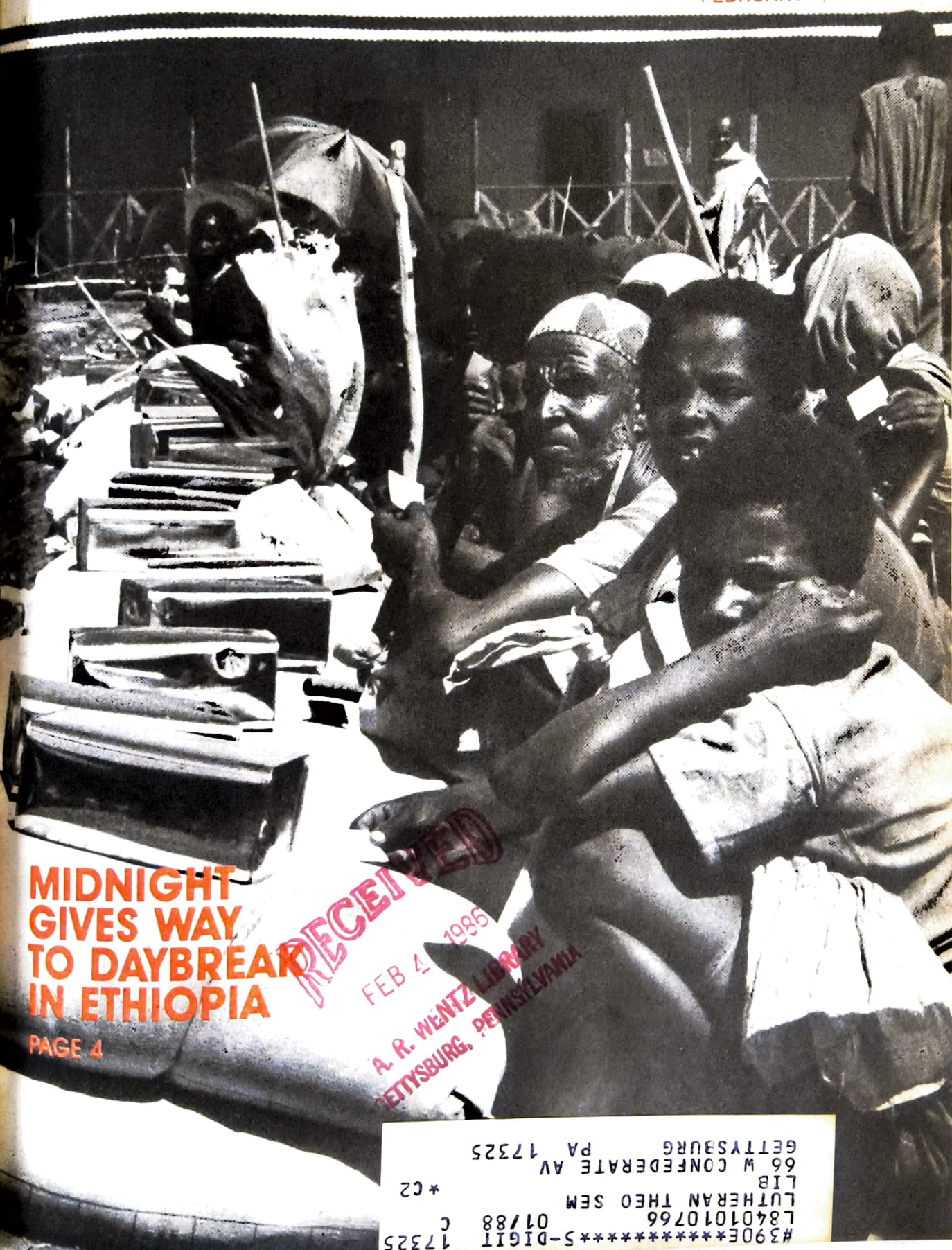


# The Lutheran Standard®

FEBRUARY 7, 1986



**MIDNIGHT  
GIVES WAY  
TO DAYBREAK  
IN ETHIOPIA**

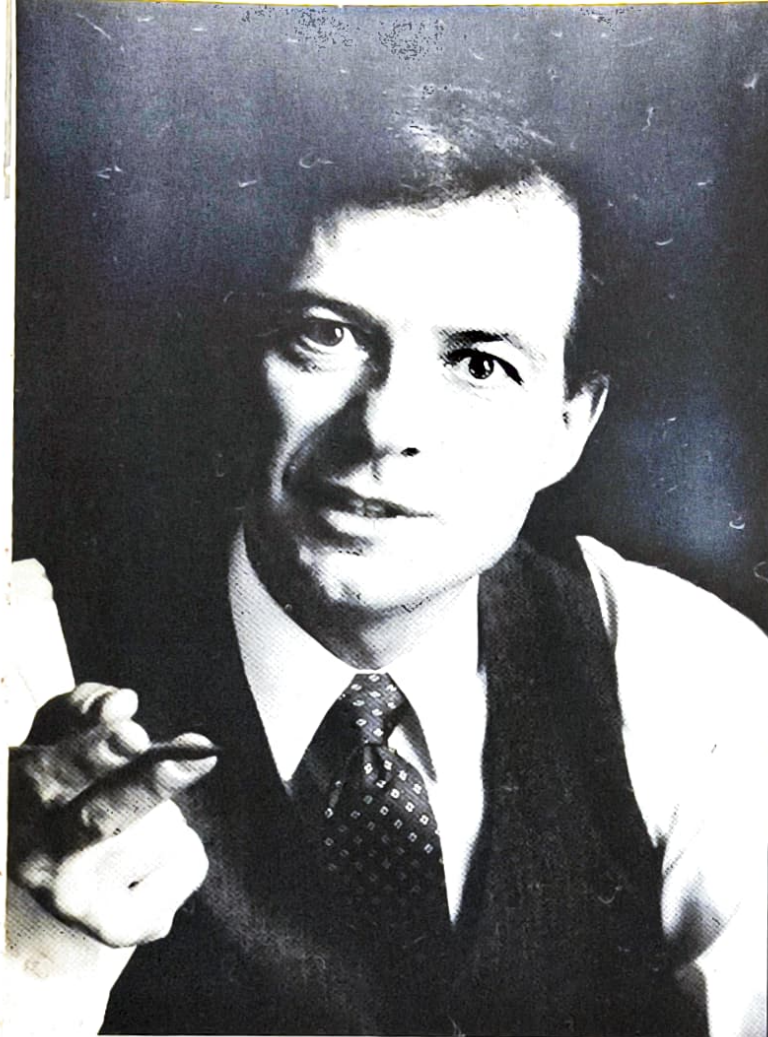
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***In Ethiopian  
famine relief:***

# MIDNIGHT GIVES WAY TO DAYBREAK

by Lowell Almen

**O***h, the children, the starving children. Listless and sick. Faces fly covered. Legs pencil thin. Haunting images on a TV screen. Sad pictures that tug at heartstrings and pull from our pocketbooks money to fight hunger.*

A miracle has occurred. Midnight has given way to daybreak in Ethiopia. Gone now are most of the gut-wrenching scenes of human devastation. Smiling, spirited children come running. Families walk many miles once a month to pick up their rations and return to



their homes. Rain has fallen in some parts of the country and crops have been harvested. People watch the sky and hope the latest cycle of drought is ending.

The war against famine is not over, however. On the first battle has been won. Even this initial victory depends on maintaining the lifeline of needed food, medicine, and clothing. The big task lies ahead—the challenge of helping the people shift from depending on relief to providing for themselves.

Ato Francis Stephanos, president of the Ethiopian Evangelical [Lutheran] Church Mekane Yesus, recalling standing in a relief camp a year ago. "I was surrounded by 2000 kids," he says. "They had no hope, no future, simply nothing."

Stephanos looks at what has happened in the past





year and says, "Had it not been for churches and voluntary organizations, millions of people would have died." Echoing what has become a battle cry for those working in African famine relief, Stephanos declares: "We saved them in '85. Are we going to let them die in '86?"

The television cameras have gone now. No longer are sensational images available for videotaping. Providing seed for planting and oxen for plowing, building small dams to preserve rainwater for modest irrigation, or terracing hillsides to prevent further erosion of the severely depleted topsoil may not offer dramatic scenes for the evening news. But these efforts are as important now as was the massive outpouring of food relief that followed BBC and NBC television famine reports in

▲ Most of these children are orphans of the Ethiopian famine. They have been living in the Mersa food distribution center for a year. Many other orphan children have been placed with relatives. But no homes have been found yet for these children who are being cared for by the Lutheran church in Ethiopia.

October 1984—the reports that finally provoked the long-overdue flood of aid to drought-stricken Africa.

The need for emergency relief has not ended, however, even though initial steps in agricultural development must begin. Last year, an estimated eight to nine million Ethiopians—out of the country's population of 42 million—suffered from the drought. While some parts of Ethiopia again went without a harvest,



Items of used clothing are distributed at the Mersa center. The woman is carrying the umbrella not for protection from rain but for shade from the hot noonday sun.



other areas did get enough of a crop to feed part of the population this year. Lack of rain wasn't the only problem. People often were too weak to plant last summer. Many did not have seed or plough oxen. Some lost what little crops they had to pests or hail.

### Seeds distributed

For those who were able to take advantage of the main rainy season, 565 metric tons of seeds were distributed to 60,000 families through the Mekane Yesus-Lutheran World Federation program in the Wollo and Shoa regions.

In areas where farmers did have a harvest, Niels Nikolaisen reports, the need for food relief has decreased, at least temporarily. Nikolaisen, a 42-year-old farmer from Denmark who has been directing Lutheran World Federation (LWF) efforts in Ethiopia since 1980, says distribution centers in areas that had a harvest have been closed to avoid depressing local prices for crops.

But this year, he indicates, some 5.8 million Ethiopians must continue to depend on food relief to keep them alive. They will need 1.2 million metric tons of grain and supplementary food supplies. Together, Lutherans and Roman Catholics are responsible for feeding about two million of these people (see box, "Partners in Action," on facing page).

"A relief operation is like being in a war," Nikolaisen declares. "This is a war against starvation."

But Ethiopia cannot be viewed by itself, he emphasizes. "It is important that food also go into Somalia and the Sudan for a balanced relief effort," he says, adding that "wherever you put the food, people will walk to it." For best long-term results, the food should be close enough to people in need so they can stay in their homes and care for their land.

Nancy Franczak, nutrition coordinator in Addis Ababa for the Mekane Yesus-LWF relief program, says, "We didn't meet all the food needs last year and many people died." She notes that malnourished children are susceptible to infections and diseases. While the visible signs of malnutrition may be gone—no more pencil-thin legs or distended stomachs—the children must have a long-term, stable, balanced diet to recover. They remain vulnerable for several years, she explains.

### Firsthand look

To see firsthand our Lutheran relief effort, Presiding Bishop David Preus of the American Lutheran Church, Bishop Will Herzfeld of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, and I boarded a Cessna 208 single-engine plane at 7 o'clock one morning at the Addis Ababa airport.

We flew north for about an hour, to a landing strip



at Combolcha in Ethiopia's Wollo region. Passing over the plateau of the country's central highland, we could see the massive canyons cut by centuries of soil erosion. The patterns of fields surrounding the circular, dome-shaped dwellings, known as tukuls, were visible 2500 feet below us. Most rural families live in compounds protected by fences made of thorny branches and sticks. Animals are penned in the fenced area.

### An ironic twist

Landing at Combolcha, we saw Soviet-made helicopters across the field. In one of the ironic twists of this "war" of hunger, Polish pilots fly Soviet helicopters and carry—into areas that cannot be reached by transport plane or truck—supplies of grain provided by the U.S. Agency for International Development, the primary source of food for African famine relief.

While most food is delivered to distribution centers by trucks that carry about 22 tons a trip, a Hercules transport plane, chartered by LWF, flies food from Asmara to Axum and Mekele for distribution in Eritrea and Tigray regions, because truck convoys that bear license plates from Ethiopia's central government are attacked by rebels in those regions. In other areas inaccessible to convoys and without landing strips, Hercules cargo planes of the British Royal Air Force swoop over the mountains and into the valleys. Flying precariously close to the ground—some 10 to 20 feet above the terrain—they drop food supplies.

From the Combolcha landing strip, we traveled by four-wheel-drive vehicles on the winding mountain road to Dessie, capital of the Wollo region and site of the Mekane Yesus—LWF administrative office and warehouses for 13 distribution centers.



Bishop Will Herzfeld of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, Niels Nikolaisen, director of the Mekane Yesus—Lutheran World Federation relief program in Ethiopia, and Presiding Bishop David Preus of the American Lutheran Church converse outside the program's office in Addis Ababa.

## PARTNERS IN ACTION

**T**ogether, Lutherans and Roman Catholics are responsible for feeding about one-third of the estimated 5.8 million people needing food aid this year in Ethiopia.

Our relief work is a coordinated effort known as Church Drought Action in Africa—Ethiopia. The four partners in this program are the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, the Lutheran World Federation Commission on World Service, Catholic Relief Services, and the Ethiopian Catholic Secretariat. We are working together to ensure the best possible use of relief and development dollars. Support is provided by members of American Lutheran Church congregations through the ALC Hunger Appeal, with funds channeled through Lutheran World Relief and LWF World Service.

As James R. Cheek, chargé d'affaires at the U.S. embassy in Addis Ababa, said, "Your churches can be very proud of what you're doing out here" in Ethiopia.

Going still farther north, we reached the Mersa distribution center, which provides rations for 13,000 families a month. About 500 come each day.

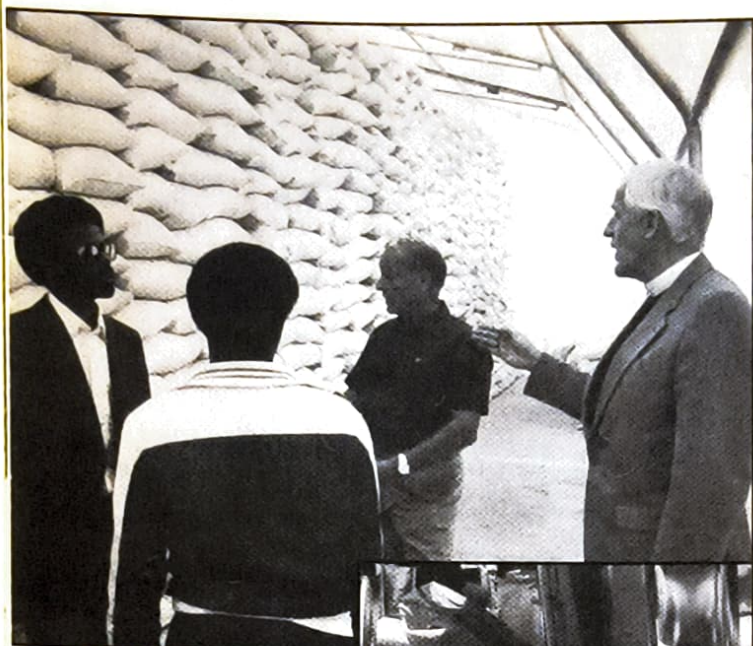
Weight is checked and records are kept to track progress by children in regaining normal weight and growth. Health personnel in some centers took photographs of children when they began receiving rations. These are shown to the children's parents to demonstrate progress in the fight against malnutrition and to underscore the importance of balanced nutrition.

According to nutrition coordinator Franczak, fewer than 10% of the children served by most food distribution centers in the Wollo region now are below 80% of their normal weight and height—"a tribute," she says, "to a full year of regular food supply." In the western part of the Shoa region, however, as many as half the children registered for monthly rations late last year still were below the 80% measure, and in the Shoa region's southern area, some centers reported 13% were even under 70% of normal height and weight. In a recently opened program in the Sidamo region's Wolaita county, half of the first 3,351 children registered were under 80% of normal height and weight and nearly one-fourth were below 70%.

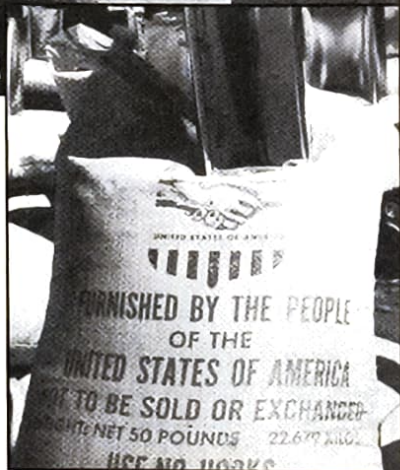
The step of weighing and checking height is a key to measuring the effectiveness of the relief effort. Lack of progress points to the need for nutritional supplements to pull the children back from the brink of starvation or severe malnutrition.

Another stop in a family's monthly visit to the





Bekele Terfassa (left), coordinator of the food distribution center of the Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus and Lutheran World Federation at Mersa, Ethiopia, shows Dr. David Preus of the American Lutheran Church (right) the grain storage area. John Eriksson (middle background) is regional director for the program that provides rations of U.S. grain.



center may be the clinic, a tiny shack modestly stocked with some basic medicines. A health worker there explains to us that the first priority of the clinic's program is malnourished children, then nursing mothers and older people, before attention is given to the health needs of the rest of the people.

Typhus, a fever transmitted by flea- and lice-bites, is a common problem. So are viral hepatitis, whooping cough, malaria, and pneumonia. Eye ailments plague many people. Gastric problems and infected wounds are treated, as well as venereal diseases.

Next stop for families is the clothing distribution station, where used clothing is provided as names of families are checked off a list.

***Part of the challenge of this relief effort is maintaining the supply line of food.***

Then the people go to get their monthly ration: two 50-pound sacks of ground wheat, a gallon of soybean oil, and a supply of dried milk. Finally, food is getting through to the people. But the process of distribution involves a massive job of bookkeeping as the name of each family is checked off a list to see how much food was provided and to whom it was given.

The people stand under the hot noonday sun and wait until they are given the signal to go. Then they load the sacks on their backs and start walking. One girl who appeared to be only about 15 carried 100 pounds on her back. For miles along the road, a steady caravan of people trudged toward home. A fortunate ones had donkeys to carry their supplies; most, however, did not.

Bags of ground wheat, bearing the words "Furnished by the People of the United States of America," are stored at the Mersa center in a pipe-framed, canvas-covered shelter that has a concrete floor. The 33-by-66-foot building contains 13,000 bags. Trucks, purchased with funds provided by Lutheran World Federation and Lutheran World Federation, travel from warehouses in Dessie to keep this and the other centers in the region stocked. To help ensure a steady supply and protect stocks of food, a new 75-foot by 223-foot warehouse is under construction in Dessie, according to John Eriksson, Mekane Yesus-LWF relief coordinator for northern Ethiopia.

Part of the challenge of this relief effort is maintaining the supply line, with trucks moving the food from the port inland to warehouses and then to the distribution centers. About \$140 is needed per ton for inland transportation.

### **Surrounded by children**

After walking several yards in the Mersa distribution center while making a quick visual survey of the place, I took my camera from my bag. Almost immediately, more than two dozen children gathered in front of me. Smiling and jostling for position, they wanted their pictures taken. Later, I learned that many of them are orphans who have lived in the center for a year now.

Whenever relatives can be located, children are placed in their care. But these children, and about 100 others, have no known surviving relatives. Some eventually may find homes with families in Addis Ababa or elsewhere in the country. The rest will be cared for through the Mekane Yesus-LWF program.

Departing Mersa, I glanced back. On one side of the road are graves of those who died at the center last year, victims of starvation and disease. But across the road, the center now bustles in a daily life-giving routine. Each morning, midnight gives way to daylight at this place of hope. ■



*No simple solutions  
exist for Ethiopia's  
battle against hunger.*

# IN SEARCH OF THE FUTURE

by Lowell Almen

Berhane Deressa, deputy commissioner for relief and rehabilitation for the Ethiopia government, sat at the end of a conference table in his office. He chain-smoked Winstons as we talked.

Clearly, the past 18 months have been difficult times for the government's relief and rehabilitation commission. Getting needed international aid and coordinating the work of 47 nongovernment agencies that have relief and development programs in the country have been challenging tasks.

While massive famine relief involves complicated

logistics, political ideology has made the task even harder. Following the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie on Sept. 12, 1974, military officers and enlisted men took control and formed a socialist government. Parliament was dissolved and the constitution suspended. After several years of struggle for leadership, Mengistu Haile Mariam became head of state and chairman of the provisional military advisory council in 1977. He also is secretary general of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia. The party drafts all government policy.

Portraits of Mengistu now are almost omnipresent



The future of these children depends on continuing relief and development aid to help Ethiopia become self-sustaining.



**Deressa: "Many lives have been saved, but we must now shift to recovery and rehabilitation."**

in the capital, Addis Ababa. Busts and paintings of Lenin, a sign of the government's Marxist orientation, also are prominently displayed. In what is now called Revolution Square in the capital is a full-color billboard painting of Marx, Engels, and Lenin. Less showy likenesses of the so-called Marx brothers can be seen in villages throughout the country.

Within two years of coming to power, the government signed a military assistance agreement with the Soviet Union. Billions of dollars worth of military hardware and contingents of Soviet military advisors and Cuban troops have poured into the country. The nation now has one of the largest armed forces on the African continent, developed to maintain political control and to fight secessionist movements in the north and an intermittent war with Somalia in the Ogaden, a long-disputed Montana-size plateau that stretches from the southeastern desert to the inland mountains that form a crescent through Ethiopia.

Arches across the four-lane street and flower-covered center boulevard on the way from the Addis Ababa airport proclaim, "Long live proletarian internationalism" and "Workers of the world unite." The hammer and sickle are prominently displayed.

### **Stunning contrasts**

This city, whose name means "New Flower" in the country's official Amharic language, is a place of stunning contrasts. Eucalyptus groves flourish in this sprawling, hilly city of 1.5 million people. Modern office buildings and the lovely Hilton Hotel stand near mud-walled shacks with corrugated-steel roofs. Mercedes cars buzz through busy streets as goats, sheep, donkeys, and cattle are herded along pedestrian-filled sidewalks.

Many buildings, including the six-story Mekane Yesus office center and the LWF Radio Voice of the Gospel, have been confiscated since the Marxist government came to power. These now house a vast bureaucracy for the revolution's various ministries. A particular point of tension for Western nations in relation to those in power in Ethiopia is the multimillion-dollar Communist party headquarters, built to celebrate the 10th anniversary of coming to power in the Marxist revolution. This stately structure was built in the midst of the country's great devastation from famine.

Because of strong opposition by the U.S. govern-

ment to the political direction of Ethiopia, food aid did not come quickly. When massive public pressure showed the deep concern of Americans for the victims of African famine, however, U.S. grain and money were provided. The United States became the major source of relief aid in the past year, with assistance also coming from Canada, Australia, and the European Economic Community. Last year, in fact, Ethiopia ranked fourth in the world in terms of the amount of U.S. aid received.

As Commissioner Deressa said, "People contribute when they see a child on a TV screen who is starving and dehydrated." But, he added, "they are not as willing to support development efforts."

### **Second step**

In a fervent tone, he said, "Charity cannot be an end in itself. It needs to help make people self-sufficient." This is the necessary second step, if all the efforts of the past year are to bear permanent fruit in Ethiopia.

"Many lives have been saved, but we must now shift to recovery and rehabilitation," he argued. This involves reclaiming the land by terracing and by tree planting to avoid erosion. Small dams to retain whatever rainfall comes and modest irrigation channels also are needed (see "Grain Basket for Africa" on pages 38-39).

I glance around his spacious, simply furnished office and notice the bookshelf across the room. Among the several volumes is a copy of Henry Kissinger's *The White House Years*.

Our discussion turns to the government's controversial resettlement program to move 1.5 million people from heavily populated northern regions into less populated areas in southern and western parts of the country.

"We believe this is the only viable way of helping people to help themselves," Deressa told us. He noted that most areas of the north are crowded, with the land having been overused, overcultivated, and overgrazed. "In the south and west are thousands of acres of virgin land," he said. These offer people wood for shelter and fuel, fertile soil, adequate water, and more stable rainfall. He added, "With proper use of resources and an equitable distribution of the population, Ethiopia may be able to move to self-sufficiency in the years ahead."

Deressa said the resettlement "began spontaneously as thousands of people migrated toward the south." He also claimed participation in the resettlement program is voluntary and involves whole families. Critics have charged families have been divided by the resettlement and individuals have been forced on crowded buses and trucks for the long trip south.

Responds Deressa: "Our conscience is clear on this one. It is better to travel on a crowded bus than





These mothers and children await their monthly rations of food at the Lutheran distribution center in Mersa, Ethiopia.

to walk 125 to 200 miles from the north." He points out that those who have been resettled will have more doctors per capita than even the hospitals in Addis Ababa.

### Charges of critics

According to critics, the main motive of the resettlement effort is political—to decrease the population in areas where the Tigrean Liberation Front, a secessionist group, has had support. Another aim, critics charge, is to "dilute" the Oromo people, an ethnic group that accounts for 40% to 50% of Ethiopia's population and one that is feared by the central government. Many government officials come from the Amhara ethnic group, which makes up about 25% of the population.

The Ethiopian government is touchy about international criticism of the resettlement program. Late last year, a French medical relief agency, *Medecins Sans Frontieres* (Doctors Without Borders), was expelled from Ethiopia because of what the government viewed as the agency's "covert efforts to sow seeds of discord" regarding resettlement and its "vicious media campaign of vilification against the humanitarian operations" of the government.

A recent World Bank report concluded: "A measure of population relocation is absolutely desirable"

for the long-term food needs of Ethiopia. But the U.S. Agency for International Development, which a decade ago advocated a resettlement plan for Ethiopia, now leads the opposition.

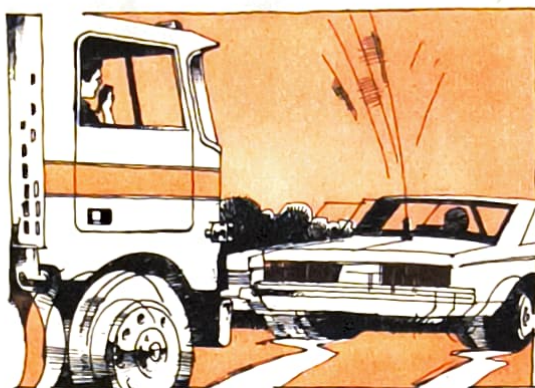
Last summer, the American Lutheran Church Council, prompted by the ALC's Division for World Mission and Inter-Church Cooperation, criticized the resettlement policy "as an inappropriate and immoral solution" to Ethiopia's famine. But the council also urged that both immediate and long-term help be given to those who have been resettled.

Doing this has become a point of conflict between the jointly operated Lutheran-Catholic relief program in Ethiopia and the U.S. government. Because of objections to the resettlement, the U.S. government is refusing to provide food, medicine, and money for people who have been resettled. But officials of the Lutheran-Catholic relief program argue that it is "immoral" to withhold food from people who need such help until they get established in their new communities.

As with almost everything else related to relief and development, the picture is complicated. No simple solutions exist for a nation and people in search of even a modest future. ■

*Lowell Almen, editor of The Lutheran Standard, visited Ethiopia in December.*





*"You in the brown Chevy . . . , pull over!"*

## GOOD SAMARITAN IN OVERALLS

by Joseph N. Nilsen

**T**he young trucker shook off a yawn as he passed through rural North Carolina on Interstate 95. Only two more hours of driving and then a hearty meal, some TV, a call home, and a warm bed. Most days on the road were like that—not quite as glamorous as some country-western singers suggest.

A brown sedan entered the highway just ahead and began weaving back and forth between lanes, causing the trucker to throw his rig into a lower gear. At first, it appeared to be another drunk driver, but as the truck eased closer, the young man noticed something unusual. The driver, a small gray-haired man, appeared to be shaking uncontrollably.

### **Car swerved violently**

The trucker was wide awake now. The car swerved violently, whipping its CB antenna like a fishing rod loaded with a catch. "That's it," he thought, "the CB!"

There was no time for formalities. "You in the brown Chevy, if you can hear me, pull over! Pull off the road!" To his amazement, the man obediently slowed to a stop on the shoulder. Pulling over as well, the trucker jumped from his cab. The elderly man staggered from his car and fell into the trucker's grasp.

Moments later, on a rock by the side of Interstate 95, a young man in overalls sat cradling a distinguished-looking gentleman. Tears flowed freely as the distraught man poured out months of fear and pain that had accompanied the illness of his only daughter. He was returning from

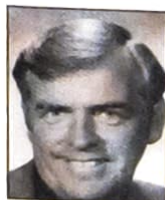
the hospital where she had revealed her decision to cease further treatment. Father and daughter could not cry together; each, for the sake of the other, had tried to maintain an air of stoic strength. While he was driving home, reality dawned and waves of tears and grief overwhelmed this brokenhearted man.

The encounter was over in less than an hour. Wrenching sobs gave way to serenity, to a warm embrace, and to a new resolve to share pain rather than deny it. The good Samaritan offered a simple prayer, and they resumed their journeys.

For 50 miles they traveled in tandem, the young trucker using the CB to voice words of encouragement to his new friend. Finally, the old man announced his exit was next. The trucker said farewell and sought assurance that his friend could make it the rest of the way.

### **"Breaker 19, don't worry"**

Suddenly a third voice could be heard across the airwaves. "Breaker 19, don't worry, good buddy. Go your way. I'll see him home!" Glancing into his side mirror, the good Samaritan in overalls saw a livestock truck move into the exit lane behind the brown sedan. ■



Joseph Nilsen is now staff chaplain at Eger Lutheran Homes, Staten Island, N.Y. Previously he was a chaplain at North Carolina Memorial Hospital in Chapel Hill. This is a true story told to him by the man "in the brown Chevy."





Wilfred Bockelman told his "tapestry" of stories at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis.

## ***"I've got a story"***

by Donn McLellan

**B**ill Bockelman says the collections of stories he calls "Tapestries" are "sort of the Lutheran version of a testimonial." Bockelman, who recently retired as director of research and special projects in the American Lutheran Church's Office of Communication and Mission Support, hit upon the Tapestry idea as he tried to think of ways members of ALC congregations could celebrate the ALC's 25th anniversary in 1985-86.

Each year, said Bockelman, his office had produced "structure and budget" stories describing the ALC's work. He explains: "We told the story of the ALC pretty much from the administrative perspective—who works where, how much money is spent, and other data that we put into our yearbook. But that's not really the story of the church. Then we wonder why people don't jump up and down with excitement."

"That's not the life story of the church. The life

story of the church is how people's lives have been touched."

So Bockelman came up with the "Tapestry" concept. Tapestry would be both a book and a series of events. In the 130-page book (Augsburg), which bears more than a vague resemblance to *Reader's Digest*, about 50 ALC members tell stories based on their experience in the ALC.

### **On stage of Guthrie Theater**

The Tapestry events, sponsored by ALC districts, conferences, and congregations, feature stories by professional storytellers and others. Last year Bockelman performed his own Tapestry 30 times—in 13 of the ALC's 19 districts. In November he took his "one-man show" to the stage of the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis for a one-night stand. Not bad for a man with



a lifelong stuttering problem who once was told by a nationally known speech pathologist that his impediment was one of the three worst the pathologist had encountered—and who informed Bockelman that his plan to enter pastoral ministry was insane.

The stage is bare except for a table and chair.

Bockelman walks onstage, carrying three books under his arm. He sits down and begins humming a tune. He turns pages through a thick, black book, and as he does, he begins to sing a stanza of a hymn, off-key: "My church, my church, my dear old church, my father's church, and my own. . . ."

## From her great storehouse of stories

by Carol Becker Smith

**M**aria Moe was a natural storyteller. At 94, she had a great storehouse of stories, and they rushed out of her, tumbling headlong over one another in her conversation. I visited her often in the year before she died, because her stories taught me so much about the American Lutheran Church (ALC) as she had experienced it.

She told of those long-ago days in Wisconsin, when her pastor husband was on the road, raising money for some of the first nursing homes of the former Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC), including one he administered. "He was out on the road, having a good time, meeting people, and getting all the credit. I got to stay behind as matron of the nursing home. That meant overseeing all the employees and supervising the kitchen, in addition to raising the last of my own five children." Her tone was one of mock disgust.

Maria told her stories with humor, pride, and flair. They were stories of the days when the old ELC first began to see its role in caring for older persons—and they were stories of a growing church.

### What next?

As Maria told her stories, I always wondered what would happen next. Would this tiny woman, with an often absent husband and a nursing home to run, survive this new venture of the church? She herself was a strong character in her stories, and her oft-repeated message was how important nursing-home ministry was to the church and how she had to struggle to make it work in Wisconsin. Her husband, Sigurd, struggled too. In some of her stories, Maria told how he was criticized for encouraging the establishment of church-related nursing homes—because some people felt families should care for their own elderly.

Professional storyteller Maren Hinderlie, an ALC member who is available for Tapestry presentations, says "good stories raise a question near the beginning: 'What's going to happen?'" To keep that question vivid, Hinderlie says, stories "must have strong central characters, good conflict, and repetition."

"The story doesn't tell us what to believe," says Hinderlie. "The value of these stories for us as Lutherans," she adds, "is that we are allowed to shape our thinking by listening to a story that is vivid and involving."

"Not all of our Tapestry stories will be about good

things and happy events in the church," cautions Hinderlie. Conflict, too, is part of good stories. "Stories can be challenging to us—even threatening—as well as fun."

In the Tapestry project, says the Rev. William R. White, author of *Speaking in Stories: Resources for Christian Storytellers* (Augsburg), "the ALC is repeating a habit of the early days of the Christian church, when people of the new faith often gathered to tell stories." Says White: "Our faith—and the story of our church—can move by story."

White says that "as a person who is part of the church, finding out what I'm about comes as I see myself in relation to others." He says good Tapestry stories "tell how God has touched the lives of people in my community and therefore tell me also how God has touched me."

### Not just fond memories

Storyteller Martha Batalden collected many of her stories during "years of work with Lutheran World Relief in four Asian countries." She says she knows that her Tapestry stories can't be just her own fond memories of the ALC's past, but also must involve the listener.

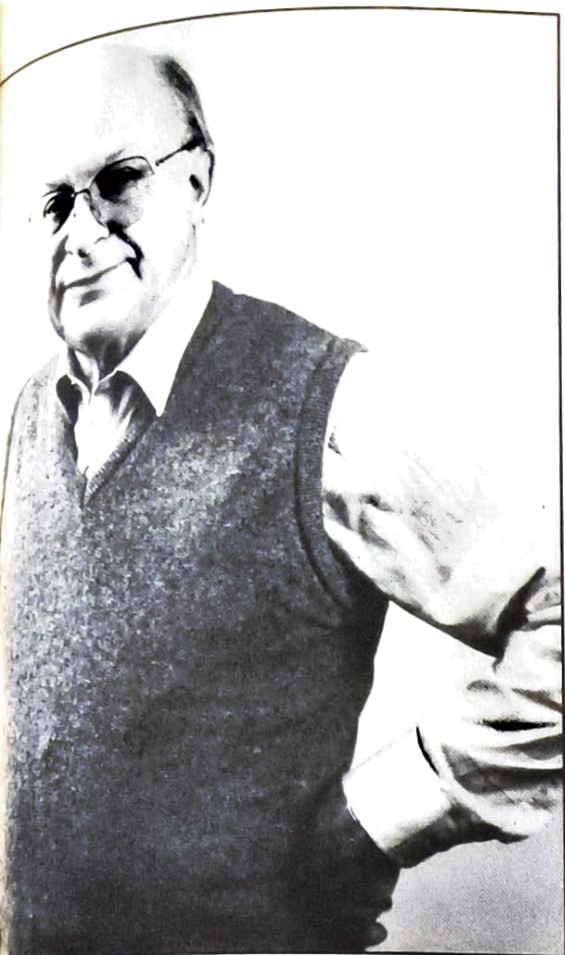
In India, Batalden explains, mirrors sometimes are made a part of tapestries. "In storytelling, I pick out the mirrors of our lives," she says. She adds: "But I'm not just telling my own story. If I don't whet people's appetites to tell their own stories, I've failed."

Darlene Malmo of Seattle says she became a Tapestry storyteller in spite of herself. "I was willing to talk about my own faith, but I wasn't so sure I wanted to brag about the Lutheran church," she says. Then she attended a Tapestry workshop where Bill Bockelman reminded her "what my church has done for me and how it has changed." Malmo "started being proud of my church." Now she is preparing stories—her own and those others have given her—to present at Tapestry events in her area. ■



Carol Smith is a writer living in Madison, Wis. She serves on the standing committee for the ALC's Office of Communication.





Wilfred Bockelman hopes that many congregations will help members reflect on and tell their own stories about faith and their life in the church.

He hums a few more lines, stands up, and says: "My family and my best friends tell me I should not sing in public."

The audience response ranges from a chuckle to loud laughter. For the next 45 to 70 minutes—Bockelman's performances are flexible in length—there's a lot of laughter, some deathly silence, and an occasional rattle.

#### His full name

He tells his audience that his full name is Wilfred Carl Albert Bockelman, although friends call him Bill. Those middle names have special significance, he explains: "I come from a religious family and community. Children were baptized as infants, and it was often the custom that they received the names of their sponsors or godparents. So, Carl Eggers, a cousin of my dad, was one of my sponsors. And Albert Huner, who lived on the farm behind our woods, was one of my sponsors. I was given their names as a reminder that others besides my parents were interested in my spiritual well-being."

When he was small, Bockelman says, the men sat on one side of the church, the women on the other. "I

kept my eye on that clock on the left wall," he says, "because the pastor usually preached 30, 35, or 40 minutes, and the clock would tell me when I could begin getting hopeful."

Bockelman tells his audience that the church of his childhood didn't have a Sunday school but "something better": three months of summer school for eight- through 13-year-olds. "Not the kind of vacation Bible school we know today, where you go at 10, have cookies at 11, and go home at 12," he explains. "No, five days a week, from nine o'clock in the morning till four o'clock in the afternoon, 12 weeks every summer, for five years."

From an educational standpoint, "everything was wrong," says Bockelman, "a hundred children, ages eight to 13, all in one room, one teacher—the pastor." But "it was a great experience. The kids loved it. For one thing, the alternative would have been hoeing weeds. And most of the kids went to a one-room country school, where the enrollment might be as few as 13. What kind of ball game can you have with 13 kids? But here at summer school there were 100 kids, enough for several ball teams."

#### Their own stories

Bockelman says his hope is that more and more congregations will encourage their members to tell their own stories about life in the church. He says the concept has "great flexibility." Tapestry events can be organized by single congregations, clusters of congregations, or ALC conferences, or they can be held in homes of members. Members can tell their own stories or hear a trained storyteller.

Bockelman suggests that Tapestry participants read the *Tapestry* book (which costs \$3.95, although discounts are available for quantities)—not because he edited it, but because it includes stories from across the ALC and helps others to think of their own stories. Also available as a Tapestry resource is "The Heroes Begin to Shift—A Spiritual Odyssey," a 15-minute videotape in which ALC Presiding Bishop David W. Preus recounts his own faith story and what the church has meant to him. The tape, available through the ALC's communication office, can be purchased or rented. A brochure that includes guidelines and suggestions for Tapestry events is available, too. It lists 29 storytellers who are available for Tapestry presentations.

Whether it's at the Guthrie Theater or in a church basement in a rural community, Bockelman wants people to walk away from Tapestry events with two impressions: "First, I want them to say, 'Gee, it's great to be a part of that church.' And then I want them to say, 'Hey, I've got a story I'd like to share with somebody.'" ■



# 'I JUST DO MY BEST'

**M**y son, Erich, came home from first grade clutching his usual handful of worksheets, drawings, and stories. As a proud father, I enjoyed looking at them. Like most fathers, I also delighted in what I saw as his flowering genius.

But I knew even then that, like all of us, he needs much encouragement along the way to keep up the good work. So I started early to praise his work and to express honest amazement at what he could do.

"Well, Dad, I just do my best," he replied. Only a child could have said that so innocently and disarmingly. He didn't feel the need for my motivational push. Maybe he even resented it.

Of course, there is a place for parents to encourage their children and express honest wonder at their growth. But Erich's response taught me something too.

Our high expectations as parents lay heavy burdens on children. Even as we continue to prod them long into their adult years, many of them never feel that their parents really approve of what they have done with their lives.

On top of all this are the added expectations

and appeals of spouse and family, occupation and community organizations, and even the church. All of these, perhaps unintentionally, may give us the feeling of not measuring up.

There will always be more that could have been done. Realizing this, we need to hear Erich's declaration, "I just do my best." It's biblical. Look at Romans 12: "... present your bodies as a living sacrifice. . . ."

Instead of worrying about winning the approval of others or even of God, we can focus on what our Lord has done for us. Then, grateful that we have been adopted as members of God's family, we can join hands with other believers and just do our best. "Having gifts that differ . . . , let us use them" (Rom. 12:6).

Paul Hoefer



*E. Paul Hoefer is senior pastor of the Lutheran Church of Arcata in Arcata, Calif.*

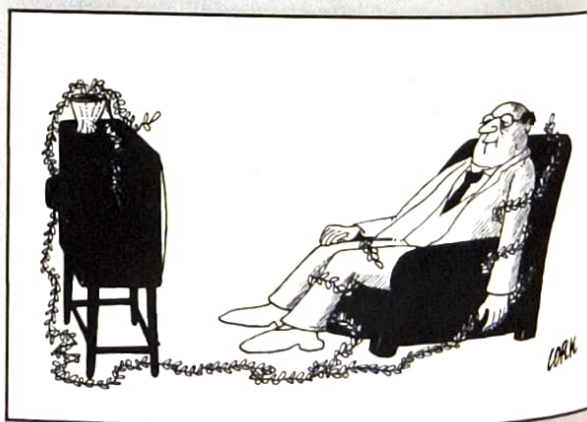
## IN DUE SEASON

### HEY, WHAT ABOUT YOU?

The pastor prefaced the Prayer of the Church by telling the congregation about the condition or need of people for whom we would be praying. He said there might be others who should be included and asked the congregation to mention any persons he had forgotten.

Elizabeth's hand shot up in the air and she called out, "Hey, what about me?" Elizabeth is a grown woman with a beautiful, childlike mind. Her presence in the congregation is a natural blessing. As she leaves the church, many people seated along the aisle get a hug because she is so authentically happy to see them. Her frequent hospitalizations often have placed her on the congregation's prayer list. This was her first Sunday at worship after spending a few days in bed.

Elizabeth taught me some lessons that Sunday. If I had been as honest as she was, I would have raised my hand



and requested prayer too. I wonder how many others in church that day were saying, under their breath, "Hey, how about me?" The pastor didn't hear those unspoken sighs. Neither did the other worshipers. Still, they did not go unheard. God hears our silent pleas, but worship would be enriched by more shared expressions, following the example of a candid child named Elizabeth.

Rod Kvamme  
Seeley Lake, Montana



# COMMITMENT TO MISSION...

SPECIAL  
SECTION

Future Home of  
JOCKO VALLEY LUTHERAN  
AN ALC MINISTRY



## The risk of starting something new

Larry Foreman

A cartoon pictures a potbellied dragon sitting under a tree, contentedly picking his teeth with the remains of a broken lance. Pieces of armor are strewn about, and it's obvious the dragon has made a meal of some hapless knight. The caption reads, "Sometimes the dragon wins."

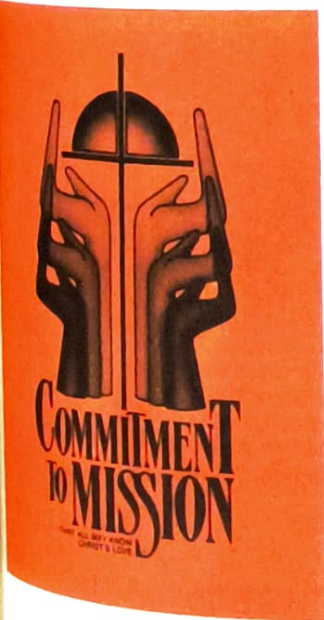
No matter how worthy the venture, sometimes the dragon wins and we experience less-than-complete success. It's a risk we take every time we start something.

People often assume the church starts a new congregation simply by calling a pastor to a flourishing suburb. The pastor knocks on doors and finds friendly people eager to join a mission congregation. A few months later, St. John's of the Burgeoning Suburb opens the doors of its newly constructed first unit. But things aren't that simple.

Commitment to Mission presents the members of the American Lutheran Church with the opportunity to give \$30 million for support of new ministries and for low-interest loans so new congregations can buy land and build first units. That's a bold venture—and a risky one.

It's risky because success in starting new congregations is not a "sure thing." In fact, a number of ALC ministries are struggling for survival. Some already have died.

Why? There are many reasons, but one is that the church is *intentionally* taking more risks with some of the ministries it initiates. This is particularly true of new starts in regions where the Lutheran church is relatively unknown and, in some cases, unwelcome.





# COMMITMENT TO MISSION



## Taking risks in Arlee, Mont.

The Rev. Lee Gerdes, pastor of Jocko Valley Lutheran Ministry in Arlee, Montana, knows about the risks of new ministries. He and his wife, Sally, also can talk about feeling unwelcome.

Six years ago, Gerdes left a lucrative career in private business in Atlanta to study for pastoral ministry. Four years later, he accepted the call to develop an outreach ministry in Arlee, a small, rural community located between the Bitterroot and Rocky mountains of western Montana. Estimates indicated that only about 100 of Arlee's 2000 residents attended church.

Gerdes and his family arrived in Ar-

lee during its Fourth of July celebration. They found several intoxicated townspeople wandering through the front yard of their new home. Gerdes says, "They were using the yard as a toilet facility."

During the next few weeks, one man threw rocks at the house until Gerdes chased him down and confronted him. Gerdes laughs about the incident now, but it wasn't funny then—he didn't have time to put on his pants, so he wore only his underwear as he pursued the startled offender.

### A tough neighborhood

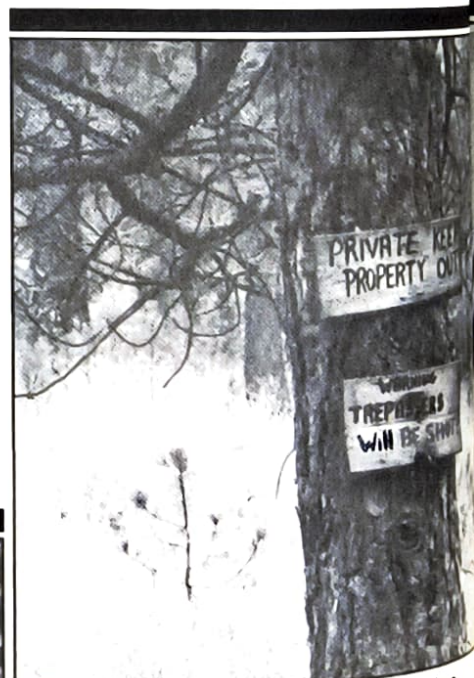
It was a tough neighborhood. To befriend some of the young people, Gerdes joined them in a basketball game. He purposely was shoved to the floor by a young man who apparently wanted to

show up this new arrival. Neighboring children repeatedly beat up the Gerdes five-year-old son, Josh, before the family finally accepted him.

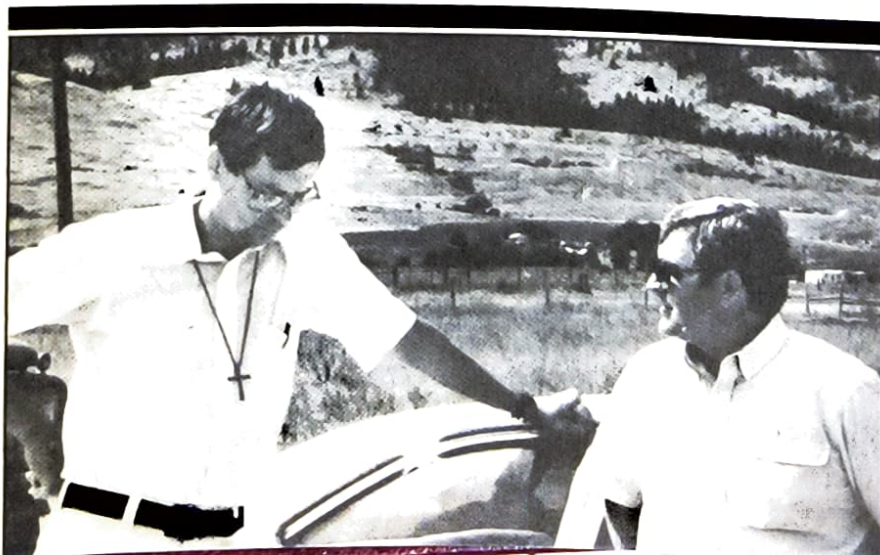
Gerdes recalls, "For a long time, one even would say hello. We would meet people on the street or in the office, smile, and greet them with 'Good morning,' and they still wouldn't say a word! They perceived us as a threat. We were outsiders, and not Western."

As Gerdes drove through the countryside searching for potential members, he often encountered signs that threatened bodily injury to anyone who passed. He found only two families who had any acquaintance with the Lutheran church. Attracting prospective members was agonizingly slow.

"At one point," Gerdes con-



**Above:** Signs like this often greet Pastor Lee Gerdes when he visits prospective members. **Left:** Gerdes (left) and the Rev. Harold Everson, service-mission director for the region, talk about the risks in new ministries.





# COMMITMENT TO MISSION

became so discouraged that I wanted  
pull out. I came up against wall after  
until I realized I had no place to  
go but to God. We go to God and  
changes us. God changed me."  
Gerdes became grateful for small  
things. He started teaching for small  
of religious instruction permitted at  
public school. His class of 12 more  
doubled, to 28. Twenty of the  
members never had attended church;  
and not been baptized.

## Ministry center needed

After Gerdes knocked on hundreds  
of doors, enough people began attending  
church that a modest ministry center  
was needed. Pastor and people fashioned  
one from a used, temporary classroom  
building hauled in from a nearby town.

The walls of suspicion and hostility  
started to crumble when a dozen vol-  
unteers from town—people not even  
connected with the ministry—suddenly  
showed up one afternoon because they  
heard that the emerging congregation  
needed help to put up a 54-foot-long  
basement partition.

That was last summer. Now, nearly  
two years after its shaky beginning, the  
ministry at Arlee is still a risk. Growth  
is slow, but ministry is happening. The  
people of Jocko Valley Lutheran are be-  
ginning to claim that ministry as their  
own.

Gerdes has tried to teach the people  
that "to be a mission congregation is not  
simply to start a new congregation, but  
to start a new direction of *service* to Jesus  
Christ." After hearing about an Idaho

congregation where many members were  
unemployed, Arlee's struggling, young  
ministry managed to send an offering of  
\$48. It was a widow's mite, but it was a  
beginning.

For Gerdes, that's not a bad return  
on the church's investment in the people  
of this remote valley. Gerdes says, "The  
people of this area now know that we are  
here and that we are serious. I'm just glad  
the church still has enough risk in it to  
take on this kind of challenge."

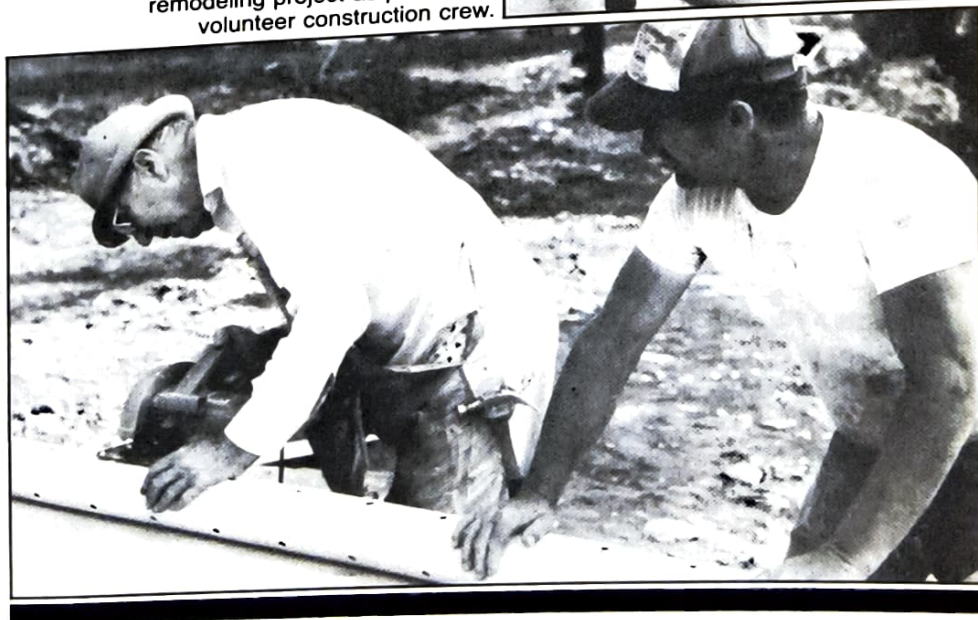
As long as it does, Gerdes says he  
will keep knocking on doors—threaten-  
ing signs and all.



**Above:** Sally Sanders, a contractor,  
operates a tractor and bucket during the  
remodeling on Jocko Valley's ministry  
center. **Right:** Parishioner Walter  
Burroughs (left) works with contractor  
Chuck Sanders on a drainage pipe for the  
ministry center.



Member Bill Wright works on the  
remodeling project as part of the  
volunteer construction crew.





# COMMITMENT TO MISSION

## The challenges are everywhere

Challenging, but risky, ministries like Arlee exist throughout the nation. In Florida, ministry is taking place with migrant workers. In the North, inner-city congregations are suffering from disruptive socioeconomic changes.

The Rev. William Hanson, the ALC's director for new congregational ministries, feels the sting when risky, new ministries have to be discontinued. The nagging question persists of whether the decision to start these ministries was right. Hanson struggles with this question and others: "Could such an investment have been spent better elsewhere? Could we have done something different?" Answers are hard to find.

Hanson's concern goes beyond

questions of money and effort. It extends to those who were involved in the disbanded new start, parishioners as well as the mission pastor and staff. "Are their prayers, efforts, and financial sacrifices wasted?" he wonders.

Hanson says, "Actually, 'wasted' is the wrong word. Nothing done for the sake of Christ is wasted. Even in a ministry with a short life, the faith is shared, new ideas are tried, lives are enriched, and we can learn from the effort."

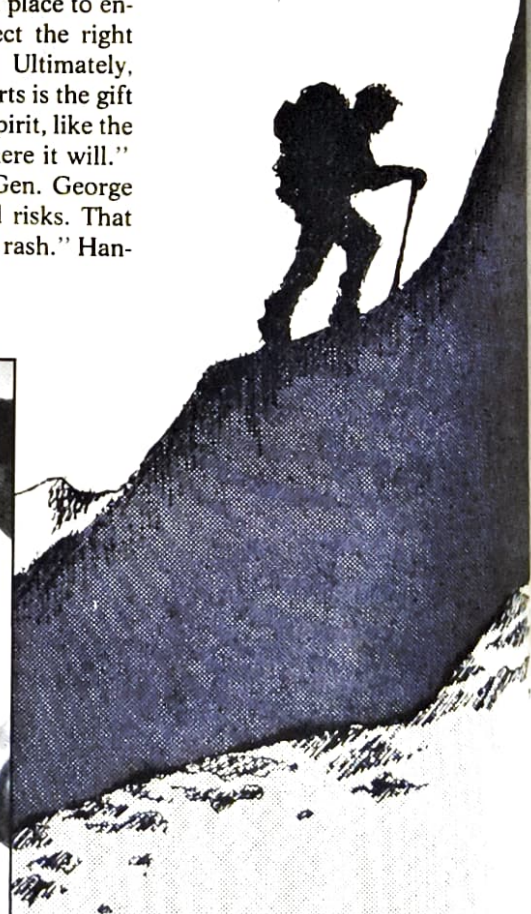
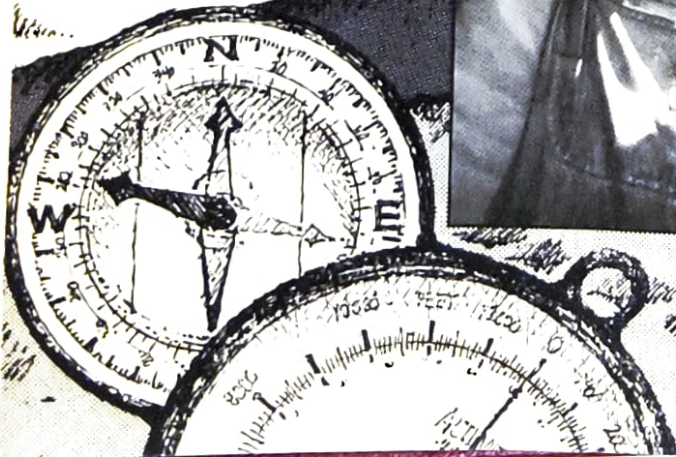
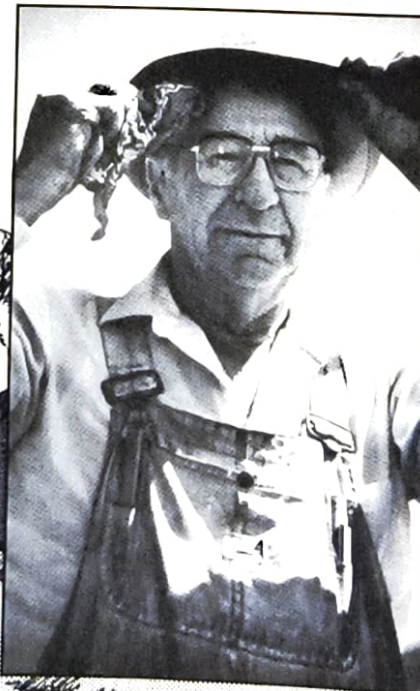
Hanson stresses, "Careful planning to choose the right time and place to enter a new field and to select the right leadership are all essential. Ultimately, however, the fruit of all efforts is the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit, like the wind, blows and blesses where it will."

Hanson cites the late Gen. George S. Patton: "Take calculated risks. That is quite different from being rash." Han-

son adds, "In the church, it is important to distinguish faith from foolhardiness. The ALC's new-ministry program tries to be faithful by taking calculated risks."

The church needs more risk-taking. Commitment to Mission challenges each of us to become exactly that. ■

Member Walter Burroughs, a volunteer construction worker, pauses to mop his brow.





# We pray in diverse ways

by Martin E. Marty

You won't catch me up at five A.M., spending an hour on my knees in prayer. Maybe everyone should pray that way, but this is the time for honesty: I don't. The Bible describes and prescribes all sorts of ways to converse with God. Where two or three are gathered, there is Christ in our midst. In the Psalms, we praise God in the "midst of the congregation." Christ is "present" in the Eucharist, and together we respond in thanks. In the congregation, we pray intercessory prayers—my favorite form, one that strikes me as more generous than "personal begging" prayers.

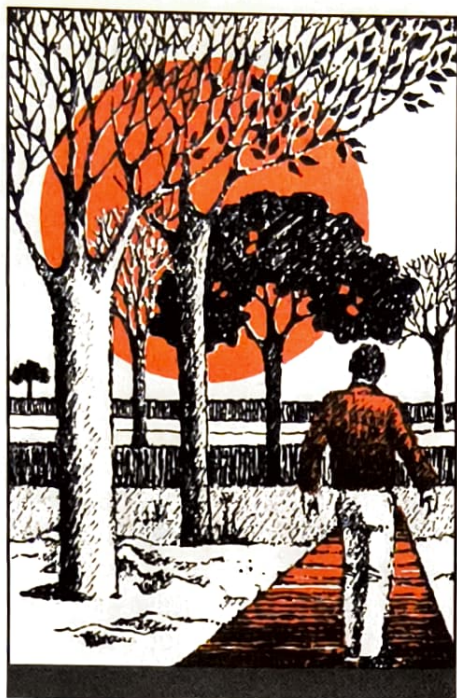
This congregational prayer requires discipline. It's good to get there early and to clear the mind (though I too seldom do). I let the setting of a church, which weeping and smiling people have consecrated with their prayers, place me where God speaks. In the "passing of the peace," I am reminded of a worldwide congregation of believers who respond to God's speaking through prayer.

I also pray constantly. How does that square with the admission that I'm not much of a solitary pray-er? Prayer is like a *cantus firmus* in music, a "preexisting melody" which is held unchanged while other parts flit above or below it. If God and I are "on speaking terms," we do not always need to use words to find formulae for passing messages.

## Closeness to God

To pray constantly does not mean that I never set aside moments or hours for prayer, or that I never utter an "arrow-prayer," a soulful or loving stab toward the heart of God. It does mean that I make "back of the mind" closeness to God part of my life.

I pray confidently. That may sound strange, since I wrote a book about the winter of the heart, the coldness when God seems remote and silent. This cry of absence strikes me as faithful to the Psalms, to Job, to Habakkuk, to Jesus in



## HOW I pray

the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross. It has more depth than the chummy intimacy that makes God into "the man upstairs" or "a living doll," someone I can use and always get the answer I need.

Praying "confidently" is to see prayer not as something I achieve as an athlete in the Olympics of piety. Instead, it has to do entirely with the character of God. Faith, for me, is almost entirely trust in the God who speaks most clearly in Jesus Christ, most expansively in the Bible, most mysteriously in the whirlwind and the small voice, and most puzzlingly in silence. The central aspect of God's character is trustworthiness. When God seems absent or silent, whether in congregational or constant prayer, I rely on the God who makes promises and, as promise-maker, keeps seeking to win my confidence.

Let me also say that I pray *classically*. While constant prayer is "out of the heart" and in my own language of reverie or drift, when I get serious about organizing prayer, I prefer more formal language. That may mean a table prayer in "King James Version" English, which I may choose over slangy, modern mumbles of my own. I admire and on occasion employ personal expression, born of the moment and circumstance. Yet I am not convinced that all homemade prayer language implies more sincerity than prayer with borrowed language.

## Unlimited possibilities

I prefer good and clear speech to the "I means" and "you knows" of radio call-in shows. The language of the church's little collects and hymns is timeless and compressed, packed with meaning and beauty. In a lifetime I cannot exhaust the possibilities of some of those four-liners. To utter or intone them reminds me of people long dead or far away, people for whom I weep or in whom I rejoice, and people who also prayed them. With these classic and time-honored phrases, I think of people in congregations miles or ages away who are praying or did pray them. People in generations yet to be born will pray them. My imagination expands, as it does not with do-it-yourself prayer language.

Finally, I pray *catholically*. Making the sign of the cross on my body each day signals my baptism into the body of Christ. Catholic also means "going through the whole" of everything, touching all of life. It means "universal," around-the-world. And it allows for diversity—which means that the way I pray is not, to me, the only way. I resent it when the five A.M. kneelers or those who wave arms in the air tell me that if I do not do it their way, I cannot well speak or be spoken to by God.

Graced in different ways, we can commend our ways to others and also learn from them. In the process, we will realize that just as humans find almost infinite ways to communicate, God also has found infinite ways, without the "almost" that limits our own. ■



Martin E. Marty is the Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Service Professor of the history of modern Christianity at the University of Chicago, senior editor of *The Christian Century*, and author of *A Cry of Absence* and numerous other books.



# I THINK



## NEW CHURCH CONCERNS:

*"They may be playing a very good brand of baseball, but they are playing in a different ballpark. . . ."*

by Sanford Mitchell

**"C**onsiderable disinterest," it is said, exists in the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), the American Lutheran Church (ALC), and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC) concerning the new church planned for 1988. I offer three reasons for that disinterest.

First, it is not "we" who are forming the new church; it is "they." I was a delegate at the 1982 LCA convention in Louisville, at which we elected our representatives to the Commission for a New Lutheran Church (CNLC). We were not allowed to vote for whom we wanted, but were presented with selected individuals in carefully "boxed" slots. So we are represented by persons who may be very qualified, but most of whom are relatively unknown. They are not our churches' natural leaders.

### Grass-roots folks

These CNLC members then proceeded to isolate themselves from us—perhaps for their self-preservation. As the flap about quotas showed us, they may be playing a very good brand of baseball, but they are playing in a different ballpark than most of the grass-roots folks.

At a recent gathering of about 200 professional leaders of the LCA's Ohio Synod, a CNLC representative was asked, "If the 200 of us sent a unanimous resolution concerning something that directly affected Ohio, would it make a difference?" The representative's response was that there is some confusion about whose desk most of "that type" of thing ends up on. He said he felt that we would have very little effect upon the CNLC.

Second, and far more worrisome, the CNLC seems to be headed in a direction that does not offer much help for the concerns that some of us care about deeply. I am sure that my work as pastor-evangelist for the LCA slants the selection of persons who talk with me. Perhaps that is why the clergy and lay people I talk with care deeply about

strengthening the outreach of the church to those who do not know Jesus as Lord. We are striving to strengthen local congregations, to add vitality to witness and the caring love we extend to those around us. These goals seem far down the list of concerns voiced by the CNLC.

Why should we get excited about an institution formed by a process that talks about things we do not particularly care about and does not seem to talk about the issues in which we are vitally interested?

Church mergers and ecumenism are all right, but it is hard for me to get excited about them. The ALC, the Presbyterians, and the pope already know Jesus as their Lord! Shouldn't somebody at the national level be worrying about the people who do not yet know Jesus? Shouldn't the CNLC deal with strengthening congregations, with evangelism? Or are they dealing with that in private and only going public with things like new name, new headquarters, quotas, and who will be placed on the clergy roll?

### Far from thanking us for leadership

Third (and this one is personal), in 1984 our congregation gave \$195,236 in benevolence. I was thanked by a number of churchwide folk for my leadership in keeping interest in benevolence high in our parish. Far from thanking us for leadership, the CNLC seems to be saying, "Pastor Mitchell, in the new church we want the leadership to be non-White, nonmale, nonmiddle-aged, and nonclergy to a far greater extent. In other words, Pastor Mitchell, we want in leadership positions just about anybody but people like you. Oh, by the way, can you help us raise \$6 million to get this thing started?"

The people they hope to elevate to leadership positions to take the place of people like me love Jesus just as much as I do and are fully as capable as I am, I feel sure. It is just surprising that they want me to get excited about shooting myself in the foot.

Finally, do not confuse protest with dropout. Those of us who think the way I do love the Lutheran church deeply! We have been nurtured by it and will seek with all our effort to strengthen its outreach, add vitality to its ministries, and make stronger its congregations. To those of you in the hierarchy who share our love of congregational strengthening and outreach to the unchurched, blessings on you. We can use all the help we can get! ■

*Sanford Mitchell is a pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Ashland, Ohio. This guest editorial is reprinted from the December 1985 issue of The Lutheran, magazine of the LCA.*



# LETTERS

## Concerns about new church

Albert P. Stauderman  
Singer Island, Fla.

The members of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church [Nov. 1, pages 27-58] have had a very difficult task, particularly since most of them were thrown into it without experience or training. They deserve credit for developing an orderly plan for the merged body.

If the CNLC has fallen short, it is because they have tried *too* hard. By seeking to control every detail, they have created a mass legalism that seems more Calvinistic than Lutheran. Is it really necessary, for instance, to mandate an inclusiveness that requires every board, committee, and other group—from the church council to the church choir—to have 10% of its members "persons of color or primary language other than English?" Not only does this set a standard that does not relate to the competence of the persons chosen, but it is a denial of evangelical freedom.

We seem to be drowning in a sea of legalism. Before the three church bodies rubber-stamp the CNLC plan, let us at least attempt to rescue the principles of Christian liberty. If we love and trust one another, we don't need so much law.

(Albert Stauderman is a former editor of *The Lutheran*, official magazine of the Lutheran Church in America.)

Don Gaarder  
Pierre, S.D.

Our church has taken risks before. And remember that our Lord took the greatest risk when he put us on earth with the freedom to choose. We have competent people on our commission, working hard, praying diligently. Trust them; have faith in them; permit them to be our spokespeople. The merger will take place, and it will work if we permit it to.

L. David Brown  
Des Moines, Iowa

The CNLC took its eyes off the ball [Dec. 13, p. 21]. Our absolute prime priority is to establish a strong Division for Outreach, USA. That is the one office that must have adequate personnel from the very start. Parish services can be on hold. In world mission, we have a great deal to learn from dynamic Third-World churches. The education division needs time to sort out how much national involvement the colleges need and want. Social ministry organizations should have gone into the regions. Many of the commissions and offices are relatively new and should have much more time to assess staff needs.

It is urgent that we not cripple our chances for extending our mission to the Southland and be ready to do that from the very beginning. That is the essential reason many of us wanted a new Lutheran church. We must direct our eyes toward the ball

once again and not strike out in the last innings of preparation.

(L. David Brown is president of the ALC's Iowa District.)

## Breakdown of trust

Albert L. Hock  
Strawberry Point, Iowa

I write to counter Gregory Jackson's statement [Nov. 15, p. 20] that there is a breakdown of trust between the congregation and broader church structures, which he calls "the greatest and least recognized danger to the future of American Lutheranism." The fact that *The Lutheran Standard* printed his undocumented charges stands as an answer to Jackson's claim.

I do not see in the Lutheran churches a "shrunk view of the Scriptures," such as Jackson believes has caused "our diminished trust in God." I received seminary training back in the days when most pastors and parish members had a childish view of the Scriptures, as if the Bible had fallen from heaven. Today, our Lutheran churches are mature enough to look honestly at the Scriptures. Now we wonder not at a magic Book but at the great God who speaks his love to us through human writings. Now the Bible is not a collection of rules and wise sayings but the story of God's love wrestling with and working through sinners. It is not a "shrunk view" of the Scriptures that we have, but we see a great Bible that we are able to trust because it is both a divine and a human product. It fits the world where we live and hurt and love. For this veteran pastor, that view of the Scriptures strengthens his trust in God much more effectively than the magical view once did.

Harry N. Huxhold  
Indianapolis, Ind.

I should like to add a word of caution.

The kind of sweeping charges Jackson lists are the very accusations people like to pounce on as the reasons for failures in the church. Those of us who labor in diminishing and losing situations do not need such unfounded charges to complicate our ministries. I know of many younger colleagues who serve faithfully in what would appear to be promising fields who are not experiencing great successes either. Mainline churches that strive to be faithful to the gospel that asserts that God was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world unto himself are not gaining nationally. There are a host of reasons for that, which take more space than allowed here. However, they are not the reasons Jackson obviously thinks they are.

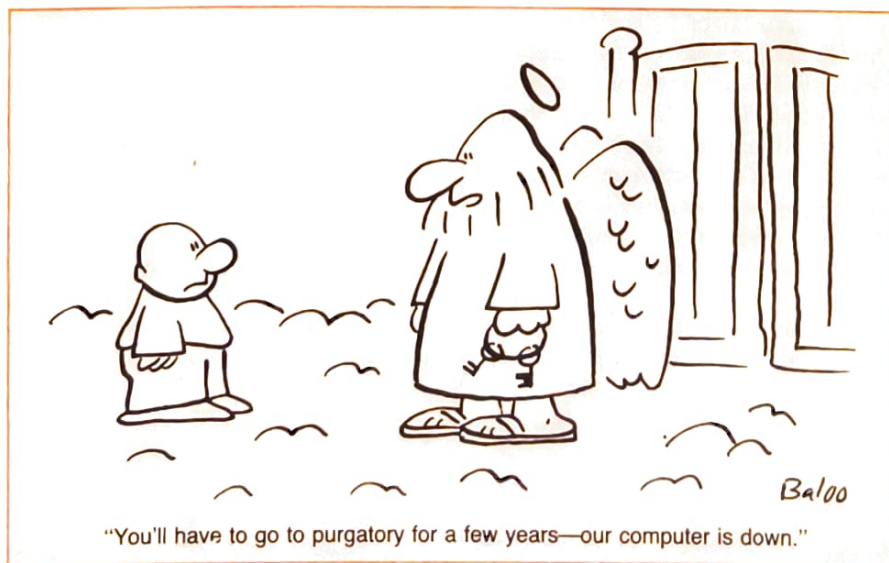
## Military chaplains

Barbara K. Benner  
Missoula, Mont.

I enjoyed reading "Needed: A Few Good Men and Women" [Oct. 18, p. 12]. It's about time someone wrote on the need for military chaplains and on the need for the military. My teenage son, who has military aspirations, finds it hard to participate in worship because of the distinct antimilitary atmosphere the ALC presents. He considers himself a Christian and a Lutheran but finds himself an outcast because of his military interest.

John F. Backe  
New York, N.Y.

I finally understand why attempts to minister to drug addicts have so little success. Would the ALC be interested in financing me for \$1000 a month for cocaine so I could minister from the inside? I'm sure if I did that, I'd be able to have as much influence on drug abusers as chaplains have on the military.



"You'll have to go to purgatory for a few years—our computer is down."



# NEWSFRONT

## U.S. churches unite to battle apartheid

- **Commitment follows Harare Declaration**
- **Partial boycotts, June 16th protests planned**

A diverse group of more than 125 church leaders—representing 24 Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Christian churches and 12 interchurch agencies—proclaimed 1986 “the year of action by U.S. churches against apartheid,” and agreed in Washington, D.C., to a common strategy for opposing the system of racial discrimination in South Africa.

The leaders, including Dr. David W. Preus, presiding bishop of the American Lutheran Church, set forth a plan that includes a stepped-up campaign for U.S. economic sanctions against South Africa and pressure on banks and American companies to stop doing business with the nation.

“We have heard the cries of anguish from our brothers and sisters in South Africa and they have asked us to take this action,” the church leaders said in a declaration at the end of the Jan. 13 meeting. They described economic sanctions against South Africa as the best hope “for a transition from apartheid which will be relatively free from violence.”

### Emergency committee

To coordinate its activities, the church leaders voted to create a Churches Emergency Committee on South Africa, led by the national heads of denominations. The committee could lead to one of the most broad-based religious coalitions since the civil rights movement of the 1960s and the anti-Vietnam War movement of the 1970s.

The church leaders met to follow up a December gathering in Harare, Zimbabwe, where the World Council of Churches brought together about 50 world church leaders to declare solidarity with the South African church opponents of apartheid (see *L.S.*, Jan. 10, pp. 18-19, 29).

The Harare Declaration called for the international community to apply “immediate and comprehensive sanctions” against South Africa, and expressed support for banned movements in South Africa fighting apartheid.

The group agreed to:

- press banks not to proceed with renewal of \$14 billion in short-term loans to South Africa;
- organize a day of prayer, fasting, and demonstrations for June 16, the 10th anniversary of the Black uprising in Soweto;
- participate in a postcard campaign aimed at presidents of major American corporations that do business in South Africa;
- call for “selective buying campaigns,” or partial boycotts, “against companies which refuse to disassociate themselves from apartheid”; and

- assign staff members of denominational agencies to work on the issue.

Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa praised the move to follow the Harare Declaration. Said Tutu: “The Harare Declaration is as important to our people as the Barmen Declaration was to the Confessing Churches in Germany.” The reference was to the declaration by German Christians in Nazi Germany who broke away from the official church to oppose the Hitler regime.

Underscoring the urgency of the efforts, church leaders steered away from what kind of government should ultimately replace the current regime. But Dr. Preus asserted that South African Blacks “are not looking for a Black nation to exclude Whites, but looking for Black racism to replace White racism.”

## Svendsbye resigns as seminary president

Dr. Lloyd Svendsbye has resigned as president and professor of church history at Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., effective June 30, 1986.

In a letter to the seminary's board of directors, Dr. Svendsbye, 55, said, “I do not wish to make the same mistake some administrators do by remaining in the same office too long.” Noting that he was completing his twelfth year in the positions, he referred to “some observers of the educational scene [who] have noted that if a president has any influence in shaping the life of an institution, that shaping usually occurs during the first 10 years of one's administration.”



**Lloyd Svendsbye**

Dr. Svendsbye, who remains ALC vice president and member of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church, said in the letter that he “seriously considered resigning at the time of the seminary merger [July 1, 1982], but was persuaded that continuity then was sufficiently important to stay.” He also said he reviewed the question carefully at the end of his tenth year.

Svendsbye's letter expressed thanks for the honor, trust, and support he received from the American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church in America—the church bodies that own the seminary.

He and his wife, Anne, currently have no future plans, according to the Jan. 17 letter.



## New bishop of Southern Wisconsin District



### A family affair

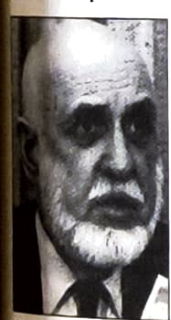
The Rev. Peter Rogness (kneeling) receives the bishop's cross from his predecessor, Dr. A. C. Schumacher, at his installation service, Jan. 5 in Madison, Wis. Officiating at the installation was Kathryn W. Baerwald, general secretary of the American Lutheran Church. The new bishop's father, the Rev. Alvin N. Rogness (photo at left), president emeritus of Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.,

preached and served as an assisting minister, and a brother, the Rev. Andrew D. Rogness, pastor of Advent Lutheran Church, Madison, was a reader. Bishop Rogness, who was elected leader of the ALC's Southern Wisconsin District Oct. 28, previously served Hephatha Lutheran Church, Milwaukee. Rogness, 40, is the youngest ALC bishop. He was joined by his wife, Gerry, in greeting the assembled congregation.

## Churches, government react to lawsuit

A lawsuit filed against the federal government by congregations whose worship and other activities were infiltrated by federal agents (see *L.S.*, Jan. 24, p. 21) has been explained further by church officials, while government officials have defended government actions that led to the suit.

The suit, filed Jan. 13 in Phoenix, Ariz., is an effort to define the proper relationship between church and government, according to the Rev. James E. Andrews, Atlanta, stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The suit alleges, in part, that government agents tape-recorded church gatherings with



James Andrews

concealed "body bugs," noted license plate numbers of persons attending worship, and in one case reviewed and copied a congregation's private books and records.

The suit was filed by the American Lutheran Church, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and four Arizona

congregations—three Presbyterian and one ALC, Alzona Lutheran Church, Phoenix.

Andrews said in a letter to the denomination's clergy that while the case filed in the U.S. District Court "grows out of the problem of refugees, [it] is not a part of the trial of sanctuary workers. It could have developed in connection with a tax case, a matter of racial discrimination, or the issue of confidentiality in pastoral counseling."

### Only alternative

Charles P. Lutz, director of the ALC's Office of Church in Society, said the churches had exhausted possible remedies in the executive and legislative branches of the U.S. government before turning to the judicial branch.

Last July, Lutz said, Dr. Preus met with Alan Nelson, commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization Services, who is an ALC member. According to Lutz, Nelson "said in response to a direct question . . . that the government did not like to use undercover agents in churches but it is sometimes necessary. He said he would not promise us that the INS would never again repeat the practice."

Luke Austin, press officer for the INS in Washington, D.C., told the *St. Paul Pioneer Press and Dispatch* that the content of the tape-recorded meetings was not "total and pure [Bible study] content."

Austin said although he had not seen the full contents of the suit, the complaint was being used to divert attention away from the smuggling of illegal aliens.

"We have admitted we took the tape recordings on those premises," he told the Minnesota newspaper. "But they were not used to gain indictments. We have chosen not to use the tape recordings as evidence. There is sufficient evidence to indicate there was a conspiracy to break the federal law."

Peter Baird, lead lawyer in the churches' suit for the Lewis and Roca law firm in Phoenix—the firm that handled the *Miranda* case in the 1960s—said the firm is not charging the churches except for out-of-pocket expenses.

In the meantime, the churches in Arizona have established an office for day-to-day coordination related to the suit. It is known as COUGAR (Churches Opposed to Undercover Government Activities in Religion).



# Uniting churches resolve dispute on funding postretirement benefits

Three Lutheran church bodies planning to unite in 1988 have reached agreement in a dispute over how to fund future medical benefits for retired church workers and benefits paid under the churches' minimum pension plans.

Governing bodies of the American Lutheran Church (ALC), Lutheran Church in America (LCA), and Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC) approved the agreement in closed sessions late last year, and the plan was released in early January.

The agreement stipulates that 6% of benevolence funds received by the new church from former LCA congregations will be reserved in a special fund to cover postretirement medical benefits of LCA pensioners and benefits paid under the LCA's minimum pension plan.

## Differences explained

A sometimes-heated dispute arose during the past year because of a difference in the way the ALC and the LCA cover the costs of post-age-65 medical benefits and minimum pension plans. The ALC has pre-funded those benefits, while the LCA pays the costs from current receipts from congregations and synods. The LCA's basic pension plan is fully funded.

Because of the differing approaches, the ALC has on hand all the money it expects will be needed to pay medical benefits and minimum pension benefits for those now retired and those who will retire before the new church is formed in 1988.

The LCA's method of payment, it was stated, means the church has a liability for these benefits that could extend decades into the future and could total \$41 million or more. It would not be financially feasible for the LCA to pre-fund this amount prior to the formation of the new church, LCA officials said.

The new agreement acknowledges that both church bodies have valid plans for funding future medical and minimum pension benefits for retirees. It maintains that congregations that now belong to the LCA should be "the

source of funding for the LCA-related retirement benefits that had been earned and promised prior to the new church." ALC and AELC congregations would be responsible for similar obligations, should they arise in those bodies, according to the agreement.

Former LCA congregations will receive "full benevolence credit" for their contributions, according to the agreement, though 6% of the funds will go toward postretirement benefits.

## ALC benefits protected

The agreement says the solution gives "assurance to members of the ALC that funds they set aside to provide their member benefits would be fully protected for that purpose," a reference to the concern that money collected for ALC pensioners might be used to pay the unfunded liability of the

LCA's postretirement benefit programs.

ALC congregations also should be assured that "they are not being asked through the benevolence budget or any other means to pay for a benefit which they have already funded."

"The ALC did not wish to contribute benevolence funds in the future for the LCA obligation," the agreement says. The statement also notes that the LCA, "while not wanting to burden the ALC, did not wish to change its practice of providing the funds on an annual basis from the benevolence budget."

The agreement now has the approval of the ALC Church Council Executive Committee, the LCA Executive Council, and the AELC Board of Directors. It is to be included in the merger documents now being drafted by the three church bodies.

## Making soap for LWR



### Nearing goal of 1000 pounds

Volunteers of First Lutheran Church, Minot, N.D., a congregation of the American Lutheran Church, stir batches of soap while Esther Whitcomb, the project's originator, pours a completed bowlful into a box lined with newspaper and wax paper. The soap gels, is cut, and then allowed to age before being shipped to Lutheran World Relief (LWR). The ALC women pictured are (from left): Beverly Nordstrom, Geneva Nelson, Whitcomb, and Valerie Priest. By January 1986, the women, whose group totals 15, had made over 700 pounds of soap. Once they meet their 1000-pound goal, sometime this spring, the soapmakers will start the next batch. About 250 pounds of soap are made at each session. They start the process by melting ground suet (beef fat)—donated by meat markets—in the church ovens. Water, lye, ammonia, and borax are added and the mixture is stirred constantly for an hour and a half. Two months later, after the chemicals have completed their work, it's soap!



# Schlaflly distributes 'Student's Bill of Rights'

About 75,000 copies of a "Student's Bill of Rights"—written to help parents and children assert their religious and moral values in public schools—have been distributed by Phyllis Schlaflly's Eagle Forum.

Schlaflly, a conservative activist, said many parents feel their children's



Phyllis Schlaflly

beliefs are under attack in the schools. "We want 1986 to be the year when our public schools once again recognize that parents are the primary educators of their children, and that the authority of school persons

is subject to the constant supervision of citizens and taxpayers," she said.

The 10 declarations contained in the student's bill of rights include "the right to my religious faith and beliefs," and "the right to have and to hold my moral values and standards, my political opinions, and my cultural attitudes."

About religion, the document says: "School persons may not force me to do assignments or engage in classroom activities which criticize or downgrade my religion."

## Examples listed

As examples, it cites such practices as "teaching that any religion or non-religion is as good as another, that there are many gods, or that God did not create the world; teaching witchcraft, the occult, or astrology; conducting Eastern mysticism, yoga, Transcendental Meditation, Quieting Reflex, guided fantasy or imagery, or 'stress' courses using hypnotic practices."

Schlaflly said the Eagle Forum, which claims a membership of 70,000, has received 500 complaints from parents about such practices, and it plans to launch a drive to pass "pupil protection amendments" in state legislatures.

## QUICK LOOK

**ROCKFORD, ILL.**, is being suggested as the site for national offices of the proposed new Lutheran church. The request for consideration—forwarded to the February meeting of the Commission for a New Lutheran Church—comes from a Lutheran Strategy Mission comprised of clergy and laity from about 20 Rockford-area congregations of the American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church in America. "The quality of life, proximity to Chicago and O'Hare airport, and 25% savings in cost compared to Chicago" are some of the reasons the community of about 200,000 is being recommended, according to the Rev. Loren Nielsen, ALC pastor at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Rockford.

**A FEDERAL COURT** in Washington, D.C., ordered the Federal Communications Commission to restore requirements that radio stations make available daily programming logs. The logs are used by civic groups, especially churches, to evaluate whether stations are serving the public interest in accordance with federal law. Dr. Beverly Chain, director of the United Church of Christ communications office, said this action should stem the steady erosion of public-service broadcasting that was replaced in many localities by nationally syndicated programs.

**AFTER WALKING 180 MILES** to demonstrate the need for a peaceful solution to farmers' problems, Larry Haukos addressed a rally of 2500 farmers outside the capitol building in St. Paul, Minn., saying "we cannot let the system beat [farmers] by forcing us to do bodily harm or take a person's life." Haukos, a 36-year-old farmer and member of Eidskog Lutheran Church, Ortonville, Minn., decided on the walk when he became concerned about the mention of violence at meetings of financially troubled farmers. Similarly, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) of B'nai B'rith has reported that "extraordinary efforts" are being made by extremists to propagandize farming areas with hate rhetoric and conspiracy theories, raising the specter of violence by calling on farmers to resist foreclosures with force. ADL said such activities have centered in midwestern and southern farm states and emanate from the Populist Party, Posse Comitatus, and National Agricultural Press Association.



**A DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE** has been named to hear the case of the Rev. Daniel Solberg, an LCA pastor who formerly served Nativity Lutheran Church, Allison Park, Pa. He is charged with violating the constitution of the LCA and its Western Pennsylvania-West Virginia Synod. The charges are related to his involvement in the controversial Denominational Ministry Strategy, a group of clergy and labor activists who used confrontational tactics to draw attention to Pittsburgh-area economic problems. D. Douglas Roth, former pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Clairton, Pa., was found guilty of the same charges last year and defrocked. Roth and a union president were sentenced in mid-January to jail terms for an April 7 demonstration on behalf of the unemployed, held at Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh. Actor David Soul, Solberg's brother, was sentenced to two years' probation and fined \$1000 for his role in the demonstration.

**HONORARY ISRAELI CITIZENSHIP** has been awarded to Raoul Wallenberg, the Lutheran Swedish diplomat who saved 100,000 Jews from the Nazis in World War II. It marked the first time Israel has granted honorary citizenship to anyone, according to presidential spokesperson Ami Gluska. Israel's President Chaim Herzog described Wallenberg as a "tower of light in those dark days."

**ANTI-SEMITIC INCIDENTS** underwent a "notable decline" in the United States last year, according to the annual audit compiled by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Reported incidents of vandalism against Jewish institutions and private homes totaled 638, an 11% decrease from 1984's total of 715, while 306 reports of anti-Semitic assaults, threats, and harassments represented a 17% decrease from 369 such incidents during 1984.



# PEOPLE

## Central American pastor walks among many, sides with poor

Life has presented him with a large share of varied experiences.

In April 1983, Pastor Medardo Gomez was tortured and held in a clandestine jail for three days by government death squads in El Salvador, supposedly for "associating with subversives." In summer 1985, he was detained by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service at the Houston airport for two hours and questioned about his Salvadoran social ministry projects and his attitude toward the sanctuary movement in the United States.

In El Salvador, his life revolves around a settlement camp—which he helped establish—for about 1000 displaced persons, mostly women and children, who are refugees in a land racked by civil war. Yet he was similarly "at home" receiving an honorary doctor of divinity degree from Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, in December 1984.

And Gomez, qualified to teach theology at the master's level in a university setting, is equally as comfort-

able preaching in one of the 28 congregations of the Lutheran Synod of El Salvador—affiliated with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod—and among its more than 6000 members.

While able to relate to many different people and situations, he most prefers the poor at his side. Says Gomez: "Our work and our message is tied to the situation in which we live. We have taken the option to serve the poor."

He speaks often and fondly of a good friend, the Rev. David Fernandez, a Lutheran pastor assassinated by right-wing death squads (see box). Gomez himself, married and the father of five, continues to receive frequent death threats, and surly plainclothes policemen, who monitor the church's activities, have become such a fixture in and around the church, Gomez occasionally addresses them in his sermons.

"But the life of the church is a paradox," he says. "It is not logical. . . . When they killed David Fernandez and I disappeared, it would have been log-



**Baptized over 2000**

Pastor Medardo Gomez, pictured holding a baby at the Fe y Esperanza (Faith and Hope) refugee camp in El Salvador, says he has baptized more than 2000 people since his ministry with the Lutheran Synod of El Salvador began in 1972.

## Murder trial postponed, moved

When the Rev. Medardo Gomez, president of the Lutheran Synod of El Salvador, and nearly 100 other Salvadoran Lutherans arrived at a courthouse in the eastern Salvadoran city of San Miguel Nov. 13, the room was empty. The group had traveled three hours by bus from San Salvador to witness the trial of two former soldiers accused of brutally murdering the Rev. David Ernesto Fernandez, a Lutheran pastor from San Miguel, Nov. 21, 1984 (see *L.S.*, Dec. 14, 1984, p. 35; Jan. 4, 1985, pp. 18-19).

The trial was postponed because too few jurors showed up. Observers say citizens are especially scared to serve in cases involving the military for fear of reprisals, and the penalty for not appearing is only 25 colones, or \$5 (U.S.). Ralston Deffenbaugh Jr., director of the office on world community for Lutheran World Ministries, said, "Few cases in El Salvador actually get to trial, especially those which involve members of the military." Deffenbaugh said only international pressure is making it happen.

Meanwhile, the Supreme Court in San Salvador has changed the trial venue from San Miguel to San Salvador, according to Deffenbaugh. He said observers in El Salvador told him the change enhances the possibility of the trial sometime in the first half of 1986.

*This story contains some material from a Lutheran Council News Bureau story written by Chris Norton, El Salvador correspondent for the Christian Science Monitor.*

ical for everyone to leave the church to go into hiding, but this did not happen. It was the opposite. More people began coming to church, which confirms the experience of the first Christians who found that persecution fortified the church.

"Being held by the death squads made me a more spiritual person," Gomez says. "I found myself deeply in need of the spirit of God. In those moments when I thought the death squads would kill me, I found myself renewing my dedication to God's work. I knew if I lived I would dedicate my life to more profound ways to God's call. The promise . . . sustains me now when I am afraid. When I want to leave and hide, I remember the dedication I made to God . . . and . . . my fear is unable to destroy me."

*This profile incorporates material from a story by Chris Hedges, Central America bureau chief of the Dallas Morning News. It first appeared in the Harvard Divinity Bulletin.*



# ALC colleges adopt policies on South African investments

Seven of the 12 colleges affiliated with the American Lutheran Church (ALC) are moving toward divestment or no longer have investments in companies that do business in South Africa.

In June 1985, the ALC Church Council adopted a statement urging ALC congregations and related institutions and agencies to adopt the divestment policy of the ALC Board of Trustees.

The policy says that "in the buying and selling of securities, where, in the judgment of the Board of Trustees, the economic considerations are equal as between two or more securities issues under study, the Board of Trustees will, where applicable, choose in favor of the company not doing business in South Africa (or choose against the company doing business in South Africa)."

The trustees adopted the policy in 1981 in response to a request made by the 1980 ALC general convention.

Colleges that have formally adopted the ALC policy or use it without a formal statement as operational policy are: Augustana College, Sioux Falls, S.D.; California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks; Concordia College,

Moorhead, Minn.; Dana College, Blair, Neb.; Texas Lutheran College, Seguin; Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa; and Waldorf College, Forest City, Iowa.

## Other policies adopted

Augsburg College, Minneapolis, has approved a policy of "selective investment," giving preference to companies actively promoting social change in South Africa.

Capital University, Columbus, Ohio, has a bank manage its endowment funds. President Harvey Stegemoeller said the endowment investments are treated like mutual funds, so the school doesn't know in which companies it has invested. Stegemoeller said Capital hasn't adopted the ALC policy because it is "not applicable in our practical considerations."

President George Anderson of Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, said the college has not invested in companies that haven't signed the Sullivan Principles. The faculty recently called for total divestment, and Anderson said the board of regents will work with a faculty committee on that issue.

The Sullivan Principles were

## LWR expands work in West Africa

Lutheran World Relief plans to expand development operations in Africa and hire more staff with \$1.8 million in contributions designated for African famine relief.

Norman E. Barth, LWR executive director, said that "churches have challenged LWR" through generous contributions to expand its operation. Expansion in 1986 will include adding country directors in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Senegal, in addition to the country director who already is in Niger.

drawn up in 1977 by the Rev. Leon Sullivan and are intended to bring the influence of American companies in South Africa to bear against the "racist practices, customs, and apartheid laws of that country."

Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Wash., is discussing the adoption of the ALC policy, according to Perry Hendricks, vice president—finance and operations. He said PLU "invests only in mutual funds, so we have no control" over where money is invested.

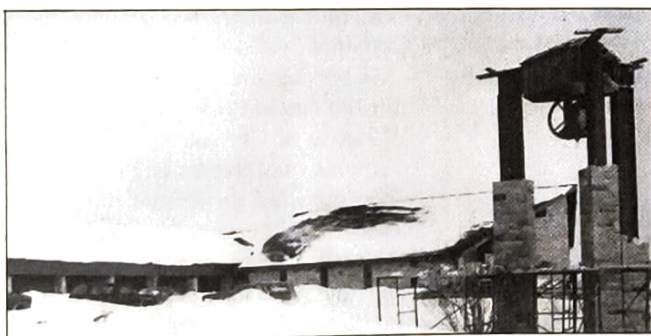
St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn., currently has no holdings in U.S. corporations doing business in South Africa, although the "board has no policy of divestment," according to William Koms, vice president and treasurer. He said the board has adopted a policy of investing only in companies that have signed the Sullivan Principles.

Meanwhile, the number of companies in which the ALC itself holds stock has declined. The Rev. David H. Rokke, executive secretary of the Board of Trustees, said that as of Jan. 17, the ALC had investments in eight companies doing business in South Africa, down from nine in September 1985.

The holdings in those companies have a market value of \$29,820,540. That represents 5.01% of the church's total marketable investments of \$595,284,415.

Michelle Sanden Johlas

## Tornado-stricken church rebuilds



### ... family of God surrounded us and picked us up

Nineteen months after a tornado swept away Barneveld Lutheran Church and most of Barneveld, Wis., the congregation has dedicated a new church building. Members Sylvia Thoni and Ken Johnsrud examine part of the few remains of the old building—a marble baptismal bowl, which now sits in a new wooden base. Stained-glass chips from the old, shattered windows have become part of the new light fixtures, and the former church bell will become—after construction is completed—part of a new bell tower. Pastor Robert Twiton said the new building was constructed on the original foundation but was designed to be more energy efficient. "A cloud of witnesses have made it possible for us to accomplish this," he said, referring to people nationwide whose prayers, physical labor, and money helped cut labor costs by \$25,000 and rebuild and refurbish the church with only a \$10,000 debt. The offering received at the Jan. 5 dedication service was sent to the American Lutheran Church and designated as disaster relief funds for flood victims in West Virginia.



# 'Shoah': Is another Holocaust film needed?

by Gerald Renner

Midway through a showing of *Shoah*, the epic film about the Holocaust, an anguished young Jew in the New York audience cried out in loud protest. Immediately, those nearby shushed him into silence.

What had provoked him—and disturbed the rest of the predominantly Jewish audience in the theater—were the comments being made on the screen by Polish Catholic churchgoers to explain the Holocaust.

It was, they are saying, retribution for the Jewish people having rejected our Lord. One woman sums it up: "So Pilate washed his hands and said, 'Christ is innocent,' and he sent Barrabas. But the Jews cried out: 'Let his blood fall on our heads.'" She concludes, as her neighbors nod in vigorous assent: "It was God's will, that's all."

This is the explanation of the Holocaust by the townspeople of Chelmno, the Polish village where Jews were first exterminated by gas. In front of detached and curious Christian onlookers, the Nazis had herded the Jews into the church in Chelmno, and then gassed them in vans en route to their burial in a mass grave.

Other Polish witnesses in the nearby village of Grabow testify to the "dishonesty" of Jews, of how the Germans killed them because "they were rich," and because "the Jews ran Poland." These comments come from poor peasants who bettered their lives by moving into homes taken from the Jews, who had been mostly tradespeople and tanners.

The film makes plain that there persists in modern Poland, ardently Catholic Poland, the Poland of Pope John Paul II, the most primitive and virulent strains of anti-Semitism. This—40 years after the Holocaust and 20 years after the church fathers renounced hereditary guilt of the Jewish people and deplored anti-Semitism.

## Describes a society gone mad

The film's title, *Shoah*, is a Hebrew word that means annihilation. Ten years in the making by Claude Lanzmann, a French Jew, it is scheduled for nationwide distribution.

Nine and one-half hours long, it predictably will not attract such large audiences as *Rambo*, even shown in two parts on different days. And that is a shame, because *Shoah* depicts, in a strangely beautiful and haunting way, society gone mad. It does not use one foot of archival film. It has no background music. It raises directly no overarching moral questions and does no preaching. It simply describes. People tell their own stories—of death factories in Auschwitz, Treblinka, Belzec, and Sobibor, and of the Warsaw ghetto's destruction.

Those who perpetrated this crime against humanity also give testimony. Lanzmann filmed some of them sur-



Scene from *Shoah*

Polish locomotive engineer Henrik Gawkowski views the train station at Treblinka, a city made infamous by its Nazi concentration camp.

reptitiously with a hidden television camera because they didn't want to appear on film.

Former SS officer Franz Suchomel says it is "an exaggeration" that 18,000 Jews a day were liquidated at Treblinka at its peak.

"How many?" asks Lanzmann.

"Twelve thousand to 15,000. But we had to spend half the night at it."

Dr. Raul Hilberg, University of Vermont historian who wrote the definitive account of the period, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, gives context to the testimony at various points.

He explains that Christianity had prepared the way for the Nazis. From the earliest days, he says, "the missionaries of Christianity had said in effect to the Jews: 'You may not live among us as Jews.' The secular rulers who followed them from the late Middle Ages then decided: 'You may not live among us,' and the Nazis finally decreed: 'You may not live.'"

But, one may ask, is another account of the Holocaust needed, especially since so much already has been written and filmed?

The answer needs to be "yes," as long as the attitudes that allowed Christians to watch, mute and detached, persist.

The answer needs to be "yes," too, considering the artistry of this production.

Lanzmann does for the Holocaust in *Shoah* what Dante did for Hell in *The Inferno*: He enshrines horror poetically for posterity.

Gerald Renner is religion writer for the Hartford Courant and former editor of Religious News Service.



# Youth: Live in 'the now'

by Emily Demuth

Youth are not only "the future of the church" but also an important part of the church right now, according to Julius Filo, new youth-desk secretary for the Lutheran World Federation's department of church cooperation.

Too much emphasis is put on what young people will be when they grow up, or what they can do in the future, and not enough on how they can contribute as youth, the 35-year-old Czechoslovakian said.

Filo said one of the problems youth face in the church is that they "often do not feel they belong because they do not participate fully in leading worship or governing the church." He sees service as one way to solve the problem. "The Bible imperative to serve also is directed at young people, and when we actively make contributions to the church, our service and presence will be acknowledged," Filo said.

It is possible that some young people see the church as another organization they should receive from, not a community they can and should contribute to, he said. "The church is a home community, and each member should work to make it the best home possible," said Filo, a former pastor and youth counselor.

Young people have an optimism and fresh openness that makes them better able to form friendships and achieve peaceful solutions than adults sometimes can, he said, because their thoughts have not been determined by experiences or prejudices.

One of Filo's goals is to remind youth that "while we can make valid contributions to the spiritual life of the church, we cannot do so if we isolate ourselves from the church. We must understand ourselves as being part of the whole church community," he said.

Emily Demuth is a staff member of Lutheran World Information, the news service of Lutheran World Federation.

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given, as required by Bylaw 6.23.16., that First Lutheran Church, Valley City, North Dakota, merged with Nebo Lutheran Church, Valley City, North Dakota (a member of the LCA), effective January 1, 1986. Kathryn W. Baerwald, general secretary

# Dorm students sponsor 6-year-old Korean boy

"It's a boy," proclaimed the banner on Centennial Two, a dormitory floor at Wartburg College, Waverly, Iowa. The floor residents were celebrating the arrival of information about the child they now sponsor, a 6-year-old boy from Korea.

Several weeks earlier, the women decided to sponsor a child from an underdeveloped country, but they indicated no preferences such as sex, age, or nationality on the application forms. They wanted the child to be a surprise.

Oct. 29 marked Kim Hee Hyun's "birthday," when residents of Centennial Two finally received an information packet and picture of their child. Hyun is not an orphan, but sponsorship was needed because his father is handicapped. His mother works when jobs are available.

Centennial Two decided to sponsor a child after the resident assistant, senior Joy Bowden of West Union, Iowa, suggested the project. "I brought it up at a floor meeting," Bowden said. "It was something I had always wanted to do. However, being a college student, I couldn't afford to sponsor someone else, because I am busy sponsoring myself. Then I realized that maybe there were other people who felt the same way I did."

## Provides education and Bible training

The students sponsor Hyun through an organization called Compassion International (CI). "It not only gives food, clothing, health services, and other temporary assistance, but also helps to support the child's education and provides Bible training," Bowden said. CI's commitment to help children help themselves was the deciding factor in Bowden's process of selecting that organization through which to work.

To sponsor Kim, the students send \$21 per month to the organization. Each of the 37 floor residents is asked to contribute voluntarily \$1 per month.

The women keep in touch with Kim by writing letters, which are delivered and translated by CI workers. It usually takes two months for letters to reach him. Letters often incorporate universal topics like families and pets.

Centennial Two plans to sponsor Kim through the summer, and next year's floor residents will have the option to continue the project. Freshman Michelle Brainard of Marengo, Iowa, hopes the floor will continue to sponsor Kim, and she would like to see other groups at the American Lutheran Church college become interested in sponsoring a child.

# Quake relief tops \$108,000

A special fund established after earthquakes devastated parts of Mexico City in September has received more than \$108,000 from members of the American Lutheran Church.

Of the funds, \$15,000 was distributed through ALC missionary staff in Mexico City participating in the Lutheran Aid Committee, which includes staff of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and Mexican Lutheran laity.

The remainder of the funds either have been or will be distributed through the Lutheran World Federation department of church cooperation, the Mexican Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Aid Committee, and agencies cooperating with Lutheran World Relief.

According to the Rev. James E. Petersen, ALC missionary in Mexico City, the Lutheran Aid Committee is involved in a housing project that provides materials and expertise for building clusters of modest, one-room homes. A stipulation for families receiving new homes is that they and their neighbors take part in the actual building task.



## 'Potential Sunday': congregation meets tithing challenge

by John E. Davidson

"Potential Sunday," a special stewardship event at Lord of Joy Lutheran Church, Houston, Tex., resulted in nearly \$800 over the congregation's average weekly giving. The \$800 was distributed equally to a Houston Hispanic congregation and American Lutheran Church benevolence.

According to Wayne Murray, stewardship committee chairman at Lord of Joy Church, the goal of Potential Sunday was to challenge the congregation to give 10% of members' weekly income on the Sunday before Thanksgiving.

A total of \$2,036 was received at Lord of Joy Church, which far exceeded the congregation's average weekly income for November—\$1,248. Of the increase, \$197 was sent to Northside Lutheran Church to be used at the congregation's discretion, \$197 was designated for Northside Church's food pantry program, and \$394 was sent to the ALC for benevolence.

Lutheran Brotherhood matched the \$197 gift for the food pantry, making the total gift to Northside Church \$591, and the total contributed through Potential Sunday almost \$1000.

Lord of Joy's pastor, the Rev. Timothy Quill, called the \$2,036 offering "heartening." He said that the morning's attendance of 110 represented 32 giving units in the church, and that the average family income in the congregation is approximately \$35,000, or \$673 per week. Said Quill: "A 10% tithe from each of those 32 giving units would have brought in about \$2,150. We were approximately \$100 short of having each of those family units tithe."

"It means that tithing is not a bad word," said Quill. "We can now talk about tithing—probably not for annual pledges, but certainly for special needs."

Krishna Singh, a member of the congregation's stewardship committee and mission interpreter for the ALC's Commitment to Mission (CTM) program, agrees. "The Lord of Joy church council has made a commitment to 1% growth giving for 1986 for the CTM program. The tremendous results of 'Potential Sunday' ought to give us reason to hope this commitment will be met," she said.

*John E. Davidson is a writer in Houston, Tex., and a member of Lord of Joy Lutheran Church.*

## Lutheran membership declines; European church losses cited

The continuing decline in membership reported by European Lutheran churches resulted in a decrease of Lutherans worldwide from the 1984 level of 68,493,170 to 68,444,845 for 1985, according to statistics compiled by the Lutheran World Federation's (LWF) information bureau. The 630,000-member decline reported by European Lutheran churches was offset only partially by gains in African, Asian-Pacific, and Latin American Lutheran churches. North America reported a loss of 8500 members.

The annual statistical survey for 1985 shows an increase in the number of LWF member churches, from 99 to 104, with membership increasing from 79.4% of the world's Lutherans to 79.5% of the total membership.

Six new member churches—in Bangladesh, Botswana, Canada, El Salvador, Venezuela, and Zaire—joined the federation in September. These include the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, which was formed through a merger of the Canada Section of the Lutheran Church in America and the

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada.

Of the 14 million Lutherans in churches or congregations unrelated to the LWF, most are members of the Protestant union churches in Germany or the 2.7-million-member Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the largest nonmember church.

Asian Lutheran churches report the greatest increase, from 3.4 million to 3.8 million members. The Protestant Christian Batak Church in Indonesia has grown by 300,000 members to 1.9 million over the last three years. Lutherans in Papua New Guinea increased from 582,000 to 645,000.

In Africa, churches grew at a slower pace, increasing 1% in 1985 to 3.9 million. In 1984, African churches reported an annual increase of 3.1%. The white Evangelical Lutheran Church in Natal-Transvaal reported the largest loss of any African church. Membership dropped from 15,000 to 12,924.

The Church of Sweden remains the largest Lutheran church in the world with 7.7 million members.

The data were gathered by the LWF information bureau from information provided by the churches. Because of some discrepancies in way church bodies count their membership, precise statistical comparisons cannot be made. For instance, some churches count baptized members, others count confirmed members.

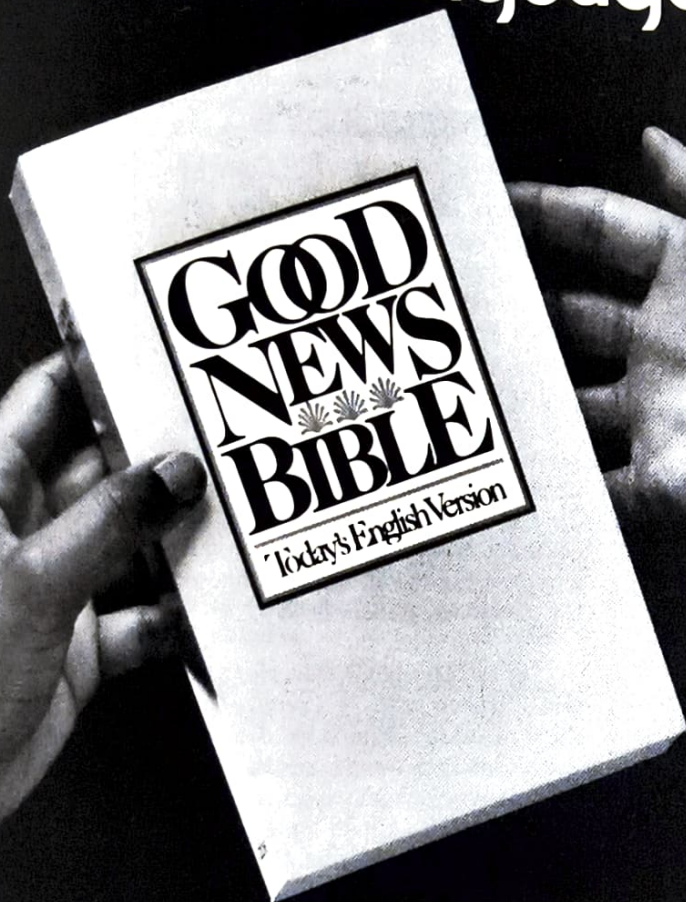
## Congregations start worship

Faith Lutheran Church, Cottage Grove, Wis., a new congregation of the American Lutheran Church, began worship Dec. 1 at 11:15 A.M. Services temporarily are being held at Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, 229 N. Main St. The Rev. Milo Ken Anderson is pastor-developer.

Elk River, Minn., a community northwest of Minneapolis, is the site of Christ Church, a new congregation of the Lutheran Church in America. The congregation started 10:30 A.M. services at the Otsego Town Hall, Highway 39 at Nashua Ave. The Rev. Karen Gendorfer-Lindgren is pastor-developer.



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# Hall of fame for disabled honors five

Dr. Anne Carlsen, a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Jamestown, N.D., a congregation of the Lutheran Church in America, was one of five persons inducted into the Na-



Anne Carlsen

tional Hall of Fame for Persons with Disabilities at its third annual recognition ceremony in Columbus, Ohio.

Dr. Carlsen, who was born with partial arms and legs, has won international ac-

claim for her work in the education and rehabilitation of youth with disabilities. She retired in 1981 as executive director of the Anne Carlsen School for the Physically Handicapped in Jamestown. She also is a member of the National Teachers Hall of Fame and a former winner of the President's Trophy as the Handicapped American of the Year.

Nearly 140 persons were present for induction ceremonies, which also honored: **Boyce R. Williams**, Washington, D.C., for work among persons with communication disorders; **Alamo June Reeves**, Tucson, Ariz., for consumer lobbying in transportation and housing for disabled persons; **Clyde C. Berger**, Wichita, Kan., for contributions toward the understanding of communicative disorders; and **Alan J. Farber**, Louisville, Ky., for leadership as an attorney and judge in disability rights.

John Clark, founder of the organization and member of Trinity Lutheran Church, Columbus, Ohio, a congregation of the American Lutheran Church, said 1986 nomination forms may be obtained by writing to the National Hall of Fame for Persons with Disabilities, Inc., Box 151053, Columbus, OH 43215. The deadline for nominations is June 15.

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Lutheran teachers and principals needed in ALC schools. Apply to Glenn Bracht, director for Christian day schools, 422 S. Fifth St., Minneapolis, MN 55415.



Martha Levardsen



Dorothy Marple

## Newsmakers

► **Capt. Martha J. Levardsen**, Houghton, La., has been named outstanding junior officer of the year by the Reserve Officers Association of the United States. Levardsen, 33, a member of First Evangelical Lutheran Church (ALC), Shreveport, and graduate of St. Olaf College (ALC), Northfield, Minn., spends her civilian workdays as law clerk for the Second Circuit Court of Appeals. The first member of the U.S. Air Force's Judge Advocate General Corps and the second woman to receive the award, she was honored Jan. 28 in Washington, D.C.

► **Dr. Dorothy J. Marple**, assistant to Bishop James R. Crumley Jr. of the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), has been named coordinator of the transition committee for the unification of the LCA with the American Lutheran Church and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches. Marple, 59, will serve as executive staff person for the transition team that will assure that key national programs and staff are in place when the new church begins, scheduled for Jan. 1, 1988.

► **Paul Boeker** was named U.S. ambassador to Jordan, and **Donald Shasteen** was selected assistant secretary of labor for veterans' affairs. Both men belong to Pilgrim Lutheran Church (LCMS) in Bethesda, Md.

► **James M. Noss**, a former ALC missionary, has been appointed assistant program director for Africa for Lutheran World Relief. He will help coordinate African relief and development programs for LWR. Noss, 42, was a missionary in Africa for 17 years. He coordinated the ALC's mission operation in Cameroon. Most recently he served as a manager for a travel agency.

## Gifts to aid mission unit, famine victims

A \$400,000 endowment from Ohio woman's estate and \$10,000 from Namibian Lutherans will be used to support the Institute for Mission in the USA and assist Ethiopian drought victims, respectively, according to a report from the Lutheran World Mission (LWM) commission meeting in New York City.

LWM decided to endorse preliminary discussions aimed at using the endowment from the Anna Hoewisch estate to support the mission unit based in Columbus, Ohio.

"Our main concern is with evangelical outreach and training of people for the evangelical task," said Dr. P. A. Wee, LWM general secretary. The funds will go to programs that "further the ministry of LWM member churches" and "contain a discernible international mission dimension."

LWM is the U.S.A. national committee of the Lutheran World Federation and is supported by the three uniting Lutheran church bodies.

During an address to the commission, Dr. Carl H. Mau Jr., former LWF and LWF general secretary, said "There is not a single worldwide appeal that the Namibian church has not responded to." Mau called the Namibian gift of \$10,000 to the LWF Ethiopian hunger appeal "like \$10 million coming out of the United States."

In other actions, LWM:

- approved a plan to support international volunteer teachers in a joint program with the three uniting Lutheran churches; and

- supported a United Nations agreement aimed at tracking down and punishing torturers.

## Anniversaries

- 75—St. John Lutheran, Bird City, Kan., Jan. 8.
- 60—Faith Evangelical Lutheran, Toledo, Ohio, Jan. 27.
- 25—Ascension Lutheran, Saginaw, Mich., Feb. 26.

To be included in this listing, please notify the LUTHERAN STANDARD of your congregation's anniversary.



# Video programs on baptism released

Baptism is the focus of "Water-life," the third series of "Reflections" video programs. "Reflections" is a television ministry of the American Lutheran Church (ALC) and is created by "Lutheran Vespers" and the Media Services Center.

Each "Waterlife" program includes original music and brief meditations by Dr. Richard A. Jensen, director of "Lutheran Vespers," and Bonnie L. Jensen, executive director of ALC Women.

Titles of this series are Through Baptism: Good News for Sinners; The Gift of Identity; Life in a New Community; Called to Daily Ministry; and Daily Hope.

Under the sponsorship of Lutheran congregations, the programs will be aired by cable and television stations across the country.

The first two "Reflections" series, Words from the Cross and Images of Christ, have been widely used over the past three years.

## The Lutheran Standard.

### DISTRICT EDITION EDITORS:

David L. Miller (Central); Gerald Gundersen (Eastern); Dean Larson (Eastern North Dakota); Joseph Hultstrum (Iowa); George Hanusa (Iowa); David Miller (Michigan); John Nyberg (Northern Minnesota); Barbara DeGrote-Sorenson (Northern Wisconsin); Philip Falk (North Pacific); Gloria Andrews (Ohio); Margaret Grorud (Rocky Mountain); Robert Binger (South Dakota); Harold McCullough (Southeastern); Mary Mergenthal (Southeastern Minnesota); Robert A. Fleischer (Southern); Paul Whiting (Southern Wisconsin); Walter Mees Jr. (South Pacific); Philip Heide (Southwestern Minnesota); Jean Schlender (Western North Dakota).

## ALC clergy deaths

The Rev. **Peter J. Vammen**, 93, Blair, Neb.: born Sept. 13, 1892; died Dec. 11, 1985; served parishes in Green Bay, Wis. (1927-35); Ruskin, Neb. (1935-40); West Branch, Iowa (1940-45); McCabe, Mont. (1945-47); Luverne, N.D. (1947-52); Swan River, Manitoba (1952-56); and Penn Yan, N.Y. (1956-61); as interim pastor after retiring in 1961.

The Rev. **Leif H. Roholt**, 78, Minneapolis, Minn.: died Nov. 4, 1985; served parishes in Brooklyn, N.Y. (1933-35); Alpena, Leer, and Spruce, Mich. (1935-45); Renville (1948-50) and Hayward (1951), Minn.; chaplaincy at Fairview Hospital (1951-75); interim and visitation pastorate at Bethany Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, from 1979 until his death, having returned to the ALC through colloquy in 1982.

The Rev. **Myron Backmann**, 82, Woodstock, Va.: born Nov. 10, 1903; died Nov. 21, 1985; served Patmos Lutheran Church in Woodstock from 1930, shortly after graduating from Evangelical (now Trinity) Lutheran Theological Seminary, until he retired in 1978; also served the Shenandoah County schools for 24 years.

The Rev. **Lawrence M. Gudmestad**, 69, Minneapolis, Minn.: born March 14, 1916; died Jan. 14, 1985; served parishes in Bellingham, Wash. (1942-45) and Minot, N.D. (1945-54); chaplain, Lutheran Deaconess Hospital, Minneapolis (1954-63); director of chaplaincy services and associate director, Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota (1963-81); director of church relations, Ebenezer Foundation, Minneapolis, since 1981; delegate to LWF Assembly in Hanover (1952); member, Lutheran Free Church Board of Missions (1960-63) and ALC world-mission board (1964-74).

The Rev. **Henry Young**, 84, Kissimmee, Fla.: born Sept. 8, 1901; died Jan. 6, 1985; served parishes in Akron (1929-30), Cardington (1930-36), New Lexington (1936-37), Botkins (1937-41), Galion (1941-48), and Medina (1948-52), Ohio; Greenock, Pa. (1952-61); and Kissimmee, Fla. (1961-66); as interim pastor after retiring in 1966; also an author.

## New to the clergy roster

Information provided by ALC general secretary's office.

ALLMAN, DAVID R., 543 S. Main, Pataskala OH 43062 (p-t, Drums).  
BALDWIN, RANDALL VERN, Box 5, Riga MI 49276 (Trinity).  
BERRY, CHRISTOPHER D., 1607 N. Prairie Ave., Joliet IL 60435 (Theodore Street).  
BLICE-BAUM, CHRISTINE L., 312 W. 11th Ave., Oshkosh WI 54901 (p-t, First).  
BOCKHAUS, RONALD R., Box 174, Rogers MN 55374 (assoc., Word of Peace).  
DEAMES, MATTHEW DALE, 3990 W. Sidney Rd., Sidney MI 48885 (Faith).  
FRY, C. GEORGE, 2701 Spring St., Fort Wayne IN 46808 (chap., St. Francis College).  
ISBELL, LAWRENCE L., Box 73, Venus PA 16364 (Faith).  
JERKE, LARRY L., Box 276, Howard SD 57349 (Bethany, Bellevue).  
JOHNSON, MAYNARD, E. 8304 Buckeye, Spokane WA 99212 (interim, Zion).  
KOSS, LAWRENCE L., 1801 Port Malabar N.E., Palm Bay FL 32905 (asst., Peace).  
MOBERG, GLENN BERG Sr., 311 W. Mackie St., Beaver Dam WI 53116 (assoc., First).  
OVERVOLD, JON A., Eighth and College, Cedar Falls IA 50613 (assoc., St. John).  
ROD, JANICE, Box 358, Clermont IA 52135 (East Clermont).  
SUELTY, MARY LYNN, Box 65, Arkdale WI 54613 (co-pastor, Trinity, Zion).  
WENGER, JAMES C., Box 298, Acme MI 49610 (Feast of Glory).  
WITT, KENNETH R., 50 County Road 2575, Box 243, Lakeville OH 44638 (St. John).

## Pastors' changes of address

Information provided by ALC general secretary's office.

AMUNDSEN, ROLF F., 332 S. Madison St., Green Bay WI 54301 (ext. min., Family, Life, Growth Ctr.).  
ANDERSON, ROBERT L., Moorhead MN, to 2001 80th St., Kenosha WI 53140 (St. Mary).  
BAACKE, DONALD C., Williston, to 1525 Eber Rd., Holland OH 43528 (ext. min., Decem Ctr.).  
BARTHELMIE, THOMAS C., 1000 Helena Blvd., Helena MT 59601 (ext. min., St. John—LCA).  
BAUMAN, PHILIP Q., Box 7, Shatin, N.T., Hong Kong.  
BOCKELMAN, WILFRED, 422 S. Fifth St., Mpls. MN 55415 (ret.).  
BREINDE, ROLF V., 1825 Logan Ave., Waterloo IA 50703 (chap., Allen Mem. Hosp.).  
CHENEY, GEORGE B., Endicott WA, to Box 455, Mountain Home ID 83647 (Grace).  
EIDUM, CHARLES D., Brazil, to 1550 Eustis St., Apt. N, St. Paul MN 55108.  
EISNER, ALEXANDER J., St. Paul MN, to 10540 Apache Tr., Sp. 38, Apache Junction AZ 85220.  
FAALAND, THOMAS A., Grand Forks, to Box 307, Hampden ND 58338 (interim, Faith).

FOLKERTS, LEONARD F. R. 1, Box 71, Palmer KS 66962 (ret. I. GABRIELSON, CARL N., 4-9-9 Tsurukabuto, Nada-Ku, Kobe-Shi 657 Japan).  
GORDON, ROBERT L., Edmonds, to 2515 Western Ave., Seattle WA 98121 (ext. min., Millionaire Club).  
GRAY, KENNETH R., White Salmon WA, to 1235 S. Dellwood, Cambridge MN 55008.  
GUNDERSON, CHARLES, Oklee, to R. 3, Benson MN 56215 (Shepherd of the Hills).  
GUNSTEN, STANLEY G., Veradale, to 2317 S. Davis Ct., Spokane WA 99216.  
HANISCH, JOHN M., Madison WI, to 13200 Red Hill Ave., Tustin CA 92680 (assoc., Red Hill).  
HANSEN, PHILIP L., 2640 Westwood Village, Roseville MN 55113 (ret.).  
ICE, OSCAR I., 8425 W. McNichols Rd., Detroit MI 48221 (ext. min., Ecumenical Theol. Ctr.).  
JERSTAD, MARK A., 1000 N. West Ave., Sioux Falls SD 57104 (ext. min., Good Samaritan).  
JOHNSON, ROBERT R., Thornton CO, to Box 12156, Oakland CA 94604 (chap., Global Assoc.).  
KINKEAD, ROGER W., Gig Harbor WA, to 1730 3rd St., Baker OR 97814 (First).  
KINTNER, JOHN C., 1836 Silver Beach Rd., Bellingham WA 98226.  
KRUSE, ALFRED L., Cushing IA, to R. 2, Carhage IL 62321 (Immanuel).  
KUEHNER, ROBERT W., 612 Morsman Dr., Fort Collins CO 80526.  
LANGE, HERBERT L., Madison, to 310 E. Washington St., Stoughton WI 53589 (interim, First).  
LINSTRAND, ROBERT C., Devils Lake ND, to R. 1, Box 211D, Audubon MN 56511 (St. Peter).  
LUND, RICHARD E., Newfolden, to 728 Potter St., Red Wing MN 55066 (ext. min., U. of Minn.).  
MALDE, ROY K., Santa Clara, to 22449 Cupertino Rd., Apt. C214, Cupertino CA 95014.  
MENDENHALL, THEODORE L., HCR 2, Box 249-B, Springville CA 93265 (ret.).  
MOLLIDRE, ARIEL R., Moorhead MN, to Marina Village, Snug Harbor, 645 San Carlos BV 501, Fort Meyers Beach FL 33931.  
OLSON, GARY L., 5065 Coleridge Dr., Fairfax VA 22032.  
PATZKE, MARK S., 4320 W. 19th St., Apt. 310, Chicago IL 60651.  
PETERS, PHILIP G., Forest City, to Box 55, Scarville IA 50473 (Immanuel).  
REUTER, ALAN C., Frankenmuth MI, to St. John's University, Collegeville MN 56121 (ext. min.).  
ROBINSON, MICHAEL M., Box 680-516, San Antonio TX 78268 (Amazing Grace).  
ROEHL, JULIUS A., Redfield SD, to Dana's Court, Sp. K7, 10712 Apache Tr., Apache Junction AZ 85220.  
SCHWARZ, JAMES A., Cashton, to 310 E. Washington St., Stoughton WI 53589 (First).  
SEIBEL, STEPHEN E., Mpls. MN, to Office of the Chaplain, Fort Devens MA 01433.  
SHERVE, A. G., 914 2nd Pl. N.E., Jamestown ND 58401 (ret.).  
STEIN, SAMUEL E., 39140 Detroit Rd., Avon OH 44011 (ret.).  
STRAND, OLIVER T., 4413 Spicewood Dr., Apt. E, Bradenton FL 33508.  
SUTORIUS, CARLTON I., 70 E. Markison Ave., Columbus OH 43207 (ret.).  
TOMLINSON, JOE H., Jr., Brownsville OR, to 3607 228th Ave. S.E., Issaquah WA 98027.  
VAN HUNNIK, GARY W., Forman, to 603 6th St., Devils Lake ND 58301 (St. Olaf).  
VIGEN, LARRY A., Nashville TN, to Box 38, Glyndon MN 56547 (Glyndon).  
WAITE, ROBERT A., France, to Baboua-Car, c/o B.P. 6, Garoua Boulai, Cameroon.  
WILLIAMS, G. H., 7720 York Ave. S., No. 423, Edina MN 55435 (ret.).

## CLASSIFIED

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WELCOME TO PASTOR CONRAD THOMPSON'S Scandinavian Tour, June 12-29. Contact Gordon Hanson, 2000 W. 98th St., Minneapolis, MN 55431. (Tour Australia-New Zealand, April 1987.)

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# QUESTION BOX

by William A. Poovey

## What is the Antichrist?

**Who or what is the Antichrist, and what should I as a Christian do about this person?** W.D., III.

The Antichrist is mentioned by name only in the second and fourth chapters of 1 John. But there are references in both Testaments to a sinister figure who will oppose the church of Jesus Christ before the end of the world. He will even sit in the "temple of God," pretending to be God (2 Thess. 2:3-4). There are many references to the Antichrist, particularly in Daniel and Revelation.

Almost every age has identified some person or movement as the Antichrist. In Reformation days, Lutherans said it was the pope, while Catholics said it was Luther. Today many people identify communism with the Antichrist.

We need to remember two things here. First, each time we identify some person or group as the Antichrist, we are closer—at least in time—to the real one. Yet we cannot say, "This one is the final and complete Antichrist"—because the Antichrist appears at the end of time, and we do not know when that will be.

Second, what are we to do about this? The writer of 1 John tells us—several times—to abide in God and to remain faithful to Christ. We are to resist worldly things, especially when they creep into the church. But we should not get agitated, for the Book of Revelation tells us that Christ will defeat the Antichrist.

**Please explain Genesis 6:1-4. Also, Genesis 10:20 speaks of "languages," while Genesis 11:1 says "the whole earth had one language." Is that a contradiction?** A.W., N.D.

Genesis 6:1-4 is a disputed passage. It speaks of the "sons of God" marrying the "daughters of men." Some people have thought this refers to angels marrying human beings, as in pagan myths. The Good News Bible and the New English Bible take this position.

Others say the sons of God were a godly line of men. This seems to me to

be the correct interpretation. Angels aren't sexual beings, and God punishes people—not angels—for intermingling good and evil.

At the time in question, human beings were divided into two lines: the Sethites and the Cainites. But the Sethite

***'The events in Genesis do not always follow chronological order. What's told in Genesis 10:20 actually occurred later than what's reported in Genesis 11:1.'***

men were seduced by the beauty of the Cainite women and married them, thus mixing the two groups. I think this is the best interpretation, despite some Bible translations.

As to the second question, the events in Genesis do not always follow chronological order. What's told in Genesis 10:20 actually occurred later than what's reported in Genesis 11:1. Genesis 10 traces the family trees of Ham, Shem, and Japheth, showing how each became the ancestor of certain tribes and nations. So the writer accurately speaks of "languages." In Genesis 11 the author steps back in time and indicates how languages originated. Thus, there is no contradiction.

**The Lost Books of the Bible portray Christ as becoming so angry as a child that he caused the death of another child. Can we explain this? It is not the usual picture we have of Jesus.** L.E., Wis.

The writers of the so-called Lost Books of the Bible tried to fill in pictures of Jesus' youth. Since the birth of Christianity, writers have tried to elaborate on the Gospels. Some of these stories may be true, but these books contain a lot of fanciful and imaginative material.

The church long has had to contend

with apochryphal material of this sort. In recent years even more such books have been discovered—for example, the Nag Hammadi Library.

Don't worry about these stories—or take them too seriously. The four Gospels include all that we really need to know about Jesus. Apparently, the Holy Spirit didn't feel it necessary to tell us what happened to Jesus before his public ministry. Jesus' appearance in the Temple when he was 12 years old is the only exception. We would like to know more, but we have no reliable record.

**In the Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness in Lutheran Book of Worship, the minister says, "As I called and ordained minister of the Church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins. . . . This seems to put a middleman between me and God. Why was I added?"** L.K., Mich.

The words are in accord with the Scriptures, where Christ gives his ministers—laity as well as clergy—the power to forgive sins. Whether or not a pastor uses this formula, he or she is functioning as one who has this power.

Members of the committee that prepared *LBW* felt that this power should be spelled out, so that all will know the pastor functions this way. But whether or not those exact words are said, you are receiving God's grace through your pastor.

Of course your pastor does not have power to forgive the sins of a person who is not truly repentant. But you should be thankful that you don't have to rely only on your own feeling that your sins are forgiven, but have an actual person to tell you. ■



William Poovey, a retired seminary professor, lives in San Antonio, Tex. He is the author of many books, including *How to Talk to Christians About Money* (Augsburg).



# Each one bring one

by Larry Foreman

Whatever happened to "50 More in '84"—the 50 new ALC ministries authorized in 1984 *beyond* the 31 that had been planned earlier? Those 81 ministries were more than the ALC had ever before started in a single year.

Happily, the answer is that 49 of the "50 More" ministries are alive and well, in places like Ellsworth, Maine; Victoria, Texas; and Juneau, Alaska. One ministry did not develop as hoped and was terminated.



But those new ministries are not all *congregations*—yet. They are initiatives taken in places that seemed to offer the best potential for development of organized congregations. Nineteen of the "50 More" initiatives have formally organized as congregations, and another 20 are expected to do so in 1986.

Unfortunately, prospects for funding to provide initial support for those ministries are less bright. A total of \$4.5 million was to be raised by special offerings for "50 More in '84" between 1984 and 1986. Although \$2.8 million was raised in 1984, only a little over \$300,000 was contributed in 1985—leaving \$1.4 million to be contributed in 1986.

Still, the "50 More" story is one of people more than of budgets. For example, Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church in Juneau is the fifth new congregation the Rev. David Spencer has started in his 26 years as a mission developer. "Maybe this time I'll get it right," he quips.

If he does, it won't be because the new Juneau congregation is any easier than the other four congregations Spencer helped organize. Alaska is the "Last Frontier," the state's license plates proclaim. That's accurate, Spencer says, recalling that while making his first 2200 house calls in Juneau, he approached one house to find a bear standing on its hind legs, peering at him. "I didn't go to that house," Spencer confesses.

Juneau has more than its share of nontraditional people, many of whom migrated there because of the city's remoteness. By road, one can travel 40 miles in one direction and seven miles in another—and that's it.

But the isolation also contributes to psychological and emotional problems, including an alcoholism rate that is four times the national average.

"Sure, Alaska is different," says Spencer, "but I share the church-growth theology that expects the church to grow anywhere people are, including Alaska."

Members of Shepherd of the Valley Church quickly become enthusiastic partners in Spencer's vision for the congregation's mission. Spencer implemented his E.O.B.O. (Each One Bring One) program in which individuals and families are encouraged to bring at least one new person or family to worship. Three congregational teams are having a friendly E.O.B.O. competition—and they've decided that the winning team will enjoy a meal prepared by the second- and third-place teams.

But Spencer regularly reminds members that "E.O.B.O. is not simply a membership drive." Says Spencer: "People do not exist for the institution. We exist, together with our message, for them."

For this "50 More" congregation, Spencer says, the "deepening of faith, a shared sense of evangelism, and congregational ownership of our Lord's mandate to grow" is just as essential as growth in numbers. ■

Larry Foreman is director of interpretation for the American Lutheran Church's Division for Service and Mission in America.

**The Overseas List: Opportunities for Living and Working in Developing Countries** (Augsburg, paperbound, \$11.95) by David M. Beckmann, Timothy J. Mitchell, and Linda L. Powers. First published in 1979, this book opened up new areas of service to thousands. This revised and expanded edition promises to do the same for thousands more. It includes names, addresses, and detailed descriptions of businesses, Christian organizations, and government agencies offering opportunities for volunteering or working overseas.

**Lutheran Higher Education in North America** by Richard W. Solberg (Augsburg, paperbound, \$9.95) traces, for the first time, the history of the more than 50 Lutheran colleges and universities in the United States and Canada—from Gettysburg (Pa.) College founded in 1832 to Christ College, Irvine, Calif., founded in 1976. These institutions reflect the com-

## BOOKS

mitment to education that has characterized North American Lutherans from immigrant times to the present day.

**Preaching: The Art of Connecting God and People** by F. Dean Lueking (Word, clothbound, \$12.95). Lueking has been pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in River Forest, Ill., for over 30 years and has learned a great deal about proclaiming the Word of God to all sorts and conditions of humanity. Here he gives commonsense advice about how preachers can integrate and incorporate experiences from the lives of their listeners into the act of preaching.

**The Parables of the Kingdom** by Robert Farrar Capon (Zondervan, clothbound, \$10.95). Capon writes: "Jesus not only spoke in parables; he thought in parables, acted in parables, and regularly insisted that what he was proclaiming could not be set forth in any way other than in parables. He was practically an ambulatory parable in and of himself: He cursed fig trees, walked on water, planted coins in fishes' mouths, and for his final act, sailed up into a cloud. In short, this book is not a routine, pious review of parables; rather it is a fresh adventurous look at the parabolic words and acts of Jesus in the larger light of their entire gospel and biblical context." Capon is always worth reading.

Roderick Olson  
Augsburg Publishing House  
Minneapolis, Minn.

These books may be purchased from  
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## THE BACK PAGE

# Grain basket for Africa?

**E**thiopia, second only to Egypt as Africa's oldest independent nation and one of the world's oldest countries, covers 472,000 square miles, an area about the size of Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico combined.

As in most developing countries, high infant mortality rates drive people toward high birthrates so that parents will have some surviving children to support them in their old age. One in seven Ethiopian children die before the age of five. Polluted water, hunger, poverty, and disease take a heavy toll, with average life expectancy for Ethiopia pegged at about 46 years, according to the World Bank. In the words of Dr. David French of the World Health Organization: "People don't live long enough in Africa to worry about cancer or the other diseases that concern us in the Western world. In Africa, the big trick is to get to be five years old."

Estimated per-capita income in Ethiopia is about \$140 a year. The literacy rate is under 10%.

Nearly one billion pounds of food, worth \$280 million, plus some \$250 million in money and other supplies, have been sent to Ethiopia from the United States in the past year, reports InterAction, a charity clearinghouse.

***"They sounded the alarm, urging international action to combat the tragedy of malnutrition and starvation."***



a column of  
editorial opinion

The Lutheran World Federation—Mekane Yesus relief program in Ethiopia last year handled \$83.5 million of food aid, relief supplies, equipment, and funds for transportation and operation.

The current plight of Ethiopia has a long history. Normally, what are known as the short rains come in February through May. Heavy rains usually fall between June and September, with scarce rain between October and January. During the latter period, the major harvest is gathered.

But beginning in 1982, the rains ceased for three years. Besides this latest siege of famine, parts of Ethiopia have suffered drought five other times in the past 30 years—1978-79, 1971-74, 1969, 1965, and 1957-59.

The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus and the Lutheran World Federation began the most recent famine relief work early in 1983, in the Wollo region. They sounded the alarm, urging international action to combat the tragedy of malnutrition and starvation then facing a rapidly growing percentage of the population. Not until a BBC-TV crew vividly portrayed the devastation in October 1984 did the devastation of Ethiopia grab global attention.

### **"An absolute scandal"**

There is a cruel twist to the plight of Ethiopia. In spite of its image as a nation of starving people, the country has some of Africa's most fertile farmland. In parts of Ethiopia, the soil is thick and loamy, unlike the thin and sandy earth found throughout most of the continent. "It is an absolute scandal that there is famine in this country," Guido Gryseels told the *Washington Post* recently. Gryseels, an agricultural economist in the International Livestock Center for Africa, claimed that Ethiopia "could easily become the grain basket for Africa."

Ethiopia's farmers, however, seem centuries away from that prospect. They cultivate only 15% of the arable land with methods that are three or four centuries old. Because of years of deforestation, little terracing of hillside fields, and almost no systems for storing rainwater, erosion abounds and most of the rainfall runs away without being used. As the saying goes, Egypt is fertilized by Ethiopia's topsoil.

The story of low production, high erosion, and inadequate use of land is much the same on the rest of the continent. Africa has an estimated 200 million farmers who produce, even in good times, barely enough food for their own families. By contrast, each of the five million farm workers in the United States





## QUILTS GET TO THE PEOPLE

Presiding Bishop David Preus of the American Lutheran Church and Lowell Almen, editor of *The Lutheran Standard*, gave a quilt to Yeshi Abate and her five-year-old daughter, Lubaba Seid, at the Mersa relief center in Ethiopia. The quilt was made last summer by children in vacation Bible school at St. Philip's Lutheran Church in Fridley, Minn. Early this year, Lutheran World Relief shipped 100,000 quilts to Ethiopia. Last year, 232,830 LWR quilts, made by ALC Women, were sent there.

produces enough for 68 people, a figure that has grown from 45 a decade ago.

Africa cannot copy the heavy emphasis of U.S. agriculture on machinery and petrochemicals. But many nations need policy reforms to encourage production.

For example, Ethiopia's agriculture policies work against getting farmers to grow more than they need for their own families. In forced collective farming, those involved in farmers' associations must sell their small surpluses to the government at prices far below the private market. At one point last year, the government's price for 100 kilograms (about four and one-half bushels) of barley was \$14, compared with the market price of \$50.

Under the government's 11-year-old land-reform plan, small farmers do not know from one year to the next what land they will have. The farmers' associations, whose heads sometimes become local tyrants who demand grain from farmers as bribes, reassign land as they see fit. So farmers have little incentive to clear stones, plant trees, and battle erosion.

Underscoring the problem, James R. Cheek, chargé d'affaires at the U.S. embassy in Addis Ababa, says the Ethiopian government gives exclusive attention to the state collective farms, which account for about 5% of all farms, while ignoring efforts to increase production in the rest of the country.

Before the World Bank will grant large, new development loans, it is demanding that land policies be reformed to move the country's farming practices

out of the Middle Ages. Ethiopian agriculture provides employment for 85% of the population and accounts for 45% of the country's gross national product. But Ethiopia's absolute ruler, Mengistu Haile Miriam, refuses to alter his rigid Marxist policies that tolerate no dissent.

Once again, incentive for increasing production is strangled by ideology.

Lowell Almen

## A big difference

**D**uring the first hours of flying nearly 8000 miles from the United States to Ethiopia, I read a collection of articles by Mark Patinkin, a columnist for the *Providence (N.J.) Journal-Bulletin*. Patinkin visited hunger relief sites in Ethiopia and Sudan just a year before I left on my trip to Ethiopia. His superbly written, thoughtful articles—recently published in a paperback book, *An African Journey* (Eerdmans, \$4.95)—offer a vivid picture of the devastation in late 1984: people starving, thousands dying, great masses crowded into camps in search of food and medicine, and relief workers showing seemingly unbounded fortitude and amazing ingenuity in battling famine.

While food and health problems still persist in Ethiopia, the emergency relief provided in the past year has made a big difference. Part of the war against the current famine has been won. A hard, long-term challenge lies ahead, however—the challenge of helping people rebuild their lives to provide for themselves.

Lowell Almen



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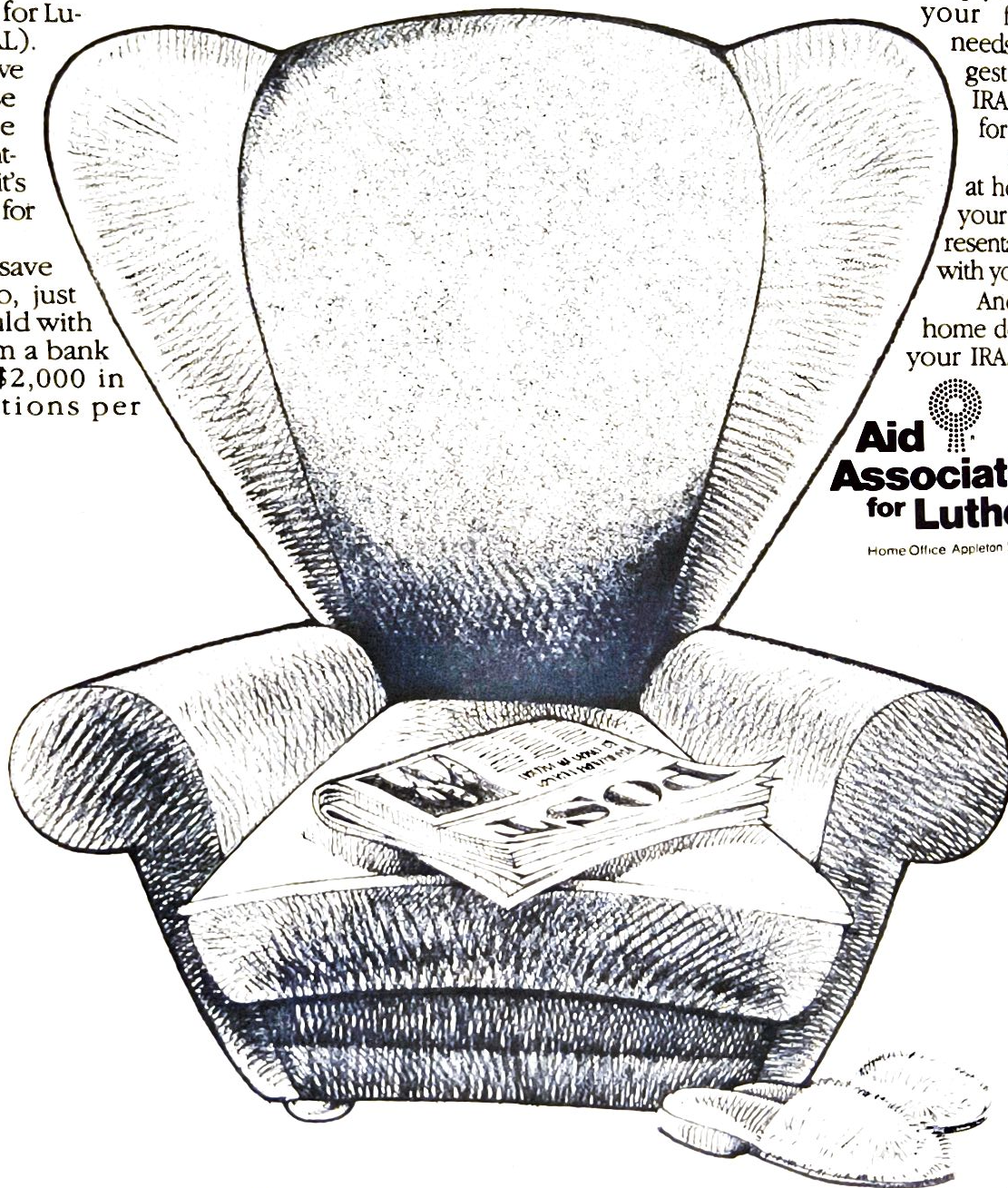
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