

THE Lutheran

JUNE 18, 1986

UPROOTED IN EL SALVADOR

Will They Ever Go Home?

THE SLICK WORLD
OF CAMPUS
FUNDAMENTALISM

FAITH AND
THE DEADLINE:
A REPORTER'S
STORY

NEWS:
HOW SYNODS
AND DISTRICTS
FEEL ABOUT
THE NEW CHURCH



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A LITTLE SALT

Prayer without an answer

During an address at Ohio University, Ernest L. Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, spoke about the issue of prayer in the public schools. He said one prayer is acceptable to and practiced by members of all religions. The prayer goes "Please, God, don't let her call on me!"

—A. Michael Williford
Athens, Ohio

A religion that gives nothing, costs nothing and suffers nothing is worth nothing.

—Martin Luther

Salad with undressing?

The announcement for our church picnic was supposed to urge people to arrive in informal clothing. Considerable hilarity resulted when people saw the actual bulletin sentence which read "Everyone is asked to wear clothing for the picnic."

—Elaine Campagnoli
Walkersville, Md.



The safest road to hell is the gradual one — the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts.

—C. S. Lewis

Misquoted

Residents of Martin Luther Tower, San Francisco, were honoring their chaplain, Pastor Walter Bock, on his birthday. Someone had called the bakery to order a cake with the inscription, "Happy birthday, Pastor Bock." But as the chaplain entered the lounge on the fateful day, he was startled to see the frosting read this way: "Happy birthday. Pass the buck."

—Hildur Norling
San Francisco

Neutral position

Here in Liberia we celebrated our bishop's birthday. Our pastor announced, "The bishop has donated three cakes to this congregation. I have decided the women will have one, the men will have the second, and I will have the third cake."

—Raphael M. Kpissay
Monrovia, Liberia

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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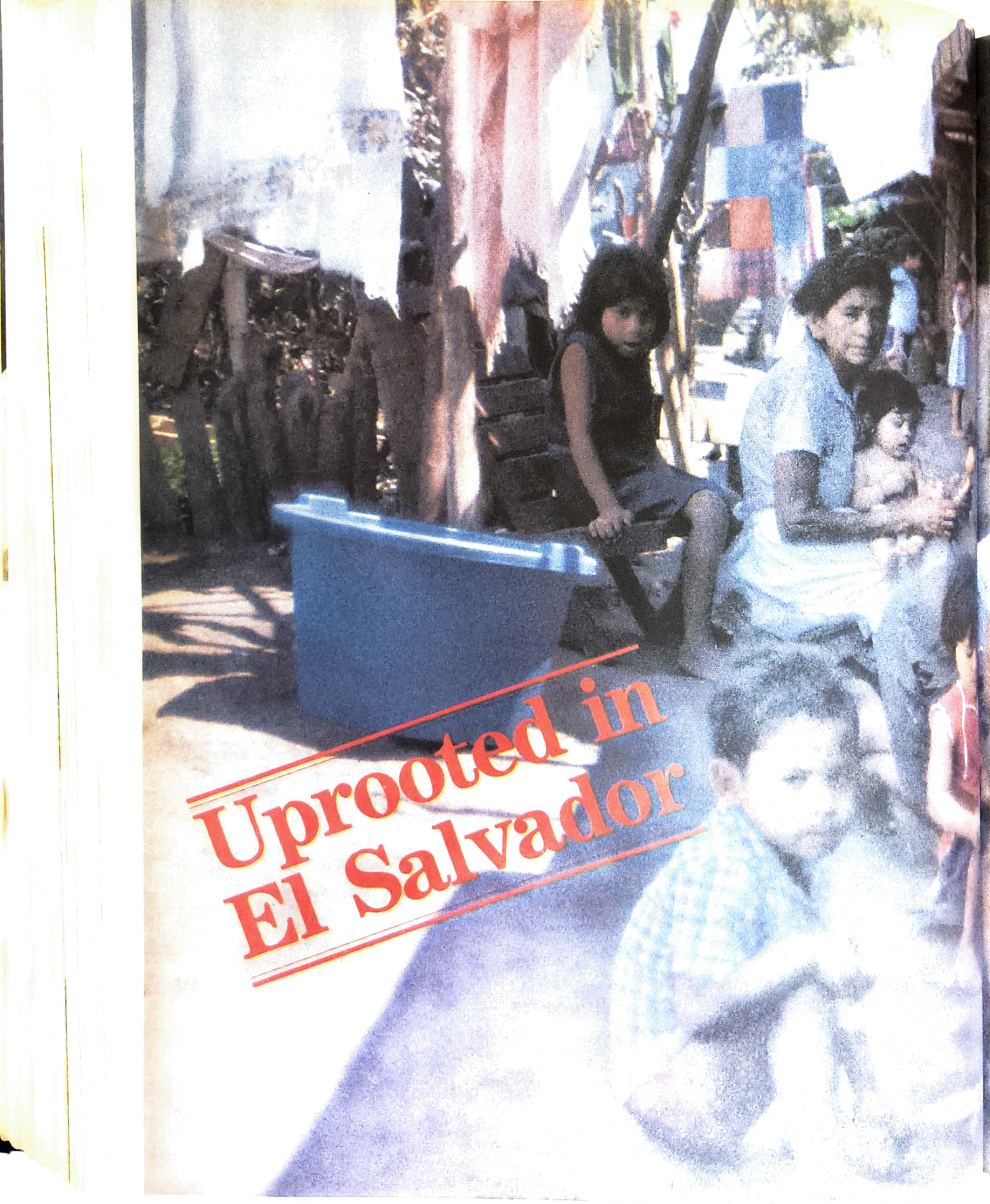
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Our cover by Edgar R. Trexler was taken at Fe y Esperanza Christian Community near San Salvador. (Story on page 4.)

A photograph showing a family in a makeshift outdoor shelter. A woman in a light blue shirt sits on the ground holding a young child. Another child sits on a wooden bench in front of a large blue plastic tub. The background shows a simple structure with a red and white striped cloth hanging. The title 'Uprooted in El Salvador' is overlaid in red text.

Uprooted in El Salvador



Women and children
seek shade from
camp's heat

More than 400 Salvadorans displaced in their own land by civil war find an uneasy haven in a church-run camp

By Edgar R. Trexler

His face was bronzed, his black hair tousled. He spoke with passion.

"The Salvadoran army told us to leave our village because the air force was going to bomb us. We left everything. Our pigs. Our homes. The corn meal we were pounding. They bombed our village that same day."

Chamba is one of more than 1 million Salvadorans displaced by the ravages of civil war in Central America's most populous country. Five hundred thousand Salvadorans have fled the country; 600,000 more are homeless in their own land.

But Chamba also is fortunate. He is one of 474 refugees living at Fe y Esperanza (Faith and Hope) Lutheran Christian Community, a virtual miracle 15 miles north of San Salvador sponsored by the Lutheran Synod of El Salvador and supported annually by \$250,000 from Lutheran World Relief.

"We tried to go back to our village after the bombing," Chamba continued. "But the government army accused us of trying to help the guerrillas they were bombing. Thank God we got out. We don't want to live at a camp, but we are relatively well off here."

Fe (as the camp is popularly known) began as a venture of trust by church president Medardo Gomez, 40. He is one of two remaining Lutheran pastors in El Salvador. Three have fled the country; a fourth, a childhood friend of Gomez's who brought Gomez from the Roman Catholic Church into the Lutheran church, was killed allegedly by the same government force that threatened Chamba.

Both Gomez and the camp live in daily peril. When government troops arrested Gomez, one of his captors told him that he was lucky. They wanted to kill him, but they knew there would be too much pressure from overseas if they did.

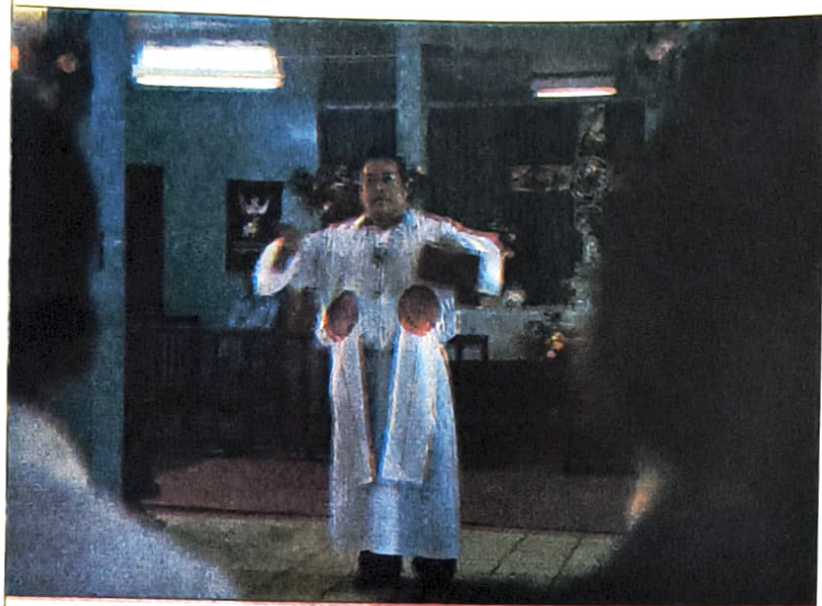
Lutheran World Relief sends U.S. volunteers to the church as administrators and teachers. But in many ways, volunteers Wayne and Terri Steinert, John Lamb and Carol Tobkis are Gomez's bodyguards.

U.S. personnel provide a degree of protection for Salvadorans who might otherwise be vulnerable to persecution by their own government. The government assumes that anyone who is displaced must be a guerrilla, and anyone who ministers to displaced persons is a guerrilla sympathizer. But the United States is such a strong supporter of the Salvadoran government that U.S. citizens are not as likely to be challenged.

Other terror has come to the camp. In mid-April, three drunken government soldiers on patrol raped a 14-year-old retarded girl at the camp while the girl's mother watched. Gomez and LWR volunteers lodged formal protest but no arrests were made.

"Faith and hope" were about all Gomez had going for him

The author, editor of *The Lutheran*, recently completed a journalistic trip to El Salvador and Nicaragua.



Gomez conducts service at Resurrection Church

when he agreed in 1982 to find a place for some 150 displaced persons. Almost the same day, a man told Gomez about some land the man wanted to buy.

"When I saw that the land was flat and cheap, I asked the owner to sell *me* the whole plot," Gomez recalls. "I told him I had no money.

"The owner said that since the land was for the church, I could have it — and pay for it in six months."

But Gomez had no money for housing either. "In the next few days," Gomez says, "\$10,000 came to the church from Norwegian Church Aid for a mobile medical clinic. We used the money for housing.

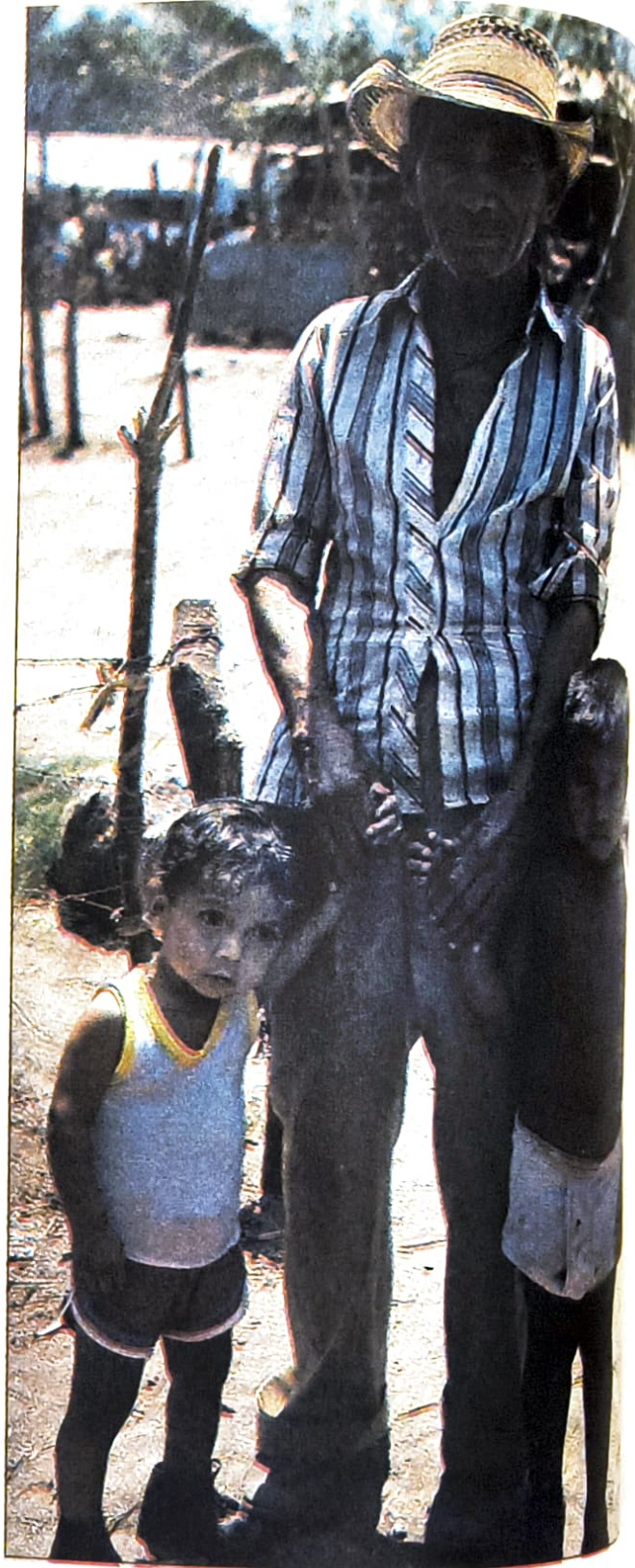
"When the Norwegian representative came, I was embarrassed. I told him we hadn't replaced the money for the clinic, but he gave me great absolution. In fact, he said, 'That's fine,' and helped us with another grant."

And so Fe began. About 85 percent of the residents are women and children; the remainder are older men. Most young men have either fled the country or are dead. Many of the residents have been at Fe for four years.

To a visitor's eyes, the camp is a meager place to live. Barbed wire encompasses an open field that is reached by a rough dirt road a mile or so off a main highway north of San Salvador, the country's capital. Across the highway, the extinct volcano Guasapa rises toward the sky. On the other side of Guasapa are guerrilla strongholds, which means that the area is a crossroads for government-guerrilla conflict.

Inside the compound is a series of long brick huts, topped by zinc roofs. Faces look out from the 12x14-foot sections allotted to each family. The partition goes only about 8 feet high, so the privacy for each family is not complete. Each family has a couple of trunks in which to store their belongings and hammocks for sleeping.

Outside on plots soybeans, maize (corn), papaya and herbs are grown. Bread is baked in a common kitchen. Mothers and children line up at long washstands to do laundry. Children attend the school and adults learn to read. A medical clinic is open twice a week. Church services are held daily. Workshops in carpentry, shoemaking, sewing and hammock-making teach a trade. Chickens are raised for food, with 68 slaughtered each week so that the whole camp has meat one day a week. Bales of clothing and bags of wheat from



Young and old make up most of camp's population

Lutheran World Relief are stored in a shed.

Faces show the frustration of makeshift living and separation from family roots. Neither Chamba nor Gomez expected Fe to be a long-term project, or for Fe to become the flagship of Socorro Luterano Salvadoreño, the social ministry arm of the church.

The probability of the refugees returning home soon is not good. While the guerrillas have more popular support than the government and might be able to win the war, both keep the war going, in part because of U.S. aid that the present government brings into the country. Although the guerrillas control about one-third of El Salvador, they are not part of

the government. The Christian Democratic Party is in power, but President Duarte has little control over his party and even less control over the military. The military operates the death squads which at one time killed 1,000 people a month but now kill about 30 a month.

Nearly everyone acknowledges that the country's judicial system is a shambles. No Salvadoran officer has yet been convicted of any atrocities. The trial of the former soldiers who are charged with killing Salvadoran Lutheran Pastor David Fernandez has been delayed twice, partially because Salvadorans are reluctant to be publicly displayed on a jury which might convict a soldier.

In this situation, the predominant Roman Catholic Church issues strong statements on human rights. Archbishop Oscar Romero is considered a martyr because he was assassinated while saying Mass. But the church's hierarchy is divided. The Catholic bishop of San Miguel, the country's second largest city, is a chaplain and is often seen in an army uniform.

The number of evangelicals in El Salvador is growing larger, many with support from U.S. churches. Evangelists Jimmy Swaggert and Pat Robertson are seen on television. An evangelical university has opened. Many of these churches openly preach an anti-Soviet message.

The tiny band of Lutherans, some 7,000 in number scattered in 25 congregations with 15 lay pastors, dates back to Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod missionaries. Because of Gomez, the camp and other social ministry activities, Lutherans are visible far beyond their numbers. They are known as having a clear preference for the poor.

Sunday services at Resurrection Church, with its modest interior painted a bright blue-green and decorated with flowers, are well-attended. Gomez doesn't use sermons to analyze the country's situation; that occurs in the context of Bible studies. He is quick to defend the church's social involvement as "eminently Christian work. There is no Marxist political line to what we do."

To be sure, the Lutheran Church in El Salvador would not collapse without Gomez, but he has made it what it is. It hasn't been easy. At one time the Gomez family was so harassed that they decided he would remain in El Salvador but his wife and their five children would go to her home in Mexico. The family actually made the trip, but "no one had the courage to say goodbye," as Gomez puts it.

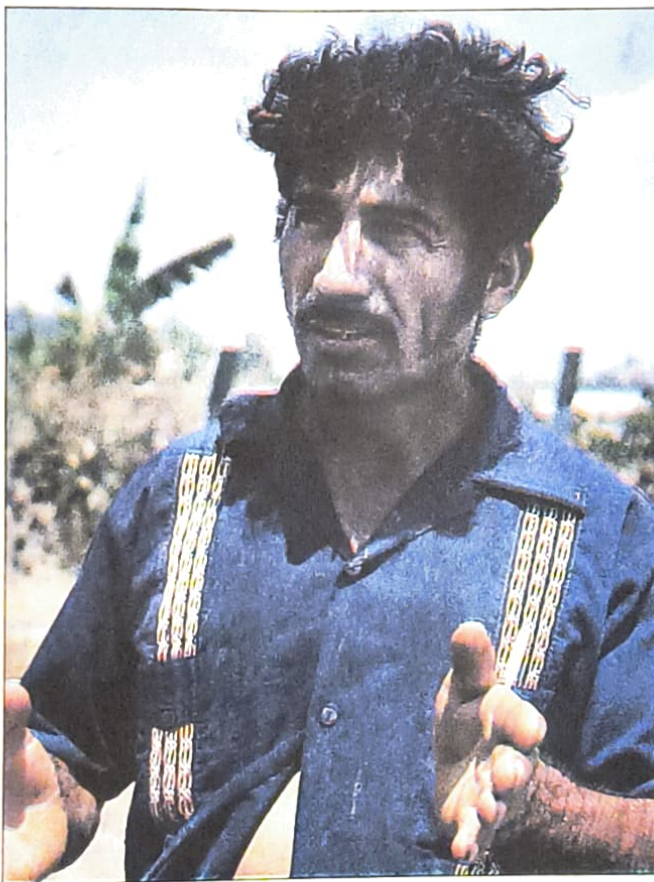
"We cried for a while because we know the children are negatively affected by the fears under which we all live," he continues. "But we decided family union negates that fear."

Gomez has simple yardsticks for measuring his work. "When I see something that we can do that will be good for people, then I know that work is the will of God," he says.

And so Socorro Luterano Salvadoreno has grown from one to 160 employees and a budget of \$734,000.

In addition to the camp, LWR helps the church support a host of activities, such as clinics and community centers at such areas as San Martin, a community of displaced persons who live in shacks along the railroad right-of-way near San Salvador. Some eat and sleep within four feet of the tracks. At other places, the church has shelter houses for orphaned children, food and clothing centers, schools and vocational and agricultural training. Some 20,000 people within a 50-mile radius of San Salvador feel the church's ministry.

In the midst of it all, life remains fragile. "El Salvador is so small that people are almost paralyzed by our situation," Gomez explains. "There is a certain amount of pain when one is accused, but joy in knowing that we do the work of God."



Chamba, whose home was bombed, describes frustration

Some families in the congregation have sons in the government forces and other sons in the guerrilla forces. "I have to serve the whole congregation," he says. "At one time I didn't understand why Jesus did some things and then told the people to 'say nothing to no one' about them. But Jesus knew he had to take precautions in his ministry, to buy time. Sometimes I have to say the same thing to people that Jesus did."

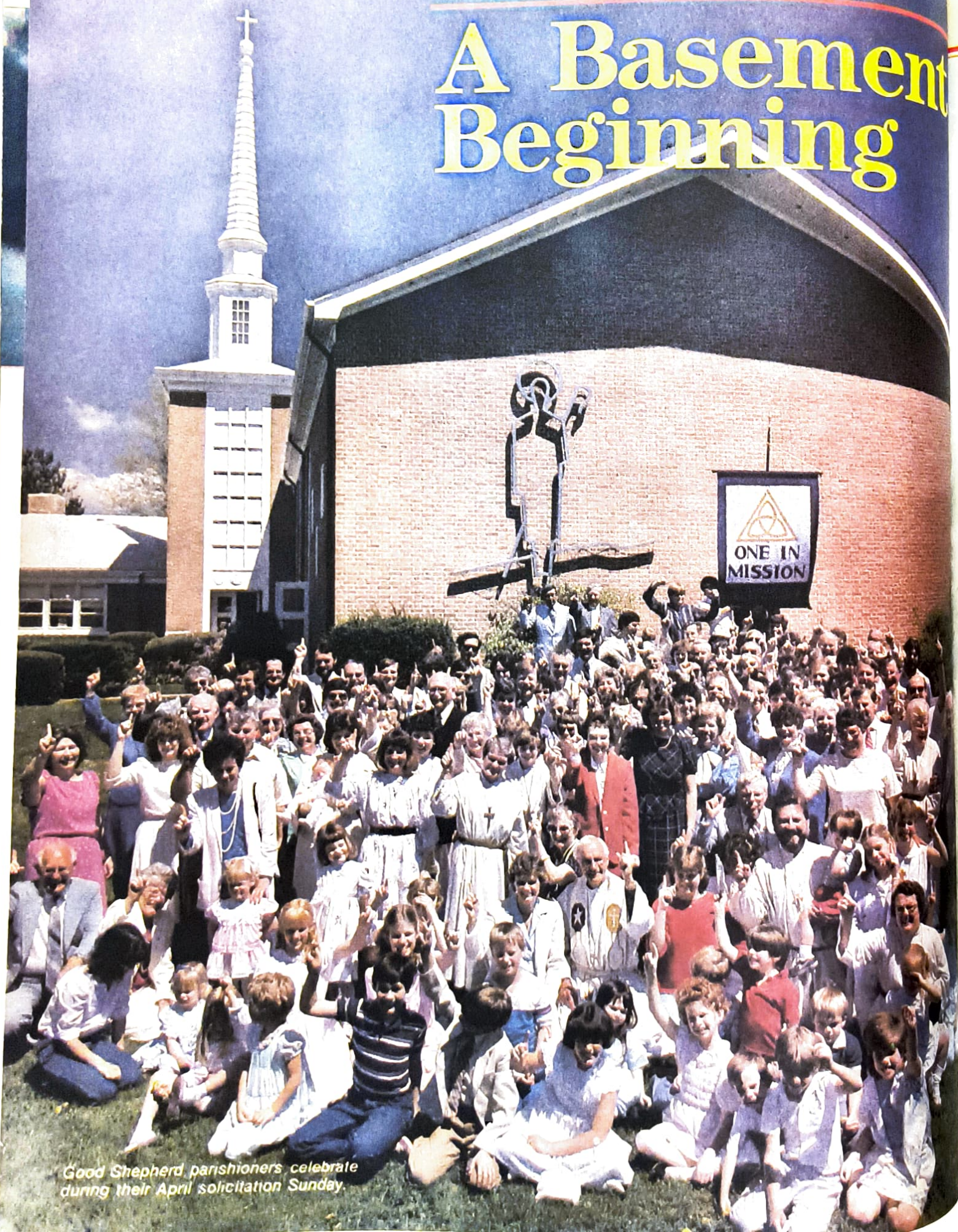
Gomez acknowledges that many Salvadorans blame the United States for maintenance of the country's civil war. One result is that Gomez and many other church groups "don't consider it honest as a church to receive aid dollars from the U.S. government — from those who hit us on one hand and then use the other hand to give us medicine. We prefer to receive aid from church groups."

LWR, like many humanitarian groups, has access to funds from government agencies such as USAID. But if the churches take aid from Salvadoran or U.S. governments, even if it is food to feed displaced persons, the action suggests agreement with the government's policy. If a recipient objects to receiving government funds, as the Salvadoran Lutherans do, LWR does not use these funds to support that group.

Gomez feels the support of overseas Lutherans. "If the U.S. government would respect our people and let our own national ways develop ... as the churches do in helping us but not imposing on us, we would be better off."

His words were not too different from those of Chamba a day before. "Let your people know," he implored, "what is going on here. Give them clear information about how church help is helping make this camp possible. But also ask them to stop your country from sending other help which exterminates us. What we need is solidarity with you. The solidarity you bring is sacred." ■

A Basement Beginning



Good Shepherd parishioners celebrate during their April solicitation Sunday.

Recollections of its humble start prompted a Maryland congregation to give \$35,000 to One in Mission

By Linda N. Lovell

Good Shepherd Church, Frederick, Md., started in Ethel Pemsel's basement 32 years ago.

"We had nothing but desire back then," Pemsel recalls. After a time the congregation, led by pastor/developer the Rev. Carroll Boyer, moved its handmade cross and communion rail to the Staley Park Field House and then to a very small rented church.

It wasn't until 1957 that the congregation secured a loan from the then United Lutheran Church in America to build at the corner of West 7th Street and Taney Avenue.

Memories of that challenging beginning were poignantly revived when members of Good Shepherd's council viewed the One in Mission videotape in November. Ed Rohde, assistant to Good Shepherd's Pastor Lavern D. Rasmussen, was present at the meeting and recalls, "You could just see the enthusiasm build and the identity bond when the shovel (for a mission church's new building depicted on the tape) was going into the ground."

The enthusiasm carried over into action. After seeing the tape the council decided that meeting its basic congregational goal of \$5,436 or its challenge goal of \$7,610, would not be enough of a response to the campaign which seeks to raise \$30 million for the Church Extension Fund and \$6 million as a birth gift for the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The council learned that 15 recently organized congregations and 21 congregations under development don't yet have a building site because the Church Extension Fund lacks sufficient funds. They recalled what it once was like to wait painfully for the chance to build.

The council pledged \$25,000 to One in Mission. Then on April 27 the congregation spent the day recalling its history and soliciting its members for One in Mission. The result? The congregation, with 175 active members, pledged an additional \$10,000 to the church's national campaign. The \$35,000 congregational total was nearly seven times the amount for which it was asked.

"We have a lot for which to be thankful," said parishioner Dolores Beach that April Sunday. Audrey Boyer, a member of the congregation for all of its 32 years, told the council in November, "Without the Church Extension Fund we wouldn't be here."

The Good Shepherd council, at Rasmussen's urging, had followed the One in Mission approach as laid out by the campaign — except it amended the slogan to read, "One in Mission: That all may know Christ's love, and Good Shepherd congregation says, 'Thank you.'"

Janet Rippeon and Ruth Brohawn co-chaired the church's appeal. The five-week process began with Rasmussen and Rippeon visiting two council members, who in turn called on

other leaders, who called on still others, until every church member had been visited.

Although Rippeon admits, "I go from the assumption that nobody likes to make visits," she says the campaign changed many attitudes. "We've had a positive visitation experience here for the first time in a long time," she says.

As people gathered for One in Mission Sunday, Rasmussen reflected on just having returned from a tour of churches in Europe and the Holy Land. "In every church I visited I prayed for the Good Shepherd family and what we are about — God's mission. We are one family not only in Maryland but throughout the world. That gives us a good reason to celebrate that we are one in mission."

The enthusiasm seems to be reflected throughout Maryland. One in Mission director for the synod, David Eitland, reported the synod's combined pledges and advance gifts total \$1,252,000 — 117 percent of the synod's goal.

One in Mission success stories are happening elsewhere too. In Reading, Pa., for example, Trinity Church decided to establish a unique One in Mission connection for its 235th anniversary. The congregation had already helped support the start of a dozen other congregations in its history — one of them only a block away. This year Trinity decided it might be nice to help start a church in another part of the country. On June 1 the Rev. Larry Richardson of Kandiyohi, Minn., visited Trinity. He is pastor/developer of a new congregation to be set up in Duluth, Ga., part of the growth ring of communities around Atlanta. Richardson departed Trinity with \$24,500 from the congregation and its senior citizens program toward the Georgia mission effort.

Overall, One in Mission is very much on target toward reaching its goal, reports the Rev. Leonard Ashford, who coordinates major gifts solicitation for One in Mission. As of May, the campaign had more than a month to go before reaching the halfway mark and 15 synods participating in the campaign so far had pledged \$25.2 million. The amount also includes funds some synods are raising for local beneficiaries (such as Philadelphia Seminary in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod and Lutheran Social Services of Illinois in the Illinois Synod). When goals for synod beneficiaries are added to the national One in Mission goal, the total is \$58 million.

Ashford says that by the end of this month he expects the 15 synods would report pledges of between \$32 million and \$36 million. About \$3.3 million has been collected in major gifts, Ashford says. Besides Maryland, other synods recording extraordinary campaign success so far were Iowa, which had met 160 percent of its goal, and Rocky Mountain, which had exceeded its goal of \$1.5 million. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod had topped its goal of \$2.6 million by nearly \$1 million by May 30.

The LCA's 15 remaining synods will begin their pledging in August. ■

The author is Maryland Synod correspondent for *The Lutheran*.



The Slick World of Campus Fundamentalism

A Lutheran student from Texas finds faith can't be as simple as the growing campus evangelical movement suggests

By Karen Nelson

Articulate, gleaming-eyed and confidently earnest, the young enthusiast flashed me a blinding grin as he sought to proselytize me.

"What changed my life was getting saved. Do you know what being saved means?" he asked.

"Yes, I do," I replied.

"What does it mean then?"

"I guess for those who subscribe to it, it means the exact day and time when you first take Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior."

"That's right! But you say 'for those who subscribe to it.' Don't you know you *must* be saved? We're all going to hell if we don't know Jesus personally — don't you know that?" he persisted.

How do I answer this well-meaning, but pushy evangelist? How do I convey that I try to be a Christian even if I am not as positive as he is about knowing all the answers?

As a lifelong Lutheran and currently a junior at the University of Texas at Austin, I've had a front-row seat to observe the growing popularity of fundamentalism on campuses. (A *New York Times* article recently cited a growing interest in

spirituality on campuses and the growth of campus evangelical groups involving public expressions of faith. The Campus Crusade for Christ, a student evangelical movement, now has chapters on 575 college campuses across the country.) Instead of embracing the swelling ranks of conservatives as fellow Christians, I find myself turned off by them.

That I can get to heaven only if I am rescued from my "dead church" and suddenly "accept" Christ repels me. Campus fundamentalists make everything too easy. By simplifying Christianity into a slick campaign, conservative groups are appealing to students' emotions. They serve up an appetizing meal of an abundant, hassle-free, indigestion-free life topped off with guaranteed eternal life for dessert.

What price is this seemingly well-balanced meal? Simply admit that you've never understood Christianity at all, but starting now you'll follow Jesus and enjoy an entirely changed life. Then begin your glorious celebration, intent on saving others like you from their "dead churches."

What attracts me and others most to the born-again Christian groups is their supreme confidence that they *know* the right answers about Christianity and have a confirmed reservation to heaven. After all, if they're so positive that being born again will take away any feelings of loneliness or emptiness, what am I waiting for?

I'm waiting because the whole born-again movement side-steps my intellect and relies solely on my emotions. Trying to figure out just what makes fundamentalists so confident,

The author is active in the Lutheran Student Movement and is secretary for ecumenical affairs for the movement's South Central District.

Nelson: "That I can get to heaven only if I am rescued from my 'dead church' repels me."

I spoke with Lance Watson, a clean-cut 25-year-old who is well-versed in both Scripture and fiery rhetoric. He works as recreation director for an independent Baptist church that contains an indoor track and gym.

Using strong guilt and fear tactics, Watson tried to undercut all my confidence in God's grace. He painted my life in dreary colors and hooked me into believing that I probably am bound for hell as a Lutheran.

Upon leaving Watson's trophy-lined office, my thoughts were spinning. For the first time I wasn't turned off, but felt guilty and hypocritical about my Lutheran faith.

"Organized religion grows more popular every day, but real Christianity does not," Watson said. "Smoking a cigarette or taking a drink won't send you to hell, but not knowing Jesus personally will."

This concern for "deluded and unenlightened" students led Watson and other Christians to "sponsor Jesus" at my school. Posters for the \$28,000 extravaganza teased, "Dare to Meet Jesus in the Performing Arts Center."

Curious to see if the Second Coming would really occur on my campus, and lured by the giant searchlights outside the auditorium, I went to the revival's first night. Instead of Jesus, I saw a popular Christian singer and two earnest evangelists.

Watson proudly proclaimed that 52 people had been saved and more than 100 rededicated themselves during the three-day event.

"Anyone in their right, intelligent mind will realize that Jesus is real," Watson said. "Some just don't want to hear the truth. I wanted to give students a chance to experience what I have — the reality of Christ."

Not everyone shares the feverish belief that to be a Christian you must be a fundamentalist.

"The whole movement upsets me in a way," said Andy Douglas, a senior studying architecture. "I like to think of myself as a Christian first and a Lutheran second. The different approach at the revival was something of an eye opener," he said. "It makes me wonder if I'm standing on the same rock they are."

"I saw a lot of positive aspects — things I haven't encountered in the church I've been attending," Douglas said. "There was a very warm feeling and people were very free with their expression. Yet I felt uncomfortable many times during the evening. Everything built to a lot of pressure and since I'm a Christian who doesn't believe in being born again, I felt somewhat intimidated."

"A lot of those who fall in the born-again movement are out there looking for something to latch onto in a very free society," Douglas said. "I don't want to sound like I'm against the movement — I'm not. I'm not one to judge but I only hope fundamentalists aren't so forceful in their evangelistic approach that they turn non-Christians off!"

Turning people off is not something "real" Christians worry about, according to Watson.

"Jesus never worried about turning people off," he said. "I can't worry about pleasing men because the Bible tells me not to."

What Christianity needs now is a happy medium, Douglas said.

"As Lutherans, we're on opposite ends of the spectrum and many times we fail in evangelism. By our nature we tend to hold back. The other extreme is the person who will gladly witness to everyone in the whole room," he said. "Somewhere there is a happy medium. I just hope and pray that witnessing will be done in a way that doesn't turn non-Christians away."

For me, the notion of knowing exactly what I should feel like if I am a "real Christian" appeals.

"How should I act now that I'm an adult?" and "How do I know when I am in love?" are questions I'm dealing with constantly. Being given the formula answer to Christian-

ity attracts me. To know I could transform my life and be assured of a heavenly berth is better than an "A" for a semester of chemistry.

Many students are finding security in conservative Christianity because suddenly it is "in," said Scott Scarborough, University of Texas student government president.

"Today it is OK to be Christian," he said, admitting that he's proud of his nickname, "Jerry Falwell Jr."

"Vocal Christians are providing other students with the kind of lifestyle they've never been offered before," he stated. "People can now find the answer in Christ instead of in alcohol and drugs. It's a huge influence and now you see people living the good life."

While this "good life" attracts many, it is just too simple for some students to stomach, said the Rev. Curtis Johnson at the University of Texas.

"Part of our trouble with the religious right is that we were raised as Lutherans and so we believe that we are both saints and sinners at the same time," he said. "As sainted sinners we are leery of anybody with a pure answer."

"The born-again people are like the gnostics of the New Testament which means they know all the answers. Faith operates on God's grace rather than sloganized answers," Johnson said.

In the midst of all my smugly born-again peers who won't admit any doubts about their salvation, I wonder a lot. Yet this puzzling brings me closer to my Lutheran heritage. My sins and my worth are too tied together for me to separate them and honestly say my doubts are gone forever. Understanding fundamentalism's appeal brings me a step closer to affirming a very Lutheran notion of growing through doubt. ■

Nelson:

'Using guilt and fear tactics, Watson tried to undercut all my confidence in God's grace. He painted my life in dreary colors and hooked me into believing that I probably am bound for hell as a Lutheran.'

ONE BLOOD, MANY COLORS

Lutheran Beginnings Among Hispanics

By Jose D. Rodriguez Jr.

The Lutheran presence among Hispanic people actually goes back as far as 1519 when the early writings of Martin Luther were translated into Spanish. A Lutheran colony was established in Venezuela in 1528. Emperor Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire, to whom the Augsburg Confession was presented in 1530, also was King Carlos of Spain. The chaplain who ministered to him at his death in 1558 is believed to have had Lutheran leanings. While the Inquisition eliminated Lutheranism from Spanish domains in the 16th century, the Lutheran mission to Hispanics was to be renewed in the 19th century.

The Lutheran presence in Puerto Rico, where today the Lutheran Church in America has more than 5,000 members, began after the island was taken over by the United States following the Spanish-American War (1898). On Jan. 1, 1899, Gustav Sigfrid Swensson, who had been a student at Augustana College, Rock Island, Ill., held the first Lutheran worship in San Juan. Some believe it was the very first Spanish service to be held by Protestants after the military occupation of the island by the United States. When Swensson arrived in Puerto Rico the previous October, all he had was a great desire to



This is the first of five installments by the Rev. Jose David Rodriguez Jr. in a year-long series on diversity and inclusiveness in the church. The author is associate director of the Hispanic Ministry Program at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.



The first Lutheran confirmation class in Puerto Rico with the Rev. Gustav Sigfrid Swensson.

spread the Gospel and the remains of \$50 that a Lutheran mission board had given him to begin the venture. He later returned to Rock Island where he finished his theological education and was ordained to continue the mission.

The first recorded Puerto Rican actively engaged in the work of the Lutheran church was Gabriela Cuervos. She was confirmed April 15, 1900, at the same service which inaugurated the first Lutheran Spanish-speaking congregation on the island: Iglesia Evangelical Luterana de San Pablo.

Cuervos was sent to a missionary school in Milwaukee for two years of training. Upon her return in 1906 she became the first Puerto Rican missionary on the island.

While other Puerto Ricans became active in the work of the church as lay readers, and although a "theological seminary" had been established as early as 1909 in Catano, the Lutheran church had no ordained national until Eduardo Roig in 1926.

The Lutheran church also reached out to Hispanics in the United States. For example, among Mexicans in Texas work was initiated in 1918. Sergio Cobian, along with Andres Melendez and German Vazquez, joined Irene Mellenbruch who was the pioneer of Lutheran work in this area. In New York City the first Hispanic congregation, Transfiguracion, was organized in 1924. Its first Hispanic pastor was an Argentinian, Jaime Soler.

The mission in Mexico started in 1877 as a personal project of a German pastor, Goethe by name, who had begun work among Germans in Mexico City. He soon included both English- and Spanish-speaking communities in this ministry. Later, in 1946, a Mexican layman, Vallejo, who had become a Lutheran in Texas, began a ministry in Mixcoac. This ministry influenced Rene Ballinas Gonzalez who, along with David Lorea Luna, became the first ordained nationals in the country. This work was sup-

ported by what is currently known as the American Lutheran Church.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod began a mission in Cuba at the turn of the century. After the Cuban revolution of 1959, the missionaries, who were mostly foreigners, left the island. Lenier Gallardo, a pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Cuba, moved to the United States in the early 1960s. He joined the LCA, entered Philadelphia Seminary and, after devel-

oping ministry among Cubans in New Jersey, started a Lutheran ministry among Cubans in Miami.

The Spanish Lutheran mission in Argentina was started by E.E. Cedar of the Augustana Synod in 1917. It was further developed by E.H. Mueller, who went to work with the conviction that the future of Lutheranism in Argentina could only be secured in its becoming part of the national life. Mueller established four congregations, founded two primary schools and began a seminary. After his death in 1923 at the age of 47, the church lost its momentum and direction. The seminary was closed. Other missionaries came but their work did not help foster national leadership and independence.

The United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Argentina, which has historic ties with the LCA, was organized in 1948. Pastor Jonas Villaverde, who received his education in the seminary founded by Mueller, became its first president. In 1954 a new seminary, funded largely by the LCA and the Lutheran World Federation, was begun in Jose C. Paz, outside of Buenos Aires. Its aim was to train pastors for Lutheran congregations in Argentina and other Latin countries and to be a Lutheran theological center for all Spanish-speaking South America. When the first graduates became pastors, a new generation of national leadership emerged. Today, the UELC has some 5,000 members and is served by 15 national pastors.

Lutheran congregations also have been established in other Latin American countries, such as Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. While Lutheran work among Hispanics has not been as successful as with some other ethnic groups, it represents the efforts of a broad spectrum of Lutheran church bodies and includes a varied membership in most of the Hispanic countries.

Next: A New Breed of Lutherans

Faith and the

A young journalist describes how a faith in God helps him handle the rebuffs and frustrations of newsroom life

By Eric Thomas

I was having one of those inevitable ice-breaking conversations with a woman I had just met.

We had covered name, hometown, college and date of graduation.

With two sips left in the first cup of coffee, my companion and I seemed to be progressing nicely. On deck: Place of employment.

She said she worked for a bank.

I said I was a newspaper reporter.

"Oh," she said, pausing. "You know, before now I've never had any respect for reporters."

She explained she had once worked for a police department and had been less than impressed with several reporters with whom she had needed to deal.

Justified or not, she had written off all reporters as jerks.

Journalist, reporter, newperson. Call us what you will, we're one and the same. And all subject to the stereotyping frequently associated with our profession.

For instance, some people assume that sensationalism is the cornerstone of the news business. Stories detailing scandal, crime and misfortune appear not because they are news but because they sell papers, they say.

In such a light, reporters' actions can be easily misconstrued. The obligatory call to the family of a murder victim for information about his or her past is considered insensitive. The pursuit of a story that an executive or politician doesn't want made public becomes irresponsibility. Repeated attempts to reach someone for comment for the sake of fairness may be equated with rudeness.

For me, such perceptions produce anger, frustration and painful soul-searching. To respond in a calm, respectful manner is one of the challenges I find myself facing as a Christian in the newsroom. Other challenges arise.

Most common is dealing with the pressure to produce stories in a limited time.

Another pressure is having one's name at the top of stories one writes. When I make a mistake I make it 22,000 times, roughly the paper's circulation. Readers aren't shy about telling me when I mess up. I've misspelled names or given people the wrong title. I get upset at my mistakes. Any mistake in print, even a little one, is important. But my faith helps.

I tell myself I honestly am trying to do a good job, and making a mistake doesn't change that. I try to learn from errors so I don't repeat them.

It is a challenge to cover a complex, unfamiliar or controversial event and produce a complete, fair and interesting story. In pursuing stories, I have been hung up on, lied to, belittled, and verbally and physically threatened. One person tried to bribe me.

Often reporters deal with people hesitant about talking, and for good reason. They have worked with irresponsible reporters in the past and are wary about having a confidence betrayed or seeing an "off-the-record" comment in print.

My response has been simply, "Have you ever dealt with me?" It's amazing how far a little trust can take you.

Then there are times when you can't leave the job at the office, no matter how hard you try. For instance, I will be talking with someone I know socially only to have the person say, "Now, don't quote me on this." Apparently the acquaintance feels that at any moment I'll pull out a pencil and scribble a note on an *hors d'oeuvre*. I want to say, "Give me some credit. I can separate business from pleasure."

Another frustration is having someone cry "misquote" when I have been accurate. I know misquotes happen, but sometimes people blame a reporter as an "easy out."

Still, there's nothing I'd rather be doing.

It's a chance to be creative, involved and informed. It's a way to step out of the office and into people's lives. New faces, new issues, new challenges provide quite an education. In just three years I've covered murder trials, UFO sightings, professional basketball and seances.

Since becoming a reporter I've found myself turning to my Christian faith for comfort, inspiration and guidance.

First, I try to do the best I can with my God-given talents. No one will ever confuse me with Ernest Hemingway, but that doesn't mean I shouldn't try to write in a compelling and sensitive fashion.

Doing my job well according to my faith also means putting aside any personal bias — if only long enough to report a story. It means being fair and accurate when I need to criticize others in print and giving them a chance to tell their side of the story.

I have found that such a practice makes me a better listener in my personal life — a key ingredient to doing ministry.

I also find myself asking God for courage in handling tough assignments and for patience in confronting misconceptions and resentment.

I'll never forget having to cover an accident in which five young people had been killed in a car crash in a split second. Seeing all that death was very hard. I needed my faith for strength to face that situation. Another time I had to call the family members of people who had been murdered. The people were distraught and I felt like I was intruding on their privacy. Some reporters I've seen act discourteously in a situation like that. They act like they have the right to know the

The author, a reporter for the *Bellingham Herald* in Washington, is a member of Faith Church there. He wrote this piece while on assignment to cover a murder trial in Ketchikan, Alaska.

Deadline

Photo by Hall Anderson

feelings of the family. I try to be responsible and courteous and my faith makes a difference in how I treat people in those situations.

My faith helps me have integrity in what I do. When I was in charge of a charity event in Bellingham, Wash., an editor asked me to write a story about it. I suggested another reporter do the job because I felt my handling it would be a conflict of interest I was too close to the situation.

I guess I am most thankful that I am a Christian when I see co-workers struggling with the same things I do without the resources of being able to turn to God.

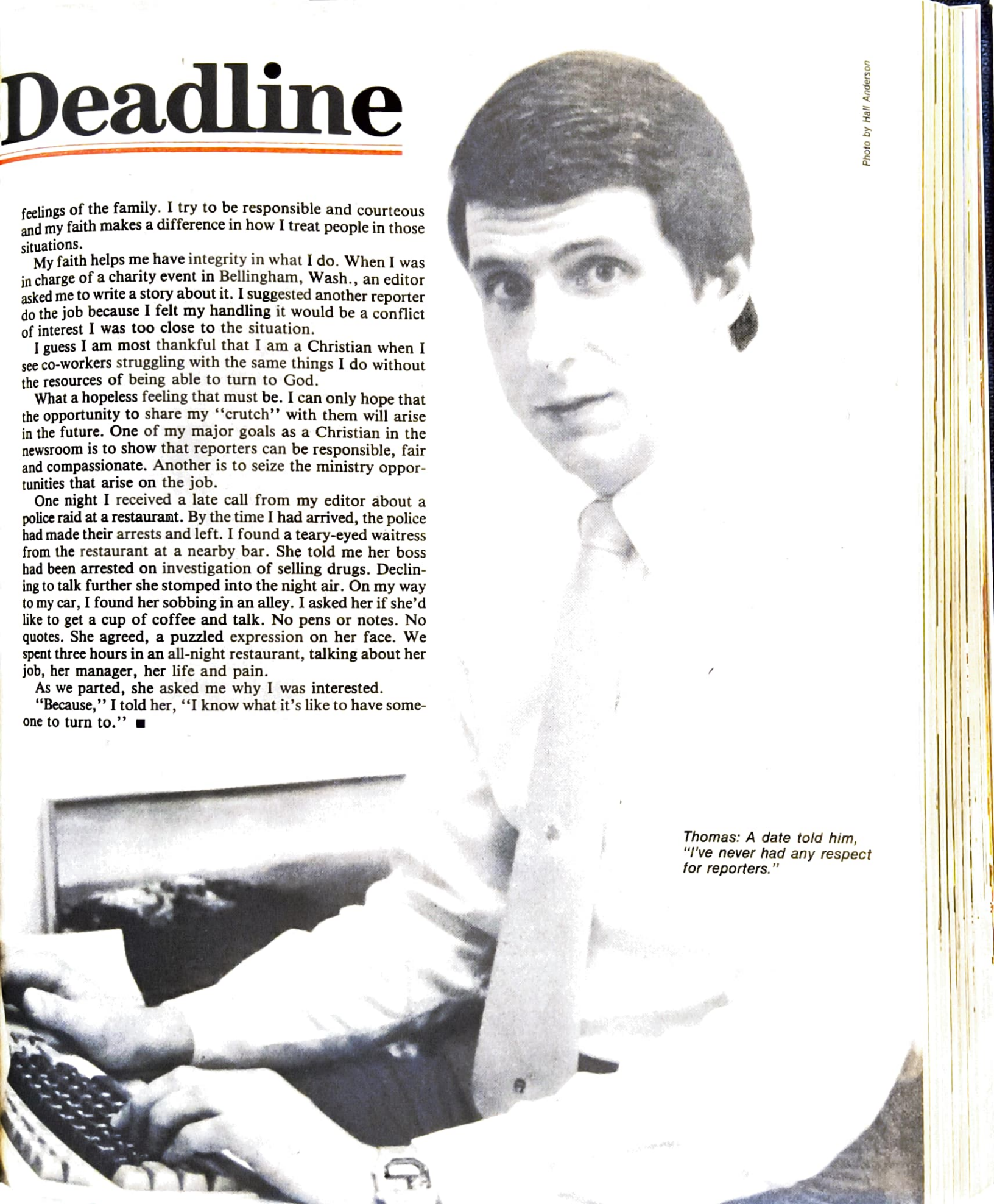
What a hopeless feeling that must be. I can only hope that the opportunity to share my "crutch" with them will arise in the future. One of my major goals as a Christian in the newsroom is to show that reporters can be responsible, fair and compassionate. Another is to seize the ministry opportunities that arise on the job.

One night I received a late call from my editor about a police raid at a restaurant. By the time I had arrived, the police had made their arrests and left. I found a teary-eyed waitress from the restaurant at a nearby bar. She told me her boss had been arrested on investigation of selling drugs. Declining to talk further she stomped into the night air. On my way to my car, I found her sobbing in an alley. I asked her if she'd like to get a cup of coffee and talk. No pens or notes. No quotes. She agreed, a puzzled expression on her face. We spent three hours in an all-night restaurant, talking about her job, her manager, her life and pain.

As we parted, she asked me why I was interested.

"Because," I told her, "I know what it's like to have someone to turn to." ■

Thomas: A date told him, "I've never had any respect for reporters."



Crumley elected NCC officer

Dr. James R. Crumley Jr., bishop of the Lutheran Church in America, is the new second vice president of the National Council of Churches. He was elected by the NCC Governing Board last month in New Orleans.

Crumley succeeds the Rev. Robert Neff who resigned because he has concluded his work as general secretary of the Church of the Brethren.

Among other items, delegates from the NCC's 31 member churches adopted a new policy on genetic engineering, responded to the AIDS crisis and were challenged by four general secretaries of councils of churches in southern Africa.

The board also participated in the first of a series of worship services planned for subsequent board meetings to give mem-

bers "direct firsthand experience" with the communities of faith that are part of the NCC. The opening service was conducted in the black Methodist tradition, an evening service was led by black Baptists and black Roman Catholics conducted a novena, normally nine days of special prayers.

Bioethics statement

Crumley chaired a bioethics panel which prepared a study on bioethical issues and collected feedback from the churches. The statement says this technology has immense potential to benefit humanity by "improving food production, drugs, medicaments and therapeutic procedures." But it notes that genetic engineering also "instigates new problems for environmental control, commerce and government policy.

"We cannot agree with those who assert that scientific inquiry and research should acknowledge no limits," the statement continues. "All that can be known need not be known," particularly "if the process for gaining such knowledge violates the sanctity of human life."

The 22-page statement calls on churches to "undertake programs of research and education on the scientific, sociological and political aspects" of genetic science "as well as on the theological, ethical and moral ones." It supports establishment of a federal government commission to regulate biological and biochemical research.

'Inactive' Christians

Leaders of church councils in South Africa, Angola, Mozambique and Namibia said their people perceive the United States as "completely responsible" for their suffering and for South Africa's destabilization of the region.

Their "appeal to the American churches" said American Christians are perceived as "inactive," only passing resolutions on apartheid but reluctant to engage the U.S. government on its policy of constructive engagement.

On other issues, the board:

— declared that "AIDS should be viewed as an illness" and affirmed "our belief that the loving God revealed in Jesus Christ does not inflict illnesses as punishment";

— granted observer status to the Unitarian Universalist Association, a status now held by the Synagogue Council of America and others who share concerns in common with the NCC.

LWF approves U.S. 'mission'

Establishment of a study group on mission and evangelism in North America and Europe was approved at a recent meeting of the Lutheran World Federation's church cooperation commission in Caracas, Venezuela. Some LWF-member churches, particularly in West Germany, have felt that Eastern Europe has attracted a disproportionate share of LWF attention.

The study is designed to fill a "void" in LWF programs by having churches in North America and Europe better define their needs, said Dr. Dorothy J. Marple, Lutheran Church in America member who chairs the commission.

Problems being faced in North America and Europe include secularization, family difficulties, economic decline and an ever-increasing influx of migrants and refugees to urban areas, the commission said. Dr. Gunnar Staalsett, LWF general secretary, noted that in some European cities "there are more people going to a mosque on Friday than to church on Sunday."

Latin America sects

In Latin America the growing presence of sects is causing concern among the churches, said the Rev. Heimberto Kunkel of the LWF staff. Lutheran churches need to pay attention to these groups because "their presence on the continent has already caused enormous religious confusion," he said. Recently the Roman Catholic Church called for a renewal to counteract the growing influence of sects.

Kunkel criticized groups which he termed "pseudo-Christian" and non-Christian

sects such as the Unification Church and Jehovah's Witnesses. "They are totally anti-Christian and prone to vigorous proselytism," he said. He added that they deny Latin American values and cultural identity and use methods "to deviate people from the church and confuse them completely."

The commission learned that the Lutheran Seminary in Hong Kong plans to train 100 pastors and 500 lay people by the time Hong Kong becomes part of China in 1997. China needs about 10,000 Protestant congregations, officials say, up from 4,000 now. The seminary is moving to a new location because of the construction of a new highway connecting China with a major seaport.

New church not 'Lutheran'

The faculty of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Concordia Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., is asking the LCMS triennial convention to declare that the Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches are "no longer genuine Lutheran churches from a traditional and confessional point of view."

The LCMS convention meets July 18-25.

The faculty resolution also asks that after the three churches form a new Lutheran church, LCMS "officials and

members avoid any actions or relationships tending to lend credibility to the new body as a Lutheran church."

In Houston, former LCA Bishop Robert J. Marshall predicted the merger will fail because of the reduced role of clergy in the headquarters site.

In Milwaukee, business leaders launched a \$127,000 campaign to promote the city as the new church headquarters. Each of the 70 members of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church is invited to visit Milwaukee at the leaders' expense prior to the CNLC meeting June 23-25 in Seattle.

Lutherans most 'American' church

"Lutherans are perhaps the most 'American' denomination in the United States," pollster George H. Gallup Jr. told some 90 staff members of the Lutheran Church in America Division for Parish Services last month.

Lutheran opinions on current social issues such as "right to life," handgun control, premarital sex and alcohol abuse closely parallel those of the general U.S. population, Gallup said. Lutherans and the general population also seem to agree on the importance of religion and on their frequency of prayer.

"Overall, Lutherans are slightly more upscale, slightly more Republican and slightly more conservative" than the general population, according to Gallup. They

also are "somewhat older and a higher proportion of them are women," he said.

Perceptions of Lutherans by non-Lutherans are generally favorable, Gallup continued. About 25 percent of those polled gave Lutherans a highly favorable rating, 1 percent an unfavorable rating, and 29 percent didn't know, he said.

ALC loses 7,630 members

Baptized membership in the American Lutheran Church declined 7,630 to 2,332,316 during 1985, according to the church's general secretary.

Presiding Bishop David W. Preus noted that although the church began new congregations each year from 1967 to 1985, the net increase was only three new congrega-

tions. "We lose congregations as fast as we gain them, largely because of the outmigration of people from historic rural and inner-city congregations," Preus said.

The Rev. James A. Bergquist, director of the Division for Service and Mission in America, saw two other reasons for the declining membership. "We're becoming an older church," he said. "If there are losses, it seems to be at the age between confirmation and 40. Certainly the average age of the ALC member has increased — it's about 55 now."

"Second," Bergquist said, "we've got maybe 20 percent of ALC congregations in communities undergoing racial and other forms of transition, and not making the shifts with the same numbers as before."



Stamps honor Lutherans

Papua New Guinea stamps to be released next month honor the 100th anniversary of Lutheran churches in the country. At left, a stamp shows a traditional church and the modern chapel at Martin Luther Seminary in Lae, New Guinea. Stamp at right depicts Martin Luther and a present-day preacher.

Paper rejects millennialism

The Lutheran Council in the USA recently adopted a draft statement which "objects strenuously" to the millennialist view voiced by such fundamentalists as Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and Hal Lindsey. While cautioning Lutherans not to reject the reality of the hope of God's eventual victory at the end of the world, the paper states that "our Lord did not say when he would return."

The statement will be printed as a brochure to help Lutherans understand millennialism, the view which claims people can calculate the date of the end of the world and the second coming of Jesus Christ by using such biblical books as Daniel and Revelation.

Prepared by the council's division of theological studies over the last three years,

the paper directly challenges the theology of fundamentalist evangelists that "all current history is in a 'countdown stage' toward the end and that the end is imminent."

"The Bible is understood to provide a calendar of the crises leading up" to the end of the world, the statement says. "To make human measurements out of heavenly visions is simply a forced imposition on the text."

"The manipulation of numbers and dates easily becomes a substitute for truly confronting the demands of the word of God," the statement adds. "Attention is thereby distracted from the true struggle — that of making moral choices, avoiding deception, bravely facing the true enemies of God and remaining faithful to God's promises."

Porn report worries leaders

Religious leaders are mixed in their reaction to the U.S. Justice Department's commission on pornography report which concluded that most pornography is potentially harmful and can lead to violence.

Contrary to a presidential commission's findings in 1970 that denied a link between pornography and violence, the 11-member commission said exposure to most pornography "bears some causal relationship to the level of sexual violence, sexual coercion or unwanted sexual aggression."

The commission also called for consideration of a federal law requiring a mandatory one-year prison sentence for anyone convicted a second time on federal obscenity charges.

The Rev. James Wall, chairperson of a National Council of Churches task force on media, sex and violence, said he agreed about the "connection between pornography and violence," but was "concerned with what seems to be a police mentality in the commission which overrides a concern for First Amendment rights. There are other ways to remedy the situation than through law," he said.

The Rev. Donald Wildmon of Tupelo, Miss., a United Methodist pastor and director of the National Federation of Decency, said he was "more pleased than disappointed" with the report, noting that it would "help our case" against pornography.

A spokesperson for the American Jewish Committee said the organization agreed with the commission's findings regarding child pornography. A representative of the U.S. Catholic Conference termed the report "highly political." He declined further comment.

WORLDSCAN

The aftermath of the Chernobyl nuclear accident caused Lutheran World Ministries to cancel a 24-day peace study seminar to the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. LWM officials told the 22 U.S. participants that although the effects of the accident may not be known for years, "the very perception that a danger exists constitutes a serious factor" as to whether the objectives of the trip could be met. In Geneva, Switzerland, the Lutheran World Federation offered assistance to Chernobyl victims through the Lutheran churches in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and through the Russian Orthodox Church. Elsewhere, fear of contamination from Chernobyl caused a Lutheran professor and his family to cut short a sabbatical study leave in northwestern West Germany to return to the United States. Dr. Kurt Hendel is a Christ Seminary-Seminex associate professor of historical theology at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

Citing "militaristic images" as the reason, a committee planning the new United Methodist Church hymnal has dropped *Onward Christian Soldiers* and the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*. A committee member said the first hymn "puts Christ in the role as the supreme field commander," while the latter is "steeped in the Civil War mystique." At the same time, the committee approved *Soldiers of the Cross Arise* and reversed a previous decision to drop *Am I a Soldier of the Cross?* because the hymn's warlike images are balanced by a call for personal piety.

Conceding the need for cuts in the federal budget, U.S. Roman Catholic bishops are suggesting to lawmakers a three-point strategy for making budget decisions: 1) the poor must be protected; 2) the military must bear its share of the cuts, and 3) military cuts should take into account not only the costs of weapons systems but the "questionable effectiveness" of the weapons.

Success in mobilizing the religious right by the Rev. Pat Robertson prevented Vice President George Bush and Rep. Jack F. Kemp (R-N.Y.) from victory in Michigan's delegate-selection process. The television evangelist's showing sparked rumors that he will seek the Republican presidential nomination in 1988.

An alternative to bingo is being sought by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago. He told priests in the archdiocese that while bingo and other forms of gambling are not immoral *per se*, "I do not think that gambling is an appropriate way to raise money for the church." In New York Cardinal John O'Connor said he was shocked when he realized that some parishes in the archdiocese were holding bingo several nights a week to finance parish schools.

Amish students can skip computer classes in Berne, Ind. After parents objected to the classes, the school board said Amish students could enroll in art, music or vocational classes rather than the state-required computer instruction.

"The Church of Sweden is too expensive to run," says Bishop Krister Stendahl of Stockholm. A former Lutheran Church in America pastor, Stendahl says, "We are the best-looked-after, best-heated, best-taken-care-of church in Christendom. Even the delegates in the church councils are paid." Stendahl wants more volunteers for church work, objecting to people who have steady incomes also being paid for their work in the church.

Support for an ecumenical peace council and a study on liberation theology were endorsed by the Lutheran World Federation's Studies Commission during a meeting in Decorah, Iowa. The commission also nominated Dr. Erika Reichle, 46, a West German, to succeed Dr. Yoshiro Ishida as head of the department. Reichle would become the first woman to head an LWF department.



Eva Burrows, 56, is the youngest person and second woman elected general commissioner of the worldwide Salvation Army, the organization's top post. She is an Australian.

Aging nuns face poverty

Poverty looms for increasing numbers of Roman Catholic nuns, according to the church's bishops. They will soon announce the start of a two-year project to find solutions to the financial crunch faced by many religious orders.

With the median age of nuns now over 60, an estimated 115,000 nuns are caught without a meaningful retirement plan and a sharp decline in the number of young nuns coming into the church to help care for the aging nuns.

A still-unreleased study sponsored by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops indicates a gap of about \$2 billion between available funds and what will be needed to care for the nuns. The figure is based on an average retirement cost of \$8,556 for women, with only \$2,500 covered by Social Security.

Average salary for a nun teaching in a parochial school is \$6,000 to \$9,800. Members of religious orders were not allowed to join Social Security until 1972.

Some small orders of nuns are applying for public welfare. Other orders are selling school properties.

Underclass needs community concern

The escalation of poverty in the United States threatens "the core of our future as a civilization," said Robert C. Maynard, owner and editor of the *Oakland Tribune* and a member of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches. Speaking to members of the Associated Church Press, Maynard said America must replace "give-away" anti-poverty programs with "a social investment in effective citizenry."

Maynard said that an uneducated, opportunity-less underclass is growing rapidly. "It worries me deeply that I hear little concern about this alienated group of Americans," he said. This group has grown because America has failed to create enduring community, Maynard said. The angry and destructive people in this underclass "do not care about the rest of us because they believe we do not care about them."

He urged the church-press writers and editors "to ask your readers how we can create a greater sense of community." He said his newspaper has made community building its foundation. "We call ourselves an instrument of community understanding," he said. Trying to make itself a servant of the community, the newspaper has created citizens' advisory boards and instituted dialogue sessions between its editors and civic leaders.

LCA SYNOD CONVENTIONS

UNY calls for communion study

The Upper New York Synod at its convention at Cazenovia (N.Y.) College June 1-3 focused on the new Lutheran church and the report of a sacraments task force.

The report of the sacraments task force sparked lively debate. The task force proposed changes in the current statement on communion practices that would permit communion of all the baptized. In a clear vote the proposal was defeated. Delegates recommended a study of the matter with the request that the new Lutheran church respond as soon as possible.

Delegates adopted the new church recommendations of the Lutheran Church in America bishops. These call for increased pension contributions, reduction of congregational authority, the understanding that the church is the sole authority in the determining of acceptance and continuance in the ministry, strengthening of the ecumenical stance and the removal of quotas. The convention affirmed goals in strategies developed to increase inclusiveness.

The convention asked that all pastors on the roll of the synod be permitted vote at synod assemblies. Delegates said that the language of the model constitution describing the power of the congregation "to terminate a pastor" was offensive.

The convention asked that rural and small-town ministry be included as an agenda item for the new church. After lengthy debate a motion urging the three churches to overcome difficulties "in order to bring the new church into being on the target date of Jan. 1, 1988, or as soon as possible thereafter" was adopted.

Concern for evangelism

The Rev. Craig J. Lewis of the LCA Division for Professional Leadership staff, the keynote speaker, urged the convention to be concerned about its ministry of evangelism. Agreeing with a study by Synod Bishop Edward K. Perry, Lewis noted "that the key to evangelism is how people do or do not nurture each other in the local congregation in the larger community."

"The new Lutheran church has declared that all people of this multicultural society will constitute its context for mission," Lewis said.

The convention also urged that wider latitude be granted for pastors to remain under call while parenting.

A 1987 mission proposal of \$1.6 million was adopted.

—JOHN PEARSON

S.C. reaffirms timetable

The South Carolina Synod "remains resolutely committed ... and strongly reaffirms support" for creation of a new Lutheran church by Jan. 1, 1988, delegates voted at the synod convention held May 30-June 1 at Newberry (S.C.) College.

Dr. Reuben Swanson, Lutheran Church in America secretary, told delegates "we do not concur with all the suggested directions." However, Swanson said he fully supports and believes the new church will be formed, "so we can expectantly and excitedly look forward to that new church in 1988."

Delegates approved recommendations by LCA bishops which call for removal of quotas, increased pension contributions, a stronger ecumenical stance, reduction of congregational authority and the understanding that the church has sole authority in determining acceptance and continuance in the ministry.

Delegates asked that retired pastors be given voice and vote at synod conventions and that the CNLC reconsider its decision to locate the national headquarters of the new church in Milwaukee. They also asked that Southern Seminary not be moved from Columbia, S.C., and that consideration be given to the seminary's establishing a house of studies in Atlanta to utilize urban ministry contexts available there.

Delegates approved a resolution calling for the removal of the Confederate flag

Illinois seeks more time

Stating that "profound differences should be resolved" before the new church comes into being, the Illinois Synod convention asked 333-266 that the current timetable of merger by Jan. 1, 1988, "not be followed rigidly" if gaining more time can help the new church begin with positive attitudes.

Meeting in Springfield, Ill., May 30-June 1, delegates approved recommendations from the Lutheran Church in America bishops which call for increasing pension contributions, strengthening the ecumenical stance, reducing congregational authority and specifying that the church has sole authority in determining acceptance and continuance in the ministry.

Delegates supported quotas for achieving inclusiveness proposed by the Commission for a New Lutheran Church. They asked that the CNLC reconsider its selection of Milwaukee as the new church headquarters with preference given to Chicago.



Ordination procession begins

from the Capitol in Columbia, S.C. The resolution said the flag is associated with slavery by some people and is "a historical artifact and not a living symbol." It should be displayed where it would receive adequate understanding as a part of state history, the resolution stated.

A budget of \$2.6 million, an increase of 4.7 percent, was adopted.

—D. MURRAY SHULL JR.

Delegates also recommended that the Church Council consist of 30 members and four officers rather than the 68 to 70 as proposed.

On other matters, delegates supported the Contadora Process for settling problems in Central America and opposed foreign military intervention in Nicaragua. Delegates urged pastors and congregations to support congressional action suspending deportations of Salvadoran refugees and to consider becoming sanctuaries for Central American refugees.

Delegates voted to urge members to petition their legislators to abolish the death penalty in Illinois and Missouri. Members were also urged to minister to persons with AIDS and their families.

Delegates took a candlelight tour of the Old State Capitol.

A budget of \$6.7 million was adopted.

—ARMIN WENG



Wimmer (left) greets Youth Convo participants during convention

N. Eng. takes abortion stand

Recognizing "responsibly chosen" abortion for problem pregnancies, the New England Synod of the Lutheran Church in America called on society to protect the need of women for "medically safe and duly licensed services." Adopted at the synod convention in Lowell, Mass., May 29-31, the resolution condemned abortion as an alternative form of contraception and emphasized the stewardship of creation and support of children.

The convention re-elected Bishop Harold R. Wimmer and Secretary E. Earl Okerlund.

The new church was discussed with leaders of the American Lutheran Church and Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches. Delegates approved recommendations from the LCA bishops calling for changes to reduce congregational authority, increase pension contributions, delete quotas, strengthen the ecumenical stance and specify the church as sole authority in determining acceptance and continuance in the ordained ministry.

Delegates also called for voting rights for retired pastors and pastors on leave from call and asked for a study on uniform compensation for all clergy.

The convention asked that the new church headquarters be in New York, Minneapolis and Philadelphia. Acknowledging the "long, hard and faithful work" of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church, delegates expressed hope that the new church will begin Jan. 1, 1988.

Delegates approved a Youth Convo proposal that the LCA "provide teenagers with information and guidance on the sacredness of their sexuality, the issue of premarital sex and capital punishment."

The convention urged Lutherans to become involved with advocacy groups working for the homeless. The LCA was asked to commission a hymn for people of the Soviet Union "to commemorate 1,000 years of Christianity in their land."

A budget of \$1,469,450 was adopted.

Thirty-one attended Youth Convo.

—CAROLINE ACKERMAN

Central States endorses merger

"It was an overwhelming endorsement of the merger," said Bishop Roger J. Gieschen of the Central States Synod after delegates voted to support formation of the new Lutheran church. Meeting in Oklahoma City, Okla., May 23-25, delegates suggested that headquarters for the new church be in Kansas City, Mo.

The convention endorsed quotas proposed by the Commission for a New Lutheran Church and approved a sense motion that 10 percent of retired ministers and those on leave from call have voice at synod assemblies.

Gieschen was elected on the first ballot to a third term as synod bishop. The Rev. J. Edward Nelson was re-elected synod secretary.

Delegates adopted a resolution asking the Lutheran Church in America to seek a peaceful, negotiated solution to Central American problems and to discourage U.S. military aid to the *contras*.

Delegates asked for a study on the feasibility of equal clergy salaries.

The Rev. Maurice Ngakane, a South African Lutheran pastor, called for understanding in his land. "The world is caught up in ideological schizophrenia. The only place we can be sane is in the church. Outside is insanity," he said.

Delegates said that future synod conventions should be held at a time farmers can attend and voted to establish a bishop's fund to assist troubled congregations during the rural crisis. A 1987 budget of \$1.5 million was approved.

A Senior Convo was attended by 30 people.

—PHYLLIS T. WERNER

Nebraska wants issues resolved

Delegates to the Nebraska Synod convention meeting May 29-31 in Omaha tabled resolutions both to delay the start of the new church and to proceed toward merger without delay. A delegate explained that the synod wanted to send a "single signal that the pending issues should be resolved and that determination of proceeding or delaying is not appropriate at this time."

Delegates adopted versions of recommendations by the Lutheran Church in America bishops which call for increased pension contributions, a stronger ecumenical stance, reduction of congregational authority and specification that the church has sole authority in determining acceptance and continuance in the ministry.

Delegates asked that the proposal for quotas to ensure inclusiveness in the new

church be changed to goals.

The convention also asked that all ordained ministers, including retired ministers, be given voice and vote in synod assemblies. Delegates recommended deletion of the constitutional provision calling for a caucus of lay professionals at national church assemblies.

In other action, at the convention Bishop Dennis A. Anderson was elected on the first ballot to his third term as bishop. Anderson reported that in the past decade synod membership growth had matched that of the state.

Delegates expressed concern about the current agricultural crisis. They adopted a resolution giving qualified support to a proposal for an amendment to the state constitution "only insofar as it seeks to

counteract concentration of land in fewer and/or corporate hands." Delegates called for establishment of fair farm and food policies and a national LCA coordination committee on the crisis. Delegates also voiced strong support for local food pantries.

A resolution was approved calling upon U.S. policy-makers to join with the Soviet Union in a mutually verifiable suspension of the testing of nuclear weapons.

A budget of \$2,882,086 was adopted. Keynote speaker Dr. Phyllis Anderson of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago said that the patterns Christians experience in worship can and should provide the pattern Christians follow throughout their lives.

—RAYMOND J. THIEL

Pacific Southwest supports quotas

"A new church does not mean that we are going to be less than what we were individually," said Bishop Stanley Olson of the Lutheran Church in America Pacific Southwest Synod. "We will indeed be more," he told the synod convention held May 29-June 1 in Los Angeles.

Delegates supported quotas proposed by the Commission for a New Lutheran Church. They supported recommendations by the LCA bishops calling for increased pension contributions, a stronger ecumenical stance, reduction of congregational authority and the understanding that the church has sole authority in determining acceptance and continuance in the ministry.

Delegates supported New York, Minneapolis and Philadelphia as initial sites for offices for the new church with study of other cities for future selection.

Also, delegates supported a treaty banning all nuclear weapons tests. They acted in support of Latin American nations seeking a peaceful solution in Central America and expressed continuing commitment to working for refugee status of Salvadorans and Guatemalans.

The convention asked the LCA Executive Council to seek additional steps in



Children of Faith Church, Monterey Park, Cal., do One in Mission presentation

achieving reconciliation in the economic crises in Pittsburgh and a re-evaluation of guidelines for handling disputes.

Delegates encouraged congregations to advocate for the homeless poor.

Dr. Nelvin Vos of Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pa., emphasized the ongoing mission of the church. "The only Gospel

our neighbor may hear is the Gospel we speak and live," he said.

Dr. Granger Westberg of the University of Illinois said, "We have the potential of doing more in the health field than any other group. A church is where every Sunday people can go for preventative medicine." —KARYN ERLBUSCH

N.C. emphasizes social ministry

The North Carolina Synod convention held May 30-June 1 at Lenoir-Rhyne College, Hickory, N.C., emphasized social ministry, justice and inclusivity.

Keynote speaker Dr. Carl Ficken Jr. of Southern Seminary, Columbia, S.C., said that "something in most of us rebels against 'quotas' because they seem forced and artificial and perhaps because they seem to suggest an absence of trust. And yet, we also know that human beings sometimes won't do what is right unless they are forced to do it."

Dr. Michael C.D. McDaniel was re-elected bishop on the first ballot.

A 24-hour prayer vigil for Lutheran unity was held. The synod adopted a sense of motion that affirmed its commitment to Lutheran unity.

The convention asked synod congregations to observe a day of prayer and fasting for the people of South Africa. Synod-supported agencies were encouraged to withdraw funds invested in corporations in South Africa.

Delegates approved distribution of a brochure on AIDS with training to be offered on pastoral care.

A resolution opposing the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazi groups was approved. Congregations were encouraged to express

public opposition to these groups.

Concerning the new church, delegates adopted recommendations by the Lutheran Church in America bishops calling for increased pension contributions, removal of quotas, strengthening of the ecumenical stance, reduction in congregational authority and specification of the church as sole

authority in determining acceptance and continuance in the ordained ministry.

The convention supported a men's auxiliary and a commission for stewardship in the new church.

A 1987 budget of \$3,812,109 was approved.

—RONALD FINK

N.J. hears Crumley keynote

New Jersey Synod delegates re-elected the Rev. Herluf M. Jensen as bishop and the Rev. Glenn H. Rudisill as synod secretary.

Meeting in Ocean City, N.J., May 29-31, convention delegates heard Lutheran Church in America Bishop James R. Crumley Jr. address criticism arising from actions on the new church by the Conference of Bishops and the LCA Executive Council. Crumley cited what he called "unfortunate" headlines as leaving the impression that at the 11th hour the LCA was balking.

"This is not the case," he said. "The bishops have responded to every report by the Commission for a New Lutheran Church. Some of our statements have been adopted, some were ignored and some did not receive much attention," Crumley added, "but this was not the first time that

the bishops have let their views be known.

"We are wholly committed to the principle of the Lutheran churches in the United States becoming unified, but we have a responsibility to question the design through which unity comes about," Crumley emphasized.

Convention delegates approved recommendations of the LCA bishops to reduce congregational authority, strengthen the church's ecumenical stance, increase pension contributions, remove quotas and stipulate the church as the sole authority for determining acceptance and continuance in the ministry. Delegates also voted that retired clergy should be given voice and vote in synod assemblies.

A budget of \$2.9 million was approved. Youth Convo was attended by 51 people.

—GARY SALMON

ALC/AELC CONVENTIONS

AELC Southwest Synod supports concessions

The Southwest Regional Synod of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches voted its strong approval of the work of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church. "We applaud its efforts and will be supportive of concessions which need to be made to achieve Lutheran union," delegates said. "We are convinced that it is paramount that Lutheran union become a reality."

Delegates recommended that "in view of the dissatisfaction of the selection of Milwaukee" as a headquarters site, Kansas City, Mo., be considered as headquarters with Chicago as a second choice.

The convention reaffirmed support for the model constitution for congregations as an optional document.

Delegates recommended that an optional

supplemental pension plan be established.

The convention also recommended changes in proposed documents to allow ordained persons to hold congregational offices and to specify that congregations may suggest names for pastoral candidates.

Delegates also asked that full-time salaried coordinators for regional centers be optional.

AELC's Pacific Synod endorses timetable

The Pacific Regional Synod of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches voted "with great joy" support for the new Lutheran church. The synod convention endorsed the timetable for the new church to begin operating Jan. 1, 1988.

Delegates asked that a task force of three laypersons, three pastors, three seminary faculty and three seminary students study

existing and potential methods for screening and preparing candidates for ordination for the new church.

Noting that the Commission for a New Lutheran Church has proposed an "intensive study of the nature of ministry," delegates asked that the study process include representatives from a variety of economic backgrounds with an emphasis on those from low-income groups. "More than one-half of the earth's population suffers from malnutrition and hunger and the needs of the whole world ought to shape our ministry," delegates were told.

Delegates also asked that a national conference be held in 1988 entitled "North American Theology from the Grassroots: Mission and Special Ministries" in order to provide grassroots data for the proposed study on ministry.

Convention delegates recommended that congregations consider special offerings on Reformation Sunday in 1986 and 1987 to raise money for support of synods in the new church.

Conventions react to CNLC

A compilation follows of reactions by 18 American Lutheran Church districts, two Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches synods and 16 Lutheran Church in America synods to proposals of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church.

Congregations

Strengthen congregational authority: ALC 7

Reduce congregational authority including increasing vote needed to leave church: LCA 15

Increase vote needed to leave church: ALC 3

Ecumenism

Strengthen: LCA 14

Higher education

Add "sustain" to encourage and assist church colleges: ALC 4

Authorized Ministries

Church determines acceptance, continuance in ministry: LCA 14

Increased distinction between clergy and lay professionals: LCA 14

Give vote to retired clergy: LCA 11

Affirm proposals, especially study: ALC 1

Pensions

Equalize pensions: ALC 3

Equalize contributions: ALC 7

Increase contributions: LCA 15

Quotas

Affirm: ALC 4, LCA 5

Oppose: ALC 7, LCA 8

Make them into goals or guidelines: ALC 1, LCA 3

Headquarters

Endorse Milwaukee as headquarters: ALC 2, LCA 1

Reconsider Milwaukee as headquarters: ALC 5, LCA 6, AELC 1

Rural

Continue rural ministry: ALC 4, LCA 1

Timeline

Affirm current schedule: ALC 6, LCA 7, AELC 1

Women

Broaden commission beyond women: ALC 2

Assign commission to church in society: ALC 1

Support incorporation of women's organization: ALC 2

Support women's organization under another unit: ALC 1

Men

Support men's organization: ALC 3, LCA 2

Youth

Grant voting-member status to all confirmed members: ALC 6

ALC Michigan District urges minimum pension

The Michigan District of the American Lutheran Church voted to ask that the Commission for a New Lutheran Church establish a minimum for pension benefits. Delegates also asked that the pension contribution be 9 percent for all participants, that a supplemental benefits plan be adopted and that provisions be made for adoptive parents to receive prenatal care and delivery costs benefits.

Delegates also asked that the agreement reached on the unfunded liability in the Lutheran Church in America pension program be changed to require LCA congregations to provide to the pension program 3 percent of workers' salaries until the unfunded liability is fully funded.

Delegates voted against proposed quotas to achieve diversity and instead approved extensive recommendations which would allow minority caucuses to elect a portion of the representatives to synod and church-wide legislative groups.

The convention asked that voting rights be granted to all confirmed members and that a youth position be included in synod structures.

The convention adopted the ALC Church Council proposal to increase congregational authority.

Noting plans for women's and youth organizations in the new church, delegates asked that the new church include a men's organization.

Solberg deposed from ministry

By a vote of 413 to 119 with five abstentions, Daniel Solberg was deposed from the ministry of the Lutheran Church in America June 5, the first day of the Western Pennsylvania-West Virginia Synod convention. The vote was by secret ballot at the request of the Rev. Philip Long, pastor of East Liberty Church, Pittsburgh.

Following the vote Bishop Kenneth May requested the Rev. Martha Clementson, chaplain, to lead the convention in prayer for Solberg, his family and the synod.

Solberg and about 50 supporters marched from the hall singing hymns. Solberg stood outside surrounded by his family and other supporters. Each family member hugged Solberg and wept openly.

Solberg was charged with "conduct incompatible with the character of the ministerial office" and disregard of church constitutions. He was removed from the pastorate of Nativity Church, Allison Park, Pa., following his involvement with the Denominational Ministry Strategy, a group which uses confrontational tactics in dealing with unemployment concerns in the Pittsburgh area.

Although Solberg had been under suspension since May 1985, East Liberty Church voted last month to call Solberg as associate pastor. May said "a person under discipline can't be called to serve any congregation." No one was sent from the synod to officiate and the installation was conducted by Dr. Richard Solberg, father of Daniel.

During the convention several persons spoke for the "forgiving of Dan and defeat of the recommendation for removal." Solberg, in a brief speech, indicated that the church was failing in its mission to the unemployment if it adopted the recommendation.

Solberg was the second pastor removed from the roll by the synod. At last year's synod convention Douglas C. Roth, who had been pastor of Trinity Church, Clairton, Pa., was deposed from the LCA ministry for his involvement with DMS.

Trinity Church was closed by the synod



Deputy confronts Roth outside Trinity Church, Clairton, Pa.

but recently worship services were begun in the church. According to newspaper reports 40 people attended the first service held there in more than a year.

Sheriff's deputies kept Roth from entering the church when he showed up with about 50 supporters. Roth said he had written to May and asked for permission to attend the service. Roth said he had stated in writing that there would be no disruption or takeover.

Roth charged that the church was being made into a "private club." Those who at-

attended the service said that Roth and his supporters had not come to worship but to disrupt the service.

Doors to the church were locked during the service. After the worshipers left, the church was again locked and a "no trespassing" sign hung up.

DMS recently lost the support of the United Steelworkers Local 1397 which voted to prohibit DMS from using its union hall. "All DMS has done is destroy the credibility of a lot of steelworkers," said one local member.

Floods strike Pittsburgh

Flash flooding in a 10-mile section of Pittsburgh's northern suburbs last month affected members of at least two Lutheran Church in America congregations.

Hardest hit were parishioners of Emmanuel Church, Etna (Pittsburgh). About 15 families suffered severe water and mud damage to their homes. "Other parishioners are helping them clean up," reported member Nancy Horn. Since the community has been declared a disaster area, the victims are waiting for assessors to total extent of the damage. Horn said some families have returned to their houses.

"People have been sending donations of money to the church for the families," she said. The church is being used as an American Red Cross shelter and meal preparation center.

The Red Cross also is using the facilities of Bethlehem Church, Glenshaw, Pa. At least three members of that congregation experienced flooded homes. Pastor C. Gerald Huhn said that one parishioner's

place of business was "under water" and a company truck caught fire and burned.

"Other members lost cars which floated away as two creeks rose over their banks," he said.

Local officials said that at least eight people died and property damage could exceed \$20 million in the 11 flooded communities. The highest recorded rainfall was 3.9 inches within several hours but the actual amount is probably much higher because gauges were not working properly.

Missions begin worship

Two Lutheran Church in America mission congregations have started holding Sunday worship.

All Saints Church, Madison, Wis., is holding services at 10:15 A.M. at 6 Essex Court, Madison. The Rev. Russell Creydt is pastor/developer.

Christ Church, Gainesville, Ga., is holding services at 11 A.M. at the Georgia Mountains Center, Gainesville. The Rev. Mark Christoffersen is pastor/developer.

Synod conventions

June 19-21

Maryland: Howard University, Washington.

Ohio: Wittenberg University, Springfield, Ohio.

June 28-30

Indiana-Kentucky: Holiday Star Resort, Merrillville, Ind.

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NEWS NOTES

Game helps child

Wichita, Kan., Lutherans recently participated in a volleyball tournament to benefit Danielle Holt, 17-month-old brain-damaged and blind daughter of David and Tracy Holt. The event was sponsored by St. Paul Church, Gloria Dei Church and Aid Association for Lutherans.

More than 1,800 attended the event which featured the Wichita Wings soccer team playing teams made up of pastors from area Lutheran churches and members of the two sponsoring congregations. "It was an enthusiastic crowd that enjoyed a wonderful evening of entertainment," said Karen Palmateer of St. Paul Church. "But the most exciting part was that everyone had banded together for the common cause of helping a family in need."

The goal of \$5,000 was met. That amount will be matched by AAL. "Although money cannot make the Holts' precious little daughter well, we were able to ease some of the family's financial burden and perhaps lift their spirits by showing that people care enough to help," Palmateer said.

Book decries battering

Stopping the violence, not saving the marriage, should be the immediate goal in helping battered women, according to a new book published by the Lutheran Church in America Division for Mission in North America. The book, *Battered Women* by the Rev. Joy M.K. Bussert, presents theological and sociological analyses of wife-beating and counseling suggestions.

Women often hesitate to reveal the abuse in their life. "She fears — from past experience — that she will not be believed, especially if her husband teaches Sunday school, directs the choir or sits on the church council," Bussert explains. She adds that marriage counseling "can be helpful and productive only after the man has learned to control his violent behavior."

Farm statement issued

Bishops and church executives in Nebraska have issued a joint statement on the crisis in rural communities. Bishop Dennis A. Anderson of the Lutheran Church in America Nebraska Synod was one of the 14 signers of the statement which calls on the church to acknowledge the lack of sufficient care for people of the land and the land itself and to provide greater pastoral care to those hurt by the crisis and more involvement in the public debate.

The statement also calls for farm and

food policies to enable a fair profit for farmers and keep farmers on the farm.

The statement concludes that despite the pain there is much potential for good. "The people of God who share God's vision of justice and of community must be an active agent of hope for exploring new opportunities and fostering meaningful dialogue," it says.

Sanctuary supported

Immanuel Church, an Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches congregation in St. Louis which has declared itself a sanctuary for Central American refugees, recently adopted a statement saying that the conviction of eight sanctuary workers in Tucson, Ariz., will not "stop our ministry of justice" in providing sanctuary. "The duplicity of our nation's actions and policies toward Latin America will eventually be exposed. Humane rather than political motives will eventually energize our legal system. And freedom will eventually be allowed to reign in Central America," the statement says.

Coalition approved

Representatives of 13 Lutheran Church in America congregations and 10 American Lutheran Church congregations have affirmed the creation of a Coalition of Evangelical Lutheran Churches of Dade and Monroe counties in the Miami area. The organization, which will meet bimonthly, anticipates the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

195 confirmed

Zion Church, Anoka, Minn., claims what may be the largest confirmation class in the Lutheran Church in America. Zion, which has a total membership of approximately 7,000 members, had 195 10th graders in its latest confirmation class.

Shootings remembered

Grace University Church, Minneapolis, commemorated the deaths of four students at Kent State University in Ohio at a service May 4, 16 years after the event. "It seems appropriate that we should on this anniversary remember a time easy for us to forget — certainly one we want to forget," said the Rev. Verlyn O. Smith. "Yet the mentality that sent troops with live ammunition against unarmed students engaged in peaceful assembly is very much with us today. Christ calls us to an alternative mind, that of peacemaker and peacekeeper."

MY QUESTION IS...

Q. How did the custom arise of conducting the service for Burial of the Dead in funeral homes? One lives a lifetime in the faith, attending all services possible in the church building, yet when his or her last service is held the church building is ignored. In the mortuary attendees often sit cramped together on odd assortments of furniture. Sometimes people are seated in different rooms, not able to see or hear the speaker. Attention is focused on people around you, or on the display of casket and flowers, rather than on God's word. Our worship book provides a beautiful burial service and the church offers a proper and dignified setting. Why opt for a funeral home?

A. The use of "funeral homes" developed from the earlier practice of holding visitation and funeral rites in the parlor of the deceased's own home. In the days before motorized transportation, some people lived too far from the church building to permit access within the time available. In some places and seasons the church was unheated during the week. Then, too, some people in fact did not attend "all services possible" during their lifetimes, or in some cases their families did not identify with the church. In some traditions the church itself provided a mortuary chapel in the cemetery. The later development of the funeral home was viewed as a convenient way of catering to the variety of backgrounds and needs in an increasingly complex society. You have cited several good reasons why

the secular mortuary is inappropriate for the funeral service of a church member. The liturgy for Burial of the Dead in the *Lutheran Book of Worship*, like earlier books, is intended "primarily for use in church" (*Minister's Desk Edition*, page 37), although modification for use elsewhere is permitted. While the church makes no law on this practice for its members, most pastors strongly prefer and encourage the use of the church building for funerals.

Q. How does the Lutheran church evaluate the 1917 apparition of the Virgin Mary at Fatima, Portugal, in which she told three shepherd children to pray the Rosary for peace? The Roman Catholic Church, which I assume does extensive homework on such things, accepts it as genuine. How can the Lutheran faith, given the evidence, not accept this?

A. The Lutheran church has taken no position on the apparition of "Our Lady of Fatima." In general, when confronted from any source with alleged "new revelation," Lutheranism would respond as follows: If the message in any way contradicts the Gospel revealed in the New Testament, then in accordance with Galatians 1:8-9 it is to be rejected. If the message simply confirms the authentic Gospel of Christ, then it would have the same status — no more or less — as any other private and personal post-New Testament witness to the Gospel. A third possibility would be that the "revelation" deals with matters entirely outside

the scope of New Testament teaching. In that case, it would be deemed irrelevant to the church's God-given task and viewed as quite outside the church's competence and concern.

Q. A friend who is a "confirmed member" of a Lutheran church told me he was never baptized. He feels that every time he takes communion he is forgiven. I think he commits a sin by doing so. What can be done in this situation?

A. Is it simply the case that he does not remember his baptism which would have taken place during infancy? Is he simply lacking a certificate? If he is really unsure that he was baptized, he should be encouraged to consult the pastor, who will want to check the church records. If, after careful research, it seems clear that your friend was not baptized, the pastor will want to arrange for baptism. Although this is normally a public act, it can be done privately if the situation would seem to cause undue embarrassment to your friend. You should not conclude that he is sinning by receiving communion without first having been baptized. This is certainly irregular, but it appears from your description that it is done out of faith, not unbelief. But steps should be taken, for the sake of good order and good conscience, to clear up the irregularity.

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

CAPITOL CURRENTS

Prayer amendment surfaces again

In the midst of a busy schedule including work on the national budget, tax reform and Central America, Congress may make time for extended debate on a constitutional amendment to allow silent prayer in public school.

Yes, you read right. Some in Congress wish to change the U.S. Constitution to "allow" silent prayer in schools! The proposal, S.J. Res. 2, is on the agenda of school-prayer advocates wanting government sanction for any kind of prayer, even if that prayer is silent. As innocuous as it sounds, this proposal could create serious problems.

Even silent prayers can be manipulated. Would the circulation of prayer cards be allowed by zealous, proselytizing students? Could the silent prayer for the day be writ-

ten on the blackboard?

Problems of definition abound. The language of the amendment reads in part: "Nothing in this Constitution shall be construed to prohibit individual or group silent prayer." What is a "group silent prayer"?

Last June the Supreme Court found the Alabama silent prayer statute unconstitutional (*Wallace vs. Jaffree*). In 1978 a law in that state authorized one minute for silent meditation. That was not challenged, but in 1981 an amendment added the words: "or voluntary prayer." Justice John Paul Stevens III noted in his court opinion that a moment of silence allows students who wish to pray that opportunity. However the additional word "prayer" amounted to "the State's endorsement and promotion of religion and a particular reli-

gious practice."

While many take this current effort lightly, the constitutional amendment now being considered would assure that high court decisions like *Wallace vs. Jaffree* could never prohibit group prayer in public schools.

The private petitions of individual students have never been disallowed, or ruled unconstitutional as some would have you believe. How could that be done? The foolishness of such a suggestion belies the mischief that could be done if a silent prayer amendment becomes a part of our Constitution's framework.

—CHARLES V. BERGSTROM

The author directs the Office for Governmental Affairs, Lutheran Council in the USA.

Committee lists LCA agency nominees

The committee on nominations for the 1986 convention of the Lutheran Church in America, appointed by Bishop James R. Crumley Jr., met in New York, May 14-15. The Rev. William E. Cox is chairperson. Additional members are:

Clergy: Wayne Carmany, James B. Christ, Donald R. Fauble, Richard E. Geib, Sherman G. Hicks, Ronald K. Johnson, Donald J. McCoid, Richard J. Perry Jr., Jane O'Hara Shields, Mary Carol Strug, Dwayne J. Westermann.

Lay: Mark D. Burkhardt, Dorothy Carlson, George S. Edwards, James J. Frankenfield, R. Keith Hutto, Rosalind Moldwin, Sarah Payne Naylor, Arlett Nordsletten, Sue Richardson, Mary Jane Schieve, Carole Suhr, Paul Walo, Frances Weant.

Approximately 390 forms suggesting nominees were submitted by churchwide agencies and convention delegates. The committee selected 154 nominees for the 77 positions to be filled. Should any find it necessary to decline nomination, the secretary of the church should be notified at once. The committee has adopted a procedure for substituting nominees for any withdrawing.

Biographical data on all nominees will be sent to delegates prior to the convention. When the report of the committee on nominations is presented to the convention, additional nominations may be made from the floor.

Provisions for nominations and elections are written in Section VI of the LCA bylaws. In accordance therewith, the properly certified list of nominations for vacancies to be filled by the 1986 convention is presented below:

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL Term expiring 1990

CLERGY	
Almen, Louis T., Greenville, Pa.	College pres.
Anderson, Mary, Prosperity, S.C.	Pastor
Carroll, Julius, Philadelphia	Synod staff
Damm, John S., New York	Pastor
Davis, Bruce T., Newark, Del.	Campus pastor
Gallardo, Lenier L., Miami	Pastor
Gazzolo, Barbara Spandet, Evanston, Ill.	Pastor
Holst, E. Frederick, Ithaca, N.Y.	Pastor
Jessen, Richard N., Cedar Rapids, Iowa	Pastor
Johnson, Ronald K., Minneapolis	Pastor
Lohr, Harold R., Fargo, N.D.	Synod bishop
Marek, R. Joe Jr., Wakefield, Neb.	Pastor
Moldwin, William G., Detroit	Synod staff
Sauer, Kenneth H., Columbus, Ohio	Synod bishop
Starr, C. Marion, Asheville, N.C.	Pastor
von Craig, Berntha T., Harrisburg, Pa.	Synod staff

LAY	
Coles, Waetina, Baltimore	School principal
Eash, Louise, Johnstown, Pa.	Homemaker
Flores, Ness, Waukesha, Wis.	Lawyer
Graff, John R., Annandale, Va.	Lawyer/bus. exec.
Jorgenson, Wallace J., Charlotte, N.C.	Broadcasting exec.
Metzger, Angela S., Summit, N.J.	Homemaker
Naylor, Sarah, Phoenix, Ariz.	Synod staff
Root, Michael J., Columbia, S.C.	Seminary prof.
Schieve, Mary Jane, Janesville, Wis.	Synod sec./bus. exec.
Sigueland, Ann L., Seattle	Consumer protection specialist
Sundberg, Shirley U., Los Alamos, N.M.	Budget coord.
Tillquist, Paul F., St. Peter, Minn.	College admin./psychologist

Wagner, Bradford D., Bethlehem, Pa.	Lawyer
Walo, Paul L., Little Falls, N.Y.	Public school supt. (ret.)

COURT OF ADJUDICATION Term expiring 1992

CLERGY	
Horn, Edward T. III, Philadelphia	Pastor (ret.)
Lee, Robert E., Atlanta	Pastor (ret.)
Luffberry, Henry B., Gaithersburg, Md.	Pastor (ret.)
Michel, Herbert H., Trappe, Pa.	Pastor
LAY	
Carlson, Clarence G., Birmingham, Mich.	Lawyer
Joy, Daniel, Jamaica, N.Y.	State Supreme Court Justice

DIVISION FOR MISSION IN NORTH AMERICA Term expiring 1990

CLERGY	
Boyer, Ralph A. III, Reading, Pa.	Pastor
Crist-Graybill, Jessica, Great Falls, Mont.	Pastor
Ellison, James M., Washington	Pastor
Hicks, Sherman G., Chicago	Synod staff
Marsh, Stephen, Springfield Gardens, N.Y.	Pastor
Miller, Jerry M., Thousand Oaks, Cal.	College pres.

LAY	
Black, Gorham L. Jr., Harrisburg, Pa.	State Secy. of Aging (ret.)
Bonds, Marlene K., Baton Rouge, La.	Lawyer
Donohue, Delaine R., Emmaus, Pa.	Bus. exec.
Dunlevy, James H., Fairfield, Iowa	Physician
Felder, Rodney, East Orange, N.J.	College pres.

Jackson, Judy, Ithaca, N.Y.	Univ. student dev. spec.
Moldwin, Rosalind (Sally) Santos, Detroit	Physician assistant
Moyer, Suzanne B., York, Pa.	Cong. services coordinator, Luth. Soc. Services
Tlou, Josiah S., Blacksburg, Va.	College prof.
Trotman, Raynel L., Hollis, N.Y.	Accountant

DIVISION FOR PARISH SERVICES Term expiring 1990

CLERGY	
Amundson, Melvin E., Columbia, S.C.	Pastor
Capers, James, Savannah, Ga.	Pastor
Lundblad, Barbara K., New York	Pastor
Nelson, David E., Kansas City, Mo.	Pastor
Payerchin, Paul M. Jr., Uniontown, Pa.	Pastor
Richards, Elton P., Reading, Pa.	Pastor

LAY	
Berge, Charles H., Bethlehem, Pa.	Insurance rep.
Brookover, Claudia, Humble, Texas	Educator
Fienen, David, St. Peter, Minn.	College prof.
Hughes, Mary E., Columbus, Ohio	Seminary prof.
Mattos, Angel M. Jr., Bayamon, Puerto Rico	Music teacher

Meyers, James, Kailua, Hawaii	Bus. exec.
Snell, Gwendolyn Harrietta, Detroit	Graduate student
Steindal, Yvonne Louise Donslund, Omaha, Neb.	Synod youth coordinator
Trendel, Virginia S., Deerfield, Ill.	Office mgr.
Zayas, Ana, Bayamon, Puerto Rico	School teacher

DIVISION FOR PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP Term expiring 1990

CLERGY	
Byerly, John F. Jr., Richmond, Va.	Pastor
Hand, Lawrence L., Philadelphia	Synod bishop
Meginniss, F. Norreen, Pleasant Hill, Cal.	Pastor
Reinsel, Thomas H., Emmaus, Pa.	Pastor
Rinn, Ronald A., Jacksonville, Fla.	Pastor
Shields, Jane O'Hara, New Castle, Del.	Pastor

LAY	
Chrichlow, Mary L., Elmont, N.Y.	Human relations dir. (ret.)
Fintel, Norman D., Salem, Va.	College pres.
Hanson, Paul, Cambridge, Mass.	Sem. prof.
Jansak, Paul, Cincinnati	Bus. exec.
Peterson, Marybeth A., Minneapolis	Synod staff
Reece, Connie, Los Angeles	Synod staff
Schroeder, Robert, Shawnee, Kan.	Quality assurance mgr.
Thomsen, Donald, Naples, Fla.	Educator

CLERGY	
Giffin, Dale R., Youngstown, Ohio	Pastor
Moller-Gunderson, Mark, Madison, Wis.	Pastor

DIVISION FOR WORLD MISSION AND ECUMENISM Term expiring 1990

CLERGY	
Cobrida, Juan, Akron, Ohio	Pastor
Eaton, Elizabeth A., Worthington, Ohio	Pastor
Forell, George W., Iowa City, Iowa	College prof.
Lazareth, William H., New York	Pastor
Parkinson, John A., Philadelphia	Hospital chaplain
Wu, Wilson, Monterey Park, Cal.	Pastor

LAY	
David, Gerson, Houston	Univ. prof.
Kessler, Frances Maria Bonilla, Mundelein, Ill.	Telephone co. mgr.
Moy, Mabel, Seattle	Ed. psychologist
Paulson, Ross E., Moline, Ill.	College prof.
Perry, David L., Chicago	Doc. cand.
Rowberg-Schaefer, Charles, Chicago	Doc. cand./bus. cons.

OFFICE FOR ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE Term expiring 1990

CLERGY	
Fauble, Donald, Arden, N.C.	Development dir.
Molgren, Gerald E., Chicago	Synod staff

LAY	
Hall, Elaine D., Teaneck, N.J.	Sr. purchasing agent
Hanson, James W., Summit, N.J.	Business economist
Harris, Jack S., Kenosha, Wis.	Foundation admin.
Luecke, Walter L., Macungie, Pa.	Consultant/real estate assoc.

Parrott, Robert E., Alexandria, Va.	Development and fund-raising counselor
Price, Barbara L., Burbank, Cal.	Synod staff-controller
Roth, Donald, Horse Shoe Run, W.Va.	Bus. exec.
Shultz, C. Fred, Hanover, Pa.	Bus. exec.
Tedrow, Robert T., Greensburg, Ind.	Bus. exec. (ret.)
Thomas, Barbara H., Atlanta	Deputy dir., vocational college

OFFICE FOR COMMUNICATIONS Term expiring 1990

CLERGY	
Mattison, Judith M., Minneapolis	Pastor
Souders, Harry G., Erie, Pa.	Ecumenical agency exec. dir.

LAY	
Carroll, Ramona, Philadelphia	Free-lance writer
Daniel, Missy, Boston	Free-lance writer
Ebel, A. James, Lincoln, Neb.	TV exec.
Emigh, Carl M., Marion, Ohio	Advertising exec.
Fozard, Myra, Aliquippa, Pa.	Synod Educational Ministry coord.
Heard, William J., Chicago	Teacher/printing
Imhoff, Frank, Laramie, Wyo.	Radio news information dir.

Liberatore, George W., Germantown, Wis.	Video productions pres.
Paxson, Marjorie, Muskogee, Okla.	Newspaper publisher
Tiedemann, J.H. Jr., Baldwin, N.Y.	Broadcasting exec.

Term expiring 1988

LAY	
Brenner, William F., Richboro, Pa. Chrp., college media dept.	Writer/pub.
Joyce, Jon Loyd, Springfield, Ohio	

BOARD OF PENSIONS Term expiring 1990

CLERGY	
Bremer, Otto A., San Leandro, Cal.	Dir. laity programs
Childs, James M. Jr., Columbus, Ohio	Sem. prof.
Edmiston, Guy S., Harrisburg, Pa.	Synod sec.
Harkins, George F., Wyckoff, N.J.	Church exec. (ret.)
Lange, Jeffrey, St. Albans, N.Y.	Pastor
Larson, Linda C., Seattle	Pastor

LAY	
Anderson, Kenneth M., Wayzata, Minn.	Lawyer
Bowen, Donna R., Metuchen, N.J.	Supervisory auditor
Eckert, Ralph J., Wilmette, Ill.	Insurance CEO
Hyer, Ranae, San Francisco	Bus. exec.
Johnson, Glen, Pittsburgh	Bus. exec.
MacBain, Kenneth D., Philadelphia	Actuary
Myers, Robert J., Silver Spring, Md.	Consulting actuary
Newhart, Dale E., Treichlers, Pa.	Institutional supt.
Olson, Mary, Chicago	Bus. exec. (ret.)
Rokos, Shirley H., Summit, N.J.	Bus. exec.
Ruclius, Frederick E. Jr., Wyomissing, Pa.	Banker
Schmider, Mary Ellen H., Moorhead, Minn.	Univ. exec.

BOARD OF PUBLICATION Term expiring 1990

CLERGY	
Axness, Paul R., Des Moines, Iowa	Campus pastor
Ehlers, Edwin L., McLean, Va.	Pastor
Ficken, Carl F.W. Jr., Columbia, S.C.	Sem. prof.
Holloway, Callon W. Jr., Dayton, Ohio	Pastor
Lull, Patricia J., Athens, Ohio	Pastor
Saari, Martin F., Columbia, S.C.	Clergy educator/church consultant
Sigel, Charles R., Columbia, S.C.	Sem. prof.
Swanson, Byron R., Thousand Oaks, Cal.	Univ. prof.

LAY	
Ballentine, Andrew W., Columbia, S.C.	College lecturer/advertising consultant
Conway, Beverly, Chicago	Field rep./Consumer Price Index
DeWerth, Gordon H., Avon, Conn.	Finance exec./univ. admin.
Hermanson, Susan, West Lafayette, Ind.	Synod parish services coordinator
Johnson, Keith J., Austin, Texas	Publishing co. mgr.
Nelson, Charles V., Bronx, N.Y.	Financial consultant

Lutherans join 'Hands' event

Lutherans were among the estimated 4.9 million Americans who participated in the May 25 "Hands Across America" chain which extended 4,150 miles from New York to California.

Delayed by a small-town parade, the six busloads of Lutherans from the **Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod** were still on the road at 3 P.M. (ET), the designated time for the chain to begin linking. "Instead of getting upset, people just started singing and holding hands on the buses," said the Rev. Elizabeth Mitchell, a synod staffer who was the trip coordinator.

Five minutes later the caravan reached Route 27 in Franklin Township, N.J., "not our assigned place but close enough," Mitchell said. Doors opened and 350 Lutherans spilled out onto the highway, joining the people already in line.

More than 300 people from seven Lutheran churches held hands in a mile-long line nicknamed the "Lutheran Link" and sponsored by Lutheran youth groups in **Albuquerque, N.M.** "It started as a youth project but ended with involvement of all age groups," said Damon Larson, of



Drawings enable children in Florida and Pennsylvania to join hands

St. Luke Church, Albuquerque.

A morning worship service in line "centered our minds on the fact that we were there because of others' needs," Larson said.

Because a section of the Hands Across America line crossed in front of its building, members of **All Saints Church, Worthington, Ohio**, took the opportunity to both join it and feed it. They provided a free lunch for participants.

Elsewhere in the Ohio Synod, many congregations conducted Sunday worship services which emphasized world hunger themes. Parishioners were urged to give special offerings for the Lutheran Church in America World Hunger Appeal.

Holding hands long distance

Since they were physically unable to hold hands, Lutheran students in two states decided to do it symbolically. About 400 pupils from **Zion Lutheran School, Deerfield Beach, Fla.**, sent drawings of their hands to Sunday school members of **Redeemer Church, Philadelphia**. They wrote their names, grades, hometowns and hobbies on the fingers of the hands.

"We hope our greetings will be hung fingertip to fingertip like a big hug around Redeemer," said art teacher Jan Miller.

Children helped by **Lutheran Family and Children Services of Missouri, St. Louis**, stood in a section of the national line. "They're kids who know what hunger is all about," said Otis Woodward, a social worker. "They're the experts."

Residents, patients, staff and other people associated with **Good Shepherd Lutheran Home, Allentown, Pa.**, participated in Hands Around Good Shepherd. They brought food and cash donations for a food bank.

About 150 pounds of food and more than \$250 were donated when students and faculty at **Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pa.**, joined in Hands Across Muhlenberg.



Smith displays one of the campaign's bus placards

Devil advertises church

A devil of an advertising campaign is increasing Sunday worship attendance at St. James Church, Portland, Ore.

For several weeks this spring large placards depicting the devil appeared on the sides of 35 Portland city buses. The devil (a photograph of a man in a costume) seems to be shrinking away from the message: "I don't have a prayer at 1315 S.W. Park." That's St. James' address.

Pastor Joe Smith came up with the idea for a publicity campaign as a way of increasing non-member interest in St. James. A committee of volunteer parishioners worked on the project and decided on the "devil" approach.

"This church wants to be open to people," Smith said. "Rather than beating them over the head with a steeple, we thought we'd try humor."

Since the church is located downtown near a shopping mall, "we wanted a campaign that would reach both workers and shoppers," Smith said. After researching several options, such as newspaper advertising, the group decided to try the inexpensive bus cards. Bumper stickers and buttons bearing the same message also were printed.

Smith reported mostly positive responses to the ad. Worship attendance is up an average 10 percent.

Michael Lloyd, The Oregonian, Portland, Ore.

Youth experience other cultures

Dancing during a Turkish wedding reception and singing with an expatriate U.S. entertainer in a nightclub were two of the experiences shared by youth from **Camden (N.J.) Lutheran Parish** when they visited West Germany recently.

"Our group of nine teenagers stayed in a youth hostel next to the Berlin Wall," said the Rev. Charles Kelly, a Lutheran Church in America pastor who accompanied the youth. A Turkish worker at the hostel invited the teens to the wedding.

"We met the singer, who calls herself Queen Yahna, in town," Kelly said. "She's originally from Philadelphia."

The trip was part of a youth exchange program sponsored by Camden Lutheran Parish in cooperation with the Kreuzberg district government of West Berlin. This project brings together inner-city youth from different cultures to give them an opportunity to broaden their horizons.

In addition to touring the Berlin Wall, the Camden group visited two schools and several museums, rode the West Berlin subway, journeyed on a train into East Berlin and met with German youth who are apprentice artists. The teens also got reac-



Argentine students rest during mountain climb

quainted with the 13 German teens who had visited them last summer.

"This trip was a unique experience for our group, most of whom rarely leave Camden, let alone fly in airplanes," Kelly commented. The Kreuzberg government provided room and board for the U.S. group. Transportation and other costs were

financed through a grant from the New Jersey Synod, corporate contributions and fund-raising events by the teens.

Japanese visit Massachusetts

When 17 students from Girls Lutheran High School, Kumamoto, Japan, visited New England recently, they stayed for a week with members of **Good Shepherd Church, North Quincy, Mass.**, and for another five days with parishioners of **St. John Church, Stamford, Conn.**

Their daily activities ranged from attending high school classes in North Quincy to buying sneakers and Cabbage Patch Kids in Boston. They participated in Lutheran worship services and saw a Passion play.

The girls, from Shintoist and Buddhist families, were chaperoned by two Japanese Lutheran teachers. Their visit was arranged by the New England Synod for the LCA Division for World Mission and Ecumenism. This trip marks the third year that a group of students from the school has visited an LCA synod in the United States.

Bible camp in Argentina

Youth from seven Lutheran congregations in the **Buenos Aires** area spent a portion of their summer Bible camp climbing Cerro Champaqui, the highest peak of the Sierra de Cordoba mountains in Argentina.

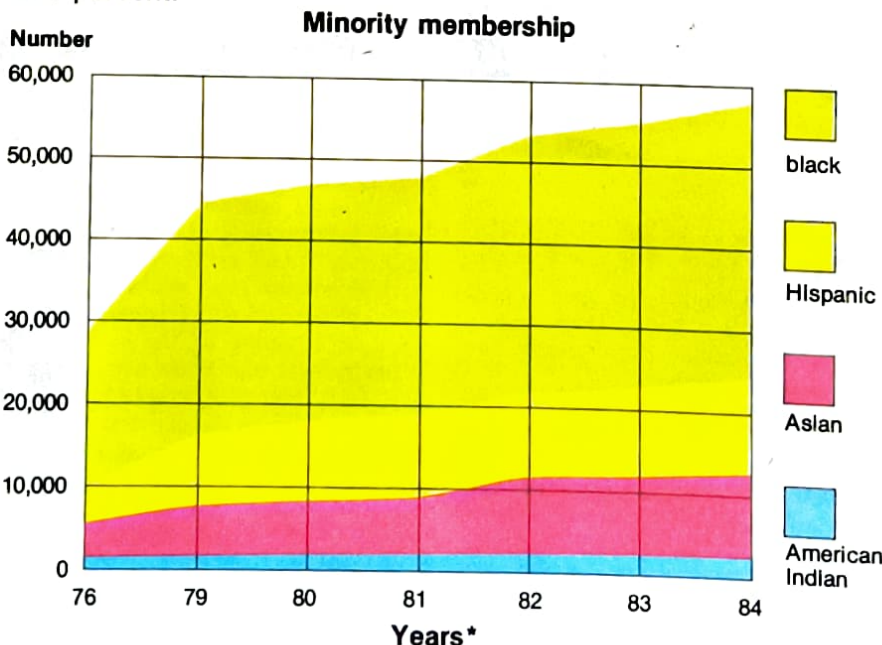
"Our adventure started with short day-long hikes to nearby sites in order to strengthen muscles, test endurance and try out gear," said Eva von Hefty, an LCA member who organized the camp.

Problems were worked out through improved communication and positive thinking, von Hefty said. "A positive contribution to the success of our undertaking was the daily Bible studies," she said.

(Contributing to this story were Wolfgang Herz-Lane and Caroline Ackerman.)

LUTHERAN LISTS

Black, American Indian, Asian and Hispanic heritage membership in Lutheran Church in America congregations increased by almost 100 percent since 1978 when such statistics were first gathered. However, the total percentage of minorities in the LCA is still only 1.91 percent.



*Statistics not available for 1977 and 1978.
Source: LCA Executive Council



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.

Pupils enjoy working on projects

Sunday school students at **Shepherd of the Lakes Church, Sayner, Wis.**, found a way to combine the fun of working on a project with helping people. They made a "blessing tree."

"We collected the end caps from orange juice cans and punched holes in them," said classmates Ericka Maines and Melissa and Hillary Long. "We tied a piece of colored string through the hole to make a loop for hanging. On the lids we wrote suggestions for nice things one person could do for another."

The students' ideas included visiting a homebound person, keeping a smile on your face all day, helping elderly people, reading a chapter in the Bible and doing a good deed for someone.

"We attached the lids to old tree branches," the three girls said. "On Sunday at church we asked worshipers to take a disk and do what it said."

Nebraska bakers

At **St. Mark Church, Bloomfield, Neb.**, the second-grade Sunday school class mixed batter, rolled dough, cut out



Busy bakers from **St. Mark Church, Bloomfield, Neb.**, are (left to right): Cory Lamprecht, Myndi Bumann, Julie Schroeder and Courtney Smith.

shapes and baked 156 cookies which looked like their church. Then the four bakers packed up the cookies and gave them away!

The class spent two Sunday sessions in making the cookies. One day after school the students got together and delivered the boxes of cookies to the older parishioners who had been unable to attend a "founder's day" celebration at the church.

Mural in South Carolina

Fifth- and sixth-grade Sunday school students at **St. John**

Church, Spartanburg, S.C., drew a mural on paper of the Lord's Prayer. Each of the 12 students chose a section of the prayer and decided how to illustrate it. When completed, the mural was hung up for church members to see.



Benefit flower sale

Hillary Blausen (left) and Keith Yost, **St. Timothy Church, Kutztown, Pa.**, put out flowers for sale on a table. Seventh- and eighth-graders grew the plants from seed. Sale proceeds were given to a local group which sends city children to summer camp in the country.

Enter the bookmark contest

Readers of books often use bookmarks to keep their place. By entering the *Kidbits* "Mark the Book" contest you can design a bookmark for readers to use.

To enter, follow these contest rules: Trace the bookmark outline in the June 4 issue of *Kidbits* or draw your own. On your entry, copy your favorite passage from the Bible, verse of a poem or sentence in a story. (Be sure to include the title of the work.) Decorate with art if you wish. Use colored pencils, paint, ink or

felt-tipped marking pens.

Print your name, age, address and church's name and address on the back. Your entry will be judged according to design, originality and age group.

Send all entries by Sept. 1 to Em Romin, *The Lutheran*, 2900 Queen Lane, Philadelphia, Pa. 19129.

Winners will be announced in *Kidbits* and will receive *Kidbits* T-shirts as prizes. (For more complete details, see the June 4 issue of *Kidbits*.)

PEOPLE



Davis

Andrea Davis, 9, Lake Park, Milwaukee, won first place in the compulsory event and second place in freeskating during the Wisconsin-Illinois-Michigan Skating Competition.

The women's auxiliary of Delnor Hospital, St. Charles, Ill., named **Lois Benson**, Bethany, Batavia, Ill., Volunteer of the Year for her 21 years of service and more than 3,000 hours of work.

William Stubing, St. Peter, New York (Manhattan), was elected director of the New York Academy of Medicine.

Joyce Bean, Faith, Wataga, Ill., received the Joseph A. Beirne Community Services Award from United Way of America for distinguished public service by a member of organized labor. Former vice president of Communications Workers of America, Bean's community work includes conducting workshops for laid-off workers, supporting local organizations and coordinating labor's involvement in the community.

Dr. Kenneth Rowe, Faith, Calumet, Mich., received the Michigan Governor's Award for excellence in administration. He is director of the Western-Upper Peninsula Health Department.

The Council for Wisconsin Writers gave **Marion Youngquist**, Redemption, Wauwatosa, Wis., a second-prize drama award for her full-length play, *The Gift-Givers*.



Schnase

Norma Jean Schnase, St. Luke, Omaha, Neb., was chosen Lutheran of the Year by Lutherans of Omaha. She was honored for her 30 years of service to the community through her television show, *Miss Jean's Story Time*.

Newberry (S.C.) College awarded an honorary doctor of divinity degree to the Rev. **Howard W. Miller**, St. Paul, Sarasota, Fla. Dr. **Jiabao Chen**, Zhongshan University, Canton, China, received an honorary doctor of humane letters degree from Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Wash.

The Rev. **Charles R. Stadler**, St. Mark, Wilmington, Del., was named director of the state's Lutheran Office on Public Policy.

Roxanne Larson, Pilgrim, Puyallup, Wash., was named Educator of the Year by Phi Delta Kappa, a teaching fraternity. She teaches third grade.

Two members of Faith, Wichita Falls, Texas, were honored recently. Capt. **Judy Rognli** was named Nurse of the Year by Sheppard Air Force Base Hospital. **Nancy Scott** received the faculty award for teaching excellence from Midwestern State University.

Rose Feilbach Broberg, Resurrection, Arlington, Va., was given the national Valiant Woman Award by Church Women United for her church and community work.



Lombardi

Sheri Kay Lombardi, St. Luke, Glen Ellyn, Ill., was selected Miss Illinois U.S. Teen. She will compete in the national contest in August.

The Antietam Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, named **Marjorie A. Jamison**, Holy Trinity, Sharpsburg, Md., Outstanding American History Teacher of the Year. She was cited for her promotion of patriotic endeavors, her commitment to students and her ability to "make history come alive."

Betty M. Danzberger, Trinity, Chambersburg, Pa., received a community service award from the American Association of Retired Persons for her "outstanding" volunteer contributions.



Pedrotti

New correspondent to *The Lutheran* for the Southeastern Synod is **Kay S. Pedrotti**, Living Word, Jonesboro, Ga. Vice president of public relations for an Atlanta firm and editor of the synod publication, *The Southeastern Lutheran*, Pedrotti succeeds **Jacqueline Lewis**, who is attending Columbia Seminary, Atlanta.

Death and Dying, a correspondence study course written and taught by the Rev. **David Belgium** and offered by the University of Iowa, Iowa City, was named the 1986 Distinguished Independent Study Course by the National University Continuing Education Association. Belgium, an LCA pastor, teaches in the university's school of religion and in its department of internal medicine.



Members of St. Peter Church, Englewood, Colo., pause while completing a stained glass window. Guided by artists Dave and Maril Redeker, about 50 people of all ages worked for a week on two windows for the congregation's new unit.

PROFILE

Bird-watchers flock to family's magazine

A magazine hatched eight years ago is now flying high for its Lutheran founders.

Bird Watcher's Digest, published by William and Elsa Thompson, members of St. Luke Church, Marietta, Ohio, is a 96-page bimonthly magazine. Geared to both beginning and professional bird-watchers, it carries original stories, reprinted articles, color photos and art. Internationally known artists and bird-watchers are frequent contributors.

"Our emphasis is on good reading with technical accuracy," states Elsa Thompson.

The idea for the magazine came out of the family's interest in bird-watching and their notice of the growing number of bird-watching columns in national publications.

In 1978 William Thompson resigned as vice president of Marietta College and "we began *BWD* from scratch with an abundance of faith and determination," Elsa Thompson recalls.

To cut expenses, the Thompsons ran their magazine from their home where it eventually encroached on every room, including the kitchen and their two sons' bedrooms. They have since left the nest and moved to a set of offices.

BWD now reaches 56,000 subscribers all over the world, more than 10 times its original readership. It has been featured in publications as varied as *The New York Times* and the *Polk* (Neb.) *Progress*. An anthology of stories from the magazine has been published.



Elsa and William Thompson

lished.

According to the National Audubon Society, bird-watching currently attracts about 21 million Americans. "Bird-watching is good for the mind and body and sharpens one's ears and eyes," William Thompson explains.

"You have to train yourself to hear, recognize and remember bird songs. You must train your eyes and powers of observation to spot and identify obscure yet vital field marks of tiny warblers in treetops. You must hike over all sorts of terrain to spot various species in various habitats and you must try to remember everything for your next outing," he says.

While pleased with the success and growth of *BWD*, the Thompsons do have one problem — they no longer have time to bird-watch.

Art Smith, The Marietta (Ohio) Times

Illinois

Miller, Earlean, associate, Calvary, Minneapolis, to St. Paul, Chicago (Ohio Street).

Planas-Belfort, Dimas, St. Thomas the Apostle, New York (Bronx), to Trinidad, Chicago.

Raymond, Marvin J., Holy Spirit, Lincolnshire (Deerfield), to on leave from call.

Rourke, Marguerite F., newly ordained, to Ascension, Chicago.

Sneed, Sherrie L., on leave from call, to chaplain, Chicago Rehabilitation Institute, Chicago.

Indiana

Rodewald, Robert F., pastor/developer, Lake of the Four Seasons, to Cross of Christ, Lake of the Four Seasons.

Sundin, F. Laraine, assistant, Grace, Elkhart, to on leave from call.

Iowa

Anderson, Theodore L., Bethany, Des Moines, to retirement.

Knudsen, Beryl M., Luther Memorial, Des Moines, to retirement.

Rice, Charles L., Our Saviour, Box Elder, Mont., to Munterville, Blakesburg; St. Paul, Albia.

Louisiana

Stern, James A., First, Oklahoma City, Okla., to St. Paul, Baton Rouge.

Maryland

Scheffer, Robert A., received from American Lutheran Church, to St. Peter; St. Paul, Leitersburg.

Spence, Mary B.Z., newly ordained, to Trinity, Baltimore.

Massachusetts

Tomsuden, Henry L., on leave from call, to retirement.

Wyse, Arthur B., pastor/developer, Hispanic ministry, Worcester, to Iglesia Luterana San Juan, Worcester.

Michigan

Johnson, Wilbert J.O., Holy Cross, Baraga, to retirement.

Laakko, Michael V., assistant, Bethel, Ishpeming, to St. Henry, Nisula; Faith, Pelkie; Our Saviour, Pelkie (Elo).

Minnesota

Brown, Nancy L., newly ordained, to associate, Diamond Lake, Minneapolis.

Erickson, Gerald A., Bethel, Little Falls, to Elim, Duluth.

Leapoldt, Loren J., on leave from call, to Bethlehem, Elbow Lake.



Stitched into a banner made by Lutheran Church Women of St. Matthew Church, Richmond, Va., are the signatures of past and present parishioners. The names on the lawn are of the charter members; in the sun, current members and their children; in the cloud, deceased members and in the walkway, pastors.

Clergy changes

California

Evans, Thomas L., on leave from call, to St. John, Grover City.

Horpedahl, Gary B., associate, St. John, Sacramento, to on leave from call.

Ketterling, David, to St. James, San Leandro (correction).

Myers, Donovan A., on leave from call, to retirement.

Peters, David A., received from Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, to associate, St. John, Sacramento.

Sun, Philip, associate, Faith, Stockton, to retirement.

Wheeler, Gary L., on leave from call, to executive director, Lutheran Social Services of Southern California, Los Angeles.

Deaths

The Rev. Louis Ewald, 69, died May 14. Ordained in 1942, he served Holy Cross, Philadelphia; Zion, Egg Harbor, N.J.; Trinity, Wernersville, and St. John, Pen Argyl, both in Pennsylvania. He retired in 1979.

The Rev. Robert L. Herman, 75, died May 17. Ordained in 1936, he served Trinity, Pottsville; Berwick Parish, Berwick; St. John, Farmersville, and Trinity (1943-76), Hecktown, all in Pennsylvania. He retired in 1976.

The Rev. John M. Warnes, D.D., 81,

died May 17 in DeLand, Fla. Ordained in 1932, he served Auburn, Springfield, Ohio. He was executive secretary, Luther League of Ohio; superintendent (1949-53) and executive director (1956-67), Oesterlen Home for Children, Springfield, Ohio; staff, Lutheran World Federation, Geneva, Switzerland; associate director, division of welfare services, Lutheran Council in the USA, New York, and executive director, Lutheran Welfare Society of the Virgin Islands, Frederiksted, St. Croix. He retired in 1970.

NOW, I THINK

By Frank J. and Marlene E. Kopta

Guarding against pastoral misconduct

The decision by the Commission for a New Lutheran Church to weaken the constitutional safeguards against pastoral misconduct alarms us. So we want to tell our story in the hope that the churches involved in the merger will overrule the commission and come down hard in favor of constitutional processes and majority rule.

We are not "knee-jerk" reactionaries. We consider ourselves near the political center. At this very moment we stand ready to enlist our voices, our word processor and our checkbook in a responsible, ethically led crusade to persuade the leaders of American business that they should not base decisions which affect the lives and livelihood of their workers solely on the basis of the "bottom line" of their profit-and-loss statements.

We are members of a congregation which became the victim of a totalitarian mentality. Our former pastor, who sat in our living room until 12:30 one morning and shrugged off our arguments that economic problems call for economic, not theological, solutions, would have rather seen our congregation go under than back away from the "prophetic ministry" to which he felt called. The majority of the congregation did not share his views, and withdrew their support. Our budget required a weekly income of \$2,000; the average receipts dwindled to \$300. We were forced to cancel our congregational subscription to this magazine, to withhold apportionment payments to our synod, and finally to remove that errant pastor through constitutional processes the founders of the Lutheran Church in America had wisely provided.

During and after those processes members of our congregation learned to what depths determined radicals were willing to sink to gain their ends. The front yard of our

home was "trashed" with a load of animal carcasses; other member families found "For Sale" signs posted on their properties; still others began to receive invoices for magazine subscriptions they had never entered. The radicals even created a potential threat to our vice pastor by distributing flyers which alleged he had a \$200,000 coin collection in his home and gave detailed directions to his residence.

All the while they preached that they were only acting out of "love" and that the real "evil ones" were tools of "corporate greed" within our congregation who had engineered their leader's firing. Witness the letter from that dismissed pastor which this magazine published March 19 (page 33).

In the letter the Rev. Daniel Solberg referred to "... the biased report of this incident ..." (in which he and his supporters were denied the sacrament at our church), and he eloquently pleaded that he and his supporters live "... lives (that) are shaped by God's love, not by those who hate us." However, he did not mention that one of those supporters was arrested, tried, convicted and fined for shouting obscenities at persons seeking to enter our church premises to worship.

Neither did he indicate that two women were struck by snowballs thrown by some of those "love-and-forgiveness-motivated" supporters, nor that some of those self-same supporters caused \$400 in damages to the automobile of one of our worshipers. And he failed to mention that on an earlier occasion, when he was being given the sacrament, he — Solberg — had profaned it.

Some might think the words "totalitarian mentality" rather strong. But what other term can you apply to a philosophy which embraces the tactics described above and which rejects constitutions and majority rule?

Those who have taken that position argue that the Bible is paramount in their thinking. However, they fail to qualify this with an acknowledgement of the possibility of their error. So we think that congregations in the planned Evangelical Lutheran Church in America should not be denied the protections which saved our congregation.

Lutheran theology proclaims that all have sinned and that all are redeemed through God's grace. It is un-Lutheran for one group to point at others and to say, "You have sinned, but we have not." And since one successful method of reconciling divergent views which exist in a universe of sinners is majority rule, the ELCA should make it emphatic to misguided pastors who claim a monopoly on virtue that perhaps they might be happier in some other communion if they cannot subscribe to democratic principles. ■



The authors are members of Nativ-ity Church, Allison Park, Pa.

"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

Growth game: fair or foul?

I agree with everything Pastor Daniel Biles said ("Getting back into the growth ball game," *Now, I think*, May 21) about the falseness of the "inclusive" approach to minority involvement. Growth, in this area and in general, will happen when we hear and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and when we are willing to share our faith journeys with others. It will not happen through quotas or any other artificial kinds of goal-setting.

MARY LOU SCHROEDER
Winchester, Va.

I say "Amen!" to Biles' words, "We've (been) trying to be a religious mirror of the left wing of the Democratic Party." Those words should be carved in stone and placed in the editorial offices of *The Lutheran* so you can read them every day.

LUKE AULL
Ninety Six, S.C.

We are over-administered now and headed for more as the new church develops with quotas and diminution of congregational authority. Biles would have my vote as chairman of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church or as presiding bishop of the church.

CONRAD H. ZIERDT JR.
Allentown, Pa.

Do not some of the most energetic "ball players on the field" return to the locker

room for rest, ritual and strategizing? Is not our "work" at being open to all one of our responses to the Gospel and an expression of our catholicity and evangelical desire? Would that Biles had engaged us in analytical thinking, helping us understand the complexities of our sluggishness, rather than using the moment to try to link it to some pet peeves.

STAN MEYER
Seguin, Texas

I can just see my uneducated, sainted mother as she leans back in her rocker, "Sounds like the pot calling the kettle black." And my uneducated, Bible-reading father, "Ain't it written in the Good Book, 'Judge not lest ye be judged'?"

BRINKLEY CRAFT GORANSON
Arendtsville, Pa.

Reading the signs

The signs of mediocrity you cite for the Lutheran Church in America (*Editor's Opinion*, May 21) are "consistently depressing," especially for parish pastors who are doing their best to proclaim the Gospel, administer the sacraments and carry out the mission of Christ Jesus. We need a new day and a "new covenant," to be more Bible-believing and Christ-exalting as a church. There should be no more talk of "civil courts" concerning "discipline of pastors," but love, support and lots of prayer. I pray that God will give the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America birth Jan. 1, 1988. Your statistics clearly show that the "old ways" and the "old covenant" no longer work.

RONALD H. MCCLUNG
Convoy, Ohio

Healing community

I wish to clarify some details in the article, "Lutherans aid AIDS patients" (*News*, May 7, page 21). Although holding special meetings to counsel AIDS patients is commendable, it is not the special emphasis of St. Timothy's Healing Community which I serve. Nor have we housed and cared for 22 AIDS patients in our home. My 27 friends who have died of AIDS in the past two years are persons I had known through night ministry, involvement in civic organizations or in my previous work in the flower industry. One of these 27 is "Craig," mentioned in the article, who lived with us for seven months but who died in his parents' home. St. Timothy's conducts a regular healing ministry, including anointing of the sick, for people with a wide range of problems; some AIDS patients have benefited from this ministry. We do not refuse prayer and counsel to anyone.

CHARLES L. KALDAHL
Daly City, Cal.

Clarification

The report, "Services restart in closed church" (*News*, May 21, page 25) stated that an appeal committee upheld the decision of Nativity Church, Allison Park, Pa., to "excommunicate" the Rev. Daniel Solberg and several parishioners accused of persistent troublemaking. The committee actually upheld the "suspension" of the group. "Suspension from stated privileges of membership for a definite period of time" is the second of three levels of discipline authorized in the Approved Constitution for Congregations. The term "excommunication" has been replaced by "termination of membership and denial of the Sacrament of Holy Communion."—Ed.

CLASSIFIEDS

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Five crucial questions: reprints available



A 24-page booklet is now ready containing the five articles from *The Lutheran's* recent major series on troubling questions people ask their pastors. The questions are, "How Can I Cope?", "How Can God Still Love Me?", "What Is God's Will for My Life?", "Why Evil Anywhere?" and "Why Me, Lord?" The booklet includes a guide for parish study groups. Pastors also may find them useful in counseling. The booklets come in packets of 25 at a cost of \$10 per packet. Send check with order to Subscription Fulfillment Department, *The Lutheran*, 2900 Queen Lane, Philadelphia, PA 19129. Allow six weeks for delivery.

EDITOR'S OPINION

By Edgar R. Trexler

A congregation is not a church

After sitting through 41 days of meetings of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church over five years, I find it difficult to believe that the CNLC is preparing for its 10th and final meeting June 23-25.

It's also hard to believe that a topic so fundamental as the nature of the church is likely to be the pivotal issue for that meeting. The issue impinges on several parts of the new church's constitution.

To put the situation simply, the Lutheran Church in America constitution says that "congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the church, and the universal church exists in and through congregations." The LCA does not equate "church" and "congregation." They are partners living under the authority of Christ.

The American Lutheran Church places more emphasis upon the congregation than on the larger church and says that the congregation creates the national church. ALC Presiding Bishop David W. Preus speaks about the congregation as "foundational" to the church.

The views of both churches reflect their histories. The LCA's view is built on the former Augustana Church's posture and on the fact that former United Lutheran Church in America congregations were influenced by Henry Melchior Muhlenberg's insistence on congregations being parts of various groupings. Muhlenberg was respected by the laity and few pastors or congregations preferred to do things alone.

The Norwegian portion of the ALC was founded primarily by immigrants who distrusted the Norwegian state church. They downplayed central authority and viewed clergy as educated elitists. Consequently, congregations tended to be independent and focused on lay leadership.

The CNLC has not been able to reconcile these positions. As compromises have been struck, the proposed constitution for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America seems to speak out of both sides of its literary mouth.



In one section, it says: "This church shall seek to function as people of God through congregations, synods and the churchwide organization which shall be interdependent. Each part, while fully the church, recognizes that it is not the whole church and therefore lives in a partnership relationship with others."

In another section the constitution says: "Congregations of this church retain authority in all matters that have not been committed to the synod or the churchwide organization in this constitution and bylaws."

In addition to reconciling these statements, the CNLC needs to make clear that all authority in the church belongs to Jesus Christ and that all parts of the church live under that authority. Neither congregations nor national structures exist by their own strength.

Beyond that, the issue of congregationalism plays itself out in various practical ways in the proposed constitution. Congregations may vote to leave the ELCA by a simple majority, allowing a congregation to turn its back on years of Lutheran investment in that place.

Similarly, congregations can come into the new church with their present constitutions, with no provision for making them conform with a model constitution. This goes to the heart of whether ELCA congregations believe the same things and whether the new church will be so congregational that the national church cannot speak for the congregations.

In dealing with the ministry, the LCA believes that clergy are pastors of the whole church, not hired hands of a congregation. The proposed constitution would allow congregations to terminate the call of a pastor with only minimal contact with the synod bishop.

The congregational issue impinges on the new church's ecumenical stance because ecumenical relations depend upon church-to-church relationships. If a denomination is too congregational, it is limited in what it can do ecumenically. LCA relationships with the Episcopal and Roman Catholic churches are based on church-to-church contacts. By contrast, the LCA has declined to move toward intercommunion with the United Church of Christ because the LCA believes the UCC is so congregational that its national body cannot speak for its congregations.

The issue of congregationalism is not, as one observer put it, a "theological nicety." Understanding the full nature of the church has clear theological implications which need to be clarified. That is a struggle which the CNLC must undertake because its resolution is foundational to the new church.

The Difference

A World Hunger Diary—Day 4

Never before have I realized how essential water is to life.

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