Gathering pace (40 minutes)</p> 	<p>This phase has two parts. Show slide 5</p> <p>Part 1: Reading and responding Provide participants with a copy of the handout <i>Ten words</i> (see <i>Handouts: Ten words</i>).</p> <p>Refer participants to <i>Participant theological notes</i> and ask them to read <i>A biblical insight</i> and <i>Aspects of theology of sin and grace and Christian freedom</i> and then complete the <i>Ten words</i> task.</p> <p>As participants finish, they find one other person with whom they compare and discuss their responses.</p> <p>Alternatively, <i>A biblical insight</i> could be encountered through one of these options:</p> <p>Lost and found prodigal son <i>The Skit Guys</i> http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxWTEApjRfQ&feature=related Animated Part 1 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0VoG7YmINnc&feature=related Part 2 http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=buA3g5wKmDI&feature=related</p> <p>Part 2: Short Trails Show Slide 6 and distribute <i>Short Trails</i> (see <i>Handouts: Short Trails</i>) Invite participants to further explore <i>Freedom</i> individually through any one of the following <i>Short Trails</i> available online at www.lutheran.edu.au login to the member area and then select <i>Resources/publications</i> then <i>Pathways</i> then <i>TRIAL MATERIAL ONLY Pathways: theological focus</i>. If the facility is available bring the screen up to show participants the options as a whole group, or select and provide some that can be explored in hard copy (see <i>Resources: Short Trails</i>).</p>

Workshop (...cont)

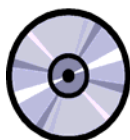
Gathering pace (...cont)



Art Short Trail: Participants have an opportunity to study and analyse a number of culturally diverse representations of *The prodigal son*, reflect on these and respond according to the guidelines.



Music Short Trail: In this *Short Trail* participants select one of the options that gives opportunity to explore aspects of the theology of the *Freedom encounter* through music, lyrics, video interview and reflection.



Video Short Trail: A number of video links enable participants to explore more of the theological understanding of grace.



Catechism Short Trail: Opportunities to look in more detail at the ten commandments and the third article of the creed are provided through this *Short Trail*.



SMS Short Trail: Summarise, More views, Synthesise
Participants work with any of the three options:

- quotes and responses
- significant statements
- questions

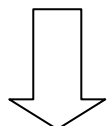


School Short Trail: In the school context the behaviour management policy is one of the most critical in terms of how interpersonal relationships are enabled to be restored and indeed to grow. A range of documents is listed to give participants an opportunity to look at how both national and school-developed policies and guidelines reflect the theology that interfaces here.



Reading Short Trail: Additional readings, from a range of sources, can be used by participants to expand, extend and challenge their thinking about the various theological concepts inherent in the *Freedom encounter*.

Multiple views (40 minutes)



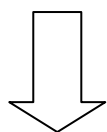
Participants gather, bringing their recorded responses up to this point, and any other material they have recorded or developed from their personal engagement with the *Short Trails*. Work with the *discussion questions* in the *Facilitator and participant theological notes* and refer also to *Responding to issues relating to Christian freedom in Lutheran schools*. (... cont)

Workshop

(...cont)

Multiple views

(...cont)



Option 1: Whole group approach

Show slide 7

The group agrees by consensus on a list of questions they wish to discuss, including questions that have arisen as a result of their reading and engagement with *Short Trails*. Use a discussion strategy such as *Talking Circle Strategy* (see: *Resources: Talking Circle Strategy*):

- Everyone sits in a circle and take turns to express their ideas or feelings about the question under consideration.
- If the group is particularly large, participants can be organised into an inner circle and an outer circle.
- Those in the inner circle speak, those in the outer circle listen.
- Participants can take turns being in the inner circle.

Refer to *Responding to issues relating to Christian freedom in Lutheran schools* in *Participant theological notes*. The *Consequences wheel* (see *Resources: Consequences wheel*) will be a suitable strategy for responding to *Discussion question 4* as it allows for the analysis of likely or observable consequences of a process/strategy/action.

Option 2: Small group approach

Show slide 8

Each group agrees by consensus on a priority order for the questions they wish to discuss. Participants organise into groups of four to eight people.

The group chooses a question on which they plan to focus. This could also be a question that has arisen as a result of their reading and engagement with *Short Trails*.

Use a discussion strategy such as *Snowballing*. The object is to record as many ideas as possible around that focus question:

- Individuals start by reflecting briefly and writing three or four responses
- Pairs are formed and ideas combined
- Pairs join into fours with discrete ideas being recorded
- Then groups of eight share their responses and write these on chart paper

At the conclusion invite each group of eight to share their thoughts with the whole group. Summary comments and statements can be made as each chart is reviewed.

Refer to *Responding to issues relating to Christian freedom in Lutheran schools* where or if necessary.

Work through as many questions as possible in the time given. To bring this phase of the encounter to a close, restate the purposes for the encounter and the means by which you have achieved that (see slides 2 and 3 for purposes and plan).

In a quiet place

(10 minutes)

Show slide 9

Distribute copies of *Reflect and respond* (see *Handouts: Reflect and respond*).

Invite participants to find a quiet spot where they can be comfortable while using the prompts to reflect on their experience, their thinking and their learning.

Play some restful, peaceful background music.

Close with a prayer.