

THE *Lutheran*

JANUARY 1, 1986

GOD'S WILL FOR MY LIFE?



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A LITTLE SALT

Humor with loopholes

Pacific Lutheran Seminary has a van which makes several roundtrips a day between the seminary, the Graduate Theological Union and an apartment house where some students live. The students have nicknamed the van the "Martin Looper."

—Ross Hidy
Concord, Cal.

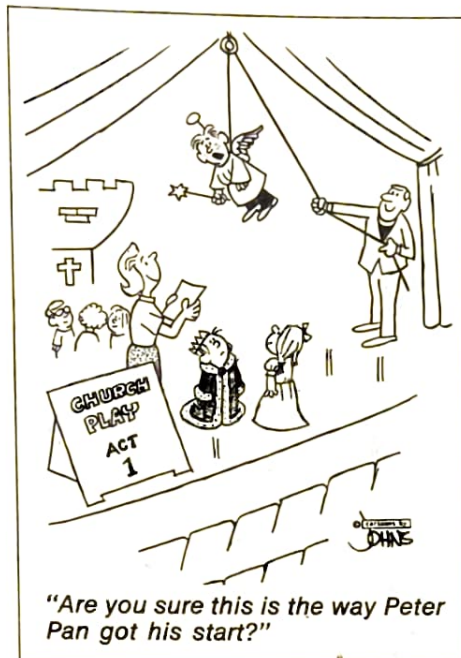
If God sends us on stony paths, he gives us strong shoes.

—Corrie Ten Boom

Prophetic sermon

While choir members at four churches in Culpeper and Orange, Va., sang on recent weekends, a thief was busily removing credit cards, drivers licenses and cash from their billfolds and purses, according to the *Richmond Times Dispatch*. Ironically, on one of the Sundays in question, the pastor at one of the churches preached on the topic, "Someone is Watching You."

—Margaret Sue Copenhaver
Richmond, Va.



God has promised forgiveness to your repentance, but he has not promised tomorrow to your procrastination.

—Augustine

Reservations confirmed

I received these replies to test questions I asked my seventh grade confirmation class. Question: What does communion do for us? Answer: It forgives and renews your sins. Question: What does baptism do for us? Answer: It forgives sins that you have picked up from your parents.

—B. Rachel Dart
Kitchener, Ontario

Crying softly will do!

I ask persons with special prayer needs to remain with me as pastor after the service so we can pray together at the altar. The topic of conversation for the day was the way instructions to do this read in the bulletin on a recent Sunday: "Those who would like to have prayer with the pastor at the altar, please wait in the front pew."

—John A. Anderson
Kelliher, Minn.

Original contributions are welcome. We'll make a small payment for published items, but we can't return unused submissions or acknowledge their receipt.

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Our cover is by Bernhard Sperl. (Story on page 4.)

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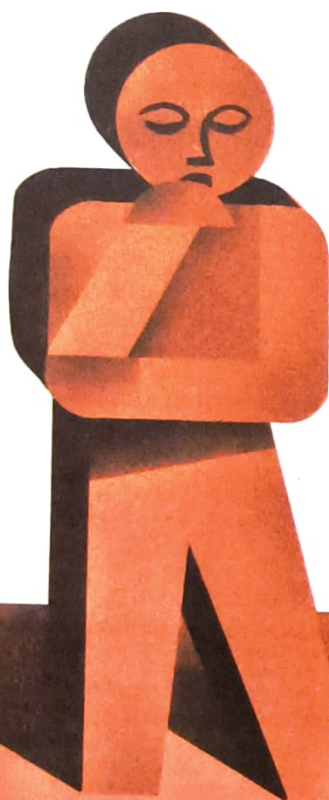
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God's Will for My Life?



Here are seven ways to learn the mind of God in making life's crucial decisions

By Herbert W. Chilstrom

At age 15 I heard God's certain call for me to become a pastor. I went to college and seminary with absolute confidence that this was God's will for me. Over the next 18 years I served in two parishes and at a college, never doubting that each call was the right time and place for me. Nine years ago I was elected bishop of a synod with full assurance people had made the right choice. Certainty about God's will has always come easily for me.

Now that I have your attention, let me tell you that practically nothing I have said so far is true! The general outline does apply. But words and phrases like "certain," "absolute confidence," "never doubting" and "full assurance" do not. Whether it be the major decisions that change the course of life or smaller choices that affect my week by week activities, understanding the will of God has never been a simple matter for me.

Everyone wishes at times that crucial decisions might be easier. If someone would only come up with 10 easy, fool-proof and thoroughly tested steps to know the mind of God in a given matter:

- Shall I attend this college or that one?
 - Shall I prepare for social work or teaching? Law or medicine?
 - Is this the right man — or woman — for me?
 - Should I accept this transfer and uproot my family?
 - Should my wife's career come first this time?
 - Should we go through with the divorce?
 - Can I work on this defense project for my company?
 - Should I take early retirement?
 - Is it time to sell the farm?
 - Can I feel right about putting Mother in the nursing home?
 - How does one come to know the will of God?
- We should begin our search for an answer by reminding ourselves that God is not a machine into which we put our questions and wait for an answer to print itself out on word processors. God is a Person. As human persons are complex

and not easily known, so it is with the divine Person.

Nor should it be otherwise. Would you have fallen in love with your husband or wife if you could have understood his or her mind in all matters after the second or third date? Would your best friend *be* your best friend if you had had to put no effort into understanding his or her mind? Would you really enjoy your children if you could always figure out exactly what they were going to do?

So far as God is concerned, Martin Luther even suggests that God keeps himself hidden at times in order to make his people more alert and intentional in their relationship with him. On one occasion Luther said that if he lived to be an old man he would write a book about how God hides behind temptation in order to encourage followers to study Scripture more diligently and pray more fervently in their search for his will. The only real understanding of God's will, Luther said, is that which endures when it has been tested.

It's important not to drive this point about God's hiddenness too far. God also reveals himself to the one who searches. In fact, John tells in his Gospel that it is the purpose of God the Holy Spirit to be our helper. In several references the Spirit is referred to as "Counselor." "The Counselor ... will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you" (14:26). An even better translation of the term might be "Friend" or "Helper."

From this background emerges a clear picture: We are related to a personal God. Within the richness and mystery and complexity of that relationship we are invited to search out his will and purpose for our lives.

Having said all these things about the nature of our relationship with God, and having acknowledged that it is God's pleasure to reveal his will, it is fair to ask if there are practical ways in which we can ascertain the mind of God. I believe there are.

• *I suggest we begin with a lively and vigorous reading of Scripture.* If the Bible is the best written source by which one can know God, then it is reasonable to conclude that regular and attentive reading of Scripture will help readers know the mind of God. Not every reading of the Bible is full of excitement. But neither is every paragraph of a love letter. Some-

times we must content ourselves to read pages of rather boring detail. But out of that ongoing correspondence — including the mundane parts — we come to know the object of our love. So it is with Scripture. On these pages we learn how God does his work and what he wills for his world. As we reflect on what God said and did *then* — in biblical times — we come to a better understanding of what he wills *now* — in our time. Other writings too — devotional and practical — can likewise expand wisdom and be vehicles of God's guidance.

- *We should pray.* Good friendships demand ongoing conversation. At its core prayer is exactly that — conversation with God. That means it can happen at any time and in any place. While it may be well to develop a habit by which we find a certain time and place each day for concentrated prayer, I suspect most people pray “on the run.” We ought not to apologize for that. In fact it may be that this is exactly what the apostle Paul meant by his admonition to “pray without ceasing.”

- *We should use “sanctified” common sense.* That advice came from a pastor in my youth. A lover of the book of James, this pastor encouraged me to examine all the obvious facets of a particular question and then “do what seems right.”

I have often passed that suggestion to others. Waiting beyond a certain point for further insight or for some kind of supernatural sign usually proves futile. We must be content most of the time to look at the facts and decide. If judgment has been informed by an active life of Scripture reading and prayer we can *usually* be confident about a decision. And we can move ahead with assurance that God will put a barrier in the way after a wrong decision.

- *Talk to friends.* I underscored the word *usually* in the previous paragraph because of all those junctures in life when a decision has proved to be more difficult than we realized. At times like this we can do other things, such as getting advice from friends.

After four years of enjoyable parish ministry I was surprised one day to get an offer to teach. Weeks of restless turmoil followed. I simply could not ascertain God's will on my own. I called a trusted friend and spent a long evening with him, laying out the pros and cons. He listened. He asked questions. We prayed. He didn't tell me what to do. But as I drove home that evening I felt enough confidence to be able to make a decision.

I spend a good deal of my time counseling with people about God's will for their lives — especially pastors wrestling with a call to another place. I try to follow the pattern of my own mentor: I listen. I ask questions. We pray. But I send

God is a person. As human persons are complex and not easily known, so it is with the divine Person.

them all off with the same word: “You walk the last mile alone.”

- *Write out the options.* When the choice is not obvious it often helps to sit down at an uncluttered desk or table with blank pages of paper. Think first of the consequences of one option. Write them out in detail. Then do the same with the other choice or choices. Don't rush. If the decision could significantly alter the rest of your life it deserves a generous time.

When you're satisfied that you have written down the principal aspects of each choice, put the papers away — preferably for at least a day or two. Try to keep the decision out of your conscious mind during that time. Occupy your thoughts with things that have nothing to do with the issue.

When your time of forced distraction is over, take out the pages and read them again. What you will often discover is that your subconscious self has been working on the questions all the while and that you now have enough clarity to come to a decision.

- *Go to a place where you can look at yourself from a more distant and objective perspective.* Bizarre as it may sound, I have found cemeteries to be good for this kind of reflection, especially when it is a difficult judgment I must make. If you live near a place where loved ones and familiar friends are buried, that works best. But if not, most any cemetery will do.

Why a cemetery? Because it may be the best place to put your decision into the framework of your entire life. As you walk among the gravestones, reminders will be all around that many people did not live as long as you have lived, that some wasted their lives, that some were too disabled or retarded to have the privilege of making such decisions, that many have lived a life worth emulating.

After an hour or two you may likely find that a deep sense of peace and tranquility will have settled over your spirit. And you may even discover that the answer to your quest has become clear. For some, another quiet place may work — a secluded lakeside, a walk through the woods, a study or a retreat.



• *Listen to dreams.* They happen when we sleep. They may seem to provide vision when we day dream. Like everything else in life, they can be good or bad, helpful or destructive. Nor can I say with certainty that all dreams are conjured up from within — or if some are given to us as revelations from God. On the basis of Scripture and my own experience I believe that some are gifts, avenues through which we are guided and reassured. For example, nearly every significant event in the book of Acts is accompanied by an extraordinary dream or vision. So I recommend that one listen to dreams — with caution. Set in the context of all that has been said before — Scripture, prayer, common sense, sound judgment, the advice of friends and sober reflection — I believe dreams can be a source of further insight into the will of God.

We end where we began. Life is a journey. Along the way decisions are to be made. Christians want to know the will of God. We know in the deepest currents of life that we will always be “restless until we rest in him.”

A prayer appears twice in the *Lutheran Book of Worship* — the Morning and Evening Prayer — that speaks for all.

Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untraveled, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ■





*Manz at practice session:
he encourages parishioners
to "withhold judgment" on
new hymns.*

Energy in Abundance

Often called the dean of American organists, composer Paul Manz, 66, has an unhurried approach to a hectic schedule

By Kathy Kastilahn

Paul Manz was just 9 years old when he played the organ the first time for Sunday worship.

He'd wanted to play the organ as long as he could remember, but had been introduced to the discipline of music first with two years of piano lessons — the requirement of his grandfather. "He was a tough old German," Manz recalls. He had been a cantor, a position similar to director of music, and organist, before moving to Cleveland, Ohio.

"I must have been 5 or 6 when my grandfather set about to make a reed organ with pedals," Manz continues. "He made music exciting enough to expand my horizons beyond what I thought were great. I'm very grateful to him."

Today Manz is widely known in the Lutheran church and beyond. He has performed across the United States and in Europe. He is on the road with 30 or more hymn festival presentations yearly. Last November he again was a featured soloist with the Minnesota Orchestra. "If you're looking for the dean of organists," comments Henry Charles Smith, resident director, "you call Paul Manz." Manz regularly conducts organ workshops and has been a lecturer and recitalist at conventions of the American Guild of Organists. Chorale improvisations that have become his signature number more than 100. He's made eight recordings of these. Manz also has composed choral works.

And he still plays the organ every week for Sunday worship.

Manz is 66, an age at which many men already have retired and others contemplate it. But he is busily and happily settling into the career change that brought him to Chicago in 1983 to be professor of church music and artist-in-residence at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and director of music and organist at St. Luke Church, an urban congregation in the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches with more than 1,000 members.

He left Minneapolis, his home for 40 years, where, in the tradition of his grandfather, he had been cantor at Mount Olive Church (AELC) for 37 years and a professor of music, including 20 years at Concordia College (Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod) where he once chaired the music department. Dr. Robert Leshner, LSTC president, says Manz' presence at the seminary "opened up a new dimension in worship life."

The author is a free-lance writer from Evanston, Ill., who writes regularly for *The Lutheran*.

Manz is chief seminary organist. In that, as much as in the classroom, the president says, "he's helping future pastors relate to the music of the church and to musicians."

Manz seems to have energy in abundance. One Thursday morning in late fall he returned to his seminary office two days after a hymn festival tour concluded with stops in Boston; New York; Long Island, and Washington, D.C. He got home Tuesday in time to speak that night at a synagogue about Lutheran worship, taught Wednesday and was preparing for an engagement in a town 50 miles away Friday. He would play for regular services Sunday at St. Luke, and Tuesday another tour would take him to Kansas City, Mo., and Denver. Only one thing bothered him. "I haven't had time to practice. I like to have three hours a day," he said. He would spend Friday morning at the keyboard.

Manz is a compact man. Precise. A white beard is evenly trimmed and his longish hair is combed back smoothly, with only a springy curl or two escaping over one ear as he takes his glasses off to consider a question and thrusts them back on to talk.

His clothes are conservative — a blue blazer and tan slacks, white shirt and dotted tie. With thick crepe soles, his shoes, however, correctly clue that the wearer is more concerned with comfort and serious walking than fashion.

Manz attended chapel services earlier, so seminary folk know he's in town. There's a knock on his door, and a lunch meeting is set. The phone rings and rings. He takes it off the hook to have quiet time to talk. He may have a hectic schedule, but he's not a hurried man.

Like many other Lutherans in these days Manz is looking eagerly to the formation of the new church. "I have immersed myself with the idea of unity," he says. It's become his work. Even the hymn fests have the theme "Prelude to Unity." Most are fund-raisers, either for support of the Seminex faculty or for outreach causes from world hunger to nursing homes. They brought in more than \$180,000 for Seminex last year. Manz' manager, and daughter, Mary Bode, has no record of how much was raised for the other causes.

"Dad's only criterion," she noted, "is that the money go outside the congregation. He takes expenses. It's his way of serving the church-at-large. But I can't book even a quarter of the requests."

Manz has composed liturgical music and hymns for a new

service written by Walter Wangerin, also a Christ Seminary-Seminex professor at LSTC, called *Una Sancta: A Mass in Thanksgiving for the Unity of the Body of Christ*. "It will be used for the final convention of the AELC this summer and then, hopefully, by the new church," he says.

Manz has devoted much of his professional life to the study of good hymnody. At the seminary organ, which he helped design, he plays again the hymn of the day for this special unity service. And he describes what makes a hymn work: "Short phrases ... a recognizable theme that is carried on and made more interesting ... till it's time to go home."

"We stood below the rolling mountain smoke and trembled to be there, for there you spoke ..." the hymn begins.

Manz says he isolated the text, typed each phrase on separate sheets. Then, one day, on a plane, he sketched out the tune in 10 minutes. Many more hours of thinking and composing followed, he hastens to add, before he completed the tune.

"Through the word," the organist emphasizes. That's the way he approaches music, whether an original piece or a hymn improvisation.

More than any other one thing it is the organist's improvisations on hymn tunes that has been his contribution and has made him popular with people who come to hear him.

Manz believes in the power and importance of hymns. "The enemies of Martin Luther feared his hymns more than his theology," he reminds. He offers standards for a good hymn text: theology, imagery, rhythm, the feel of words and communication. And he'll list the qualities of a good hymn tune using the technical language of musicians: melody, ambitus, rhythm, strong harmony, tonality and major and minor modes.

He also has a succinct way of describing how these all must come together for a hymn to be truly good. "It cannot just contain solemn joy," he cautions. "It must contain holy hilarity as well."

Manz typically hears good singing in response to the hymns he plays, even at the festival performances when he includes ones people may not know. He suspects there may be greater willingness to try something new when the hymn isn't part of the worship service. Still, he reports, "people always come up and say, 'But you didn't play my favorite hymn.'"

The comment troubles him. "Not much exciting is happening with hymnody in many congregations," he says. "A survey showed the average Lutheran congregation knows just 100 tunes in the *Lutheran Book of Worship*."

With a smile that tempers the criticism to come, he observes, "People in the pews have lots of opinions when it comes to worship. But they go to experts for medical or legal problems."

He offers no simple solution. His own experience as a parish organist has been one of openness and trust, he says, and that is developing again at St. Luke where clergy and music staff together select hymns.

Manz would encourage congregational members to withhold judgment on new hymns and to trust "the experts." Sometimes, he adds, it's the pastor or organist who may be hesitant to challenge a congregation. He encourages risk.

The *LBW* has resources, he believes, to enrich worship. "It can open windows for us," he says. There are many hymns not previously in Lutheran hymnals. "It's one of the greatest single documents of ecumenism," he says, citing examples from other traditions that he believes should be sung. His voice races. "*LBW* 207, *We Who Once Were Dead* — a Dutch hymn for communion ... it's death defying; 499, *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* — it's Baptist ... lovely; 430, *Where Restless Crowds Are Thronging* — a marvelous societal hymn that needs to be brought to our awareness; 563, *For the Fruit of All Creation* — first there's the text by one of the greatest English poets, F. Pratt Green ... there's classic strength, though it's a little jarring as each line lifts higher than you'd expect."

Manz is looking forward, too, to the publication later this year of a supplement to the *LBW* which will include hymns from the black and Hispanic traditions. "I've seen the list. It looks exciting. It will give our brothers and sisters songs from their traditions and give all of us something we can use in multicultural worship."

Dr. Mark Bangert, the faculty colleague he shares teaching responsibilities with and choir director at St. Luke, adds that Manz rarely shows his downsides, but that when he does Bangert's likely to know. Manz mentions physical fatigue, lack of preparation from people that work with him and a sense he's been taken advantage of. "He's so willing to do

benefits," points out Bangert, "but sometimes he isn't paid for transportation."

John Manz, the organist's second son, is associate pastor at Gloria Dei Church in St. Paul, Minn. "My father had to struggle whether to be a pastor or pursue music," he recalls being told. "We grew up surrounded by music, aware that it is what touches us deeply."

None of the Manz children are musicians, but all seven are in what John Manz describes as "people services" — teaching, nursing, adolescent psychiatry, social work. "As a family we were raised with a sense of wanting to be useful," he comments.

John Manz was one of three sons born to Manz and his wife, Ruth, whom he'd met at college. When the boys were teenagers the family was increased by four. Ruth's brother, the pastor at Mount Olive, died of a heart attack, and his widow and four young children came to live with the Manz family. Three years later, the mother succumbed to cancer.

Ruth Manz says Manz is by nature shy. "We don't have much of a social life. When Paul comes home after a tour, having been well-peopled, he needs to retreat," she explains.

She has attended many of his hymn festivals. "When the applause comes," she says, "he seems to recognize that it's not so much for him, but for the moment, for what has happened between people's spirits in worship. I've noticed he raises his arms up. He's saying thank you to God for that moment."

Manz recounts that many people will come up to him and say, "You are blessed to be able to do what you do."

"I say that I understand that blessing," Manz says, "but your reaction strengthens my own faith. If it's true that I excite people to sing, then it's equally true that they excite me to play." ■

Manz:

'Not much exciting is happening with hymnody in many congregations'

ONE BLOOD, MANY COLORS

Biblical marching orders

By Massie L. Kennard

The unity of the world's people under God is not a new idea. A great variety of colors and cultures has long enriched the one people of God. The Bible makes clear the common roots of all people. Scripture shows how God's children struggled to express their shared humanity in a sinful world. The story of the church brings that struggle up to date. "Diversity" and "inclusiveness" are common themes in the 20 centuries of the church's life.

The theme of unity goes back to Genesis. The creation account records how "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." One finds no reference here to race, nationality, ethnicity or language. God made human beings.

The story of Noah repeats the theme of human unity. Through each of his sons Noah becomes the common ancestor for diverse peoples. None of these descendants is greater than any other. Noah is seen as the father of a new humanity, which in its diversity of races is the fulfillment of God's command to be fruitful and multiply.

But sin again intrudes. Because of rebellion against God, communication between people breaks down. Conflicts arise, divisions multiply. But time and again God breaks through human barriers to demonstrate the inclusiveness of his love for diverse people. Moses marries a non-Israelite. Ruth the Moabite becomes a mother of the people of Israel. Solomon introduces the Queen of Sheba to the true God. Isaiah foresees all

This is the first installment of a yearlong series. Massie L. Kennard is director for minority concerns in the LCA Division for Mission in North America.

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nations coming to worship on God's holy mountain. Jonah is required to preach repentance to the Ninevites.

The story develops in the New Testament. The Jews — long harassed by invaders and pressured by pagan religions — often emphasized national exclusiveness. But Jesus reached out to foreigners — Samaritans and Syrians among them — who were despised by some of his contemporaries. "Strangers" were attracted to him (Persian "wise men" and Greek pilgrims came seeking him); a Cyrenian bore his cross.

Jesus' message was addressed to all: The kingdom of God is coming — repent, believe, be baptized. One finds no reference to race, nationality, ethnicity or language. Those who hear and accept that message become God's children through faith.

The young church had to struggle to catch up to the teaching and example of its Lord. Gentiles wanted to join Jewish believers in Jesus; Peter was deeply moved by a dream in which God showed him that no people should be thought "unclean." Paul carried the message of Christ outside the synagogues to the marketplace for all to hear. He told the Athenians that God "made of one blood all nations" (Acts 17:26, KJV), a declaration that sparked the name for this series. Philip preached to an Ethiopian eunuch. In Jerusalem, the apostles took action opening the possibility of church membership to all. In a world that drew sharp lines of separation, Christians welcomed Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, for, as they affirmed, "all are one in Christ."

The Bible concludes with the grand vision in Revelations of "a great multitude...from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb..."

The history of the church is in part the story of how more and more diverse peoples were included. Although mainly centered in the Roman Empire in its early centuries, the

Gospel was carried by wave after wave of missionary expansion to the "ends of the earth." When invaders breached the bastions of Christianity, they were in turn "conquered" by the Word of God and incorporated into the church. New spurts of creativity in theology, worship, the arts and charitable work burst forth with each new group touched by the faith.

The Reformation also can be seen as a move to embrace diversity in unity. At a time when centralized control threatened to stifle Christian liberty, the responsibility of each nation for its life under the Gospel was emphasized. Diverse languages and traditions were accepted as part of a precious heritage.

In North America, the story took a different turn. The forces of history brought together here a greater variety of races, nations and languages than anywhere else on earth. The long struggle to realize the vision that "all men are created equal" has been and continues to be dramatically played out in this land. That struggle has been reflected in the life of the church, which has been a central participant in it.

The Lutheran Church in America has always been nationally and linguistically diverse. Even today our congregations hold services in some 13 different languages. Less well-known, perhaps, is the racial diversity that reaches back to the earliest chapters of Lutheran history on these shores. In this series, *One Blood, Many Colors*, four of the ethnic streams that enliven the mosaic of our common life will be shared with all of us. Blacks, Hispanics, Asians and Native Americans each have distinctive stories that belong to the total story of God's people. They are part of our common heritage of inclusiveness and diversity.

Next: Michael L. Cobbler on early Lutheran work among blacks.



A mural from the Roman catacombs depicts Christ and the Samaritan woman



A training videotape can show future acolytes what not to do

VIDEOTAPE COMES TO CHURCH

Creative videos can give new dimension to your church's activities. Such projects are surprisingly affordable.

By Paul Milner and Woody Chamberlain

Isabella eases herself into the comfort of her old, overstuffed chair. Her eyes moisten with tears of joy. She is watching the broadcast of a worship service on her television set. The congregation, Isabella's congregation, rises to sing her favorite hymn and Isabella openly weeps. Then her lips form a smile. She listens intently to the sermon. She peers closely at the screen to see people she knows. She hears her name included in the prayers of the church. This is the first time in more than 10 years that Isabella has been able to watch her congregation worship.

• John, Karen and their family are crowded into the small basement of their California home. They have just received, on videotape, a copy of the 150th anniversary celebration of their home congregation in Ohio. They push the one-button start on their video player and begin watching. John points out to the children the many people they know. There's Mrs. Gardner, their Sunday school teacher. Mary Calloghan stands out in her bright red dress and pheasant plumed hat. Karen describes how she always played the same hymn, *Onward Christian Soldiers*, when she filled in for a vacationing organist. There is James Crawford, the fix-it-man around the building who taught John about tools, machines and special care for God's house. The children watch and learn about their

parents' former involvement at Zion Lutheran Church. The story of faith is shared and passed on to future generations.

• As worshipers arrived for the Maundy Thursday service they find a large projection TV screen perched high over the pulpit. During the service the youth act out a seder meal to dramatize what is so special about this night. They proclaim that Christ has given this meal to everyone and that, just as they worship together, people all over the world are joined together into the body of Christ, into one mystical union. At that point the TV screen comes into action to show people participating in communion services in Africa, Asia, Europe and South America. The congregation joins those on the screen in singing the hymn *In Christ There Is No East or West*.

• Andy sits in the acolyte's chair at the front of the church. He wears a robe but slouches down with his blue jeans and red sneakers visible to everyone. He wears no socks. His head is propped up by one hand and his jaw works at a wad of gum that would choke an elephant. The pastor, looking back at Andy, is not angry but pleased. Andy is being videotaped for the confirmation class to portray what "not to do" in front of the congregation. He is doing a good job.

By borrowing, renting or buying video equipment, churches of all sizes are using this new technology for their proclamation of the Gospel. The four vignettes are just a few examples. Imagine these other uses.

• The adult Sunday school class is studying the letters of the apostle Paul. Borrowing a video player from a class and

The authors are Ohio Synod parish pastors with backgrounds in media, photography and video work.

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Once the equipment is purchased, videotaping is much less expensive than movie film or slides

getting a cassette tape from the synod library, they see the places Paul traveled and hear an outside expert confirm what their Sunday school teacher has been saying. Finally they really see what Paul was up against.

- The youth group of your church flops before a television set, popcorn in hand, and discusses the movie *Jesus of Nazareth*. They had borrowed it from the local public library and watched it at their convenience, which at this time happens to be at 2:30 A.M. during an overnight retreat. The youth advisers smile. They know what horror shows would be showing on regular TV and are pleased they had the power to select what to view.

- Your congregation, by borrowing a video recorder and camera from a member, tapes the annual Thanksgiving Eve service and puts it on the local cable public service channel during the break between the football games on Thanksgiving Day. People who could not attend the services this year, or who never attend any year, see your congregation proclaiming the word of God.

- A daughter of your congregation is being ordained at the synod convention. You record the event with a video camera rented from a local store and bring it home as part of your synod report. All members, now, have the opportunity to feel the special presence of the Holy Spirit during the laying on of hands, instead of just hearing about it.

- Having taped the ordination service as well as the vacation church school's closing pageant, the bringing of food to the altar from the annual Christmas collection for the needy and portions of the Sunday school picnic, you present a visual history of the life of the congregation to the pastor. That depiction of the wider ministry of your congregation is then shown to persons in the pastor's new members class and they, excitedly, look forward to participating in the events of the church.

- The pastor, on Monday morning, watches Sunday's sermon on TV and learns new ways to enhance the message, also realizing that from half the pews the cloth flames on the new banner behind the pulpit look like they are coming out of the top of this preacher's head.

- The choir practices its processional in front of a camera and experiments with a different route to help emphasize the Palm Sunday event.

- The visitation teams role play difficult visits to sharpen their skills at telling the story of the church while, at the same time, listening to the faith story of prospective members.

And so it goes with each group and committee finding new ways to use the video recorder to add another dimension to their activities.

The video recorder is only a tool like the microphone, the blackboard or the mimeograph. With this tool people grow closer to each other, hear God's story in a new way, participate in teaching, or spread the Good News to the world.

Imagine how your congregation could use it.

Best yet, video does not have to cost an arm and a leg. You, or others, may already own your own video cassette recorder. With a little planning you can use this equipment at the church for your own presentations, groups or classes. If a member owns a camera too (you would be surprised how many do), he or she might be willing to use it to tape a church service or a special event. Or, just as many congregations share the use of 16mm sound movie projectors, you could borrow, rent or share owned equipment with a neighboring congregation. Many stores now rent recorders and cameras.

If your congregation *does* choose to buy equipment there are many ways to go. If you only want to show tapes that you borrow from your synod or rent from distributors of religious tapes, you can purchase a table model playback unit for as little as \$250 and use any TV set you have available. With most units you can even copy programs for later use.

If you want to take the videotapes to shut-ins you need a playback-only unit. For shut-ins take along a portable television (a black and white 12-inch portable runs about \$65 and a 9-inch color, smaller for weight reduction, can run as low as \$200). Currently, two types of video recording units are popular with a third type slipping in the back door. The most popular types are the "Beta" system and the "VHS" system. You cannot play tapes from one system on the other although you can play any tape made on any machine of the same system. The VHS format (we recommend it) is selling about four to one over the Beta. The most important aspect to consider, however, is what format your members have so that you can swap tapes or send church tapes into the homes. You should, also, check with your synod library to see if only one format is available from that source. Most commercial stores still rent both types of tapes.

The third format is the 8 millimeter size in comparison to the half-inch size of the Beta and VHS systems. Right now the 8 millimeter systems are new, have only a few companies producing equipment and prerecorded tapes, and offer only a few features on the equipment. Nevertheless, this system may be the home unit of the next decade and needs to be considered.

Videotaping, once the machines are purchased, is much less expensive than movie film or slides. Most prerecorded tapes can be rented for as little as \$1 a night and purchased in a range between \$12.50 and \$49.95 for most tapes that churches would be using. Movies on film compare at an average rental fee of \$30 for short features (your synod library may offer films free) and a purchase price in the hundreds of dollars.

Blank videotapes for use in your own production run around \$5 a tape at a discount store. Stay with brand-name tapes and you won't hurt your recorder. A typical tape will record and playback from two hours at its fastest speed to six hours at its slowest speed. Compared to home movie film, super 8 size with developing at about \$10 for three minutes, or a slide presentation produced at about \$6 a minute, you have quite a bargain. Plus, the videotape can be erased and used over again when material becomes dated.

Video has many applications you could put to use in your church. Some member may be willing to donate the equipment or memorial funds might be used for the project. In a short time your congregation could be using a video recorder to expand your church's ministry. Imagine that! ■

LCUSA

Wins Name Poll

If readers of *The Lutheran* were selecting the name for the new Lutheran church, they would choose Lutheran Church in the USA by more than 2 to 1 over Evangelical Lutheran Church in the USA.

More than 4,200 readers responded to ballots published in the magazine's two November issues. The final tally was LCUSA — 2,915; ELCUSA — 1,325.

The two names were chosen by the 70-member Commission for a New Lutheran Church last September. A final decision will be made next month. The poll by *The Lutheran* will be shared with the CNLC. The new church expects to bring together the Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches Jan. 1, 1988.

In a similar poll by *Lutheran Perspective*, the newspaper of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, LCUSA was preferred 306-247.

Some congregations took surveys or reprinted the ballot in newsletters or bulletins and encouraged members to respond directly to *The Lutheran*. At First English Church, Syracuse, N.Y., 60 voters preferred LCUSA and 12 ELCUSA. At Glade Creek Church, Blue Ridge, Va., ELCUSA won 48-25. In Tacoma, Washington, the Rev. Lyndon K. Murk decided that "our church (Bethel) will not be a determining factor" because 29 voters favored each option.

A sign-up sheet at Christ the King Church, Kendall Park, N.J., showed LCUSA the winner 86-0. "Our members don't usually all agree so well on something," commented Pastor Elizabeth Waid.

Most of the respondents were individuals, including 17 who filled in their names but forgot to vote. Of the more than 100 respondents who sent notes with their votes, two themes were predominant: 1) they don't like either name, or 2) they want "USA" removed.

Paul Stouffer of Highspire, Pa., called the names "mundane" and "without much zip. But ELCUSA

is the best of the two." John Wayland, Baltimore, said both names are "unimaginative and forced." He preferred simply "The Lutheran Church."

The Rev. John F. Sammel, Bedford, Pa., said "in the USA is exclusive. We should try to be inclusive in name and mission." A number of voters wondered about Canadian members, forgetting that the LCA Canadians became members of the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada Jan. 1, 1986. All congregations of the new U.S. church will be in the United States and its territories or possessions except for one congregation in the Bahamas and one in Bermuda.

Carol J. Jacklin, Geneva, Ill., reflected the thoughts of a number of voters when she said that "in the USA is too cumbersome." What about "Lutheran Church—USA"? asked Mark Stichter, Cape Coral, Fla. A number of voters suggested replacing "in the USA" with "in America."

W.R. Csellak, West Palm Beach, Fla., asked, "Why should we put an address in the name?" And Alice Rentell, Hamden, Conn., thought that "using initials commercializes the name."

Most of those who preferred LCUSA expressed the same sentiments as Daniel F. Lincoln, Greenhurst, N.Y.: "The simpler and more direct the better. Lots of people don't know what 'evangelical' means."

By contrast, Agnes Cooper, Gladstone, Mich., chose ELCUSA because "many people tell me my church is not evangelical, so my choice makes it plainer." But Lester Kaufman, Greenville, Pa., said that "if ELCUSA wins, I will probably withdraw."

Of those who made other suggestions, Irene Floy, Carroll, Iowa, pleaded for "a name without LCA, ALC, AELC, ALCW, NCC, CNLC, etc. I was married to a pastor for 30 years and still don't know what all those letters mean. No initials, please." Pastor Ronald Rude, Williams-ville, N.Y., said, "We have two especially good possibilities for naming the new church: The Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church. Both are simple to say and communicate who we are. Why not just flip a coin?"

Finally, there was Carolyn D. Negele, Frankfort, Ill., who wondered "whether our theme song will be 'Born (again) in the USA.'"



KIDBITS

Send your stories, art, photos, puzzles and craft ideas (but no poetry, please) to Em Romin at *The Lutheran*, 2900 Queen Lane, Philadelphia, Pa. 19129. Payment to young contributors for material published is a *Kidbits* T-shirt.

Students enjoy church rally day

Paper peace cranes, T-shirts and balloons helped Sunday school pupils celebrate "rally days."

Youth at **Messiah Church, Marquette, Mich.**, folded paper into the shape of the tall birds during a peace rally. (The paper crane is an international symbol of peace.) They mailed the cranes to President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

At **Bethany Church, Duluth, Minn.**, 40 students designed rally day T-shirts with the slogan, "Come celebrate, go proclaim." Wearing their shirts, they marched through the church to make all present aware of the importance of evangelical outreach.

"Balloon-grams" were released on rally day by children from **Good Shepherd Church, Glen Rock, N.J.** Each balloon contained a card for the finder to return.

Class 'dresses up' to learn Bible

At Christ Church, Lancaster, Pa., third- and fourth-grade pupils learn Old Testament stories by dressing in costumes.

"We set up a two-corner screen and call it Old Testament Theater," says teacher Ella Mae Kilheffer.

Art about the story of the day is placed on front of the screen. Behind the screen is a box of used clothing and props.

"After we read the story two students go in back of the screen and dress up," Kilheffer says. They appear in front of the class and act out the story the way they heard it. "In this way, each person becomes a part of the Bible story," Kilheffer says.

Young clowns spread cheer

To lighten the hearts of others is one of the goals of The Heart Lights, a clown ministry group at Good Shepherd Church, Columbia, S.C. The mime group believes that in "clowning" both audience and performers share in God's love.

A part of the church's youth ministry program since 1983, The Heart Lights currently is made up of 14 youth and two adult advisers. So far the group has put on more than 30 shows for people in nursing homes, hospitals and congregations.

The youth plan the shows, with each skit having a message. "We usually take an idea and make up our own parts," says Donna Hyatt, 13.

Alan Hyatt, 16, describes the skits as "sort of flowing. You just have to pick up vibes from the other person to see what they're going to do," he says.



Clowns perform "sad" skit

At the end of a performance the clowns move through the audience, giving out hearts printed with the words "God loves you" or "We love you."

"It's fun," says Karina Salisbury, 15. "I'm sure other people enjoy it. It makes them happy."



Youth paint mural of ark

Young members of St. Paul Church, Mobile, Ala., work on a mural of Noah's ark. Designed by parishioner Pat LaGrange, the mural was painted on a wall in the fellowship hall. Fifteen children and adults did the painting over several months last year.

LCA council chides pension board

Chiding its Board of Pensions for not filing certain stockholder resolutions concerning investments in South Africa, the Lutheran Church in America Executive Council last month asked a special committee to meet with representatives of the board to discuss the church's corporate social responsibility.

The action came after the pension board's investment committee met in November and voted against submitting shareholder resolutions to several companies doing business in South Africa. The resolutions had been unanimously recommended by the Sept. 20, 1985, meeting of the council.

The investment committee, in action later supported by the pension board, said that urging companies to withdraw from South Africa could constitute a "gift" of corporate assets to the South African government and that if the shareholder actions were approved and implemented it could adversely affect the value of the stock held by the board.

Corporate decision

"The board has supported shareholder resolutions," said John G. Kapanke, senior vice president for investments of the board, "but in the area of whether a corporation should be in a country, it was decided that those decisions should best be left to the

corporation management."

Dr. Elizabeth Bettenhausen, a council member from Boston, lamented the "ideological gap which causes the board not to hear what we say." Bettenhausen also said the board had provided "no data that shows it will be financially irresponsible to take a shareholder action."

Trustees of pension funds are required by law to be "prudent" in their investments, and must act in ways that are likely to be profitable for the portfolio. LCA Secretary Reuben Swanson said he thought the board's investment committee "believed it was acting in a fiduciary way."

Dr. Franklin D. Fry of Summit, N.J., was critical of the board's refusal to file the resolutions and said he had "difficulty in maintaining my patience" because of the numbers of cities, states, universities and foundations that have found it financially and socially responsible to withdraw from South Africa. "We are hardly asking the board to be Daniel Boones charting an unknown course. It is hard to believe that our extreme caution is required when others without the motivation of faith seem willing to do what we are not willing to do."

The Division for Mission in North America argued in a paper presented at the council meeting that the pension board had not substantiated its claims that filing the shareholder resolutions would be finan-

cially irresponsible. "The Board of Pensions is evidently not aware of the profit situation for American companies operating in South Africa," the paper said. DMNA said it had provided the pension board with material that outlined the "very adverse situation for American corporations in South Africa and listed those which have already left because of heavy losses."

New church constitution

The council devoted nearly six hours to review of the working draft of the proposed constitution, bylaws and continuing resolutions of the new Lutheran church. The merger will unite the LCA, the American Lutheran Church and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches.

The council noted that the merger plan indicates that if the LCA or ALC fails to vote positively, the merger is off. If the AELC votes negatively, however, the LCA and ALC will still unite.

In other action, the council:

- named April 20 as One in Mission Sunday to promote the \$36 million fund-raising effort;
- approved a revision in the Board of Pension constitution allowing board members to serve until age 75, and
- adopted ways for synods to take the necessary actions to effect merger without meeting in 1987.

WCC leaders ask S. Africa sanctions

The presiding bishop of the American Lutheran Church, one of two U.S. Lutheran bishops at an "emergency meeting" of the World Council of Churches in Harare, Zimbabwe, said in a statement that he was convinced of the need for "strong, targeted sanctions against the South African government and for an end to regular renewal loans by U.S. banks to South Africa."

Dr. David W. Preus said after the Dec. 4-6, 1985, meeting of 85 heads of churches that "economic pressure is the only avenue available to bring a peaceful solution."

The other U.S. Lutheran church leader at the meeting was Bishop Will Herzfeld of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches.

Preus' comments echoed the theme of a strongly worded six-point "Harare Declaration" signed by the 48 delegates from Europe, North America and Africa and 37 delegates from South Africa. The declara-



Preus and Tutu

tion called for the resignation of the South African government, the Western churches' support of sanctions against South Africa

and the support of liberation movements.

The declaration says, "We affirm that the moment of truth is now, both for South Africa and the world community. We have heard the cries of anguish of the people of South Africa trapped in the oppressive structures of apartheid. In this moment of immense potentiality, we agree that the apartheid structure is against God's will and is morally indefensible. The government has no credibility."

Bishop Desmond Tutu, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, told the meeting that "if President Reagan were to apply to South Africa the same policies that he has to Nicaragua and Poland, the apartheid system would be dead."

Tutu, bishop of the Anglican Church in Johannesburg, pointed to the United States, United Kingdom and West Germany as playing key roles in sustaining the oppressive, white racist government of South Africa.

Rome's synod keeps ecumenical thrust

Rumors of the demise of the ecumenical movement in the Roman Catholic Church proved to be greatly exaggerated as the two-week extraordinary Synod of Bishops ended in Rome Dec. 8, 1985. The synod showed the ecumenical spirit of the Second Vatican Council to be "deeply and indelibly inscribed" in the church 20 years after the council ended.

Interviews, statements of individual bishops, the final summary report and even a surprising papal initiative in holding an "ecumenical celebration" near the end of the synod indicated that the largest and most diverse communion in Christendom is intent on seeking fuller unity with other Christians.

"The general expression of commitment is quite strong, but what I still would desire is a more practical implementation," said Bishop Andreas Aarflot of Oslo, Norway, the official Lutheran World Federation observer at the synod. Nine other non-Catholic observers were present.

Bishop James W. Malone of Youngstown, Ohio, head of the U.S. Catholic bishops, said the synod was an "ecumenical plus," but he feels that there has been a "kind of a plateau reached in theological dialogues" with other churches.

Helpful images

The synod's summary report or *relatio* contains helpful ecumenical images "lifting up the person of Christ, as opposed to a comment that would be primarily concerned with the church of Christ," said Malone.

At the end of the synod Pope John Paul II said it had achieved its stated goal to "celebrate, promote and verify" the work of Vatican II which introduced profound changes in the liturgical, spiritual and structural life of the church.

Some had feared that the synod would give way to a "certain fundamentalism" in the church, and that one possible casualty might be a weakened Secretariat for Christian Unity.

The secretariat, created 25 years ago during preparations for Vatican II, occupies a middle-level position in the Roman curia and is dwarfed by the more powerful institutions, particularly the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith headed by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger.

Ratzinger has repeatedly emphasized the need to return to the original documents of Vatican II because he believes they have been misinterpreted. He views movements such as liberation theology and social statements from the national bishops' conferences as aberrations of the council's teachings.



From left, the pope and Belgian archbishop Jan Schotte pray during ecumenical service with French Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox clergy.

The synod's summary report, according to some observers, is a carefully balanced statement reflecting some of Ratzinger's concerns for maintaining a strong Catholic identity in the midst of social change, but it also underscores the need to work for social justice. The report also proposes a universal catechism to reflect the documents of Vatican II in the church's traditional teachings, with the possibility of some regional supplements to the compendium of faith.

The need for certain regional autonomy was expressed in the report, which also recommended a careful study of the role of national bishops' conferences in doctrinal matters. Decentralization is generally viewed as an aid to ecumenism, where church practices often reflect local needs instead of the concerns of Rome.

The synod's final report has a small section on ecumenism itself, saying that the movement toward greater unity is now a part of the "conscience of the church" and that the synod hopes for "full communion

with other churches."

The pope surprised some with a candid homily at the synod's ecumenical celebration. He implied a certain self-criticism of the church for its failure to make a "whole-hearted personal commitment to Jesus Christ, which makes separation intolerable for those who share that commitment."

The concerns of the Third World bishops at the synod are not easily met through theological dialogue, reflection and even official action. Brazilian Cardinal Aloisio Lorscheider said that in Latin America, ecumenism comes alive in the "common struggle" against poverty and social injustice.

At the close of the synod, celebrated by a solemn Mass at St. Peter Basilica, the pope made a strong plea for a return to the faith as represented by Jesus Christ, the apostles and Mary. He also recognized that the church, as it approaches the year 2000, must also be "the church in the modern world."

—DANIEL CATTALU

Canadians begin new church

The 209,000-member Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada came into being Jan. 1, 1986. The new church is made up of three former Lutheran Church in America synods and the former Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada (of American Lutheran Church background). The ELCIC has 655 congregations and is the fourth largest Protestant denomination in Canada.

ELCIC President Donald Sjoberg, former bishop of the LCA Western Canada Synod, thanked the LCA Executive Council last month "for giving us the space to make the decision to form a Canadian

church. We have our office building in Winnipeg, although it is not quite ready for us to move in. Our five synods are constituted and we have all but one of our churchwide staff.

"Remembrances are important to us," Sjoberg continued, "and we greatly appreciate how you have strengthened us through the years." Sjoberg then presented the LCA with a \$5,000 check from the Western Canada Synod.

LCA Bishop James R. Crumley Jr. replied that "we already miss you folks in Canada, but we exult in your new relationship."

Nicaragua arrests evangelical leaders

After protests by U.S. religious groups, the Nicaraguan government freed a leading evangelical pastor who had been held during a crackdown on evangelicals, according to U.S. officials.

Released was the Rev. Boanerges Mendoza, pastor of the First Central American Church of Managua. In early November he and several other leading Nicaraguan evangelicals were arrested by authorities in a series of events that included a raid on the Managua offices of Campus Crusade for Christ, an evangelistic group based in the United States.

According to widespread reports, the religious leaders were "humiliated" and forced to strip naked during interrogations. All were freed, but Mendoza was arrested again after he contacted American groups.

The detentions met with loud protests by U.S. religious groups, especially by United Methodist Church bishops. Additional pressure was applied by the Nicaraguan Evangelical Committee for Aid and Development, known by its Spanish acronym, CEPAD, which has been criticized by conservatives for being too closely aligned with the Nicaraguan government.

Maryknoll priest the Rev. Miguel D'Escoto, Nicaragua's foreign minister, told about 2,000 people in Berkeley, Cal., that U.S. backing of guerrillas fighting the Nicaraguan Sandinistas was "an illegal immoral war" causing "incalculable death and suffering."

In El Salvador, Archbishop Arturo Rivera y Damas appealed in a letter to all members of the U.S. Congress to halt the deportations of Salvadoran refugees from the United States. He said that while Canada and countries in Central America have offered refuge to Salvadorans, U.S. authorities have "closed their doors and hearts."

Sanctuary trial

In Tucson, Ariz., a government informant who infiltrated churches during an undercover investigation of the sanctuary movement admitted that he formerly smuggled illegal farm workers at \$100 a head into the United States from Mexico.

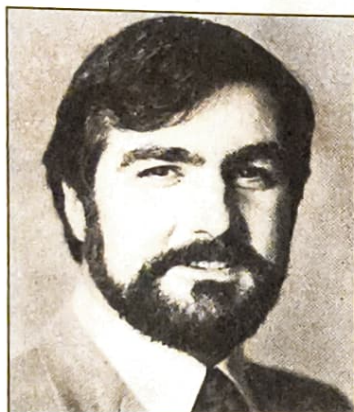
Jesus Maldonado Cruz attended Bible study classes at Alzona Church, a congregation of the American Lutheran Church, and then told government authorities about undocumented persons who were there. Cruz said he became an informant when the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service learned about his smuggling and promised him immunity from prosecution if he would cooperate with them.

WORLDSCAN

Twenty-four East and West German theologians, church leaders and peace activists issued a joint statement lauding the temporary ban on nuclear testing by the Soviet Union and urging the United States and European nuclear powers to follow suit. Elsewhere, the general synod of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in (West) Germany supported the idea of an ecumenical peace council earlier endorsed by the Lutheran World Federation.

"No references to contemporary Protestant life of any kind," a "liberal political bias" and a notable emphasis on feminism were found in a survey of public school textbooks conducted by a New York University psychology professor. The study was funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

The term "human being" does not include a fetus, according to the Minnesota Supreme Court's interpretation of a state homicide statute. The decision came in a case involving a car accident where an 8-and-one-half-month-old fetus died even though the mother lived. The court's decision follows a definition of "human being" accepted by 23 other states.



The Rev. William F. Schulz, 36, is the new president of the Unitarian Universalist Association. He says he wants to make the 138,000-member denomination "a household word in North America."

The Vatican's deficit will be about \$50 million for 1985, up from about \$33.8 million for 1984, according to reports from Rome. In New York, a CBS/*New York Times* poll showed that Catholics believe by a 6-1 majority that they can hold divergent views from the church on abortion, birth control, women as priests and married priests and still remain good Catholics.

The Lutheran Church in America Bishops' Commission on Economic Justice, appointed last January to help the LCA Western Pennsylvania-West Virginia Synod formulate a response to the area's unemployment and economic stagnation, will report to the synod in the spring. The commission had planned to report earlier.

The Southern Baptist Convention is being sued by three delegates who contend that they were "irreparably harmed" during last year's convention when SBC President Charles Stanley refused to recognize them during a debate on elections.

Angry parishioners of Little Flower Roman Catholic Church, Berkeley Heights, N.J., and members who belong to a charismatic group called the People of Hope called a meeting to settle their differences but disrupted speakers with placards and slogans and booed their bishop off the podium. The principal and about one-half of the faculty of the parish's parochial school are members of Hope.

The possibility of a future archbishop of Canterbury not being a British citizen is gaining favor, according to Church of England documents. The archbishop heads the worldwide Anglican communion.

More than 150,000 Romanians turned out to see and hear evangelist Billy Graham during an 11-day, seven-stop preaching mission. "We have never seen anything like this before for an evangelical preacher," said a Romanian Baptist.

For the record: Orthodox Jews excommunicated New York Mayor Edward Koch because of his support for gay rights.... Jan Vecan, 22, a Czech Lutheran youth worker, was arrested when police found books containing Christian children's stories in his car. The books were printed outside the country in the Slovak language and secretly taken into the country. Possession of such books is forbidden in Czechoslovakia.... Deaths: James Groppi, 54, Milwaukee, former Roman Catholic priest who was active in civil rights marches, and retired Catholic Bishop Carroll Dozier, 74, Memphis, Tenn., an advocate of draft resistance and a supporter of women's rights in the church.

1985: Year of law in religion

Historians may shudder over 1985 because the world of religion seemed enmeshed in church and civil court cases in which law disrupted them internally and externally and threatened to overshadow, if not eclipse, grace.

Lutherans became part of unwanted church and civil litigation when arrests, hearings and jailings made former Lutheran Church in America pastor D. Douglas Roth in Pittsburgh almost a household word. A Tucson, Ariz., trial of 11 members of the sanctuary movement charged with transporting illegal aliens raised the issue of infiltration of churches by government agents seeking information.

The Vatican accused Brazilian liberation theologian Leonardo Boff of promoting Marxist ideas and ordered him to keep quiet for a year. U.S. Presbyterian missionary Benjamin Weir was freed after 16 months of captivity by a radical Shiite Muslim group in Beirut. South Africa jailed Dr. Allan Boesak, head of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, for his anti-apartheid stands.

Among the cults, courts ordered the Scientologists to pay \$39 million in damages to a former follower. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh was deported from his Oregon commune for violation of immigration laws and the Rev. Sun Myung Moon was released after serving a prison term for tax evasion.

Numerous court cases affected church social action. Seven church-state cases were decided by the U.S. Supreme Court, the largest number in the court's 195-year history. They struck down an Alabama law that prescribed a daily silent prayer period in the state's public schools, and said that states may not require private employers under all circumstances to give employees a day off each week for religious observances. The Minnesota Supreme Court followed the precedent of 23 other states and ruled that an 8-and-one-half-month-old fetus killed in a car accident was not a "human being."

Internal turmoil

Some United Methodist pastors and laity formed an unofficial mission society and sent out five couples to protest the official church mission agency which they say overemphasizes social outreach. U.S. evangelicals faced up to an "alarming increase in born-again Christians" involved in wife and child abuse, calling it a "gap between our ideal commitment to theology and the practical stuff of life."

The Southern Baptist Convention was taken to court by three delegates to last year's convention who charged that they had not been allowed to enter a floor debate about elections. The controversial "salamander letter" written by the first convert to Mormonism referred to Mormon founder Joseph Smith's belief in the occult, and led to further suspicions when a person involved in the sale of the

letter was injured by a car bomb.

Among Lutherans, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod faced sharp faculty divisions at Concordia Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., over the leadership of President Robert Preus. The American Lutheran Church revised its ordination guidelines to remove phrases about handicapped pastors. The Commission for a New Lutheran Church continued to move toward a 1988 union of the LCA, ALC and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, but struggled to find answers to pension and ministry differences and were said by some to be legalistic in imposing quotas for representation on boards and assemblies.

Times of grace

There were, of course, many times when the central witnesses of religious groups shone clearly. U.S. church

membership was up nearly 1 percent, the first increase since 1962. A "wounded" National Council of Churches vowed to establish more balance between evangelism and social action. An NCC panel on sex and violence in the media told film, television, cable and home video industries to monitor their productions or face possible censorship.

Ecumenical relations progressed during the year, highlighted by an exchange

of letters between LCA Bishop James R. Crumley Jr. and Pope John Paul II, and a worship service by U.S. Roman Catholic and Lutheran bishops in Reformation Lutheran Church, Washington. The extraordinary Synod of Bishops in Rome endorsed the reforms of Vatican II.

Overseas, seven more theological centers opened in China, and the Chinese government welcomed teachers sent by churches. Hunger relief for Africa topped the \$200 million mark. Evangelist Billy Graham reached the 100 million mark in listeners during his career. The Church of England agreed to ordain women deacons, a step regarded by many as a prelude to ordaining women as priests. In Canada, former LCA and ALC Lutherans banded together to form the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

Churches took the lead in providing counseling and care for AIDS victims. The anti-Arab racism of U.S.-born Rabbi Meir Kahane, an Israeli Parliament member, was condemned. Human rights violations were criticized in Central America, the Philippines, Afghanistan and other countries.

Despite the longer list of minuses than pluses, a review of 1985 in the world of religion needs to be cast against the historical backdrop that the church has often fared well in times of crisis. The year 1986 could well be a year of more grace and less law.

—EDGAR R. TREXLER



Rajneesh



Roth



Boff

Black Lutherans plan for new church

"We confess Christ on the principles of the Augsburg Confession. We are really Christians. We are really black and we are real Lutherans," said Dr. Peter Nash, instructor at Garrett Seminary, Evanston, Ill. Nash and Dr. Rudolph Featherstone, professor at Trinity Seminary, Columbus, Ohio, led the Association of Black Lutherans biennial conference titled "Harambe — One in Christ."

The conference, held Dec. 6-8, 1985, in Techny, Ill., included Bible study, reports from regional chapters and elections. It also reviewed the meeting of the ABL executive committee with representatives from the American Lutheran Church Coalition of Black Members on joint projects in preparation for the new Lutheran church.

Harambe, a Swahili word meaning "let us come gather together," was a recurring theme for the 136 delegates and visitors attending. There were nine senior high and college students, 10 seminarians and 17 CBM members participating.

During Bible study sessions Nash discussed the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis to illustrate the experience of U.S. blacks in "pharaoh's court. As black men and women in the United States we live on the edge," he said.

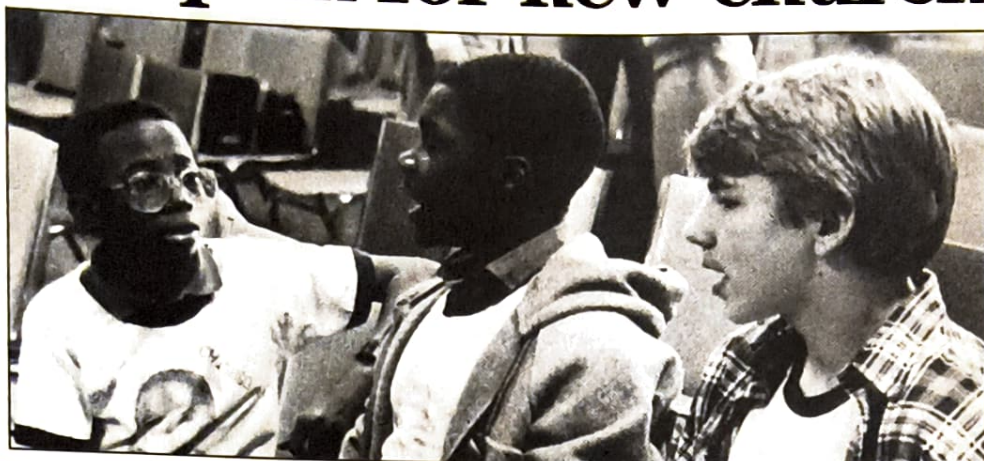
Teams play championships

The football teams of two colleges with ties to the Lutheran Church in America played in national championships last month. Augustana College, Rock Island, Ill., defeated Ithaca (N.Y.) College 20 - 7 to win the NCAA Division III championship. Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Wash., lost to the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse 24 - 7 in the NAIA Division II championship.

Another Lutheran college, Gettysburg (Pa.) College, played in the NCAA Division III semifinals where it lost to Ithaca College 34 - 0.

Augustana College, which has been the division champion for the last two years, had the longest win streak in college football with 36 straight wins prior to the championship game last month. Augustana last lost in a championship game in 1982. The team has not lost a regular season football game since 1980, giving the team a streak of 49 wins in regular-season play.

Pacific Lutheran had the longest unbeaten record in its division with 14 straight wins prior to the championship game last month. PLU won the division title in 1980 and has been in the playoffs four other times.



Young people taking part in conference are (from left) Keith Frazier, Kenneth Robinson and Michael Davis, all of Chicago.

"How can you not be Joseph and claim to know about Martin Luther King Jr.?" asked Featherstone during his presentation. "Blackness is God's gift to this church. We don't play with the gift or the giver," he exclaimed.

Delegates approved a resolution that CBM and black members of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches create and financially support a Black Task Force on Merger.

The task force will design a permanent organization to succeed ABL and CBM and develop a process for the nomination and election of four blacks to serve on the commission for multicultural ministries.

ABL committed itself to a cross-cultural youth event in 1987. ABL will invite representatives from CBM, the LCA Hispanic Caucus, the Asian Caucus of the LCA and ALC, the National Indian Lutheran Board,

representatives of the AELC and the appropriate agencies from the uniting church bodies to participate in the planning.

Delegates elected the Rev. James Capers, Holy Spirit Church, Savannah, Ga., to his second term as vice president of ABL. Shirley Pickett of Chicago continues as president and Carolyn Baker Brown of New York as secretary. Emma Graeber, New Hope Church, Jamaica, N.Y., was elected treasurer.

Dr. Callon Holloway, pastor of Westwood Church, Dayton, Ohio, and a member of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church, spoke on what the new Lutheran church would mean to black Lutherans. "It is better to define our own way of how we relate to the church," Holloway says. "We have to decide that we are going to be accountable for the definition of our ministries."

—ROSEMARY DYSON

LUTHERAN LISTS

In a 1985 survey 782 Lutherans described as "inactive" listed the major factors for their dropping out of church activities.

Church places too much emphasis on money 55%

Worship service is not meaningful 50%

Pastor doesn't seem interested in them as person 47%

Personal conflict with pastor 47%

Irrelevant sermons 42%

"Burnout" — church overuses people 40%

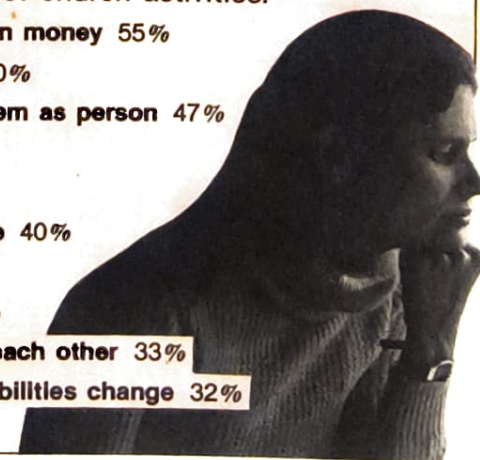
Changes in member's interests 39%

Apathy on the part of members 35%

Members lack care and concern for each other 33%

Conflicts arise as member's responsibilities change 32%

Source: Profiles of Lutherans



FELLP applauds Svendsbye

In response to concerns that the current Lutheran churches place too much emphasis on social issues, the vice president of the American Lutheran Church recently told a leadership conference of the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Laity and Pastors that he hoped the new church being formed by three Lutheran bodies would balance its emphases on evangelism and social issues.

Dr. Lloyd Svendsbye also told the group that he and ALC Presiding Bishop David W. Preus hoped that the new denomination would not establish "quotas" to ensure racially balanced delegations to conventions of the new church and its synods. Svendsbye, a member of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church, said he wanted "the legalistic language about quotas" taken out of church documents.

The ALC vice president who is also president of Luther Northwestern Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., made his remarks in response to questions during a two-day FELLP meeting in Minneapolis.

About 250 FELLP sympathizers from across the country attended the sessions and heard FELLP board members charge that Lutheran leadership in America had abandoned the Bible as "the only norm" for church teaching.

Svendsbye attempted to reassure the participants in the conference that the commission planning the new Lutheran church would emphasize the Bible as the authoritative source and norm of church teaching. He said he could not agree that the Bible was the "only" norm, noting that the new church's documents refer also to the faith proclaimed in the creeds and confessions.

Svendsbye drew applause and "Amen's" when he said, "Evangelism is the heart of the Gospel and evangelism is what we



Svendsbye

should be talking about when we get together at conventions."

He said that the public news media is interested in the social actions taken by conventions. If a church convention spends six hours discussing evangelism and one hour on social issues, the media will report the social issues, he said. More balance in reporting would be appreciated, he added.

Speakers charged that Lutheran publications had published writings which "denied that Jesus was the only way to salvation."

Svendsbye also attempted to reassure the conference participants on that issue. "I have heard that there are persons who say there are more ways than one to salvation," the seminary president said, "and I reject that, the Scriptures reject that, the confessions (of the Lutheran churches) reject that." Those who deny that faith in Christ is the only way to salvation should be disciplined, the seminary president stated.

Soviet women visit Michigan

When a delegation of Soviet women visited Detroit on an international peace mission recently, Rosalind Moldwin, Christ Church, Detroit, was among their hosts.

Moldwin, who says she has a personal commitment to work for peace and understanding, described the Soviet women as "extremely articulate."

"I was impressed by their desire to work for peace," she commented. "They supposedly are our enemies yet they have a similar desire to approach political leaders in both countries about the subject of global peace."

The women emphasized that their main purpose in traveling to America was to create an atmosphere of hope. "There will always be differences among us," they said. "We must simply find non-nuclear ways of resolving them."

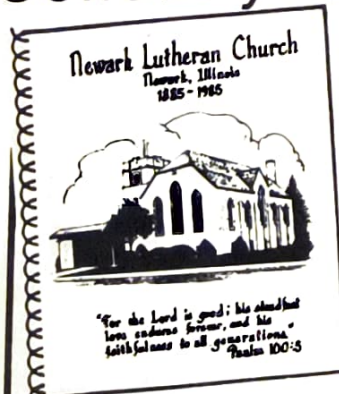
The visitors included a scientist, a youth magazine editor and a member of the Soviet Women's Committee who served as interpreter. During their two-day stay they were serenaded in Russian by a Detroit school choir, met city council members, toured businesses and spoke.

The discussions were mainly about peace, Moldwin reported. "We did not talk about religion at all," she said, "although there was a prayer before one of the meals." Moldwin said she assumed that the women were atheists.

The trip was sponsored by Peace Links, a U.S. organization that seeks to prevent nuclear war. Moldwin was involved as a board member of the YWCA of Metropolitan Detroit. The Michigan Synod's Committee on Peace Making and Lutheran Church Women also sponsored the visit.

—JOHN SIEFKEN

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Volunteer corps works for justice

In 1979 nine volunteers answered the call of a new organization called Lutheran Volunteer Corps, a ministry of Luther Place Memorial Church, Washington. The challenge was threefold: to work for social justice, to live in intentional Christian community and to simplify their lifestyle. The volunteers went to work in the "homeless" shelters, medical clinics and "bread lines" of the nation's capital.

Today the program has expanded to include 40 volunteers living and working in five more U.S. cities: Baltimore; Wilmington, Del.; Jersey City, N.J.; Chicago, and Milwaukee. Work placements range from direct service in such places as shelters to indirect service such as organizing and advocating for the "voiceless" members of society.

Molly Mansker, Central Church (American Lutheran Church), Eugene, Ore., works with children in a foster care program in Chicago. She describes her job as "one of the biggest growth experiences I've ever had."

"I've heard the Gospel message to go to the poor since I was a kid," Mansker says. "Now I'm experiencing that test of faith



Heckert (top row, second from left) poses with Washington volunteers.

by doing work in Jesus' name and sharing spiritual life with people from different backgrounds. It's all working out! I encourage anyone to test themselves because the rewards are tenfold."

A volunteer, who must be at least 21, receives room, board, transportation, medical insurance and a monthly personal sti-

pend of \$85. Three to seven volunteers live in a community arrangement. Since the work contains high responsibility and a fair share of stress, this community is the volunteer's base for strength and support.

"We all know we're going to come home and vent. We need that and are supportive of that. It's so important and appreciated," says Dawn Heckert, night supervisor of Sarah House, a place for homeless women in Washington. Heckert is a member of Zion Church, Zion Hill, Pa.

"I'm learning about teaching, black and Hispanic cultures, the peace movement, and emergency food and housing practices," Mansker adds. "We're sharing the burden of simple living. It's a challenge to discover free entertainment and to experiment with different foods."

To a Lutheran Volunteer Corps member work is a constant reminder of the biblical call to be always faithful, not always successful. "LVC is worth all the grief, anxiety, joy and challenge," states Alex Williamson, a Presbyterian from South Dakota in his second year of service at a shelter and soup kitchen in Hoboken, N.J.

—ANNIE MUMGAARD

Call church 'people of God'

People from 31 states and six countries signed a "Manifesto of the People of God" to climax a recent convocation on the ministry of the laity. The manifesto calls for "the recovery of the term 'the people of God,' to describe the church," stating that the terms "laity" and "lay" are inadequate and result in a false dichotomy between professional ministers (clergy) and non-professional ministers (laity).

"Most of all we call for God's people to extend and broaden their understanding of ministry," the manifesto states. "The whole ministry is given to the whole church for the whole world."

Heading the group which wrote the manifesto was William Diehl of Allentown, Pa., a Lutheran Church in America member who serves as a consultant with the LCA Division for Mission in North America.

Diehl was keynote speaker at the convocation held at Andover Newton Theological School near Boston.

LCA members were among those who signed the statement at the convocation attended by 350 people from 15 Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic Church.

—CAROLINE ACKERMAN

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Today, however, the Quechua heritage is largely one of subjugation and poverty. Their religion is a mixture of ancient Indian beliefs and customs with Roman Catholicism.

An LCA missionary couple

are living among the Quechua people, studying the language and culture in order to serve them in a manner that will foster self-reliance and self-respect.

Other missionaries will follow as it becomes clear what kinds of ministries will contribute to the Quechuas' self-realization as children of God. These missionaries will seek to help the Quechua people find a new evangelical and biblical content in the Christian customs that they have known for generations.

So, as you place your offering on the offering plate this Sunday, remember Quispe and his people in the Andes of South America.

Group explores unity issues

An almost magnetic attraction draws the ecumenical debate to ministry issues, said Dr. Harding Meyer, director of the Lutheran World Federation's Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg, France. The focus on mutual recognition of ministries by churches engaged in ecumenical dialogue has frequently emerged as an obstacle to Christian unity.

Speaking to ecumenical officers of the Lutheran Church in America's 33 synods in Washington recently, Meyer called on them to look beyond a mutual recognition of ministries as the goal of dialogues between churches and look instead toward a joint exercise of ministry which translates to intercommunion.

Among the ministry issues debated are who should be ordained, what their role should be and how the ministry should be ordered.

Meyer said that each church should reconsider its own practices. "Ecumenism is not only a matter of improving outward relations with each other," he said. "The quest for fellowship and unity between churches cannot be separated from the quest for renewal of churches."

Dr. William G. Rusch, LCA ecumenical relations director, said that "we are at an ecumenical crossroads." In addressing the participants at the training seminar on ecumenics, he said that "today churches are being asked if they want to continue to speak about unity or if they want to do something about the actual possibility."

Dr. Mary Hall, author and lecturer at Selley Oak Colleges, Birmingham, England, told participants that "churches are in an ecumenical recession" and that "it is scandalous." A divided church is hindered in its ability to preach the Gospel, she said.

Hall, speaking on relationships with Third World cultures, said that churches must look for an "authentic appropriation of the faith within that culture. We cannot claim to know how the Gospel is going to take root in another culture."

Liberation theology is a key element in discussion of ecumenical issues in the Third World, she said. "There are liberative streams in religions and cultures throughout the world" and it would "bother me greatly if every effort at justice was seen as Marxist," she said.

Dr. Arie Brouwer, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, also spoke to the group. He said that from the NCC perspective "the ecumenical movement hasn't slowed down at all." He acknowledged that the NCC is a "community of conflict," a place where "the churches can come and fight fair."

Rusch, responding to Brouwer's speech, noted that "there is a temptation to identify the ecumenical movement exclusively with the bilateral dialogues," but "an important dimension of the movement is conciliar." Councils of churches provide a forum for conversation between groups which wouldn't otherwise meet each other.

May sees ecumenical advance

"The doors for ecumenical dialogue are opening," said Bishop Kenneth May of the Lutheran Church in America Western Pennsylvania-West Virginia Synod. "Let us, as Lutherans, take advantage of these opportunities and strike while the iron is hot," he said.

May spoke recently to Lutheran pastors attending the annual Pennsylvania state pastors' conference in Camp Hill, Pa. More than 50 Lutheran pastors attended the conference which included a total of 600 participants from 15 denominations.

"As we pray in the Kyrie, 'for the well-being of the church of God and for the unity of all,' every Sunday, these are not idle words. Those words are in the process of being fulfilled," May said.

May was one of the nine LCA synod bishops who last fall accompanied LCA Bishop James R. Crumley Jr. on visits to Pope John Paul II in Rome, Archbishop Robert Runcie at the Canterbury Cathedral in England and the Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul.

"The events of our pilgrimage indicate that in matters relating to greater Christian unity, there are better days to come," May said.

"When I hold up this cross which I now wear before my various congregations, and say that this was presented to me and my fellow Lutheran bishops personally by Pope John Paul II, there is often a gasp," May said. "In view of the bitter Lutheran-Catholic relationships of some four centuries ago, who would have dreamed that this would ever take place?"

May praised Crumley for his ecumenical leadership. "In this respect," he said, "Crumley is carrying out the precedents established by Dr. Franklin Clark Fry and Dr. Robert J. Marshall," former heads of the LCA.

The conference was sponsored by the Pennsylvania Council of Churches headed by Dr. Albert E. Myers, an LCA pastor. Dr. Frank Seilhamer of Advent Church, York, Pa., was conference chaplain.

—ALTON MOTTER

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Farmers face difficulty, uncertainty

"Grim," "uncertain," "unclear" and "challenging" were words used by church leaders to describe the future of rural America when they met recently at a "Visioning the Future Conference" at Concordia College, Moorhead, Minn.

"With all the difficulties and uncertainties facing farmers and rural churches, it is important to see the future as God's gift," declared Pastor Paul Landstrom of Cumberland, Wis. A variety of present and future challenges to rural people, churches and communities was presented to the 30 leaders of seven Upper Midwest synods attending the event initiated by the Lutheran Church in America Division for Mission in North America.

"Thirty-three percent of LCA congregations and 57 percent of American Lutheran Church are located in communities of under 2,500 people," stated Merle Boos, LCA director of town and country ministries. "With that kind of presence, what will the new church look like in rural ministry?" he asked.

"There is that growing sense that things will be different — that nothing, nothing



Anne Kanten talks with Jon Evert, rural advocate for Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota.

will be the same," said Anne Kanten, assistant secretary of agriculture for Minnesota. Programs initiated by her office to assist rural citizens include investigation of limited moratoriums on farm foreclosure, legal assistance, assuring basic needs, retooling and retraining for displaced farmers

and counseling services related to lending, she said.

"I see the church as catalyst — it has not always been that," she added, affirming the relevant role of the rural church today and in the future. "Good decisions require knowledge, faith and many, many voices," she said.

Charles Kanten, her husband and staff member with the ALC Division for Life and Mission in the Congregation, spoke of his work with pastors and seminarians. "Seventy-seven percent of our seminarians will go to a rural parish, but fewer than 40 percent have experienced rural life — that's a concern," he declared. Kathleen Daugherty, rural legislation specialist with the Lutheran Council in the USA, reviewed the status of farm legislation. Linkages between the farm bill, the federal budget and the federal deficit, the proposed farm credit system bailout, and tax reform made the matter extremely complex, she said.

Dr. Foster McCurley of the Division for Mission in North America staff said that while there is not a separate rural theology, there is need to come to grips with the church's role in rural justice issues. "Justice takes place at the intersection of serving love and enlightened self-interest."

—RON GLADEN

Leaders listen to farmers

Flying through early winter snowstorms, 11 bishops and church executives of Nebraska churches formed a two-day caravan visiting four agriculturally dominated communities to learn and to listen. The caravan visited farms, businesses, lending institutions, counseling centers and community leaders.

The Nebraska communities visited were Sidney, Kearney, Norfolk and Fairbury. Each visit ended with a joint worship service and the sharing of a statement signed by leaders of 14 church bodies. In that statement the leaders declare: "A serious rural crisis grips the state of Nebraska and indeed our whole nation. It is a crisis of the land and the people of the land."

The caravan was suggested by Bishop Dennis A. Anderson of the Lutheran Church in America Nebraska Synod to churches involved in Interchurch Ministries of Nebraska. The purpose of the caravan was "first to provide a sign of pastoral care to those who are hurting," Anderson said. "We are lifting up the hope that is ours in Christ and as members of the church which is a caring community."

Another purpose of the caravan was "to demonstrate what can happen for good when church bodies work together and to provide a model and catalyst to others in

our communities to work together for creative solutions to this crisis that grips not only farmers but the whole nation."

The caravan also was a way "to continue to advocate to our governmental leaders on behalf of the community," Anderson said.

The statement by the Nebraska church leaders points out that "as the people of God we are called to care for those who suffer, call for and search for justice and speak the word of hope in the midst of crisis time."

"We call upon public policy makers to work toward a national farm and food policy that will provide short-term debt relief; enable farmers to earn a fair profit on their investment; eliminate tax policies which encourage and subsidize overexpansion of farms, overproduction and separation of ownership from operation, and foster cooperative efforts worldwide to enhance food production in developing countries and effective means of distributing surplus produce to the most needy areas of the world," the statement adds.

A farmer in western Nebraska commented that "seeing the churches join hands together and join hands with us is beautiful. It has given me more hope than anything else."

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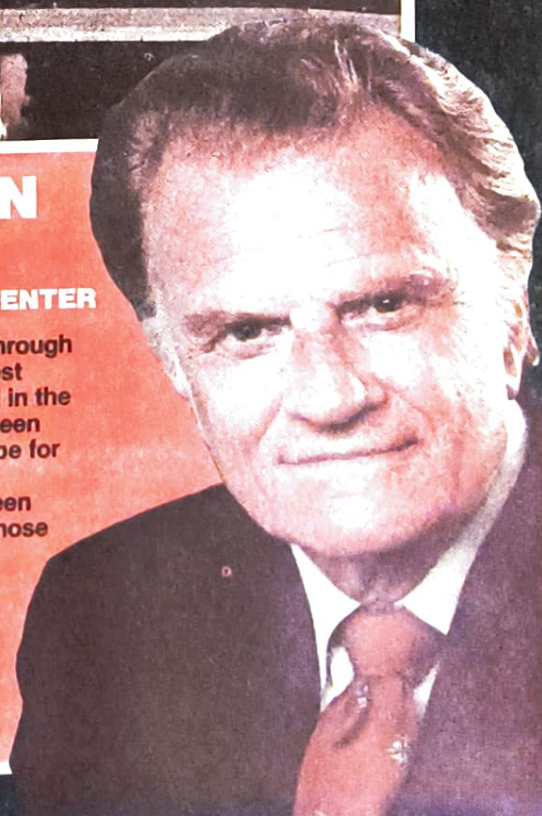
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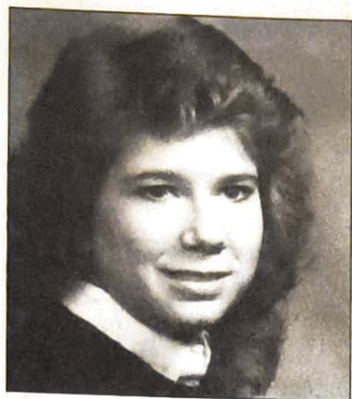
Next Spring, we will conduct a citywide crusade in Washington, D.C. through which we hope to reach most aspects of the city's life from the smallest neighborhood to Capitol Hill. One prominent clergyman who has lived in the area for almost thirty years told me that such a crusade would have been premature five years ago, or even one year ago, but that the time is ripe for bringing the Gospel to our nation's capital—the opportunity is now!

This could be one of the most important crusades we have ever been involved in. Washington, D.C. is one of a handful of world capitals whose commitment to spiritual things, or lack of it, can affect the spiritual health of our entire country, and even the world!

Therefore, I am asking Christians throughout the country to join me in praying for the Greater Washington Billy Graham Crusade. Please make this a top priority in your daily prayer, asking God's blessing and guidance on all phases of our preparations, and on the meetings themselves.



PEOPLE



Blomquist

The Swedish Council of America awarded its **Glenn T. Seaborg** Nobel Travel Award to **Kathryn J. Blomquist**, Trinity, Waukegan, Ill. She received an all-expenses-paid trip to Stockholm during December and attended many of the events connected with the awarding of the various Nobel Prizes.

Lutherans were involved with the Seattle Peace Chorus' singing tour of the Soviet Union. **Anita Vedell**, Bethany, Seattle, a chorus member, sang on Soviet television. A "goodwill" quilt, made by members of Central, Seattle, was given by the chorus to a Christian family in Leningrad, U.S.S.R.

Stephanie Toney, 15, St. Mark, Charlotte, N.C., won first place in the Charlotte Piano Teachers Forum Senior Division. She received a scholarship. Her teacher, **Dzidra Reimanis**, also is a member of St. Mark.

Irene Gould, Good Shepherd, Reno, Nev., represented the Nevada Foster Grandparents association during a ceremony in Washington which honored the national organization. Gould is a foster grandparent for a children's agency.

The Village of Woodridge, Ill., honored the Rev. **Albert W. Weidlich**, Prince of Peace, Woodridge (Downers Grove), as its Citizen of the Year. His community work includes serving as fire department district chaplain and secretary of the Fellowship of Fire Chaplains.



Head

"Skip" **Head**, Peachtree Road, Atlanta, was honored by the Veterans Administration for her 18 years of volunteer service at a VA hospital as a member of the Salvation Army.

Danny Brooks, Resurrection, Havertown, Pa., was honored by the Haverford Township Commissioners for having won second place in the 400-meter race at the Arco-Jesse Owens Games, held in Philadelphia recently.

Mildred Olsen, Trinity, New York (Staten Island), was named Woman of Achievement by the *Staten Island Advance* for her years of community and church service.

New editor of *The Southeastern Lutheran*, the publication of the Southeastern Synod, is **Kay S. Pedrotti**, Living Word, Jonesboro, Ga. She succeeds **Jacqueline Lewis**, editor for nearly 10 years, who is attending Columbia Seminary, Atlanta.

The Rev. **Dale E. Sandstrom**, president of Good Shepherd Home, Allentown, Pa., was honored by the Allegheny County Easter Seal Society for his role in creating Good Shepherd's Handicapped Hall of Fame. The society's award is given annually to an individual whose efforts enhance the quality of life for disabled people.

Lisa K. Nelsen, 17, Grace, Columbia City, Ind., was chosen Junior Miss of Whitley County, Ind. She won a scholarship and several awards.



Sullivan

Carin Sullivan, Atonement, Beloit, Wis., was honored by Maurices Inc., for superior performance in women's clothing sales for the second consecutive year. She was top salesperson in both the district and region.



Hutchison

Lutherans won in two recent local elections. In Apollo, Pa., **James W. Hutchison**, First, Apollo, was elected mayor by 36 votes. **W. Paul Hayworth**, Augsburg, Winston-Salem, N.C., was re-elected to a seat on town council.

PROFILE

Washington Lutherans help African student

Lutherans in Tacoma, Wash., have changed the direction of Mufaro Dube's life. Dube, 28, was born and raised on a subsistence farm in rural Zimbabwe. One of nine children, his opportunities for higher education were few.

Fascinated with biology, Dube wanted to study medicine. He was aware of the need for health services in Zimbabwe.

Dube worked at several jobs after completing high school. "I was beginning to wonder if I would ever have the service-oriented career I had hoped for," he said.

Then Dube heard that U.S. Lutheran congregations affiliated with Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, were offering an all-expenses-paid scholarship through the Lutheran Church of Zimbabwe. As a member, Dube applied and was accepted.

The Rev. Paul Freese and his wife, Patty, Redeemer Church, Tacoma, agreed to be Dube's host family. "Their home was a place of refuge when things got tough," Dube said.

"It took the better part of a year to get adjusted," he recalled. "Over the years we saw him



Dube

change from a reserved, almost suspicious person to an open, easygoing man," Paul Freese commented. Only a few years older than Dube, Freese said he was delighted when Dube would affectionally call him "father."

Dube graduated summa cum laude from PLU in May. He is now maintaining a 3.7 grade average at Howard University Medical School, Washington. His first year there is being funded by members of several Lutheran churches in Tacoma.

After medical school Dube plans to return to Zimbabwe and begin a general clinical practice.

Clergy changes

Illinois
Erickson-Pearson, Janice, on leave from call, to Christ the King, Chicago.

Michigan
Hahn, Michael S., Zion; Salem (Evans Creek), Stone Creek, Ohio, to chaplain/social worker, Luther Manor, Saginaw.

Minnesota
Carlson, Charles R., Normandale, Edina, to House of Prayer, Minneapolis (Richfield).
Finke, Dean S., Danebod, Tyler, to First, Red Wing.

Guthrie, William O., newly ordained, to Grace, Mora.
Jervson, Timon C., newly ordained, to St. Mark, North St. Paul.

Lehner, Robert J., newly ordained, to St. Paul, Minnesota.
Nygard, Lyndon E., newly ordained, to House of Prayer, Minneapolis.

Schneider, Vicki Pedersen, newly ordained, to Trinity, Lindstrom.
Wicklund, Patricia F., newly ordained, to Salem, Minneapolis.

Witt, Judith K., received from Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, to Faith, Sturgeon Lake.

Ohio
Brown, Jay W., Christ, Carey, to retirement.
Dyer, John L., First, Crestline, to assistant, Augsburg, Toledo.
Swiggle, Albert E., Trinity, Lewisburg, to associate, Glenwood, Toledo.

Pennsylvania
Billow, Mark, newly ordained, to assistant, Bethany, Montoursville.
Deist, William E., newly ordained, to Grace, Bellwood.

Fryer, Carol E.A., newly ordained, to St. John; St. Paul, Stewartstown.
Fryer, Gregory, newly ordained, to St. John; St. Paul, Stewartstown.

Gretman, Ralph A. Jr., St. Paul, Dillsburg; Emmanuel, Franklinton, to on leave from call.
Jones, Herbert W., Tressler Memorial, Loysville, to disability retirement.

Kieffer, Alan J., Evangelical, Dun-casville, to disability retirement.
Lambert, John D., St. Paul, White Haven, to on leave from call.

Lambach, Howard E., on leave from call, to retirement.
Lehardt, John J., St. James, Muncy; Emmanuel, Williamsport, to retirement.

Lindewurth, Herbert G. Jr., on leave from call, to St. Luke, Mount Union; Mount Zion, Huntingdon; Cassville, Cassville.

Nace, James R., on leave from call, to chaplain, York Lutheran Retirement Village, York (under synod administration).

Nelson, Richard A., newly ordained, to assistant, Trinity, Robesonia.

Peterman, C. Wayne, St. John, Lancaster, to associate, Mount Zion, York.

Ruby, S. Alan, St. Jacob, York New Salem, to Zion, Akron.

Schroeder, Hugo W. Jr., Messiah, South Williamsport, to St. Matthew, Bloomsburg.

Sell, Ronald A., on leave from call, to director, Pennsylvania synods, Lutheran Coalition on Public Policy, LCA Division for Mission in North America, Harrisburg.

Smyser, Harry E. Jr., St. James, Huntingdon, to retirement.

Toepel, Douglas J., English, Zelienople, to retirement.

Trost, Lou Ann G., associate, First, Carlisle, to on leave from call.

Van Brakle, James D., St. Paul; St. Peter, Leitersburg, Md., to Evangelical, Newry.

Williams, Robert H., St. Paul, Summit Hill; Zion, Nesquehoning, to St. John, Mohnton.

Wolf, Richard C., on leave from call, to Friedens, Oley.

Ziel, Catherine A., Hope, Cherryville, to on leave from call.

Zimmerman, Kenneth W., St. Timothy, Camp Hill, to Zion, Goldsboro.

South Carolina
McKay, Henry M. Jr., First, Watsonville, to executive director, Social Services of South Carolina, Columbia.

Warren, R. Cecil, assistant, St. Matthew, Charleston, to Atonement, Laurens.

Weber, Harry, Mount Pleasant, Saluda, to retirement.

Wilson, J.F., chaplain, U.S. Air Force, Beaufort, to retirement.

Tennessee
Martin, Richard E., Holy Trinity, Newport, to Messiah, Jackson.

Wolfert, Robert G., Providence, Burns; Luther Chapel, Pulaski, Miss., to Solomon, Greeneville.

Texas
Anderson, Marsha C., assistant, Bethany, Englewood, Colo., to



A mariachi band serenades members of King of Kings Church, Pueblo, Colo., during a fiesta designed to encourage fellowship with the Chicano community. Future events are planned.

associate, Our Savior, Mesquite.

Hinger, Richard S., St. Peter, Ander; St. Andrew, Weesatche, to Resurrection, San Antonio.

Huang, Nathan T.L., on leave from call, to associate, St. James, Houston.

Jenson, Neale O., St. John, Grand Prairie, to retirement.

Lauderdale, Daniel L., Danevang, Danevang, to on leave from call.

McCrone, Thomas R., associate, Holy Cross, Yoakum, to St. John, Grand Prairie.

Nordstrand, David A., newly ordained, to associate, St. Martin, Houston.

Rajan, Frederick E.N., newly ordained, to associate, Holy Trinity, Irving.

Virginia
Delaney, David K., associate, St. Mark, Grafton-Yorktown, to on leave from call.

Honeycutt, Frank G., newly ordained, to Trinity, Stephens City; St. Paul, Winchester.

Washington
Brenna, Gary L., on leave from call,

to Immanuel, Centralia.

Schroeder, Burton W., on leave from call, to Resurrection, Tacoma (under synod administration).

Wisconsin

Eckman, David V., Augustana, Duluth, Minn., to Pilgrim, Superior.
Funk, Paul W., St. John, Elkhorn, to retirement.

Mode, Catherine K., newly ordained, to pastor/developer, Oshkosh.

Peterson, J. Clemmons, Good Shepherd, Madison, to retirement.

Petersen, Paul R., Bethlehem, Elbow Lake, Minn. (LCA and American Lutheran Church congregation), to Nazareth, Withee.

Rasmussen, Barbara M., newly ordained, to associate, Trinity, Kenosha.

Stratton, Terrance L., Balsam, Amery, to Zion, Superior.

Wyoming

Rockwood, David H., Zion, Jennings; St. John, Swanton; Emmanuel, Bittering, Md., to associate, St. Paul, Cheyenne.

Deaths

The Rev. Arthur J. Hall, D.D., 97, died Nov. 30, 1985, in Orrville, Ohio. Ordained in 1913, he served Crouse Memorial, Tiro; Augsburg, Orrville; First, Bryan; Emmanuel, North Georgetown; Trinity, Sebring, all in Ohio, and St. Paul, El Paso, Texas. He retired in 1956.

The Rev. C. Leighton King, 83, died Nov. 17, 1985, in Frederick, Md. Ordained in 1937, he was pastor/developer in New York for the Board of American Missions of the former United Lutheran Church in America.

From 1938 until his retirement in 1968 he served Prince of Peace, New York (Queens).

The Rev. Charles R. Terrell, 69, died Nov. 10, 1985. Ordained in 1942, he served Pioneers Central, Badger, S.D.; Hope, Enumclaw, Wash.; St. John, Cozad, Neb., and Nain, Newell, Iowa. He was chaplain/administrator, Valborg Memorial Lutheran Home, Des Moines, and executive director, Lutheran Homes for the Aging, Madrid, both in Iowa. He retired in 1981.

NEWS NOTES

German group meets

The Lutheran Church in America German Interest Conference at its biennial gathering focused on evangelical outreach in the German language. Presenters noted that large numbers of people who declare themselves as Lutherans do not belong to any Lutheran congregation. It was suggested that many of these could be German-speaking Lutherans who immigrated to North America following World War II but were never integrated into the church.

Participants also discussed ministry to the aging in situations where language and culture have isolated the elderly from the wider society. They also expressed need for a special ministry for grief associated with being forced to leave one's home.

Detroit study begins

A joint committee of the Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches is conducting a major study of the metropolitan Detroit area to determine how the church can address the needs of this community as a new church comes into being. Dr. Raymond Heine, bishop of the LCA Michigan Synod, calls it "the most ambitious study of this kind that has been done in the church."

The study will deal with major demographic, sociological and political realities in Detroit, the fifth largest metropolitan area in the United States. The study is expected to be completed in about one and one-half years.

Poll cites colleges

Several Lutheran colleges were again cited in a poll by *U.S. News and World Report* of 788 college presidents on what they consider to be the top schools in the United States.

Among Lutheran Church in America colleges Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pa., and Upsala College, East Orange, N.J., were named in the top 10 smaller comprehensive institutions in the East. Texas Lutheran, Seguin, Texas, an American Lutheran Church school also related to the LCA, was listed as one of the top smaller comprehensive institutions in the Midwest and Far West.

Valparaiso (Ind.) University, which has ties to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, was listed as second and Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Wash., was listed as sixth among the larger, top comprehensive institutions in the Midwest and Far West. Concordia College, an ALC

school in Moorhead, Minn., was cited as "noteworthy" in that category.

Several other Lutheran colleges were listed among the nation's 90 "most selective" liberal arts schools.

Design receives award

The Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art and Architecture, an affiliate of the American Institute of Architects, recently cited Christ the King Church, Houston, for its architectural design. Tapley Associates of Houston received the citation for its design of the new church structure.

Churches try tithe

Members of Lutheran Church in America congregations in Nebraska were recently asked to tithe their weekly salary on one Sunday called "Try a Tithing Sunday." More than 70 percent of the congregations participated in the emphasis. In many cases the average weekly offering doubled on that day. The synod is considering making the Sunday an annual emphasis.

CLC to become CLU

California Lutheran College, Thousand Oaks, Cal., becomes California Lutheran University Jan. 1. "The change reflects the emerging role of a maturing institution committed to undergraduate and graduate study, to the liberal arts and selected professional programs," said President Jerry H. Miller.

The new name "should more accurately reflect who we are," Miller added. "The change confirms our commitment to the centrality of graduate and continuing education, research and service to the mission of this university."

Founded in 1959, CLC has an enrollment of 2,300 students and offers 33 majors to undergraduate students and five master's degree programs. It is jointly owned by the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America.

College reduces board

Wittenberg University, Springfield, Ohio, will reduce the size of its board of directors from 76 to 37 with the start of the new church in 1988. Nineteen of the 37 board members will be from Lutheran congregations. Six of the 19 will be clergy. Dr. William Kinnison, Wittenberg president, said the large size of the current board has been expensive because of room, board and transportation costs, and the size also often prevented involvement by members.

Church stops smoking

Grace Church, Trenton, N.J., has voted not to allow smoking in any portion of the church building. "We want to be clear that we are not 'anti-smoker,' yet we had concluded that our poorly ventilated building did not permit non-smokers to be comfortable in the presence of tobacco smoke," said Dr. John Slade, a member of the church council and assistant professor of clinical medicine at the Rutgers Medical School.

Slade added that "the policy will help people irritated or injured by tobacco smoke. It also sets an example for children about healthful living. At another level, the policy is a witness which focuses attention on the widespread sanction, permission and encouragement which our culture gives tobacco despite the enormous destruction it causes," he said.

Slade conducted a program on tobacco at the church to give members a chance to discuss the new policy.

CLASSIFIEDS

ATTENTION PASTORS AND GROUP-TRAVEL ORGANIZERS: Now you have the choice — the best in *domestic and foreign* travel values! Fully escorted group-tour programs being formed for 1986 to the Holy Land, a Heritage tour of Britain and Scotland, Hawaii, Alaska and other destinations. Several itineraries available. Departures from your home town. Attractive incentives. We specialize in clergy-hosted tours. Individual inquiries also welcomed. GARLIN TRAVEL SERVICE, 1700 Walnut St., Phila., Pa. 19103. 215-732-0800.

"LEARNING TRAVELER" EDUCATIONAL TOUR FOR ADULTS: "SCOTLAND'S FAMOUS SONS," July 17-Aug. 10, 1986. Sightseeing in London and Scotland. Informal university lectures on Burns, Scott, Stevenson, Livingstone and others, plus visits to sites associated with them. Theater, concerts, highland games. **"SUSQUEHANNA AT OXFORD,"** June 29-Aug. 10, 1986. Study program in British literature, history, politics, theater, business, architecture, archaeology; for college undergraduates and adults. Brochures available: Dr. R.L. Bradford, International Education Office, Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pa. 17870. 717-374-0101, ext. 254.

SCANDINAVIAN TOUR: Fully escorted, 15 days, June 23-July 7, \$2,091. NORWAY, SWEDEN, DENMARK. First-class, deluxe hotels. Most meals. SAS Airline. Brochure: Rev. Craig Dorward, 428 Evergreen Road, Lebanon, Pa. 17042. 717-274-2451.

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MY QUESTION IS...

Q. Does a pastor have authority to change the written word of Scripture to conform to the women's liberation movement? Ours has lined out the printed words in our church Bible and written in a "de-masculinized" version. Genesis 2:20 (RSV) is changed to read, "The person gave names to all cattle... but for the person there was not found a helper fit for this person." The word "man" is eliminated.

A. The pastor does not have authority to substitute scriptural paraphrases which are not supported by the original Hebrew or Greek text. The bishop of the Lutheran Church in America has cautioned against such arbitrary changes. Even where the original language might permit another reading, it is preferable that the integrity

of a particular version such as the RSV be maintained. If the pastor believes that a particular version is seriously misleading in its translation of the originals, he or she should find a more accurate version or be prepared to make a fresh translation, clearly pointing out to the congregation what he or she is doing. At ordination, pastors pledge to "preach and teach in accordance with the Holy Scriptures..." They should not arbitrarily impose their own ideas of what the scriptural author should have said.

Q. Our organist refers to all music presented during the services, including hymns and liturgy, as "performances." Is this a proper expression?

A. The word "performance" is defined as "the execution of an action, something accomplished." In this sense the term is appropriate for music offered during worship. You are probably thinking of the somewhat different meaning of "putting on an act." Hymns and liturgical music should, of course, be more than that. It is offered to God by the congregation — and the musicians — as an artistically worthy response to his grace. The "performance" will naturally be heard and, one hopes, appreciated by the congregation. But it is offered in the first place to God, for his glory and as a witness to his truth and beauty.

Answers are researched and compiled by Editorial Associate Glenn C. Stone.

SIGHT AND SOUND TV

Television: family member and foe

Most people 35 and under can't remember a time when there was no television. In fact, growing up today without a TV set in the house is considered abnormal.

According to a recently issued report by the Communication Commission of the National Council of Churches, 98 percent of U.S. homes have television sets. On the average people watch television more than six hours a day.

What effect does this constant exposure to TV shows have on the viewing public? Firm answers are difficult to come by, although the NCC report, *Violence and Sexual Violence in Film, Television, Cable and Home Video*, concludes that "violence in the media does lead to aggressive behavior by children, teenagers and adults who watch the programs."

Critics blame the "vast wasteland" of television for other modern problems, too, including lower scholastic test scores. Yet television also is praised as a social class equalizer and "great teacher."

Recently, 25 Lutherans gathered to discuss how television influences family values and what Christians can do to help television shape those values in a positive manner. The conference, held in Newark, N.J., was sponsored by the Lutheran Academy, a lay organization. Attending were television industry employees as well as viewer advocates.

Resolutions passed by the group asked national Lutheran church bodies, their agencies and congregations to study the NCC report and to take action against



NCC report says TV violence adversely affects viewers.

media violence, to support funding for public broadcasting and to help viewers by issuing packets of educational resources and advocacy activities.

The conference also called upon churches to support the Children's Television Education Act now before Congress which would require minimum standards for children's educational programming for all television stations.

Keynote speaker Dr. William F. Fore, assistant general secretary of the NCC's Communication Commission, said that churches today are challenged "to penetrate the media...with images and messages

which communicate fundamental human values...and to teach parishioners how to deal with the mass media without succumbing to their power."

Only by these actions, Fore said, can the church "liberate families so that they will be able to use television as a tool rather than being used by it."

Carolyn Manlove, a television awareness trainer from Custer, S.D., who described television as "a family member," suggested that consumers publish their own weekly guide to TV programs. "I'd call it *Good Stuff*," she said. The guide would contain a rating system for strong language and sex.

Television is "both friend and foe," said Dr. Robert E.A. Lee, executive director of the Office of Communication and Interpretation of the Lutheran Council in the USA.

"The communications miracles of our time are too pervasively powerful for us to ignore," he said.

He urged Lutherans to engage in constructive criticism of television, to start a ministry with media professionals, to promote visibility for Lutheran newsmakers, to organize funding of selective video productions and to develop media markets.

To carry out these plans, Lee proposed the establishment of a Christian Institute for Communication Development for church and media professionals. Conference participants called upon the Lutheran Academy to sponsor an exploratory meeting about the institute.

—EMILYMARIE ROMIN

NOW, I THINK

By Nancy K. Jermakian

Open doors for 'our kind of people'

Five years ago I belonged to a congregation where almost everyone was a descendent of German or Norwegian immigrants. Our number was rapidly dwindling. Most of us were middle-aged or beyond. We had no Sunday school.

Today, I'm a member of that same parish. But it's not really the same. The Germans and Norwegians are still there. But almost as many members can trace their roots back to Africa, Asia or Latin America. The names on our membership roster include Suarez, Feliciano, Chu, Varki and Jackson. With a spectrum of colors, and a promise of new life, we've dubbed ourselves the "rainbow people."

And new life we have: more baptisms during the past four years than during the previous three decades, worship attendance tripled, a burgeoning Sunday school, summer program, children's choir and liturgical dance choir. And most of the leaders of these programs have joined our church within the last few years. Seven of 13 church council members (including the youth member) are "new."

For several years, the second lesson on Pentecost has been read aloud simultaneously by worshipers in native or ancestral languages. So far, that's meant Cantonese, Czech, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Mandarin, Norwegian, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish and Tamil. *Every Sunday* one of the lessons is read in Spanish.

Attendance at the Feast of the Epiphany (*El Dia de los Tres Reyes*) now approaches that of Christmas and Easter. This service is followed by a *pinata* party. Our potlucks are a joy to behold — and a gourmet's paradise.

All this didn't happen overnight. But once we'd made

up our minds to change and grow, we learned that there are specific do's and don'ts to make it happen:

- Pastor and lay leaders must be committed to planned change and growth. Negative, even "neutral," attitudes are deadly.

- Get to know the people in the area surrounding your church building. *Every* member is an evangelist.

- *Don't* start by setting up "programs" to serve your neighbors as "clients" of the church. *Do* start by inviting them into the word and sacrament life and make sure they feel welcome when they arrive.

- Make it clear that long-time members continue to be as important and necessary as ever, maybe even more so, but *make it equally clear* that new members have all the same rights, privileges and responsibilities as do old-timers.

- Explore and include traditions in music, worship and special occasions that are cherished by newcomers. Explain and share with them the long-held traditions of older members. (The object is mutual respect, enrichment and growth.)

- If a substantial number of worshipers use English as a second language, or do not understand English well, consider using their language in part of the service (a Scripture lesson, alternate verses of a hymn, an occasional anthem). Suggest that people pray the Lord's Prayer in unison, but in the language of their choice.

- Station greeters in the narthex and use a guest book. Have members write personal follow-up notes to visitors, thanking them for coming and inviting them back. (This seems to be more effective than the "expected" follow-up letter from the pastor.)

- Never underestimate the power of the fellowship hour after service. Introduce visitors all around. Be as hospitable as you are to guests in your home.

- *Never* tolerate or ignore racist comments, innuendos or "jokes." Righteous anger is probably unnecessary; quietly point out that such remarks hurt people.

My home town is blessed with extraordinary racial and ethnic diversity. These days, however, diversity often extends to the smallest villages. As we include all kinds of people in our church family, we are amazed to learn how much we all have in common. We learn that every kind of people is *our* kind of people. We are *all* the people of God. ■



The author is a member of St. Matthew-Trinity Church, Hoboken, N.J.

"Now, I think" is a regular feature in *The Lutheran*. Readers may contribute cogent, timely and varied analyses of issues in church and society. Material should be 800 words (about three double-spaced typed pages) in length. Opinions in this column do not necessarily reflect the views of *The Lutheran* or the official positions of the Lutheran Church in America.

LETTERS

Moon conferences questioned

As a former member of Sun Myung Moon's church, I read with interest the article, "Scholars support Moon conferences" (News, Nov. 20, 1985, page 21). I was in the movement when Moon began his ecumenical campaign. We were told that this effort was designed to create a protective shroud around the movement and to help Christianity realize its God-given mission of receiving Moon as messiah. According to the doctrine of the movement, the primary symbol of Christianity — the cross — is a symbol of satanic victory. Christianity in its present state is viewed as aligned with all that is evil. Don't be deceived into thinking that the Unification Church has any other interest in mind than its own.

SUSAN E. BURNS
Pittsburgh

Biting the bullet

"Bishops attack balanced-budget plan" (News, Nov. 20, 1985, page 20) ignores the fact that the amendment was sponsored by three U.S. senators. In addition to Gramm and Rudman who are mentioned, Sen. Ernest Hollings, a Lutheran, is the third sponsor. I am among the many Lutherans who care about the poor but who also applaud these senators for "biting the bullet" in regard to the intolerable federal deficit. Any plan to balance the budget will involve cuts in all categories of federal spending, including programs for the poor. Meanwhile, we Lutherans need to deal with how the poor are being cared for in our own towns and communities.

ESTHER B. MCBRIDE
Rio Rancho, N.M.

To see through God's eyes

Many thanks to Louise T. Jones for sharing with us *The Miracle of Jay-Jay* (Nov. 20, 1985). Her testimony holds before us a beautiful Christian life of selfless love and service. How encouraging to be reminded that God gives us the love and ability to cherish and nurture all children, even the "imperfect." May God give love and grace to us all to see the "unwanted" through his eyes, for we live in a society that increasingly rejects the unborn, handicapped, retarded and elderly. Jay-Jay tells us that all children will give us back the love we give them — if we give them a chance.

EDWARD FEHSKENS
St. Paul, Minn.

(The writer is executive director of Lutherans for Life.)

Darroll Bryant, who apparently speaks as a Unification advocate among Lutherans, was perhaps saying more than he realized when he affirmed that "the Unification Church should be considered a legitimate group of people who are deeply religious." If that is what legitimizes a religion, then our Christian witness to any other "religious" person in the world stands in serious question. Has Bryant characterized an attitude among many in mainline Christianity today, that there may no longer be any reason to evangelize *anyone*? Have our ecumenical relationships become so casual as to erase the distinctives of our biblical, evangelical faith?

HOWARD D. VRANKIN
Fort Dodge, Iowa

Isn't it carrying the term "ecumenical" a bit too far? Who shall we help next, the Mafia or the Ku Klux Klan?

ENOLA KJELDGAARD
Tekamah, Neb.

Rewriting the Gospel

In "Women share biblical ideas" (News, Nov. 6, 1985, page 24), you report that Dr. Elizabeth Bettenhausen wants people to "rewrite the Gospel stories casting Jesus as a woman." This is downright humorous. We would also need a sex-changed forerunner to replace the male John the Baptist. Then, if Christ returns in our time, he will

have to stop off first in Sweden for a sex change operation. With his "Immaculate Emasculation" completed, he can come back as Christine, and the genetic mistake which God apparently made in the womb of Mary will have been corrected by the wiser-than-God technology of modern humans. Thanks to Professor Bettenhausen we have now progressed from liberation theology to aberration theology!

A. JACKSON ZIPPERER JR.
Shelbyville, Tenn.

Cover shock

It came as a rude shock to see on the cover of the Nov. 20, 1985, issue a list of what are obviously regarded as serious sins with *abortion* included as one of them. The same "sins" are pictured and listed in Martin Heineken's article, *How Can God Still Love Me?* The message of forgiveness was excellent but the presumption which makes sin out of an act which Scripture nowhere mentions seems inexcusable in a Lutheran publication. What has happened to the Pauline and Lutheran theology that leaves freedom of conscience in matters not specifically commanded or forbidden by God? It is sad to see Lutheran theologians whose pronouncements change with the political wind. We had some courageous statements on abortion from Lutheran conventions back in the 1970s. Are we afraid to say, "God's word is true no matter which way the wind blows?"

PAUL G. HANSEN
Mariposa, Cal.

More about 'handouts'

I was disappointed in *Are Handouts Helpful?* by Ruth Mundorff (Nov. 6, 1985). A handout may be helpful to the beggar but it also may be helpful to the giver. Part of our tradition is the monastic movement that emphasized simple, self-denying living. What we do as owners of welfare agencies, either public or church-related, may be different from what we do as individuals confronted with a beggar. We feel pity and revulsion. It's easier to refuse and makes us feel superior. But an act of unmerited generosity may be aroused solely by God's graciousness to us.

ROBERT M. BELLES
Roswell, N.M.

Christ's love for us calls us to a higher level of thought. We are to respond joyfully to our brothers and sisters in need, not be preoccupied with judgments that require "proof" of need. We should pray that they use the gift prudently and responsibly but

to require it in advance encourages people to be suspicious of others' motives and tempts Christians to return to the logical, humanistic level. We must spread the *unconditional* love of Jesus to everyone.

PATTI BLOUNT
Shreveport, La.

How does giving handouts to "beggars" relate to the church's social ministry programs such as food pantries? Some in my congregation feel that just giving food to those who come asking is no solution. We create the same situation so often decried when welfare is mentioned. Giving food may compound the problem if there is no follow-up and counseling to see that long-term solutions are sought. We do need to share with the needy what God has given us. It is the word of God. Don't stop giving, but think and give wisely.

MICHAEL A. FROST
Easton, Pa.

EDITOR'S OPINION

By Edgar R. Trexler

Why we print what we do

Our office receives about 50 letters to the editor each week. Most of them comment about things we've published. But a surprising number ask why we print what we do. So we're taking this New Year's opportunity to let you know how we make some of our decisions.

- **Anniversaries, dedications, groundbreakings, retirements, scout and student awards:** Many of the Lutheran Church in America's 6,100 congregations and 8,000 pastors have a significant anniversary each year. We simply don't have the space to publish articles about all of them. In addition, these events are primarily of local rather than nationwide interest.

- **"My question is...":** We don't make up those questions; they are sent in by readers. But we can't answer every question. Some deal with items of limited interest. Others reveal personal situations that could prove embarrassing. Sometimes the same questions are asked over and over — such as, "Should we have the American flag in church?" We don't have the staff to answer questions privately.

- **Feature articles, news and photo tips:** We get about 900 unsolicited feature manuscripts a year. Each is carefully reviewed and answered, usually within six weeks. Regarding news, we get many tips from letter writers. We also have a correspondent in each synod.

- **Letters to the editor:** The *Letters and Now, I think* pages are readers' forums. But they don't always represent the mind of the LCA because people who are upset tend to write more often than those who are satisfied. Letters which we publish are carefully chosen to be representative of those received on a given subject.

Most letters are edited for space. Only one subject should be addressed in each letter. We limit the frequency of letters from prolific writers, and we don't usually print letters which reply to letters. All letters must be signed, but a request for anonymity will be honored if the subject matter is personally sensitive. *The Lutheran's* staff tries to re-

spond to letters not published, but it may take awhile.

- **Editorial viewpoints:** *The Lutheran* cherishes and upholds editorial freedom. But when an LCA convention has adopted a particular stance on an issue, feature articles and editorials in the magazine will be consistent with that stance. If the LCA has not adopted a position, the magazine's feature articles and editorials may reflect a wide range of views. Both the magazine and the church adopt positions on the basis of theological and scriptural insights. If a position seems to lean toward one political view or another, it is coincidence.

The news pages reflect the life and activities of congregations and synods. If some practices reported there do not seem consistent with LCA guidelines, such as with the statement on commercialism, readers are free to note the inconsistency. Publishing an item does not imply endorsement; withholding it, however, would be censorship.

- **Advertising policies:** *The Lutheran* publishes advertisements as a service to readers, as a source of income to support the magazine and to make the magazine "look like a magazine." Final decisions on acceptance of an advertisement rests with the editor. Each advertiser is checked through the Better Business Bureau as to financial reliability. Publication of an ad does not imply church endorsement of a product or service.

- **Obituaries:** We publish the cause of death of active pastors because we believe the information answers a question that most readers ask. That policy is tested when the cause of death is suicide. Even though we are sensitive to those who feel that such information aggrieves the surviving family, we believe this information aids people in ministering to the family. It also reveals pastors as human beings who often live under much stress.

- **Bad news:** Handling unpleasant news in the light of the Good News has a great effect on a church publication's credibility. Sometimes the news is rowdiness by fraternities at a college, or a sex discrimination case in faculty promotions, or a pastor involved in a criminal matter.

When bad news happens and has become a matter of public record, *The Lutheran* tries to handle it tactfully and unsensationally. Our treatment is intended to be quietly accurate. If *The Lutheran* were to be silent about a story which was widely known in a particular area, readers in that area would rightly question what the magazine might be covering up elsewhere.

Readers deserve to have the news reported objectively and fairly. There are sincere arguments why a church magazine should not publish bad news in a world which already has more than its share of terrible events. But I have yet to hear a good reason for not printing the truth.



LUTHERAN

The Division for Mission in North America has designated as the church agency to disburse the Hunger Appeal Fund, a part of advocacy of persons whose voices are heard.

Advocacy efforts are out in a variety of include:

Listening to Peoples' voices to give opportunity to persons in specific of economic distress the LCA in learn may minister to

Support of local, national organizations to advocate with government business leaders economic policies include IMPAC World, Reform for Welfare in

Support of state Offices of Government Ministries to and justice co state or provi are 14 such o

Implementat Lutheran Ne Policy to ass LCA to part in matters o

Ten percent Appeal fun toward adv Although t support the ministry o significant tribution.



LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA WORLD HUNGER APPEAL

The Division for Mission in North America has been designated as the churchwide agency to disburse World Hunger Appeal funds in support of advocacy on behalf of persons whose voices are not heard.

Advocacy efforts are carried out in a variety of ways. These include:

- Listening to People Conferences to give opportunity for persons in specific conditions of economic distress to assist the LCA in learning how it may minister to them.

- Support of local, regional and national organizations that advocate with government and business leaders for just socioeconomic policies. Examples include IMPACT, Bread for the World, Reform Organization for Welfare in St. Louis, MO.

- Support of state and provincial Offices of Governmental Ministries to address hunger and justice concerns at the state or provincial level. There are 14 such offices.

- Implementation of the Lutheran Network on Public Policy to assist members of the LCA to participate more fully in matters of just public policy.

Ten percent of World Hunger Appeal funds are designated toward advocacy efforts. Although this amount does not support the entire advocacy ministry of the LCA, it is a significant and important contribution.



GOD'S PEOPLE Called, Empowered, Sent —

Jesus was sensitive to the needs of the people around him. He **CALLED** disciples and apostles, **EMPOWERED** them with the Holy Spirit and **SENT** them out in service to others.

The miracle story recorded in John 6:1-4 illustrates our Lord's sensitivity to those who were hungry!

Today, **WE** are the people **SENT** to be servants to those in need.

As **CALLED** persons, we serve as we:

- **EDUCATE** • **ADVOCATE** • **DEMONSTRATE** • **CELEBRATE** •

ADVOCATE

The LCA, through its Division for Parish Services, encourages individual social action. Each of us can and should serve in our communities.

The Division for Mission in North America has placed advocates in 14 U.S. state capitals and one Canadian provincial capital. Part of their time is spent in research and information sharing with elected representatives on hunger issues.

Our goal is to be a voice for the voiceless and to support all those who suffer from injustice.

The LCA World Hunger Appeal enables us to speak and act on behalf of others through our "official" advocates who speak to government, business and industry.

Each one of us is called to be an advocate.

Present your offering at your local church or directly to:

LCA World Hunger Appeal
Lutheran Church in America
231 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10016

☐ Enclosed is my offering for \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

State/Prov. _____

ZIP Code _____

City _____

Congregation _____

TL/1/86

How to Feel More at Home with Your IRA.

You don't have to go to a bank to start your IRA. Just sit down. Relax. And start an Individual Retirement Annuity with your representative from Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL).

You'll save time because we'll make your appointment when it's convenient for you.

You'll save money, too, just as you would with an IRA from a bank — up to \$2,000 in contributions per

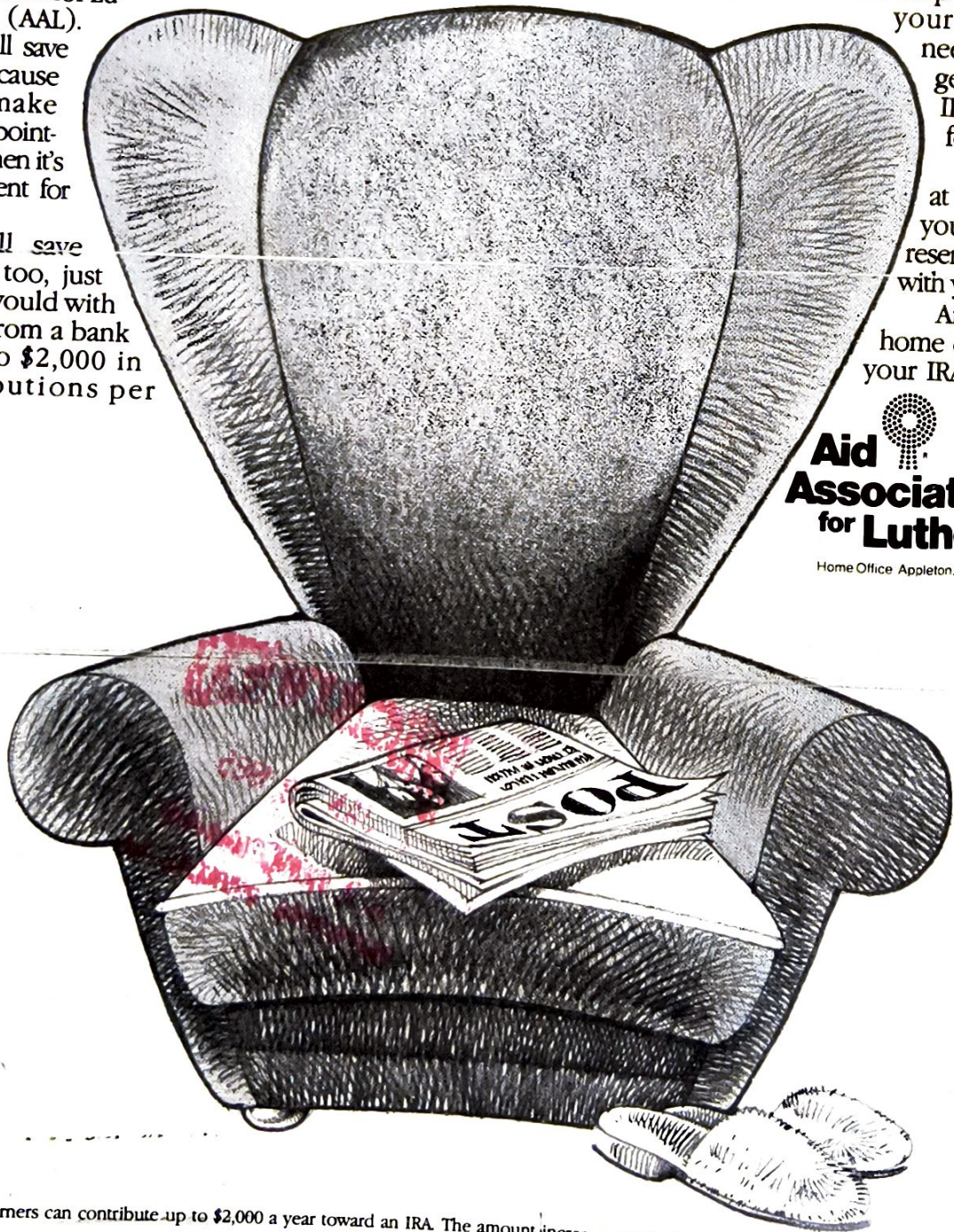
individual is tax-deferred.*

And you'll like our high interest rates, financial strength and retirement benefits you can't outlive.

In addition to all the savings, you'll get the kind of personal service your financial matters deserve. Your trained AAL representative will help you evaluate your financial needs and suggest the best IRA options for you.

It all starts at home with your AAL representative. Talk with yours today.

And get free home delivery on your IRA.



Aid Association for Lutherans

Home Office Appleton, Wisconsin 54919

*All wage earners can contribute up to \$2,000 a year toward an IRA. The amount increases to \$2,250 if you include your non-working spouse.