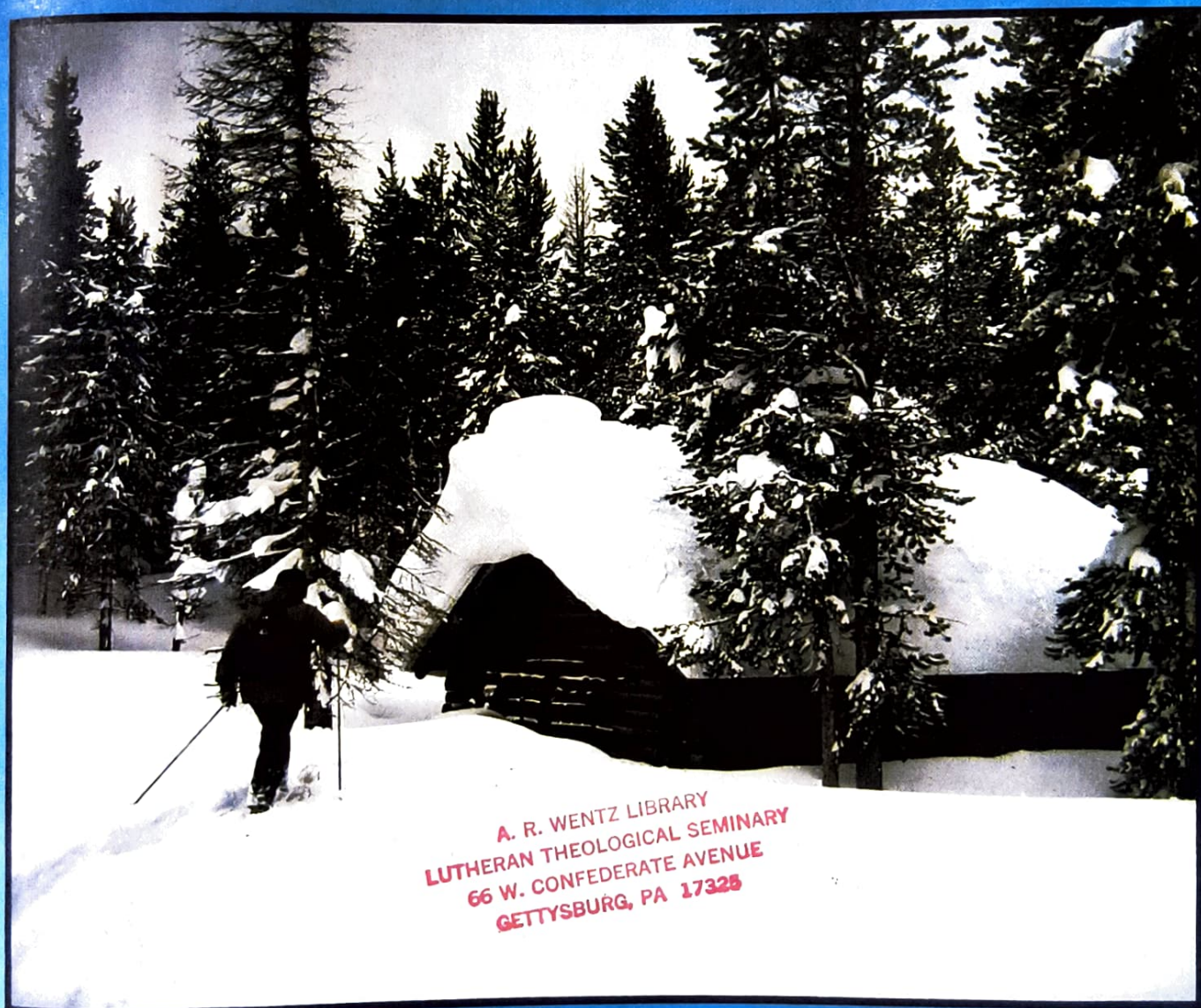


**GIFTS WE BRING: Page 13**

# *The Lutheran Standard*®

JANUARY 9, 1987



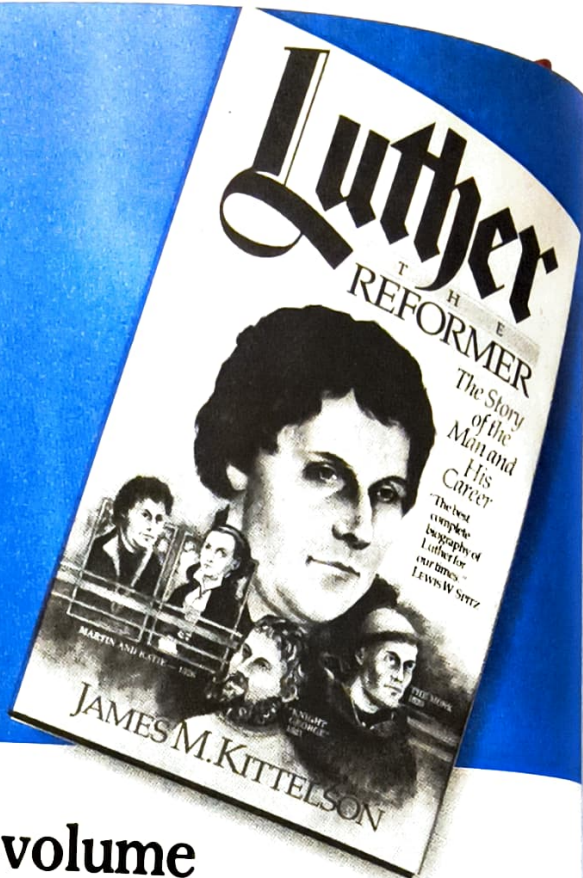
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## **LYLE SCHALLER ON SIX STEPS INTO THE FUTURE**

**PAGE 4**



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**COVER:** With vision and courage, members of the proposed new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its leaders will see their winter in the struggle of uniting three Lutheran churches give way to the warmth and joy of spring as they look to the future together. For a discussion on some subjects that merit serious attention in the new church, see "Six Steps Into the Future" by Lyle Schaller, beginning on page 4.



# SIX STEPS INTO THE FUTURE

by Lyle E. Schaller



*Will the struggle of winter give way to the warmth of spring for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America?*



**W**here should the headquarters be? How many congregations should a synod include? Which pension plan is best? Are quotas the best way to attract new members from among minority groups? Those and other issues relating to the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) were the stuff of interesting corridor discussions at last August's conventions of the American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church in America, and Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches. But they won't be the most productive issues to place on the agenda once the new church begins functioning.

Experiences of other denominations and of earlier church mergers suggest, in my judgment, six subjects that *do* merit serious attention.

### **Minimize congregational mergers**

Consider, first, the practical fact of where congregations are now located. This may not be the most important item on the new church's agenda, but sooner or later members of some congregations will ask: Now that we're all part of the same church body, how can we justify having two (or three) Lutheran churches across the street from each other? Why don't they go ahead and merge?

In the vast majority of congregational mergers, the result is  $3 + 2 = 3$ . A 150-member congregation merges with a 100-member congregation, and five years later the result is a single 150-member congregation. A 700-member congregation merges with an 1100-member congregation, and in four years there's one congregation with 700 or 800 members.

One example of congregational mergers that Lutherans may want to examine involved the 1968 merger of the Methodist Church with the Evangelical United Brethren Church. That merger brought together two denominations with a combined total of 44,000 congregations and 11 million members. Nineteen years later, the United Methodist Church has fewer than 38,000 congregations and slightly over 9 million members.

The most common exception to that pattern

is when two or three congregations—ideally, with the largest of the three smaller than the combined size of the other two—come together with a shared vision of a new tomorrow. A decision is made to create a *new* church, with a *new* name, to meet in a *new* building at a *new* location, with the early arrival of a *new* pastor, and with the expectation that most leaders will be drawn from *new* members, who will function in a *new* organizational structure.

One reason two-congregation mergers so often fail is that they seldom are accompanied by the changes in culture, organization, program, and schedules necessary to accommodate a larger number of people. Creating a completely new parish makes it easier to create the new culture necessary to accommodate more people.

Another reason congregational mergers fail to fulfill expectations is that most are organized around institutional survival, real estate concerns, and compromise—rather than mission and outreach. For those who like quotas, I think a maximum of five congregational *mergers* would be an acceptable quota for the ELCA in its first decade!

### **More creative response**

A far more creative response than merger to the overlapping of parish boundaries might be this: Encourage about 1% of the ELCA's congregations to *relocate* each year. A goal of 110 relocations annually for a decade or more might be an acceptable goal.

Some of those would be congregations that had been in an inappropriate location since day one of their existence. Others would be congregations that had seen social, public policy, and economic forces change what once had been a good location. In other cases relocation would be an alternative to the merger of two Lutheran congregations with buildings at the same intersection.

Encouraging relocations can be a far more economical churchwide strategy than organizing new missions as a way of reaching people with the good news that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior. It also is a more productive approach than seeking congregational mergers.



# In today's world, people often pick a congregation not on the basis of geography but of personality—that is, what a particular church has to offer them.

Another agenda item involves the function of each congregation. I think the ELCA should urge



all 11,000 of its congregations to sharpen and reinforce their distinctive identities and roles. Then, when someone asks what can justify having two Lutheran churches only a block apart, the answer might be: "Zion appeals to a theologically more conservative group

of people than Bethel does." Other possible responses: "St. Paul is a highly liturgical congregation, while St. John is a charismatic parish." "The focus at Trinity is largely on mature adults, while First Lutheran has a countywide ministry with young adults." "The distinctive role of St. Mark Church is its Christian day school, while St. Timothy has the best ministry of music of any parish in this synod." "People who seek the inti-

macy and lay leadership typical of many small parishes can find it at Hope Lutheran, while those who want the variety of programs that only a large congregation can offer may prefer Grace Lutheran." "Faith Lutheran is a Korean congregation, while Gethsemane Lutheran is a racially mixed church." "Bethlehem Lutheran is an issue-centered parish, while Immanuel Lutheran has an exceptionally strong educational ministry for adults."

## Oriented to the future

For a congregation to build a distinctive identity around one or more high-quality specialized ministries—rather than around ethnic heritage or some previous national church body affiliation—can increase its appeal to outsiders, reinforce the morale of members, make the congregation more oriented to the future, and help it respond to the real needs of people.

Of course, there's a general ministry that all congregations must offer. But in today's world, people often seek a church home not on the basis of geographical convenience but in response to the personality and specialized ministries of particular

## Six key concerns for ELCA's agenda

**1. Congregational mergers:** Too often the result is "3 + 2 = 3"—a 150-member congregation merges with a 100-member congregation, and five years later there's one congregation with 150 members. The exception occurs when merging congregations share a vision of a new tomorrow and work toward it in unity.

**2. Relocating congregations:** Encouraging some congregations to relocate is far more economical than relying only on organizing new missions, and it is more productive than most congregational mergers.

**3. Strengthen parish identity:** The ELCA should encourage each of its 11,000 congregations to sharpen and reinforce its distinctive identity and role. Today more and more people seeking a new

church home are less interested in geographical convenience than in the specialized ministries and personality of a parish.

**4. Outreach for new members:** Organizing missions among Koreans, Haitians, Native Americans, and other ethnic groups has proved to be far more effective than quotas.

**5. Starting new congregations:** U.S. Lutherans started an average of 250 congregations per year in the 1880s. Starting 1200 congregations over seven years—an average of 170 per year—is a modest goal for the ELCA.

**6. Meet needs and hurts of the 1990s:** By 1990, churches must offer leadership in promoting the basic values needed to keep a complex, urban, affluent society from destroying itself.





Out of the cold of winter may emerge renewed growth with the coming of spring. Such growth also can happen in the proposed Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

parishes. Indeed, the stronger a congregation's self-identified role and image, the less likely its members will be to talk about the possibility of merging with another congregation. That alternative usually is attractive only to congregations that are unsure of their own role or worried about their own future.

To encourage congregations to build their identity and community image around ministry in the world of today and tomorrow rather than around yesterday's memories, denominational leaders need to emphasize that no one congregation can be all things to all people. That's why it will be appropriate for the new ELCA to be represented by at least two congregations even in some places where Lutherans are relatively sparse.

### **Serious about outreach**

If leaders and members of the ELCA are serious about reaching larger numbers of Blacks, recent immigrants from Latin America and Asia, and other ethnic minorities, first contrast two different strategies:

- One strategy has been followed by the Southern Baptist Convention and the Assemblies

of God. This evangelism strategy has emphasized organizing new congregations to reach people whose ancestors did not come from northern Europe.

- The other strategy, followed by Methodists, Presbyterians, and others, has emphasized the use of quotas in recruiting members of minority groups for appointive and elective offices.

The first approach has been far more effective in reaching and assimilating new local church members from minority groups. But the ELCA will have a quota system. So, if the goal is to reach more people with ties to Latin America or the Pacific rim, ELCA leaders would be well advised to put a high priority on organizing scores of new missions among the Vietnamese, the Hmong, Koreans, Mexican-Americans, Cubans, Mandarin Chinese, Cantonese Chinese, Puerto Ricans, Haitians, Filipinos, Colombians, Native Americans, and others.

### **A high priority**

Leaders of the three uniting Lutheran churches have debated whether the ELCA should start 500 or 1200 new congregations in the first seven



years. To put the situation in perspective, remember that the ELCA will start its life with 4 million confirmed members. In the 1880s, when all Lutheran congregations in the United States had fewer than a million confirmed members, Lutherans were organizing an average of 250 new congregations each year. Between 1890 and 1906, an average of 300 Lutheran congregations were organized each year. Thus, a goal of 1200 congregations over seven years—an average of 170 per year—seems modest, especially if reaching ethnic minorities and newcomers from other parts of the world is a high priority for the new church.

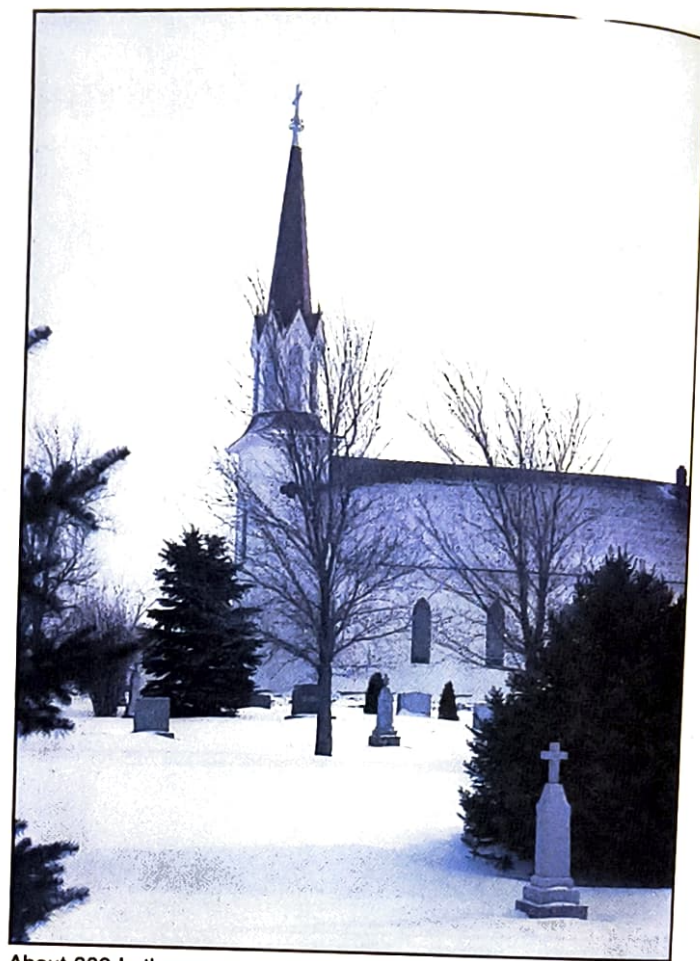
A threefold strategy of (1) encouraging 100 or more congregations each year to make a fresh start at a new location, (2) expecting every parish to define its role and ministry in clear, specific language, and (3) organizing 170–200 new missions annually likely would help the ELCA avoid the declines in membership that have followed most other recent denominational mergers and fulfill the goal of becoming a more inclusive church body.

### Concerns of the 1990s

My last suggestion for the agenda of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is the most speculative. What will be the paramount concerns of people in the 1990s, and will the ELCA be prepared to respond?

At the risk of oversimplifying history, consider these dominant themes of recent decades.

- During the 1950s many parents looked to congregations for the Christian education of their children, and Sunday school attendance boomed.
- The 1960s brought the expectation that the church should and would speak to the social and political issues of the day.
- The 1970s saw an unprecedented demand by adults for serious in-depth study of the Scriptures. During-the-week Bible study groups—few of these groups met on Sunday morning—enrolled tens of millions of people.
- The 1980s brought a surge of interest in the problem of world hunger, and churches have responded in hundreds of creative ways to mobilize resources to help alleviate hunger. The '80s also brought into Protestant congregations unprecedented numbers of former Roman Catholics, as they explored new roads on their spiritual pilgrimage.



About 300 Lutheran congregations were organized annually in the United States between 1890 and 1906. Can the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America reach the goal of 1200 new congregations over seven years? If that happens, declines in membership may give way to growth.

To what needs and hurts will people be asking congregations to respond in the '90s? My guess is that by 1990 we will see a growing expectation that the churches give leadership in expressing and propagating the basic values needed to keep a complex, urban, affluent society from destroying itself. Whatever those needs and hurts, helping congregations identify and respond to them should be a high priority for the ELCA.

With vision and courage, ELCA members and leaders will see their winter in the struggle of uniting three Lutheran churches give way to the warmth and joy of spring as they look to the future together. ■



Lyle Schaller, who describes himself as a "veteran merger watcher," is parish consultant on the staff of the Yokefellow Institute, Richmond, Ind. He is the author of many books, including *Effective Church Planning*, *Getting Things Done*, *Growing Plans*, *Looking in the Mirror*, *Survival Tactics in the Parish*, *Assimilating New Members*, and other works.



# GROWTH FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS

by Timothy K. Wright

The statistics are alarming. Over the past 10 years, membership in both the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America has declined. And according to church-growth experts like Win Arn, Peter Wagner, and Lyle Schaller, the merger resulting in the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) could worsen the decline—although Schaller offers more hope in his article “Six Steps into the Future” (see page 4).

Yes, there is hope. Forty percent of the U.S. population—96 million people—now have no religious affiliation. Thirty-one percent of the population—another 73 million people—are Christian in name only. That means that close to 170 million people in our own country are waiting to hear the good news of Jesus Christ.

## Waiting to be asked

Waiting is exactly what they are doing. In a recent survey, 54% of the people who reported no religious affiliation said they were open to the possibility of joining a church. They said they would visit a church if they were invited.

In other words, the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has an opportunity to reach thousands and even millions of new people. The ELCA can grow—if we help make it happen.

For we are living in a time of overwhelming openness to the gospel, due largely to a major change in how we react to and interact with one another. We have moved from the confrontation of the 1960s and early 1970s to more “relational” attitudes. Negotiation is one of today’s buzzwords. In our high-tech society, relationships are becoming more and more important, as people cry out for a loving, caring, personal touch.

Our nation also is in a period of political change. For good or ill, the political mood seems to have become more conservative since the 1970s.

Experience and research tell us that openness to the gospel and the church is high during these major social, political, and psychological transitions. On average, these periods of increased openness to the gospel have lasted 10–15 years. If this latest period of openness started in 1980, as some people have suggested, we already may be more than halfway through this “prime time” for evangelism.

The implications for the new church are astounding. We have the good fortune to be merging at a time

of overwhelming responsiveness to the gospel. Unchurched people in our communities are waiting eagerly for us to invite them to Christ and the church. The church has what millions of people are searching for: unconditional love and acceptance.

But if we are going to reverse the recent trends in our present churches and make history by growing in the years immediately after a merger, it is imperative that our congregations take seriously the Great Commission to “go make disciples of all peoples . . .” (Matt. 28:19–20). In order to merge with hope, we need to love the world as Jesus did, so that we share the gospel in our local communities, supported by the combined strength of our newly united church body.

## Ways to be involved

Here are some ways congregations can become more involved in the Great Commission:

- Introduce an evangelism-training program like Ed Markquart’s *Witnesses for Christ* (Augsburg) or *The Master’s Plan for Making Disciples* from the Institute for American Church Growth. Both are excellent relational approaches to sharing the gospel. Congregations should establish goals of training at least half their members to be “life-style witnesses” through these or similar programs.

- Get to know the needs of unchurched people in your community, then seek positive, loving ways to meet those needs.

- Pray for your unchurched friends and relatives.

- Develop church-growth consciousness through seminars, books, and conferences, available from ALC offices and from independent church-growth organizations.

We can unite in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with enthusiasm and hope as we shift our focus from ourselves and fix it on the unchurched people all around us. As we reach out in love, inspired by the Spirit, our new church will grow—not for growth’s sake, but for the sake of those millions of people eagerly awaiting the good news of Jesus Christ. ■



Timothy Wright is associate pastor of Community Church of Joy, an American Lutheran Church congregation in Glendale, Ariz.



One-fourth of the 84 passengers  
died on the voyage.

## DANGEROUS TRIP

by Liz Callahan

**T**wo Vietnamese boys emerge from snowsuits at the end of an afternoon of sledding near their foster home in Burnsville, a Minneapolis suburb. A trail of snow pursues their footsteps through a kitchen lit by a subdued midwinter sun.

Against the backdrop of their middle-class home, they seem no different from other young boys enjoying a school holiday. But Tu Tran, 11, and his brother Tai, 9, already have navigated a long, treacherous path from their parents in Ho Chi Minh City—once Saigon—to the American Midwest.

### To escape from Vietnam

Tu and Tai, who in the jargon of refugee agencies are "unaccompanied refugee minors," have witnessed sights most Americans cannot even fathom. Their journey started in October 1982, as they prepared to escape from Vietnam by boat with their father, two other brothers, an uncle, and a husband and wife who were friends of their father. They had split into two groups and were to meet at the boat. The boys' father, brothers, and uncle never arrived at the boat.

Says Tu: "The fresh water ran out when we got to sea. The boat's engine died. We stayed at sea for 25 days and nights. There was no water, and we ran out of food. A Thai boat crew found us and asked if we had any gold or silver. They took all of it and gave us food and water. That was about the 18th day. They pulled us for a while."

Later, when another Vietnamese boat towed theirs for a time, their father's friends jumped aboard that boat, leaving the boys to fend for themselves. Then a Chinese man stole a bag of clothes, their sole possessions.

Eventually, a fishing boat towed them to Malaysia, where Tu and Tai were hospitalized. They were among the lucky ones; one-fourth of the 84 passengers had died on the voyage.

Tu and Tai spent nearly a year in a Malaysian refugee camp before Lutheran Social Service of Minne-

sota matched them with Angie and Richard Strand. Children were no strangers to the Strand household. They already were the parents of five children, including a Vietnamese boy adopted at the age of seven months during Operation Airlift in 1975, and foster parents to three teenaged Vietnamese brothers—one of whom had surgery for a brain tumor the day Tai and Tu arrived in February 1984.

### Learn about roots

The young immigrants shared their culture with the Strands' adopted son, Brad, now 11, who, Angie said, needed to "learn about his roots." Another of the Strands' foster sons, Dung, still lived at home and served as interpreter.

Richard Strand says Tai and Tu "fit in well with the rest of the family." The Strands' nonfoster children ranged in age from eight to 22. "Some people thought we were traveling with a ball team when they saw us at the airport," Angie says.

Unlike Operation Airlift, when young orphans were adopted, unaccompanied youngsters now are placed in foster families, in case their birth parents appear. Tai and Tu correspond with their parents and cousins. They have learned that their father has been released from prison and is ill.

"When we made a commitment, we decided they'd be like our own kids," says Angie. "We try to treat them the same as the others."

Richard thinks Tu sometimes "has periods when he is sad. At first he had headaches that we thought were due to stress." Richard says Tu and Tai make friends easily, do well in school, and enjoy a new hobby: knitting. The Strands' other foster sons were older when they emigrated. That's why their transition was rockier and making friends was harder, Richard thinks.

Since 1979, 6,895 unaccompanied refugee minors have been placed in foster homes. Of those, some 3800 remain in foster care, 865 have been reunited with a





The Strand family includes (from left): Richard, Joshua, Tai, Tu, Brad, and Angie. They live in Burnsville, Minn.

parent or other relative, and 2200 have reached legal age, says William R. Eckhof of the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement's program for unaccompanied minors.

### **Vast majority**

Laury Gordon, regional program coordinator for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) in New York, says teenage boys between 15 and 17—in other words, somewhat older than Tu and Tai when they fled Vietnam—make up the vast majority of unaccompanied refugee minors, and not without a reason: "It's a very dangerous trip, and boys are thought to have a better chance to survive."

Adapting to a new culture is tough for all immigrants and refugees, and the first year is "full of disorganization," says Joan Rudnick, who heads Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota's program for unaccompanied refugee minors. But the transition is much more difficult for children and adolescents because "they're so vulnerable," says Rudnick.

She says 90% of the unaccompanied minors in her agency's program are Vietnamese. Most of the rest

are from Kampuchea (formerly Cambodia), although a few are from Iran, Ethiopia, and Albania. Nationally, up to 75% are Vietnamese, and 20% are from Kampuchea, Eckhof estimates.

Unaccompanied young refugees are regarded as wards of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. That agency asks the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to accept some of the young refugees for resettlement. The INS follows State Department policy, which gives preference to refugees with close family or government ties to the United States. Yet about half of the unaccompanied young refugees have no such ties, says a U.S. refugee affairs officer. Eckhof says the United States accepts between 50 and 70 unaccompanied young refugees each month.

LIRS and the U.S. Catholic Conference are the only U.S. voluntary agencies that find foster homes for unaccompanied young refugees. LIRS works through 22 local programs, such as the one operated by Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota.

Most of the uprooted Vietnamese youths are "boat people" who have escaped. But Vietnam also has an "orderly departure program" for "Amerasians," chil-



# Children and teens often convert pain to anger.

dren with a Vietnamese mother and an American father, who leave Vietnam legally.

"The Asian culture's belief is that the child belongs to the father's family," says Rudnick. "Also, there's the mixed-race issue. Vietnam thinks these are America's kids. This is the first time our government has acknowledged that our men overseas have left kids behind."

Rudnick says the Amerasian children are sent "almost directly from Vietnam, with about a week's stay-over in Thailand," while most other unaccompanied young refugees have spent from six months to three years in refugee camps. The average is one year.

"All the children who enter our program grieve," Rudnick says. "Even though their families may be alive in Vietnam or Iran, they've lost a lot." Rudnick says the Kampuchians have lost the most. Within four years after the Khmer Rouge took over what had been Cambodia, nearly half of the country's seven million people had been massacred or had died of starvation.

Some of the young refugees inflict blame and guilt on themselves for their families' deaths and their own survival. One young Cambodian girl who fled with two siblings during the Khmer Rouge's reign of terror thought it was her fault that a baby died and one of her older siblings disappeared.

## Witnessed atrocities

Rebuilding shattered trust is especially vital for the young refugees from Kampuchea who witnessed atrocities. Says Rudnick: "I can talk about kids who have seen people beheaded, who have seen people . . . cut individuals open and lift their hearts out." Rudnick says "tremendous grief" often begins to overwhelm these children just when they begin to feel safe in the United States. She says adults who experience such trauma "have a base-line knowledge of what it was like before," while "for a child, it's all they can remember."

Children and teens often convert this pain to anger, flailing out at people nearby. "We try to educate the [foster] families that they're not angry at them," explains Rudnick. "When we can begin talking with them and help them touch on the sadness, the loneliness, then the tears come. Once the tears have subsided, the anger also dissipates."

Carol Hammarberg, director of the refugee program of Lutheran Children and Family Service in Philadelphia, said that when the young refugees arrive in the United States, their first need is "to survive—to

learn the language and to become integrated in the community." Once those basic needs are met, they "move to the next stage of making an emotional adjustment." And that, says Hammarberg, is when problems often arise. "Like Americans or members of any race, some will take a look at their problems, and others will not." Hammarberg thinks the young refugees "have better survival skills than we as Americans have. . . . They're kids who have a lot of strength. Maybe it's because they've survived."

Hammarberg tells of a Vietnamese "street boy" who arrived in the United States six years ago wearing an "I dare you" look on his face. He was rude to his foster parents, traveled with the wrong crowd, drank, and skipped school. But the foster parents "knew the kid didn't like himself, and they were willing to work with him, and the caseworker stuck with him, too," says Hammarberg. Now 21, the young man still is living with his family, and he's "bending over backwards to help them. He has a good job as a welder. That kind of success is very gratifying," says Hammarberg.

## Talk about future

Rudnick says she felt as if she'd "won the lottery" when a once-suicidal young refugee suddenly started talking about the future, and when a nine-year-old, blue-eyed Amerasian boy with curly light-brown hair laughed and hugged himself his first day in America. "When asked why, he said he was so happy to be here because he sees all the people around him who look like him," Rudnick says.

Rudnick is certain the young refugees "will add so much to this country in years to come, and not only in creativity and strength. Many of these youngsters are beating the pants off American kids academically. . . . They will repay in taxes so much more than the federal government put in the program. It's an investment."

Ninety percent of the young refugees in LIRS-sponsored programs graduate from high school and go on to postsecondary education. Only a few continue to depend on welfare. Nationally, says Rudnick, there have been "maybe five suicides." Some of the young refugees have found themselves on the wrong side of the law, "but not nearly the percentage you'd get if you took 7000 American kids," Rudnick says.

Laury Gordon of LIRS reflects on those and other statistics and concludes: "Considering the trauma and adjustment, I think it's miraculous." ■



Liz Callahan is a writer, editor, and photographer in the community relations department of the University of Minnesota Hospital and Clinic in Minneapolis. She lives in Plymouth, a Minneapolis suburb.



# Muhlenberg: A rare gift to the church

by Christa R. Klein

**H**enry Melchior Muhlenberg was honored as a patriarch in his own lifetime. In 1987, the bicentennial of his death, he continues to bear this reputation.

- At his death, he was likened to Elijah, for calling the scattered German-Lutheran immigrants to faithfulness in a foreign land.

- In the 19th century, as Lutherans struggled over the meaning of the Augsburg Confession for their faith and practice in the United States, Muhlenberg was remembered for his patient orthodoxy.

- In the 20th century, as we have been preoccupied with the organization of Lutheranism, he is remembered for his wisdom as convenor, in 1748, of the first Lutheran synod, the Ministerium of North America, which in 1792 was renamed the Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States.

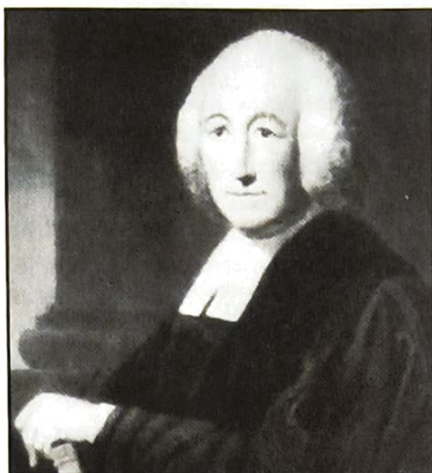
## Meaning of being Lutheran

If Muhlenberg's followers often have verged on remaking this hero in their own image, his life invites the attempt. His struggle as a missionary pastor makes him kin to each generation, as it works out the meaning of being a Lutheran in the United States.

We would not know Muhlenberg without his journals. They reveal his participation in 18th-century Pietism, a movement in all branches of European Protestantism that first aimed to renew the clergy, so they would "awaken" a personal sense of sin and salvation in the people and see to their "edification."

Muhlenberg lived Pietism's examined life. He chose to be a missionary, the vocation that to many seemed truest to the spirit of the movement. At the same time, however, his writings tell of his classically Lutheran concern for an orderly ministry and worship life, to ensure that the people were regularly fed on Word and sacrament, the source of their regeneration.

Since the late 1800s, leading pastors



Henry Melchior Muhlenberg

and theologians in the Ministerium tradition have seen to the publication of Muhlenberg's journals. Their efforts demonstrate their veneration for a person whose ministry blended two historic strands of the Lutheran tradition, Orthodoxy and Pietism.

Through Muhlenberg's journals, we view his ministry and the early history of the Pennsylvania Ministerium, the first root of the coming Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The fervent, unmarried 30-year-old man who accepted the call, in 1741, to the struggling congregations in Pennsylvania, could not have been prepared fully for the challenges that lay ahead. He records his wonder at the religious and material needs of the German immigrants, the closely guarded power of lay organ-

izers in the congregations, the competition with non-Lutheran and irregular Lutheran missionaries, the moral latitude of the frontier, and the demands of travel and language for pastoral work in the middle colonies.

But Muhlenberg had resources to meet the challenge. The missionary institute in Halle, Germany, promised him financial support and the help of other pastors.

## Flexible in new culture

Muhlenberg's work was centered in Pennsylvania, a colony governed by benevolent Quakers committed to religious liberty—and, therefore, a seedbed for many new U.S. denominations.

As a Pietist, Muhlenberg knew how to persuade in preaching and conversation. He used his powers to scold and cajole during congregational dissension and in gathering and strengthening new congregations. His pragmatic view of institutions and language kept him flexible in a new culture. As a son of the north German province of Hannover, he drew on his confessional and liturgical heritage to judge the quality of others' revivalism, to teach the people, and to set in writing the standards for congregational life. Few successors could sustain this blending of traditions.

Muhlenberg also was nourished by his companion in marriage, Anne Maria Weiser, who bore 11 children, managed the household during her husband's frequent absences, and lived with him through their infirmity in old age.

As a pastor, Muhlenberg looked for support in the Ministerium, where he expected his colleagues to meet to share their troubles, receive the Lord's Supper, agree on cases calling for moral judgment, and comfort one another.

Henry Melchior Muhlenberg brought unusual abilities to his ministry, and he made the most of particular opportunities. His heritage reminds us that true patriarchs and matriarchs, known for their faithful and effective leadership, are rare gifts to the church. ■

Next: Ohio Synod (1818)



Gifts We Bring, an 18-part series appearing simultaneously in *THE LUTHERAN STANDARD* and *The Lutheran*, magazine of the Lutheran Church in America, explores the roots of the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Among the subjects in the series, written by Christa R. Klein, Todd Nichol, and several other authors, will be the General Synod, the Norwegian Synod, the Lutheran Free Church, and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches.



Christa R. Klein is an American church historian who now is doing research for the Lilly Endowment, Inc., Hartford Seminary, and the Lutheran Church in America. She is a member of Christ Church, an LCA congregation in York, Pa.



# I THINK



## PASSING THE PEACE:

***"When your heart is not in it, for whatever reason, it becomes phony and meaningless."***

by Margaret Martinson

The "passing of the peace"—that obligatory handshake or hug accompanied by the phrase "Peace be with you"—has become standard operating procedure in most Lutheran congregations. I've tried it, and I don't like it. I remain an active church member only because I'm fortunate enough to be married to my minister—and he knows I would leave the congregation if he used it.

That probably sounds extreme. This certainly is no major point of theology or church doctrine. Yet it is no small issue for those of us for whom the passing of the peace causes discomfort. It shatters the very peace and comfort we have received from the rest of the service. I know people who have left their congregations for that reason.

The majority of pastors, and perhaps even most members of congregations, enjoy this practice. That's hardly surprising for clergy. Most are your basic "hail fellow well met" personalities—or they wouldn't be in the ministry. For them a room full of people is an exciting prospect. They wade in, hand extended.

### Little short of terrifying

For me, a room full of people is only a little short of terrifying. I prefer to find a quiet corner where I can observe the scene, rather than be part of it. I don't dislike people. But I'm uncomfortable in most social gatherings.

Why do so many pastors insist that I imitate their social amiability and ease to worship at their church? I've heard more than one pastor announce the passing of the peace, then say, with a grin, "I know this makes some of you more reserved types uncomfortable, but we'll do it anyway. It's good for you!"

A lifelong struggle with shyness is neither fun nor easy. I wish the church would show a little more compassion for those of us with this not uncommon

problem. Most of us have learned to cope reasonably well with our very real panic. We manage to live our daily lives without outwardly betraying the inner tremblings we fight whenever we are faced with non-family human interaction. Does worship have to be yet another testing ground?

Communion services once were a highlight of conventions and retreats for me. Only then, once or twice a year, did I have a chance to take communion alongside my husband. I always felt a special peace and wholeness on those too rare occasions. Then they began passing the peace—at least that's what they thought they were passing.

For the first few years I tried to overcome my aversion to the practice. Then I had what I thought was a wonderful idea. I was surrounded at these services by sensitive and caring pastors, spouses, and delegates. If I remained seated, with head bowed and hands folded, surely they would honor my wish to observe the peace in my own fashion.

### Forced the unease on me

It didn't work. Each time I tried it, one or more well-intentioned individuals reached down, hauled me to my feet, and forced the unease on me. I no longer attend the communion services at those functions. The distress at the forced interaction is greater than the peace I once treasured.

This active participation isn't mandatory for other parts of the service. I can join in the liturgical responses or choose not to. I can partake of communion or not. I can follow the spoken prayers or offer my private joy or pain to God. Even the offering is optional. So why, even for my own good, must I be forced to participate in the passing of the peace?

The practice need not be abolished. It is very meaningful for some, and that's wonderful. But when your heart is not in it, for whatever reason, it becomes phony and meaningless. I think everyone should be offered a choice. If you wish to participate, stand up, extend your hand or give some other indication that you want to share in this part of the service. Otherwise, remain seated, bow your head, fold your hands, or otherwise indicate your desire for private meditation.

That choice would make worship easier for many of us. It could even ease the way for the return of some members who have wandered off in recent years. Isn't it worth a try? ■

*Margaret Martinson is a homemaker in Forman, N.D., where she is a member of Trinity Lutheran Church.*



# LETTERS

## Learning to face death

Robert Stroud

Reese Air Force Base, Tex.

Thank you so much for bringing us the fine message in "Can We Learn to Face Death as We Face Life?" [Nov. 7, p. 4]. Lawrence Holst dealt with the difficult subject of allowing people to die in a sensitive and balanced manner. We who have been personally involved in helping families face this dilemma can benefit from his insights.

In truth, the decision to allow a comatose, vegetative individual to leave this life and more fully inherit the promise of the resurrection (in the case of a Christian) is difficult for those who must make it. As Thomas Mann has said, "A man's dying is more the survivor's affair than his own." In light of this, we should all make as clear as possible to our loved ones our personal desires should we ever find ourselves in such a state.

The church needs to face up to this increasingly common tragedy. Holst's article offers a fine contribution toward this end.

Vivian Martin

Norwalk, Calif.

I am going to pass the article on to my children. We have periodically discussed what to do if such a situation would occur in my life. Thanks for putting the words into a loving and caring way; it is positive for the dying and those who would live afterwards.

Iva M. Perkins

Gardena, Calif.

I am 74 years old now and in excellent health. If, in my 80s or 90s, I should have a serious illness, I think I would weigh considerations very carefully before deciding to even enter a hospital. Once in a hospital, one has *no* control over one's own body. Perhaps it is better to face death at home without all the "plugs" that cannot be pulled.

## Teenage turmoil

Tracy Ferrell

Woodbridge, Va.

I am 16 years old and disagree with many points made by the authors [Nov. 21, p. 3]. Apparently, it has been so long since they were teenagers that they have forgotten what it is like.

The authors say all teenagers "are terrified of seeming different" and "long to blend into the protective foliage of the group." This point is repeated throughout the article. It is obvious that neither of the authors spoke to any teenagers before they wrote the article. I pride myself on being different and dread being just like everyone else. Most of my friends also feel the same way.

So, please do not lump all teenagers into one group. This simply reinforces the false notion the media already conveys

## DO YOU REALLY MEAN THAT?

"Typos,"—that is, mistakes on the computer keyboard and typewriter or errors in typesetting—seem to lurk in the most surprising places, defiantly challenging any proofreader or editor to find them. Here are two noted recently:

- The latest edition of *Church Music Memo* for Lent, Holy Week, and Easter, in a listing of recommended anthems, includes: "Surely He Has Borne Our Briefs."

- "Giver of immoral gladness, fill us with the light of day" is the way one line of "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee" reads on a hymnsheet submitted by Dr. Walton F. Berton, coordinating pastor of Christ Lutheran Church in Long Beach, Calif. He suggests that those using the sheet had to take a "laugh-break" between the hymn's first and second stanzas.

about today's teens. We are all individuals, and thus you cannot make a generalized statement about us.

Rod Broding

Pine River, Minn.

Excellent article! Should be very helpful to parents. Should be "must reading" for most adults. Let's have more articles like this in the future.

## Where are the Lutherans?

Ella Baker

Northfield, Minn.

As I began to read through the Nov. 21 issue of THE LUTHERAN STANDARD, I noted the first article by Catholics, then one by a Methodist, then another by a Methodist. I turned back to the cover to make certain I had the right magazine. We have many fine writers in our own ALC who are anxious to be heard. Why not let them be heard and read?



## Communion practices

Mark E. Chapman

Lancaster, Pa.

I am shocked and appalled beyond belief that William Poovey would, without hesitation, make the blanket endorsement of sub-Christian theology and piety he does in writing, "If you speak to your pastor, he or she will give you grape juice (as substitute for wine in communion) if there is reason for it" [Nov. 7, p. 29].

Maybe this is common eucharistic practice in the ALC, but this LCA pastor certainly would not do so! The true elements of bread and wine (*not* grape juice!) are the earthly elements over which our Lord made his promise of presence and forgiveness; you may give grape juice in place of wine, but then you give a human idol in the place of the true sacrament, and so give *no* sacrament, *no* Christ, and *no* forgiveness.

The church has always held to the doctrine of concomitance, which teaches that the whole Christ is present even in only one of the elements. Rather than profaning Christ's holy sacrament by serving grape juice, pastors should deal with concerned alcoholics by communing them with the bread only.

As for the sloppy pseudotheology taught by Dr. Poovey, it is only one more example of ALC laxity that makes this LCA pastor so fearful of the impending merger.

Michael R. Rothaar

Dearborn Heights, Mich.

Dr. Poovey appeals to historic precedent and says, "You can't expect change overnight." But many of us understand the issue to be one of obedience to our Lord's command to "do this." I hope we are not seeking to change the scriptural warrant for our practice, overnight or otherwise.

Dianne S.

Minneapolis, Minn.

It is attitudes similar to Poovey's that have more than once made me, a recovering alcoholic, feel uncomfortable enough to abstain from communion. How nice it would be if all congregations affirmed the abstainers, whatever their reasons, by offering grape juice.

## Getting older

Dorothy Tallman

McGregor, Iowa

By using biblical references, Rolland Reece has done a fine job of proving that life for older persons can be ho-hum [Oct. 10, p. 22]. The only criticism I would make is that he has written it 20 years too soon. I am a firm believer that the years of maturity should be challenging, inspiring, and a marvelous time to do the great things that you found impossible in earlier life. Think of the experience you have, the untapped wells of creativity that are just waiting for you to explore.



# NEWSFRONT

## Budget troubles hit proposed new church

- **Cut made in estimated churchwide income**
- **Churchwide program must shrink**

Although the start of the proposed Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is still a year away, dark clouds of budget shortages already loom large on the new church's horizon.

The dilemma of dollars—or, more specifically, a serious lack of money—confronted the Churchwide Transition Team in Chicago Nov. 23–25.

The 10-member team, charged with the task of bringing together the operations of the American Lutheran Church (ALC), Lutheran Church in America (LCA), and Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC), confronted some hard facts on the budget's "bottom line." Members of the team were told that:

- \$103 million is anticipated for the ELCA in the 14-month period beginning Jan. 1, 1988, and running through Feb. 28, 1989.

- In 1986, for a 12-month period, the combined churchwide program income for the three uniting churches was \$111 million.

- If the 1988 estimate of \$103 million were adjusted to a 12-month basis, the amount would be \$88.3 million, representing a \$23 million drop from the 1986 total of funds available for churchwide efforts.

### Initial requests

Last spring, initial budget requests for ELCA churchwide divisions, offices, and commissions for 1988 came to \$144 million, a figure pared to about \$124 million in three days of consultation on the money needed to fulfill the mandates assigned to the new churchwide structure.

Churchwide income projections for 1988 at that time amounted to \$119 million.

Factors leading to the lowered estimate for churchwide income include:

- more money being retained in ELCA synods, with an anticipated average split of 55% from congregational contributions for churchwide mission and 45% for synod work.

- about \$6 million in higher costs to congregations for the ELCA's new pension-benefits program.

- \$6 million or more needed for funding medical benefits for LCA retirees.

- a \$5 million reduced projection for hunger contributions, based on the 1986 experience.

Higher costs for churchwide offices in the Chicago metropolitan area than those in earlier projections also must be faced by budget makers. These costs likely will be more than double the \$1.5 million figure used in the initial budget planning last spring.

The Rev. Leonard Sibley of Philadelphia, program and budget development director for the Churchwide Transition Team, said, "Some of our fiscal problems come out of the ELCA structure." More synods (65 in the ELCA compared with the ALC's 19 districts, the LCA's 30 synods, and the AELC's

four synods, for a combined total of 53), three new churchwide units, and a more costly pattern of governance put pressure on the budget.

Declared Elwyn Ewald of St. Louis, an AELC member of the Transition Team's finance work group: "We don't have enough money to do everything the way we've done it before. We've got to bite the bullet."

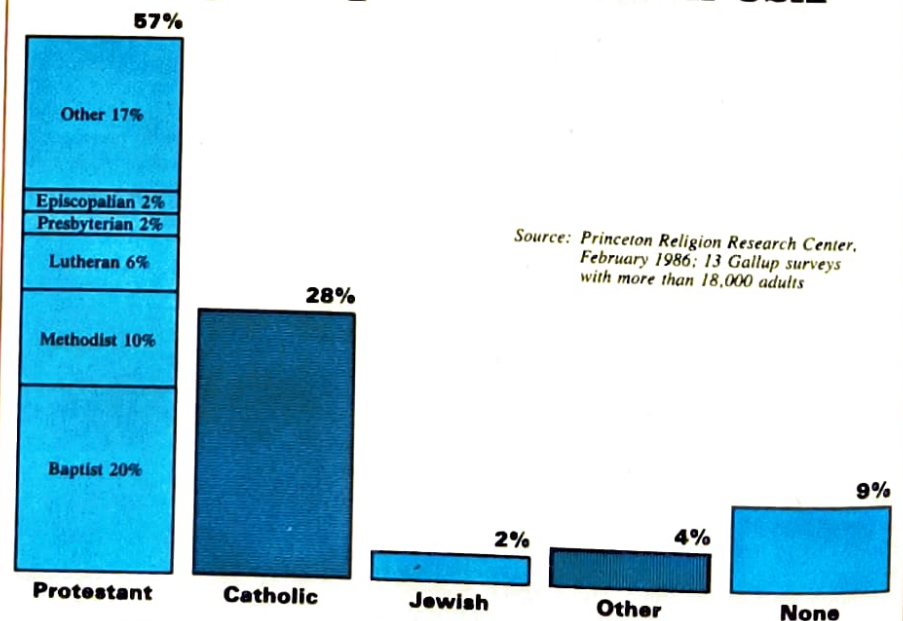
Staff teams have been summoned to meet this month to try to develop budgets in keeping with the sharply slashed estimates of income.

### Chicago site

The Transition Team hopes in the near future to narrow the search for a Chicago-area headquarters site. In late November, the team visited several examples of the types of facilities available.

The Transition Team faces the challenge of having ELCA churchwide offices in Chicago operational in December 1987. That means making final site decisions no later than March 1, according to the Rev. James L. Wylie, who chairs the site committee.

## Religious preferences in USA





# Visit fosters ongoing Nicaraguan, American friendships

by Phyllis Mensing

Fabio Rosales learned about skiing, ice skating, and Minnesota Gophers football. Rick and Jan Stanton learned about the Spanish language. But that wasn't all.

Rosales and the Stantons, together with eight other Nicaraguan students and their hosts, discovered each other during a three-week visit to Minnesota in October and November. They learned that despite different political viewpoints and backgrounds, they are family.

The visit was sponsored by Project Minnesota-Leon, an organization set up two years ago to promote friendship between Minnesota and Leon, the capital city of the state of Leon in northwestern Nicaragua. The students, who range in age from 12 to 20, were chosen by local school and community organizations. Families from eight Lutheran congregations, as well as Roman Catholic and Methodist parishes, served as hosts.

"These were very typical students from very typical, working families," said Mary Foster, a coordinator of Project Minnesota-Leon. "We didn't just bring in the best and the brightest."

Alba Reyes, 18, an industrial electronics student, was the most political of the group, and her letter calling President Reagan a "fascist pig" made Wally Ostlie of Lino Lakes wonder whether he and his family should reconsider their decision to welcome her into their home.

Reyes also was uneasy about how she would be received. But the fears on both sides evaporated after they met. "We enjoyed her very much," said Ostlie, a member of Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Circle Pines. "She enjoyed running from house to house trick-or-treating with our 12-year-old. Even though she had so many heavy things on her mind, she seemed to have fun."

Ostlie added, "We had no understanding, no real sensitivity to the Nicaraguan situation. I tend to follow



Above: Participants in Project Minnesota-Leon experienced a wide range of emotions, from Maria Jose's joy in bursting a piñata to the sadness (right) of Fabio Rosales and Jan Stanton prior to his departure.



what the government does, generally, but I really feel now that in Nicaragua we are doing it wrong. We should be working to help them improve their standard of living instead of supporting what seems to be a minority [the contras]."

As for Reyes, he said, "she sees us as individuals, and, even though we seem to have a lot of affluence, she and the others know we feel concern for them."

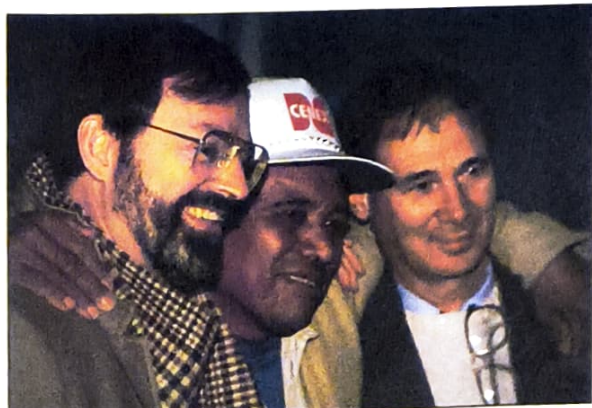
Though the focus of the trip was not political, the reality of the ongoing war between forces of Nicaragua's Sandinista government and the U.S.-backed contra rebels couldn't be ignored:

- when Alba saw a deer hunter dressed in fatigues, she wondered whether he worked for the government;
- the wife of Cano, the group chaperone, was killed by the contras; and
- Fabio, a 17-year-old agronomy student, said he expects to join his three brothers in military duty.

The Stantons, members of Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, already are planning a trip to see Fabio. "We have been actively opposing the contra war for several years," Rick Stanton said. "But having Fabio here has just increased our desire to do something. If he should ever be killed, I don't know what we would do."

"This project helped uncover the real friendship that exists between the people of Leon and the people of Minnesota, despite different governments, cultures, misunderstandings, and war," concluded Foster.

*Phyllis Mensing is a staff member with the Office of Communication and Mission Support for the American Lutheran Church.*



**Smiles and hugs traverse miles, differences**

Cano (center), the chaperone for nine Nicaraguan youth who recently visited Minnesota, said his best memory was the way host families opened themselves and their homes.



# Farisani: Modern-day Jeremiah remains imprisoned

by Daniel Cattau

T. Simon Farisani, a Black South African Lutheran pastor, lives a faith of biblical proportions. No stranger to torture, he is back in prison.

Family, church officials worldwide, and human rights organizations fear for his life (*see box this page*). No one has seen Farisani since Nov. 22, except his captors in Venda, a nominally independent homeland in South Africa.

Yet I can hear and see Farisani singing as he did from the pulpit during a sweltering commencement ceremony last May at a Lutheran seminary in Philadelphia:

*I'll walk tall in Jesus' name. . . .*

*Blankets smelling, I'll sleep tall in Jesus' name. . . .*

*Food with worms, I'll eat tall in Jesus' name. . . .*

*Wounds all over, I'll sing tall in Jesus' name. . . .*

The 39-year-old Farisani, a mild and courteous man, can mix words of pain and praise as no one can. He preaches and speaks with the fire of a Jeremiah, only with a softer touch.

During an October visit to the United States, he told a church audience: "You are a superpower. Why don't you have a super-Christian message?" He noted that some White U.S. church leaders would fit with the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa.

Then, in a self-deprecating tone, he added, "I hate to say too much or the Lord will have nothing to say in praise or condemnation in the Second Coming."

## A prophetic voice

He strongly criticized South Africa during trips through the Far East, western Europe, and North America on behalf of the Lutheran church and Amnesty International, an organization that monitors human rights.



**Pastor T. Simon Farisani**

He is particularly disliked by the Black authorities in Venda and the White leaders in Pretoria for his criticism of the homeland policy that creates separate states for Blacks, the forced removal of Blacks from their homes, and apartheid.

Authorities in Venda, located in northeastern South Africa near Zimbabwe, apparently have charged Farisani with "obstruction of justice," said a South African embassy official in Washington during a Dec. 4 interview. Initially, the Vandan authorities gave no reason for Farisani's recent arrest under their security laws. They have claimed in the past that the pastor has connections with "terrorist groups."

This is not the first time Farisani has been detained. Starting with his work as a seminary student with the Black Consciousness Movement led by Steve Biko—who died in a South Africa prison in 1977—Farisani has been imprisoned four times in the last 10 years for a total of nearly 400 days.

## Tortured to near death

He was tortured and nearly died during a November 1981 to January 1982 imprisonment by the ruthless security police in Venda, a Black-run state financed and controlled largely by White South Africans.

Farisani was detained but never formally charged after the bombing of the Sibasa police station in Venda, where two security police were killed.

"They banged my head against the wall, pulled off my hair and my beard—karate chops, judo chops, all the combinations," he said during a 1983 interview. "I lost consciousness many times. There was blood all over and in the evening, when I regained consciousness, they asked me to scrub the blood on the floor and to use the same cloth to wipe the blood off my body. I was swollen. My head was swollen, and I was breathing through the ears because my eardrums were punctured. I had holes in my knees I could put my fingers in."

He was taken later to a "more sophisticated" torture room, where his torturers administered electric shocks

## Many protest detention

Students at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn., have sent more than 600 letters to the South African embassy in Washington, D.C., and to U.S. Secretary of State George Schultz asking for the release of the Rev. T. Simon Farisani (*see story this page*).

Farisani is viewed as a friend of the college, since he is close to another South African who was a campus pastor at the ALC school during the 1984-85 school year. Students said they hoped "that people will use their own initiative to write or call [the South African embassy and Secretary Schultz] as well."

Others who have written high-ranking government officials of South Africa and Venda to plead on Farisani's behalf include the three leaders of the uniting Lutheran churches; the Lutheran World Federation; Lutheran World Relief; Amnesty International; Church World Service (the relief and development agency of the National Council of Churches); the U.S. State Department; and many others.

Regina Farisani, the pastor's wife, has given a Bible, food, and clothing to Vandan police authorities for her husband. She has not seen him since he was arrested and doesn't know if he received the articles.



to him while he was standing naked in a pool of water. "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!" the police would taunt the pastor. "Dean, you are a man of God. He's going to help you."

He was hospitalized for several months after his release from prison in February 1982. Farisani won a \$5000 settlement in a lawsuit against the Venda government for his injuries.

After his release, Farisani showed no outward signs of anger toward his torturers. Yet he had changed. Farisani had, in his own words, "looked into the grave" and was well beyond it now.

"No one can kill me," he said at a dinner in Budapest, Hungary, during the 1984 Lutheran World Federation assembly. "I have already died."

Yet the Venda authorities are intent upon discrediting and quieting this very lively and outspoken "dead" man, and one day they may succeed.

### Reminders of Bonhoeffer

Last spring Farisani was the target of an attempt by Venda authorities to remove him from his position as dean of part of the northern diocese of the predominantly Black Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Africa. Particularly galling to the authorities was his leadership in the Ecumenical Confessing Fellowship in Venda, modeled after the Confessing Church in Germany during the 1930s, which opposed the Nazi regime of Adolf Hitler.

Several leaders of the Confessing movement were imprisoned, most notably the theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who paid for his opposition to Hitler with his life.

And now, each night Farisani's friends and church members gather for prayers at his home in the Beuster church center, where he gave himself over to Venda authorities after barricading himself, his wife, and three children, ages 2 to 7, in the parsonage bedroom (see *L.S.*, Dec. 12, page 19). There, they can recall his words that place nightmarish events in the perspective of a prophet: "There's no way anyone can convince me that evil can triumph in the final analysis. . . . I would rather fail temporarily in a cause that will ultimately succeed than succeed temporarily in a cause that will ultimately fail."

*Daniel Cattau is director of the Lutheran Council news bureau in New York City.*

## QUICK LOOK

**THE DETENTION** of a second pastor (see story on pages 18-19) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa (ELCSA) came as part of an attempt by South African authorities to stop a national boycott of White businesses, according to South African sources close to the American Lutheran Church. The Rev. James Knutson, secretary for Africa with the ALC's world-mission unit, said the Rev. Molefe Tsele, 30, "was not working to overthrow the government." Tsele, a pastor in Soweto who works for nonviolent change, "was involved in planning forms of alternative education to replace the present system," Knutson said.

**AN ALC MISSIONARY COUPLE** who served the only integrated ELCSA congregation has been told by South African church leaders not to return from home furlough—despite appeals from the ALC and the congregation they serve on the edge of downtown Johannesburg. No reason was given by ELCSA's church council for its decision not to recall the Rev. Thomas Soeldner, 42, and his wife, Joyce, 43, and their four children, of Port Townsend, Wash. ALC world-mission officials indicated that the action apparently stems from Tom Soeldner's participation in a November 1985 meeting at Germiston, South Africa, that involved a number of African pastors and expatriate missionaries. The group called for a Lutheran Confessing Fellowship to promote unity among Lutherans in resisting apartheid, and participants questioned what they perceived as ELCSA's lack of response to the country's crisis. The meeting disturbed some ELCSA members, especially Bishop Manas Buthelezi, under whom Soeldner served. The action comes four months after the Rev. Brian Burchfield, another ALC missionary, was ordered by the South African government to leave that country. And another missionary couple, the Rev. Dan and Mary Selbo, were denied visas by South African authorities to enter the country and serve at the request of ELCSA. ALC missionaries Rolf and Viola Aaseng continue to serve at Umpumulo in Natal, and the Rev. Phil and Lou-Marie Knutson at Onverwacht in Orange Free State.



**THE REV. LEON SULLIVAN**, author of a widely used code of ethics for businesses operating in South Africa, said he will abandon his code because it is no longer useful. At least 184 U.S. companies have adopted the code, which calls for desegregation in the workplace and equal pay for equal work. Instead, he will work for a "total economic embargo" and complete U.S. corporate disinvestment if the system of apartheid is not significantly dismantled by May 31, 1987. A Dec. 10 report in the *Washington Post* said Sullivan, a Baptist pastor in Philadelphia, accused the pope, Israel, the World Council of Churches, and President Reagan of failing to pressure the Pretoria government to end apartheid.

**A PASTOR** of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia, the Rev. Gabriel Amupolo, 63, was shot to death Nov. 25 by unknown armed men near his home at Othika in northern Namibia. Although South African Radio reported that guerrillas of the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO)—the Namibian liberation movement—had killed Amupolo, South African rifle shells were discovered near the body. One church official said that the consensus of the nearly 4000 mourners who attended the pastor's funeral was that the South African Radio reports were wrong, and that SWAPO was not the party to blame for the murder.

**AUGUSTANA COLLEGE**, Rock Island, Ill., won its fourth consecutive NCAA Division III national football championship Dec. 13, defeating Salisbury (Md.) State 31-3 in the Amos Alonzo Stagg Bowl in Phenix City, Ala. The team (12-0-1) extended its unbeaten streak to 50 games—including a 41-7 victory in the divisional semifinals this year over Concordia College (ALC), Moorhead, Minn.—which meant that the 13 seniors on the team never lost a football game while attending the Lutheran Church in America school. Concordia College ended its successful season with an 11-2 record. Pacific Lutheran University (ALC), Tacoma, Wash., made its sixth appearance in eight years in the NAIA Division II quarterfinals, losing in overtime 27-21 to eventual champion Linfield, and ending its season with 8 wins and 2 losses. PLU won that same national championship in 1980 and was runner-up in 1983 and 1985 (see *L.S.*, Nov. 21, page 28).



# News briefs

## 100TH CONGRESS

### Survey shows varied faiths

The highly varied religious composition of the U.S. Congress represents "the vitality and diversity of the religious enterprise in America, as well as the tolerance and fairmindedness of the voters," according to Albert J. Menendez, research director for Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

After the group's biennial survey, he said that those who want to "impose an unconstitutional religious test for public office are not likely to win favor with the American people."

The greatest changes in representation occurred for the Baptists, who increased five members to a total of 54. Episcopalians, on the other hand, experienced the largest decrease—7—to a total of 60. The number of Lutherans remained at 23.

Roman Catholics are the most numerous—141. Some others include: United Methodists, 74; Presbyterian, 57; Jewish, 37; United Church of Christ, 16; Mormons, 11; and Unitarians, 10.

## CLERGY ROLLS

### LCA accepts other clergy

For the first time, clergy ordained by other Christian churches can transfer into the ordained ministry of the Lutheran Church in America even though they have not been ordained by a Lutheran church.

Clergy of denominations that "believe, teach, and con-



**Three Lutheran bishops honored for new-church work**

Presiding Bishop David W. Preus of the American Lutheran Church (right) accepted an award from Religion in American Life (RIAL), presented by Dr. Arie R. Brouwer, general secretary of the National Council of Churches. Preus, along with Bishop James R. Crumley Jr. of the Lutheran Church in America and Bishop Will L. Herzfeld of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, received an Earle B. Pleasant Award for distinguished leadership in the creation of the proposed new Lutheran church.

fess the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian creeds," will be considered for transfer to the LCA clergy roster after successfully completing an examination process.

The practice does not dilute Lutheran teaching about ordination nor the LCA's commitment to Lutheran teachings, according to Dr. William G. Rusch, LCA director for ecumenical relations. He noted that the number of denominations that believe, teach, and confess the three creeds is very small.

However, he said, the action reflects "the continuing maturity of the ecumenical movement" and shows the LCA is "constructively struggling to incorporate the insights of the ecumenical movement into its faith and life."

## LUTHERAN MEN

### Member goal set at million

One million members by the year 2000 is the goal set for the men's organization of the new Lutheran church.

The group, forming in

1988, seeks to involve 100,000 men by 1990.

The national conventions of the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America approved a men's organization in August.

A statement of purpose for the group calls for it "to afford men the opportunity for spiritual growth and development of an evangelical attitude through the study of Scripture and prayerful reflection."

## REFUGEES SETTLED

### Lutherans aid U.S. allies

Two hundred and nine Montagnards (pronounced mon-ten-YARDS) from mountain tribes in Vietnam—159 men, 17 women, and 33 children—have been resettled in three North Carolina cities by the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), working through Lutheran Family Services of North Carolina (LFSNC).

The Montagnards fought alongside U.S. Green Berets during the Vietnam war.

Some 100 U.S. veterans were on hand to greet them.

LIRS was selected by the U.S. State Department as the sole voluntary agency to perform the resettlement, in recognition of its "excellent record of resettling refugees."

LIRS chose North Carolina for the resettlement because of the availability of jobs, affordable housing, pleasant climate, and enthusiastic network of church support.

Most of the Montagnards are Christian. Rmah Dock, 45, leader of the group, summarized their long trek: "God has pity for us, and we know God helps us know what is peace and freedom."

## CHURCH FIRES

### Electricity, cult blamed

An early morning fire Oct. 29 at Lutheran Church of Martha and Mary (ALC) in Mount Prospect, Ill., caused a half-million dollars damage, including a new \$75,000 organ which was to be dedicated the following Sunday.

Pastor Norwood Knutson said the cause of the fire—which was almost fully covered by insurance (see story on pages 25-26)—was thought to be electrical.

Knutson praised St. Raymond Roman Catholic Church there for its special offering of \$3000.

Members of a Satanic cult claim that they started a fire after breaking into Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church (ALC) in El Paso, Tex., the afternoon of Oct. 27, causing \$21,000 damage and destroying ceiling speakers and a small electronic organ in the choir room.

Pastor Mark McLagan said the intruders "stacked Bibles in a pile and burned them." Several fires were set in the church building, which was dedicated in 1984.



# Evangelism gets ALC board action

Evangelism as part of seminary education gained attention at the semi-annual meeting of the American Lutheran Church (ALC) Board for Theological Education and Ministry.

The ALC's general convention, last August, asked that the theological education board encourage seminaries "to begin a process of establishing a chair of evangelism at each of the American Lutheran Church seminaries."

Under a plan approved by the board, the church's theological education division will seek descriptions of what currently is being done in education for evangelical outreach at Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, Calif., Trinity Lutheran Theological Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, and Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa.

New possibilities will be studied and their costs estimated in planning for the future, according to Dr. Walter R. Wietzke, director of the ALC's Division for Theological Education and Ministry.

A report on proposed ways to carry out the convention's resolution is planned for the ALC Church Council meeting in March.

The board, Dr. Wietzke said, is seeking to honor fully the expectation of the church expressed in the resolution. But being explored now is the question of whether faculty "chairs" are the best means of implementing the concern, he explained.

The nine-member board met in Austin, Tex., Nov. 3-4 to visit Wartburg Seminary's branch there, that focuses on developing pastoral leadership especially equipped for ministry in Hispanic settings.

## 'Important place' of seminary

The board gave extensive attention to the financial situation of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, which is jointly owned by the ALC, Lutheran Church in America (LCA), and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches.

## LCA seminary enrollment drops

Enrollments in seminaries of the Lutheran Church in America declined approximately 9% in the past three years, according to a report by Dr. Martin H. Smith, director for studies of the LCA's Division for Professional Leadership. The decline in 1986, including figures for the three seminaries owned jointly with the American Lutheran Church (see story this page), was 2.5%.

For the first time in six years, Smith noted, the number of women enrolling in LCA seminaries dropped. Statistics indicate the drop was caused by fewer women entering seminary rather than women dropping out of theological education.

The number of men enrolled in LCA seminaries increased (3%) for the first time in six years.

Two LCA seminaries—Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg—experienced growth in their Master of Divinity programs of 9.7% and 6.6%, respectively.

The "important place" of Pacific Seminary in the life of the church was reaffirmed by the board. At the same time, the board urged the seminary's "constituents to give continued and increased support" to help the school face "the present situation of financial exigency."

A large graduating class last spring and an entering class with fewer than anticipated students contributed to an enrollment drop of 25 persons in the Master of Divinity program—a decline of 17%. The seminary's total enrollment in all programs this year is 142. At the same time, budget shortfalls have raised concern at Pacific Seminary, the ALC board was told.

Meanwhile, total enrollments reported in all programs for the three other ALC-related seminaries were:

- Luther Northwestern, 749, down from 771 last year;
- Trinity, 274, a decrease from 289 a year earlier; and
- Wartburg, 244, compared with 248 in 1985.

In other action, the board:

- approved an increase in tuition for Pacific Seminary from \$2150 to \$2300 this month, pending concurrence by the LCA's Division for Professional Leadership;

- raised tuition for Luther Northwestern, Trinity, and Wartburg seminaries from \$1950 to \$2100 next September, pending LCA concurrence;

- asked for a detailed report from the Luther Northwestern Board of Directors on the rationale, costs, and projected income for a proposed doctoral program; and

• named the Rev. Glenn Nycklemoe, a board member from Austin, Minn., as representative on the presidential search committee of Luther Northwestern Seminary.

## Proposal for Phoenix college referred to ELCA

Because higher education boards of the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America took different positions on a proposal for a Lutheran college in Phoenix, the question of how to proceed will have to be resolved by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

The ALC Board for College and University Services (DCUS) decided that the idea of a college in Phoenix should be studied further. The LCA's Division for Mission in North America management committee voted to postpone further study until after the new church is organized.

The Rev. Dennis V. Griffin, vice president for college relations at St. Olaf College (ALC), Northfield, Minn., and chair of the feasibility study group that proposed in April continuing the process toward a Lutheran college in Phoenix, said, "If one could simply pick up the campus of one of our ALC colleges and move it to Phoenix, we believe it would succeed very well."

The report noted, however, some serious issues that remain, including the need for a ground swell of local support, a proper site, and funding.



## DMS demands payment of \$150,000 from new church

The Denominational Ministry Strategy (DMS), a pro-labor activist group that disrupted the 1986 national convention of the Lutheran Church in America (see *L.S.*, Sept. 26, page 4), has threatened to disrupt the constituting convention of the new Lutheran church.

In a letter from DMS chief strategist Charles Honeywell to the Transition Team of the three uniting churches, DMS said that in the next five years, it wanted from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

- reinstatement of two defrocked clergy who are DMS members—Douglas Roth and Daniel Solberg;
- \$150,000 to fund DMS causes;
- a special interest conference in the new church to be "permanently designated as a place for DMS prophetic ministry";
- development of two locations—Clairton and Hampton, Pa.—as places for DMS prophetic ministry; and
- the integration of DMS concerns into theological education.

Honeywell said that if the group's

demands are met, its members will "leave our focus off the Lutheran church." Otherwise, he said, "we will change the focus for the convention in a stronger manner than we even did in Milwaukee." Honeywell warned: "Sooner or later there will be a bloodstain on the church, not just an uncomfortable thorn in the side."

No action was taken by the Transition Team.

Some 10 weeks earlier, Dr. John Tietjen, president of Christ Seminary-Seminex in Chicago, a school of the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, declared in a letter to Roth that the former pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Clairton is "outside the kingdom of heaven and not a member of the body of Christ."

Roth, present at the AELC national convention in August, sought placement of himself and Solberg on the AELC clergy roster. For Tietjen, any possibility of such reconciliation disintegrated when Roth participated in the DMS-sponsored disruption of the LCA national convention.

## Pension board OK's reduced contributions

Clergy and lay workers who were enrolled as of Nov. 18, 1986, in the supplemental major medical-dental plans of the American Lutheran Church will make reduced contributions to the plans in 1987.

The ALC Board of Pensions, meeting Nov. 17-18, voted to reduce the 1987 annual contribution for participants in Supplement Plan I to \$100 for a single person and \$250 for a family. The contribution for Supplement II participants will be \$200 for single persons and \$550 for families.

Those enrolling after Nov. 18 will pay the regular annual contribution of \$250 per single person and \$450 per family for Supplement I and \$300 per single person and \$600 per family for Supplement II.

The supplemental plans had 4,435 participants at the end of November.

The board voted to credit 11% interest, compounded annually, to pension accounts. It also announced that pensioners will receive half their total pension income for 1986 in July in the form of lump sum checks, and the remainder in the form of a 2.28% increase in monthly pensions beginning in February.

In other actions, the board:

- allocated the 18% contribution rate paid by employers into the ALC plans, specifying 12% for participants' basic pension accounts, 5% for major medical-dental and disability plan benefits, and 1% to fund the family protection plan benefits; and

- set guidelines to provide major medical-dental coverage, permanent disability, and family protection coverage for unemployed lay workers and clergy seeking call whose income is below the national poverty level and who have no other means of support.

## Commitment to Mission tops \$30 million

Individual pledges, congregational goals, and Mission Partner gifts have passed the three-quarter mark toward Commitment to Mission's (CTM) \$40 million goal for special mission needs, including the start-up of new congregations. As of Nov. 21, the total was \$30,020,645. Reports from 41% of the congregations of the American Lutheran Church indicated that \$21,598,722 of the \$30-plus million represented established goals.



"Reaching \$30 million is a significant milestone in the effort to strengthen the mission outreach of the American Lutheran Church," said Dr. Loren J. Anderson, CTM director. "As we enter the fourth-quarter stretch toward the program goal, suc-

cessful completion of the designated giving phase is in sight."

Two districts have surpassed their minimum goals for the designated giving phase of the program. The Southern Wisconsin District, with a \$2,500,000 suggested minimum goal, has congregational goals and individual pledges totaling \$2,577,960. The Southern District has \$2,562,242 in gifts and pledges toward its \$2,250,000 minimum goal.

The Lutheran Church in America is conducting a similar campaign, called One in Mission, and has raised pledges totaling more than \$31 million toward its goal of \$60 million. The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches is raising \$3 million in another campaign.

The Iowa District has the highest goal-and-pledge total reported to date—\$3,324,564—toward its minimum goal of \$4,250,000, the highest goal among the ALC's 19 districts.

Two other districts have goal-and-pledge totals of over \$2 million: Illinois and South Pacific.



## Kanten links farm crisis, Third World

The severity of the farm crisis in the Midwest is forcing many rural Lutherans into activist roles similar to those of poverty-stricken Christians in Third-World countries, according to Anne Kanten, associate commissioner of agriculture for Minnesota and a member of the American Lutheran Church. She made the remarks in New York City, where she spoke at a conference called by the National Council of Churches and Riverside Church to "bring the farm crisis home to the city."

She said that rural poverty and problems stemming from it have "radicalized" Christianity in much the same way that poor living conditions have led some Latin American Christians to espouse "liberation theology."

"With the large farm monopolies today, many farmers are being excluded. Middle America is now our own Third World.... I'm not sure how long this will go on without a massive uprising of the people," Kanten said.

### 'Whole new renaissance'

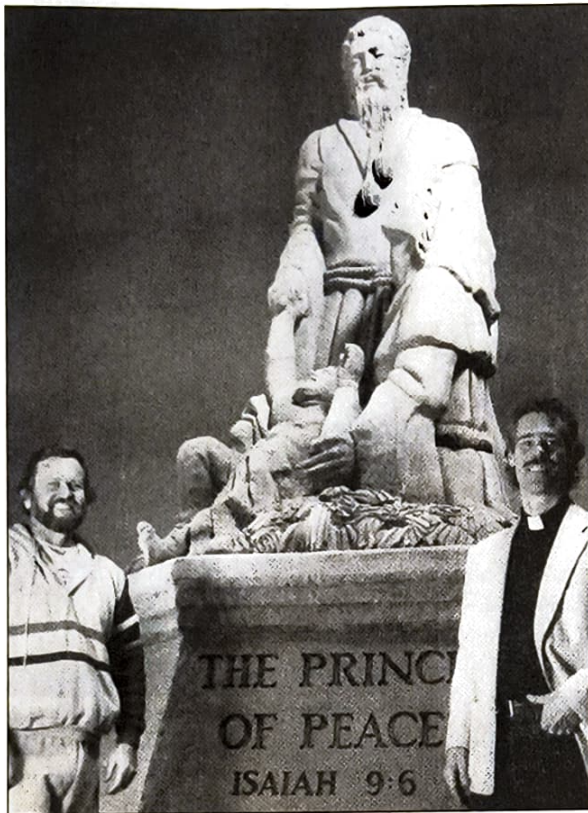
Growing poverty and increasing farm foreclosures in the Midwest have caused "a whole new renaissance" of church involvement—especially in the ALC—in farm issues, from forming support groups for farmers and their families to pushing for new legislation, according to Kanten, whose husband, Chuck, works for the ALC on farm issues.

She described "four waves" of the farm crisis:

- a first wave, which happened years earlier, when poor Black and other minority farmers were forced off their farms;
- a second wave, occurring now, as families lose their farms;
- a third wave, which will be felt when "Main Street is boarded up" in farm communities, and industries and agribusinesses are closed; and
- a final wave, which "will roll over the cities" and deplete the whole country's economy.

*This story is based on a report by Richard Cimino, a New York writer, for the Lutheran Council's news bureau*

## Christmas sand sculpture



A two-story-high sand sculpture of the Holy Family was displayed during December outside Hope Lutheran Church, an ALC congregation in Hollywood, Calif. The sculpture, entitled *The Prince of Peace*, was created by the world-famous sand sculptor Todd Vander Pluym II (left) from 75 tons of special sand, as a giant Christmas greeting to Los Angeles and as a fundraising project toward the rebuilding and debt reduction of Hope Church, according to Pastor Mark Rasbach (right). Choirs and other groups were invited to join in singing carols and hymns around the sculpture, which also served as the focus for the congregation's Christmas Eve service. The sand sculpture—featured in *People* magazine—succeeds Vander Pluym's *The Holy City*, built last Easter (see *L.S.*, April 18, page 23) at Hope Church.

## Few from staffs of uniting churches expect ELCA work

Only one-fifth of the persons now working on the executive staffs of the three uniting churches expect to be employed by the proposed Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), according to a report presented to the Churchwide Transition Team.

At the same time, widespread dissatisfaction among present church workers about ELCA hiring plans was indicated in a survey done for the team.

"I was struck by how few current employees expect to serve in the ELCA," said Stephen Hart, associate director of survey studies for the Lutheran Church in America.

Criticisms of the ELCA's hiring program included the feeling "that the recruitment system is unfair, disloyal, or degrading to existing staff."

Declared Hart: "There is a strong felt opinion... held by a significant number of employees, that their devoted service is not held in high enough

esteem, that the ELCA doesn't much want them, and that the transition process is happening in a high-handed, top-down way which is insensitive to employee needs and desires."

In spite of such feelings, Hart said that "we have a group of employees with a strong sense that their work contributes to the mission of the church and makes good use of their skills."

The report suggested that the merging church bodies may have difficulty maintaining present programs if key staff leave before the end of 1987 or decline to continue into 1988.

"The Transition Team may need to start thinking about ways to interest more current staff in applying, and about creative strategies for locating high-quality applicants from outside, since the pool available from the existing churches will not meet the need," Hart said.

Addressing the Churchwide Transition Team at its Nov. 23–25 meeting in Chicago, Alfred "Chris" Stein, ELCA personnel director, said, "Recruitment is going to be more difficult than I anticipated."



## PEOPLE

### Hamm passionate about education, service

Two motifs characterize William Hamm's life: Lutheran higher education and service.

Hamm, 42, became president of Waldorf College in Forest City, Iowa, last July. Waldorf is the only junior college affiliated with the American Lutheran Church.

He feels a "strong sense of calling" to Waldorf's presidency, but was surprised when he got the job.

"I knew they would never call a single, German, Lutheran layman as president of a Norwegian Lutheran college," he says with a laugh.

No stranger to Lutheran schools when he came to Waldorf, Hamm graduated from Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, in 1966. After graduation he worked in Wartburg's admissions department for eight years. In the meantime, he completed a master's degree at the University of Iowa, Iowa City.

He managed a Chicago-based consulting firm's contract with Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Ala., before joining the staff of California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, as vice president for university relations in 1977.

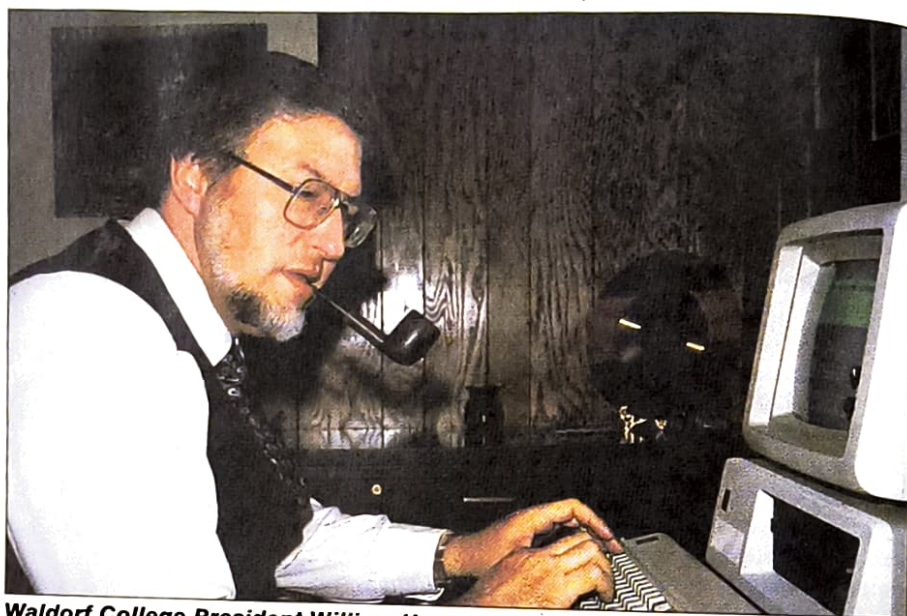
#### Student-faculty interaction

Hamm takes seriously the interaction between students and faculty. One reason for this is his "fantastic" experience at Wartburg. As student president, he met regularly with college president Dr. John Bachman, who Hamm describes as "my mentor."

At Waldorf, Hamm attends as many college events as possible. He often eats in the cafeteria, asking students about athletics, classes, and their plans for transferring.

"Waldorf College is a neat transition place," he says. "Students need a place where they can gain confidence and maturity. They need to have the opportunity to be leaders."

His "passion for students" shapes Hamm's vision for Waldorf. One goal is to give residence-hall groups more responsibility for student government and campus entertainment.



Waldorf College President William Hamm

Another of Hamm's early initiatives was to cut tuition by 30% for the 1987-88 academic year. The college regents approved the plan, dropping tuition from \$5600 to \$3,990.

"We have to increase our enrollment," Hamm explains. "Costs were identified as the most significant factors affecting our enrollment. We had to make a cut large enough to make a significant impact."

Hamm believes that in addition to the people, Waldorf's biggest asset is its Christian character.

"Faith and learning go together," he says. "The vitality of that combination is a rare commodity in this society. The ALC schools have a sense of commitment to Lutheran theology that gives these places integrity."

#### Life of service

Along with faith and learning, service is an important part of Hamm's life. A self-described workaholic, Hamm becomes involved in his community. He credits Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* with influencing his dedication.

"Service to one's community is a distinctive quality of the American republic," Hamm says. "I believe deeply

that our way of life is dependent upon public service."

He has joined Forest City's Rotary Club and plans to become involved in the Chamber of Commerce. In California, Hamm was active in those groups, the United Way, and numerous other charitable and arts organizations. He has received several awards for service.

Hamm was president of his congregation in Thousand Oaks and served on church council and other committees. He now belongs to Immanuel Lutheran in Forest City, but speaking engagements and college business often take him out of town on Sundays.

"One of the things I don't like as a college president is that it's hard to have a regular fellowship with a congregation," he says.

It's "fun" to be president, Hamm says, because "I appreciate the process of planning a viable future."

Hamm says he "appreciates more and more the distinctive contributions that Waldorf can make." He is confident that Waldorf will continue to provide its students with a quality education in a Lutheran setting and chances to serve other people—things with which Hamm is well acquainted.

Michelle Sanden Johlas

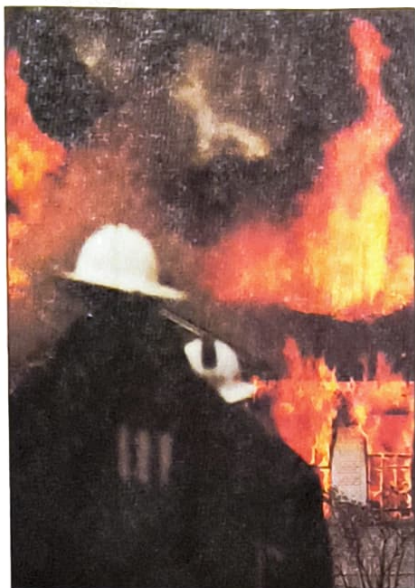


# Is your church adequately insured?

by Carol Smith

It could happen to your church. A dehumidifier in the basement shorts out in the middle of the night, starting a fire. By the time firefighters arrive, the building is a total loss. Or an ice storm knocks down power lines, starting a midnight fire that is whipped by 65 mph winds. Firefighters at the station across the street are virtually helpless, and your church is gutted.

It doesn't need to be a fire. A robber could steal your safe, open it, and dump all your church records in a river. A flood could destroy books, carpets, and furniture. Or a tornado could turn your church building into a large pile of useless rubble.



**Would your church be covered?**

Unlikely as these scenarios sound, each has happened to a Lutheran congregation within the past few years. And each parish found its insurance situation to be a surprise. In fact, an informal survey of eight congregations that recently experienced these and

other disasters raises some important questions that all congregations should ask about their insurance coverage.

**Is our insurance designed specifically for churches?** When the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Chinook, Washington, was destroyed in an ice storm and subsequent fire, "our insurance company gave us six months to rebuild and settle claims, because costs change," explained the Rev. William Leed, pastor of the American Lutheran Church congregation. "But a parish doesn't move that fast. They just didn't have any way of working effectively with us. They actually had sold us a small-business policy and were geared to working with small groups that can settle quickly." The congregation now has new insurance, with a carrier that offers a special policy for churches. It is no more expensive than the former policy, Leed reported.

The experience of Faith Lutheran Church (ALC), Bellaire, Tex., exemplifies how well specialized insurance works. The fire at Faith Church damaged the education unit and destroyed the organ. "Our insurance company advanced over \$600,000 of our settlement funds within three months, even though we were not yet rebuilding," reported Pastor Paul Schairer. "We also were allowed to settle our claims on church contents in categories. We got a certain amount for robes, for example, and could use it to buy any robes. We got a total of \$27,000 to replace books, and they didn't care what books we bought. I would recommend insuring with a company that has policies for churches, so they know what you're talking about when you make a claim."

**What kind of insurance do you have?** St. Paul Lutheran Church, a Lutheran Church in America parish in Roanoke, Va., found the answer to this question the hard way. Of four Lutheran churches in Virginia and West Virginia hit by flooding in late 1985, St. Paul sustained the most damage. Only the organ was insured by a special "all-risk" policy, because, said Pastor John Morrill, "the cost of flood insurance is prohibitive." Ten months after the flood, they had replaced the organ, church office, carpeting, books, and some furniture. Then, an arsonist started a fire in the church office. In settling the claim, the insurance company de-

**Continued next page ►**

## Three generations



**'... essential ministry of baptismal sponsors'**

Baptismal sponsor Mary Wong stands with three of her goddaughters whose three children were baptized on the same Sunday at Grace Lutheran Church, Palo Alto, Calif. (From left) Lonnie Low Leong, Scott Leong, Pastor Stephen Cornils, Laura Currier, Mary Wong holding Ashley Walter, Marie Low Walter, Cindy Low Currier. Wong has served as the baptismal sponsor for the three women, their three brothers, and the children pictured. Cornils said the event affirmed two rich blessings in the American Lutheran Church: the diversity and enrichment brought by Chinese-Americans and the essential ministry of baptismal sponsors.



preciated the six-month-old carpeting. Why? St. Paul Church had "cash value" insurance, which allows depreciation before determining the amount the insurance company will pay.

Faith Lutheran Church (ALC), Rapid City, S.D., was similarly surprised. After its August 1985 fire that destroyed the sanctuary and nave, the congregation received only \$4000 to replace its \$14,000 organ. "We paid \$25,000 to \$30,000 to replace the organ and other altar furnishings that had depreciated," said Pastor Bruce Baum.

Both congregations recommend "replacement value" insurance, which pays to replace exactly what the congregation has lost, regardless of present value.

**How well are our church contents insured?** Not very well, was the answer from most churches. Christiania Lutheran Church (ALC), Lakeville, Minn., held a replacement value policy of \$600,000 to cover building losses, but only \$50,000 for loss of church contents. It was more than adequate to cover building losses after a fire—set by an arsonist—caused extensive fire, smoke, and heat damage. But the loss of contents was more than two times the parish's coverage, estimated Christiania's president, Barbara Bachman. She said the congregation hadn't done an inventory before the fire and therefore didn't realize how much property it had accumulated in its 129-year history, and how much those contents had appreciated in value.

Christiania Church received about \$400,000 from insurance coverage and is raising nearly \$250,000 to pay for church remodeling and additions unrelated to fire damage, as well as for upgrading the church to meet building codes. "All the church doors needed closures added to them, and rest rooms had to be made accessible for the handicapped," Bachman noted.

The report is the same from several other congregations. Holmes Lu-



**Torched records**

An unlocked safe, opened by an arsonist, led to destroyed records when the fire at Christiania Lutheran Church, Lakeville, Minn., was begun in the church office where the safe was located.

theran Church (ALC) in Holmes, Iowa, had just increased its insurance before a fire destroyed the church. Insurance covered 96% of building losses, but only 29% of the loss of contents. In Washington, insurance covered 80% of the building losses but only 26% of the loss of contents by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Chinook. And in Wisconsin, where a tornado destroyed Barneveld Lutheran Church, "We had only \$35,000 to replace everything," said the Rev. Robert Twiton.

**What are church contents?** Part of the problem in obtaining adequate insurance is that congregations often don't know what is meant by "church contents." Twiton recalled: "We found out that even our pews, organ, and sound system were classified as church contents. There was no way we could replace all that with \$35,000." Barneveld Church had inadequate coverage, he said, "because we had no idea until after the tornado what was considered church contents." But at Christiania Church, the organ and pews were considered part of the building rather than church contents.

The message from all these congregations: Be clear with your insurance company about what constitutes church contents, so that you can purchase adequate coverage.

**Could you prove your losses?** "You have to prove your losses in order to settle with the insurance company,"

cautioned Schairer. At Faith Church, Schairer had the full-time help of a retired accountant who worked with the insurance company for three months. His job: to count lost inventory and put a price tag on everything. Since its fire, the congregation has compiled better lists of church contents.

Insurance companies indicate that generally pastors don't have the time to take on this additional work. "It's critical for a congregation that has experienced a disaster to identify a member who can be available to work with the insurance company," said Barbara Bachman of Christiania Church. "That same person should have the authority to make decisions on behalf of the congregation."

**How can we insure priceless items?** It takes some planning to insure items that can't be replaced with money, said the Rev. Bruce Thalacker of Hope Lutheran Church (ALC), Sioux Falls, S.D. The day after Hope Church's 1985 fall bazaar, someone undoubtedly believed there would be money in the safe. It was stolen, opened, and dumped in the Sioux River. Total loss to the church: \$20 cash, a broken window, church keys, and the church records accumulated during its 30-year history. The congregation's \$250 deductible "all-risk" policy paid \$900 to fix the window, change the locks, buy a new record book, and even hire someone to reconstruct the records. "But we are very aware that that didn't put things back to normal," said parish secretary Elaine Kenahan. Now, Hope Church will have its records microfilmed. Eventually, the records will be computerized and back-up copies will be kept in another safe place.

**How should we reevaluate our policy?** Reevaluating insurance coverage requires a good look at costs, but not only costs, says Tom Manti, an agent for Church Mutual Insurance Company. "You have to get different estimates and compare what you're buying. Right now, the way insurance premiums are going, quotes can vary widely. Furthermore, they're not the only thing to consider. You've got to go with a company that has financial strength and a high rating for the competency of its underwriters, that guarantees its policies, and that regularly reevaluates your particular policy."

Carol Smith is a writer in Madison, Wis.

## Anniversaries

100—St. Paul Lutheran, Aberdeen, Md., Nov. 23.

25—Zion Lutheran, Stockton, Calif., Jan. 11.

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



# Newsmakers

► Three American Lutheran Church pastors will form the worship programming team for the ALC's Division for Life and Mission in the Congregation until the end of August 1987. They are: the Rev. **Stephen J. Cornils**, Palo Alto, Calif.; the Rev. **Paul H. Knutson**, St. Paul, Minn.; and the Rev. **Nancy L. Maeker**, Dallas. Cornils (pictured on page 25) and Maeker serve part-time as deployed staff from their home cities. Cornils, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in Palo Alto, will have duties related to preaching, review of worship resources, teaching at the 1987 Lutheran Conferences for Worship and other events, and as a consultant to the 1988 youth gathering. Knutson, campus pastor for Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary in St. Paul, also serves on a part-time basis and has an office in the ALC national offices. He will be in direct contact with congregations and those planning workshops or other events. Maeker, a pastor at Faith Community Lutheran Church in Dallas, will work with Hispanic worship resources, the *Alleluia* worship series, the 1987 worship conferences, and as needed, as a workshop or conference leader.

► Dr. **A. C. Schumacher**, bishop emeritus of the ALC's Southern Wisconsin District, received the fifth annual Manfred E. Swarsensky Humanitarian Award from the Rotary Club of Madison, Wis. "I can't imagine an honor that would be more treasured by its recipient," said the Rev. Robert Borgwardt, pastor of Bethel Lutheran Church (ALC) in Madison, who presented the award. "Ace" Schumacher spent 32 fruitful, creative years in our community. He showed deep concern for people, especially for the little people, the forgotten ones. No one deserves this award more," said Borgwardt. The award carries a \$1000 stipend, which Schumacher donated to four organizations.

► The Rev. **Carl E. Linder**, an ALC pastor who is a staff member of the Lutheran Church in America, has been appointed editor of *Lutheran Partners*, a joint publication of the three uniting Lutheran churches for clergy and other professional church leaders. Linder,



**Paul Knutson**



**Nancy Maeker**



**Carl Linder**



**Ernest Hoff**

65, has served as editor of world hunger and global justice resources for the LCA's Division of Parish Services, where he edited *Learning With* from 1971 to 1982. He succeeds the Rev. Richard E. Koenig, who became pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church (LCA) in Woburn, Mass., on Jan. 1.

► Senator **Paul Simon** (D-Ill.) and Rep. **Byron Dorgan** (D-N.D.) are Lutheran members of Congress who were honored by Bread for the World for their legislative work in 1986, aimed at combatting hunger. The Distinguished Service Award is given every two years by the Christian citizens' antihunger movement. Five senators and 19 representatives received the award.

► The Rev. **Ernest Hoff**, 89, a retired ALC pastor living in Eau Claire, Wis., has hit four holes-in-one since taking up golf 20 years ago. *Sports Illustrated* cited Hoff's accomplishments when he sank his most recent hole-in-one, using a three-wood for a 135-yard shot. "When I quit preaching, I had to do something," Hoff said.

► Dr. **James May**, chair of the St. Olaf College (ALC) classics department, received one of three national awards for teaching excellence from the American Philological Association. The APA, which has more than 2200

members, is the professional organization for classicists in the United States and most of Canada. May was chosen on the basis of demonstrated excellence in pedagogy, including Greek and Latin language, literature, culture, mythology, history, and etymology.

## Catholic bishops urge new ecumenical steps

When the U.S. Roman Catholic bishops responded for the first time in an official way to the reports of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic ecumenical dialogs, the Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs suggested six steps for the immediate future, including:

- efforts to foster "spiritual ecumenism" through joint services of prayer, without the sharing of Holy Communion, such as the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Service of the Word;

- education programs in parishes to help clergy and people better understand results of the dialogs;

- continued theological study of issues that separate the two churches, while, at the same time, people are warned against thinking "that the churches can now recognize each other's ministry as interchangeable" or "that the faithful can freely participate in intercommunion";

- meetings of bishops on the diocesan or regional levels;

- attention by the Vatican's Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity to the critique of the dialogs from the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Committee on Doctrine (see *L.S.*, Dec. 12, page 18); and

- evaluation by the bishops' doctrine and ecumenism committees of the 1983 dialog report on "justification by faith."

"There are special demands upon those who participate in the theological dialogs between the churches," said the report of the ecumenical affairs committee. "Of fundamental importance is their thorough knowledge of and their fidelity to the teaching of their own church, for the dialogs represent a quest of the churches themselves for fuller unity."



## **The whys, whens, and hows behind a merger**

# **Two parishes unite for one mission**

Whether three national Lutheran church bodies merge or two local congregations merge, the concern of Dr. Richard Rouse is the same: merge for the sake of mission (see "Six Steps Into the Future," pages 4-8).

Rouse has been discussing mergers a lot lately: one leading toward the new Lutheran church; another in which he has been deeply involved as lead pastor of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Salem, Ore.; and those being considered by other congregations which ask him about the merger that resulted in Holy Cross Church.

"The number of churches in the latter category will likely grow," said Rouse, "as a result of the new Lutheran church." He expects that as congregations of the new Lutheran church "discover" other parishes of the new denomination nearby, they likely will consider cooperative ministry and, perhaps eventually, merger.

Holy Cross Church was formed by the merger of two congregations of the American Lutheran Church: Grace Lutheran Church, an urban congregation of 600-plus members, and Central Lutheran Church, a struggling downtown congregation of 200-plus members. Both were formed in the late 1940s.

At the beginning of this decade, Central Church was facing three options: call another pastor, share pastoral leadership with another parish, or unite with another congregation. The parish decided to call the Rev. Elton Zerby, a young pastor with evangelism experience, who began work September 1980.

By April 1982, Zerby and Rouse were meeting informally with congregational representatives of the parishes to discuss cooperative ministry. By July, Central Church issued an invitation to begin formal discussions on cooperative ministry and possible merger.

"A cooperative ministry task force was established, and soon the two congregations were sharing some worship, vacation Bible school, and training of evangelism callers and Sunday school teachers," Rouse said.

In early 1984, both congregations approved a plan of merger, and a 20-member merger commission worked out plans for the new congregation.

### **Committed to the community**

Rather than sell both buildings and relocate, the accepted plan was to expand Grace Church's facility. Rouse explained, "We had many community groups already using Grace and felt it was important not to abandon the parish's commitment to the neighborhood."

He described the neighborhood as filled with lower-middle and lower-income dwellings and a population that is about 90% White, 5% Hispanic, and 5% Asian.

The new congregation began worship in August 1984, but dated its articles of incorporation Sept. 14—Holy Cross Day—to coincide with the church's new name. Since Zerby accepted a call to a different parish that August, Grace Church's two pastors—Rouse and



**Full-time pastoral staff**

Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Salem, Ore., is shepherded by (from left): Dr. Richard Rouse, lead pastor; Kathy Barker, director of care; and the Rev. Kenneth Sutherland, pastor.

the Rev. Kenneth Sutherland—were called as its pastors.

Although the merger happened quickly, Rouse said it has worked well. "Our people realized that together the parishes had greater resources to meet needs that were surfacing in the community."

Rouse highlighted, too, the leadership's sensitivity to the deep feelings of the people for their own congregation, and ample opportunity was given to them to establish trust.

Explained Rouse, "We offered events like family camping, a progressive dinner, and a picnic."

At one point, a large sheet of butcher's paper was placed on the narthex wall of each parish. The years of each congregation's life were marked on a time line, and members were asked to write their names at the year they joined the parish. "At our first worship service, the two sheets were placed in parallel, with arrows from each that came together," he said.

People got excited about ministry, and many inactive members became active, he noted. The ministry of the facility was expanded, and today it includes a number of programs: a year-round day care center, two preschool programs, a county program for disabled children, a kindergarten program, senior citizens' meals, a nutrition program for low-income people, and an AA group.

Recently the church began a \$650,000 building program. "We were using the entire building six days a week," Rouse said. The first phase—completed in December 1986—added: a gym, classrooms, kitchen, library-conference room, expanded office space, and enlarged narthex. The second phase of construction will include remodeling and expansion of the sanctuary.

"Our place seems like a young mission—except that we have more resources," said Rouse. "We're creating something new, putting up with construction, and growing."

*Kenneth E. Roberts*



# NILB director Eugene Crawford dies at age 58

Eugene Crawford, 58, the first Native American hired to an executive staff position in the Lutheran church, died Nov. 30 in Omaha, Neb., of a heart attack.



Eugene Crawford

Born on the Sisseton Sioux reservation in South Dakota, Crawford served in the U.S. Marine Corps after graduating from high school. He attended college in Monroe, La., and graduated from Huron (S.D.) College. After receiving a master's degree in social work from the University of South Dakota in 1963, he was employed as a social worker in the Omaha school system for six years and served as executive director of the Omaha Indian Center.

In 1971 he became executive director of the National Indian Lutheran Board (NILB), an agency affiliated with the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A., with offices in Chicago. He devoted his life to easing the tension between American Indians and church officials over the church's commitment to helping Native Americans, and he served as mediator in controversies between American Indians and government agencies. He had a prominent role in reconciling the takeover of the Bureau of Indian Affairs building in Washington, D.C., in 1972 and the occupation of Wounded Knee in 1973.

Crawford's major tasks involved advocacy and approval of emergency and development aid for Native Americans in both urban and reservation settings. He was one of two Native Americans who served on the 70-member Commission for a New Lutheran Church.

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

Pursuant to the constitution and bylaws of the American Lutheran Church (8.11., 8.13., 8.13.11., 8.13.12., 9.36.21.) upon decision of the Church Council and at the call of the Rev. David W. Preus, general president, the 1987 Closing Convention of the American Lutheran Church will meet, God willing, in Columbus, Ohio, April 29, 1987. The convention will begin with a plenary session at 1:30 p.m. and conclude at approximately 5:30 p.m.

The following corporations will meet: Augsburg College, Dana College, Luther College, St. Olaf College, Texas Lutheran College, Wartburg College

Kathryn W. Baerwald, general secretary

## New to the clergy roster

Information provided by ALC general secretary's office

BROCKER, LORILEE, 972 Utica Ave., Brooklyn NY 11203 (asst., Trinity)  
BRUESHOFF, DAVID W., 12650 Johnny Cake Rd., Apple Valley MN 55124 (p-t asst., Shepherd of the Valley)  
COLVILLE, JOELLE, 3702 City Trunk Hwy. AB, Madison WI 53704 (asst., Hope)  
DIETRICH, STEVEN M., 810 Lookout Dr., Richardson TX 75080 (Community)  
DORSEY, JEROME B., Box 491239, College Park GA 30349 (New Life)  
GREGORY, PAUL V., Prairie City SD 57649 (Homme, Immanuel)  
JOHNSON, PATRICIA E., 749 Bluff St., Beloit WI 53511 (asst., Our Savior)  
LYNDES, ROBERT P.S., 8500 Hillside Tr., Cottage Grove MN 55016 (asst., Zion)  
MELSTED, MARINO S., R.4, Box 69, Albert Lea MN 56007 (East Freeborn)  
RADKE, KURT R., 1355 West Ave., Medina NY 14103 (St. Peter)  
RASMUS, R. DANIEL, R.2, Box 22, Huxley IA 50124 (Palestine)  
RUNESTAD, DANA R., 3879 Jackson Rd., Ida MI 48140 (Immanuel)  
SOLOMONSON, NEAL R., Box 275, Stanhope IA 50246 (Our Savior)  
STADEM, TIMOTHY R., 411 N. Duff, Mitchell SD 57301 (asst., First)  
WAHTO, MARY L., 209 11th St., Burlington CO 80807 (First St. Paul)  
ZIEMER, CYNTHIA A., 3200 Ashbury Rd., Dubuque IA 52001 (St. Peter)

## Pastors' changes of address

Information provided by ALC general secretary's office.

ANDERSON, PHILIP G., St. Paul MN, to APDO (0219, Barrio San Miguelito, San Salvador, El Salvador (LWF staff))  
BECKER, CARL A., Sister Bay WI, to 204 N. 23rd St. N.W., Waverly IA 50677  
BERNLOHR, THOMAS P., Sterling Heights MI, to 3350 Dayton-Xenia Rd., Dayton OH 45432 (Peace)  
BOUTON, RICHARD W., Kansas City, to 3119 S. Sterling, #B, Independence MO 64052 (King of Glory)  
CHRISTENSEN, DAVID W., Warren, to R.1, Erhard MN 56334 (Tenth)  
DEAMES, DALE R., Columbus OH, to 51161 Maria St., New Baltimore MI 48047 (St. John)  
ERICKSON, JAMES T., Kent, to 706 N.W. 185th St., Apt. 204, Seattle WA 98177  
EVENSON, PAUL T., Torrance, to 4100 Mayfield St., Newbury CA 91320  
EVENSON, WALTER H., Box 315, Stover MO 65078 (ret.)  
FALK, ROBERT L., Fargo, to c/o Dennis Falk, 210 Nova Dr., Bismarck ND 58501  
FISHER, DONALD J., Sacramento, to 359 Glenwood St., San Carlos CA 94070 (Holy Trinity)  
FOSEN, GERALD A., 10035 W. Turney, Phoenix AZ 85039 (new cong.)  
FULLER, JAMES A., Mesa AZ, to 3801 Cortland St., Lynwood CA 90262 (St. Paul)  
GIBSON, ROBERT F., Bexley, to Box 482, Somerset OH 43783 (St. Paul)  
GRIFFITH, HARRY W., San Diego CA, to Office of Chaplain, Dallas NAS, Dallas TX 75211  
HIRLEMAN-AALBORG, NAN, West Branch IA, to 2481 Como Ave., St. Paul MN 55108  
HOFER, DAVID L., Roland, to Box 385, Buffalo Center IA 50424 (Bethlehem)  
HOLTE, CARLY E.W., Northfield MN, to 10149-BN, 97th Dr., Peoria AZ 85345  
JOHNSON, TIMOTHY P., West Covina, to 45-900 Portola Ave., Palm Desert CA 92260 (Hope)  
JONES, J. WESTON Jr., Worthington, to 241 S. Prospect St., Marion OH 43302 (Emanuel)  
KOLIN, LUCY A., Daly City, to 308 Palmetto, #27, Pacifica CA 94044  
KUEHNER, ROBERT W., Fort Collins, to LSS, 2695 Alcott, Suite 3385, Denver CO 80211 (resource dev. dir.)  
LLOYD, SCOTTIE R., Emerald ND, to Dept. of Navy, 1st Basic Trng. Bde., Fort Jackson SC 29207  
MATHISEN, ARNOLD G., Bucyrus OH, to Oleander Acres, Lot 215, Mission TX 78572  
MEYER, LAWRENCE F., Ravenna OH, to 629 Second Ave. S.W., Hickory NC 28602 (St. Paul)  
MILLER, CLYDE A., Lima OH, to Vacation Village, Box 220, 6850 Ulmerton Rd., Largo FL 33541  
MOON, MARVIN D., Jr., Porterville, to 2227 N. Naomi St., Burbank CA 91504  
MOSER, GILBERT W., APO New York, to c/o Clarence Williams, 9223 128th Ave. N.E., Kirkland WA 98033  
MUELLER, FRED, Willmar MN, to 10540 E. Apache Tr., Sp. 5, Apache Junction AZ 85220  
OLESON, CHESTER A., Webster, to 745 Sibley Dr., Northfield MN 55057 (visit., Solori)  
PAULSON, PHILIP H., Rice Lake, to Box 208, Washburn WI 54891 (CTM dir.)  
PHILIPP, FRANK E., Sioux City, to 735 Fifth St., Merrill IA 51038 (St. John)  
QUANBECK, PHILIP A. II, Princeton NJ, to Augusta Strasse 24A, 1000 Berlin 45 West Germany  
REHL, THOMAS E., Hillard, to Capital University, Columbus OH 43209 (staff)  
SCHROEDER, LYNNETTE C., Blair WI, to 1570 Eustis St., #335, St. Paul MN 55108 (DWMIC staff)  
SEVIG, ALFRED H., Spicer MN, to 303 S. Recker Rd., Sp. 190, Mesa AZ 85206  
SHEALY, GRANT A., Payne OH, to 2917 W. Hwy. 83, Lot 18, McAllen TX 78501  
SHIMOTA, JAMES C., Sunnyside, to 26841 Prairie Dog Ln., Moreno Valley CA 92558 (study)

## OFFICIAL NOTICE

The Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary Search Committee solicits names of nominees for the position of seminary president from members of the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America. Bylaws of the seminary stipulate the following:

**ELIGIBILITY:** The president shall be an ordained minister on the clergy roster of, and a member of, either the American Lutheran Church or the Lutheran Church in America, or, if not at the time of election, shall fulfill both requirements before assuming office.

**SEARCH COMMITTEE:** The Search Committee shall consist of 16 persons representing the seminary board of directors, faculty, students, and the broader American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church in America.

**PROCESS:** The Search Committee invites persons to submit nominations by March 1, 1987, to the address below. The president of the seminary is expected to provide pastoral, academic, and administrative leadership to the institution. It would be helpful to have nominations accompanied by information relevant to those responsibilities.

**ELECTION:** The Search Committee shall rank and forward a minimum of two names to the board of directors of Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, which will elect by two-thirds vote.

**SEND** names of nominees with current address to: Presidential Search Committee, Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, 2481 Como Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108.

## CALL FOR DESIGNS FOR BISHOP'S CROSS

A work group of the Transition Team for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America invites artists and designers to submit design ideas for the pectoral cross for the bishop of the new Lutheran church. The design should: make a visible statement regarding the office of bishop; be four to six inches in height; take into account the fact that the size, build, and stature of wearers may vary; and consider integration of a chain. Pectoral crosses presently worn by the bishops of the American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church in America are set with an amethyst. Designs and drawings should be accompanied by a written rationale and be sent by Jan. 30, 1987, to Dr. Dorothy Marple, Transition Team coordinator, Lutheran Center, 360 Park Ave. S., New York, NY 10010.

## CLASSIFIED

RATE: \$6 per word; \$100 minimum. Prepayment required. Single initials, abbreviations, alphabetical and numerical groups (for example, box numbers), names of cities and states, ZIP codes, and entire telephone numbers count as one word each.

**DIRECTOR OF CHURCH RELATIONS,** Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minnesota, seeks a director of church relations. The director of church relations reports to the president and is responsible for organizing and directing programs to serve the congregations. Qualified candidates will have a commitment to the mission and ministry of Augsburg College; possess the ability to relate to church leaders, both clergy and lay; have working parish or directly related experience; and demonstrate effective written and verbal communication skills. Send letter of inquiry, resume and salary requirements to Dr. Charles S. Anderson, President, Augsburg College, 731 21st Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55454. Augsburg College is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

**CASCADE MOUNTAIN** work-study retreat on "Christian discipleship" Jan. 30-April 10, \$650. Also seeking mechanic, secretary, cooks, nurse, summer volunteers. **HOLDEN VILLAGE,** Chelan, Washington 98816.

**BRITAIN-IRELAND** June 29-July 14, \$2,295-N.Y. Rev. Kallio, 4320 Sylvan, Indianapolis, IN 46208. (317) 293-6326.

## First worship

Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, S.D., began 9:30 A.M. Sunday services Dec. 7. The new mission congregation of the Lutheran Church in America, on the west side of the city, meets at the Oscar Howe Elementary School, 2801 Valley View Rd. Pastor-developer Douglas K. Olson reports that in the last three years many young married couples with children have moved into the fast-growing area.



# QUESTION BOX

by William A. Poovey

## What is the right method of baptism?

**Where in the Bible is baptism by sprinkling taught, rather than by total immersion?**

**J.F., Wash.**

This question has puzzled many people. The truth is that no method of baptism is taught in the Bible, probably because the Holy Spirit considered *method* a matter of no importance. We shouldn't either.

Let's start with the words "baptize" and "baptism," which come from the Greek word *baptizo*: to apply water. That could mean immersion, but it doesn't have to.

The region in which Jesus lived is hot and dry. To baptize large numbers of people, it made sense to work on the bank of a river. John the Baptist conducted his ministry at the Jordan. People came to be baptized. They went down into the water and came up out of the water. The Bible never says they were completely under the water. If total immersion is so important, it would seem the Bible would say so. But it doesn't. Baptism by sprinkling or pouring water on heads would do just as well as far as the biblical record is concerned.

Other New Testament passages are equally ambiguous concerning the method of baptism. On Pentecost, more than 3000 people were baptized. Was there sufficient water to immerse that host of people? Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch when the man said, "See, here is water! What is to prevent my being baptized?" (Acts 8:36). He didn't say, "There's enough water here to immerse me."

Paul apparently was baptized in the house where he was staying. Was he immersed? Paul baptized the jailer and his entire family at Philippi, yet he didn't go outside the jail. How could he have immersed them?

In the New Testament, immersion often seems a possibility, but only that. Much is made of Romans 6:4, where Paul says we are buried by baptism. The proponents of immersion say Paul is referring to the water covering us. But in Romans 6:6, Paul says we are crucified with Christ. If Paul is speaking meta-

phorically in that verse, is he also using a metaphor in verse 4?

The truth is that we have no way of knowing what method was used for baptism in the New Testament. Perhaps it was immersion, perhaps it wasn't. Most Christians have settled on sprinkling or pouring. The important thing is that we have been baptized and that we live out our baptism.

**In our Bible study we could not agree on whether we enter heaven as spirit or a body at the resurrection. What does the Bible say?**

**H.J., Ind.**

Here, too, the answer is ambiguous. The best answer is found in 1 Corinthians 15, where Paul speaks of our resurrection as being like Christ's. We will be resurrected, and we will have spiritual bodies that are imperishable and immortal.

Paul doesn't tell us what those spiritual bodies will be like. But we will have bodies. We will not be pure spirit. The

**"If I could write all the prayers that would be used in schools, I might favor the idea."**



Creed is correct when it says, "I believe in the resurrection of the body."

As a matter of fact, we cannot be sure where we're going to be in that new kingdom. The Bible speaks of a new heaven and a new earth. Chapters 21 and 22 of Revelation picture God as coming down to earth to live with human beings, rather than us living in heaven with God.

But why should we worry? To be alive in that great new world is enough. We will be happy wherever God puts us.

**Why is school prayer rejected by the church? Personally, I think school prayer is a good thing. What do you think?**

**J.W., Ind.**

If I could write all the prayers that would be used in the schools, I might favor the idea. But since I can't, I'm against organized prayer in the schools. That may sound selfish, but it exposes what is wrong with such prayer—which is not the same as personal, private prayer, which has not been and cannot be banned.

We need to remember that something has happened to our school systems. In the past, many Catholic students attended parochial schools, while public school students in most parts of the country came mostly from main-line Protestant groups. But today public school students come from all kinds of religious backgrounds, including Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism.

We tell our Lutheran students that prayer should always be "in Jesus' name." Catholics may wish to pray to Mary.

I believe it may be proper to have a time of silence in which each student could pray to God as he or she sees fit, or simply remain quiet. That seems to be the only workable solution. ■



William Poovey, a retired seminary professor, lives in San Antonio, Tex. He is the author of many books, including *The Prayer He Taught and What Did Jesus Do?*



# THE BACK PAGE

a column of  
editorial opinion

***'We actually may  
behold with  
horror a merger  
of three churches  
that yields not  
one but 65 mini-  
churches.'***



**W**e may be on the verge of a new day for U.S. Lutherans. At the end of April, we may see the American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church in America, and Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches come together to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

Many people throughout the history of U.S. Lutheranism have hoped for this day. They dreamed of a more united Lutheran witness in this country. As members of the uniting churches, we may be participants in helping their long-held dream come true.

But as the moment draws closer, a danger emerges. We actually may behold with horror a merger of three churches that yields not one but 65 minichurches—that is, the ELCA's 65 synods claiming independence while choosing to be only loosely tied together through the ELCA.

Signs of this discouraging prospect were seen in churchwide-synod budget consultations held late last year, with synodical transition teams representing the 65 proposed synods for the ELCA. If synods become independent fiefdoms, giving only lip service to interrelationships with the ELCA's churchwide organization and efforts, we will have lost the sense of unity in mission and purpose reflected throughout the past quarter century by the ALC's districts and national structure.

## **Keystone of interdependence**

The keystone for the ELCA's organizational structure is interdependence. Like the wedge-shaped piece at the crown of an ancient arch that locks all the other pieces in place, interdependence is the crucial principle for the ELCA's design and framework. So interdependence must be understood and practiced if the dreams of greater unity through the ELCA are to be realized.

The ELCA's commitment to inclusiveness has received much more attention and discussion than many other aspects of the proposed church. But that is not a matter of organizational structure. Rather, it involves a practical pattern and a mission commitment, as well as ongoing operation in the ELCA.

Interdependence, however, is the thread that weaves together all the expressions of the new church—congregations, synods, and the churchwide operation, with regions serving as a point of intersection for joint work by synods and the churchwide structure. As Chapter 5 of the ELCA's constitution declares: "The congregations, synods, and churchwide organization of this church are interdependent partners sharing responsibly in God's mission."

Therefore, all these organizational elements of the ELCA—congregation, synod, and churchwide structure—must discover what this keystone principle of interdependence means for them and how it can shape the attitudes and operations sought through the new church.

This deep sense of interrelationship is an urgent need. Without a clear vision of our interdependence in the ELCA, we will face years of hobbled effort as individuals and groups try to copy past patterns from the structures used by the LCA and its synods or by the ALC and its district structures.

## **'All power and authority . . .'**

Gaining renewed awareness of our interdependence and moving toward clearer practice of this keystone principle will be impossible if the various ELCA structural partners become victims of a narrowed vision and preoccupied with turf protection, power, and self-concern. This need not be the case, however. As the ELCA constitution emphasizes, "This church recognizes that all power and authority in the church belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ, its head." In keeping with this confession, "all actions of this church by congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization shall be carried out" under Christ for the mission to which we are called.

If the current handwriting on the wall proves accurate (see page 16), interdependence in the ELCA may prove to have been a nice idea that got lost in the shuffle. Without continuing renewal in the life of ELCA members and congregations and without heartfelt excitement about mission in all its dimensions, what was to be a joyous moment of Lutheran unity will be, instead, a step into a future of lost vision, hobbled efforts, and shattered dreams.

Lowell Almen



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 Starting your own business.  
 Life holds many changes for you.

Some you can plan for. Others you can't. Fortunately, there's an affordable insurance plan that's flexible enough to adjust to these changes. It's Horizon, the universal life plan from Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL).

A single Horizon plan lets you change your coverage to reflect the changes in your life. So you'll avoid the cost and trouble of buying additional insurance plans in the future.



Horizon can even automatically increase the amount of your insurance protection to respond to inflation. And as your financial circumstances change, Horizon lets you adjust your coverage and premium level.

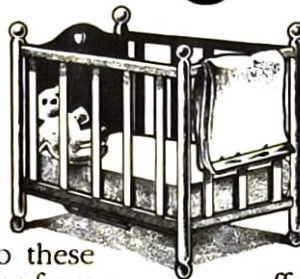
How the insurance plan helps you is only part of the story. You also have a specially trained AAL representative to help tailor the plan



to your needs.

Periodically, and at no cost to you, your Horizon plan will be reviewed to see if it meets your current needs.

And the benefits don't stop there. Through your Horizon plan, you automatically become a member of AAL, the nation's leading fraternal insurance organization. And your membership entitles you to an array of special opportunities, benefits and programs for you and your family.



There's an AAL representative ready to tell you all about those benefits.

So talk to your representative or write to Aid Association for Lutherans, Appleton, Wisconsin 54919.

And find out how Horizon's affordable flexibility can take care of the changing needs in your life.

**Aid Association for Lutherans**

Home Office: Appleton Wisconsin 54919

