

The Lutheran Standard®

OCTOBER 24, 1986



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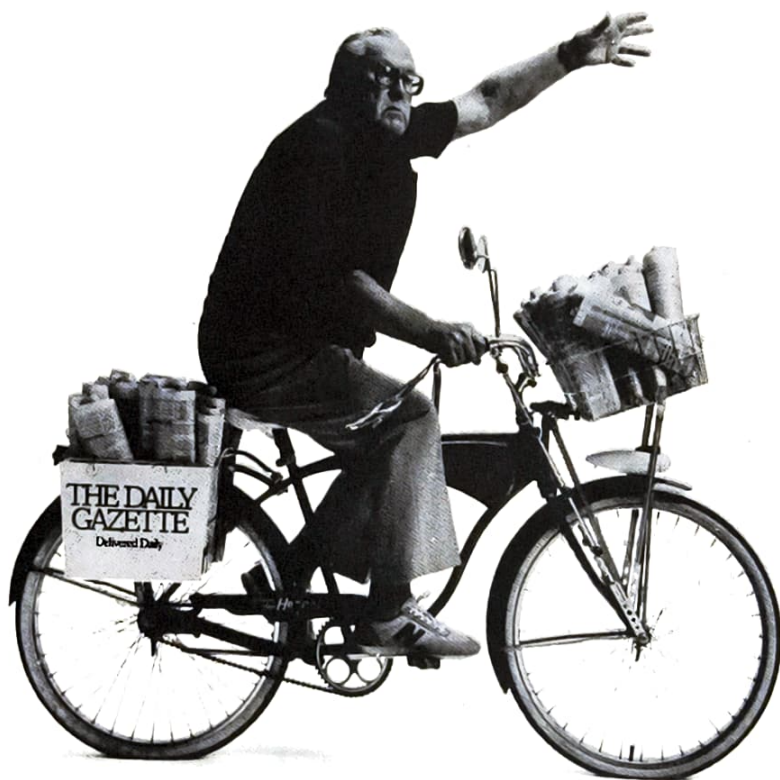
OUR DAY IN COURT

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*How will the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America
speak of the Bible?*

PURE POWER

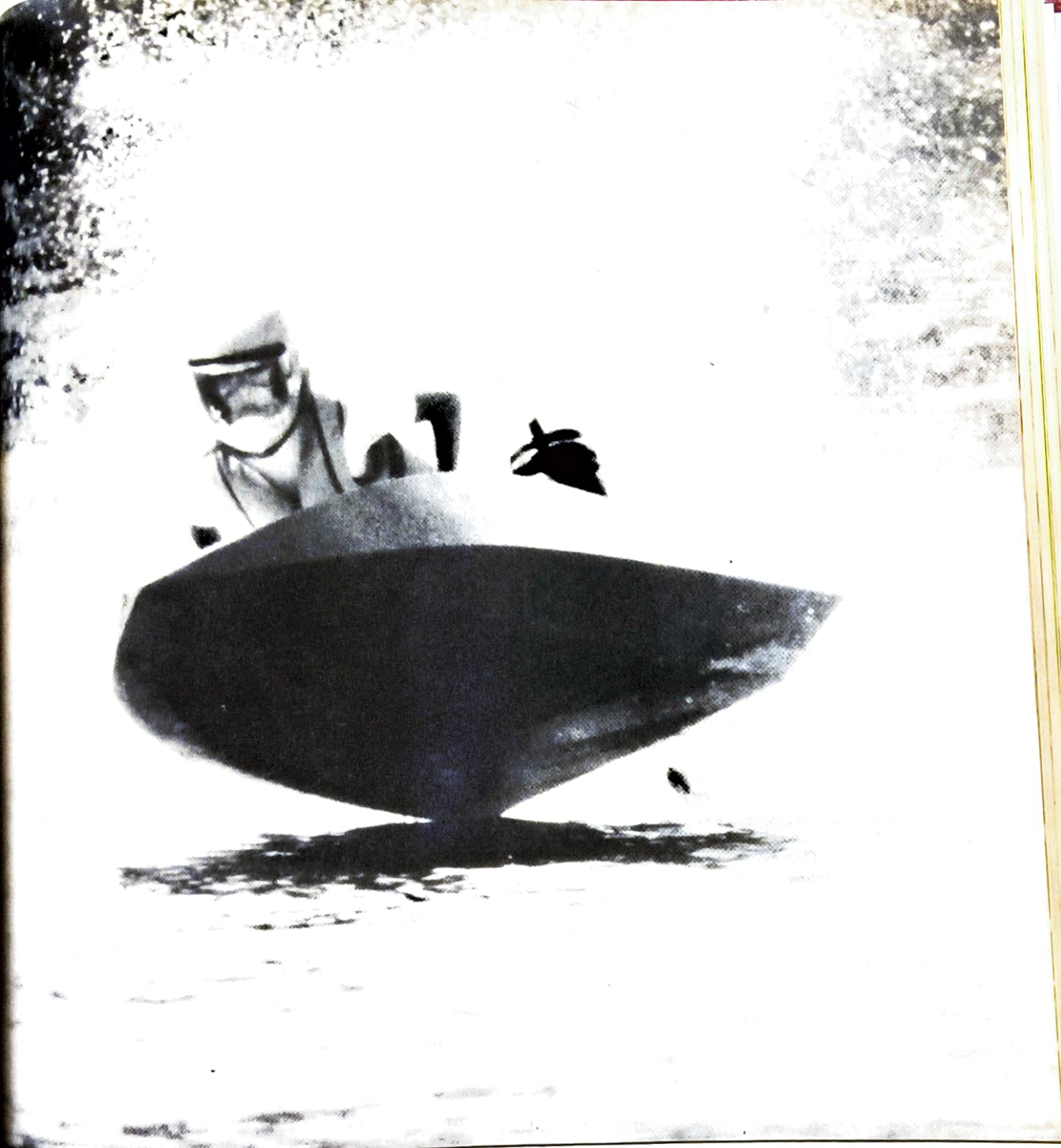
by Todd Nichol

The Word of God is pure power. When God talks, it takes. When you hear your pastor say, "I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins," there is no way to avoid the reality of the Word. Clothed in splashing water and broken bread, the Word delivers and nourishes us. The sacraments are the Word happening. But what about the written Word—the Bible?

The Bible is not an event but a book, and American Lutherans have not always agreed about what kind of book it is or how to use it. Sometimes they have tussled with hard questions about the

Bible on the way toward Lutheran unity. The fate of more than one merger has hung on a decision about what kind of book the Bible is.

Before World War I, most American Lutherans were used to saying that the Bible is God's inspired and infallible Word. It would be naive to think that doubts or difficult questions about the Bible are new; but before 1920 most churchgoing Lutherans probably were not troubled about the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible. Of course, every town had a skeptic or two who knew how to put tough questions to Bible-believing Christians.



tians, and every congregation had members who enjoyed stumping the pastor. But most Lutherans did not worry too much about these eccentrics.

By and large, Lutherans thought God had inspired the writers of the Bible in their choice of words and that Scripture spoke literally where it did not use obviously figurative language. They thought that the Bible told the truth and told it plainly. If Genesis said the creation happened in six days, then six days it was. Scientists had produced evidence supporting events described in the Old Testament and there were Gospel "harmon-

ies" to account for differences and contradictions in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. "Scripture cannot be broken" was a favorite quotation from John's Gospel.

Lutherans in the United States were thankful for the blue water that separated them from Europe. They remembered that the churches of Europe were not in robust health. They knew, too, that new theologies in Europe had snipped and clipped at Christian confidence in the Bible. And they had read about dramatic discoveries by Charles Darwin and other scientists that chal-



lenged old assumptions about the creation of the earth and humankind.

Pastors and theologians also knew that European scholars had uncovered evidence that the Bible had been written over many centuries, that it included literature of many kinds from a multitude of sources, and that it had been put together by editors working in a variety of times and places. These findings were the result of a scholarly method called historical criticism. The new method was hotly debated in and outside the churches. Wherever anyone stood, almost everyone agreed that historical criticism was a challenge to the authority of the Bible.

Wise heads knew that sooner or later historical criticism would cross the Atlantic, and by the end of the Civil War it had. Lutherans watched and shook their heads; at first, however, they did not pay much attention to the hubbub. But by 1920 they were worried.

In the 1920s American Protestantism cracked and split down the middle. On one side were "Modernists," who believed they could fit the faith to the findings of the scientists and the historical critics. On the other were "Fundamentalists," a loose coalition of Christians who had rallied to the defense of the Bible.

New word for Lutherans

Most Lutherans in the United States sympathized with the Fundamentalists. They liked their emphasis

on the Bible. They understood what the Fundamentalists were up to when they made the inspiration and "inerrancy" of Scripture their final line of defense against the Modernists. "Inerrancy" was a new word for Lutherans, but for many it summed up their confidence in the authority of Scripture. By 1920 the "inerrancy" of Scripture had become an article of faith for some Lutherans.

Shortly after World War I, representatives of several U.S. Lutheran churches met to form a new cooperative organization, the National Lutheran Council. They took as their doctrinal platform a set of statements written in 1918 by H. G. Stub, president of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America. In his propositions—later known as the Chicago Theses—Stub called the Bible "the inspired and inerrant Word of God." The representatives agreed to the statements without dissent.

But the word "inerrant" was soon to stir controversy. Four German-American synods—Ohio, Iowa, Buffalo, and Texas—had for some time been working toward a merger. A merger commission started work in 1922, and all seemed in order for a union in 1925. Then, because Lutherans take theology seriously, there was a delay. Iowa's leading theologian, J. M. Reu, demanded that "inerrancy" be removed from the proposed constitution. Reu argued that neither Scripture nor the Lutheran Confessions required the term.

An explosive controversy followed, but eventually

Talking about the Bible in different ways helps us stay honest about what it means to be a church under the authority of the Word of God.'

compromise was patched together. The Bible was called "infallible" in the doctrinal article of the new constitution and "inerrant" in an appendix. The scrap of Scripture was settled, and the American Lutheran Church—now remembered as the "old" ALC—came into existence in 1930.

That same year, the ALC joined four other primarily midwestern bodies—including the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in America, which had Swedish roots, the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Lutheran Free Church, and the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America—in forming a federation called the American Lutheran Conference. In its doctrinal platform, the Minneapolis Theses, the conference said the Bible was "divinely inspired, revealed, and inerrant." All but one of these churches—the exception was the Swedish group, known as the Augustana Synod—later would form the present American Lutheran Church. But that's getting ahead of the story.

Scholarly shorthand

By 1930, historical criticism was finding its way into the Lutheran churches of the United States. As they do today, seminarians nodded off trying to keep straight the scholarly shorthand identifying the editors of the Old Testament: J for the Jahwist, E for the Elohist, D for the Deuteronomist, and P for the Priestly editor. They learned as much as their teachers could give them about the words and worlds of the Bible. They came to understand that the Bible is a huge collection of different kinds of writing, meant to be read and listened to in different ways.

When first introduced to hermeneutics, the study of theories of interpretation, more than one student asked, "Herman who?" But in the end, and most importantly, students learned to understand that the Bible is not only a book of facts, but above all a book bearing witness to the law and gospel of God.

Learning a new way of reading the Bible was painful for some and liberating for others. Members of seminary and college faculties often were at odds over these matters, and students sometimes wondered whether to believe their Sunday school teachers or their theological professors.

Students at Lutheran Theological Seminary at

Philadelphia sang an irreverent ditty in honor of a friendly professor who opposed historical criticism:

*He walks with me
And he talks with me,
And he tells me I must beware
of J, D, and E
Redacted by P! . . .*

And a few people with long memories of life at Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota (now part of Luther Northwestern Seminary), still remember the dramatic day an esteemed professor of Old Testament emerged from his study to acknowledge that more than one author may have had a hand in writing the Book of Isaiah.

Widely accepted

Historical criticism was first widely accepted in the United Lutheran Church in America (ULCA), the largest of the bodies that eventually united to become the Lutheran Church in America. And in 1930, faculty changes brought the new approach to the seminary of the Augustana Synod in Rock Island, Illinois. But the advent of the new approach opened a breach between these and other churches.

Historical criticism was welcomed only later and more cautiously in other U.S. Lutheran churches. Leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church—as the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America had been renamed—were particularly strong opponents into the 1950s, and the standard-bearers of Missouri remain opposed to the present. Sharp words over historical criticism often were exchanged by leaders of the churches and in the church press.

When the Lutheran Church in America and the new American Lutheran Church appeared on the scene in the early 1960s, many people wondered, "Why two churches instead of one?" One reason was a division of opinion over Scripture. The leaders of the churches that formed the ALC insisted on the position their predecessors had taken in 1919 and 1930, when they had described the Bible as "the divinely inspired, revealed, and inerrant Word of God" in the constitution of the new ALC. The LCA constitution, on the other hand, shows the influence of the historical-critical approach: "The Holy Scriptures are the divinely inspired record

All of our faith and life as followers of Jesus Christ, our crucified and risen Lord and Savior, are under the authority of God's Word.



of God's redemptive act in Christ, for which the Old Testament prepared the way and which the New Testament proclaims."

In spite of the provisions of its constitution—and because of them—the new ALC was threatened by controversy over Scripture. Another document incorporated into the Articles of Union for the new church, the United Testimony on Faith and Life, was a lengthy statement framed by theologians of the American Lutheran Conference prior to the merger that brought together four of its churches. The United Testimony left the door open to the use of historical criticism. That made it possible for those uneasy with the notion of inerrancy to use the new method and enter the new church in good conscience. But this was unsettling to advocates of inerrancy, who could point to the constitution of the new church for support of their position.

Signs of trouble

Even before the merger, there had been signs of trouble over Scripture. But with the skillful leadership of Fredrik Schiotz, the first president of the new ALC; with retreats that brought district presidents and theologians together; and with the publication of *The Bible: Book of Faith*, written by ALC theologians, the historical-critical approach was introduced and widely accepted in the ALC in the 1960s.

Some years later, the Missouri Synod was convulsed by a quarrel over inspiration, inerrancy, and historical criticism. Controversy swirled around the faculty of its Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. In 1974 most members of that faculty were charged with false doctrine. The chief complaint was that the teachers had embraced the historical-critical approach to the Bible. Eventually, most of the St. Louis faculty left the seminary and established a new school. Later a number of

congregations left the Missouri Synod to form the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, one of the partners forming the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

What will the ELCA say about the Bible?

The constitution for the new church says: "This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life." The statement is modeled after the first sentence of one of the Lutheran Confessions, the Formula of Concord. Like the Lutheran Confessions, the proposed constitution says the Bible is the primary, authentic, authoritative written testimony to the Word of God. This statement puts all of our faith and life under the authority of the Bible.

Clear about authority of Scripture

The statement is strong in its insistence on the authority of the Bible. It does not exclude those who say that the Scripture is inerrant. It welcomes them and joins them in paying honor to the Scripture. Those who say the Scripture is inerrant will bring to the new church an insistence that we listen to the Bible before we interpret it. They steep themselves in the texts of the Bible, embodying a long Lutheran tradition of reverence for the text of the Scripture as it stands written. They come prepared to give the obedience of faith to the testimony of the Holy Bible.

But the proposed statement also makes room for historical criticism. Lutherans who have studied in the ALC's Search or the LCA's Word and Witness programs have learned that the authority of Scripture increases for them as they learn more about it and the worlds from which it came. They think that with the help of scholarship and intellectual honesty, the Word can be understood and believed in today's world. They, too, honor the Bible as the source and norm for the faith and life of the church.

The constitution proposed for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is clear about the authority of Scripture and generous in leaving room for us to find different ways of expressing that authority. Talking about the Bible in different ways helps us stay honest about what it means to be a church under the authority of the Word of God written in the Bible.

It makes sense. We are Lutherans. We know that what we say about the Bible is, finally, not as important as what the Bible says to us. ■



Todd Nichol is assistant professor of church history at Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minn. His latest book is entitled *All These Lutherans: Three Paths Toward a New Lutheran Church*, published by Augsburg Publishing House. This article is the sixth in a series on "Lutherans Growing Together," being published by both *The Lutheran* of the Lutheran Church in America and *The Lutheran Standard* of the American Lutheran Church.

**AN APPEAL FOR FREEDOM
IN LUTHERAN WORSHIP**

THERE'S A FIRE IN THE FONT

by Paul Romstad

When you're in the middle of baptizing a baby, and the acolyte holding the baptismal candle accidentally sets your book on fire, and by the time the fire is out the baptismal water is full of little black fishes, and everybody who saw it ends up laughing hysterically, you're apt to decide—as I did—that Lutheran worship could use a little more of that kind of thing.

I am a faithful follower of *Lutheran Book of Worship*. I like it. Liturgical worship is good for what ails me. When I worship in a nonliturgical church, I feel like I'm going away from the table still hungry. But, God forbid, I'm afraid we Lutherans have a tendency to dullness in worship.

And when something unexpected does happen—like the time my friend tripped over his own feet and fell out of the pulpit—the congregation laughs so hard and so long I can only conclude that they're starved for this sort of thing.

If my seminary liturgics professor happened in on the service I was conducting, he wouldn't have much to complain about. I'm not so sure the same could be said about the man in the jogging suit who dropped by to worship with us one Sunday.

I'd met him on an airplane. He had already decided he liked me by the time he found out I was a pastor. We laughed and talked most of the way from Milwaukee to Minneapolis. As we were landing, he said, "I'm not a churchgoer, but I want to come to your church some Sunday."

He did. But when the service ended, he avoided me by sneaking out another door. He never came back. I'm certain he was so disappointed that he couldn't bear to face me. In a way, I'm glad he didn't stop, because I'm not sure I could have taken what he would have said: "Boy, was that ever boring!" or, "Well, Paul, that was very nice, but it's just not for me," or, "I don't like places where people never laugh."

I'd give anything if he'd had reason to say: "Was that ever fun! I'll be back next Sunday," or, "You people certainly know how to have a good time together," or, "You guys sure have great music!" or even, "I really liked what you had to say in your sermon, Paul." Unfortunately, there wasn't much that Sunday to make him say any of those things.

I'm sure he's the kind of person who prefers the Top 40 to 400-year-old hymns, stand-up comics to

"We're forgiven and free—and that means we don't have to apologize if some of our experiments crash"

learned lecturers, and ball games to church services. But there's no sin in making certain that there's *something* in the Sunday service to show people like him that Christians are people who have a wonderful time doing what they do, that Christians have gotten hold of something that's marvelous to have, that faith in Jesus Christ is attractive and exciting, even to the uninitiated.

All of this is an appeal to the church to recognize that worship can be a lot more interesting than most of us make it. After all, God is not dull!

For example, how did we ever decide that worship has to last 60 minutes, plus or minus three minutes, every Sunday? Isn't it time for some of us to realize that there are times when we can be done in 30 minutes—and times when we need to go two hours?

One of my friends once attended a Christmas Eve service in Ethiopia. The service ran eight hours. The congregation chanted the entire book of Psalms—all 150 of them. People brought lunches, took naps on the floor, and walked around when they needed to stretch. My friend loved it. I think any of us would have.

I once went to an early-morning communion service in an Episcopal church that was over in 30 minutes. It's a weekly event in that congregation. It was beautiful!

Choir went for breakfast

When J. S. Bach was organist and choirmaster at St. Thomas Church in Leipzig, the Sunday service lasted four hours. During the sermon, the choir went out for breakfast.

In my childhood home, dinners ordinarily took less than 15 minutes—my mother's concession to three restless boys. But on special days we had wonderful dinners that kept us at the table for an hour or more. And we never minded, because it seemed right. Why not apply that principle to worship?

How did we ever decide that we need to sing different hymns every single Sunday—and that if we sang a particular hymn last month, we certainly can't sing it again this month? We never change the songs at ball games and birthday parties, and I have yet to get tired of singing "The Star Spangled Banner" or "Happy Birthday."

At nearly every service in my childhood we sang "Holy, Holy, Holy" at the beginning and "Lord, Dismiss Us With Thy Blessing" at the end. I still love to sing both of those hymns.

If we like a hymn, what's wrong with singing it as often as we want to, even if that's every Sunday? Of course, it's also important that we sing some new hymns now and then.

Or what about doing some new Sunday things just for the fun of it? Why not dress-up Sundays ("it's Pentecost—everybody wear red") or special days ("This is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Services here are canceled. Visit another church. Leave your offering there."). I know of a congregation where they occasionally say, "No liturgy today; we're going to sing hymns by request."

How about a Sunday when members of the church council cook bacon and eggs for everybody who shows up, or the youth group provides valet parking, or a "progressive service" on a summer Sunday in the backyards of a series of members?

Serious business

All of this is not to say that the gospel isn't serious business. But at the heart of the gospel is a joy and energy that sometimes can be profoundly expressed in freedom and playfulness. Doesn't our witness to the world stand or fall on our ability to demonstrate that when our Lord gets us together, it's really good to be there?

We're forgiven and free—and that means we don't have to apologize if some of our experiments crash on the runway.

I'll be the first to confess that I lack the courage to try at least half of the worship ideas that occur to me. Some members of my congregation just couldn't take it. I realized that again during the Sunday worship service during which we dedicated the \$500 popcorn machine we purchased with memorial money. It symbolized for me the wonderful times we have together, sharing good things as God's people. But some of our members saw it differently. They were angry and embarrassed because the event wasn't "dignified." You can't win them all.

But when we too easily settle into our ruts of solemn habit, we stifle the newness and energy of the Holy Spirit. We Christians are a people called to be imitators of God. That means doing all we can to make worship interesting, full of surprises, and joyful.

I still think about my friend in the jogging suit. I wish he'd been there the Sunday we had the fire. I'm sure he would have come back. ■



Paul Romstad is senior pastor of Woodlake Lutheran Church in Richfield, Minn.



CHRIST'S REAL PRESENCE AND THE SATANISTS

by Russell E. Saltzman

I was talking with a pastor who served a congregation on Manhattan's Lower East Side. The neighborhood is known for its drunks, drugs, despair, and all the miseries of poverty and perversion. His parishioners included a goodly number of street people, illiterates, and, he suspected, a few "evening ladies" or "gentlemen of the night."

He didn't have to describe in great detail what went on in that neighborhood. As I stood on the corner next to the parsonage, I could see drug passes in the park across the street.

In talking about serving that congregation, the pastor mentioned that he distributes communion wafers by placing them on the communicant's tongue. He never gives communion in the hand. I thought this practice rather unprogressive, and I said so.

"Well," he replied, "we had to do something. We found that some of our 'visitors' were palming the host—the bread—and later profaning it in voodoo and satanic rites."

I was stunned.

We Lutherans teach and confess, officially anyway, that the true body and blood of Christ are present "in, with, and under" the conse-



Christ offers himself to us. We should respond to our Lord with our best in gratitude for what we have been given.

crated bread and wine. Some of us may not be certain in our gut what that means or how deeply we believe it. But at least we say it is so in our Catechisms, new-member classes, and doctrinal statements.

Yet the reality of the Real Presence of Christ in Holy Communion has never struck me so vividly as on that New York street corner. Even if we sometimes find ourselves doubting the Real Presence, the satanists around Ninth Street on east-side Manhattan do not.

This experience and the communion-sharing overtures U.S. Lutherans have made to other churches in recent years have caused me to consider the unique aspects of our Lutheran teaching on Holy Communion.

'We are ushered into the presence of our Lord, whose body and blood were given and shed for us.'

I have wondered if what we teach has any meaning anymore in our congregations, our worship, and our personal lives. Or perhaps the question of how real the Real Presence is has become an unnecessary burden for modern Lutherans—a doctrinal relic grown dusty with age, that now can be ignored or forgotten.

Great casualness

If you sense a certain fretfulness in me on this issue, you are correct. I see in our worship life great casualness toward the Sacrament of Holy Communion. "Leftover" bread and wine—elements of our Eucharistic celebration—are thoughtlessly disposed of. In some congregations, parishioners feel free to leave the service immediately after the offering, before the communion begins. Disposable plastic communion cups are deemed practical for distribution. And it is not uncommon to find Lutherans who believe that communion can be received "too often."

Christ's Real Presence in the sacrament—an irrelevant question? No. Not if we wish to keep our uniquely Lutheran perspective on the Sacrament of Holy Communion. Not if we believe we have a special contribution to make ecumenically in expressing

pective. Not if we are serious about keeping the
ly Supper as Christ instructed us to do "in re-
embrance of me."

Presence of Christ

Historically, Lutherans have described the Real Presence in terms of body and blood. We've said this presence is real whether believers or nonbelievers partake. This is an "objective" presence, there because of Christ and not because of us. In other words, Christ's presence doesn't depend upon our particular feelings at the moment, or on our faith or unfaith. Christ is present, recognized or not.

But aren't the elements in the meal simply bread and wine? Yes, Luther said in the Large Catechism. "It is bread and wine," he explained, "comprehended by God's Word and connected with it." He also emphasized that "it is the Word which distinguishes [the sacrament] from mere bread and wine." The Word also creates the sacrament that "is rightly called Christ's body and blood."

Luther put this matter bluntly: "Even though a minister should receive or administer it, it is the true sacrament—that is, Christ's body and blood—just as truly as when one uses it most worthily."

In bread and wine, the Word of God brings us into the presence of Christ in a real way at a particular time. Through God's Word in relation to *this* bread and to *this* wine at *this* time, we are ushered into the presence of our Lord, whose body and blood were given and shed for us. Luther often used the illustration of a red-hot iron: Iron remains iron and fire remains fire, but both become inseparably united in the red-hot iron.

No other formula or doctrinal position regarding Christ's presence is adequate to contain our Lutheran concept. Neither transubstantiation (the traditional Roman Catholic contention that the bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood) nor consubstantiation (the theory that Christ's body and blood are "substantially" present with bread and wine) express what for Lutherans is a deep, deep mystery.

The weakness of transubstantiation and consubstantiation lies in the attempt of these notions to explain *how* the Real Presence happens. This has never been of much interest to Lutherans. For us, *why* it happens is of much greater importance. In the action of blessing, giving, receiving, eating, and drinking, the presence of Christ happens, truly, for Christians. This we believe.

Our Lutheran Confessions, the basic doctrinal statements of our church, hold to an intimate union in describing the connection between bread and wine, body and blood. These statements carefully erect a fence around this union with terms like "true" body, "true" blood, "truly" received and eaten.

We have insisted upon two largely obscure Latin

phrases to pin the matter down. One, *manducatio im-piorum*, emphasizes that even the ungodly receive Christ in communion (not to their benefit, let it be noted), and *manducatio oralis* points to the oral eating of Christ. To deny this—or to fail to see the consequences of it in our communion practices—is to empty our Lutheran doctrine on the Real Presence of any solid, true content.

Meaning for our worship

This doctrine, taken seriously, does have implications for our worship.

"Leftovers?" There should not be any. Our Lutheran interest has never been in reserving or storing the sacramental elements once consecrated. Our emphasis is doing the sacrament, eating and drinking within the context of worship. Reserving or storing the elements after consecration (except for the purpose of homebound communions) is not a Lutheran option. Remaining elements should be consumed by the worship leaders following the service.

Leaving early? Why anyone should wish to leave the service before communion is beyond my understanding. Aside from the fact that Judas was the only person, according to Scripture, who left the Last Supper before it was instituted, we know it is impolite to leave the table before all the guests have been served. And at my house, we insist that the children stay at the table until everyone is finished.

Plastic cups? How can we even think of them? Christ offers himself in the eucharistic meal. We owe the Lord our best. In a consumer-oriented, throwaway society, surrounding the sacrament with just another cultural symbol of disposability borders on blasphemy, in my judgment.

Commune too often? Is it possible to celebrate and receive the presence of Christ too often? Luther said in the Large Catechism, "... those who claim to be Christian should be prepared to receive this blessed sacrament frequently, for we see that people are becoming listless and lazy about its observance." The sacrament should be a frequent—not an occasional—part of a Christian's life. This means, at a minimum, that Holy Communion ought to be offered weekly to those who desire it.

What of the Satanists? We need not worry. They can play their repulsive games. God protects Christ, present in our midst "in, with, and under" bread and wine. ■



Russell Saltzman is a pastor of First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Blue Island, Ill.

*"Can you take me
to the hospital?" she asked.*

BEST LUNCH I EVER HAD

by Mary Louise Kitsen

It was evening in the busy southern city where I once lived, when I heard a tap on the door of my apartment. I got up from my typewriter and opened the door to face a neighbor I barely knew. Two tots clung to her, and it was clear that she was soon to have another child.

"Can you take me to the hospital?" she asked.

"Perhaps I should call for an ambulance," I said.

"It isn't time yet, but something's wrong. I'd rather not wait on an ambulance." Her eyes pleaded with me.

I went next door and got the elderly couple living there to take in her two children. I pulled a sweater on, and we were off. On the way, the young mother said her husband was at a bar she named. She had tried to phone, but nobody had answered.

At the emergency room she grabbed my arm and said: "Please try to reach my husband. I need him so much."

Nobody answered

I looked up the number and called from the pay phone in the lobby near the emergency room. The phone rang and rang, but again nobody answered.

A nurse came to me. "The doctor says her husband should be here," she told me.

I was about to suggest that we ask the police to find the woman's husband when I quickly thought better of the idea. "I think I can locate him," I told the nurse.

The clear night air felt good as I approached the



Two tots clung to her, and it was clear that she was soon to have another child.

I didn't want to go in. Even outside I could hear noise within. I said a little prayer, opened the door, and went inside.

It was even worse than I had expected. The crowd-room was dark and smoke-filled. A country band was playing in one corner, but I could barely hear the music over the din. How would I ever find the young man in this place, I wondered.

I decided the bartender might know him, so I approached him and asked.

"Lady, do I look like a lost and found department?" he growled.

I moved away. Another man said, "Hello, sweetheart! You're a new one, aren't you?"

I asked him if he knew the young man I was looking for. He gave me a dirty look and moved on without answering.

Kindness in her face

"Need some help, honey?" I turned to see the owner of the voice. She was a waitress who had been arrested several times on prostitution charges. I recognized her name from the newspaper. She sparkled like a Christmas tree. Her hair was so bleached it was almost white. Her face was thick with makeup. But there was kindness in her face. I told her my problem. "I know him," she told me. "He's out in one of the back rooms. Stay right here, and I'll fetch him for you." She moved away, then came back and said: "Listen, honey, this guy hangs around. He talks and he makes, but he doesn't ever leave with a girl or anything. He's forever showing pictures of his wife and kids."

I nodded, and she left.

She was back in a minute. "I had someone take him to the kitchen. He can't go to the hospital in his present state. He'd only make trouble for that young wife of his. Come on."

We went into the kitchen, which was quiet compared to the rest of the place. Two men were slapping sandwiches together. Another man, with salt-and-pepper hair, was attempting to get the young husband to drink some coffee, but he kept pushing the cup away.

"Charlotte, I'll have to take him upstairs to my apartment and give him a cold shower," said the man with the salt-and-pepper hair. He somehow coaxed the younger man to go with him. Charlotte motioned me to a chair and poured me a cup of coffee. I glanced at my watch and told myself I'd be glad when the night was over.

The young father was better when he returned to the kitchen. Now he was able to understand what was happening, and he was anxious to go to his wife.

We decided he would ride with me. Charlotte would arrange to have his car brought to the hospital parking lot later. Before we drove off, Charlotte leaned in the car window to make sure everything was all right.

I said, "You have so much good in you, Charlotte. You'd make a wonderful Christian."

"So long, kiddo," she replied as she backed away. I had said the wrong thing, I told myself. I should have simply thanked her for her help.

The night finally ended. The mother and her newborn child were fine. The husband's sister was coming from a nearby town to care for the tots.

Winter passed, spring came, then summer, then fall again. One beautiful day my friend Hazel and I



Her hair was so bleached it was almost white. Her face was thick with makeup. But there was a kindness in her face.

went out for lunch, something we often did. It was our first visit to a restaurant that featured sandwiches and homemade soups. We spent a pleasant hour enjoying good food, good service, and good conversation.

Ask for the check

I asked our waitress, a plain woman with dark hair streaked with gray, for our check.

"Your bill is paid," she told me.

I glanced around quickly, trying to spot somebody I knew. "Who paid it?" I asked the waitress.

"You did."

"I did?" I was confused. She laid our bill, marked "paid," on the table. I said: "I'm afraid you've made a mistake. I haven't paid yet."

"You paid many months ago," she said. "At a little bar on the other side of town."

She walked away.

I turned the bill over. Printed on the back were the words "Thank You, Your Waitress." Below them our waitress had written, "A Christian named Charlotte." ■



Mary Louise Kitsen is a writer in Plantsville, Conn.

*'This could turn out to be
the most important case
in U.S. constitutional history
involving churches and the government.'*

OUR DAY IN COURT

The American Lutheran Church, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and four of their congregations in Arizona—three Presbyterian, one Lutheran—filed a civil law suit last January alleging that the federal government and its Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) violated the constitutional rights of the congregations and their members by sending undercover agents into worship and other congregational activities.

The government's actions were part of its investigation into efforts by church members—the "sanctuary" movement—to help undocumented Central Americans enter and remain in the United States.

Last May a federal jury in Tucson, Arizona, found six sanctuary workers guilty of conspiring to help Central Americans enter the United States illegally. Two others were convicted on lesser charges, and three were acquitted. The convictions are being appealed.

The churches maintain that their suit is not an attempt to justify the sanctuary movement. They say the government's methods of investigation damaged the ministries of the congregations and violated the rights of members and others to the "free exercise" of religion under the First Amendment.

What's at stake here? Donn McLellan, managing editor of *THE LUTHERAN STANDARD*, put that question and others to Charles P. Lutz, director of the ALC's Office of Church in Society, and Duane Krohnke, an attorney with Faegre and Benson, the Minneapolis law firm that regularly represents the American Lutheran Church.

L.S.: *What was the nature of the "infiltration" of the churches by government agents?*

Lutz: In the case of Alzona Lutheran Church in Phoenix, Jesús Cruz came to the Rev. Jim Oines and lay leaders of the congregation early in 1984 and said, in effect: "I'm a friend of refugees. I want to work with you in helping to minister to them." He was eager to help in all kinds of ways: driving cars, transporting people—including undocumented persons. He is Hispanic and bilingual, and he became part of the congregation's ministry with undocumented persons. He regularly attended the congregation's Sunday night Bible study meetings, which at the time attracted many Spanish-speaking nonmembers, including undocumented people. The Bible studies were an outreach of the congregation into the community, and Jesús Cruz became part of it. Then, in January 1985, when the sanctuary workers were indicted, it was revealed that Cruz had been a government undercover agent.

L.S.: *Was Cruz a regular INS employee or an informant?*

Lutz: He and Solomon Graham were not full-time government employees. They worked on a contract basis, and they were paid to infiltrate the congregation and gather information. Their activities were similar in the three Presbyterian congregations. They made tape recordings of services and sermons, and they recorded the license numbers of cars in the church parking lots. And when people in the congregations learned what had been done, some of them feared that

they would lose their security clearances, if they had government jobs, or that they would lose their benefits, if they were on a federal pension. Those fears probably weren't justified, but that's what people felt.

The consequences in all four congregations have been several. The people felt that their trust was violated and that the fabric of confidence within the community of believers had been undermined. Now somebody they don't know comes to church and they wonder if this is another government agent. People have become more guarded.

The people at Alzona Church claim they have almost totally lost any opportunity for outreach into the Hispanic community. The word is out that government agents have infiltrated the congregation—so don't go there! The Sunday evening Bible studies, which were reaching 30 to 40 people each week, have died. So the members feel that their ministry has been seriously affected by the revelation that government informants were there.

Krohnke: We aren't speculating here. The churches' complaint is based on public revelations in the pre-trial proceedings in the criminal case. But since we have not yet had discovery in the civil case, we don't know whether this was the full extent of the infiltration.

Lutz: The government's response to what is being alleged by the churches isn't to deny what happened, but to say that it was necessary and justified.

The members of the Arizona congregations felt that they had been violated by the two informants. Another fac-

that Graham and Cruz had no investigation. They were sent to the churches on a "fishing expedition." All of that added to the members' feelings of revulsion about what happened.

L.S.: What are the churches seeking in the suit?

Krohnke: We're asking the court to determine that what was done was illegal and unconstitutional. We're asking for an injunction against such action by the government in the future. And we're asking for compensatory money damages, though the emphasis of the suit certainly is not on that.

L.S.: Are the churches claiming that government agencies may never send undercover agents or informants into congregations?

Lutz: No. But we believe the First Amendment gives special protection to religious associations. The government must follow due process of law in conducting investigations. We're saying that there is a government agency believes there is reason to suspect criminal behavior in a church organization, it should go to go before a judge and get approval before doing certain things—just as the police ordinarily would need a warrant to search someone's home.

The complaint also argues that the government's behavior was unnecessary. Church people weren't trying to hide anything. The government could have found out what it wanted to know simply by being aboveboard and asking people. Some people believe the agents were sent to the congregations chiefly to intimidate the churches. And there was some intimidation, at least as an effect. But intimidating churches is not the proper role of government.

Krohnke: We are not claiming that religious people and religious bodies are above the law or that they may never be investigated by undercover agents. It's conceivable that under some circumstances, such an investigation would be proper. But the safest way to make the accommodation between the government's legitimate needs of investigation and the rights of religious liberty that we as Americans enjoy under the Constitution is to have an independent judge to do the delicate balancing and adjustment—rather than a third- or fourth-level bureaucrat or part-time, paid informants.



The Rev. Jim Oines is pastor of Alzona Church, an ALC congregation whose outreach was severely hurt by fears of government intrusion.

Lutz: We're trying to remove approval for such investigations from the zealotry of an agency that feels it is being attacked by the churches. We think there would be some protection if it were established in law that you have to get an independent judicial review and approval prior to conducting such investigations.

L.S.: Had government agents ever been sent into churches before?

Lutz: There was a lot of speculation and some anecdotal evidence that such agents were sent into church gatherings and church offices during the civil rights movement and, later, during the Vietnam war. During the Vietnam war there was some pretty clear evidence that congregations in the San Francisco area and in other port cities were infiltrated because they were harboring military deserters. In fact, the word sanctuary was used then, too. But in those situations the government didn't take anyone to court in connection with the churches' activities, nor did any churches sue the government.

ALC Presiding Bishop David Preus has often said he would like to see infiltration of U.S. churches nipped before it becomes a pattern, as it has in many other nations in the world. In the Soviet Union or South Africa, for example, it's taken for granted that government

agents likely are present during worship. That was true in Nazi Germany, too.

L.S.: You used the term zealotry. Many people would argue that there's plenty of political zealotry among the sanctuary activists and that religion and politics are mixed together here. How do you answer the person who says you're just trying to throw the cloak of religion over what in fact are very political activities?

Lutz: It's a fair question. Religion and politics clearly are intermixed here. Many of the people working with undocumented Central Americans are not only trying to help refugees—although the government doesn't consider them refugees—but also questioning U.S. immigration policy and attacking U.S. policy in Central America. But some of the people supporting the churches' position in this suit either have no interest in the sanctuary movement or even oppose it. That's especially true of some of the people in the Arizona congregations that were infiltrated. Not everybody in those congregations sympathizes with the sanctuary movement—in fact, two of the congregations had formally declared themselves sanctuaries, while two had not.

L.S.: My understanding is that what's loosely called the sanctuary movement includes a spectrum of activities, some clearly legal, others not, and many in a gray area in between.

Lutz: Right! Generally, it's not against the law to provide, say, food or clothing to undocumented persons who may be in your community. It's true that some of the church people involved in the sanctuary movement also want to challenge U.S. foreign policy. But this suit isn't about U.S. immigration policy or U.S. policy in Central America. It's about a First Amendment constitutional principle, and we need to make that as clear as we can.

Krohnke: The federal jury in Tucson concluded that some of the things the people on trial did were illegal. But an appeal is being prepared in that case. The Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit or the U.S. Supreme Court may decide that what those sanctuary workers did was not illegal. But even if we make the assumption that what they did was illegal, the ALC's 1984 statement on "Human Law and the Conscience of Be-

Trust is fragile at best, but it is absolutely essential for a religious community.

lievers," adopted at the church's 1984 general convention, says there may be circumstances where people of faith feel compelled to do things which the civil authorities regard as illegal. The statement says other Christians should "remain in communion" with such people and support them as fellow believers, without necessarily agreeing with or supporting their actions.

L.S.: *Can the ALC afford the legal costs of bringing a suit like this?*

Lutz: The Phoenix law firm of Lewis and Roca is contributing the time of its attorneys. That firm could recover some of its costs if the churches are successful and the court awards compensatory damages. The churches involved will have to pay certain out-of-pocket costs, and some people already have contributed to a fund set up for that purpose.

L.S.: *Litigation involving constitutional issues can drag on for years. Did you seek simpler, more direct remedies to what happened in the Arizona congregations?*

Lutz: Yes. We've pursued both the legislative and executive routes, without success so far. The Immigration and Naturalization Service is headed by Alan Nelson. He's a member of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, an ALC congregation in Vienna, Virginia, as is his boss, U.S. Attorney General Edwin Meese. ALC Presiding Bishop David Preus met last year with Nelson and told him: "We're very unhappy about this kind of behavior by the government in what we understand to have happened in Arizona. Will you assure us that you will not do it anymore?"

Nelson said: "No, we can't give you that promise. We don't like to do it. We'd rather not do it. But we will not promise not to do it again."

Our relationship with Mr. Nelson remains open for dialog. He said at the close of our meeting that he hoped we could continue to talk.

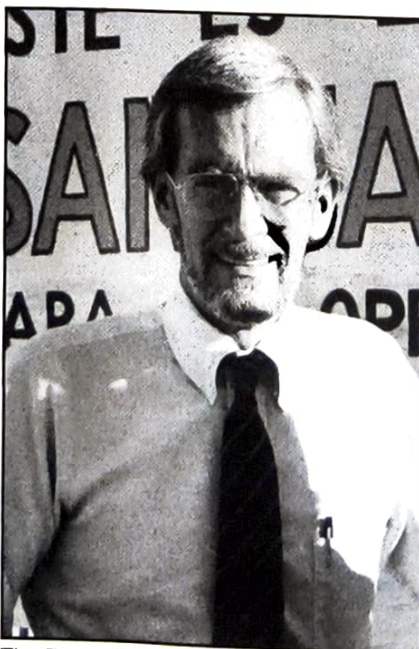
The fact that Nelson and Meese are

ALC members is an interesting coincidence, but it also illustrates how church and state often are intermixed in the same people. Meese and Nelson both are faithful members of the ALC. Nelson told Preus: "I want to respect you as my national bishop, but I disagree with you in what you're saying [about the infiltration of the churches]." Nelson's situation is a little parable of what is true for all believers, who are simultaneously citizens of the kingdom of God and of a governmental system. For most of us there's at least occasional tension between those roles. But it's heightened for a civil servant like Nelson, who is trying to do a good job in government *and* be a faithful Christian.

L.S.: *Earlier, you said members of the four Arizona congregations felt that their trust had been violated by the government agents. Say more about that.*

Lutz: I think a sense of community trustworthiness is absolutely essential for a religious community or religious association. You have a right to expect that other people are there for reasons that at least are similar to yours. This trust is a fragile thing at best. Once you have it, you'd like to resist any forces that might attack or undermine it.

I look for this kind of trust from my local congregation in a way that I don't from, say, my political party, where the relationships aren't as deep and don't



The Rev. John Fife is pastor of Tucson's Southside Presbyterian Church and one of the persons involved in the debate on investigation procedures.

deal as much with ultimate values. Our suit argues that religious association is different and special—and that it is protected in our constitutional system in ways that we ought to celebrate and safeguard.

L.S.: *Suppose the case goes to trial and you lose. Wouldn't that give the government a signal that it's OK to send agents into churches?*

Lutz: And make things worse? Sure.

Krohnke: The ALC's participation in this case was the result of a very careful, considered decision by the Board of Trustees and the executive committee of the Church Council. In our legal system you can't go to court with hypothetical questions for advisory opinions. You can assert a claim only where there is a concrete dispute. For the churches, one of the considerations was that if these things happened and we didn't stand up for what we believe to be our rights, the churches could be seen as not living up to their responsibilities.

Lutz: There's great general interest in this case both inside and outside the religious community. I've been impressed with the interest lawyers—of all kinds—have shown in this case.

Krohnke: It's easy to exaggerate when you're involved in a case. But if you look at all the religion cases decided by the United States Supreme Court—involving Sunday closing laws, religion in the public schools, the flag salute case, the Amish—and compare those issues with what's involved here, I think it's fair to say that this could turn out to be the most important case in U.S. constitutional history involving churches and the government.

L.S.: *What happens now?*

Krohnke: If the hearing on the government's motion to dismiss the suit takes place in mid-October as scheduled, the judge likely would issue his ruling by about the end of this year. If the government's motion is granted, we probably would appeal to the Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. If the motion is denied, we would move ahead to discovery—with both parties taking statements from witnesses who are under oath and asking for certain documents. Then there would be a trial, with or without a jury, and subsequent appeals from the trial court's decision. ■

Global Christians teach us to pray

Barbara Rossing

Praying in restaurants: For many of that is an embarrassing childhood memory. But one of the most moving I've ever heard was in a Japanese restaurant in Minneapolis.

I had eaten dinner with members of a Lutheran peace delegation from Japan. In a soft voice, Kayako Nakanishi described being pinned under her house by the force of the Hiroshima blast. She told how she suffered from radiation sickness and watched many of her friends die; how she gave up on life, living a hell-like existence of shame and suffering; how she finally became a Christian 30 years later; how she felt called by God to participate in a peace mission to the United States.

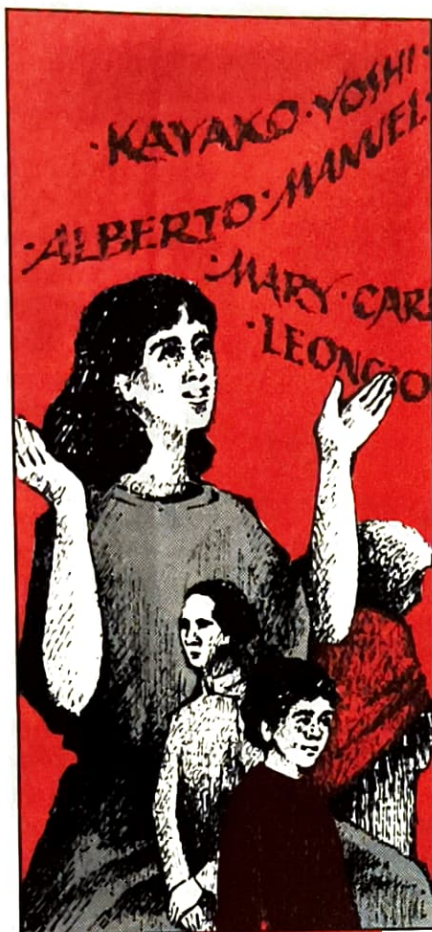
As we prepared to leave the restaurant, Mrs. Nakanishi suddenly said, "Let's join hands and pray together." So the other customers all around, the 10 of us stood in a circle, joined hands, and prayed.

Incredible experience

And it wasn't embarrassing. To hold hands with this remarkable woman who had survived the atom bomb—to hear her praying out loud to the living God for whom she had searched so long—was an incredible experience.

That and other encounters with global Christians have been conversion experiences for me—conversions to prayer. I was a novice in prayer the first time I went to Africa, but there I met people for whom prayer is the center of their lives. I met men and women who, in the midst of poverty and sickness, gave thanks to God and prayed for me.

Prayer is the life-breath of people of faith. Through the intercession of God's Spirit, even our deepest sighs and longings become prayers. Through our intercessions, we join a body of Christ that extends around the world.



HOW I pray

Of the many wonderful passages in Scripture that teach us about prayer, the one that has been the most meaningful in my struggle is the story of Jacob wrestling with God (Genesis 32). For prayer is most of all an encounter—an encounter, a wrestling, a striving with the living God.

Wonderful and terrifying

Prayer involves every fiber of our being. Like any true encounter, prayer is both wonderful and terrifying. God meets us in prayer—God leaps out like that midnight wrestler and grasps hold of us. We go away, like Jacob, limping but changed.

I certainly don't understand *how* intercession works. But I slowly have learned from global Christians the importance of intercessory prayer.

As I've traveled overseas, I've asked my hosts, "What can I do for you?"—expecting a request for money or medicine or books or scholarships for their children. Their first response always has been the same: "Pray for us." I've asked Christians in South Africa and Ethiopia, "What message shall I take back to people in the United States?" Again, "Please ask your people to pray for us."

Prayers are vital

Of course, we can do much more: We can work to alleviate injustice; we can advocate with our government; we can work for peace. But global Christians assure us that our prayers are vital in sustaining their ministries.

"We know in our experience what it has meant to be upheld by the love and prayers and concern of so many around the world," Nobel laureate Bishop Desmond Tutu tells American audiences. "It has been almost a physical sensation, this being borne up by those servant prayers."

Prayer is the best gift we can give those we love: praying for them, daily remembering them by name and lifting them up before the throne of grace, commending them into God's gracious care.

If we find prayer difficult, we know that we don't stand alone when we pray. Far away, on the other side of the world, people are praying for us. We join Mrs. Nakanishi and Bishop Tutu; we join Christians in South Africa and Namibia and Ethiopia; we join Christians around the globe; we join with *each* of them through prayer.

"Pray without ceasing," Scripture tells us (1 Thess. 5:17 KJV). It's both a gift and a command—a command to bring our needs and the needs of others to God, a command to listen to God's voice even when we don't feel like it. But most of all, it's a gift: a gift of relationship—a living encounter—with the living Christ. ■



Barbara Rossing is associate pastor at Holden Village near Chelan, Wash. She formerly was director of interpretation for the ALC's world-mission division and a pastor of Bethany Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.

I THINK



EVANGELICAL:

"Will the new church live up to its name?"

by Paul Spaulding

On January 1, 1988, the American Lutheran Church (ALC), Lutheran Church in America (LCA), and Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC) will become the *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*—assuming that this union of churches is approved by the necessary percentage of ALC congregations.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: It's not a bad name. For one who grew up in the old Evangelical Lutheran Church, it has a bit of nostalgia built into it. On the other hand, much has changed since the 1950s.

But the key word in the new name is *evangelical*. Any time that adjective is part of a name, it invites the question, "Is the organization expressing what the adjective means?"

Four uses of word

The trouble is, at least four uses of evangelical are current in U.S. religious circles. One is a traditional Lutheran usage that sees "evangelical" as all but synonymous with "Lutheran." The two terms are almost interchangeable in European Lutheranism. But this usage is by far the least valuable as a reason for including the word in the name of a new Lutheran church. "Institutionalizing" the word separates it from both its original biblical meaning and its current U.S. use as an adjective describing Christian people and the Christian church.

We can credit—and blame—the media for the second meaning of the word. The secular media find it convenient to lump evangelicals with fundamentalists as part of the religious and political right. It's been implied that evangelicals may be as much a political interest group as they are a religious movement. Already, one member of my congregation has asked, "Does calling ourselves 'evangelical' in today's world mean people are going to expect us to vote for Pat Robertson in 1988 and support Jerry Falwell's political ideas?"

But the media's definition is not secure, for two good reasons: the rich biblical meaning of the word and because millions of people who call themselves evangelicals don't fit the media's narrow definition.

I trust that one major reason why the Commission for a New Lutheran Church put "evangelical" in the new church's name is because of the biblical meaning of the term. The Greek New Testament word *evangelion* most often is translated as "gospel." This definition can reflect our desire to be rooted in and driven by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This poses a monumental challenge. A church organization that claims to be evangelical in this sense invites continuous evaluation. Can we in the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America live up to our name?

To discover a practical expression of what it means to live up to the name "evangelical," we would do well to consider a fourth definition of the word. It is one common to millions of Christians in dozens of denominations. To be evangelical in this sense involves having a burning desire to see men and women come to a personal relationship with the living Christ. This desire arises from a firm conviction that apart from a saving relationship to Jesus Christ, a person is lost.

To be evangelical within this meaning is to have a high view of the inspiration and authority of the Bible. Contrary to a popular notion, not all evangelicals insist that the term "inerrant" be applied to the Bible. The real distinction between an evangelical view of Scripture and liberal theology is this: Most contemporary biblical theology sees religious language, including the Scriptures, as a *subordinate* expression of other, more fundamental religious experiences. Evangelicals, on the other hand, insist that religious experience itself is given birth by God's Word and shaped by biblical language. Evangelicals say that the Bible is an essential part of God's special self-revelation and an active and effective means of grace.

Evangelicals say with Martin Luther, "My conscience is captive to the Word of God." Trends in behavior and morality that may be acceptable in our culture still must undergo the scrutiny of the Word of God.

If we live up to this definition of our new church's name, we can only see brighter and more vibrant days ahead. ■

Paul Spaulding is pastor of Living Christ Community Church, a congregation of the American Lutheran Church in Flagstaff, Ariz.

LETTERS

Angelic Lutheran Church in America

Charles E. Schmitz
Bay, Fla.
Although I am not a member of any so-called charismatic group, I want to commend them and others of similar conviction (Sept. 26, p. 25) for not threatening "ship" or "form a new church." I plan to vote "No!" on merger, when called in my parish, to register my personal disapproval of the doctrinal statements, polity, the nibbling at local sovereignty, the lack of evangelism structuring, the lack of unalterable articles, so that the quota-structured conventions could control doctrinal and functional positions of the new church without recourse to congregations.

In a day when we celebrate new visions with fellow Christians in both Reformed and Episcopal churches, we trust that our ELCA will practice an inclusiveness that neither condemns nor depreciates parties or individuals who cling to what some may believe to be a more traditional Lutheran statement and practice of the biblical and historical doctrine and polity of our church.

Jim Nielsen
Minn.

There is nothing wrong with merger, and there is nothing particularly right about either. The fact is that merger is an unorthodox subject of a true Christian's thoughts, words, and deeds. Merger is not a political issue and will save no one and will not contribute to a change in our walk with the Lord.

After 50 years of being a Lutheran, I, like multitudes of others, realize that the message was incomplete. Let Jesus take over your life. That is being born again. Then, let the Holy Spirit fill you with power. That is living with, in, and for the Lord. You will then realize that filling your magazine, your church, and your life with thoughts, words, and deeds concerning merger, administration, and ritual are utter nonsense.

Obey the gospel message. Get saved. You say, "I am." Sorry, but most of you aren't. Make your decision for Jesus and invite others to join you. That will be true un-

Central America concerns

Victor D. Jenson
Anticello, Iowa

A group called CEPAD (Sept. 26, p. 25) urges Christians to "overcome narrow nationalism and ideology" and respond to the plea from "a people being slaughtered by foreign aggression." As far as I am concerned, the foreign aggression is by Soviet communism. It appears many so-called Christian organizations are against U.S. in-

terests and find little fault with communist intentions and aggressions. Do you suppose the Afghanistan anti-communism forces could use a bit of Christian support against the Soviets who, from all past performances, are anti-Christian? Then again, maybe I'm too much of a right-winger to understand the situation.

Sally C. Fahrenthold
Overland Park, Kan.

In February 1986, I enjoyed a travel seminar with the Center for Global Service and Education of Augsburg College, visiting Mexico and Nicaragua. This was an opportunity to tour and also to visit personally with people from many walks of life. I felt that the range of contacts was more diverse than any personal travels could be. The variety of opinions openly expressed and the number of active political parties amazed me.

The people of Nicaragua, from peasant farmers to governmental leaders, seemed wonderfully alive spiritually. I was deeply moved by the Christian witness and the vision of justice and compassion that the people of Nicaragua cherish. It is my prayer that Christians in the United States will encourage them.

Carol Ward
Minneapolis, Minn.

Many thanks to Lowell Almeñ, editor of THE LUTHERAN STANDARD, for his determination to present information from both sides of the Central American question. This kind of fair coverage will encourage responsible, self-questioning debate on the important issues the church is facing.

At the same time, I am disappointed in the four responses to "Duping Nicaraguan Visitors" in the June 13 "Letters" section (p. 19). They fail to produce any documentation to discredit reports of deception of religious groups by the Sandinista govern-

ment. A mere assertion to the contrary does not satisfy my curiosity.

I have read the itinerary of the tours given by Augsburg College's Center for Global Service and Education. It gives me little reason to believe that such tours are independent from the selective direction of the Sandinista Front (FSLN).

Augsburg's Center has lost more credibility for me after hearing two of their representatives speak on Nicaragua. The ease with which they broadly excused a myriad of FSLN human rights violations, from almost total press censorship to the slaughter and devastation of the Miskito Indians, is reminiscent of the Rev. Hewlett Johnson's cavalier defense of genocide committed by the Stalin regime. If Nicaragua was submitted to the kind of scrutiny given South Africa, we would never hear, as I heard from Augsburg's Jack and Sara Nelson-Pallmeyer, of press censorship and jailing of government critics described as "necessary," and the murdering of civilian minority Indians as "a mistake."

Robert R. Smith Jr.
Soquel, Calif.

I was shocked to read that the American Lutheran Church's Task Force on Central America objected to the publication of the U.S. State Department's charges about the Nicaragua government's "duping of visitors" (June 13, p. 30). A church-oriented publication such as THE LUTHERAN STANDARD should be a forum for all opinions, as well as a source of information covering all points of view. To be anything less is to become a propaganda organ for one narrow viewpoint. Please keep up the Lord's work.

Shaping Lutheran history

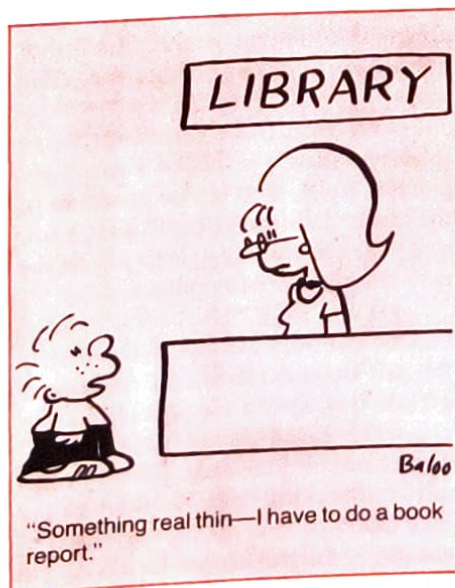
John DeYoung
Kyoto, Japan

The article, "They Shaped Our History as Lutherans" (Sept. 5, p. 4), was marvelous. The three words—pastor, theologian, statesman—summarized a great story. However, there's a fourth word to be added, and it's not a noun but an adjective. I give it to our great writer, Wilfred Bockelman, and the word is trustworthy. In my many years as a pastor-missionary, I have read more of his articles than of any other scribe. I have never been disappointed.

Youth alive

Kathleen McDowell
Deerfield Beach, Fla.

When I read young Martin Kaste's article (July 11, p. 30), I wanted to shout "Praise God!" In his words, I could hear a young man whose eyes are not only open to the reality of this world, but also one with a spirit-filled heart. He knows what our mission as Christians should be. What a sense of joy and hope I had when reading this from a church leader-to-be.



"Something real thin—I have to do a book report."

NEWSFRONT

First person picked for new church's staff

- Site search begins for Chicago headquarters
- Governing patterns set for church colleges

The first person chosen for a position on the churchwide staff of the proposed Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) is Alfred C. (Chris) Stein, who was named executive director of the Office of Personnel.

Stein, who lives in New Brighton, Minn., a St. Paul suburb, was selected by the 10-member Transition Team representing the American Lutheran Church (ALC), Lutheran Church in America (LCA), and Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC).

The team is working to bring the operations of the three uniting churches together for the functional start of the ELCA on Jan. 1, 1988—if the new church is approved in the referendum currently under way in ALC congregations.

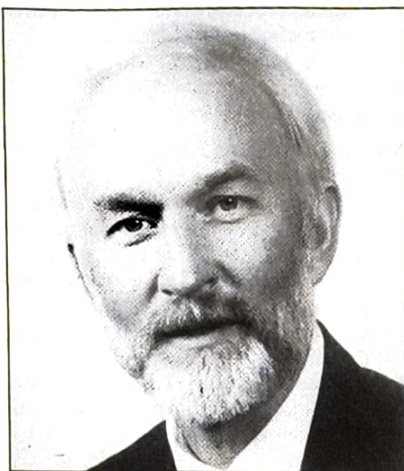
Stein, 40, began work Oct. 13. He has a temporary office in Chicago, located with other Lutheran agencies in that city.

He is a former ALC pastor who now belongs to an LCA congregation. Since 1984 he has been personnel manager for the A. C. Nielsen Co. in Minneapolis, a broadcast rating service. Earlier he worked as personnel representative for Cardiac Pacemakers, Inc., of St. Paul.

From Ohio

Stein, a native of Ohio, is a graduate of Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, and Trinity Seminary in Columbus, Ohio. He served parishes at Tuttle, N.D., and Arlington, Minn., between 1971 and 1978, before undertaking study in a clinical pastoral education program at Metropolitan Medical Center in Minneapolis in 1978-79.

Stein says he sees his first tasks as "developing appropriate personnel systems" so that the new church begins with a good foundation. He also is seek-



First appointment

Albert C. (Chris) Stein is executive director of the ELCA's Office of Personnel, based in Chicago.

ing an "understanding of the mission statement" for the executive directors of the other churchwide agencies. Coming quickly, he notes, is the recruitment and interview process for those positions.

Search for headquarters

This is a good time to be searching for a headquarters location in the Chicago metropolitan area, the Rev. James Wylie of Park Ridge, Ill., told the Transition Team.

Wylie, who chairs the five-member site committee, said, "We are entering a favorable market at this time" that has a 38% unoccupied rate for office space.

"We don't see [finding office space] as merely a business deal," explained Wylie, who is vice president of the Lutheran Institute for Human Ecology. "We are seeking a facility to fit the new church's mission purposes."

He also said, "The major message that we got from the folks who will pay the bill [namely, members of congregations throughout the uniting churches] was, 'Don't forget economics.'" Therefore, he indicated, the site committee is seeking to be sensitive to the fact that "people do have a concern about . . . the money we save." At the

same time, he said, "we need to be sensitive to the total picture" of the church's mission.

The group's report said, "Considering the fluid organizational state of the ELCA in its formative years, the [site] committee plans to look for lease space . . . unless a purchase opportunity should arise of compelling merit."

Patterns for colleges

As a result of college forums throughout the three uniting churches, several patterns of governance have emerged for the ELCA's 29 colleges and universities, reported Dr. Glenn Nelson of Minneapolis, director of the ALC's Division for College and University Services.

The patterns include four or five colleges with a churchwide relationship for governance; four with a congregationally based corporate structure; two with both synodical and churchwide ties; four with synodical or regionwide relationships; and 14 or 15 with specific synodical connections.

Dr. Nelson indicated that "a great deal of concern is being expressed by the colleges in terms of funding." He noted that the funding pattern is separate from the plan for governance and will involve two pieces—churchwide and synodical support—that are integrated for overall support of church-related higher education.

He told the Transition Team that synods in Regions II (Southwest) and IV (central Upper Midwest) have decided to pool their resources for college funding. But other synod Transition Teams, he said, need to give attention to funding plans for colleges and universities.

Use of hunger funds

The Transition Team approved a proposal from the Work Group on World Hunger for dividing hunger appeal funds in the ELCA between international projects and domestic causes.

The approved division of 25% to 30% for use within the territory of the ELCA and 70% to 75% for other parts

the world represents a slight increase in domestic use of the money from the present ALC pattern.

Before the Transition Team took action, ALC Presiding Bishop David Preus expressed concern over the possibility of siphoning funds away from international relief and development projects for domestic projects.

Computers for the ELCA were the center of great debate by the Transition Team. Strong differences between existing ALC and LCA staff regarding computers and pension programs were an apparent source of the team's extended discussion.

But the team did get news of some agreement: The ALC and LCA publishing houses have agreed to use the Minneapolis-based Burroughs computer as the primary system for the new church's publishing program, with the system in Philadelphia being gradually phased out of publishing use.

In relation to pension disagreements, the Transition Team directed a Work Group on Pensions "to oversee the design and implementation by Jan. 1, 1987, of a data information system for the ELCA Board of Pensions," allowing use of both the ALC-owned Burroughs computer system and the LCA Board of Pensions' Honeywell computer system, both of which are being new.

The team also voted to issue contracts for three computer-related project managers to deal with issues related to ELCA finance, pension, and data processing operations. These contracts will extend only through June 30, 1987.

Candidates for new church

Interview panels with "subject-matter experts" are being planned to evaluate candidates from which ELCA's new boards will select executive directors.

The slates are to include several minimum percentage goals: new appointments, 25%; existing staff, 50%; women and men, 35% each; people of color, 5%; members of the ALC and LCA, 40% each, and of the AELC, 2%. Positions available in the ELCA will be announced in the Nov. 7 issue of the LUTHERAN STANDARD and in the issues of the LCA and AELC newsletters. The listing also is being sent to congregations.



Seminaries make history

Wartburg Seminary President Roger Fjeld (right) and University of Dubuque Theological Seminary (UDTS) Dean Arlo Duba (left), wearing liturgical vestments with stoles, led the joint Eucharist of Presbyterians and Lutherans on the UDTS campus, Sept. 23.

ALC, Presbyterian seminaries share Eucharist service

A joint Eucharist service was celebrated Sept. 23 by the communities of Wartburg Theological Seminary and the University of Dubuque (Iowa) Theological Seminary (UDTS). The service marked the first time the two institutions have joined in celebrating the Eucharist and signals a new relationship emerging between the Amer-

ican Lutheran Church and the Presbyterian Church—USA (PCUSA).

Wartburg Seminary is related to the ALC; UDTS is a seminary of the PCUSA. Wartburg President Roger W. Fjeld preached and Arlo Duba, dean of UDTS, presided. Students from both seminaries helped to lead the service.

The service was a response to the resolution of the ALC general convention in August "that the ALC enter into a new relationship with the [PCUSA] and the Reformed Church in America." The resolution urged "occasional joint services of the Lord's Supper where appropriate and desirable, and in accord with the disciplines of our several churches." ALC officials said the Wartburg-UDTS service likely was the first official joint Eucharist to happen as a result of the resolution.

Dr. Fjeld stressed in his sermon the importance of emphasizing what the two church traditions have in common, yet each maintaining its own tradition and avoiding theological compromise. For that reason, a Presbyterian order of worship was used in the service. A Lutheran service will be used when the joint Eucharist is celebrated at Wartburg in the spring.

Such actions are not repudiating our forebears, according to Fjeld. Instead he hopes that "we are a little more humble than they in our search for theological truth, . . . less insistent that our language is the only way to express what God has revealed."

Bible Sunday: Plant the seed

The American Bible Society (ABS) has designated Nov. 23—the Sunday before Thanksgiving—as Bible Sunday.

The emphasis is intended to make churchgoers aware of Christians, mainly in other countries, who still are without Scriptures of their own.

This year's theme is "Help Children Grow . . . Plant the Seed of God's Word in Their Lives." The children of Brazil, Uganda, and Lebanon will be helped to grow through special monetary gifts received Nov. 23, according to ABS officials.

The world's national Bible societies, which function as a global team known as the United Bible Societies, increased the distribution of Scriptures by 16%—to over a half billion—in 1985.

Malone: 'Pastoral' connects gospel to economic problems

A pastoral letter on the U.S. economy that is expected to win the approval of the nation's Roman Catholic bishops in November is an attempt to link the gospel and Catholic social tradition with contemporary problems, according to Bishop James W. Malone, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Malone, speaking in Minneapolis, said the document, "Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy," is intended to inform Catholics about basic elements of their church's social teaching and to influence the public debate on the economy.

Malone was the "grand finale" speaker in a decade-old series on "Challenge for the Ministry in the Eighties," organized by Dr. William E. Hulme, professor of pastoral care and counseling at Luther Northwestern Seminary in St. Paul. Hulme said 10 years was long enough, and that he decided to end the series by inviting the Catholic bishop of Youngstown, Ohio.

Malone, speaking at Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church, said the debate engendered by three drafts of the pastoral may be more important than the final 40,000-word document. He said the first draft alone drew some 10,000 pages of comment.

Too many unemployed

The proposed pastoral contends that current levels of unemployment are unacceptable and that more must be done to create jobs. It calls for public and private efforts to preserve the moderate-sized family farm. It notes the interdependence of the United States and other nations, especially those in the Third World.

Bishop Malone said he and his fellow bishops hope to do a better job of teaching the pastoral on the economy than they did their widely publicized letter on peace and war. He said they already have set up a committee to work with Christian educators, to develop lesson plans and sermon outlines, and to establish study groups and coalitions.

It was clear to the bishops, Malone said, that voluntary agencies alone

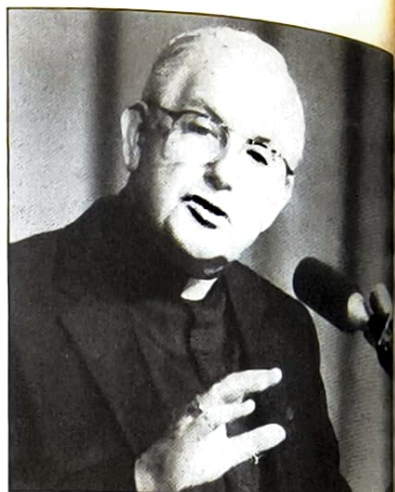
could not provide the assistance needed and that "we must address the structures of government and insist that tax dollars be given to improve the status of the underprivileged."

In a second address, at the Lutheran Church in America congregation, Malone talked about the special synod held in Rome late last year to assess progress in implementing the teachings of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). Malone said 20 years is too soon after Vatican II to make a comprehensive assessment. But he said it would have "a distinctive place in the history of the Catholic church because of the distinctive decisions it made."

In response to questions, Malone said he:

- supports the agenda of the women's movement, "short of considering abortion a right and short of admitting women to ordination, because that is against the discipline of my church";

- doesn't believe declining attendance at Mass is the result of changes in the liturgy, because the liturgy is a much more meaningful experience in English than it ever was in Latin;



Bishop James W. Malone

- enthusiastically supports eliminating language in worship that is sexist and offensive to many women, but does not favor using "Mother" in referring to God; and

- has been told that some Catholics in the United States and Latin America are joining nondenominational or nonsacramental churches, where they "find great comfort from Bible preaching and an emphasis on a very explicit moral code."

This story was provided by Willmar Thorkelson, the Minnesota correspondent for Religious News Service.

Membership in major U.S. Lutheran churches decreases

Three major U.S. Lutheran churches showed slight membership losses in 1985, according to statistics released by the Lutheran Council in the USA. Lutheran membership in the United States dropped 21,650 from 1984 to 1985, bringing the total to 8,484,450.

The Lutheran Church in America lost 12,079 members for a total membership at the end of 1985 of 2,898,202; the American Lutheran Church declined 7,713 to 2,331,521; and the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) showed a decrease of 251 members to 2,638,013. The Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches did not report any change in its 1984 figure of 112,169. Therefore, based on 1985 figures, the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America would have 5,341,892 members.

The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod—after recent membership increases—dropped 241 members to a total of 415,389. Three smaller Lutheran churches showed increases, however: the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, up 3% to 18,160; Church of the Lutheran Brethren, up 3% to 11,374; and Apostolic Lutheran Church of America, a Finnish church group, up 38% to 4,972 members.

Canadian Lutheran membership showed a 10,053 increase, to 315,243, bringing the combined U.S. and Canadian Lutheran membership to 8,799,693 in 1985, a decrease of 11,597 from the previous year.

Examine relief agencies term 'biggest' article attack on truth and a distortion

Examine relief agencies that engaged in extensive efforts to combat famine in Ethiopia have criticized an article in the current issue of *Reader's Digest* as a shameless attack on the

The article represents "a distortion of the activities of the humanitarian agencies involved," said Peter J. Davies, president of InterAction, an international organization of U.S.-based international relief and development agencies. He characterized the article as an injustice to the goodwill of the millions of Americans whose generosity saved countless lives."

The *Digest* article was written by Peter Brauman of Doctors Without Borders, a French-based nonprofit agency that was expelled from Ethiopia last year because the organization's refusal to cooperate in the overall coordination of relief efforts, in the judgment of officials of Ethiopia's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission ("The Back Page," page 39).

Davies—speaking on behalf of other relief organizations, including Lutheran World Relief and Church World Service—declared: "Millions of people, particularly children, are alive today because of the combined efforts of the world community. To infer anything to the contrary is a great disservice."

He also said, "We know from first-hand experience that . . . the donations made to voluntary agencies by millions of generous Americans were not 'misappropriated,' [as the article suggested], but were put to good use, paying for food, transportation, and medical supplies."

QUICK LOOK

LUTHERAN GENERAL HOSPITAL staff members evacuated and housed 76 of the almost 300 residents from nearby Holy Family Nursing Home after rains produced massive flooding in many northwest Chicago suburbs. "Since the loading docks at the Roman Catholic home were flooded, our staff waded through flood waters and carried the residents to our buses," said Laurie Stevens, the hospital's media relations manager. "We used classrooms and half our dining room to set up beds for their weeklong stay." She said the remainder of the residents were taken to other hospitals and another nursing home. Three residents were admitted as patients and remained at Lutheran General Hospital after flooding subsided. The hospital, affiliated with the American Lutheran Church and located in Park Ridge, Ill., also gave 725 free tetanus shots and flood-related health guidelines to flood victims.

TEN BISHOPS of the Lutheran Church in America met privately with Pope John Paul II at Vatican City Oct. 2 and delivered a letter from LCA Bishop James R. Crumley Jr., who encouraged Rome to study seriously "that goal of [Lutherans and Roman Catholics] sharing the Eucharist of our Lord." Bishop Crumley wrote: "I recognize that the challenge before us is considerable. Yet I am heartened by the distance we already have traveled together." Roman Catholics and Lutherans have been involved in theological dialog for more than two decades. The pope said Christian unity "will always be an urgent matter because the [Catholic] church has the sacred mission of preaching the gospel of reconciliation."

CITIES: Canberra, the capital of Australia, will host the seventh assembly of the Geneva-based World Council of Churches (WCC) in early 1991, according to the WCC executive committee. Fort Worth, Tex., Kansas City, Mo., and St. Louis, Mo., are vying to become the headquarters city for the 3.4-million member Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), which has maintained dual headquarters in New York and Atlanta since the merger of the northern and southern branches of Presbyterianism in 1983. The 1.7-million member United Church of Christ, which currently has its national offices at three Manhattan sites, selected Cleveland, New York, and St. Louis as finalists for the church's new headquarters.



THE REV. ALLAN BOESAK (left), 39, president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, was elected moderator of the Dutch Reformed Mission Church, a church body set up for South Africans officially classified as mixed race. Andrew S. Miller (right), 63, of Atlanta, is the new U.S. commander of the Salvation Army. He previously headed the organization in the 15 states of its southern territory.



NOTABLE NUMBERS: The Council of Presidents of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod expressed concern over first-year student enrollments at its two U.S. seminaries: Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, with 89 first-year students, and Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind., with 68. Even if all 157 students graduate in four years and are placed, the council noted, the number falls far short of the 250 new pastors needed each year to fill pastoral vacancies created by deaths and retirements alone. Elsewhere, a survey conducted by the Church Leadership Institute in Lynchburg, Va., indicated that in 32 of the 50 U.S. states, the Assemblies of God have the fastest growing congregations. For the first time the denomination outnumbered Baptist churches in growth. The fastest-growing U.S. congregation in 1985 was First Assembly of God, Phoenix, Ariz., which gained 2,307 members for a total of 7,688.

THE PETITION that wasn't, still isn't: More than 16 million pieces of mail have flooded the Federal Communications Commission during the past dozen years regarding a bogus petition. But the petition rumor persists and the mail keeps coming. There is, however, no petition by Madalyn Murray O'Hair to ban religious programs on radio and television.

COMING:

NOVEMBER 7

Can we learn to face death as we face life?

Nicaraguan church described as alive, active amid conflict

Two world-mission staff persons of the American Lutheran Church returned to Minneapolis, after a week-long visit to Protestant churches in Nicaragua, impressed with how alive and active the churches continue to be in a country that considers itself at war.

Dr. Mark Thomsen, director of the ALC's Division for World Mission and Inter-Church Cooperation (DWMIC), and the Rev. Kathryn Lee, DWMIC's secretary for Latin America, reported to *THE LUTHERAN STANDARD* on excitement in the churches, the tragedies facing the country, and signs of hope.

"The church is very active and, except for occasional incidents with hardliners within the Sandinista government, suffers little repression," said Thomsen.

Prayer and prisons

Church activities with high visibility included prayers for peace and justice in Nicaragua as part of the Journey of Prayer and Fasting held in Nicaragua from July to October. "The goal was to offer one million minutes of prayer to counteract the \$100 million of U.S. aid to the *contras*," said Thomsen.

Other church involvements that impressed Lee and Thomsen were the evangelism activities in prisons, conducted by member churches of CEPAD—the Spanish acronym for Evangelical Committee for Aid to Development. "In one prison—Jorge Navarro—there are seven congregations with a membership totaling 900," said Lee. She added that 104 inmates were baptized July 19.

Churches working in cooperation with CEPAD include about 95% of the 2000 pastors and 400,000 members in the Protestant community—or 13% of Nicaragua's population—according to Lee and Thomsen.

When asked why Nicaraguan churches were growing so rapidly, one Pentecostal bishop said, "The growth of the church is not caused by revolution or repression, but because the Word of God is known as never before."

Thomsen said he asked Benjamin Cortez, president of Biblical Seminary

in Managua and former CEPAD officer, about the involvement of Protestants with the Sandinista government. Cortez said that about 20% of Protestants are politically involved with the Sandinistas, while another 40% are supportive but keep a critical distance. The latter would include many of CEPAD's members, according to Thomsen. The remaining 40% are critical of the Sandinista government, saying that it is difficult to cooperate with a government they consider to be Marxist.

Thomsen and Lee detailed some of the difficulties that beset the Nicaraguans—such as food shortages, inflation, rationing, and embargoes—many of which are tied to the military conflict and embargo supported by the United States. They said reports indicate that about 50% of the economy is geared to the war against the *contras*. Said Lee: "The criticism then is echoed by Sandinista critics that the revolution hasn't lived up to its promises."

Lee and Thomsen pointed to three signs of hope for the area. The first is the current process to approve a new constitution for the country, guaranteeing "political pluralism, economic diversity, nonalignment, and semiautonomy for the Atlantic region."



Salvadoran refugees

These children are some of the estimated 20,000 refugees in Nicaragua who fled fighting in El Salvador.

A second positive sign is the meeting of Cardinal Obando y Bravo with Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega Saavedra (see story this page).

A third positive indicator, according to Thomsen, is the amount of support the Nicaraguans receive from the Western free world. Lee also noted that 3000 youth volunteers, primarily from Western countries, help with crops, construction, health care, and community development projects. And Thomsen underscored that over 50% of Nicaragua's trade is with nonsocialist countries.

Cardinal confers with Ortega on church-state conflicts

For the first time in almost two years, Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega Saavedra met with the Roman Catholic primate of Nicaragua, Miguel Cardinal Obando y Bravo, to discuss the deep conflicts between the church and the Sandinista government.

Ortega called the talks on Sept. 27 constructive and said they would continue with lower-level representatives. The cardinal said the meeting had produced "an agreement on a practical plan" that will serve "to maintain relations between church and state."

Church leaders suggested that the government permit the reopening of the Catholic radio station and allow two exiled Nicaraguan clergy, Bishop Pablo Antonio Vega and the Rev. Bismarck Carballo, to return. Government officials had said their main hope for the meeting was that Cardinal Obando and other bishops could be persuaded to condemn the role of the United States in the Nicaraguan conflict, according to a report in *The New York Times*.

The cardinal was an active opponent of the regime of President Anastasio Somoza Debayle, but soon after the Sandinistas took power in 1979 he began to criticize them, saying they were betraying their promises.

Left-right split sparks concern

The chasm between liberal and conservative Christians is a serious one, but few attempts are being made to bridge the rift, according to a survey by the Gallup organization.

Most often cited as areas of serious disagreement are: (1) church doctrine, (2) abortion, (3) nuclear power, (4) state issues, (5) interpretation of the Bible, (6) life-styles, and (7) views on morality.

The survey also found that:

- Two-thirds feel greater understanding between conservative and liberal Christians would be desirable, but only one person in six (16%) is actively involved in seeking increased understanding among different groups.

- Six in 10 believe "quite a lot" or "fair amount" of tension exists between people with conservative religious views and people with liberal religious views.

- One-fifth of those in the survey say people with conservative religious opinions have too much power among religious leaders on television, in national religious agencies, and in schools. At the same time, one-fifth think people with liberal religious positions hold too much power in the mass media, government, and schools.

- Only one-third of U.S. Christians claim they have spent a great deal of time trying to understand the teachings and traditions of their own church, while 12% say they have spent time seeking to understand the teachings of other churches as well as their own.

- Almost one-third (34%) of the conservatives, 18% of moderates, and 12% of liberals are involved in home Bible study.

Perhaps surprising from an ecumenical perspective was the finding that only 23% of liberals and 37% of

moderates, compared with 59% of conservatives, say bringing Christians together is very important.

For Schuller Ministries

The Gallup survey, done for Robert H. Schuller Ministries, also found that conservatives, in their public image, often are viewed negatively as "overly strict on moral issues," "close-minded," "intolerant of other religious views," "fanatical about their beliefs," have "too harsh an emphasis on guilt, sin, or judgment," are "too concerned about their own salvation," and are "too rigid and simplistic."

Liberals are viewed as "substituting social concerns for the true gospel" and "having a shallow knowledge of the Bible," as well as being "too compromising with the world," "morally loose," and "too much influenced by secular humanism."

Without changes, Africa faces long-range food crisis

Widespread famine and hordes of locusts may represent only the vanguard of future disaster for the continent of Africa, suggest studies by the World Bank and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

Africa is alone among the regions of developing nations in losing a race between food production and population growth.

During the past quarter century, Africans have proved to be the most prolific producers of babies in world history, the World Bank study said. At an unprecedented 3% annual population growth rate, the continent's population will double in 22 years.

At the same time, Africa has become the world's least successful producer of food. Per capita food production has dropped 20% since 1960, the FAO report said.

Notable success stories do exist, however. Zimbabwe is one of the world's most efficient producers of grain and the Ivory Coast is a leading cocoa and coffee grower.

Their methods for accelerated food production include significantly increased financial incentives for farmers, wider use of improved seeds, fertilizer, and pesticides, better roads and ports for moving food to market, and stepped-up attention to fragile farm and range lands.

But given present trends on the rest of the continent, only four African countries in 2010 will be exporting food, while the rest will need food imports of \$28 billion a year—more than twice the projected value of the continent's total farm-export earnings.

Without major changes, the FAO predicts there "could be massive and chronic famine, with many countries on the brink of survival."

The reports underscore the urgency of increased efforts by church-related, private, and government agencies for agricultural development and population control.

Teen suicide, TV linked

Television news coverage of suicides and TV dramas about the topic may cause temporary increases in the number of teenagers taking their own lives.

Two studies, published in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, point to an "imitative effect" influencing the rate of teenage suicides.

Suicide by teenagers has tripled since 1950. It now ranks second only to accidents as a cause of deaths among Americans 15 to 19 years old.

A danger period was noted by Dr. David Phillips, a sociologist at the University of California at San Diego. "For about a week after news stories on suicide, teenagers and their friends, parents, and counselors should be especially alert for signs of suicidal tendencies," Phillips said.

Church sources indicated the point made by Dr. Phillips also may apply to congregations, pastors, and youth program directors.

In response to the studies, a spokesperson for NBC suggested that sensitively written movies about social problems, like suicide, stimulate many people to seek help for their problems.

PEOPLE

Kelley hopes ALC can enter new church with strength and excitement

by Jay Elhard

"You take it one day at a time. If you look at it too far down the road, it scares the life out of you to think of the immensity of what has yet to be accomplished."

The Rev. Robert Kelley is destined to be the last bishop of the Ohio District in the American Lutheran Church (ALC). On Jan. 1, 1988, the ALC will become part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America—if the new church is approved in the current ALC referendum.

But with 14 months remaining in his two-year term, Kelley seems determined to make more than a lame-duck administration of it.

Committed to new church

"I am very much committed to the new church. I see my office as an interim position as this church phases out and the new one comes into position," Kelley said. "My real anxiety is I don't want the district to become a stepchild in all of this. I'd like to build morale in ministry and purpose so that we can go into the new church strong and excited about all of the possibilities."

Kelley is accountable to 275 congregations in Ohio, as well as portions of Indiana, Kentucky, and West Virginia. In 1985, the district had a baptized membership of 128,160, and a confirmed membership of 97,784, all from 56,227 households.

"One of the great gifts to me from the district was that while I was elected in May 1985, I didn't actually assume office until last Jan. 1."

After Kelley ended his 13-year relationship as pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church in suburban Columbus, Ohio, Aug. 31, the district brought him on the staff for visiting pastors. There are 473 pastors listed on Ohio's clergy



Bishop Robert W. Kelley

roster and Kelley met and talked with most of them in a few months' time.

"I went to their turf, to their office, hopefully their study, where I could talk to them," he said. "But just seeing the churches was a gift. I discovered, to my shock, I had been one of those people who see churches as only a building necessary for church life."

"In some of these little out of the way places in Ohio, where time has done so many different things to the economy and the way of life, there still remains a significant structure and people who are willing to put dollars and cents into it as an act of worship."

"It's not just bricks and mortar. It's an offering. It says something about the priority of church life. I began to look at the buildings in a whole different way. I think it was a good starting point for me."

In response to the concerns he heard on his whirlwind tour, Kelley has deployed his staff to the field rather than having them work out of a central office. There are now Ohio District staff assistants settled in Marion, Warren, Dayton, and Columbus.

"There was a crying need for a relationship, to feel that someone is close by to whom we can talk," Kelley said. "Parishes want a greater sense of connectedness."

Kelley also is using the new district structure to streamline the call process.

While he still makes the initial visits to congregations searching for a pastor, the staff assistant in that area follows up and completes the call process.

"The call process is never perfect but we're working on it."

Kelley, a Capital University alumnus, graduated from Columbus' Evangelical Lutheran Seminary, now Trinity Lutheran Seminary, in 1957. He will celebrate his 30th anniversary in pastoral ministry next February.

He served two parishes in the Buffalo area of western New York, before coming to Euclid Lutheran Church in Euclid, Ohio, as an associate pastor, in 1967. In 1972, he became pastor at Redeemer Church, a position in which he served for 13 years.

From previous experience Kelley was acquainted with the inner workings of church administration and the district when he became bishop. He served on the district's executive committee for eight years, as a conference chairperson, and as district vice president for three two-year terms.

Responsive leadership

"Leadership in the church is not exactly identical to what the term means in general society," Kelley said. "I had seen some of the structural stuff and understood it. But I hadn't seen it in daily mail and the number of letters coming in that need response."

"Ministry has tended to be where I focus most of my time, probably to the detriment of my own mental health at times. If I had cultivated a few better outlets, I'm sure my patience wouldn't get as thin at times."

He and his wife, Marlene, administrators of the annual fund in Capital University's development office, have two children: Kevin is in his first year at Capital's Law School; and Kathleen is a secretary in the children's service branch of Lutheran Social Services.

Reflecting on his life and experiences, Kelley confesses, "In some ways I guess I am a private person. And yet in recent years I think I've learned to share much more of myself."

Jay Elhard is a reporter with Suburban News Publications, a group of 13 weekly newspapers in central Ohio.

Lutheran women review progress report

The progress report from the planning committee for the new Lutheran women's organization was examined in January by national board members of the three uniting church women's groups when they met in Techny, Ill., Feb. 5. A purpose statement for the new organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America was approved, and proposed changes in the constitution and bylaws were sent to the planning committee for consideration at its final meeting in January.

The statement, formulated after questionnaires were completed by members of the American Lutheran Church (ALC), Lutheran Church in America (LCA), and Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC) in recent months, forms the basis for the program, activities, and structure of the new organization. It states: "As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our support one another in our call to engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world."

Copies of the progress report have been sent to each women's group or congregation of the three church bodies, along with a one-page questionnaire asking for input to guide the planning and structure committees in their deliberations. Along with proposed constitutions and bylaws for the worldwide and synodical organizations, the report includes summaries of the vision and planning for the Women of the ELCA, including program goals and aims, and matters relating to stewardship and finance.

Registration announced

Plans for the constituting convention of the Women of the ELCA, slated for June 11-14, 1987, in Milwaukee, also were reviewed. Registration is open Feb. 15 and close when it reaches the 6000 mark. Theme for the convention will be "Embrace God's World." The ALCW board members also: allocated funds for scholarships to make it possible for women of color to participate in the constituting convention for the new women's organi-

zation, and in the 1987 pilgrimage to eastern Europe;

- urged that the editor for the new women's magazine, *Evangelica*, be appointed as early in 1987 as possible, in preparation for publication of the first issue in January 1988;

- authorized employment of additional support staff to ease the workload in the national ALCW office during the transition to the new women's organization.

The final meeting of the national board of American Lutheran Church Women is scheduled for Feb. 26-March 1, 1987, when details of closing out the existing organization and beginning a new life as Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will be completed. Lila C. Clawson



Priesthood of all believers

Rose Gleiter (left), a shut-in member of St. John Lutheran Church in Alma, Wis., prays with Van Ludwigson (center) and Alma Kohler, participants in the parish's special ALCW chaplaincy program.

Parish embraces shut-ins

In less than a year, one-third of the members of St. John Lutheran Church, Alma, Wis., became involved in monthly shut-in visitation coordinated by the congregation's special ALCW chaplaincy program.

The program was begun in early 1985 by Jeanne Korry, after hearing and seeing a need by shut-ins to be visited by someone besides the pastor. In order to integrate the shut-ins into the life of the congregation, the American Lutheran Church Women of St. John voted to commission Arda Guenzler, a retired schoolteacher, as its first chaplain.

Until her death in June 1986, she led devotions at ALCW meetings, sought to enhance the spiritual life of St. John's ALCW members, and began a system of visits to use the congregation's women—and eventually some of its men—in a ministry of caring.

"Her creativity and talents made the program work," said the Rev. Raymond C. Korry, pastor at St. John Church. "She expanded the program well beyond the congregation's original dreams." He said the congregation continued the program in her memory, and commissioned Shirley Smith, a homemaker, as the program's second chaplain.

In the first 11 months of the program, 158 shut-in visits were made by 68 visitors. Another 55 persons either prepared gifts for monthly distribution to the shut-ins or donated toward the cost. Gifts ranged from valentine cookies and fruit to Christmas trees and homemade candies, according to Pastor Korry.

Some visitors, who found themselves in the homes of old friends, spent the entire afternoon visiting and were invited to stay for dinner. "I see the positive results the laity can have on one another," said Pastor Korry. The shut-ins enjoy the fellowship of those they have not been able to worship with for many years, and vice versa, he added.

ACCENT ON CHURCH GROWTH

What stimulates parish growth?

Many of today's churchgoers are looking for a sympathetic ear and a sense of continuity to help them deal with pressures and loosened family ties, according to representatives of the 26 fastest growing congregations in the United Church of Christ.

Meeting at First Community Church in Columbus, Ohio, the representatives concluded that worshipers also have intense religious needs and place great emphasis on messages of hope and inspiration and on intercessory prayer.

The pastor needs to make sure that each member of the congregation feels he or she is cared for, they added. Besides individual attention, they recommended involving people in a common mission as a way to heal the sense of alienation and to draw prospective members into the church.

Church-growth researcher Dr. Lyle Schaller noted that the key to making these things happen is the personality of the minister. "Twenty years ago, the three most important factors in church-growth were 'location, location, and location,'" he said. "Today, it's 'pastor, pastor, pastor.'"

Schaller links growth to bigger parishes

Helping big churches get even bigger may be the key to halting denominational membership decline, according to Dr. Lyle Schaller, a prominent church-growth expert.

Schaller told a United Methodist-sponsored conference in Nashville that starting new congregations is regarded as the best church-growth method, but that "isn't where our heart is." Addressing leaders of large-membership

churches, he listed several factors for the large-church preference of people born after 1945:

- a trend of school consolidations has taught people how to survive in large institutions;
- church people looking for quality in preaching and music believe they can be found in larger churches; and
- some people prefer to go to a large church where they can "get lost."

Schaller proposed that in placing pastors, church leaders "count people instead of churches." He noted that 7% of congregations account for one-third of United Methodist membership.

Roman Catholic partners anchor '50 More' mission

St. Andrew Lutheran Church, Ellsworth, Me., appreciated the inexpensive rental of the local Roman Catholic church's parish hall. For all the mission's activities and worship, the cost was only \$100 per month. So pastor-developer Jack Maxim sent a thank-you note to the priest a few days before the mission's first service—June 24, 1984.

Father Peter Gorham, priest at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, said, "I couldn't get [the thank-you] in our bul-



Mission-minded in Maine

Service-mission director Robert Isaksen (left) and pastor-developer Jack Maxim in front of an A-frame home near Ellsworth, Me., site of an ALC "50 More in '84" congregation.

letin in time, so I just nailed it on church door."

St. Andrew Church, which is named for the fisherman who was Jesus' apostle, is located in a "back east" Maine village. The congregation—one of 81 new congregations started by the American Lutheran Church in 1984—organized on Jan. 25, 1984, with 84 baptized members. It is the only Lutheran church along 100 miles of coastal Maine.

While St. Andrew Church has received a number of large gifts and pledges from its ALC mission partners, its partnership with St. Joseph's Church daily anchors the ALC mission.

The two congregations operate the largest pantry in the county. Already in 1986, with the help of a \$3500 federal grant, they have provided 1500 meals to more than 350 families.

And recently the Robert D. Isaksen family, members of St. Joseph's parish, committed \$25,000 toward the \$54,000 purchase price of a three-acre lot for St. Andrew's church building located along the major route to Acadia National Park, which welcomes some 5 million visitors annually.

Maxim described the church's growth in the leisure-recreation area as "slow," but added: "We will make our voice and be [the ALC's] voice and hands and eyes and feet in this place."

Household changes face congregations

Married couples likely will account for only half of all households in the United States by the year 2000, according to the Census Bureau.

At the same time, singles and unmarried or unrelated couples living together may grow to almost one-third of the total number of households—from the present 28% to 32%.

Married couples now account for 58% of households, down from 71% in 1970.

Besides divorce, factors affecting the number of households include delay in marriage by many in their late 20s and early 30s and a pattern of young people often forming unmarried households when they leave home.

An increasingly elderly population, with many women outliving their husbands, also is creating more single households.



Videocassettes promote heroes

Famous cartoonists market greatest Bible adventures nationwide

Over a quarter-million videocassettes using animated versions of "Moses and the Battle of Jericho" and other Bible stories have been sold since their April release, according to a representative of Tabor Publishing, Inc., Tex. The videos are produced by Tabor-Barbera Productions, who popularized the cartoon characters Fred Stone and Yogi Bear.

The roster of "The Greatest Adventure: Stories from the Bible" also includes Moses, Samson and Delilah, Daniel, and King David. Six additional videocassettes—planned for release in early 1987—feature the first Christmas and Easter, Moses and the Ten Commandments, Creation, the prodigal Son, and Joseph with his coat of many colors.

Kids aren't reading Bible'

Company president Joseph Barbera said the approach is the only way to acquaint today's children with Bible stories. "Kids aren't reading books anymore, including the Bible," he said. In order to draw youth into the story, the 30-minute cassettes zoom two characters and a preteen through a time warp into the biblical era.

One Tabor official said the videos intend to promote positive hero iden-

Widespread circulation urged for new church's magazine

The magazine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in every home throughout the church—this is the dream endorsed by delegates to the conventions of the three uniting churches.

The American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church in America, and Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches—at their August conventions—urged all the ELCA synods to place on their budgets every-home circulation of the new church's magazine, to be known as *The Lutheran*.

Through such 100% synodwide coverage, participating synods would be reflecting the interdependence of the entire ELCA. They also would be engaging "in churchwide-synod partnership for communication by use of synod news inserts in the periodical as their primary printed means of communication with members of congregations," according to the approved resolution.

Free news inserts for synods possible

Ten news inserts as synod supplements in the magazine will be provided without charge to synods that place the magazine on their budgets for synodwide coverage.

By vote of delegates at the synod's convention, the \$4.00 per household synodwide rate will be a "restricted" amount in the budget supported by contributions of congregations. This amount will be passed through the synod budget for the pooled purchase of the churchwide magazine, according to the circulation plan for the new *Lutheran*.

For synods that choose not to place *The Lutheran* magazine on the budget for synodwide coverage, the conventions of the three uniting churches urged congregations "to participate in the every-home circulation plan for the church's magazine."

Beginning Jan. 1, 1988, the rate per household for congregations in synods not placing the magazine on the synod budget will be \$4.35 per household.

The number of supplements provided to those synods will be based on the percentage of coverage in the synod. For example, if 80% of the congregations in the synod participate in the every-home plan, eight supplements will be available without additional charge to the synod. If only 40% participate, four supplements will be offered.

To keep the subscription price as low as possible, the magazine will be subsidized equally by the ELCA churchwide budget and by the church's publishing house.

The resolution of the ALC, LCA, and AELC conventions noted that the church periodical is "a strategic factor in fostering a sense of unity of purpose and mission among members." The magazine of the ELCA, according to the resolution, "will serve as a cohesive element and common communication medium for the uniting members of once-separate church bodies."

Declared the resolution: "Widespread distribution and readership of this magazine is crucially needed for awareness of the ELCA and shared commitment to its mission."

tification. "We want children to make these biblical heroes their own personal heroes," he said.

Barbera took special care to make the cartoons palatable to people of all faiths. Advisers included clergy from various faiths with experience in broadcasting and other performing arts.

Barbera bypassed the networks

and syndicates to sell the videocassettes through direct mail and bookstores. Estimates that 35% of the nation's homes with television sets are equipped with VCRs indicate the market is sizeable.

The VHS cassettes may be purchased for \$19.95 plus shipping—or rented—from Augsburg Publishing House branches.

After the fire: Mysterious ways of God pondered by composer

On the night of Feb. 19, the office of Norsk Musikforlag in Oslo, Norway, burned to the ground. Among the original manuscripts lost in the conflagration were some works by distinguished Norwegian composer Knut Nystedt. In the United States, Nystedt's music—often used by Lutheran choirs and organists—is some of the most widely performed of any written by a living European composer.

Solsong, or "The Awakening of Spring," which was written by Nystedt 40 years ago for chorus and orchestra, was one such piece assumed lost in the fire. And Nystedt was afraid that no back-up copy existed anywhere.

"In your mercy, O Lord, supply me with a copy of *Solsong* from somewhere!" he prayed. He also checked the library at the University of Oslo, and the libraries of the Norwegian National Radio and Oslo Philharmonic. None had a copy.

Hope after four days

Nystedt said that he became depressed and wondered, "Why did God not answer my prayer?"

Then, four days after the fire, an

Religion's impact on views toward self, others surveyed

Nearly 85% of Americans report that their religious beliefs help them to respect and assist other people, and 82% claim that their religious beliefs and values help them to respect themselves.

A survey, reported in the May issue of "Emerging Trends," shows 63% saying that their beliefs "keep me from doing things I know I shouldn't."

The survey found that 76% of the nation's adults attend religious services; 38% say they do so regularly, 31% occasionally, and 7% only on holy days. A significantly higher proportion of women (45%) than men (30%) report that they regularly attend church or synagogue.

Age is related strongly to regular attendance at religious services. Persons 65 and older are twice as likely to attend services regularly as those under the age of 30 (56% vs. 27%).

While a relatively small proportion claim to attend religious study groups (13%), they clearly are intensely involved individuals. Of this group, 78% attend religious services regularly and 78% are involved with religious charities.

Nearly four in 10 Americans (38%) claim to have had important religious experiences or revelations that reinforced their faith. Nearly half (47%) of the survey respondents interviewed—some 1,540 adults, 18 and older—say they turn to prayer when they are worried, facing challenges, or in danger. Most likely to pray under these circumstances are college graduates (58%), women (56%), and Protestants (53%).

Olso music publisher called him to say that a package had just arrived from the Peters Music Corporation of New York. A corporation representative explained that the U.S. company was returning some Norwegian music, which it had received from Norway 25 years earlier, because it no longer had storage space.

In the package was *Solsong*—with full score and all orchestral parts! The New York company had not heard about the blaze in Oslo. "But they had

held onto my composition for 25 years just so they could send the piece to me two days before the fire," said Nystedt.

Isaiah's words come alive

He recalled the words of Isaiah 65:24: "I will answer them before they even call on me. While they are still talking to me about their needs, I will go ahead and answer their prayers."

Said Nystedt: "God had heard my prayer even before I prayed to him."

Teenagers' sexual activity blamed on 'value

"a value vacuum" is why 20% of nation's eighth- and ninth-grade teens are sexually active, according to Minneapolis researchers.

Because of the silence of adults, Benson and David Schuelke said churches and schools need to redirect education for teens away from birth control toward abstinence from sexual intercourse.

Benson is president of Search Institute, an independent nonprofit re-

Indianapolis: site of youth constituting convention

The convention to constitute the youth organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has been scheduled for July 16-19, 1987, in Indianapolis, according to the Rev. Daryl D. Koenig, staff coordinator for the committee to constitute the ELCA youth organization.

The 284 young people who will serve as delegates to the convention will include 132 each from the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America, five from the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, three from each of four ethnic groups—Black, Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian, and three youth with disabling conditions.

The convention will adopt a new constitution and elect an interim board that will implement the constitution and complete preparations for the organization's first convention. That convention will be held in conjunction with the ELCA's first youth gathering, slated for San Antonio, Tex., July 31-August 4, 1988. A registration ceiling of 5,000-25,000 participants is planned for the gathering.

Mattel markets dolls with disabilities

Mattel, Inc., has unveiled a line of dolls with disabilities, hoping the toys will help disabled children develop a positive self-image and teach able-bodied young persons not to be prejudiced against people with handicaps.

Profits from sales will go to groups that help disabled children, the toy maker said. "We want to spread the message that it's OK to have a disability," said Spencer Boise, a vice president for Mattel.

Physically impaired Americans numbered 45 million in 1983. Of that number, 7 million were younger than 18 years of age, according to statistics

reported in the *Minneapolis Star and Tribune*.

Mattel's new toy line consists of seven 19-inch, soft-sculptured dolls called "Hal's Pals":

- Hal, a ski instructor who lacks a left leg;

- a ballerina with hearing aids;
- a boy in a wheelchair;
- a girl with leg braces and canes;
- a visually impaired girl with a red-tipped cane and guide puppy; and
- two dolls—a preppy boy and a Madonna look-alike—that do not feature specific disabilities.

Hal's Pals look a bit like the Cab-

bage Patch dolls made by Coleco Industries, Inc., and sell for \$40 to \$45, according to the newspaper report.

Paul Valentine, a toy analyst with Standard & Poor's Corp., reacted to the new product: "I'm sure the idea is well intentioned, and it will be tastefully executed, but I doubt that this product is going to be a hit with children, who tend to be very cruel when it comes to disabilities."

"Handicapped children already feel different. I doubt that they would want to feel even more different, to have a doll specifically geared to them that is not part of the mass culture."

Teenagers' sexual activity blamed on 'value vacuum'

A "value vacuum" is why 20% of nation's eighth- and ninth-grade students are sexually active, according to two Minneapolis researchers.

Because of the silence of adults, Benson and David Schuelke said churches and schools need to redirect education for teens away from birth control toward abstinence from sexual intercourse.

Benson is president of Search Institute, an independent nonprofit re-

search organization which has done numerous national youth surveys for churches and other groups. He said most communities have programs to disseminate birth-control information to sexually active young people.

"The abstinence approach is less visible, less coordinated, and, we would argue, less prevalent in most communities," Benson and Schuelke wrote in an article published in Minneapolis.

"There has been a profound shift in priorities in the last two decades. Twenty years ago, the message about abstinence during adolescent years was clearly communicated by parents, religious institutions, and other organizations. And birth control was a subject we would rather not discuss with

impressionable youth. Now we seem to have no problem talking about birth control, but we have great anxiety about discussing abstinence."

In encouraging parents to "break the silence," the authors found:

- Teenagers want to know adults' values about sexual behavior.
- Teenagers do not resent adults who communicate sexual standards.
- When parents communicate clear standards and expectations, adolescent sexual activity is reduced.
- When schools and other institutions help students learn how to say "no" to peer pressure, rates of sexual activity decrease.

"Ultimately," the researchers concluded, "there would be nothing more powerful in preventing teenage pregnancy than building a community-wide consensus on sexual values and using all available channels to pass these on to our children."

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Wrapped up in the church



High school graduates receive quilts

Patricia Walter (right), a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Pine Island, Minn., wondered what the church might do to show high school graduates that the church cared for them and would remember them as they left home for college or jobs. She decided on the gift of a quilt, to be presented with a copy of the New Testament during Senior Recognition Sunday at the church. She involved about 80 members of St. Paul's, who donated fabric, yarn, money, and helping hands. Graduates Brian Radke and Amy Murray (center) display the small cross-stitched heart on the back of each blanket with the words: From St. Paul's, 1986. St. Paul's member Mary Bollman summarized the efforts of Pat Walter and her helpers: "If you can dream it, you can do it." And in 1987, the congregation will do it again.

Newsmakers

► **The Rev. John Bowman** has received the Living Loehe Award from the ALC's Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, for "the bridges he has built between the United States and Japan in more than 33 years of ministry." Bowman and his wife, Verneda, an English teacher, were called by the Evangelical Lutheran Church—a predecessor body of the ALC—to missionary service in Japan in 1953. They began new congregations in Yugawara and Ogaki. In Ogaki, where they have lived since 1963, they developed three facilities for disabled persons. The award, presented at the recent convention of the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, recognizes exemplary service in the spirit of Pastor William Loehe, founder of Wartburg Seminary.

► **Carlton T. Helming**, a member of the board of directors of Olin Foundation Inc., New York, received an honorary doctor of laws degree during convocation ceremonies at Concordia College (ALC), Moorhead, Minn. The convocation recognized the opening of the new Olin Art and Communications Center, which was funded by a \$3.4 million grant from the Olin Foundation. Only three other private institutions of higher education in the Upper Midwest—Carleton, Macalester, and Drake University—have been awarded Olin's avidly sought grants for construction of new academic buildings.

► **Richard Schultz**, a retired lumber salesman and a member of Emmanuel Lutheran Church (ALC), Warren, Ohio, has been selected as Lutheran Brotherhood's 1986 Fraternalist of the Year. He was chosen from among 900,000 members in 600 branches of Lutheran Brotherhood, the largest U.S. fraternal benefit society—based on assets under management. Lutheran Brotherhood's Tornado Disaster Relief Foundation—of which Schultz is president—collected and distributed more than \$200,000 for 300 families affected by the May 31, 1985, tornado that struck parts of Ohio and Pennsylvania, leaving more than 70 dead and thousands homeless.

► **Kristin Skaug**, Fargo, N.D., a freshman at St. Olaf College (ALC), Northfield, Minn., was honored this

summer as one of 141 Presidential Scholars, the nation's highest academic honor for high school students. Skaug, who had already earned a National Merit Scholarship, was invited to Washington, D.C., for a reception and medallion presentation at the White House.

► **Larry Christensen**, director of music and arts at St. John Lutheran Church, a Lutheran Church in America congregation in Des Moines, Iowa, was elected president of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians (ALCM) at its organizational meeting in August.

500-mile trek to 80 parishes



Visits agency's 'family'

Joel Ambelang, executive director of Lutheran Family Services (LFS) of Northwest Indiana, Merrillville, visited the 80 Lutheran congregations in the agency's seven-county service area during September—by bicycle. "I wanted to get people's attention so I could let them know about the services that LFS is offering on their behalf," he said. "I also wanted to listen to the concerns and suggestions of those I met." During the week, local congregations hosted family gatherings that helped the 80 congregations realize they are part of a family of congregations working together to keep families together. Ambelang—who said he was chased by a dozen dogs, pedaled 63 miles in the rain, and discovered that county maps often show roads that don't exist—garnered \$3500 in pledges and donations for the 500 miles he biked.



Mary Gillespie



Noreen Henry

ALCM is comprised of Lutheran professional musicians who have a degree in music and are actively pursuing a full-time vocation in church music. The group, which has more than 300 charter investors and contributors, will set professional standards for church music, provide liturgical and theological insights, and develop programs, resources, trends, and practices affecting church musicians.

► Two women recently invested members of the LCA's deaconess community are serving internships in Christian day schools. Investiture is a public service of mutual affirmation which admits the deaconess candidate to the privileges and responsibilities of the deaconess community and grants the title "sister," the candidate pin, and the garb. Sister **Mary Ann Gillespie**, member of St. Luke's Lutheran Church (LCA), Saxonburg, Pa., teaches grades one and two at St. John Lutheran School (ALC), Fort Wayne, Ind. Sister **Noreen Marie Henry**, a member of St. Luke Lutheran Church (LCA), Park Ridge, Ill., serves her internship as first grade teacher at Prince of Peace Lutheran School (ALC), Chicago.

► **Martha Nause**, a 1977 graduate of St. Olaf College (ALC), Northfield, Minn., was among the top 50 money winners on the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) tour at the halfway point of the current season. The former St. Olaf golfer, who has been on the LPGA tour since 1978, is a native of Sheboygan, Wis.

► **The Rev. L. Madsen Andersen**, Camarillo, Calif., a retired ALC pastor, participated in an investment firm commercial that is being aired over ABC TV. At a local country club—with golf club in hand—he delivered lines for his TV debut.

► **Karen Steele**, Stillwater, Minn., a sophomore at St. Olaf College (ALC), Northfield, Minn., has been awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Younger Scholars Grant to examine history, legitimacy, and scope of the constitutional right to privacy. An English major, will examine a wide range of documents, including Supreme Court cases.

► The National Association of Church Business Administrators has elected **Clayton Spranger** to its Church Management Hall of Fame. Spranger, a business administrator of Centennial Lutheran Church (ALC), Minneapolis, served as association president in 1972-73 and was chairman of this year's annual conference, which drew 420 administrators.

► **The Rev. Raymond Flachmeier**, named president-elect of the Inter-Dallas Community of Churches board of directors. Flachmeier, pastor of Ascension Lutheran Church (ALC), Garland, Tex., chairs the ALC's World Mission and Inter-Church Cooperation.

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h. Total	571,965	Issue nearest preceding 12 months	560,500
I certify that the statements made by me above are correct			
DONALD M. MATTSOIN DIRECTOR OF FINANCE			

Karen Steele, Stillwater, Minn., more at St. Olaf College (ALC), field, Minn., has been awarded a Endowment for the Human- younger Scholars Grant to exam- history, legitimacy, and scope constitutional right to privacy. an English major, will examine range of documents, including Supreme Court cases.

The National Association of Business Administrators has Clayton Spranger to its Church- ment Hall of Fame. Spranger, a business administrator of Cen- Lutheran Church (ALC), Minne- served as association president 72-73 and was chairman of this annual conference, which drew a 420 administrators.

The Rev. Raymond Flachmeier named president-elect of the Dallas Community of Church- board of directors. Flachmeier, pas- of Ascension Lutheran Church (C), Garland, Tex., chairs the ALC's rd for World Mission and Inter- ch Cooperation.

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DONALD M. MATTHESSON
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

Similarities develop between U.S. Lutherans, Roman Catholics

U.S. Roman Catholics are becoming more like Lutherans in belief and practice, although the change may be due more to social factors such as interfaith marriages than agreements in doctrine between the churches, according to sociologist Dr. Jean Hoge.

"Catholics can look over the fence to Lutherans to see what will happen to them in the future. . . . There's no other group that is closer to Catholics of European background than Lutherans," said Hoge, a professor at Catholic University in America, Washington, D.C.

Writing in *Review of Religious Research*, Hoge said attitudes which once frowned upon intermarriage between Roman Catholics and non-Catholics and stressed traditional devotions are changing, particularly in the West and Midwest. Today 40% to 45% of Roman Catholic marriages are with partners of other faiths, he said.

Lutherans, who are more populous in the Midwest, stand closest to the Catholics on the "path of assimilation," he added. "If you go to a city like Minneapolis, you can see how similar Lutherans and Catholics are. There's a huge intermarriage rate and an immediate rapport between them," Hoge said in a telephone interview. "Their attitudes toward the family and social issues are very similar."

Parish life models

Hoge noted that the Catholic move toward Lutherans may provide new models for parish life. "Catholic parishes are too large. Leaders are soon going to be pressed by Catholic laity for better models. The Lutherans have had relatively good success at building strong community life in parishes," said Hoge, a Presbyter.ian.

But he also said that claims of similarities developing between the two churches have to be qualified.

Because the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is more "fundamentalist" than other Lutheran bodies, according to Hoge, the church would have less in common with Roman Cath-

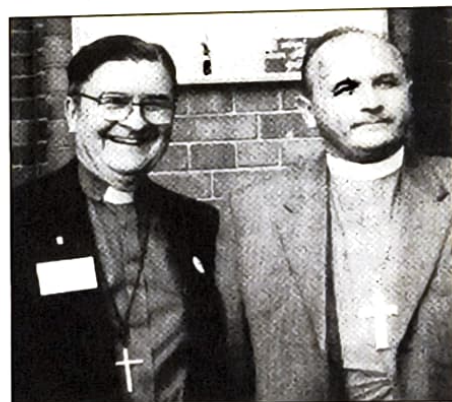
olics, who do not have a history of fundamentalism.

And there also has been a growing second influx of Roman Catholic immigrants from Latin America and Asian countries whose traditions would be more foreign to Lutherans than those of European-American Catholics, he added.

Ecumenical initiatives made by Roman Catholic leaders toward Lutherans will be few, predicted Hoge, because of the conservative leadership of Pope John Paul II. And unity between the two groups will come on the local level as Lutherans and Roman Catholics discover their similarities, he said.

Richard Cimino, a writer in New York City, wrote this story for the news bureau of the Lutheran Council in the USA.

Latvian pilgrimage



Fellow workers for peace

Archbishop Ericks Maesters (right) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia greeted Dr. Alton M. Motter of Williamsport, Pa., and others in the 137-member delegation of the National Council of Churches that visited the Soviet Union this summer. Motter, a pastor of the Lutheran Church in America, is executive director of United Churches of Lycoming County. Said Maesters: "As fellow Christians, let us be fellow workers and fighters for peace, especially to overcome the threat of nuclear war." Motter said one of his warmest memories of the three-week trip was this stop at Gertrude Lutheran Church in Riga, Latvia. The congregation's 28-year-old pastor told delegation members about last year's two Christmas Eve services, which drew nearly 3000 worshipers. Fifteen denominations from 30 states were represented in the delegation, including American Lutheran Church members Carol Heifner, Sioux Center, Iowa, and Patricia Knutson, Wakonda, S.D.

LIRS faces budget shortfall

Current projections indicate that the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS) probably will face a shortfall of \$300,000 in funding this year, according to a report given to the LIRS standing committee in New York.

The committee was told that three executive and two support staff positions would be eliminated Oct. 15 as a result of a decrease in money available for refugee resettlement, and that further program and staff reductions in the regional and national offices probably would be necessary.

The 1986-87 budget was constructed with projections for this year's refugee arrivals at 5100, according to John A. Griswold, associate director for planning development. Current case-load projections put the number of arrivals at 400 to 500 fewer people. The reduction in numbers is caused by the Gramm-Rudman federal budget cut-backs and by continued efforts of the Reagan administration to reduce refugee admissions, he said.

The U.S. government gives resettlement agencies a per-capita sum of \$560, and the number of refugees LIRS processes has decreased from a high in 1975 of 16,000 to about 5000 this year. According to Karl Fritch, associate director for administration and finance, the 1986 per-capita sum does not cover expenses to "do the quality of resettling Lutherans are accustomed to."

LIRS had been undergirding its program from refugee program reserve funds. Last fiscal year, LIRS spent \$1.2 million from those reserves, according to Fritch, but the funds now have been exhausted. The reserve fund also was used for several loan and grant programs for refugees.

The standing committee directed a task force to identify resources for supplementing agency finances. "We believe somehow in this great land there are funds available through Lutheran people to underwrite the work," said the Rev. August Bernthal of Winter Haven, Fla., committee chairman.

Clergy: Growing target of suits

Liability through lawsuits is reaching into the realm of religion, with an increasing number of suits being filed that charge clergy with inadequate teaching or improper counseling.

Edward Carr, an attorney for Alexander & Alexander's casualty claims department, says about 2000 cases are pending nationwide that involve houses of worship, clergy, and religious groups. The most serious ones, he notes, relate to allegations of child abuse, paternity, or embezzlement.

Awards exceed \$100 million

During the past 18 months, Carr says, more than \$100 million has been awarded to those suing clergy and religious groups.

"At one time, churches were protected by charitable immunity, but that's not the case anymore," says the Rev. Dean Kelley of the National Council of Churches. These days, more civil courts are willing to hear suits against churches. As a result, Kelley says, the nation may see less clergy involvement

Anniversaries

- 125—Crow River Lutheran, Belgrade, Minn., Nov. 2.
- 105—Zion Lutheran, Chicago, Oct. 19.
- 90—St. Stephen Lutheran, Hamler, Ohio, Oct. 26.
- 90—Christ Lutheran, Dayton, Ohio, Oct. 26.
- 85—Grace Lutheran, Castalia, Ohio, Aug. 17.
- 80—Trinity Lutheran, Madison, Wis., Oct. 12.
- 40—Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Burlingame, Calif., Nov. 8.
- 25—Redeemer Lutheran, Neptune, N.J., Nov. 2.
- 25—Trinity Lutheran, Kissimmee, Fla., Sept. 14.

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

in areas like drug and psychological counseling.

"A lot of churches are taking out liability insurance for clergy malpractice," says Kelley, adding that he thinks such coverage "invites suits."

CLASSIFIED

RATE: \$5 per word; \$90 minimum. Prepayment required. Single words, initials, abbreviations, alphabetical and numerical groups (for example, box numbers), names of cities and states, ZIP codes, and telephone numbers count as one word each.

EUROPE: Creatively planned, expertly guided, and escorted tours, Scandinavia May 27-June 17; Central Europe June 17-July 8. Reidar Dittmann, St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN 55057.

KENYA PHOTO/STUDY SAFARI. June 15-July 7, 1986. Nairobi, Mt. Kenya, Samburu, Masai Mara, Amboseli National Park. Credit available. \$3249. Paul Nelson, 1322 S.W. Howard Dr., Tigard, OR 97223.

PASTORAL VACANCY. Small ALC congregation in northern New Mexico university community. Preaching and evangelism of highest priority. Hall-lime, \$14,000. 505/454-0383.

Central District seeking HISPANIC MINISTRY COORDINATOR, bilingual clergy or lay. Use skills, experience to develop and staff congregational ministries and Hispanic programs from Lincoln, Neb., office. Application deadline: Jan. 1. Bruce Klitzky, 2701 Alcott, Suite 200, Denver, CO 80211. (303) 458-0364.

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Persons in midlife called most neglected

People undergoing mid-life crises are "the most neglected group of all," says a former Miami rabbi who has organized the Mid/Life Services Foundation to help such persons deal with their problems.

In his new book, *Turning Points: Self-Renewal at Midlife*, Dr. Sol Landau, 66, said that mid-lifers—which he considers to be ages 35 to 55—have sought his help more often than any other age group when he was in the rabbinate.

Landau said that men aged 45 to 55 commit two-thirds of all male suicides, and that half of all female suicides are committed by women 45 or older.

The identity crisis faced by people at mid-life is basically spiritual, according to Landau, and "needs to be taken advantage of by organized religion."

The former Conservative rabbi suggested that congregations and religious leaders offer special counseling for the middle years and adult education programs to acquaint or reacquaint people at mid-life with the basics of their faith.

Landau's book doesn't focus on religious approaches to mid-life crises. However, during an interview, he said of identity questions faced by mid-lifers: "The religious answer is, my life is not my life. My life is God's life."

FROM OUR PRESIDING BISHOP

Living in unity

A small group of American Lutheran Church (ALC) pastors have indicated that they intend to break out of the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). I believe they are wrong in suggesting that course.

The accusation is that we are not being faithful to our Lutheran confessions. That simply is not true. The ELCA provides no grounds for Lutheran schism.

The confessional statement of the new ELCA should enable every sincere Lutheran to be a fully participating member. No questions have been raised about the ELCA's subscription to the ecumenical creeds or to the Lutheran Confessions. I have heard no worries expressed about the way the statement of faith of the new church expresses our faith in the triune God or the centrality of justification by grace through faith in Christ. The only point in contention is the exact wording to be used in avowing our loyalty to the Scriptures.

Solid commitment

Great care has been taken to assure the ELCA's solid commitment to the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. Everyone who helped prepare the statement of faith sought to bring conservative Lutheran clarity to this matter. As a result, the ELCA's constitution contains a sturdy, carefully crafted, traditional statement on the Scriptures. There is no reason for this issue to divide us.

The ELCA's statement of faith says: "The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written word of God. Inspired by God's spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them, God's Spirit

speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.

"This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life."

This commitment to the Scriptures intentionally echoes the commitment of Lutherans throughout the centuries. The inspiration and authority of the Scriptures is clearly enunciated. There are no weasel words or attempts to diminish devotion to Scripture or authority.

Yet, given our ALC history, it is not surprising that some concern has been registered over the absence of the words "inerrant and infallible" in the statement of faith of the new church. The ALC used those words in its constitutional statement. All of us in the ALC have lived with them. Many people have felt that those words have been a source of confusion rather than clear confession. Obviously, others have felt those words are important in strengthening the church's scriptural stance.

The ALC has been the only U.S. Lutheran church to use those two words in its constitution. None of the predecessor bodies that formed our present ALC used "inerrant and infallible" in their constitutions, although the appendix of one employs "inerrant." Traditional Lutheran views of the Scriptures have been enunciated for some 400 years without using those particular words in that way.

Furthermore, the new ELCA will receive into membership all congregations that now are members of one of the three uniting churches. Congregational constitutions will remain acceptable as they now are

written. So congregational constitutions that call for the use of those or other particular words will not have to be changed.

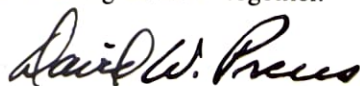
More helpful

I have been content to live under the present ALC confessional statement. I could continue to live under a constitution that included the words "inerrant and infallible." But I believe it is more helpful to move away from the use of those words in our constitutional language. They do not add anything of substance to our traditional Lutheran confessional loyalty to an inspired and authoritative Scripture.

Those who find those words helpful and those who do not should have no trouble living together as confessional Lutherans in the new ELCA. There is no need for adherents or opponents of the use of those words to feel excluded. Discussion of the matter will continue in the future, as it has in the past.

There is no difference here that calls for schism. I have been deeply grateful that God has kept the church together as we have moved toward a broader Lutheran unity. I was deeply disappointed when I learned that a group of pastors was talking about breaking away and forming a new church. I ask those who are suggesting that congregations leave the new ELCA to drop such schismatic activity. We are all needed in the fellowship of devoted Lutheran Christians. I will gladly meet with those who are considering the possibility of starting yet another Lutheran body.

Let us reason together, pray together, and study the Scriptures. God is calling us to be together.



YOUTH ALIVE

Youth call on church to fight apartheid

by Judy Diers

I was one of 75 youth representatives from churches in 26 countries who recently gathered in Harare, Zimbabwe, to address the rising crisis in South Africa and Namibia [see *L.S.*, Sept. 5, p. 30]. United in this international congress, we young people felt power to move the world on this issue.

The climate in the convention hall was exuberant. We passed resolutions that urged divestment and sanctions against South Africa by governmental and church bodies. Optimism was the order of the day; together we would dismantle this atrocious system of apartheid.

After the formal meetings each day, our euphoria flowed into the streets as we sang and danced back to the hotel. In the evenings we met in small, informal groups to share our experiences. Here, outside the convention hall, in the absence of freedom songs and international calls to action, South Africans spoke solemnly about the daily realities of apartheid.

The most striking testimony came from Philip. He spoke of his months of detention, when he daily experienced the physical dehumanization of torture. He displayed little emotion as he quietly recited his story, almost accepting as commonplace these unimaginable human atrocities.

Victims became real

As individual conversations continued, the victims of apartheid ceased to be faraway, unbelievable *Newsweek* characters. They were very real.

John seemed more reserved and shy than other South African delegates. His quick glances toward others always were followed by long, empty stares at the ground. He confided in me one evening: "Life is so tenuous; so many people I know have been killed, maimed, or simply 'disappeared' that I can no longer look someone straight in the eyes. I can't risk the separation."

Most South African youth have not been subjected to violent physical



Judy Diers (right), a member of the American Lutheran Church, talks with a young Namibian woman named Paulina during the Harare Youth Conference, sponsored by the World Council of Churches and the South African Council of Churches.

torture. Instead, they are being killed through the more silent processes of apartheid that impose on their dignity as human beings. This legalized separation, manifested in poor housing and education, daily reminds them of their inferior status.

Beyond the physical discomforts is the deeper, more penetrating pain that I witnessed in John's eyes. He represents an entire population of youth who question their worth as human beings. Out of sheer *desperation*, many young people are committing themselves to the struggle, often lacking any other vision or direction. Although many of these youth have grown up in the Christian tradition, they are becoming increasingly disillusioned with a church that calls them "impatient."

In the face of this desperation, the church is vital. At this time of crisis in South Africa, the church must take a stand with these victims of apartheid, affirming both their dignity as human beings and their right and duty to maintain that dignity. Through its moral, financial, and prayerful support, the church can provide positive alterna-

tives to these otherwise hopeless expressions of utter desperation.

An active stand

Besides uniting us in the task of preserving human dignity, the Harare Youth Conference served as a "bonding experience" for members of the international church. We left the conference to carry out our tasks throughout the world—sharing information, campaigning for an end to apartheid, praying for apartheid victims' spiritual well-being, and encouraging the church to take an active stand on the side of liberation movements.

Through exuberant song and dance we envisioned a free South Africa and Namibia. I hope that all of us in the international church will boldly accept the more difficult task of sharing the pain to realize that vision. ■

Judy Diers, a senior at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., was one of three ALC members attending the Harare Youth Conference. She is active in St. Olaf's Coalition for Social Justice and the Southern Africa Concerns Group. She belongs to St. Paul Lutheran Church in her home town of Waverly, Iowa.

THE BACK PAGE

a column of
editorial opinion



**"Make no mistake
about it: You
haven't been
duped about
Lutheran relief
efforts."**

Famine Aid: Were We Duped?" screamed the bold type in a full-page *New York Times* ad late last month. The ad was promoting an article in *Reader's Digest* written by Rony Brauman of Doctors Without Borders, a French-based nonprofit agency. The article pretended to be an exposé on what *really* happened in Ethiopian relief efforts.

Sadly, many of us, in reading the article, likely will feel we were betrayed by church-related and other relief agencies in the battle against the African famine. The truth is, we were not! But the *Reader's Digest* seems willing to mislead us about the real story of the heroic battle against starvation.

"The relief effort has helped to avert what could have become one of the worst famines in modern times," Senator Edward Kennedy said in a letter to Dr. Norman Barth of Lutheran World Relief. With the letter, Senator Kennedy sent a copy of a U.S. Senate report on refugee and famine efforts in Ethiopia and the Sudan.

Harvest of hope

"The lives of over seven million men, women, and children have been saved from starvation" in Ethiopia, the report said. "Thanks to the sustained efforts of the international community—and to the incredible work and sacrifice of the international and voluntary agencies—a remarkable success story of international relief has been accomplished."

Declared the U.S. Senate study: "The American people can know that their assistance not only got through to the people in need, but that it made a difference between life and death for millions. A visit to Ethiopia today shows that the extraordinary outpouring of assistance from Americans has helped to transform a drought and famine into a new harvest of hope."

The Senate study observed that charges by the controversial Doctors Without Borders organization were "founded too much on hearsay," were outdated, and had been "criticized by every American voluntary agency and church group working in Ethiopia, by United Nations officials, as well as by officials of the United States embassy." Claims by the Doctors Without Borders organization of squandered famine aid and government malfeasance represented "a polemic on which no wise government should now base its policy towards Ethiopia," the U.S. Senate study concluded.

My disappointment with the *Reader's Digest* article is underscored by personal experience. I have seen firsthand the dedicated effort of our Lutheran relief workers of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus and Lutheran World Federation.

Great care is taken to account for all the money and food delivered through Lutheran relief and development efforts. Thorough records are kept. These show that the food is getting through to those in need.

Battle against starvation

The wild charges and nasty insinuations that peppered the *Digest* "exposé" are an insult to those who have given years of their life in the battle against starvation, famine, disease, and death in Ethiopia and elsewhere.

The controversial resettlement program in Ethiopia, noted in the *Digest* article, was an attempt to move people from poor, parched land in sections of the north to fertile areas with more dependable rainfall in southern and western areas of the country. Abuses did occur in the resettlement effort, but the confirmed problems come nowhere near the charges made by the Doctors Without Borders organization. The government's resettlement effort, however, now has been halted.

We know that the Ethiopian government is politically Marxist. In years gone by, there was ample evidence of religious persecution. Many Lutheran churches were closed. Several pastors and lay leaders were imprisoned. Some were tortured. Most have now been released. Churches have been reopened. And the oppression has eased, although some Christians still remain in prison.

Yet, in the midst of a difficult situation, Lutherans have sought to serve in the name of Christ.

Make no mistake about it: You haven't been duped about Lutheran relief efforts.

Lowell Almen

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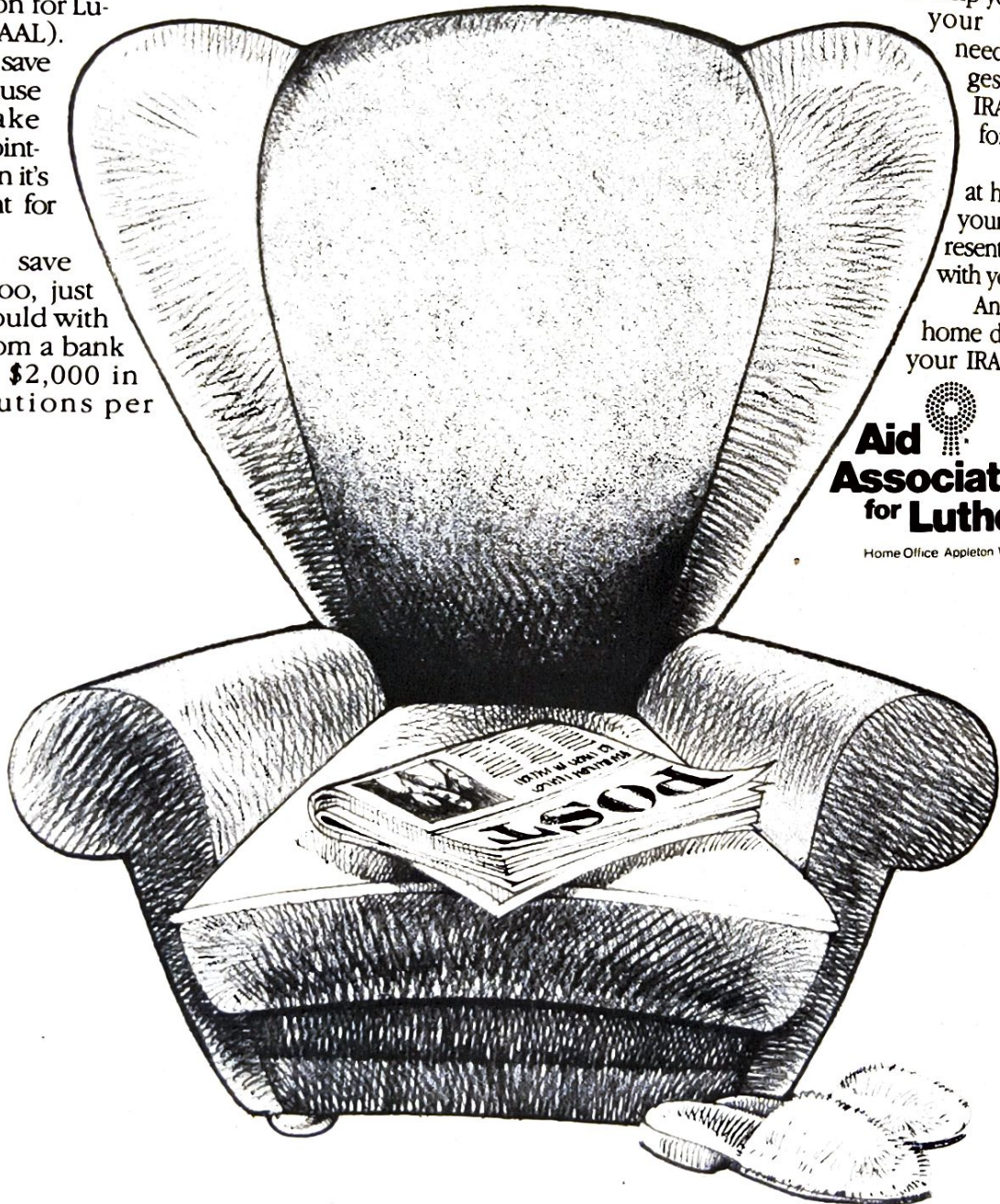
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