

# THE *Lutheran*

MARCH 18, 1987

## GROWING AGAIN

23 Pennsylvania  
churches  
learn how

MINISTRY:  
ELCA'S  
UNSETTLED ISSUE

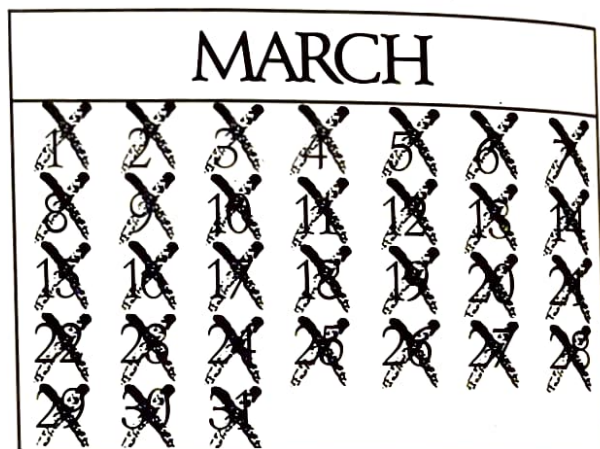
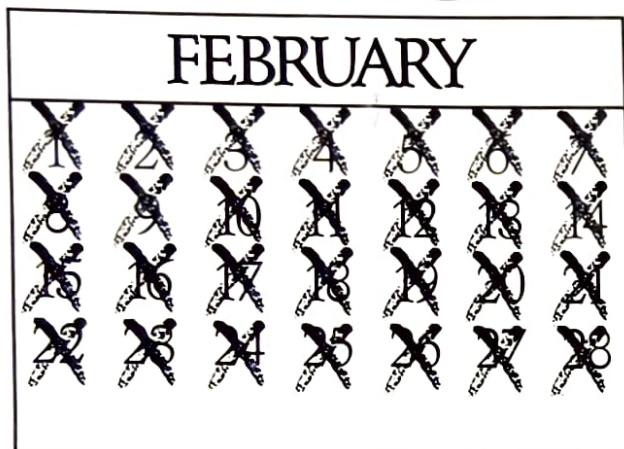
ALCOHOL'S MAJOR  
VICTIM—FAMILIES

NEWS:  
LUTHERANS  
IN SOVIET ASIA

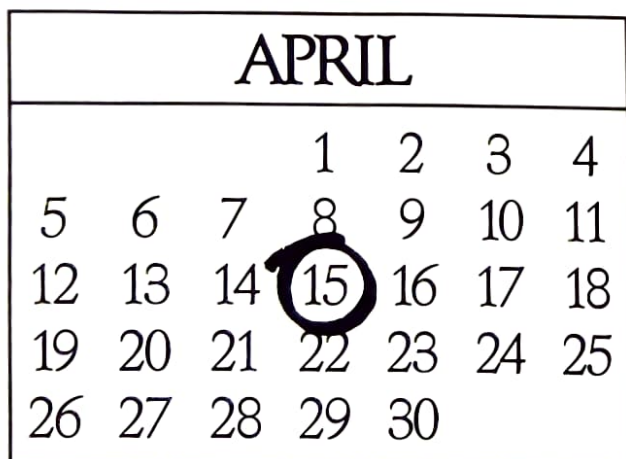
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# A LITTLE SALT

## Big response expected

The bulletin of Grace Church, Needham, Mass., reported that "the senior choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir" for Palm Sunday and Easter.

—Allan C. Page  
Needham, Mass.

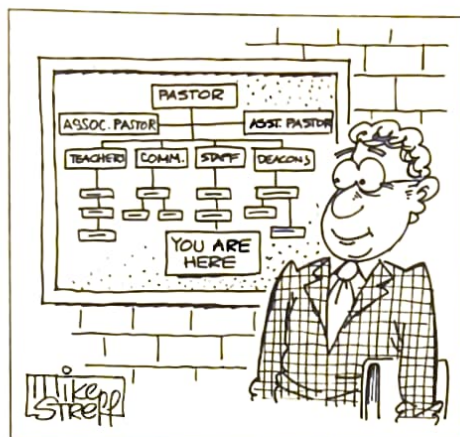
## The last shall be first

Introducing the new radio receivers to be used by hearing-impaired persons in the nave, the pastor explained that because of the transmitter location the receivers did not function well in the front pews. "They are typically Lutheran," he quipped.

—Merlin H. Knauff  
Town Line, N.Y.

## Warmly blessed

Our pastor acknowledged during preservice announcements that he wasn't feeling well and was running a high temperature, but would try to get through the service anyway. Except for a few sneezes he did well until the Benediction. He raised his hand and with congested voice pronounced, "The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make



his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor..."

—Gordon L. Stewart  
Beacon Falls, Conn.

There is a place for the rational element of religion. Without it religion would be sheer sentimentality and even superstitious. But it is not a question of either/or but both/and. Oxygen won't quench your thirst. Hydrogen won't quench your thirst. But mix them properly and they will quench your thirst. So it is with the

Christian faith. The rational element alone won't. The supernatural alone won't. But mix them together in proper proportions and you will have something that will quench the spiritual thirst of the world. This is the work of the Holy Spirit.

—Walter G. Litke  
From L.R.O. Digest

## Holy smoke

At the annual congregational meeting a motion to ban smoking in all church buildings caused sometimes heated debate among members. After the meeting, as the 11 A.M. service got off to a late start, the acolyte had to go back to the sacristy when his taper blew out. The waiting congregation saw the pastor fly out of the sacristy and then back. He explained during the announcements: "We used our last match so I had to go find a smoker to get a light for the taper."

—Helene Luechauer  
Virginia Beach, Va.

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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## THE LUTHERAN

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## A Pennsylvania district begins to build membership and morale

By Floramae Geiser

**U**nabashedly called "movers and shakers," 93 Lutherans risked icy roads to attend the kickoff meeting of an evangelism emphasis for the Warren-McKean District in northern Pennsylvania. That was February 2, 1985.

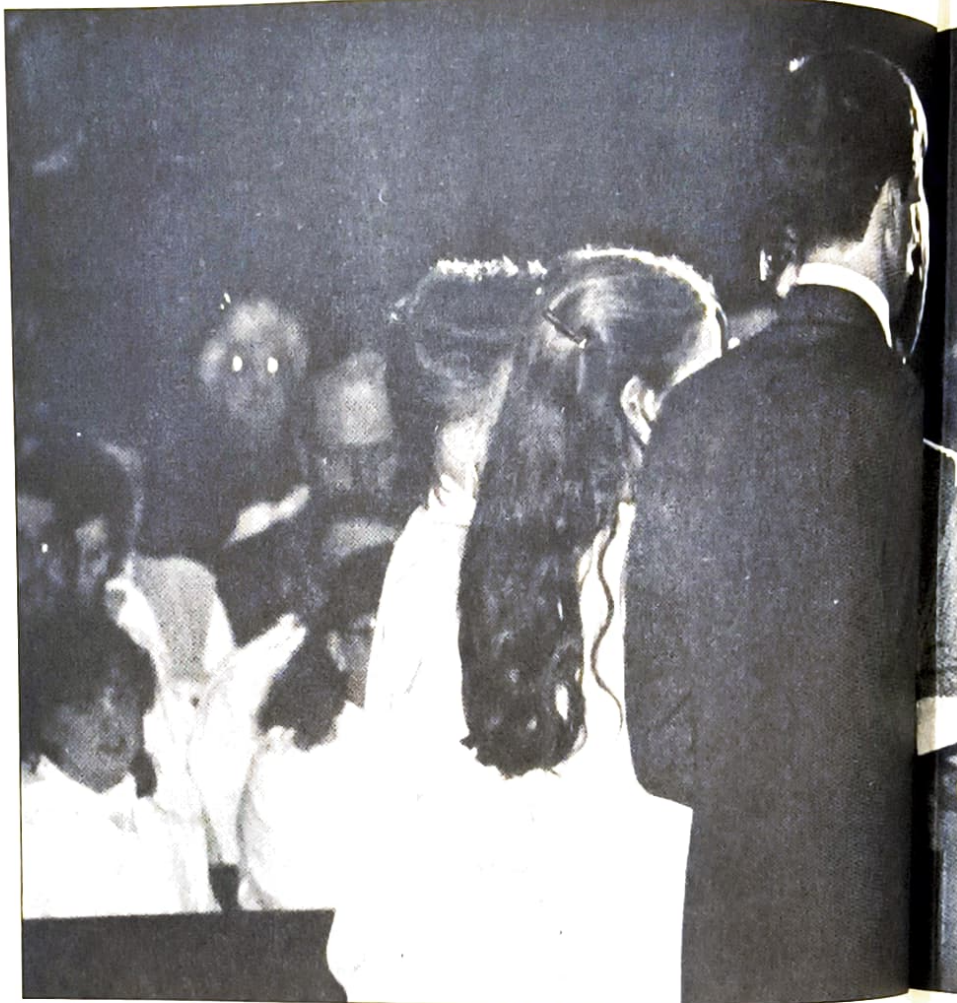
Three months later nearly 500 people turned out for a communion service at which the preacher was Dr. James R. Crumley Jr., bishop of the Lutheran Church in America.

That district of the Western Pennsylvania-West Virginia Synod was, according to the Rev. David M. Blank, a member of the district's evangelism emphasis task force, at one time "seen as weak within the synod and without strong pastoral leadership." Now it is showing growth in morale, numbers and vitality. A self-made plan for educating pastors and lay leaders about evangelism is producing good results.

Of the 23 district congregations one is taking final steps toward building expansion and renovation, nine have lay people calling on inactive members and unchurched persons, seven have functioning evangelism committees, 10 have grown in baptized members, seven in confirmed members, 10 in active members and three register an increase in Sunday worship attendance.

"Improvement in morale and attitude is not as easy to measure, but we can feel it. It's there," observes the Rev. Paull E. Spring, until recently dean of the district and still chairperson of the evangelism emphasis task force. He explains that earlier "it was demoralizing to our congregations not to grow. Slow slippage showed up year after year as we filled out congregational parochial reports. Maybe the numbers were just two or three less each year. But those were not just numbers; every loss was a person.

"We don't have models for Lutheran evangelism," Spring says. "We don't have gatherings in Yankee Stadium or go



*Crumley (far right) baptizes Matthew Robert Moore during festival service*

out knocking on doors. We need to find evangelism models with Lutheran integrity."

Throughout late 1984 the Warren-McKean district cabinet reviewed the life and mission of its 23 congregations. Statistics revealed that during the past 10 years baptized membership declined from 8,947 to 8,561 — a loss of more than 4 percent. Few congregations had functioning evangelism committees. A study of the communities served by the district showed that 50 percent of the population was unchurched. Of the Lutheran membership 50 percent was inactive.

Other problems plagued the district. Spread over five counties, the district's extremities are separated by more than two hours of driving time — described as "an energy-draining situation" for gathering church leaders together. The area suffers economically as shutdowns in the oil and gas industries have elevated unemployment to 14 percent.

The cabinet and district pastors agreed that to revitalize their church life they should emphasize evangelical outreach. They named a task force of three laypersons and three pastors who set about designing a three-year program that they called



# Again



"Let the Earth Hear His Voice." The task force was not deterred by the planned formation of a new Lutheran church midway through the program. Members expect their district's enthusiasm to be a birth gift to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**F**or extra help the task force called in the Rev. Paul Cornell, evangelical outreach coordinator for the LCA Division for Parish Services. He says this is the first districtwide evangelism emphasis he knows within the LCA. He hopes it will become a model that clusters and districts throughout the church can adapt to their own needs.

The plan centers on six goals, and actions for achieving them. The goals are:

- The morale of the pastors and congregations of the district will be improved and strengthened.
- The pastors will be motivated to desire a climate that will enhance growth in their congregations.
- The spiritual life of laity and pastors will be deepened.
- Lay leaders for evangelical outreach will be developed

within the congregations, and laypersons given a sense of personal responsibility for their own witness to the Gospel.

- An attractive climate will be created in congregations that will encourage growth in the faith and in the number of believers.

- Inclusive communities of faith will be developed, incorporating new and present members and restoring the inactive church.

To achieve the goals, a three-year series of districtwide events was designed. Activities began with the February 1986 meeting. For that occasion pastors were asked to select three to eight laypersons who were respected by their fellow members and who had a history of being able to make things happen. The six-hour event included opportunity for parish representatives to assess their churches' needs in writing. Those needs then were evaluated by the whole group. The Rev. C. Richard Evenson of DPS told anecdotes that related the simple way in which others' witness had strengthened and encouraged his faith. Then each participant huddled with two others to share stories about their faith. A concluding wor-



ship service featured the hymn *Let All Creation Hear His Voice*, written by Blank.

The May eucharistic festival with Crumley underscored his and the LCA's support for evangelical outreach. Crumley urged the district members to "be witnesses to God's word in the world. Unless there is evangelism at the very center of a church's life," he said, "it doesn't know its master or hear his command."

Intensity of the program was stepped up in the fall of 1986 with a church council workshop, evangelical outreach workshops and a two-day pastors' conference.

"They all have been quality events, well-attended. We've not yet had a bomb," Spring says. Only one congregation has lagged in sending representatives to the events.

A monthlong evangelism emphasis within congregations was planned for November of 1986, 1987 and 1988. (The task force produces bulletin inserts for that.) Each spring and fall assembly of Lutheran Church Women has a tie-in to evangelism. Additional plans for 1987 and 1988 include "Preaching from Commitment" seminars for pastors, more evangelical outreach workshops, Word and Witness training, a choir festival and evangelical outreach fair, and a mass Thanksgiving event.

Midway through the first year layperson Edward Harrington of Gethsemane Church, Port Allegany, Pa., was appointed part-time paid coordinator of "Let the Earth Hear His Voice." A career educator, Harrington chose early retirement from being a county school superintendent. With a multitude of special interests he "wasn't looking for more to do," he claims. "But as a member of the synod executive board I'd run off my mouth for some time about church decline. So when Pastor Spring asked me to do this, I couldn't say no."



Harrington's expertise in planning, administering and working with people makes him very effective within congregations, according to Spring. "Ed strikes a good balance between being positive and pointing out those things that need work," Spring says.

Harrington has visited every district church during Sunday worship to give a talk, then meet with congregational leaders to discuss evangelism and to evaluate what he experiences within that congregation.

"We can't do much about people leaving the church," Harrington says, "but we can work with inactives and reach out to the unchurched. Four years ago a new congregation of a fundamentalist denomination started in my town. It now has 190 members. We're glad they found a church. But we'd be ecstatic if they had become Lutherans. We let them get away from us."

"We're still trying to help people understand that inclusiveness is not just racial," Spring observes. "In our area that isn't much of a reality. But there are the economic minorities, for example. A handful of poor joined our church, but they were not very well received. There are those people living together without marriage. Some churches are doing more

than others at that kind of inclusiveness."

While inspiration for the bootstrap evangelical emphasis came from the district, the congregations receive financial and resource support from the synod and the LCA. The synod gave \$7,000 the first year, to be reduced by \$500 each subsequent year. The LCA sends personnel to serve as speaker and workshop leaders without cost. The district itself assesses its congregations 50 cents for each confirmed member the first year, 55 cents the second year and 60 cents the third year to finance the emphasis.

"I don't think anyone realized the size of the effort," said Sandy Jaconski at a recent meeting of the task force. Others quickly nodded. In addition to Spring and Blank, task force members are Richard Meyers, Gerry Olsen and the Rev. Robert Moore. "Frankly, I didn't know what I was getting into," Jaconski continued. "I've been enlightened. I'm growing. One of the things I've discovered is that congregations often deep down really don't want to grow because that means change."

Blank agreed. "Growing is a threat to both pastors and people," he said. "Visitation means taking the risk of opening up to people we don't know. I had one parishioner ask me, 'Don't they teach you how to visit at the seminary?' Actually, they don't. But there's no better way to know your

members than to visit them in their own homes."

"Now that we've gotten into this evangelism emphasis our desire to grow is stronger than our fear of change," Moore observed.

Moore's congregation, Emanuel Church in Bradford, Pa., is a definite success story of the program. In 1986 membership grew by 6 percent. Sunday worship attendance also increased. A youth group was started and plans laid to begin a young adult ministry. A brochure was published listing the

**Harrington:**  
*'We let them  
get away  
from us'  
(190 people  
who joined  
another  
denomination)*

congregation's activities and dreams.

"That brochure got me to join this church," says Andy Gates, a just-out-of-college schoolteacher. "I said, 'I want to be a part of this.' " And he is. He's been attending the districtwide evangelism events and singing in the choir.

But the evangelical emphasis isn't all success, task-force members admit. They say the 1986 fall events were too many and too close together. "People were saying, 'Hey, wait a minute,'" Blank notes. A couple of congregations have lagged in interest and representation.

"We need to give special attention to those congregations where pastors are not very interested," DPS representative Cornell suggests. "As new pastors come into the district, we should have a one-on-one process for getting them on board. We could do a better job of public relations for the general public — more use of the local media, even banners outside the church to help people locate special events."

Somewhat skeptically, Blank observes that "there's no guarantee that after the three-year emphasis is over we won't slip back into our old ingrown ways."

"But there's no guarantee the good things won't continue," adds Moore. ■



# MINIS.

## The ELCA's Unsettled Issue

By Timothy F. Lull

**Lutherans  
will debate  
the roles  
of clergy  
and laity  
as the new  
church gets  
underway**

**A** big argument in forming the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America concerned the nature of ministry. That Lutherans might disagree about abortion, pensions or peacemaking isn't hard to understand. But the difference between the merging churches on the status of parochial schoolteachers, the role of bishops and the theology of ordination showed that here too Lutherans are able to disagree deeply. No satisfactory compromises could be found in the time available. The issues had to be put off for a study mandated between 1988 and 1994 by the ELCA constitution.

Disagreements about ministry are not new. Recent New Testament studies show that there is no blueprint for the organization of the church within Scripture itself. Much is said about the content of mission, but only occasional side comments are made about leadership and how decisions were

The author is professor of systematic theology at Philadelphia Seminary. The article is part of a joint series of occasional articles about major aspects of the new church which are being published by *The Lutheran Standard* and *The Lutheran Standard*.



**LUTHERANS  
GROWING  
TOGETHER**

MARCH 18, 1987



# TRY

made in the early church community.

In fact many scholars have stressed the diversity of church experience reflected in the New Testament. Some of those early churches seemed to be wary of structure; others embraced it gladly. There is a clear development in the period after the New Testament toward highly organized churches under the authority of bishops, but there is no agreement among scholars as to whether this development was good or bad, accidental or inevitable.

It might seem that Lutherans could settle such issues by turning to the Lutheran confessions. But here again something both less and more than a plan of organization for the church is found. Some issues were faced intentionally (the right of congregations to have a say in choosing their own pastors, for example), while others were left ambiguous (the role of bishops) or not faced at all (how the church would make theological decisions on new issues).

Some Lutheran churches developed a structure not so different from that of the Roman Catholic Church. In other parts of Lutheranism patterns of organization developed that stressed more strongly the local congregation, the shared government of clergy and laity, or the civil government making church decisions. Lutheran churches never experienced unanimity on how the church must be structured.

The coming of Lutheranism to North America brought other changes. For some the New World was the place of refuge from interference in church life by government officials and distant, uncaring bishops. Those who believed that tended to distrust centralized national structure and developed a high level of lay leadership.

But for some other groups America seemed a dangerous place to the dearly held Lutheran form of faith and worship. They feared that Lutheran distinctiveness would be lost in the religious diversity and indifference of America. These groups tended to count on both clergy and church organiza-

tion to be a bulwark against the erosion of faith that easily could take place in such a setting.

So the churches forming the ELCA look very much alike to outsiders, but have been developing different patterns of church life. All of them also bring to the merger a relatively high level of satisfaction with their own ways of doing things and a degree of suspicion toward the patterns of others. Change and compromise in this area seem to each group a betrayal of something basic.

But in the last two decades the merging churches have been excited about the ecumenical progress represented by the dialogues with other Christians. Most of these dialogues have touched a great deal on questions of ministry. If Lutherans lived through the centuries with varying patterns of church structure, other Christians had specific ideas not only of what was desirable, but even of what was necessary. Talks with Episcopalians, Roman Catholics and Orthodox especially tend to center on questions of ministry.

Some Lutherans have not liked this growing emphasis on ministry and structure. They have seen interest in such questions as a move away from Gospel and mission toward "external" matters. But dialogue requires taking seriously both one's own views and those of others. If other churches have had to bother more about justification than they might have chosen (because Lutherans insisted that it was central), Lutherans have had to learn to be more interested in questions of ministry and structure. Such questions are serious concerns coming from a desire to support and protect the church's life and message.

A specific challenge to Lutherans to rethink ministry ecumenically comes from *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, issued by the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches. That group, with broad membership and after years of study, suggested that great ecumenical progress could be made if all churches would consider adopting some form of the ancient threefold pattern for ministry — bishop, priest/presbyter/pastor, and deacon.

Lutherans have been divided about this challenge. Some have seen it as an opportunity for ecumenical progress that could be embraced in faithfulness to Scripture and the confessions. Others have seen it violating the Lutheran under-



standing of one office of ministry, that of word and sacrament as expressed through the pastoral office. They have wanted to think of bishops only as pastors with special assignments. They have feared that a separate group of deacons would undercut the ministry of the whole people of God. It isn't hard to predict some issues that will have to be addressed in the six-year study of ministry.

• *Ministry of the whole people of God.* How can the new emphasis on the ministry of the entire church become less a slogan and more a reality? The goal is excellent, but the task of equipping people for life as Christians in the world is very difficult and takes the church quickly into the hardest questions of ethics. How can this be done in a way that provides direction and support without violating Christian freedom?

• *Ordained ministry.* Lutherans generally have valued pastors and counted on them to play a key role of keeping word and sacrament as the heart of the church's life. The office of the ministry is praised in the Augsburg Confession as ordained by God (Article V). Given that strong understanding, it seems unlikely that the study would propose to abolish the office of pastor.

But beyond the affirmation that pastors are important, Lutherans have had difficulty agreeing about the nature of ordained ministry. Some have seen continuity in ordained ministry as a major means for sustaining the church in truth through the changes of time. Others have taken a more functional view, in some cases suggesting that ordained ministry is a kind of tragic necessity, a way of keeping order in a sinful church but not a good thing in itself.

The study may not be able to solve this important question. But pastors will be looking to the study for signals about priorities for ministry today. One can hope that ordained ministry will be affirmed, not so much for the sake of the status of the clergy as for the sake of the message itself.

Lutheran pastors, beset by many demands and claims on their time, need a strong sense of identity if they are to keep word and sacrament at the heart of the church's life, even when this is not what is momentarily popular. Other churches will be looking to the study to see whether it is consistent with what Lutherans have said about ministry in earlier dialogues.

• *Bishops.* Lutherans slowly are getting used to the idea of calling their leaders bishops, but still have a great need to clarify what they expect from a bishop. The list of responsibilities in the ELCA constitution makes one wonder what human beings might be able to do all of these things well. Lutherans have been increasingly unsure whether they are seeking administrators, personnel managers, pastors, theologians, communicators or generalists in this office.

The study will have to give attention to Episcopalian claims for apostolic succession (continuity of the church protected by the succession of leadership from one bishop to the next — in a chain back to the apostles) and to Roman Catholic claims that a bishop must be in such succession but also in full communion with the bishop of Rome. The ELCA is not likely to embrace these concepts, but they are important ecumenical issues. Lutherans may need to be challenged to look honestly at how divided they have been in their five centuries

of history without some structure to promote unity.

• *Other ministries.* This may be the hardest issue of all. The ELCA will inherit some teachers, deacons and deaconesses, and a variety of lay professionals working in and for the church. How can these persons and their valuable ministries best be affirmed and held accountable?

It is hard to know how far Lutherans might be willing to go in thinking of some or all of these groups as deacons. It may be important not only to look to the varying histories of the churches, but also to the future. The Lutheran church in some other parts of the world seems to function well for mission with catechists and evangelists as well as pastors and bishops. It may be that U.S. Lutherans will need more forms of public ministry for mission rather than to keep stretching the concept of pastor to cover all tasks.

No one knows how this study will turn out, but one can hope that it will not tilt in advance in any direction.

One can hope that the high ecumenical stakes of ministry and church structure questions can be made clear to all. Decisions ought to be made with eyes wide open about how they may further or hinder the ecumenical goal of sharing at the Lord's table with fellow Christians. Lutherans sometimes have talked rather freely about commitment to ecumenism but expressed surprise that they would be asked to change in any way, or even to rethink an old position.

One can hope that the ELCA will include several of its talented and accomplished theologians in the study process, even if they have expressed strong views on one or more of the issues. Sometimes in the past studies have lacked credibility because they carefully have excluded those who had written passionately and asked probing

questions. Balance is needed, of course, but this can be found in other ways than by selecting only middle-of-the-road representatives.

One can hope that those involved in performing these ministries will have a major role in defining them theologically. This does not mean, for example, that bishops alone should write the section on bishops, or that parochial schoolteachers should make their own decision about their status in the church. But it will be good for each of these groups to have a great deal of input. It could make the report seem more the task of the whole church and less the concern of a small group.

A final hope is the most difficult of all. It is disturbing how set in their ways most Lutherans have been on ministry questions. Some "know" before the study is started how it should come out, and are ready to measure the results as a victory for one or more of the merging groups.

The church needs to pray that the Holy Spirit will stir it with genuine curiosity about these difficult issues so that real study can take place. But for that to happen, there must be more of a sense of searching than is now evident.

The mission God has entrusted is a deep mystery. The question of how the church best may be ordered to perform that mission never can be finally or satisfactorily settled. Perhaps surprises await Lutherans by 1994, so that they understand better that specific ministry to which each has been called, and see that more clearly in the light of the whole gracious work of God with and through the church. ■

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that the Holy Spirit will  
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difficult issues*







# Losing Jim to Drink

**Alcohol's major victim is the family.  
A spouse must concentrate on care  
for self and children.**

By Lynn Haviland

I was afraid — afraid to go to the store, afraid to answer the telephone and afraid to go to sleep. A series of family tragedies and personal disasters had pushed my husband, Jim, over the line between heavy drinking and alcoholism. Our home revolved around his Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde behavior. We tried to adapt to his high spirits, forgotten promises and psychotic tantrums, but I no longer could delude myself that my marriage was happy.

Each of our children was failing in life. Our eldest was fat and friendless. Johnny, our second son, was withdrawn. His choice to live in a fantasy world brought him to the attention of the school psychologist. Jennie stole small treasures from other children's desks and 5-year-old Randy was too frightened by his home situation to speak louder than a whisper.

Convinced that God had crossed our family off and that the future held more despair and disappointment than the present, I plotted my own death, not sure that I would carry it out, but wanting to be prepared if the going got too tough.

I never needed that option. Instead I heard a 10-second spot on the radio. It said that if I lived with a drinking problem I should call a number. Oddly enough I had never admitted to anybody that I lived with a drinking problem and only recently had faced it myself. Until several months before I had insisted that Jim was simply an undisciplined drinker who needed me to think of ways to help him to handle alcohol. I had a million ideas. I suggested beer instead of whisky, wine instead of beer, two drinks instead of three and even different-sized ice cubes. Nothing seemed to work, and my frustration grew until the hot summer day that Johnny ran into the kitchen, his face flushed and his voice fearful.

"What's happened?" I asked anxiously.

"We found something awful, Mom. We shouldn't have

been playing in the old car in the barn, but we were and we pulled up the back seat. The space beneath was full of empty vodka bottles."

I burst into tears of rage. My husband was conning me, pretending to do what I suggested but cheating instead. I didn't see him as a sick man suffering from the disease of alcoholism, deviled by a compulsion to drink, a man who saw himself as one of God's most worthless creatures. I now saw him as the enemy, strong and invincible. Vindictively I carried my evidence in from the car and piled the empty bottles on the coffee table. I ranted, lectured, cajoled and cried as he stared at the bottles, apparently unmoved.

My obsession with Jim's drinking dominated my thoughts and actions. I became unpredictable in my own life, taking my frustration and fear out on my children.

I was lonely, frightened and angry, not caring how I looked or whether I saw my friends. In fact, I avoided the friends whom I once enjoyed, believing that my life was so different from theirs that we would be unable to communicate.

I blamed everything that went wrong in my life on Jim's drinking. It was his fault if I burned the pork chops, went through a stop sign or punished the children unfairly. Being the wife of an alcoholic gave me a permanent excuse.

Such was the chaotic state of my life on the bleak November day when I heard that radio spot about alcoholism. I had nothing to lose so I called the number. A warm, friendly voice belonging to Paul D. greeted my stumbling admission that I was living with a drinking problem.

"I just don't know how to handle my husband's drinking anymore," I sobbed.

Gently but firmly, Paul told me about the Al-Anon family groups. He also told me that Jim's drinking was his problem, not mine; that the alcoholic is sick, not bad, but as long as I considered Jim's drinking my responsibility, he would not

Lynn Haviland is the author's pen name.

MARCH 18, 1987



get well. To help me change my way of thinking Paul directed me to the nearest Al-Anon meeting.

Al-Anon consists of the families and friends of alcoholics who through sharing their common problems give each other hope. I went to my first meeting that night.

We met in a recently repainted storefront. The slogans of Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon hung on the walls. That night they meant little to me, but gradually "Let go and let God," "First things first," "Think," "Live and let live," and "There but for the grace of God" changed my way of living. But that first night I was sure that I had come to the wrong place.

The attractively dressed men and women who were sitting at the long table chatting and drinking coffee were smiling and laughing. I had imagined that the families of alcoholics would look as shabby as I did, feel miserable and talk about their common unhappiness. These people obviously cared about themselves. I couldn't remember when I had last laughed. Just that morning my youngest child had commented, "You always wear your mad face anymore."

Everybody welcomed me as if they had been waiting for me to step through the door.

"The newcomer is always the most important at a meeting. We all want to help you because we have been where you are and felt just as desperate," said Betty, who sat beside me. Her compassion knocked over all my carefully constructed defenses.

"You all must have some suggestion to make my husband stop drinking," I said. But instead of giving me a new device, they told me I would have to take care of myself and my children and learn to live my own life instead of my husband's. With God's help it would be possible.

God was at that first meeting. I felt God's presence as we started with the Serenity Prayer and ended saying the Lord's Prayer with hands joined. After the meeting I talked with members of the group, hesitantly at first because it had been months since I had talked to anybody other than my family or the meter reader.

I was full of questions, but over and over I was told the same thing. I could not solve Jim's drinking problem. I should surrender Jim's problem to God. My responsibility was to get myself together so that I could be effective in caring for myself and my children.

My attitude as much as Jim's alcoholism was destroying my children. "Children learn to deal with the alcoholic — it is the non-drinking spouse that frightens them," Betty said. At first I was unwilling to accept that, but gradually I learned that my tears and tension did as much damage as Jim's drinking.

"How many things do you do that are just for you?" Betty asked.

I couldn't think of one thing that I did that didn't require somebody else's approval to make it worthwhile.

I lay awake a long time that night, confused and troubled by all that I had heard but wanting the same confident abil-

ity to handle my life and myself as my new friends. I went to two meetings a week and began to take care of my appearance. My sponsors called me daily on the telephone and helped me to see that I was hiding behind Jim's alcoholism. They suggested that I was dishonest with myself, that I only was pretending to let go of Jim's problem while still paying the bills and saving him from the very crisis that would have helped him. I always had been offended by criticism in the past but I knew that my new friends wanted to help, not hurt, so I listened.

"Let go and get God," Betty kept telling me. She assured me that once I got out of the driver's seat God would work miracles in my life. But instead, for a while I bargained with God, turning my life over and taking it back in a pout several times a day and giving God a bit of friendly advice.

In particular, I wanted God to do something about my husband's temper tantrums. Recently, Jim's anger, which always seethed beneath the surface of the family, had been erupting over lost homework assignments, elbows on the table or a toy left in the driveway. The kids were frightened and subdued and the family dinners became a nightmare. I came to the table with a tight knot in my stomach, trying to placate Jim and almost wishing that he would pass out before dinner rather than afterward.

But I hadn't given up until the night Jim hit 5-year-old Randy across the knuckles for interrupting. Randy's fork clattered to the plate and tears washed down his cheeks. Long after I had hugged him and read him to sleep I sat in the rocker, overwhelmed by the job of raising my family in the climate of active alcoholism.

"Please God, help me and help Jim," I whispered. Kneeling by Randy's bed I said the Lord's Prayer, repeating "Thy will be done" several times:

"Thy will," not my will. After that evening I began and ended my days with those words. Almost immediately small changes occurred that made it easier for us to live and work within our alcoholic environment.

Before, Jim had done his drinking at home. Now he went out to drink, often not coming home for dinner. The children and I spent the evenings peacefully together, watching television, playing Scrabble or reading out loud. I listened to spelling words or drilled multiplication tables. On weekends we went to the movies or took picnics to the park.

Our family was far from normal, but the kids and I were developing our own family life even though Jim continued to drink. With the help of Alateen the children learned more about their father's illness.

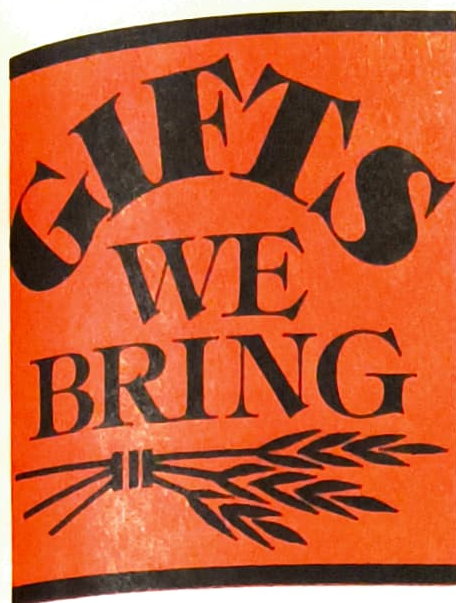
By the end of our first year in Al-Anon and Alateen I knew that our family was healing. Jim continued to drink despite two rehabilitation attempts. Eventually he left us, and five years later we were divorced.

Supported by my group I had found a part-time job and awakened each morning with expectation instead of dread. The same hope is there for people who join Al-Anon and find themselves face to face with the power of the Holy Spirit, in whom all things are possible. ■

*Jim was conning me by hiding his empty vodka bottles under the car seat*







## Iowa's Fritschels: noble brothers

By Todd W. Nichol

In the old Iowa Synod they called Sigmund and Gottfried Fritschel "Professor Senior" and "Professor Junior." The brothers taught theology together for 31 years at the synod's Wartburg Seminary. Although they had different personalities and were given to arguing with each other, the Fritschels enjoyed a remarkably harmonious partnership at Wartburg. The older brother, Sigmund, outlived Gottfried, and had completed 42 years as a mentor to the synod's pastors when he died in 1900.

The Fritschels were born — three years apart — in the mid-1830s to pious parents who had been touched by the religious revival then stirring Germany. Sigmund, a devout youth, early decided to study theology and prepare for the mission field. Gottfried for a time was put off by his brother's piety. Eventually, he joined him as a student at the mission institute in the old Lutheran city of Nuremberg.

The brothers were at the institute when it moved to the sleepy Bavarian village of Neuendettelsau where the pastor was Wilhelm Loehe, a leader of Germany's Lutheran awakening. Distressed by reports of Germans in the New World without pastors and wanting to make the Gospel known to Native Americans, Loehe had turned Neuendettelsau into a beehive of missionary activity. He sent the Fritschel brothers to the United States: Sigmund in 1854, and Gottfried a few years later.

The early years in Iowa were rigorous. "We did not come to America to find a

peaceful, comfortable life," Gottfried wrote, "but to dig wells in the desert, and to build the kingdom of God in this land." The brothers' commission was to care for immigrant Germans, to evangelize Native Americans and to establish schools.

The Fritschels were not alone in their work. They had come to join other Germans who had arrived earlier. Some of the colonists had settled in Indiana and Michigan and with other Lutherans had organized the Missouri Synod in 1847. Sigmund Fritschel worked for a few years among the Prussians of the Buffalo Synod before serving in Iowa again. The partnership with Missouri did not last long, as Loehe's Lutherans and the Missourians quarreled over the nature of the church and the ministry. The two groups also fought over the ownership and location of a teacher's seminary. Eventually the squabbling Germans went their separate ways.

In the fall of 1853 about 20 of Loehe's colonists left Michigan and pushed westward to Iowa. Although they were virtually penniless, one friendly banker in Dubuque honored a draft drawn on Loehe's bank in Germany and lent the Lutherans enough money to keep from starving. One group opened a teacher's seminary in Dubuque, while another moved on to settle in Clayton County about 60 miles away. The Dubuque school quickly was converted into a theological seminary for training pastors. In August of 1854 three of Loehe's pastors and a vicar organized the Iowa Synod.

Sigmund and Gottfried Fritschel soon became the mainstays of the struggling synod's Wartburg Seminary. Resources were meager, and the seminary soon was moved from Dubuque, thought to be too expensive, to a farm near St. Sebald in Clayton County. (Later the seminary moved to Illinois. In 1889 it returned to Dubuque, where it remains today.)

Necessity made life rigorously simple in the Christian commune at Saint Sebald. Students referred to themselves as "brethren" and wore simple cotton clothing. Housing was modest, and the fare was spare and inelegant. The seminarians took their instruction while sitting on rough benches. But one of them, later to become president of the Iowa Synod, remembered that the teaching was magnificent. "Our spirit-filled teach-

ers," he said, "led us into the understanding of the beauty of the evangelical Lutheran church, explained her confessions, her services, her history and her task in America. With truly pastoral interest they led our souls to our Savior in order to make us able, in later years, to lead others to life eternal."

The Fritschel brothers were master teachers. They steeped their students in the Scripture, encouraged them in a rich devotional life and instructed them thoroughly in the confessional heritage of the Lutheran church.

At the same time the two professors cautiously were open to new currents in theology emanating from Europe. They insisted, for example, that the Lutheran confessions must be interpreted historically — that is, in the light of the situation for which they were written. They also taught that the Bible and the Lutheran confessions do not answer explicitly every question Lutherans would like to ask of them. Tutored by the Fritschels,

the people of the Iowa Synod developed a temper more flexible, a mind more open and an attitude more ecumenical than some of its synodical neighbors could tolerate.

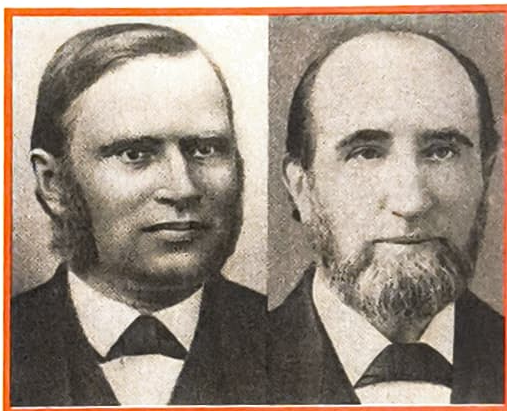
The brothers were the Iowa Synod's best ambassadors of good will. They helped lead their synod into a close — if not always comfort-

able — relationship with the eastern Lutherans, who in 1867 organized a federation of synods called the General Council. Iowa held a consultative membership in the council until it was dissolved in 1918.

Ultimately Iowa joined the Buffalo and Ohio synods in creating the "old" American Lutheran Church in 1930. That German-American church, in turn, became a part of today's ALC in 1960.

The story of the Fritschel brothers will be among the gifts the ALC brings to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. "Professor Senior" and "Professor Junior" can embody a spirit the people of the ELCA might well covet: steady in faith, devout in prayer, firm in confession, forthright in controversy, charitable in expression, missionary in motivation and heroic in dedication. Their friends were right when they called Sigmund and Gottfried Fritschel "a pair of noble brothers."

**Next: The Augustana Synod**



*Sigmund and Gottfried Fritschel*

Todd W. Nichol is assistant professor of church history at Luther Northwestern Seminary, St. Paul, Minn. This is the sixth article in a yearlong series by several authors of the roots of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.



# The Church as Communion

**The New Testament pictures the church as believers linked together in Christ**

The author is a Lutheran pastor who teaches New Testament at General Seminary (Episcopal) in New York. This is the second of three articles to help readers respond to the bishops' Lenten call for "study and reflection on the various images of the church in the New Testament."

By John Koenig

Travelers to the Soviet Union report that among the majority of citizens there who do not belong to the church, and also among church members themselves, the term most often used to describe Christians is *believers*. In an officially materialist society the word *believer* projects a clear picture. Believers are those who see and

trust themselves to a reality that most other people do not perceive or upon which they don't rely.

Believers often are thought by the Soviet majority to be a remnant of the past. Yet there is a kind of honor given by their public name, an acknowledgment that this minority group sees the world differently and at definite risk to itself.

First-century Christians also used the term *believers* to describe their communities. It is fair to assume that their Jewish and pagan neighbors also referred to them by this term, for Christians were seen as distinctly different. What set them apart was their persistent confession of Jesus as Israel's Messiah and God's fullest revelation.

One could see the term *believer* as an image of conversion, the change from an old life to a new one. Acts 11:21 highlights this meaning: "And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number that believed turned to the Lord."

Nevertheless, most uses of the term *believer* in the New Testament express a sense of continuing communion or fellowship with God or Christ rather than a first encounter. They emphasize the day-to-day trust that from the human side keeps Christians going in their newness of life from God.

The Gospel of John contains more references to believers than any other biblical book. This Gospel is summarized near its end by the statement, "Now Jesus did many other signs.... but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name" (John 20:30). John's summary is addressed to readers who already have come to faith. They are encouraged to keep on believing





so that the riches of God's favor may continue to be theirs. Another image of the church associated with the Greek word for believing is that of "the faithful." This has been one of the most prominent names for Christians in the Western branch of the catholic church.

Lutherans are familiar with the courtroom picture of the church connected with the term *justified*. God as judge declares prisoners freed from the punishment earned by their offenses — and even from the offenses themselves. The twist comes when one considers that God alone initiates this judicial process and that prisoners receive their freedom repeatedly "through faith."

The image shifts from that of a courtroom pronouncement of "not guilty" when more attention is given to God's *act* of justifying or God's "righteousness." Then the faith of the justified becomes also a vision of themselves as people sharing in the fullness of God's purpose — in peace, joy, hope and power for the salvation of the whole world.

Another way of putting this is to say that believers are partners with God and one another in the Gospel — or, as Jesus tells his disciples in John 15:14, "You are my friends."

Perhaps the most powerful and pervasive picture of the church's sharing with God is "the body of Christ." Although the phrase occurs only in the epistles, its breadth and depth are remarkable, for it expresses nearly every phase of the church's life. Believers are baptized into Christ's body (conversion), thus becoming his organs and limbs in the world (commission). But above all the body of Christ is the church's communion with God and its individual members.

Paul's only discussion of the Lord's Supper or communion comes in chapters 10 and 11 of 1 Corinthians just before his major use of the "body of Christ" image in chapter 12. The Eucharist is the most visible symbol of Christians' identity as members of Christ. Even in the Gospel stories of Jesus' last supper with his disciples, one probably should as-

sume that the body of the church was present in the mind's eye of the authors and first readers.

The body of Christ is the visible church — and more. One interpreter has called it a "new world" because it reaches beyond the boundaries of time and space into the "heavenly places" (Ephesians 1:15-2:7). It includes all believers, those living and dead and those yet to be born.

The body of Christ is an arena for both worship and Christian living (1 Corinthians 13-14). In it members cooperate like the physical parts of a human body. More important, they honor one another in their cooperation. "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you,' " for built into the body is an interdependence that claims all believers. "If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together." This sharing grows out of the chief fruit of the Spirit — love. Paul's so-called hymn to love in 1 Corinthians 13 actually is an extended interpretation of what it means for the church to be Christ's body.

The body of Christ picture becomes a foundation for other images of communion. Thus the widespread view of believers as "saints" (literally "holy ones") means not that they are better than everyone else but that they have a deep and abiding share "in Christ" who makes God's holiness real in the world. When the church is called the "temple of God" or the "household of God" the root meaning is that of a living body with a variety of appearances.

What will a church look like when it senses its participation in the body of Christ, its nature as a communion of believers with God and each other? It will be a fellowship in which each person's role, no matter how different from that of other members, is important and honored. Every level of the church's life will depend upon the Lord and be linked firmly to every other level. Such a church will not be afraid to stand out as different from the society in which it lives even as it seeks to serve that society, because it lives from a vision which is more than this world.

**Next: Images of the church's commission ■**







## 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.

### *No place better than the USA*

By Nhia Ly

On July 4, 1776, this beautiful country was free from England. Freedom and independence were established. Take time to look around and think about the freedom we have and what this country would be without it. I know the answer because I have experienced how it is without freedom.

On Aug. 21, 1976, my family and I set foot on American soil. We came to Albemarle, N.C., from Laos.

It wasn't long before I became acquainted with the English language. I started school and began to make friends and meet new people. I guess that's what makes this country a great place — the American people. At times I struggled through school but I wasn't alone. Friends and teachers were there to help me.

We are thankful to others for giving us a new life to start over in a free world. The past has been cherished but the future remains to be achieved.

The United States is truly a beautiful country. From the East Coast to the West Coast there are thousands of beautiful things to see and explore, to touch and feel, to smell and taste.

You can't do better than the United States of America.

The author, 15, is a member of First Church, Albemarle, N.C. This article was excerpted from his prize-winning entry in "You Can't Do Better than the USA," an essay contest sponsored by K-Mart.



Ly



Pupils and teachers wear pins after communion service

### Class collects coupons

Every year the students studying for their first communion at Trinity Church, Gresham, Ore., undertake a community project. The recent class of fifth-graders collected manufacturers' coupons and donated them to a local charity.

"We gathered only coupons with the words 'no expiration date' printed on them," explained teacher Barbara Topham. "The class sorted them into categories, such as cereals and paper products. We gave the coupons to an official at the Snow Cap Organization."

Snow Cap helps homeless people and operates a food closet and a clothes closet. The coupons were placed in baskets in the room where people wait for aid.

"The people can take whatever coupons they need to help them save money in grocery shopping," Topham said.

Another class tradition is that each student receives a present from the teachers during the first communion service. Members of this class were given pins whose design was a white cross with a red chalice at its base.

### 'God squad' helps church teachers

When Sunday school teachers at Our Saviour Church, Arlington Heights, Ill., need help, they call on the "God Squad." Made up of four teen-age volunteers, the squad serves wherever needed.

Alternating in teams of two every Sunday, the teens take attendance, collect the offering, set up audiovisual equipment and assist during craft activities.

"The squad has been received warmly by staff and students alike," says Sue Katte, school superintendent.



## ELCA budget to balance, leaders say

More than 200 transition leaders from the 65 synods and the churchwide organizations of the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America last month pledged to find ways to produce a balanced budget for the new church.

Meeting for three days in Minneapolis, the group did not pinpoint exact changes for overcoming the present \$9.5 million budget imbalance. But it agreed that developers of synod and churchwide budgets would "share — more or less equally — the challenge of ... expenditure reductions and income increases."

They also agreed on the norm of 55 to 65 percent of congregational benevolence being forwarded by synods to the ELCA.

Anticipated ELCA benevolence income totals approximately \$104.5 million while projected expenditures amount to \$114 million. Since planners anticipate continued in-

creases in giving by members, the budget imbalance is caused chiefly by a difference in the present and future amount of benevolence dollars retained by synods.

Lutheran Church in America synods currently forward approximately 55 percent of benevolence they receive from congregations to churchwide ministries. In the American Lutheran Church the figure is 68 percent. A 60/40 split in the new church between churchwide units and synods initially was proposed, but later was revised downward to 55/45. Synods in the new church have different and sometimes larger responsibilities for ministry on their territories than is true in the merging churches.

### Minimum budget

The ELCA transition team called the consultation after deciding that the \$114 million was a minimum budget for the new church. Prior to the gathering some synod representatives feared that the consultation was an effort to pressure synods to increase their contributions to the national church.

"All of us arrived with some anxieties about what was involved," said Neil Walden, Fresno, Calif. "But most of us are

leaving feeling quite good."

Participants met according to the new church's regional groupings to discuss various ways to increase benevolence contributions from their area. Region III suggested that it add \$800,000 to the projected amount from the region to the ELCA. In region IV the largest synod pledged a 60/40 split.

Region VI suggested that the 3 percent anticipated annual benevolence increase by ELCA was too conservative and urged 5 percent. All pledged to work toward raising the total amount sent to the ELCA and to increasing stewardship efforts in congregations.

Synodical representatives also made clear that evangelism and congregational outreach must be priorities for the new church's budget. Participants said the meetings in regional groups brought a "new spirit of awareness of each other."

The budget and finance committee of the national transition team said it would use the consultation's advice to produce a balanced ELCA budget for the transition team's consideration at its mid-March meeting.

## 200 ALC churches oppose merger

Almost 200 of the American Lutheran Church's 4,900 congregations have voted against the ALC's participation in the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, according to the committee for the formation of the Association of American Lutheran Churches.

Although the negative votes are running higher than expected, ALC leaders remain confident that more than two-thirds of the congregations that vote on the question will approve the merger documents. The congregational ratification is required by the ALC constitution and was to continue through March 16.

The Rev. James Minor, Calvary Church, St. Paul, Minn., spokesperson for the AALC, said 52 congregations in North Dakota, 45 in Minnesota, 36 in Iowa and smaller numbers in 15 states had voted against the merger.

Among the congregations was the 4,200-member North Heights Church, Arden Hills, Minn., flagship congregation of the Lutheran charismatic renewal movement; the 3,700-member Nazareth Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa, the largest ALC church in Iowa, and the 2,800-member Our Savior Church, Rockford, Ill., the largest ALC church in Illinois.

The AALC emphasizes the autonomy of the congregation and an inerrant view of the Bible. Planners say that if the merger is approved, the association could be an alternative for anti-merger congregations.

## Pension head Wang retires

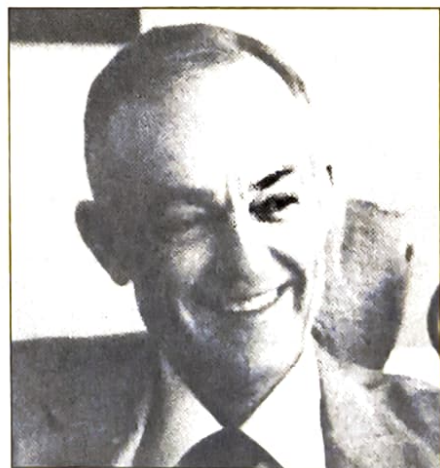
Dr. L. Edwin Wang, the only chief executive of the Lutheran Church in America Board of Pensions during its 25 years, retires March 31 for health reasons.

Wang, 67, was executive secretary of the Augustana Church Pension and Aid Fund from 1956 to 1961. For four months in 1967 he was on leave of absence from the church to serve as acting insurance commissioner for the state of Minnesota.

Dr. Robert J. Myers, former chief actuary of the U.S. Social Security Administration, will be acting president of the LCA Board of Pensions. John G. Kapanke, currently senior vice president for investments, will oversee the board's day-to-day operations.

"The superior quality both of the design and implementation of the pension and health benefit plans of the LCA has been due in large measure to the talent, training, experience and dedication of Ed Wang," said LCA Bishop James R. Crumley Jr. "The whole church, but especially its professional leadership, express profound gratitude for Ed's many years of caring and effective service."

A native of Medford, Ore., Wang spent his entire career in insurance, beginning in 1943. He was an agency manager in Oak-



Wang

land, Calif., and taught insurance classes part time at two junior colleges before moving to Minneapolis in 1956 to head the Augustana pension fund. A Chartered Life Underwriter, he has served in executive capacities for several insurance associations.

In 1985 Wang was elected president of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation. He owns more than 90 books about the two men.



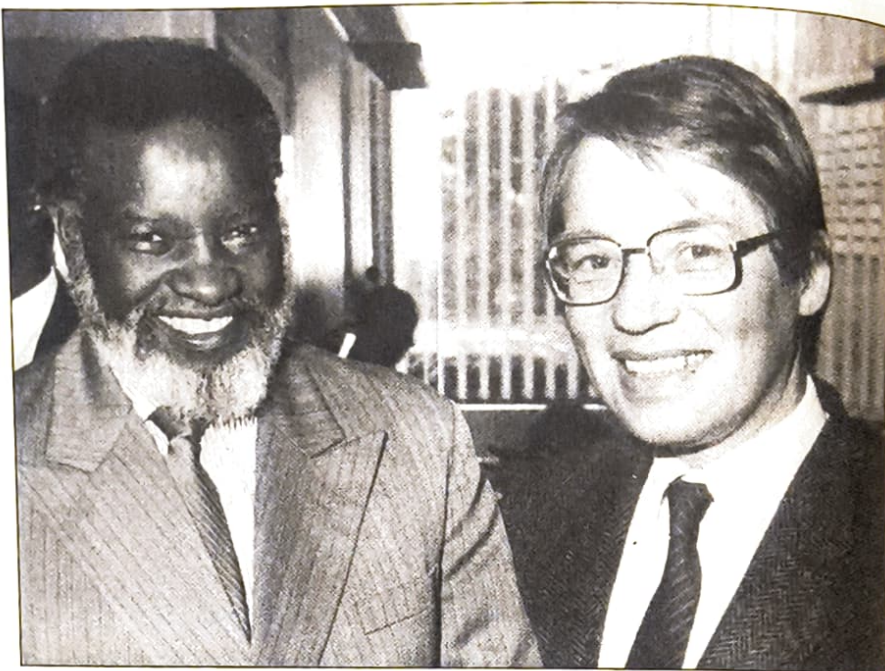
# Lutherans seek Namibian freedom

Lutheran World Federation representatives, members of the South-West Africa People's Organization and church leaders from Namibia last month reaffirmed "the role of the churches in calling on the international community to make every effort to speed up the deliverance of the people of Namibia from the oppression that they have suffered for so many years."

In a statement after a meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, the LWF reiterated its "commitment to continue its service to the Namibian people inside Namibia and in exile, and to the search for a peaceful process toward a free and independent Namibia in cooperation with SWAPO of Namibia as the legitimate representative of the Namibian people."

The meeting, called by LWF General Secretary Gunnar Staalsett, was attended by officials of Namibia's Council of Churches and of Lutheran and Roman Catholic churches in Namibia. SWAPO President Sam Nujoma also was present and reiterated "SWAPO's readiness to negotiate with South Africa on the basis of U.N. Security Council Resolution 435" calling for free elections in Namibia under U.N. supervision. Nujoma also said that churches will have a role in free Namibia.

That statement was significant, said Martin Sovik of the Lutheran Council in the USA Office for Governmental Affairs, because critics of SWAPO have called it a



Nujoma (left) and Staalsett meet at LWF headquarters

"Marxist-terrorist" group and warned that if SWAPO leaders gain power when the country becomes independent, severe strictures would be placed on the church.

"On independence Namibia is the drum that nobody hears beaten," Sovik continued. "Namibia clearly has been forgot-

ten in all the talk about South Africa."

Sovik said it is unclear if South Africa intends ever to grant independence to Namibia voluntarily. "South Africans have tens of thousands of armed troops there," he said. Namibia is, for South Africa, "the last of the buffer states."

## Ecumenists cite hope, problems

An ecumenical group of theologians and church leaders primarily from Western Europe and North America see both hope and problems in the partial theological agreements reached during 20-plus years of formal dialogues by churches.

Those attending the Lutheran Council in the USA-sponsored consultation in Puerto Rico last month recognized that much work lies ahead before more "visible unity," such as the recognition of the validity of each other's ministries and sacraments, can be achieved.

Greek Orthodox Archbishop Methodios of Thyatira and Great Britain said he considered apostolic succession — the unbroken line of teaching from Jesus and the apostles to the office of ministry today — to be "fundamental" for church fellowship.

Dr. Henry Chadwick, Anglican historian at Oxford University in England, asked whimsically if the "Lord actually intended the church to be a motley flotilla of little ships, each carrying its own flag ... with each asking to recognize the charismatic gifts of the other?"

"We believe that the church, as a totality, never errs. The Protestants, however, always are ready to declare the opposite," said Methodios, whose black robe and long gray-and-black beard gave him a certain mystical presence. He was critical of Protestants, who "were cut off from the church and created other bodies without ever having the right to do so, since Christ founded one church."

### Church and salvation

Some participants agreed with the Rev. Walter Kasper, a Roman Catholic theologian from West Germany, who said that Catholics believe the church through its teaching office, primarily the papacy, and the sacraments becomes the instrument of salvation.

Martin Luther was unwilling to grant that the church cannot make mistakes, Kasper said, and maintained that the Gospel and sacraments alone can provide the means of salvation. He said Protestants believe salvation takes place in the church but not through the church.

A German Lutheran theologian, Dr.

Harding Meyer, said that the rejection of an all-or-nothing approach to church unity "is a quite distinctive Lutheran view and a specifically Lutheran contribution to ecumenical thinking."

Dr. William H. Lazareth, pastor of Holy Trinity Church, New York (Manhattan), urged that an "ecumenical strategy of a step-by-step" approach to church fellowship be adopted rather than an "all-or-nothing" attitude. At the same time those decisions must be made in terms of what is "confessionally permissible and ecumenically advisable," he said.

Dr. Samuel H. Nafzger, executive secretary of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Commission on Theology and Church Relations, said the LCMS holds that there must be agreement in all articles of the faith before full fellowship is established. In a cautious assessment Nafzger said it might be possible to have different "levels of fellowship" but that approach "always must keep in view the fact its viability is based on the possibility of distinguishing spiritual unity in the body of Christ from external unity in the church."



## Church conventions are big business

Representatives of more than 375 cities, regional convention and tourist boards, transportation companies and others with an interest in the religious convention market converged on Long Beach, Calif., in late January to woo about 135 Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish and Muslim representatives responsible for staging their group's meetings.

"This is a multi, multimillion-dollar business that's getting bigger every year," said DeWayne Woodring, executive director of the Religious Conference Management Association. "We figure a religious convention spends an average of \$110 per day for food, lodging, gifts and so on."

"If just 5,000 people come to town that's \$500,000 a day, and frequently religious conventions last a week or more. The religious meeting organizers here plan nearly 2,000 meetings a year."

"We're being courted like political conventions," said the Rev. B. Edgar Johnson. He is responsible for organizing one of the nation's largest religious meetings, the quadrennial assembly of the Church of the Nazarene that attracts upwards of 40,000 members. "They'll be buying my meals all week in an effort to get us to go to their city or use their hotel. The freebies don't come as easily once we're there."

### Anaheim and Indianapolis lead

Leaders in attracting religious conventions are Anaheim, Calif., and Indianapolis. "It's a great business," said Bob Sherwood, religious group sales director for the Anaheim Visitors and Convention Bureau. "In 1985 we had our best year ever — 15 national or regional religious conventions and a total of 127,000 people."

The Nazarenes, who met in Anaheim in 1985, will meet in Indianapolis for five days in 1989. About 30,000 Seventh-day Adventists also will meet in Indianapolis in 1990. In 1991 the city expects about 20,000 members of the United Pentecostal Church International to arrive for a convention.

Las Vegas, Nev., representatives admitted that "we're not for everyone. In the end, however, we're a community like everywhere else with a variety of churches," said Fernando Perez of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Bureau. "If the Southern Baptists can meet in Las Vegas, anyone can." The denomination's 1989 general convention is set for the city.

The YMCA of the Rockies that runs camp centers in Estes Park and Winter Park, both in Colorado, promoted its "Christian ambience. We don't sell alcohol and we don't serve it," said Dave Thomas, marketing director. "We like to think our settings are a little more wholesome."

## WORLDSCAN

**Officials of the Roman Catholic diocese of Monterey, Calif.,** stirred an uproar when they tried to auction television rights for coverage of Pope John Paul II's five-hour visit there in September. "We have no choice. We are a poor diocese," officials said, noting that the visit would cost the diocese \$2 million. The diocese also decided to assess its parishes \$15 for each admission ticket given them for the Mass. Elsewhere, the South Carolina Baptist Fellowship, an organization of about 250 fundamentalist congregations, protested the University of South Carolina's use of state funds to cosponsor the papal visit there.

**A Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod pastor** was tried in secret by the Commission on Adjudication of the LCMS Missouri District on heresy charges reportedly stemming from his involvement in the charismatic movement. If the charges are upheld, the Rev. Leroy Paul, St. Luke Church, St. Louis, would be removed from the ordained ministry.



Gorski

**Leaders: The Rev. William Gorski,** a Lutheran Church in America pastor serving as a missionary in Santiago, Chile, is the new president of the 25,000-member Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile. Gorski has served as secretary general of the church for the past six years....

**Dr. Soritua Nababan, 53,** is the new *ephòrus* (presiding bishop) of the Huria Kristen Batak Protestant (Lutheran) Church in Indonesia. Nababan is a vice president of the Lutheran World Federation.... **Bishop Clifford R. Lunde, 57,** of the American Lutheran Church's North Pacific District died Feb. 15 of a heart attack.

**The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board** approved the publishing of a multivolume Bible commentary teaching that the Bible is without error. Approval came despite research showing that the \$1.5 million project would be divisive and that market demand doesn't warrant it.

**Some 20 percent of U.S. Roman Catholic priests** are homosexual, and half of that number are sexually active, according to a 25-year study reported in *Newsweek*. The study also reported that 20 percent of priests are heterosexually active. In New York (Brooklyn) Bishop Francis Mugavero barred Dignity, a Catholic group that ministers to homosexuals, from using any diocesan buildings for its meetings. In Chicago the Roman Catholic archdiocese sponsored a series of seminars to train priests, nuns and lay leaders on ministry to those afflicted with AIDS. In Finland Lutheran Archbishop John Vikstrom criticized the country's national medical board for deciding to test arriving African students for AIDS. He warned against focusing on any specific group.

**Finances — red and black:** Faced with a possible \$50 million deficit, the Vatican ordered a spending freeze by all offices at 1986 budget levels after an urgent appeal for contributions apparently fell short. Some of the financial problems can be traced to the \$250 million payment the Vatican made in 1984 toward the debts of the collapsed Banco Ambrosiano. Italian authorities reportedly issued an arrest warrant for Archbishop Paul Marcinkus, an American who heads the Vatican bank. Elsewhere, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada ended its first year in the black. Calling it a "minor miracle," President Donald Sjoborg said that decreased expenditures and increased designated gifts brought the ELCIC's first year to a satisfactory conclusion.

**Evangelist Oral Roberts claims** that his wife rescued him — literally — from the devil's clutches. Talking to viewers, Roberts said, "The devil came to my room ... and I felt those hands on my throat and he was choking the life out of me. I yelled to my wife, 'Honey, come!' She laid her hands on me and ... commanded the devil to get out of my room. I began to breathe and came out of my bed strong." Roberts said he had been in a deep depression.



# Lutherans active in Soviet Asia

Fifteen hundred miles southeast of Moscow, beyond the Ural Mountains in the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic, lies Tselinograd. With its 200,000 residents it is the commerce and production center of a large agricultural region. Winter temperatures of 40 degrees below zero are not unusual.

Since 1955 a German-speaking Lutheran congregation has held services in Tselinograd every Sunday between 10 A.M. and noon. The sermon usually lasts an hour. The congregation was organized by the Rev. Eugen Bachmann; two years later it was registered as a religious community and recognized legally.

At first the congregation held services in private homes. After the purchase and renovation of a duplex the congregation was able to construct a sanctuary large enough to hold 300 persons.

The communion service at the harvest thanksgiving festival always has the best attendance. The people sit and stand closely packed. They all wish to receive the Eucharist, so this service can last five hours. Parents and grandparents give religious instruction to children. Confirmation comes at age 18.

## Layperson consecrated

In March 1972 Bachmann, nearly blind, celebrated his farewell service by consecrating as the new pastor Reinhold Mueller, formerly a teacher and then an assembly-line worker who had been long active as a lector. Bachmann removed his vestments and placed them on the future minister.

In 1978 Mueller wrote in a letter: "I am overwhelmed by work and there is never enough time. Since the Helsinki Accords it has become easier and I can visit congregations in the region upon application to the authorities. So three weeks ago I visited three old German villages where there are eight congregations that gather in apartments. In four days I held five services including confirmation, communion and weddings. I celebrated the Eucharist for 400 believers, confirmed 50 and married 21 couples. In addition, during those four days I celebrated the Eucharist 14 times



Elder registers new member in baptismal record



Youth service is held in Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic

for the sick. Then I came home, exhausted. Above all I need time and energy. Then I see plainly how God strengthens and helps, so that I can surmount anything."

His letter of July 24, 1979, reads: "Besides the place of worship in Tselinograd there are two other places of worship and 24 congregations of 30 to 60 members that gather in apartments in the Tselinograd area. Some 2,000 people in the Tselinograd area are Lutherans. Just last year the house of worship was registered as such. The other is still under construction and will be consecrated before the end of this year.

"Until then all these Christians will come to our house of worship for communion and all office matters. In the large congregations there are men who at least can baptize children in emergencies. So there is enough work and I hardly can finish it all."

## Bibles, hymnals sent

In 1978, when Bibles and hymnals could be sent to the Soviet Union through the intervention of the Lutheran World Federation, a thank-you letter read: "On the morning of March 17 we landed at the airport in Tselinograd with 300 Bibles and 250 small hymnals. I carried out the distribution in peace and quiet. I distributed 80 Bibles and 150 small hymnals to my congregation and the rest lie in reserve where perhaps someone with a pressing need for them can get them."

In his recent letter of Oct. 8, 1986, Mueller wrote: "In September we had two great celebrations: the church's 30th anniversary celebration on Sept. 7 and the harvest thanksgiving celebration on Sept. 28. We celebrated it a week early because a weather report said there would be bad weather the first week of October. Therefore I had my hands full with things to do. It was a beautiful festival. There were people from far and wide. So many flowers were brought that we did not know where to put them all, and then at the thanksgiving celebration we had a lot of fruit and vegetables. At the church anniversary celebration we had more than 100 communicants and more than 200 at harvest thanksgiving."

—LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION



# Dispute arises over St. Louis home

Lutheran Family and Children's Services of Missouri and its best-known employee have parted company over sponsorship of a shelter for unmarried pregnant women.

For more than a decade Otis Woodard gained local and national attention for a LFCS outreach ministry distributing food, clothing, blankets and firewood in St. Louis' predominantly Black North Side community.

On Feb. 12 the agency ended Woodard's employment after several months of discussions about his personal sponsorship of the "Otis Home," a house that provides shelter for young Black women who are pregnant, unmarried and homeless. The home is next door to Woodard's residence, which also housed the North Side office of LFCS.

## Church focuses on family housing

Since 1981 St. John Church, Union City, N.J., has been sheltering homeless single people, primarily men. The current lack of affordable housing in the community, however, has increased the number of homeless families. To help keep them together, St. John is changing its focus to families.

The conversion of the area's low-income housing and single-room occupancy boarding homes to condominiums and "up-market" housing has brought about the dramatic change, explains Pastor H. Gerhardt Kugler. St. John's limited facilities mean, however, that both single people and families cannot be sheltered.

"When we began, we were the only emergency shelter for homeless men north of Trenton, N.J.," Kugler says. By last year about 20 local shelters had opened. All are strained to capacity.

During the years St. John expanded its shelter's facilities from a 15-by-30-foot room to both the parish hall and the entire annex. Last summer Kugler and his family moved to another house so that the parsonage also could be turned into a shelter.

In 1986 the nightly population at St. John's shelter dropped from more than 40 individuals to about 30 because another shelter opened nearby.

"From the beginning we have wanted others to do the sheltering, or at least to share it, until the government or church social agencies more appropriately do their larger parts," Kugler says.

"One major way to help without a great deal of sacrifice is to shelter one family unit at a time," the pastor suggests. If churches would do this, most of the homeless problems would be solved.

—NANCY STONE

The Rev. Carl H. Toelke Jr., agency vice president, described Woodard's termination as "very painful but absolutely necessary." He explained that Woodard's operation of the home created potential liability problems for LFCS, especially as people would infer that it was an LFCS project.

Toelke referred to a story in the February issue of the *Saint Louis Lutheran* in which Woodard requested that contributions for Otis Home be sent to him in care of LFCS at his home address.

Toelke noted that donors would not be aware that "they cannot take tax deductions, as they can for other contributions to LFCS," because the home is not an agency program.

According to Toelke, the agency was willing to assume management of Otis Home. "It was Otis' decision not to do so," he said. He said LFCS would continue to meet the needs of community people.

Woodard said he's operated the home for about three years for "girls sleeping on

the streets. I bought the house for a few hundred dollars," he said, and volunteers repaired it. Woodard said he operated the home "out of my own paycheck" and his efforts "had nothing to do with my regular work" for the agency.

Referring to the insurance and licensing issues, Woodard said he was "not used to all that legal stuff." What concerns him is that although the LFCS sign was removed, "the hungry and cold people are still here." What encourages him is that the donations "keep coming" and several congregations plan to continue their support of his work.

On Feb. 20 Woodard established the Lutheran North St. Louis Outreach Center. It was incorporated as a non-profit agency and will operate out of the former LFCS office in his home. Woodard said he decided to use "Lutheran" in its name because "the Gospel that fires me comes out of the Lutheran church." He is a member of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

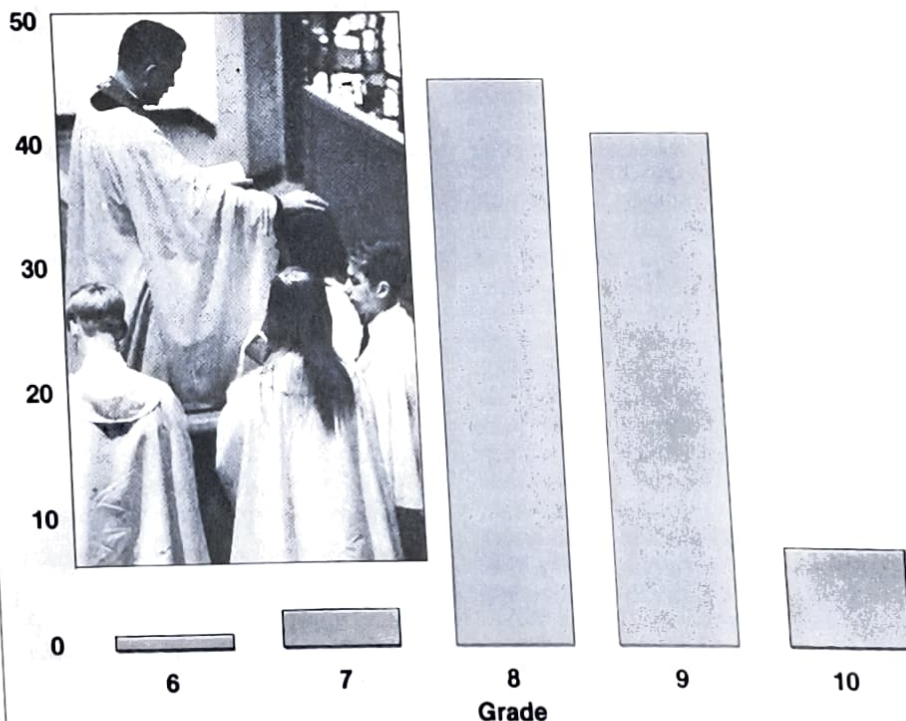
—RICHARD MUELLER

## LUTHERAN LISTS

Recent surveys by nine Lutheran Church in America synods show that the highest percentage of confirmations occur in grades 8 and 9. Participating synods included Eastern Canada, Illinois, Indiana-Kentucky, Metropolitan New York, Michigan, Rocky Mountain, South Carolina, Southeastern Pennsylvania and Wisconsin-Upper Michigan.

Percentage

Confirmation



Source: LCA department of planning, research and evaluation



# Fair promotes health awareness

Motivated by the idea of a wholistic ministry as proposed by Dr. Granger Westberg, a retired Lutheran Church in America pastor who is a consultant in religion and health, the care and concern committee of Church of the Cross, Berkeley, Calif., organized a health fair. Its members also were alarmed by the number of breast and colon cancer operations undergone by parishioners and by several cases of heart and lung diseases. They believed that the fair would make people aware of the ways to prevent these illnesses.

Open to the community at no charge, the fair featured talks on various health-related issues by local medical personnel. Topics included counseling services, nutrition update, cancer prevention, emotional health and drug and alcohol addiction.

"We don't always choose to live in this state of well-being but it is God's intention for us to enjoy the best of physical, mental and spiritual health," said the Rev. Steven G. Larson, associate pastor of Church of the Cross, in his opening remarks. He reported that one out of every five males has a heart attack before age 60 and one out of every five families is dealing with drug or alcohol addiction.

Alan Kern, a family counselor, told the audience that misconceptions about therapy are disappearing as more people discover its value.

Aging people especially need vitamin C, as do those living in smoky environments,



*Fair-goers gather information and sample nutritious drinks.*

said Dr. Gaylord Whitlock, a nutrition and exercise consultant. "Vitamin A is important in cancer prevention," he said, noting that vitamins are among the 50 nutrients needed for good health.

Cancer is prevented best by changing both personal habits and society's priorities, Dr. Roger Iliff told listeners. A family physician, Iliff said that the major causes of cancer are smoking, alcohol, chemical substances, pollutants, specific viruses and dietary factors.

Dr. Paul Moremtz, a psychiatrist, emphasized the need to accept responsibility for one's own life, actions and attitudes. This will help emotional health, he said.

Individuals were invited to visit booths for personal health consultations after the speeches. Blood pressure tests, eye care, hearing tests and a nutrition health profile were among the services offered.

Related literature and nutritional beverages were available.

## Filipino doctor speaks

Dr. Erlinda Senturias, program director of the National Ecumenical Health Concerns Committee in Manila, led a health concerns seminar with pastors in the LCA Michigan Synod.

Speaking in Detroit, Senturias defined health as "not just the absence of disease but the presence of physical and spiritual well-being." Moderator of the Christian Medical Commission of the World Council of Churches, Senturias advocates community-based health programs. She sees the church as a healing community that can bring together an area.

"Health is interrelated with employment and education problems of the community," the doctor said, adding that it is not enough that the church should teach and preach; it should help a community refocus its energy.

*(Contributing to this article were Lew Neubacher and John Siefken.)*

# Mother donates kidney to daughter

Elaine Brooks, First Church, Tacoma, Wash., never doubted that she would be willing to donate a kidney to her daughter, Kathrine, also a member of First.

"It still seems like a basic, simple thing to do," Elaine Brooks said several months after the transplant. "She needed my kidney and I saw no reason why she shouldn't have it."

Kathrine said her mother's gift has freed her from dependence on the dialysis that restricted her lifestyle and sapped her energy. Although Kathrine could have waited for a cadaver kidney, the women decided on their transplant because they could schedule it during the summer when the operation would have a minimal effect on Kathrine's school activities. She is a junior at Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma.

Complications set in almost immediately after the operation last July. The new kidney flipped over and put pressure on Kathrine's ureter, forcing doctors to perform surgery that involved tying off a vein

to her leg. This left her with slight nerve damage. Released after a month in the hospital, Kathrine had to head back almost immediately when a rejection episode set in.

At home now and back in school she must take several drugs daily. One of them has left her looking puffy and another has triggered arthritis in her hips.

"I've felt some guilt because of Kathrine's problems," Elaine said. "I felt I was contributing to her misery rather than helping her." Elaine said she deals with the guilt by putting it into context with her professional life.

"As a nurse I know there are no guarantees with medical procedures," she said.

## Teen-age stroke victim recovers

Last March 14-year-old Vanessa Claudio, Bethel Church, Gary, Ind., suffered a severe stroke that left the entire right side of her body paralyzed. Today she is an active ninth-grader who just celebrated her 15th birthday, "goes to dances and participates on the cheerleaders'

team," said her mother, Myrna. She credited her daughter's "very good outlook" with aiding her rapid recovery.

At home alone when stricken, Vanessa crawled to a neighbor's house for help. Doctors discovered a blood clot in the left hemisphere of her brain and performed a cerebral bypass operation. Numerous tests have failed to reveal how the clot formed.

Although the operation was successful, the stroke left Vanessa unable to talk or move her right side. For two months she received therapy and medication in the hospital. Her recovery was "spectacular" because of her youth and determination, her mother said, and Vanessa became an outpatient.

To help the Claudio family with the mounting medical bills, Bethel's congregation held a benefit dinner that raised nearly \$2,000.

"Vanessa is an inspiration not only to our congregation but to our community, and we were proud" to help her, said Pastor Lyle E. Y. McKee.



# U.S. Constitution speaks to today

The U.S. Constitution "is as relevant to international and domestic issues today as it was in 1787," said Attorney General Edwin Meese III in a recent address at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa.

"Increased restrictions on American exports abroad, the despicable holding of American hostages overseas and the dangers to our economy posed by a rising foreign debt" were all problems facing the new government at the time of the drafting of the Constitution, Meese said.

A member of an American Lutheran Church congregation, Meese was a classmate at Yale University, New Haven, Conn., of Dr. H. George Anderson, president of Luther and a Lutheran Church in America pastor.

Speaking in one of a series of lectures planned by the college during the Constitution's bicentennial this year, Meese told the 1,600 people attending the speech that the Constitution was "meant to be a problem-solving document."

The genius of the Constitution is that "it not only succeeded in halting the disorders that were taking place at that time, but it also guaranteed to the people a greater measure of freedom than ever has been enjoyed by any other group of people on the face of the earth," Meese said.

In reference to the church-led sanctuary movement, Meese said that the federal government must prosecute churches that provide sanctuary for illegal immigrants be-



Meese

cause they are disobeying the law.

Luther's Namibia Concerns Group presented Meese with a petition for President

Reagan urging stiffer sanctions against South Africa.

Meese called the plight of the American farmers one of the country's "most perplexing problems." He said the problem of hunger in America is caused not by a lack of money but by poor distribution.

On prayer in the schools Meese said that giving students the opportunity to pray does not violate anyone's constitutional rights as long as prayer is not required.

On abortion he said that "nobody knows for sure when life begins. My feeling is that if there is uncertainty, we ought to give the benefit of the doubt to life." However, he said he is against a constitutional amendment making abortion a crime.

On continued nuclear arms testing he said that "we will be able to bring the Soviets to the bargaining table by being strong."

—W.L. THORKELSON

## School prayer raises concern

When government begins to promote prayer, it cannot help but raise "a whole host of knotty questions," warned Sen. Paul Simon (D-Ill.) in a recent speech at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Ind. Simon, a member of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, supported the principle of separating church and state and decried efforts by President Reagan to return prayer to public schools.

"There are functions government can perform well, like building highways and providing aid for students. But promoting religion is not a function that government performs well," Simon said.

"Let prayer be taught in the homes and churches and synagogues, and reading, writing and arithmetic in the schools," he said.

Simon has been named to head the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution that handles church-state issues. His predecessor, Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), supported efforts to change the Constitution to provide organized prayer in public schools.

Simon noted that politicians are not immune from using religion to their own ends and that for many religious affiliation seems "a matter of convenience rather than conviction."

"But when the inflexibility of religious dogma is applied to political life, then practical compromises that are necessary for progress cannot follow," he warned. "Too tight a merger between political leadership and religious leadership is almost certain to lead to zealotry and abuse."

"The point is that the electorate should not make political judgments on the basis of religious affiliations," he said. "A carefully paraded religious affiliation or an unctuous religiosity that suddenly emerges before an election are not signals of statesmanship."

On the issue of abortion Simon said that those taking different sides can find common ground in efforts to prevent teen-age pregnancies.

## Politics in church upset lay

Those in church and society leadership positions in Protestant churches have turned off lay people by their "religionizing of politics" and "politicizing of religion," said the Rev. Richard John Neuhaus. As a consequence lay people do not see the connections they should make between their faith and public policy, he said.

A pastor of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, Neuhaus spoke recently at Luther Northwestern Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., and at Lutheran Brotherhood, Minneapolis.

Neuhaus said that in denominations such as the Presbyterian Church (USA), United Methodist Church and United Church of Christ, members "simply voted with their feet and walked away because they were not hearing the Gospel but gospels of false political and social liberation that have displaced the Gospel."

This also is happening among Lutherans, "especially as we drift into the orbit of mainline, oldline Protestantism," said Neuhaus, who is director of The Center on Religion and Society, New York.

"It is not a question of whether Christians should be involved in politics. They should," he said. "The question is whether the church should become a religious appendage to a particular sociopolitical ideological line."

He added that "the excitement of talking about Christianity in the public arena is precisely something that ought to be renewing to the life of the church. Yet we don't see that happening. We see people afraid to raise the issue of real controversy in the public arena, lest it disturb the peace of the church."

Religion columnist for the conservative periodical *National Review*, Neuhaus said that in many churches today one's political position is of more consequence to members than one's position on the deity of Christ or the doctrine of the Trinity.

"It is not simply a matter of the left," he added. On the right "you will find the same thing — putting together an equation of the Gospel with a particular sociopolitical agenda so the two become inseparable," he said.



# BECAUSE OF YOU



Because of you, Ramu—a ten-year-old boy and a former beggar who lived in the train station at Poona near Bombay, India—is moving toward his dreams.

Sometime ago, while begging for food, Ramu fell off a train.

He lost an arm and a leg.

As soon as he recovered, he was back begging.

One day, as he was begging at the Poona station, he met a group of Lutheran World Relief workers who were about to board a train.

They asked Ramu to go with them. He did. They arranged for him to go to a hospital at Jamkhed

where local people are crafting artificial arms, feet and legs, a project of Lutheran World Relief.

This project is made possible because of your gifts to benevolence.

Ramu was fitted for a new leg. At another time he hopes to get a new arm. Now he is attending a school for basic education.

With encouragement from his two brothers and a network of helping hands, he dreams of returning to Jamkhed hospital to train others in rehabilitation. Ramu is moving toward his dreams.

Remember him as you place your offering in the plate this Sunday.





Clowns give congregation "Life Saver" candies representing Christ

## Clowns provide outreach

Resurrection Church, Detroit, discovered that a clown ministry program provided an opportunity for children and adults to relate to one another and also served as an effective community outreach program.

During a two-week period last year children learned the "nuts and bolts" of clowning, such as how to put on clown makeup and take part in games and activities encouraging creativity and imagination. These sessions were held in the morning and were funded by United Community Service. Afternoon sessions that were supported by the church dealt with more church-related activities.

As part of one session parents had their pictures taken with their child in clown makeup and costume. Later the children made a standard for the pictures and presented them to their parents at a final show. Families joined together in special activities during the day the pictures were taken.

The final show of the program included a parade through the neighborhood with participants in clown costumes. Flyers inviting people to attend the show were passed out along the parade route. The

show included clown groups performing skits, group singing and the presentation of photos to parents.

Advanced classes performed at other local churches, did clown "caroling" and visited Luther Haven, a convalescent home in Detroit. Skits were based on Bible stories.

In the few months following the sessions several persons participating in the clown program were baptized. —JOHN SIEFKEN



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## Chisholm to speak to ELCA women

Shirley Chisholm, former member of the U.S. House of Representatives, will be one of the major speakers when an expected 6,000 women gather in Milwaukee for the constituting convention of the new Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The convention will be held June 11-14 and have the theme "Embrace God's World."

The new organization has the potential to involve more than 2 million women of the Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches.

"Where in the World is Your Ministry?" will be Chisholm's topic. The convention also will offer more than 60 workshops addressing the diversity of women's ministries.

Business sessions will deal with a proposed constitution and bylaws for the organization and its synodical and congregational units, a statement of purpose, program areas and aims. A 14-month budget is proposed with \$3,218,000 in phase one, including a major gift to the ELCA, and \$1,282,000 in phase two to be implemented as the funds become available.

Convention delegates also will elect officers and a board of directors.

In addition to 450 delegates, 50 international women will take part in the constituting convention.

## Youth gather in Virginia

A record 435 youth and adults packed an auditorium in Lynchburg, Va., for the 1987 Winter Celebration sponsored by the Lutheran Church in America Virginia Synod. Directed by pastors Chip Gunsten and Mark Graham, the purpose of the event was to help both youth and adults examine their masks and come "Face to Face" with the cross.

The event featured a huge wall constructed from cardboard donated by Dave Higgenbotham and Corrugated Container of Roanoke, Va. Designed by Robin Konieczny, a contemporary drawing of the twin Greek theater masks was constructed in relief on the face of the wall by Ken Kipps.

As the event proceeded, the masks were torn down to reveal a 10-foot-high cross that initially appeared to be constructed of wood. Later, participants saw the wood finish removed to reveal a translucent cross of plexiglass. Reflections from the cross highlighted the biblical focus of the event from 1 Corinthians 13:12, "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face."

Bishop Virgil A. Moyer celebrated communion, brought greetings and assured the youth and adult advisers that a continuing commitment to a small-group style of youth ministry would be an important part of the design of the new Virginia Synod.

Concern was expressed by many from the present Northern Virginia area of the

synod who will move into the Metro Washington Synod about the availability of such programming after the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Sixty-two small-group leaders, musicians and planners staffed the event. The high ratio of staff to participants insured that time was available to care for the special concerns of individual youth. Workshops on sexuality and dating, suicide, the ministry as profession, youth ministry in the ELCA and small-group development provided opportunity for sharing special concerns.

A recent study of Virginia Synod youth ministry events showed that 2,166 young people, adult advisers and small-group leaders from more than 100 congregations have participated in synod youth events since January 1985.

## Churches repair century-old split

A century-old split between two congregations finally was repaired when members of Immanuel Church and Trinity Church, both in Golden, Ill., gathered together for a recent Sunday worship service. The event drew the largest attendance either church has had for many years as nearly 500 worshippers crowded into Trinity's church building.

The pastors of the two congregations had proposed the service that included a performance by the Luther Men's Chorus of Champaign County, Ill., and the Service of the Word.

The dispute in 1875 was over whether Immanuel Church should affiliate with a larger church body or synod. In the spring of that year a group from Immanuel decided to form its own congregation, which became Trinity Church. Eventually Immanuel became a part of the American Lutheran Church and Trinity a part of the Lutheran Church in America. Next year with the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America they will be a part of the same church body.

"While a merger of the two congregations is not foreseen as a result of the formation of the new Lutheran church, what is exciting to many members of both congregations is that they now are beginning to see the possibilities of sharing mission and ministry together," said Catherine M. Bienhoff of Trinity Church.

For the Rev. Joseph Hughes of Trinity it was his last service at the church. He has resigned to accept another call. "If I could have written the script for my last Sunday in this congregation, this is exactly what I would have written," he said.

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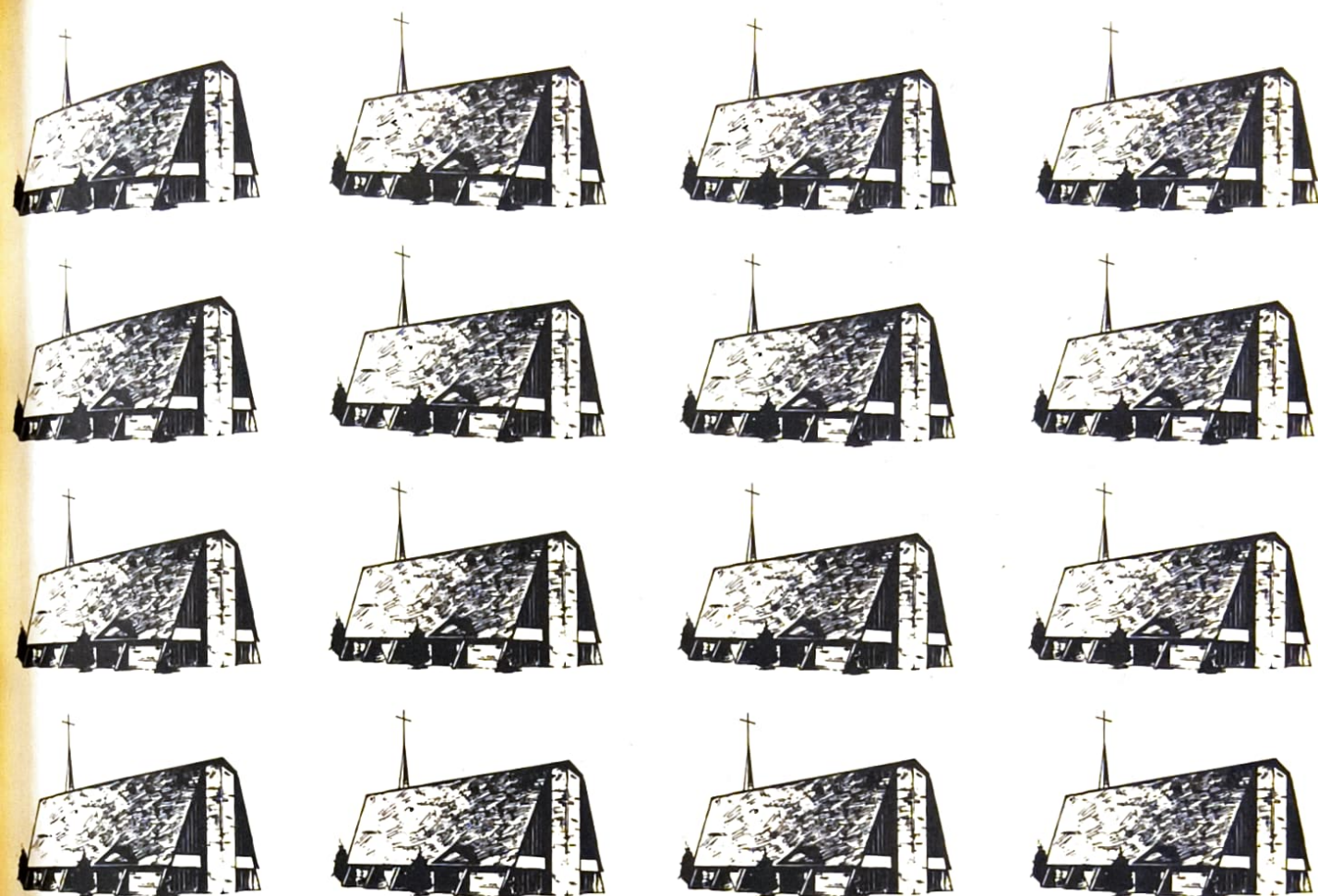
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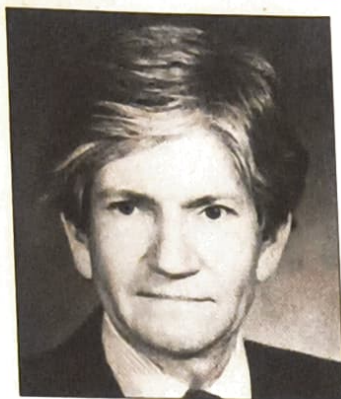
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# PEOPLE



**Brannon**

Newberry (S.C.) College awarded an honorary doctor of laws degree to **L. Travis Brannon Jr.**, Redeemer, Atlanta. An attorney and civic leader, Brannon was honored for his leadership in the church and for his contributions to the legal profession.

**Benjamin Frick**, 10, St. James, Rockwell, N.C., finished second in the National TAC Junior Olympic Cross Country Championships with a time of 11:19 for the 3,000-meter course. His twin sister, **Rebekah**, took 10th place in the girls' division with a time of 12:40.

The Rev. **David W. Peters**, Bethel, Great Falls, Mont., was elected vice president of the Montana Association of Churches.

**Claire Demler**, Bethany, Bainbridge Island, Wash., was recognized when Seattle named a day in her honor. She helped raise \$2 million to save a building for low-income residents.

**Deborah J. Kovach**, staff writer for the news bureau of Lutheran Council in the USA, New York, resigned to become a staff writer for *The Trenton* (N.J.) *Times*.

The family of **Dorothy Peeler Fisher**, Wittenberg, Granite Quarry, N.C., has established a scholarship in her name at Lenoir-Rhyne College, Hickory, N.C., for a student from Rowan County, N.C.



**Overkamp**

**Sunshine Janda Overkamp**, Hosanna, Houston, was named one of the nation's "most expert and respected practitioners in public relations" by *PR Reporter*. She is senior vice president, United Way of the Texas Gulf Coast.

**Roland M. Baumann**, former archives consultant to the LCA, was appointed archivist of Oberlin (Ohio) College. On the archives advisory board for the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Baumann also is chief of the division of archives and manuscripts of the Pennsylvania Museum Commission.

**Wendy Hendrickson**, Messiah, Auburn, Wash., was chosen state co-president elect of the American Association of University Women.

**Gale Kirk**, Mount Hermon, Concord, N.C., was named Outstanding Parent of the Year by the North Carolina Association for Retarded Citizens. She was honored for her efforts on behalf of her child and her help to other parents.

**Tim Stickel**, Holy Trinity, Mercer Island, Wash., was appointed to the governor's committee on employment of the disabled.

**Dr. Denise Shiver**, Covenant, Houston, was named Outstanding School Psychologist by the Texas Psychological Association.



**Fennell**

**David L. Fenell**, First, Colorado Springs, Colo., was elected a fellow in the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. He is professor of education at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs.



**Mau**

The American Religious Town Hall named **Dr. Carl H. Mau Jr.**, Reformation, Washington, as The American of the Year. He is the former general secretary of Lutheran World Federation, Geneva, Switzerland.

## PROFILE

## Career consultant shares her faith

A startling reminder about her own capabilities launched Alene H. Moris, Our Redeemer Church, Seattle, on a career dedicated to helping others learn about themselves. Along the way she has capitalized on unusual opportunities to share her Christian faith.

Moris' own "rude awakening" occurred in 1965 in Malaysia where her husband, the Rev. Walter J. Moris, was serving as a missionary with the Board of World Mission of the Lutheran Church in America.

Local school officials in need of an administrator sought her help. After Moris told them her training was not in that area, the officials reminded her that she had a college degree.

Moris soon found that she was qualified indeed to operate a school. "In the process I learned considerably more about myself, my potential and my faith," she commented.

Returning to the United States in 1970, Moris determined to "wake up" women about their dormant strengths and abilities. After advanced training in counseling, she worked in the guidance office of



**Moris**

the University of Washington. There she advised female students to "stretch" beyond traditional limitations.

Moris next started a career consulting company aimed at developing self-awareness among women.

Her clientele now includes corporations and government agencies.

During her speeches and seminars Moris has many chances to share her Christian convictions. "My most productive evangelism role comes from my link to people outside the church," she said.

—RICHARD LONDGREN



## Lay missionaries

**Borstad**, Elizabeth, women's shelter administrator, Luther Place Church, Washington, to teacher, Japan.

**Cleveland**, David, lawyer, and Ella, publishing company project director, Cleveland, to adviser, English training program; faculty of law (David); consultant to research institute (Ella), Nommensen University, Medan, Indonesia.

**Fredrickson**, Charles, student, School for International Training, Brattleboro, Vt., to teacher, Japan.

**Freeze**, Judy and Larry, maintenance engineer, Phebe Hospital, Suakoko, Liberia, to resigned.

**Hansen**, Hanna, parish worker, Faith Church, Hong Kong, to retirement.

**Hock**, Donna, teacher, Japan, to completed term.

**Kadota**, Amy, teacher, Japan, to completed term.

**Kraepelin**, Fred, hospital administrator, Phebe Hospital, Suakoko, Liberia, and Sherry, teacher, Cuttington Campus School, Suakoko, Liberia, to completed term.

**Kramer**, David and Jean, teachers,

Westbury, N.Y., to teachers, Lutheran Junior Seminary, Morogoro, Tanzania.

**Lang**, Hans, student, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, to teacher, Japan.

**Lewis**, JoAnne and Philip, professor; chief academic officer, Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pa., to special assistant to rector, Nommensen University, Medan, Indonesia.

**Miller**, Marion and Thomas, teachers, Japan, to completed term.

**Peters**, Michael, student, Gettysburg (Pa.) Seminary, to teacher, Japan.

**Sager**, Denise, teacher, YMCA program, Japan, to teacher, Japan.

**Slim**, Ruth, Christian education work, Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore, to completed term.

**Stixrud**, Annette and Neal, teacher, Kodiakanal School, Tamil Nadu, India, to consultant, women in development (Annette); consultant, education (Neal), Cairo, Egypt.

**Thorpe**, Lisa, assistant editor, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, to teacher, Japan.



Gary Larson, left, creator of the nationally syndicated cartoon *The Far Side*, models a T-shirt bearing a sketch he donated to the radio station at Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Wash. Holding another shirt is Dr. Martin J. Neeb, station general manager. More than 800 shirts were given away as premiums during a fund-raising drive for the station.

## Clergy changes

### Nevada

**Grumm**, Roland E., received from Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, to Holy Cross, Reno.

**Von Seggern**, Lyle E., Trinity, Winside, Neb., to chaplain, U.S. Air Force, Nellis Air Force Base.

### New Hampshire

**Stott**, C. Robert, Trinity, Watertown, Conn., to Good Shepherd, Laconia.

### New Jersey

**Dunkle**, Louis W., Bethlehem, Traverse City, Mich., to Our Savior, Haddonfield.

**Harding**, Beverly J., on leave from call, to retirement disability.

**Helmers**, Hans-Peter, Holy Trinity, North Caldwell, to on leave from call.

**Jenkins**, Russell G., Holy Spirit, Villas, to retirement.

**Johnson**, Bertil D., Our Saviour, Cresskill, to on leave from call.

**Korzun**, James E., on leave from call, to Bethany, Gloucester City.

**Schramm**, David E., received from American Lutheran Church, to

president, Upsala College, East Orange.

**Sodano**, Patricia M., newly ordained, to assistant, Prince of Peace, Marlton.

### New York

**Csellak**, Laura A., newly ordained, to Redeemer, New York (Queens).

**Frampton**, E. Lorraine, assistant, Trinity-Emmanuel, Rochester, to on leave from call.

**Olsen**, Steven D., received from Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, to clinical director, Samaritan Pastoral Counseling Center, Buffalo.

**Pierotti**, Thomas M., on leave from call, to director, counseling ministry outreach, Lutheran Social Services of Upper New York, Jamestown.

**Wietfeldt**, Fred E. Jr., assistant director, Wartburg Home, Mount Vernon, to on leave from call.

**Windle**, David L., received from American Lutheran Church, to Concordia, Watertown.

### North Carolina

**Mitschke**, Robert F. Jr., Sharon,

Gibsonville, to Grace, Bessemer City.

**Peeler**, D. Gene, Frieden, Gibsonville, to on leave from call.

**Sell**, John W., on leave from call, to associate, Christ, Charlotte.

### South Dakota

**Snobek**, Phillip E., associate professor of education, Augustana College, Sioux Falls, to retirement.

### Texas

**Conrad**, F. Leslie Jr., St. Luke, Richardson, to retirement.

**Haman**, Frederick G. Jr., on leave from call, to associate, Christ the King, Houston.

### NAMIBIA

**Smith**, Louis A., Resurrection, Hamilton Square, N.J., to missionary, Karibib.

## Deaths

**The Rev. Samuel M. Clarke**, 84, died Jan. 27. Ordained in 1947, he served Christ, Union, N.J.; First, New Oxford, and St. Matthew, Woodlyn, both in Pennsylvania. He retired in 1968.

**The Rev. Ragnar A. Kastman**, 75, died Feb. 9 in Palm Springs, Calif. Ordained in 1937, he served Clara, Salina; New Sweden and Trinity, both in Lockridge; St. John, Madrid; Grace, Davenport, all in Iowa; Augustana, Phoenix; First, Mesa, both in Arizona, and Luther Memorial, Sacramento, Calif. He was chaplain (1940-45), Home for the Aged, Madrid, Iowa, and secretary (1951-63) of the California Conference of the former Augus-

tana Lutheran Church. He retired in 1975.

**The Rev. Wesley J. Runk**, 89, died Feb. 17. Ordained in 1927, he served Trinity and Old Stone, both in Jeromesville; St. Mark, Mansfield; Third Protestant Memorial, Cincinnati; St. Luke, Toledo; St. John, Miamisburg, and Emmanuel, North Georgetown, all in Ohio. He retired in 1966.

**The Rev. Paul A. Westerberg**, L.H.D., 80, died Nov. 19, 1986, in Jamestown, N.Y. Ordained in 1931, he served Swedesburg, Swedesburg, Iowa; Ebenezer, San Francisco, and First (1950-76), Jamestown, N.Y. He retired in 1976.



# NEWS NOTES

## Records published

Records of German congregations begun in Maryland in the 18th century are being edited for publication by the Rev. Frederick S. Weiser of St. Paul Church, Biglerville, Pa. "This is the first attempt to bring into print all the records of an ethnic group in one part of the United States," he said. The records of baptisms, marriages and burials kept by the Lutheran and Reformed congregations are the primary source of information about the people of the area.

## New programs begin

The Lutheran Behavioral Medicine Institute of Moline, Ill., recently started an employee assistance program and an adult chemical dependency program. The employee assistance program provides confidential services to help troubled workers and their families deal with personal and on-the-job issues including marital difficulties, financial concerns, legal matters and health problems. The nonresidential adult chemical dependency program emphasizes education, group counseling and family involvement.

## College installs window

Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa, recently installed a stained-glass window commissioned by Kathryn Koob, a Wartburg alumna and one of the hostages held in Iran for 444 days. Created by Robert Naujoks of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, the design was selected in competition with stained-glass artists from all over the country.

Created as a visual reminder of oppressed and suffering people, the design uses darker colors at the bottom moving to lighter colors at the top. Pilloried or confined hands lead to a praying form and then opening gestures are transformed into symbols of butterfly, dove and eagle moving upwards. Koob used funds from speaking engagements for the window.

## Center gets award

The Dispute Settlement Center of Durham, N.C., has received for its mediation program the \$10,000 "Justice" award of the Foundation for the Improvement of Justice, Atlanta. The center is directed by the Rev. Michael D. Wendt of the Church of the Abiding Savior, an American Lutheran Church congregation in Durham. The center has more than 100 volunteer mediators who work with neighbors, co-workers, families and others to assist in resolving disputes peacefully.

## Fire area helped

After an area near Hyeres, France, suffered a devastating forest fire last summer, the Rev. Richard Duncan, chaplain on the USS Saipan, organized a volunteer force of sailors and Marines to go into the area, clear dead timber and plant new trees. "A total of 237 men from the ship were involved in the project," he said. For their effort the ship was presented the city's Medal of Honor by the mayor of Hyeres.

## Publications win

The Newberry (S.C.) College Admissions Office won three national awards for excellence in publications, including one first-place gold medal award. *Admissions Marketing Report*, a national newspaper on admissions, announced that the college won first place for its total public relations program including all publications. It won a silver second-place award for its quarterly newsletter that is distributed to high-school juniors and seniors. For its student viewbook, *Essentials of Achievement*, Newberry won a third-place merit award.

## First aid translated

In response to the growing Hispanic population in the Lehigh Valley of Pennsylvania, an illustrated first-aid book of Spanish phrases for English-speaking emergency personnel has been produced. The Rev. Alejandro Garcia-Rivera of St. Paul

Church, Allentown, Pa., chaired the volunteer group responsible for the project. "My phone rings off the hook" with calls from people in need of interpreting skills, he said. The booklet contains basic phrases printed phonetically in English and Spanish. The publication is meant to be used until better communications can be established through an interpreter, said Thomas Woll of Rodale Press which helped with the project.

## Unity observed

During the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Grace and St. Paul Church, New York (Manhattan), invited the people of Blessed Sacrament Roman Catholic Church to join them for evening prayer. The pastor of Blessed Sacrament served as lector and the Rev. Martin Hauser of Grace and St. Paul preached. Later that week the congregation celebrated a service of communion for unity with three neighboring Episcopal parishes. Hauser presided and was assisted by the ministers of the three Episcopal churches.

## Colleges named

Four Lutheran colleges have been invited to participate in a new three-year science program of the Pew Charitable Trusts. Augustana College, Rock Island, Ill.; Luther College, Decorah, Iowa; Muhlenberg College, Allentown, Pa., and St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn., were selected after being ranked among the nation's top 60 undergraduate colleges in science and mathematics education. The program is designed to improve undergraduate science and mathematics teaching.

## CLASSIFIEDS

**ALASKA PILGRIMAGE!** Magnificent 1987 Super Tour! Spectacular scenery, valleys, mountains, waters, oceans, snows, glaciers! Sturdy human cultures, wild animal world! American-Canadian safety. Journey by plane, train, coach, S.S. Rotterdam! Excellent guides, hosts. Write: The Klicks, 1180 Woodland Dr., York, Pa. 17403.

**TWO FABULOUS TOURS! BEST OF SCANDINAVIA** including cruise Copenhagen to Oslo, Aug. 17-29, Russia optional, \$2,098. **AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND**, Fiji optional, Sept. 24-Oct. 9, \$2,295. Experienced guides, hosts. Brochure: Pastor Jones, 5 Royal Oak Circle, Camp Hill, Pa. 17011.

**SCANDINAVIAN HEARTLAND TOURS:** The best of Norway in 17 fascinating days! Oslo on the 17th of May, Bergen, Trondheim, Lofoten Islands, Arctic Circle. Come along! May 15-31, 1987. \$2,390. For brochure: Florence Buck, 9204 Division Lane, S.W., Tacoma, Wash. 98498. 206-581-1443.

**CLERGY-HOSTED TOURS:** Escorted group-tour programs forming for 1987/88 for Lutheland, the Holy Land, British Heritage, Alaska, Canadian Rockies, China, Greece and other

great destinations. *Hometown departures.* Attractive incentives. **GARLIN TRAVEL SERVICE**, 1700 Walnut St., Phila., Pa. 19103. 215-732-0800.

**"THE MYSTERY OF THE SHROUD OF TURIN."** Is it real or fake? Seven videotapes featuring experts who examined the shroud for authenticity. **ACTION VIDEO**, 1828-D State St., E. Petersburg, Pa. 17520. 717-560-0605.

**HUSBAND AND WIFE** to take care of elderly couple in Reading, Pa. Both must drive and be willing to travel. Duties involve normal household chores including cooking, caring for couple's minimal medical needs, general handyman work. Living quarters provided. Competitive wages, benefits. Write: J.A. LaManna, 1733 Penn Ave., Wyomissing Hills, Pa. 19609.

**TWO STAFF OPENINGS: DIRECTOR OF MUSIC**, coordinate music program for large Minneapolis suburban church. Full- or part-time considered. **DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**, full-time. Excellent salary, benefits for experienced person. Send resume or call for application: Gethsemane Lutheran Church, 715 Minnetonka Mills Rd., Hopkins, Minn. 55343. 612-935-1753.



## MY QUESTION IS...

**Q.** The call committee of our congregation interviewed a pastor who was involved deeply in the charismatic movement. What is the position of the Lutheran Church in America on this movement?

**A.** The church's position could be characterized as "cautiously affirmative" and "sympathetically critical." A review of the movement and its implications is contained in the document, "The Charismatic Movement in the Lutheran Church — A Pastoral Perspective." This report was approved by the LCA Division for Parish Services and presented to the church's 1974 convention. A more recent 96-page study, "Charismatic Renewal and the Lutheran Tradition" by Carter Lindberg, was issued by the Lutheran World Federation Studies Department in 1985.

**Q.** Is it true that one can receive a master of divinity degree without being ordained? Why must one first receive a call in order to be ordained even if approved for ordination?

**A.** Preparation for ordination is not just an academic process. A candidate's spiritual qualifications and sense of divine call are tested, usually over a period of years,

by a synod. But ordination itself must be preceded by reception of a call to a specific ministry from a congregation, a synod or the national church. This practice represents the belief that pastors must have the confidence of the people they are to serve, expressed through formal vote. It also represents the practical understanding that unless a place of service is open, it can be misleading to promise a candidate entrance into the ordained ministry.

**Q.** What is the LCA policy on maternity leave for female pastors and other professional staff?

**A.** By action of the LCA Executive Council, the official call form for clergy includes the provision: "Maternity leave, for clergy women, up to six weeks with full salary, housing and benefits." A similar provision is included in the employment contract for other female church professionals.

**Q.** Our Bible class was discussing 1 Samuel 15:35: "And the Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel." Two class members insisted that God is omniscient and unchanging. I pointed out that God ad-

justs to changed situations according to the response of the people as in Exodus 32:14. Can you help us resolve our differences?

**A.** God has given humans a limited free will. Time and again the Bible indicates that God's relation to people, while grounded in God's eternal will, takes seriously the choices they make and the actions they perform. Perhaps the expression "change of mind" or "regret" is a way of speaking about God using terms from human experience. But such expressions point to a profound reality. The most personal human experience of God's "change of mind" for most of us is the knowledge that God forgives our sins for the sake of Jesus Christ. We stand under God's condemnation because of our rebellion and disobedience; that is a true description of God's wrath. But there is "now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1); that is a true description of God's mercy. Between the two there is a change in the status of the sinner. The biblical language makes clear that there is also somehow a change in God.

Answers are researched and compiled by Features Editor Glenn C. Stone.

## CAPITOL CURRENTS

### Abortion is an emotional issue for many

One of the most emotional issues for many people and certainly a disturbing one for Congress is the question of abortion. As in decisions relating to war and capital punishment, opinions concerning what is right and wrong are divided and strong.

Life is involved. Many lives are involved. Therefore it is necessary to balance rhetoric and exaggerations with the specific legislation and the best way to serve the needs of people and to preserve life.

On the one hand, statements are made that women own and can use their bodies without any responsibility to themselves and others. On the other hand, those who speak out for protecting the life of the mother are called murderers. Church statements generally are such that personal decisions are left for the individual to decide.

In the nation's Capitol there is not a great movement or strong support for "abortion on demand." Fundamentalist literature and marches on Washington may have given the impression that there is. The Lutheran Council in the USA's Office for Governmental Affairs never has testified on any legislation concerning abortion.

Many so-called "pro-choice" individuals who consider themselves to be "pro-life" are concerned about efforts to outlaw all abortions by constitutional manipulation.

Long discussions take place about what seems obvious — that some form of life begins at conception. The real question, however, is "When is each of us an individual person?" The second question is "How do people make decisions about life and its protection?"

We do not call soldiers who take life in war murderers. We are divided concerning the executioner in capital punishment. Decisions about life are not easy.

Enriching and productive conversations can occur in better places than the halls of Congress between placards with pictures of babies in wastebaskets. As Wilfred Caron, former general counsel of the U.S. Catholic Conference, said, "Most regrettably, hostility and acrimony seriously have infected the abortion controversy. Sadly enough, such views surface even among those who share a common commitment when there is diversity of opinion as to how best to carry out that commitment. It seems that

persons who seek to serve high principles should treat each other with respect despite their differences."

Concerning rape and abortion, Cardinal Joseph Bernardin of Chicago said, "As a teacher of morality I cannot justify abortion in the case of rape. But as a pastor I would have to deal with the enormous human tragedy that is involved in such a case. As a pastor I could understand why someone would be driven to such a thing (as abortion)."

Politics, religion and abortion can be topics for discussion — certainly within the family of believers and congregations of Christians. Most especially, voters should be aware of strong and dangerous efforts of the right-wing groups and others to remove the whole question from the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. All people concerned for human life will need to consider carefully any legislative proposals in 1987.

—CHARLES V. BERGSTROM

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



# NOW, I THINK

By Donald C. Flatt

## Church responsibility in sex education

**I** am distressed deeply over the huge problems faced by teen-agers as they try to find their way through the swamp of commercialism and corruption that surrounds all aspects of sexual life. Almost everyone seems to agree that there must be sex education. But there is no consensus as to where, how and by whom such education should be given.

The most common answer is that parents should initiate their children into some understanding of sex and of the values that should prevail in sexual relationships. However, the big problem is that in this very sensitive area few feel free or competent to give their children adequate guidance. In many cases they give only the most superficial and belated advice at the onset of puberty as to how to respond to the biological and psychological changes already underway. I found myself in that category. Therefore, I am astonished at the continual drumbeat of claims that the proper place for sex education is in the home and nowhere else.

If parents are too shy or unsure of themselves to orient their children thoroughly, the alternative usually has been to place the responsibility on secular society, public schools in particular. This position at least recognizes a wider responsibility than that of the nuclear home. The defect is that, in a very pluralistic society with religion and its values excluded almost entirely from the public-education curriculum, a teacher can do little more than present the subject from a purely biological standpoint. This leaves students on their own regarding issues of value and morality. There is a widespread uneasiness with this solution and vigorous opposition to it from many religious groups.

In this dilemma it is strange that we seem to have learned

nothing from the example of simpler societies, despite the advice of the late Dr. Margaret Mead and other eminent anthropologists. In such societies the initiation of adolescents into the mysteries of life generally is not carried out by the biological parents nor delegated to some impersonal authority, but is directed by senior clansmen, keepers of traditions, values, beliefs and ethics of their people. In such communities sex education traditionally has been comprehensive, disciplined and designed to insure that each young adult should become fully aware of his or her status and role in society, and fully equipped — spiritually as well as psychologically — to sustain the status and fulfill the role.

If the task of initiation into adult sexuality is too heavy for the biological parents unaided and too value-laden to be entrusted to technicians who are not custodians of people's ideals and sanctions, the one body that should be capable of giving true and valuable leadership in this matter is the church. Particularly at the congregational level, the church still is able to provide social solidarity in a fragmented world. The church, by and large, both establishes and represents the lifestyle of its members. It is far better qualified to act as guardian in the delicate matter of sex education than any other institution in our society.

**F**or the most part the churches have hesitated to commit themselves wholeheartedly to this task. True, many churches have provided some formal education materials in this field. Yet their outreach has been weakened by a long-standing reluctance to take real responsibility. Without a sensitive and deeply committed ministry from the church in this very personal area of life, tens of thousands of youth are left with little support and less guidance. Without such loving concern and moral support from the church the vacuum is filled by many — from the mass media and advertising industries to those who profit from perversion, pornography and commercialized sex. They tend to lead young adults to hurt, grief and sometimes utter destruction. The integrity of Christian romance, courtship, marriage and family life steadily is eroded and undermined.

The time has come when we in the church should cease to dump much of the challenge of sex education in the lap of rather helpless parents or secular society. It is time to carry the challenge joyfully ourselves. ■



The author is a retired LCA pastor in Dubuque, Iowa.

"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

## ELCA vision provokes fury

I find Michael Cooper-White's vision of what will make the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America historic (*Now, I think*, Feb. 18) to be amazing. However, I would suggest a less amazing vision. Our clergy might begin with a renewed appreciation of and fidelity to their ordination vows, particularly in light of that sticky promise to preach and teach according to Scripture, the Lutheran confessions and the church's historic creeds. We might take better care to develop our political opinions on the basis of our theological beliefs rather than vice versa. We might commit ourselves as God's people to minister to people in their own settings without prior constraints. We could pray for the Spirit's calling in making personnel decisions in the church, from hiring church secretaries to electing bish-

ops. Finally, we could opt out of our little legalisms and begin to live as a church within the freedom of the Gospel.

TIMOTHY BRADY EGGLESTON  
Cedarburg, Wis.

Cooper-White fears the ELCA may sink to the level of the "lowest common denominator," but some of the "truly historic" decisions he calls for the new church to adopt should ensure that we become the church of the "lowest possible number." Clearly, to demand the ordination of homosexuals, enforcement of strict minority quotas, the use of inclusive language and that clergy boycott any parish guilty of "discrimination because of sex, color, lifestyle or age" should ensure the exit of an ever-increasing number of Lutherans to the ever-growing Bible churches. Let's not throw the new baby (ELCA) out with the bath water.

CRAIG R. GILES  
Westminster, Md.

Why not make a truly "historic decision?" Let's just get rid of the law and then we won't need the Gospel either. That way we won't have to worry about that bothersome man who claimed to be the son of God and found it necessary to keep an appointment he had with a cross outside Jerusalem. With such "historic" proposals coming out of the Lutheran Church in America hierarchy, is it any wonder that some of us in the American Lutheran Church wonder what we really are getting into in this upcoming merger? We have enough of such in the ALC without adding to their number.

LUTHER B. KEAY  
Jacksonville, Fla.

## More harm than good?

I am concerned about the decision favoring requiring pastors upon divorce to express intent or willingness to resign (*Bishops deal with clergy divorce*, Feb. 18, page 17). I am clergy, and I am divorced. Through nine months of marital therapy my former wife and I discovered we are best friends, but for us it wasn't enough to sustain a 10-year marriage. We were completely open with my congregation through the process, and my parishioners were super. After my divorce my relationship with them deepened. They then were able to tell me their own troubles more easily. To suggest resignation from the parish and possible removal from the clergy roll to divorcing clergy doesn't speak well of the capacity for mutual ministry in the parish. This also would cloud any marital therapy process. With one's job at stake in addition to one's marriage, decision-reaching is more difficult, and what should happen may not.

RANDALL R. SCOTT  
Cairo, Ill.

## Working parents take it on

Regarding "Parents can't leave it to schools" (*Editor's opinion*, Feb. 4), parents, when both are working outside the home, may have to work harder at being parents and may need to do more schedule-juggling and "time-sharing" with younger children, but teaching or not teaching morals and values has nothing to do with their jobs. It has to do with the character, commitment and beliefs of the parents involved. Second, I think young people who are responsible enough to have jobs and maintain acceptable grades in schools should be commended. Perhaps there should be more training and guidelines to teach young people to use their money more wisely, but working is important training for teen-agers. There may well be parents — employed and unemployed — who want to hand over responsibility to schools, but I have never considered it *not* my responsibility to teach my children (whether I was at home full time, working or attending school). Your article was an attack on working parents and young people rather than an article aimed at relegating responsibility to schools.

BARBARA WILLS  
Boone, Iowa

I want to commend you for your excellent editorial. I believe the destruction of family life in America by the kind of neglect and false sense of values that you have pointed out so clearly is a far greater danger to our country than any military threat from a foreign power. Thank you for hitting the nail right on the head.

GEORGE L. LUNDQUIST  
North St. Paul, Minn.

## Compassion for Solbergs

Thanks for the article on the Solbergs (*Parents in a Lions' Den*, Feb. 4). As a church family we need to reaffirm to each other the Gospel lessons of love, compassion and forgiveness. Many of us cannot support some of Daniel Solberg's tactics, but we would like to support his social concern and willingness to reach out actively to others in need. There have been times when, to its discredit, the Lutheran church has been silent on social issues. We hope the Solberg situation stimulates in both laity and leadership thoughtful and prayerful consideration of the church's mission.

KOINONIA GROUP 5  
Trinity Church, Fresno, Calif.

## Five crucial questions: reprints available



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# EDITOR'S OPINION

By Edgar R. Trexler

## New church budget turns corner

**F**inances for the new church are going to be OK. That's the signal from financial planners to the new church's constituting convention six weeks from now in Columbus, Ohio.

That doesn't mean all the problems are solved, or that hard budget choices can be avoided. But past frustrations and fears can be laid aside. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will be able to pay its bills — and forge ahead in mission.

It's true that there was — and is — a gap between what had been dreamed and what will be possible. Initial proposals for churchwide ministries ran about one-third higher than anticipated 1988 income. That income projection even had to be shaved because benevolence giving to synod and churchwide ministries has not grown at the same rate since 1984 as it did prior to that year.

That imbalance is nothing new for the church. Opportunities for outreach, witness and response to human need always have outrun the resources of synods, districts and churchwide units. That struggle may be salutary since it forces clear thinking about priorities.

The thing that has been different about the building of the ELCA's first budget is that it has been done in a fish-bowl. In past years difficult priority choices have been made routinely but quietly by synod and churchwide officials. But the ELCA budget has been subject to public scrutiny from its early days, including some progress reports that indicated a money crisis could be in the offing. This open process is in keeping with the work of the merger commission itself that issued seven progress reports before it finalized its recommendations.

When synod and churchwide finance planners met last month (see page 17), the upshot was general affirmation of the proposed ELCA budget, a pledge to balance the

budget by reducing expenditures and intensifying congregational stewardship efforts, and a commitment by synods to pass on more funds to the ELCA.

No one has suggested that giving in the ELCA would diminish. Per capita giving in Lutheran Church in America and American Lutheran Church congregations is roughly identical. But separate and widely varying accounting procedures between the churches have made it difficult to prepare accurate projections of benevolence giving.

Moreover, since synods are assuming new and different roles in the new church, the division of funds between synods and the ELCA is a new ball game. Important ministries clearly are carried out by both. Instead of a single guideline governing all synods in the splitting of benevolence dollars, there likely will be variation from synod to synod as is now the case.

Regardless of the split the ELCA will honor present commitments — overseas missionaries, supporting congregations, colleges, seminaries, camps and programs of existing churches with demonstrated value. More new congregations are to be started in 1988 than the combined total by the churches in 1987. Staff in the new church is 101 less than in the merging churches. The budget has important new elements too, such as the Commission for Multicultural Ministries, a Commission for Women, a national youth organization and nine regional centers for mission, to mention a few. This newness underscores the need for flexibility; the budget that will be presented to the constituting convention is not an ultimate budget, but rather a way of bringing the new church into existence and to lay basic foundations for its emerging life and ministry.

**O**ne person who has not lost sleep in overseeing the budget-building process is the Rev. Leonard A. Sibley. A researcher and planner on the church staff since 1959, Sibley has exuded a quiet confidence that the budget problems would be solved acceptably. That's his nature; he overcame polio and a wheelchair to be in the ministry.

"A financial crisis?" Sibley asks. "Yes, if success for the new church means being able to meet every possible opportunity and need for witness and service. No, if members and congregations maintain and increase their faithful sharing of benevolence for the wider ministries of the church. No, if the leaders who are elected and appointed by the ELCA in 1987 make faithful and imaginative use of available resources in carrying out the mission that God has entrusted to the church."







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