

The Augustana Heritage Newsletter

Volume 9 Number 1 Fall 2014



AHA Festival a Grand Event

Under the theme, *"Prairie Roots, Global Impact,"* the 2014 **Augustana Heritage Association Festival** on the campus of Midland University in Fremont, Nebraska, June 13-15, turned out to be, indeed, a "grand event." With some 400 people in attendance, including those who came for just the day on Saturday or Sunday, the Festival more than fulfilled its purpose of acknowledging the roots from which the Augustana-founded agencies and institutions in Nebraska sprang, as well as celebrating the ongoing global impact each of them still has.

Beginning with the Opening General Session Friday evening on *"The Lasting Harvest of Luther College and Academy,"* led by Carl Hansen, former President of Midland, with Arland Hultgren, Lynn Johnson, Marilyn Langemeier and Mary Lindell as panelists, and continuing through the Closing Festival Worship Service Sunday morning, the weekend was full of tributes and expressions of gratitude to the founders of the agencies and institutions that provided so much to the people, not just of Nebraska, but of places all around the globe who became beneficiaries of the ministries and missions of the Augustana Lutheran Church.

A highlight of the opening evening was the formal announcement and celebration of the

growth of the Luther Heritage Fund at Midland University and the creation, thanks to the generosity of many faithful givers through their wills and trusts and estate plans, of Luther College of the Liberal Arts at Midland University. The announcement was followed by a Service of Blessing for this wonderful way of perpetuating the name and legacy of Augustana's only Junior College and Academy, founded in 1883 in Wahoo, Nebraska, and continuing today as an integral component of Midland University in Fremont.

Saturday's General Sessions focused on *"Bethphage Mission and Mosaic: From Beginnings to Global Impact,"* led by Linda Timmons, President and CEO of Mosaic; *"Augustana Churches of the Prairie,"* led by Dennis Anderson, former Bishop of the Nebraska Synod; *"Immanuel and Lutheran Family Services: Common Origins, Current Mission, Future Visions,"* led by Eric Gurley, CEO of Immanuel, and Ruth Henrichs, CEO of LFS. In addition, 14 Interest Groups were offered Saturday, most of them twice, providing opportunity for attendees to select two topics in which they were especially interested and to learn, thereby, more about each of them.

Mid-afternoon on Saturday, the Swedish Ambassador to the United States, the Honorable



Scandinavian Folk Dancers of Omaha

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The Augustana Heritage Association defines, promotes, and perpetuates the heritage and legacy of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church.

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Back Cover Books, CDs and DVDs for sale by AHA

Björn Lyrvall, spoke to the assembly, followed by two musical performances, one by the internationally acclaimed Ringmasters Quartet from Sweden and the other by the 50-voice Pathfinders Chorus from Omaha. Each was well received and warmly acknowledged. Saturday evening, following a performance by the Scandinavian Folk Dancers of Omaha, the winner of this year's Jenny Lind Singer competition in Sweden, Christina Nilsson, and her accompanist, Thomas Rudberg, presented an outstanding concert of vocal and piano music.

Sunday morning, following the third in a series of three always popular and appreciated hymn sings led by Jack Swanson, the biennial AHA Business Meeting was held (see separate article for details), after which Lanny Westphal, Director of ELCA Global Church Sponsorship, brought greetings from ELCA Presiding Bishop, Elizabeth Eaton, and shared with the group some current ELCA churchwide activities. The morning concluded with a Festival Worship Service, using the Augustana liturgy, with former Nebraska Synod Bishop Dennis Anderson presiding, current Nebraska Synod Bishop Brian Maas preaching, and the Festival Choir, led by Midland's Choir Director, Jim Logue, singing. Assisting ministers were the Rev. Mike Ostrom from Grace Lutheran Church in Lincoln and the Rev. Al Duminy from Sinai Lutheran Church in Fremont. Ruth Lund, widow of the Rev. Dale Lund, former President of Midland, served as lector.

After lunch and some closing remarks, the Festival ended with an invitation to all those attending to attend the Augustana Valedictory event being planned at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, just outside Philadelphia, June 24-26, 2016. In fact, it was suggested that a trip to the East Coast by friends and members of the Augustana Heritage Association from the Midwest in 2016 might be "just the ticket" to provide a way by which those friends and members could invite their grandchildren to accompany them or, indeed, to provide transportation for them. Now THAT would be a worthwhile trip, indeed! See you there!

*David E. Baker, Executive Director
Augustana Heritage Association*

P. S. Preceding the beginning of the 2014 Festival, a 7½ -hour Pre-Festival Tour was conducted Friday morning and afternoon with almost 50 people traveling on the bus. Leaving the Midland campus at 8:00 a.m., the group was enriched on its journey by an historical commentary while en route to Omaha, as well as by especially informative presentations at each of the sites visited: Augustana Lutheran Church, Immanuel Village, the Fogelstrom Chapel and the offices of Mosaic and the Nebraska Synod. At noon a scrumptious buffet luncheon, courtesy of Immanuel, was served in the Garden Room at Immanuel Village. The tour itself was sponsored by Mosaic.



Festival choir under the direction of Jim Logue at the Closing Services

Bishop Brian Maas, the Rev. Mike Ostram, former Bishop Dennis Anderson and the Rev. Al Duminy at the Closing Service



Highlights of AHA Board Meeting, June 12 and 15, 2014

The 2014 Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Augustana Heritage Association was held in conjunction with the 2014 AHA Festival on the campus of Midland University in Fremont, Nebraska, June 12 and 15. At the first of its three sessions, held on Thursday afternoon, June 12, the Board, in addition to approving the minutes of its previous meeting in April of 2013:

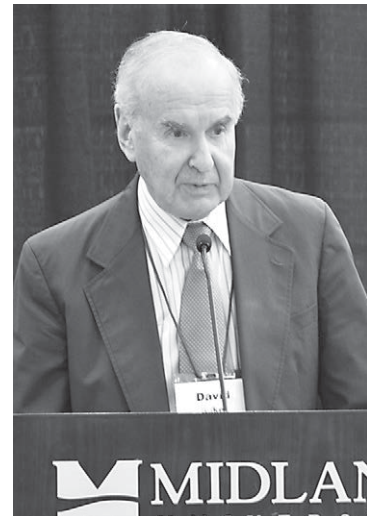
1. received and accepted reports from the President, the Treasurer and the Executive Director;
2. set the prices at which AHA books in stock would be sold during the 2014 Festival;
3. expressed appreciation to Judy Burch for performing the annual financial audit;
4. invited suggestions for articles for the AH Newsletter to be sent to the editor, George Meslow;
5. received an overview of the 2014 AHA Festival from the Chair of the Local Planning and Arrangements Committee, Bill Nelsen, and expressed appreciation to him and the committee for all the work that had gone into planning and arranging for the Festival;
6. received with appreciation a letter from the Augustana Institute in Philadelphia expressing gratitude for the gift of \$1,000 in support of the new Augustana Lectureship at LTSP;
7. reviewed the pertinent articles of the AHA by-laws in regard to the suspending of the rules in order to allow the present AHA Board to continue in office until the close of AHA and moved to recommend to the Association, at its Business Meeting June 15; that: a) AHA be dissolved as a separate non-profit organization on December 31, 2016; b) that the Board be instructed and authorized to carry out the necessary steps for dissolution; and c) that by-laws 6.4 and 11 be suspended in order to carry out the dissolution with the current Board in office;
8. received a report from the Nominating Committee with the names of six candidates who had been invited and agreed to serve as nominees, if needed, for election to the Board at the biennial Business Meeting June 15, should the above recommendation of the Board to dissolve AHA on December 31, 2016, fail to pass by the required 2/3 vote;
9. reviewed the proposed budget for the remaining years of AHA's existence and agreed to recommend it to the Business Meeting June 15 as a best estimate;
10. received information from one of the two Co-Chairs of the Local Planning and Arrangements Committee for the 2016 AHA Valedictory event in Philadelphia, Ann Kohler, about preliminary plans for that event and expressed appreciation to her for the informa-

tion and the plans already being made; and

11. in the absence of the Chair of the Communications and Membership Committee, Loran Bohman, appointed Dale Skogman as Interim Chair of that Committee.

At the second of its three sessions, held on Thursday evening, June 12, the Board received reports from its four standing committees (Administration and Finance, Communications and Membership, Publications and Projects, and Discernment) and, after due consideration and discussion of their various proposals and recommendations:

1. appointed Helene Leaf as the Board's representative to the Augustana Founders Day Reunion, April 25-26, 2015, in Andover, Illinois, and to lead a workshop there on AHA;
2. deferred action on a request from the Jenny Lind Chapel for a monetary gift in support of the above event until AHA is closer to the end of its existence so as to have a clearer understanding of what funds may be available for distribution;
3. approved the recommendation that any proceeds from the Valedictory event in Philadelphia in 2016 be designated for the Augustana Institute at LTSP;
4. approved the recommendation that, if needed, funds from the AHA Book Fund be made available to help support the continuing publication of the AH Newsletter through 2016;
5. tabled a recommendation that the Augustana Institute at LTSP be added to the list of beneficiaries of AHA at the time of its dissolution in 2016;
6. expressed appreciation to Mark Hurty for continuing to serve as AHA's webmaster; recommended that the website be taken down at the time of AHA's dissolution and the contents shared with appropriate institutions, such as the ELCA Archives; requested that, until AHA's dissolution, the contents of the site be modified in consultation with the Executive Director and the Chair of the Communications and



David E. Baker

- Membership Committee; and requested that the existence of the site be publicized in the AH Newsletter;
7. expressed appreciation to Ruth Ann Deppe for the wonderful collation of AH Newsletter articles by titles, authors and subjects and recommended that the collation be posted on the website, referenced in the AH Newsletter, and copies shared with the ELCA Archives;
 8. declined an invitation from the editor of the Pietisten journal to collaborate on an observance of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Carl Olof Rosenius;
 9. approved a recommendation that all of the essays and other material on the AHA website be printed and that digitalized and printed copies be sent to the ELCA Archives;
 10. approved a recommendation that the Publications and Projects Committee, in consultation with the Executive Committee, be authorized to determine, by October 1, 2014, the feasibility of proceeding with the publication of an English translation of a recent Swedish publication by Bishop Emeritus Jonas Jonson about Nathan Soderblom; and
 11. gave its blessing to whoever wants to organize an AHA Reunion in Southern California in 2018.

At the third of its three sessions, held on Sunday afternoon, June 15, the Board:

1. approved a motion to retain all four of the current

officers of AHA (President Hal Nilsson, Vice President Ann Kohler, Secretary Helene Leaf and Treasurer Jerry Leaf) in their present positions until the dissolution of AHA;

2. received a report on the number of AHA books sold during the AHA Festival just ended and determined that all those remaining be sent to the AHA office in Chicago;
3. reviewed with representatives of the Local Planning and Arrangements Committee the Festival just ended and expressed appreciation to them for all of the work that they had done;
4. reviewed the AHA Business Meeting held that morning and took note of the approval, with only one dissenting vote, of the recommendation of the Board to dissolve AHA by 12/31/16;
5. requested the Executive Director to consult with the ELCA attorney in regard to legal steps needing to be taken to close AHA in a "timely fashion"; and
6. set Saturday, April 18, 2015, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, as the date, time and place of the next meeting of the Board.

*David E. Baker, Executive Director
Augustana Heritage Association*

AHA Biennial Business Meeting Summary

At its biennial Business Meeting Sunday morning, June 15, on the campus of Midland University in Fremont, Nebraska, the 158 members of the Augustana Heritage Association present and voting:

1. approved the minutes of the last biennial meeting June 23, 2012 on the campus of Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota;
2. noted, in absentia but with appreciation, the ministries of the 18 oldest living former Augustana pastors, ranging in age from 93 to 102 (Clarence Leslie);
3. received and accepted, with appreciation, reports from the President, the Executive Director and the Treasurer;
4. approved, with only one dissenting vote, the recommendation of the Board that: a) AHA be dissolved as a separate non-profit organization on December 31, 2016; b) that the Board be instructed and authorized to carry out the necessary steps of dissolution; and c) that bylaws 6.4 and 11 be suspended in order to carry out the dissolution with the current Board in office;
5. heard a presentation by Ann Kohler, one of the two

- co-chairs of the Local Planning and Arrangements Committee for the 2016 AHA Valedictory event being planned at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, just outside Philadelphia, June 24-26, 2016, and expressed, on recommendation of the Board, support for the event;
6. approved the proposed budgets for the remaining years of AHA's existence;
7. expressed, with a round of applause, appreciation to the 2014 AHA Festival Local Planning and Arrangements Committee for the fine work they had done;
8. received, through AHA's immediate Past President, Don Sjoberg, greetings from Herb and Corinne Chilstrom, who were unable to attend this Festival; and
9. noted that the next and final biennial meeting of the Augustana Heritage Association is now set for the weekend of June 24-26, 2016, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lansdale, Pennsylvania.

*David E. Baker, Executive Director
Augustana Heritage Association*

The Lasting Harvest of Luther College and Academy

Carl Hansen
President Emeritus, Midland University

Allow me to begin with a personal word. When it was time to begin thinking about college in the early 1950s, I only considered three possible colleges, not because my mail box was flooded (as they are for today's prospective college students with an endless collection of glossy view-books touting the attributes of their college or university) but for very personal reasons. Option 1: the School of Engineering at the University of Colorado (my dad's choice, since he wanted me to become an Electrical Engineer—not a pastor, which he considered a dead end job where I would starve to death; obviously that is one time he was wrong). Option 2: Harvard, the choice of a mentor at East High in Denver who assured me scholarship aid from the Harvard Club would cover the cost. And Option 3: Bethany College in Kansas which was consistently endorsed by our congregation as “our” church college (the congregation, after all, had been founded in 1908 by a “missionary to the Swedes in Denver” sent by the Kansas Conference of the Augustana Church).

I don't remember even hearing there was also a place in Nebraska called “Luther” that I could consider. But once I enrolled at Bethany I began to learn about Luther College and Academy from classmates who had come to Bethany after two years at Luther in order to complete a baccalaureate degree, and from L. Dale Lund, who was president of Bethany for several of my years there (and later my predecessor in the presidency of Midland.)

Although they told me about a city called “Wahoo,” I never visited it until many years later after it had become famous as the “home office” of the David Letterman Show. By the way, it is my understanding that Letterman chose Wahoo as his “home office” after intense lobbying and a degree of bribery that included, among other things, the promise of being inducted as an Admiral into the “Great Navy of Nebraska,” free check-ups at the Wahoo Medical Center, a '76 Ford Pinto with a sofa attached to its hood, and a wall clock made of cow-pies.

But in all fairness, Midland never popped up on my radar screen either, until I was also the Director of Church Relations at Bethany College and had occasion to attend a conference here in Fremont. Driving into Fremont for that meeting, I had no way of knowing that my next visit here would be to interview as a candidate for the presidency of Midland Lutheran College, which I

assumed in the fall of 1981.

In that first year as president, I became immersed in what was the preparations already underway for the Centennial Celebration of the college that would occur two years later in 1983. As you no doubt know, Midland traces its roots to three previous institutions: the “original” Midland founded in 1887 in Atchison, Kansas, by the General Synod which later merged into the United Lutheran Church in America. In 1919, the college moved to Fremont to occupy this campus which had been started by Fremont Normal College in 1884, but closed its doors during World War I. The third institution which we are remembering as part of our AHA gathering was Luther College and Academy, founded in 1883. As the oldest of the three institutions, its founding date was the one which led to the Centennial Celebration in 1983.

I soon embarked on a quick learning curve as plans for the Centennial progressed: learning not only about Luther and the Academy but also about Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Wahoo, where we hoped to have a worship service when the Centennial Year was to begin. Part of that learning included awareness that, although Midland College had added the name “Lutheran” in honor of Luther in Wahoo in the early 1960s, many of those who had an understandably deep love for Luther College and Academy did not “jump for joy” when they heard of or thought about this college some 20 miles north of Wahoo.

For nearly 80 years, Luther had been providing education for high school and college-age students. Through those years, Luther was nearly closed several times due to insufficient funding and heavy indebtedness—once in the 1890s when drought and depression decreased enrollment and financial support, and again during the World War I years, when male students went to war instead of college, and as Public Colleges and Universities provided competition for private college throughout the US.

In the 1950s the possibility of closure came again, this time as American Lutherans began to explore the possibility of mergers that would lead to the formation of the Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church. It was apparent that these mergers would create changes not only for the colleges of the merging bodies, but a change in the conferences and synods within them.

The Augustana Synod at that time had five institutions of higher learning; four four-year colleges—Augustana, Bethany, Gustavus Adolphus, and Upsala—plus one Academy and two-year college, Luther in Wahoo.

The Augustana Synod commissioned a study of the strengths and weaknesses of its five schools in the light of impending church merger, and out of that came what was known as the Gould Wickey Report. Proposals in this report were to lead eventually to the closure of Luther and its merger with Midland College, to create Midland Lutheran College in 1962.

Whether the United Lutheran Church, as one of the merging bodies, had a similar study is not clear. But what seems to be quite clear is that neither Luther nor Midland proposed merging with one another at that time. Although only twenty miles apart, they each had their own traditions, history, and culture, and neither institution seemed interested in a “marriage proposal” to one another.

When the Wickey Report was completed, it contained two proposals that totally changed this picture: (1) That Luther College and Academy be discontinued by 1960. (2) That the Luther Board be authorized to initiate discussions with the Midland Board to explore the feasibility of merging the two institutions.

The initial response by Luther and the Nebraska Synod of Augustana to these recommendations was to begin the merger discussions but to postpone closing Luther until 1962 in the event that the LCA merger did not take place, and also to see if enough funds could be raised to continue Luther as a separate institution.

As the discussions proceeded, there was discussion of a merger that would allow both schools to remain in place in Wahoo and Fremont under a joint administration, as well as expansion of programs at Midland to allow for as many tenured faculty at Luther to move there as possible. In the end, financial realities led to the proposal from the Nebraska Conference that the two institutions be merged into one, effective September 1, 1962, creating Midland Lutheran College, located in Fremont, Nebraska.

This was difficult to accept on the part of Luther faculty, students, alumni, and friends and by the Wahoo community itself. The word “merger” comes from the Latin word “mergere” which means “to plunge.” Among its cognates are “combine, blend, fuse, amalgamate, unite, join, mix, consolidate, mingle, converge, coalesce, melt into, meld, be swallowed up by.” Whatever word is used, it is clear that a merger of two institutions is almost always a difficult event, for it is not unusual that one of the partners may cease to exist. Since that seems to be how many individuals perceived the merger of Luther into Midland, it is no wonder that this decision was met with sadness, disappointment, and anger.

For the City of Wahoo, the closing of Luther meant the loss of an institution with significant financial and

social impact on the community. For Luther’s students, faculty, and staff it meant a severe disruption. And for many loyal alumni and friends of Luther, no matter what name was given to the new institution, Midland Lutheran College could never fully be “their college.”

Some twenty years after the decision was made to close Luther and effect a merger with Midland, when the Centennial Committee began to explore involvement of Luther alumni and residents of Wahoo, they were not sure how well they would be received, and some of the people in Wahoo wondered what on earth Midland wanted now two decades later.

Thankfully the Centennial Committee was met with grace and openness, and the Centennial began with a wonderful service of Worship and Thanksgiving at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, setting the stage for a year-long series of events that took place in the months that followed.

So what was “merged” into Midland beyond adding “Lutheran” to the name in the early 1960s? For one, the transcripts and records of Luther Alumni were now housed on the Midland campus. For another, many of the books from Luther were added to the library at Midland, which was named “Luther Library” in honor of Luther College and Academy. A number of physical objects were moved from the Luther Campus and placed outside Luther Library, including a sundial and a large boulder. Several years later, the iconic “Luther Arch” was dismantled stone by stone in Wahoo and then rebuilt as part of a commemorative plaza in front of the library. A beautiful painting by Birger Sandzen was placed in Luther Library and later moved to the President’s Office in the Anderson Complex when it was completed in the 1980s. At least one Luther professor, V.E. Johnson joined the Midland Faculty. Together with his wife, Aina, they became the house-parents of Midland’s Gunderson Hall dormitory when it was constructed in 1966. Several current Luther students accepted the invitation to visit the Midland Campus in the spring of 1962, and a number of them transferred to Midland to complete their college degrees.

A few years after the Centennial still another venture was created to keep alive the memory of Luther College and Academy when Midland began “Luther Fest” in the early 1980s, which from its inception concluded with a worship service and luncheon at Bethlehem Lutheran Church. The idea for Luther Fest was born, not in Nebraska, but in Minnesota! For a number of years, Midland had hosted alumni gatherings in Minneapolis, inviting both Midland and Luther alumni to a single event. In view of the fact that the number of Luther alumni in the Twin Cities far exceeded the number of Midland alumni, a decision was one year to hold two separate alumni gatherings: one for Midland alumni and a second one for Luther alumni.

The result of holding two events was that a greater

number of Luther alumni came to “their” gathering than had been the case in earlier years, when the event included alumni from both institutions. In reviewing this Luther gathering, where alumni obviously enjoyed sharing memories of their Wahoo days, it was decided that it was time to initiate an event to which Luther alumni across the country could come to renew their ties with one another.

Named “Luther Fest,” it would be scheduled near the Swedish celebration of “Mid-Summer.” Alumni were invited for presentations about Luther College and Academy, and for recognition of outstanding alumni as well as families with a history of involvement with Luther.

We, at Midland, had rather modest hopes for the first gathering; if at least fifty people attended, we would declare it a “success.” When nearly three hundred alumni registered, a tradition was born. Since the first Luther Fest was held, gatherings have continued on alternate years, providing Luther alumni the opportunity to share memories and conversation, join in song, worship, and a traditional Swedish dinner, with a culminating service of worship and lunch in Wahoo.

Over the years, Midland has also recognized a number of Luther graduates with honorary degrees as part of its commencement ceremonies in May. Pastors and missionaries familiar to members of the AHA include: Reuben Swanson, Theodore E. Johnson, Roy E. Benson, Reuben Ariel Lundeen, Carl Waldemar Larson, Floyd E. Lauersen, and Alan J. Gottneid. Educators including Alan Seagren, Verner E. Johnson, Aina Abrahamson, and L. Dale Lund, who was president of Midland in the 1970s.

Luther alumni have not only attended Luther Fest gatherings, but also have responded with generous financial response to the request of Dr. Bud Benson and Eugene Dahlgren to create the Luther Heritage Fund at Midland. This Fund of more than \$2 Million in gifts and pledges is now part of the Midland Endowment, providing annual scholarships given in memory of Luther College and Academy.

Luther College and Academy is no longer physically present on the hill in Wahoo; but it lives on in a number

of ways on this campus and above all in the lives of its many alumni across our nation and across our world. It has been said that a college or university is not simply the campus, nor its various buildings, nor its students and faculty at any one time. It consists of all who enter and go forth from its halls, who have been touched by its influence and who carry on its spirit.

J. Iverne Dowie, in his book *Prairie Grass Dividing*, provides a glimpse of the earliest days of Luther, from its founding by Augustana Synod churches in 1883 through the next two decades, when twice financial crises threatened to close its doors. The doors remained open and for the next six decades Luther played a significant role in Lutheran higher education as one of five colleges founded by the Augustana Synod, weathering two World Wars, the Great Depression, and the Korean Conflict. Dowie includes only a brief mention of Luther between the 1890s and 1959 when his book was published, noting in the Epilogue:

If the dissemination of the gospel and the preparation of a better life through the acquisition of knowledge represented the true progress of Luther, statistics may suggest to what extent the school fulfilled its destiny. During 50 years (1883-1933) 85 Luther students entered the ministry; 312 became teachers. Ministers and teachers are but a portion of the total harvest of the school. Students have gone forth from its classrooms into many walks of life. The Swedish pioneers planted, sometimes in sacrifice and poverty, the seed. The harvest, small in comparison with great institutions of learning, has not been insignificant to the Swedes in Nebraska and to the Augustana Church in its general missionary program. (pp. 208-209)

This “harvest” did not end in 1933. Graduates of Luther College and Academy continued to “go forth from its classrooms into many walks of life” for the next three decades, continuing to make significant contributions to American society and the church. This evening, I have asked three graduates of Luther who are part of this harvest, to share personal memories of how Luther and its faculty and staff shaped and influenced their faith, their vocation, and their life.

Luther College Remembered

Marilyn Johnson Langemeier

I am a proud “non-alum” of both Luther Junior College and the Academy. (In other words, I didn’t get to graduate from either because of the closures in ‘59 and ‘62.) I guess I am here as a representative for the last generation of “Lutherites”!

Isn’t it amazing how one moving experience can wake you up to see how God has blessed you through the people and events you experience in your life? Such was my first Lutherfest in 2009—and again in 2011 when my family (the Julius and Vera Johnson family) were the honorees! And again in 2013, in the sharing of Luther memories, there came the announcement of the plan to formally launch the campaign to create “the Luther College of the Liberal Arts” as a vital part of Midland University.

What a marvelous history we all share because of a handful of Christians back in 1883 who had a vision that was Luther College and is now a part of Midland University. Many of us here today still remember with deep sadness Luther’s last commencement exercises! (I missed a portion of my twin brother’s graduation exercises because it was so emotional that I had to leave the gym). Wow, was I ever upset with Dr. Reuben Swanson, the Augustana Synod, and Midland! But, thankfully, Midland embraced the Luther students and faculty back then, just as they did the Dana College students several years ago. We “Lutherites” at least had some closure by being able to say farewell to our classmates and campus—Dana students didn’t! But now look what Midland has done for us all! It helped transition students into the Midland family, created “Lutherfest” for Luther Alumni, and now has established the creation of the Luther College of the Liberal Arts. What a marvelous way to keep the history of Luther alive for generations to come!

I continue to be amazed with the spirit of all the Luther Alumni! At Lutherfest 2009 an alum’s husband was watching the large group of Lutherites assembled and asked, “What is it about Luther that brings all these people back like this? There are more people here at this reunion than there are at reunions from schools with 3 to 5 times as many alumni?” I shared a few stories with him, and later, on my drive back to Montana, this thought hit me! Maybe the words of the Alma Mater answer it—“faith guides our way”—“the cross is the light through dark days and bright”—“for in Christ Thou has anchored Thy name.” In everything Luther was Christ-centered! It was interesting to read the responses to the 2009 survey question, “What were your favorite memories?” The majority of the answers included “Bible

studies in the dorms,” “attending chapel,” and even the Sunday walks with classmates to Bethlehem. All these had special memories and meaning!

I have been asked to reflect on how Luther and its faculty and staff have impacted my life, my faith, and my vocational involvements after leaving Luther. My faith and trust in the Lord is rooted deep in my Swedish ancestry, my strong faith-based family upbringing, my Nebraska roots, and both my Luther and Midland affiliations.

When the merger of Luther into Midland took place, God’s blessings continued. My parents and I were welcomed into the Midland family along with the V.E. Johnson family. My parents managed the student union, and I became secretary in student personnel for twelve years. V.E. taught business, and Aina was secretary to Dr. Sinkey. I obtained my BA degree as a non-traditional student and finally graduated from Midland in 1972. After graduation I accepted a position with Immanuel Mental Health and was the office manager, intake case worker and therapist for 10 years. I left the mental health field to take on my own personal patient in 1981 (my husband, Leon), and we subsequently moved to Montana where we still enjoy working with all of our employees in “our family” of community banks in Montana and Wyoming. Nebraska is home to both of us, and we both treasure our roots, friends, and memories.

The V.E and Aina Johnson family has always been special in my life without my even realizing it until Lutherfest 2009. I was 13 when we moved from Holdrege to Wahoo in 1956, and right then the only thing that mattered to me was finding a friend, Carol. V.E. was just Carol’s Dad, Aina was another ‘mom’ and, of course, we had to put up with Verner, Yvonne, Grace, Vernal, and even oldest brother Carl. I just grew up with them. They were good people, and that was that! But, historically, the impact of V.E.’s faith-based dedication, ingenuity, tenacity, and love for Luther and its students has been enormous to say the least. I am sure that all Luther students present tonight knew V.E. and probably have a few stories to tell themselves. Truly, V.E. did not miss his calling!

He graduated from Augustana in 1928 and moved to Wahoo to become Luther’s Business Manager and Treasurer for the next thirty-three years. He was a promoter, a jack of all trades, and a master of all! At Luther he recruited students, taught business courses, would trade a steer, a pig, eggs, and milk for tuition. He even started a food bank for the college kitchen. He implemented a “work in exchange for tuition and/or board

and room” program. My brother was one of many recipients back in 1949 of the “work for board and room” concept.

I was amazed at the list of community organizations, board memberships, and other civic activities V.E. was involved in. As Public Relations Director he organized choir tours to both coasts, pursued donations and fund raisers, including Luther’s Science Hall/Gymnasium and the Hanson/Eastman School of Music. He arranged Lyceum programs and, together with students, planned the Luther Youth Leadership Conference on campus for over ten years. He also served as interim pastor at 30 some congregations during the summer and served on numerous community boards, worked with the Boy Scouts, served on church boards, was Treasurer and President of the Nebraska Conference of Lutheran Brotherhood, and served on church mission boards, Bethpage Mission in Axtell and Augustana Seminary in Rock Island, just to name a few. He even taught swimming at Camp Covenant Cedars Bible Camp! Now how diverse can one person get! V.E. was

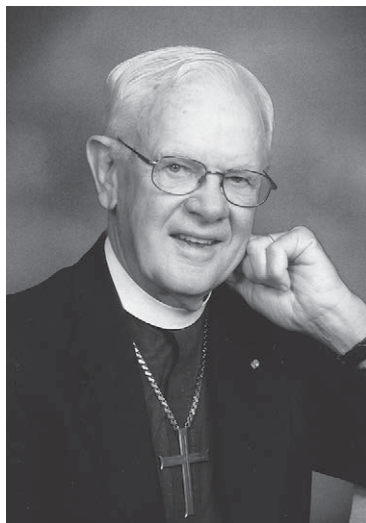
for sure reaping the “harvest” in all areas of his life!

Leon and I are pleased that we committed ourselves to the “the Luther College of the Liberal Arts.” A Julius and Vera Johnson Family Perpetual Scholarship was established by the Johnson/Bartek families at Lutherfest 2011 and will now be under the umbrella of the Luther College of the Liberal Arts. We have also pledged and established a perpetual scholarship to be named The “V.E. and Aina Johnson Perpetual Scholarship” at Lutherfest 2013. We hope that others of you will be motivated to keep the Luther spirit alive and contribute to these scholarship funds or establish your own Luther scholarship memorials.

The Johnson family has certainly been blessed for many years because of our relationship to both Luther and Midland, and we are extremely grateful. We recognize what Luther and Midland have done for us, and now it is our turn to continue supporting Midland University with our time, talents, and prayers!

To God be the glory for the things he has done!

Chilstrom has gone to the dogs...



Since his retirement as presiding bishop of the ELCA nineteen years go, Herb Chilstrom has been a busy man. Among other things, he has written four books, including his autobiography *A Journey of Grace; the Formation of a Leader and a Church* and the devotional book *Every Morning New*, coauthored with his wife Corinne and commissioned by the AHA. Income from the sale of those two books has been donated

to LSTC and has surpassed \$100,000.00

Now he’s out with another volume. This one is about dogs! It began early in 2014 when Chilstrom’s Cairn terrier “Jonah” died at age seventeen. To work through his grief, Chilstrom began to write stories about his life with Jonah. That led to thoughts about four other dogs he’s had as friends from time to time since he was a lad. Soon

he had a book—*My Friend Jonah—and Other Dogs I’ve Loved*.

Anyone who has ever loved a dog will love this book. It will bring laughs; it will bring tears. But, most of all, it’s about the lessons for life we learn from our canine friends.

In her foreword to the book, U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar writes:

As Bishop Chilstrom, with his Master’s voice, shepherds us through the lessons his dogs have taught him, from loyalty and discipline and companionship to forgiveness, curiosity, and rest, he makes us think about the big issues in life: How to live, how to treat others, and even how to die.

The book is easy to order:

By credit card: www.huffpublishing.com

By check:

Chilstrom Books; 1211 Pine Pointe Curve; St. Peter, MN 56082. Enclose a check for \$20.00 per book. Postage and sales tax, where applicable, are included.

All income from book sales goes to the Joel Torstenson Fund at Augsburg College to honor a man whose influence on Chilstrom was profound.

Three Luther Faculty Members

Lynn Johnson

I would like to use a baseball analogy to relate to three Luther faculty members who greatly influenced me during my personal and professional life.

The 1906 Chicago Cubs won 116 games, winning a championship that year. The team featured a great double play combination, Tinker to Evans to Chance. They even had songs and prose written about their exploits. My Luther double play combination would be Martin Carlson to Iverne Dowie to Theodore Johnson.

Martin Carlson visited me shortly before my high school graduation to talk about attending Luther Junior College. My mother had attended Luther Academy, so I had some background of the school in Wahoo. Coach Carlson wanted me to play basketball for him, and it did not take him long to convince me that Luther would be a good choice. My high school coach had been an individual who, in the heat of a contest, would lose his temper with his players, other coaches, and the officials. I soon found out that Coach Carlson would be the exact opposite of what I had experienced in high school.

Although the won-lost record at Luther was not outstanding, I soon found out that Coach Carlson exemplified all that should take place in athletics. Not once did I witness him using profanity, or attacking players, fellow coaches, or officials. In my combination I would call Martin Carlson the "Christian Gentleman."

I had the pleasure of having Dr. Dowie for a number of classes in history, sociology, and political science. Although blind, he was a true "visionary" in every sense of the word. I will cite but one example of what I mean. Dr. Dowie had us subscribe to Time magazine to tell us of a world beyond Wahoo, Nebraska. It was in May of 1954 that he referred to an article that dealt with the Supreme Court Decision of Brown vs. Board of Education, Topeka, mainly ending segregation in the public schools. During the course of our political science class that semester we had discussed the gap that existed

between what the laws stated, "de jure," and what society practiced, "de facto." I recall that Dr. Dowie mentioned that morning that the gap that existed in the area of discrimination had been somewhat narrowed by the Court's decision, but that this was only the tip of the iceberg and that other areas of society (hotels, restaurants, public transportation, etc.) would be affected someday.

Some ten years later, in 1964, the Civil Rights Bill was passed that would include these areas. Dr. Dowie ended our discussion at class that morning in 1954, with the question, "Can we legislate morality?" I sometimes think of that question and wonder how far we have really come since then. On my double play team, I would identify Dr. Dowie as the "Gentleman and Scholar."

Pastor Theodore Johnson ("Pastor Ted") would comprise the rest of my double play combination. He would be the "Man of Principle." In addition to serving as President of Luther he instructed classes in religion and philosophy. However, he made the greatest impact on my life because of his inspiring and challenging chapel talks. His topics were always relevant and direct. I feel that he reached most of the students' lives and actions, although that sometimes made us uncomfortable! I have always remembered one of his favorite phrases, "The world has lots of 'Sunday Christians,' but somehow that number is greatly reduced come Saturday." On a more humorous note, Pastor Ted was loyal and enduring to his beloved Chicago Cubs, usually predicting that they would win the pennant the coming season. Sometimes, when I see or hear the baseball scores, I look up heavenward and say, "Pastor Ted, the Cubs lost again." Somehow I think that he would reply, "Wait till next year!"

So, Carlson to Dowie to Johnson is my Luther double play combination. These three greatly affected my life, and I think that in today's world, they would still be winners!

Renewing AHA Membership

The Augustana Heritage Association is concerned not only with the past as it defines and promotes the heritage of Augustana, but also with the present and the future as its members faithfully live out their witness in and through the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. Your membership, as well as any additional tax deductible gift, will enable AHA to continue *The Augustana Heritage Newsletter* and other publications and projects underway and give ongoing support for office and meeting expenses.

The current memberships run until December 31, 2016. If you have already renewed, thanks! If not, please use the form below to send in your membership. And again, thanks!

AUGUSTANA HERITAGE ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

Individual membership(s) ____ @\$35 each \$ _____

Household membership(s) ____ @\$50 each \$ _____

Congregations, Institutions,
and Agencies ____ @\$100 each \$ _____

In addition, I/we wish to give a tax deductible gift to AHA:

\$25__ \$50__ \$100__ Other \$ _____ = \$ _____

Subscription to Sweden and America
@\$10 each \$ _____

Enclosed is my/our check
in the total amount of \$ _____

Please make your check payable to
Augustana Heritage Association

Name _____

Spouse _____

Address _____

City _____

State/Province _____

Zip/Postal Code _____

Phone _____

Phone _____

Send this form and check to:

AUGUSTANA HERITAGE ASSOCIATION
1100 EAST 55TH STREET
CHICAGO, IL 60615

(Memberships are not tax deductible)

Membership

We should all have received a recent mailing from David Baker, our AHA Executive Director, inviting us to renew our membership in the Augustana Heritage Association. A membership renewal form is included in this issue for you to use, if you have not already done so. Thank you for being part of the Augustana family!

18th Annual Augustana Communion Service

Normandale Lutheran Church, Edina, MN, will celebrate their 18th annual Augustana Communion Service on Sunday, September 21, 2014.

The service begins at 2:30 p.m. with a hymnsing, followed by the full communion liturgy.

The Reverend Doctor Arland Hultgren will be the guest preacher.

A time of coffee and fellowship will follow the service in the Fellowship Hall.

2016 Augustana Heritage Association Valedictory Event

AUGUSTANA—A Living Heritage! will be held June 24-26, 2016, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Lansdale, Pennsylvania.

Pre-event Tour:

- New Sweden Sites
- Delaware and Pennsylvania
- The first American Church begun by the Church of Sweden

During the event:

Visit Philadelphia Seminary and The Augustana Institute Archives, Gloria Dei Church (Old Swedes), American Swedish Historical Museum, where we will celebrate Midsummer, with all the Swedish traditions and Swedish Food!



Festival Photos

Clockwise from top left: Chair of the Local Planning and Arrangements Committee, Bill Nelsen; Welcome table; food and fellowship; Swedish Ringmasters Quartet; winner of this year's Jenny Lind Singer competition in Sweden, Christina Nilsson; Scandinavian Folk Dancers of Omaha; 50-voice Pathfinders Chorus from Omaha; and some unique visitors



Presentations from Festival at Midland

Festival Greetings and Remarks

Björn Lyrvall

Swedish Ambassador to the United States

What a wonderful welcome to the Augustana Heritage Association Festival here at Midland University! And what a wonderful welcome to Nebraska! My special thanks to Senator Jerry Johnson for outstanding hospitality and for introducing your state over the past two days. Great talks at the Capitol and Governor's Mansion yesterday. And we have been following the Swedish path across the prairie, visiting the churches your ancestors built. And this morning's visit to the feedlot. Fascinating! Thanks also to David Baker and Hal Nilsson for inviting me to this amazing gathering.

I understand that the Augustana Lutheran Church has embodied and represented the essentials of the Swedish tradition of the Lutheran Church in the religious life of America.

And it is an honor to be here with all of you. From what I understand it's 143 years since a committee of Swedes from Illinois went to Nebraska to determine whether the Nebraska prairie was suitable for Swedish settlement and farming—and ushered in an entirely new influence in the growth of the state. This led to a variety of towns being settled, including Stromsburg, Oakland, Pender, Wakefield, and Wausa. Together with other significant Swedish populations in places like Mead, Malmo, and Swedeburg, the Swedes became a substantial community in Nebraska. Thank you for everything you do for Sweden! And that goes to those of you who come from other parts of the country. Many, if not all, of you have shown outstanding and longstanding commitment to preserve and promote some of the Swedish heritage as well as aspects of contemporary Sweden in American life.

Let me say—as a relative newcomer to the US—I have certainly experienced a lot of generosity and goodwill since arriving to this great country with my family some ten months ago. At one of the first large gala evenings I attended last year a lady leaned over to me and said, “So Mr. Ambassador, how does it feel to be the Ambassador of Sweden, a country that everybody loves so much?”

Well, what could I say? Obviously I was honored and humbled, and recognizing that Swedish-American relations are actually in pretty good shape.

What a year we have had! The visit to Stockholm of President Obama. First ever visit to Sweden of an incumbent US President. For a new Ambassador you can, needless to say, be pleased to have the President visit your country on the first day of your new job, but what next? Was this the peak of relations or a platform to build on?

But also last year's celebrations of our Swedish-American heritage—375 years since the first settlers arrived to the shores of the Delaware River to set up the short-lived Swedish Colony, and 230 years since Sweden—as the first country after the Revolutionary war—recognized the independence of the USA, when our envoys, Benjamin Franklin and Gustaf Philip Creutz, signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce.

So we have a very solid basis for our relations—and a very good story to tell about our current work together, based on shared fundamental values and interests, including respect for civil rights and liberties, democratic principles, human dignity and economic freedom.

With the President we agreed to reinforce cooperation not least on trade, notably TTIP—Sweden and the US have strong trade links—Sweden being the 12th largest investor in the US, arguably the largest investor per capita, and Swedish companies creating 330,000 jobs in the US. But we also work closely together on climate and environmental issues, green technologies, innovation, international development cooperation, and regional and global security. All these issues give Sweden the opportunity to present itself as the creative, transparent, and modern society it is.

We have been working to promote Sweden in the Nation's Capitol at our House of Sweden by the Potomac, already a landmark building in Washington DC. Please come visit us there! It's presenting the best of modern Swedish Architecture and puts Sweden on the map.

But the Embassy also recognizes the need to reach out, beyond the Beltway of Washington DC. And we



Björn Lyrvall

took inspiration from Carl Eric Wickman, a Swedish immigrant from my native Swedish Province of Dalarna who in 1914 took over a failing Minnesota car dealership and turned it into a successful bus route for miners. It grew rapidly and became one of the great icons of twentieth century America—the Greyhound Bus line.

One hundred years later, my Embassy colleagues and I decided to hit the roads on a grand tour named “Sweden on the Road” in a blue and yellow bus, care of Volvo Group, to connect with Americans outside of the Nation’s Capitol.

We have been traveling over the past weeks to extend the conversation to the Governor of Minnesota, the Mayor of San Francisco, the business community in Milwaukee, start-ups in Silicon Valley, game developers in Los Angeles, students at the Volta Elementary School in Chicago and many, many others. We went to Geneva, Illinois, the constituency of US Congressman Randy Hultgren, chair of the Swedish Caucus in Congress. On its route from Chicago to San Francisco the bus passed through Nebraska a couple of weeks ago. And my visit today is in a way an extension of “Sweden on the Road,” an opportunity to meet you all and talk about how a great Swedish-American relationship can be further strengthened.

The theme of your Festival is “Prairie Roots. Global Impact.” How true that is in our day and time. The importance of your heritage in a globalized world. It chimes very well with the theme of my Embassy’s public diplomacy program, this year called “Going Global.” We are exploring how local solutions can interact with an international outlook. Very much what Sweden has been able to do.

And indeed, there are many reasons to feel proud of Sweden!

Swedes, shy as we are said to be, normally don’t brag about our country. But I dare say that there are many reasons to feel proud of Sweden, what it has accomplished, what it stands and strives for. Surveys of global value patterns show that Sweden is not at all “the country of moderation” (landet lagom). Innovation and openness have characterized the history of Sweden in everything from being internationally successful in business and the Swedish model of society to a global commitment based on solidarity as well as technical state of the art innovations.

And as Secretary Kerry said in his statement on the occasion of Sweden’s National Day just a few days ago: Sweden’s June 6, 1809, constitution set forth principles of democracy and freedom to which all nations should aspire. Those shared values continue to form the bedrock of the close friendship between Sweden and the United States today.

You all cherish an image of Sweden that you share daily with your American friends and neighbors, and that is most likely the image of Sweden that they will remember. No Embassy event can ever match your impact on America’s view of Sweden. You are true ambassadors of Sweden. You reach out much farther and deeper into the U.S. than the Embassy can. For that I salute you all!

And to answer the lady’s question: “How does it feel to be an ambassador to Sweden, a country that everybody loves?” It feels pretty good—actually it feels amazing—thanks to friends like you!

Thank You!

Augustana Founders Day Reunion April 25 and 26 Next Year in Andover

The Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, Elizabeth Eaton, will be the featured preacher at the 4 o’clock Sunday service at next year’s Augustana Founders Day Reunion in Andover, IL, April 25 and 26, 2015. A concert by the Augustana College Choir will precede the service at Augustana Lutheran Church. A dinner will be served following this service. There will also be a festive morning service, followed by a noon lunch and touring opportunities in Andover related to the history of the Augustana Synod.

On Saturday, April 25, there will be interest groups for registered attendees. Some of the topics offered are: The Augustana Seed is Sown in Andover, Augustana Synod, Augustana College and Theological Seminary, Augustana Heritage Association, Women of the Church, and Immigrant Families in the Augustana Synod, to

name a few. Following the evening meal, a hymn sing and vespers will be held in the Jenny Lind Chapel sanctuary. The weekend event will commemorate the 155th anniversary of the Augustana Synod and the 165th anniversary of the Andover congregation. Registration information will be available this fall at JennyLindChapel.org.

Thanks.

Ron Peterson, Acting Dean



Jenny Lind Chapel

Presentations from Festival at Midland

Bethphage and Mosaic: From Beginnings to Global Impact

Linda Timmons, Mosaic President and CEO



Linda Timmons

I am honored to be able to bring greetings to you on behalf of Mosaic, formerly known as Bethphage and Martin Luther Homes. We are thrilled to host this festival in Nebraska and I know that the more than 50 people who participated in the pre-festival tour of ministries enjoyed visiting Lutheran Family Services, Immanuel Village and Mosaic. We are all good partners.

Last year, 2013, Mosaic celebrated 100 years of service with the theme, “A Century of Service, A Legacy of Love.” We had some grand celebrations to mark that occasion. In February, through the wonder of modern technology, we kicked off the centennial simultaneously with all of our locations across the United States.

In June, we celebrated with more than 400 people at Axtell, the birthplace of Mosaic as Bethphage. And in October, we celebrated with more than 600 people at a Gala in Omaha, which featured Timothy Shriver, CEO of Special Olympics as our guest speaker.

Along the way we had many smaller, fun events—like the “Battle of the Batter” cake decorating contest that drew a surprisingly large number of contestants (which, for us church people for whom food is a staple at every event, was a pretty good thing!).

Throughout the celebrations, we acknowledged our faith heritage, of which the Augustana Synod played a large role. I am confident that Bethphage would not have known the success it did, had it not had the Augustana Church supporting it with prayer, people and gifts.

Even today, now that Bethphage and Martin Luther Home (another organization founded in the Lutheran Church) are united as Mosaic for nearly 11 years, our ties to the Augustana Synod are strong. So I am grateful to be here with you.

I was last with you at Gustavus Adolphus College in 2012. Since our ties to the Augustana Synod are strong, I’m just curious as I look out on this gathering. Raise your hand if you have visited any Mosaic location across the country, whether it was our campus in Axtell or by

attending an event at any of our locations in Nebraska, Kansas, Colorado, Arizona, Texas, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Connecticut or Delaware. Raise your hand if someone from your family worked at or maybe received services through Bethphage or Mosaic, or maybe you yourself worked there or visited campus as a summer retreator. Raise your hand if you have remembered our needs in your prayers. Our ties to the Augustana Synod are indeed strong!

A few weeks ago, we introduced our “Forward in Faith” vision that will guide Mosaic for the next several years. In giving it a title, we clearly stand in the tradition of Pastor K.G. William Dahl, the founder of Bethphage, and the many faith-filled people who have gone before us in this ministry.

Forward in Faith is our vision as we begin our second century of service. We want to make clear that we live in faith. Faith is not certainty; there are so many things outside of our control. But we know that it has been the guidance of the Holy Spirit that has brought us to this moment and that same Spirit will guide our future. So today, in 2014 at 101 years old, we move forward in faith because we know that what we do is too important not to do. The people we serve, their families, our staff, communities where we serve and the Church all need us—you see, for 101 years, we have responded to God’s call to serve.

We are grateful for those who have served so faithfully; yet we also want to acknowledge that we must move forward—times do change! Yet, it seems that in some ways, our past is our future. During our centennial, we routinely said we were looking back with gratitude and forward with faith.

You know, that little community of Bethphage in the village of Axtell did a lot of things right. Pastor Dahl’s vision for Bethphage was that it be a place where everyone was accepted. He welcomed people with epilepsy, people who had no other home, people whose disabilities left them disfigured or unable to speak, people who needed someone to remind them that they are lovable. That early Bethphage was a place where everyone came together as a community and helped one another. The people who came there to live experienced hospitality based in love, not hostility because they were different.

As I sat in Home Tabor, our museum in Axtell, and pored through our archives, I could read the stories of those who came for care, the families of those who decided to place a loved one in a home, and the faithful

friends who provided much needed support. They are humbling stories to read.

The concept of a welcoming community that values differences and welcomes the stranger and those who are not like us—the concept around which Bethphage was built—is finally making inroads into communities today. The world is finally catching up with the Bethphage of 101 years ago! For more than 30 years, we’ve been helping make communities beyond our own campuses more welcoming places by providing homes for people with disabilities in communities and helping people become involved. Today our mission message is that we partner with people to create meaningful lives in caring communities, giving a voice to their needs. It is nothing different than what we’ve been doing for 100 years.

I think the story of David Wilson is a good one to share about this. David was a young boy—only 10 years old—when his mother, Beatrice (whom many of you may have known), brought him to live with us at Axtell. She remembers summer trips to see him from her home when he would run after her car as she drove away—hard for mother and son! David had many friends when he lived on our campus. Then he moved into Omaha and eventually moved into a host home, which is like a foster home situation. David was out and about, enjoying life. At his church, the pastor knew that David wanted to kiss each newly baptized baby on the forehead. David was well-known at the places he frequented, the restaurants and bank.

David and his family were touched by the ministry of Bethphage. David then touched many people himself through his life in the community. In fact, when David died unexpectedly, the church was full with friends wanting to attend his funeral to celebrate a life well lived. This is what our work has been about from the beginning—helping people find loving homes where they are accepted and can become all God wants them to be. Because of the advocacy of Mosaic and organizations like us, the world is changing for people as all people find a more welcoming reception, even when they’re different. That’s part of the GLOBAL IMPACT of our mission.

Another story, another man named Davey, tells a piece of this as well. This Davey was abused by his father when he was a young child causing him permanent brain damage. He spent most of his adult life in an institution until about five years ago when he moved into one of our community homes. He was so proud to have his own room and have his own things. He died recently and his sister stood at his funeral and thanked Mosaic, saying that his last five years were his best five years because Mosaic gave him love and life. That is part of the GLOBAL IMPACT of our mission.

Stories like that can be repeated across the more than 200 communities in the United States where you find Mosaic services today. We serve more than 3,700 people.

But it all began in that little prairie town of Axtell, Nebraska on a windswept little rise that the locals called “the hill” north of town. It’s an amazing story of humble beginnings, faith-filled people and lot of prayer and hard work. I grew up in that little town, and my first job was at Bethphage, so I know that story well.

But our impact has gone beyond the people we serve directly. People from Mosaic have served on national and international organizations to help shape the guidelines for what quality services to people should look like. Staff members from Mosaic have been on boards and committees to help find solutions for housing, transportation, education, jobs training—pretty much every area of life. We’ve been there to advocate for people with disabilities so that they can know whole lives.

We also help people advocate for themselves. In southwestern Kansas, an 82-year-old woman named Alice makes trips to Topeka to visit with legislators and tell them about her needs—the needs of someone with disabilities. They listen to her; she, like so many people of her age with disabilities, spent far too many years in institutions and she has strong feelings about her rights. We fully support her to do that. Again, that is a part of the GLOBAL IMPACT of Bethphage and Mosaic.

Beyond the United States, we have been blessed to have opportunities to change lives as well. Back in the 1990s, we worked to establish a Bethphage in the United Kingdom. We were given an opportunity to present a bid to establish services there and we were chosen. In just a couple of weeks, that organization is celebrating its 20th anniversary and it is a recognized leader in England for creatively serving people with disabilities. Yes, even though the Bethphage name is a memory here now that we’ve become Mosaic, it lives on at Bethphage Great Britain. It truly was an honor to Bethphage’s reputation that a small organization from the Midwest was chosen to open services abroad. That is another piece of the GLOBAL IMPACT of Bethphage.

You can see that while we’re about providing the services that people need to live a whole life, we’re also focused on changing attitudes—even changing cultures—so that a whole life will include being welcomed as part of a larger community. We’ve seen that at work in the United States and other Western nations for the last 30 years or so. But in other places around the world, the concept of welcoming people who have disabilities is still somewhat new.

Following the fall of the Soviet Union more than 20 years ago, we were asked to help people in Latvia determine how best to use their limited resources to help people with disabilities. Officially, during the Soviet era, people with disabilities did not exist so there was no need to help provide them with anything. After the fall, suddenly they existed and had needs. We helped get things going.

We're now working with an international alliance, called IMPACT, to help create services for people with disabilities in other places. This work is truly inspiring! It is great missional work. We partner with local non-governmental organizations to find ways to serve people with disabilities. This work is all donor supported and we provide training, support and expertise, but set a time frame during which we help the local organization become financially independent from us.

Around 2002, we met up with Cristian Ispas, who runs a group named Motivation Romania in Romania. Their mission was to help train young adults who had become quadriplegics or paraplegics to become as independent as possible. Part of their work included creating customized wheelchairs for people. At first we worked to get customized wheelchairs for children with disabilities who were living in institutions. Then the project grew to where we worked with them to take children from the institutions and help them live whole lives.

Imagine in your mind what you think an eastern European communist-built institution for children might look like. Crib after crib of unattended children with little clothing, no interaction and no one who cares. Together, Mosaic and Motivation Romania took more than 30 children from that institution and helped them find new lives where people cared. Many of those children are now moving into young adulthood and do things that, years ago, no one would have dreamed possible.

I could tell you story after story about the children. We've come to know many of them by first name, even if we've never met them! They are people like Georgiana who is now a young teenager. She was abandoned by her family after an accident when she was 3 left her unable to do anything on her own. Luckily she spent only two years in the institution before Motivation Romania gave her a home. She had received no therapy and didn't even have a wheelchair that fit her in the institution. That's all changed now and she has people who won't abandon her just because she cannot take care of herself. There is another piece of the GLOBAL IMPACT of Bethphage and Mosaic.

We're also involved in an exciting program today with the Northern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania. Here, again, we're not just working to help provide services for children where nothing is available, but we're working to change a culture that has considered disabilities to be a curse from God upon a family. We've created small educational centers and trained women to be para-educators. So welcome are our services that we now serve more than twice the number of children we originally hoped to.

I could go on about the really great other things we're doing there to help not just children with

disabilities, but their families move ahead. We've created a micro-lending program that has helped people start their own little business, cooperatives that help people market and sell goods they produce, a health-care program that has virtually stopped the children we serve from dying untimely deaths because of preventable illnesses. This is another piece of the GLOBAL IMPACT of Bethphage and Mosaic.

Pastor Dahl lived a far-too-short life, dying at age 34, only four years after the founding of Bethphage Mission. The fact that the mission survived and thrived is a testament to the support and prayers of the Augustana Synod. Bethphage has had a global impact because the Augustana Synod had always been a socially minded, globally thinking church body. In his short life, Pastor Dahl had great dreams about what Bethphage would become. I do not believe he would have imagined the societal, technological and cultural changes that we know that have made his dream take a different form than he could envision. But he dreamed big.

It would not surprise him to know that Bethphage has made an impact beyond Nebraska, beyond the United States, beyond the Church itself. But we are called to be leaven in the loaf, to impact the world and share Christ's love manifest as care for one another.

I've been talking about the GLOBAL IMPACT of Bethphage, but we're going beyond that as well. Pastor Dahl's great-grandson and namesake, Kjell Lindgren, is an astronaut with NASA. He attended our Centennial Festival in Axtell last summer and recently asked for a Bethphage memento he could take into space when he goes to the international space station in 2015. We will happily oblige and are sending a small part of Bethphage history with the Bible verse Pastor Dahl loved: "Remember them that are in chains" (Hebrews 13:3). Global impact and beyond!

As part of our preparations for our Centennial, we created and shared a video titled "Perfect Day." It is a nice overview of what's happening today at Mosaic. I want to share it with you. It shares how that small start has changed lives. (Video available on Mosaic's website at www.mosaicinfo.org).

Again, I am grateful for the opportunity to share with you this morning. Bethphage, now Mosaic, was born of the Augustana Synod. It has taken a path that only God could know. Moving forward in faith, we know that God will continue to guide this ministry. We are just beginning our second century of service and I am emboldened by a line from the biblical book of the Prophet Jeremiah. It is from chapter 29, verse 11: "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"

May we all trust in those words!

Presentations from Festival at Midland

Immanuel and Lutheran Family Services

Ruth A Henrichs

President and CEO, Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska

Isn't it marvelous how the mission and ministry of Immanuel Hospital and the Immanuel Deaconess Institute live on today in Omaha and beyond! Thank you, Immanuel, for continuing to breathe life and "hope for the future" into the original mission of Pastor Fogelstrom and the deaconesses!

I begin my remarks by returning once again to the original mission set forth by Pastor A.E. Fogelstrom in October, 1887, when he said:

[Our mission shall be] the relief of the sick and suffering, the care and education of orphans and neglected children, the support of widows and aged persons, without reference to creed, color or nationality, and the establishment of hospitals, homes and other institutions for such works of mercy.

I hope you noted that Pastor Fogelstrom intentionally named as part of the original mission of Immanuel: "the care and education of orphans and neglected children." Today I stand here before you to thank you and to assure you that his original mission to care for our children is alive and well!" Thank you!

On any given day, Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska (LFS) has over 2,000 open client cases of children under the age of 18! Statewide during 2013, LFS served 4,736 children and their families within our core competency of Children Services! I doubt that the Deaconesses and Pastor Fogelstrom ever imagined that what they began way back in 1887 would have that kind of "footprint" and impact today! You should feel good about your legacy and the legacy of Pastor Fogelstrom and the Augustana Synod!

So let's take a quick minute to trace that rich history which led directly to the work LFS does today.

From Pastor Fogelstrom's diary comes this direct quotation:

We had not thought about establishing a children's home. But in January 1887 a man was killed by a train accident in South Omaha. He left a widow with four small children, the oldest of the children was six years. In June of 1887 the widowed mother became very ill. I prayed with the mother and promised that I would see to the care of her four young children when she died. The mother died in August. I contacted their uncle in Marshalltown, Iowa and asked if relatives could care for the children. The answer was that he was the only relative and was too poor to take the children. I dared not withdraw. I believed this was a sign from God that I should start a home for orphaned children. One of our

Sunday School teachers, Miss Fredina Peterson, became the first housemother for the children in the church basement, our first children's home.

Several years later (in 1901), a home for orphans was erected on the campus of Immanuel Deaconess Institute in Omaha. Children who were the victims of broken homes, illegitimacies, family illness, and neglect or death were brought to the Immanuel Children's Home to be cared for by the Deaconesses.

In 1934 the Immanuel Children's Home staff decided that there was just no substitute for a more structured home atmosphere for the children so they launched a foster parent program, requiring high standards of Christian care in these homes before a child would be placed.

In 1958 the Immanuel Children's Home closed, ending nearly 60 years of institutional orphanage care to homeless children. Immanuel Social Service was then created to continue the work in foster care and adoption and to expand casework to include care for unmarried mothers and their children, as well as additional work with disturbed or disoriented children. In 1971, Immanuel Social Service merged with Lutheran Family Service (the LCMS organization) to form Lutheran Family and Social Services of Nebraska.

Which brings us to today! For 122 years Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska has been building and strengthening individual, family, and community life across Nebraska. What began as two orphanages, one by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in Fremont in 1892...and one by Pastor Fogelstrom and the Deaconesses in Omaha in 1887...together they have become LFS, a statewide, community based, multi-service organization dedicated to bold and courageous human care ministry.

In the mid-1980s LFS expanded services to include outpatient mental health and substance abuse treatment, becoming today one of the largest behavioral health providers in Nebraska! LFS also responded to the devastating farm crisis during the 1980s, putting a pastor "on the road," counseling pastors and farmers caught up in the pain and trauma of that crisis. For some rural pastors they truly led "a house divided." On one side of the congregation would sit the family who was forced to sell their farm and on the other side of the congregation sat the family who had purchased their farm for "pennies on the dollar." LFS provided care to those pastors and to

the farmers. LFS was there to minister to the family and the community when a farmer committed suicide and when a family broke apart due to the stress of the farm crisis.

Recall with me once again the words of the original mission statement written by Pastor Fogelstrom: He said they would “care for the sick and suffering, orphans and neglected children, widows and aged persons, without reference to creed, color or nationality...”

Continuing to live out that original mission in the 1990s, Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska began resettling refugees and today, LFS has the largest resettlement program in Nebraska, resettling 603 refugees in 2013. Most refugees are not Lutheran, they are not Caucasian, and they are most definitely not Swedes or Germans or Norwegians! They are Sudanese, Burmese, Iraqi and Karen! Imagine the joy they feel when stepping off the plane in Omaha or Lincoln, safe from rape and torture, famine and filth, after living 14–20 years in a refugee camp! LFS does this work “without reference to creed, color or nationality”...just as Pastor Fogelstrom said to do!

Also in the decade of the 1990s LFS began providing immigration legal services...another bold decision, but one that an immigrant church understood!

It was also during the 1990s that LFS quietly, but courageously, began serving men who had committed incest or other forms of sexual abuse with children. Children, God’s precious gifts, who were and are too little to understand the reasons for such atrocities! LFS began these services with courage, knowing it was the right thing to do and also knowing that not all Lutherans would understand...just as Pastor Fogelstrom knew when he began the children’s home. He knew not everyone agreed with him! But he—and we—did it anyway, and today, the LFS program for children who have been sexually abused is called R-SAFE. It is a nationally recognized program that serves over 300 children a year! LFS did not run from the problem. We did not wait until the tragedy at Penn State a few years ago when the coach allegedly engaged in sexual misconduct with young athletes. Just like Pastor Fogelstrom, LFS stepped out to respond, trusting in God’s support and guidance, remembering the words of the Prophet Isaiah when he said: “learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.”

At LFS we are deeply committed to justice and dignity for all of God’s children...the sexually abused and their abuser; the poor and the rich; the homeless refugee and the homeless veteran; the pregnant teenager and the chronically mentally ill. It is our steadfast belief that “all people are created in the image of God” and we act on that belief with courage and faith! The Rev. Dr. Bernice

King, Dr. Martin Luther King’s daughter, wrote a few years ago: “Christians must be willing to listen to God, then step out of their comfort zones to accomplish what God intends.”

In January, 1889, when Pastor Fogelstrom completed the hospital organization and incorporated it in the State of Nebraska, he omitted the name “Lutheran” and said that by doing this he and the deaconesses “were inviting all evangelicals to have a part in this work of Christian welfare.” In 2008 LFS changed its Bylaws to allow for non-Lutherans to be elected to the Board of Directors, once again following in the footsteps of Pastor Fogelstrom.

Over the past 10 years LFS has intentionally focused on the development of prevention and early intervention services through three Centers for Healthy Families, one of which is located only blocks from the original Immanuel campus in North Omaha! Research validates that positive change is most sustainable when education and intervention occur early in the lives of children and families who struggle. We know, for example, that 85% of a child’s brain is developed by the time a child is 3 years old. We cannot afford to wait until something terrible happens to our children...we must do this parenting work NOW.

Different but the same. Children. Safety. Some abused. Some neglected. Young moms who were born out of wedlock 16 years ago now having children. The LFS Centers for Healthy Families respond to the needs of young children and families in different ways than Pastor Fogelstrom, but with the same purpose and call from Christ in Matthew 25 to “care for the least of these...the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the prisoner, the naked, the sick and the lonely.”

In 2014 Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska has 29 offices across Nebraska, 350 staff and an impact that touches the lives of over 35,000 people each year! This year we will serve about 150 children in foster care. We have a vision of safety, hope and well-being for all people. LFS is now embarking on a plan to create a Campus for Healthy Families in downtown Omaha. Our work is not done. Our mission is not yet complete.

Each year our Board of Directors welcomes all new members of the Board by participating in a Litany of Commitment where we say together...”May those who come behind us find us faithful.” I don’t know if Pastor Fogelstrom ever said those exact words, but I am sure he would be proud of the legacy that he began in 1887! I hope you are proud too! To God Be the Glory! Amen!

The mission of Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska is “to express God’s love for all people by providing quality human care services that build and strengthen individual, family and community life.”

Howard Hanson: Luther Alumnus, Musician, Composer, Educator, and Leader

Larry E. Erickson

Howard Hanson is one of the most famous alumni of Luther Academy and Junior College (1-10). He was born on October 28, 1896, in Wahoo, Nebraska, the son of Hans and Hilma Hanson; he grew up about ½ mile from Luther. Howard was interested in the piano, and his mother began to teach him to play at about the time he entered kindergarten. At age 7, he began to take piano lessons at Luther. At age 9, he learned to play the cello and played in a string quartet (1, 4). At Luther Howard studied piano, violin, cello, harmony, and counterpoint. He sang in the choir of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Wahoo.

Albin O. Peterson, who came to Luther from the conservatory of music in St. Peter, Minnesota, was one of his music teachers who helped him become familiar with the music of Bach, Handel, and Grieg. Albin Peterson was the organist at Bethlehem Lutheran Church. He also directed a performance of Handel's *Messiah* at Luther (8).

At age 13, Howard Hanson was recognized and established as a musician and learned to conduct and compose while studying music at Luther and participating in music activities at Wahoo High School. Howard received a diploma in music from Luther in 1912; in 1913 he was valedictorian of his class at Wahoo High School. By the time he had completed his studies at Luther, he knew he wanted to continue as a musician and composer (1, 4).

Howard continued his music education with Sidney Silber at the University of Nebraska School of Music in Lincoln (1, 5, 9). He enrolled in special courses on weekends while he was in his final year at Wahoo High School. During his junior and senior years at the high school, he conducted the orchestra and composed music that the orchestra played. In the summer of 1913, Hanson joined the Redpath Chautauqua and performed in Minnesota and North Dakota (1).

Howard enrolled at the Institute of Music Art in New York (now the famed Juillard School) and studied composition with Percy Goetschius, a composer and music theorist, in 1913 and 1914 (3, 5, 10).

Howard received a teaching fellowship at Northwestern University where he taught and also studied composition with Peter Christian Lutkin and Arne Oldberg during 1914-1916. At age 19, Howard was graduated with a Bachelor's degree, and he accepted employment to teach music at the College of the Pacific in San Jose, California (3, 5, 6, 10).

Howard taught music theory, composed *California Forest Play* and *Before the Dawn*, and conducted his *Symphonic Rhapsody* with both the San Francisco and Los Angeles Philharmonic. At age 22 he became Dean of the

Conservatory of Fine Arts at the College of the Pacific (1, 3, 4, 5, 10).

In 1921, Howard Hanson was the first American to receive the Prix de Rome, which enabled him to travel to Rome in 1922 and further develop his expertise as a composer, studying with Ottorino Respighi, Leo Sowerby, and Felix Lamond. He completed his first symphony, *Nordic*, and the premiere performance was well received (1, 3, 4, 6, 10).

In 1924 Hanson returned to the U.S. to lead the New York Symphony Orchestra in his *North and West*, and to conduct the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra in the American premiere of his *Nordic Symphony*. He returned to Wahoo for a performance of some of his music at Luther. Upon the invitation of Rochester University President Rush Rhees and George Eastman, Hanson became the second director of the recently established Eastman School of Music, taking office in September 1924, shortly before his 28th birthday (1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10).

In his first year as director, Hanson attended the first meeting of the National Association of Schools of Music, where he was selected to chair the commission on curriculum. From 1924-1933, he provided leadership in developing standards for professional degrees in music. The National Association of Schools of Music became the accrediting agency of music educational programs in the U.S. Hanson was a strong advocate for musicians earning a bachelor's degree rather than a certificate (6). He expressed his educational vision to students and others as follows:

We are serving a great and noble art. We as men and women should be worthy of the art we serve. My hope for each of you is that you will be worthy apostles of an art whose beauty passes understanding, whose blessings pour forth on a wave of sound to a weary, heartsick, beauty-starved world. My hope is that you will be strong yet compassionate, magnificently gifted yet filled with a spirit of humility, technically skilled but emotionally warm and understanding, men and women born to serve through your art a world which greatly needs your gifts; men and women filled with the spirit of revelation which teaches you that all that you have, your talents, your vitality, your youth, your enthusiasm, are gifts from the Almighty for which you are the steward, the custodian (6).

On another occasion Hanson said

I cannot close my talk to you without saying that it is my earnest prayer that your study at the Eastman School will develop not only your musical talents but that indescribable thing that we call your character. If at the end of your student life here you come out able musicians

but small men and women I shall not be happy. For life is all-encompassing, and music is but part of life. If you develop qualities of meanness, pettiness, jealousy, envy, conceit, selfishness, I shall consider your education a failure regardless of your musical accomplishments. If on the other hand, you develop a philosophy of living which includes the divine qualities of love, sympathy, self-sacrifice, humility, and unselfishness, I shall consider that you have wrought well and that the Lord has crowned our labors with success (6).

On May 1, 1925, the first American Composers' Concert was held with Howard Hanson conducting the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra. The two-fold purpose was to give American Composers an opportunity to listen to professionally competent performances of their creations and to receive responses from the audience and music critics. (6).

While he was director, Howard Hanson composed his Symphony No. 3 in 1937 and 1938 in commemoration of the 300th anniversary of the first Swedish pioneer settlement in the U.S. It was commissioned by the Swedish Tercentenary Committee. Hanson was honored shortly after with fellow status in the Royal Academy of Music in Sweden (1, 2).

Hanson received a Pulitzer Prize for his *Symphony No. 4*. His National radio broadcasts in the 1930s and 1940s helped to create a large audience for contemporary works of American composers. (1, 4).

Hanson composed *Dies Natalis* for the Nebraska Centennial in November 1967 in Omaha. He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Arts by Midland Lutheran College at about the same time (1).

During the 40 years from 1924-1964, with Howard Hanson as director, the Eastman School of Music became an internationally acclaimed institution, where students could receive a well-rounded education while concentrating on their professional studies (6).

Howard Hanson was awarded about 34 honorary doctorates, the Great Swedish Heritage Award, and others. He is one of the most famous American composers, musicians, and music educators from 1925 to 1960. His early start at Luther at age 7 allowed him to be a professor at age 19, a dean at age 22, and director of the Eastman School of Music at age 27.

A Howard Hanson fund has been established at Midland University to encourage and support music education in the Luther College of Liberal Arts. His boyhood home at 1163 Linden, in Wahoo, is now the Howard Hanson Museum.

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Augustana Heritage Association Gathering

Lois Carlson

Bearing the names of their immigrant ancestors--Ahlgren, Bjorkquist, Friedlund, Lofdahl, Nordstrom along with generous portions of the Anderson, Johnson, Olson, Swanson genre—they flocked to Midland University in Fremont, Nebraska, for the 8th biennial Gathering of the Augustana Heritage Association (AHA). The two-day event held June 13-15 drew nearly 300 attendees from 24 states and 2 Canadian provinces.

Most Lutherans over the age of 60 have some recollection of the old Augustana Synod, especially here in Lindsborg where Bethany College, Bethany Home,

Bethany Church, Messiah Church all owe their existence to it. Founded in 1860 as the Augustana Synod, it soon came to be known as the Augustana Lutheran Church and consisted almost entirely of Swedish immigrants and their descendants. One hundred and two years later, in 1962, it ceased to exist after a merger with 3 other Lutheran church bodies, becoming the Lutheran Church in America (LCA). In 1988 the LCA merged with the American Lutheran Church and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches to form the Evangelical Church in America, known as the ELCA. Hymnals in the

pew racks have changed accordingly from black to red to green and now cranberry.

Through all the mergers and changes, individuals and congregations with roots in the old Augustana Lutheran Church have continued to cherish their unique heritage which has left an astounding legacy of social service and educational institutions throughout the United States in addition to a remarkable missionary enterprise in China, India and Tanganyika (Tanzania since 1964). The Augustana Heritage Association was formed in 2000 on the campus of Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois, following a growing interest in “defining, promoting and perpetuating” this heritage and legacy. With a 14-member Board of Directors and a membership body of several hundred, AHA has fulfilled this purpose through biennial Gatherings and a semi-annual newsletter. They have published two books containing presentations or lectures delivered at the Gatherings in addition to sponsoring the writing and publication of *The Augustana Story: Shaping Lutheran Identity in America* by Marla Erling and Mark Granquist. Most recently they re-published *Prairie Grass Dividing* in which James Iverne Dowie chronicles the early Swedish settlements in Kansas and Nebraska, including the establishment of higher institutions of learning, an invaluable document.

Bethany College hosted the Gatherings in 2002 and 2008. In 2004 and 2012 they were held at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, and at Augustana College in Rock Island in both 2000 and 2010. A pre-AHA event took place in Chautauqua, New York, in 1998 which hosted another Gathering in 2006. Last summer AHA sponsored a trip to Sweden.

Although the 2012 Gathering at Gustavus Adolphus was intended to be the last, Midland University and the Nebraska Synod urged the Association to gather once more to celebrate the five Augustana-founded agencies and institutions in Nebraska: Luther Junior College and Academy, Bethphage Mission, the Immanuel Deaconess Institute, Immanuel Hospital and Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska. The Association voted at this Gathering to suspend operations as of December 31, 2016 after a “valedictory” event near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in June 2016.

Midland University was founded in 1883 in Atchison, Kansas, by the Evangelical Lutheran Church and was moved to Fremont, Nebraska, (20 miles from Omaha) in 1919. When Luther College in nearby Wahoo closed in 1962 it was absorbed by Midland, which was then renamed Midland Lutheran College. In 2010 Midland dropped its Lutheran designation and became Midland University. With a current enrollment of 1200 students, Midland is Nebraska’s fastest growing college.

It has recently established a Luther College School of Liberal Arts in honor of Luther College’s legacy.

Each AHA Gathering has had a slightly different flavor and focus, depending on the location and planning committee. One constant has been the singing of the old familiar hymns from the revered “Black Hymnal” along with worship services featuring the old Augustana liturgy. Old Swedes never lose their touch for robust singing in full four-part harmony.

The agenda for the Midland Gathering was excellent and compact. General sessions included presentations by Mosaic (formerly Bethphage Mission), Lutheran Family Services, Immanuel and a panel of distinguished Luther College alumni. Swedish Ambassador to the United States, Björn Lyrvall, who spent several hours at the Gathering, addressed the assembly. Preaching at the Sunday worship service was Nebraska Synod Bishop Brian Maas, very likely the ELCA’s best preacher.

The Gathering provided a smorgasbord of 14 Interest Groups from which participants could choose two. Of special relevance for Lindsborg community members was a session titled “Dedicated to Young People: the Life and Ministry of Dr. L. Dale Lund.” The presentation was made by eldest son Phillip with several members of the family in attendance. Dr. Lund, who died in July 2012 at the age of 93, was only 39 years old when he became president of Bethany College in 1958, serving until 1965.

The AHA Gathering on the Midland campus may forever be remembered for the musical entertainment provided. The Pathfinder Chorus, consisting of 100-plus men of all ages and recognized as the “tenth best” barbershop chorus in the world, captivated the audience with their stylistic rendering of complex harmonies and their choreographed moves.

It got even better when the Ringmasters, a quartet of under-30 men from Sweden, took the stage. Having sung together for 9 years they are now the uncontested world champions of barbershop. Their performance dispelled any doubt to that claim. It was exhilarating.

For several years the AHA Gathering has featured the most recent winner of the Jenny Lind Scholarship competition. This year it was Christina Nilsson whose magnificent operatic voice delighted her audience, even at the end of a long, tiring day. Her accompanist, Thomas Ruding, is a very fine musician in his own right.

Those of us who have made a habit of attending the AHA Gatherings will miss the fun of reconnecting and rediscovery and the opportunity for learning and inspiration. Remarkably, when the vote was called for, only one lone soul voted against the discontinuation of AHA. Clearly its purpose has been accomplished and those old Lutheran Swedes are ready to let go.

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Books, Journals, CDs and DVDs on sale

The books, CDs and DVDs listed below may be ordered from the Augustana Heritage Association. All prices posted include postage and handling. (See details below)

Books

The Augustana Story: Shaping Lutheran Identity in North America
By Maria Erling and Mark Granquist (Augsburg Fortress, 2008).
\$10

The Heritage of Augustana: Essays on the Life and Legacy of the Augustana Lutheran Church
Edited by Hartland H. Gifford and Arland J. Hultgren. Essays from the 2000 AHA Gathering in Rock Island and the 2002 AHA Gathering in Lindsborg. (Kirk House Publishers, Minneapolis, 2004). \$10

Every Morning New
By Herbert W. Chilstrom and E. Corinne Chilstrom (Chicago: Augustana Heritage Association, 2012). Devotional entries for every day of the year. \$15.00.

Prairie Grass Dividing
By J. Iverne Dowie. The book relates the early history of Swedish settlements in Kansas and Nebraska and the founding of Luther College and Academy, Wahoo, Nebraska. A republication of the 1959 book. \$13.00.

Available from the publisher, Scarecrow Press—
The Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church in Print
By Virginia P. Follstad. An annotated list of serial publications issued by the Augustana Lutheran Church 1855-1962 with selected serial publications after 1962. (Scarecrow Press, Lanham, Maryland, 2007) \$45
www.scarecrowpress.com

Journals

Lutheran Quarterly—Augustana issue—Spring 2010
Edited by Maria Erling and Mark Granquist. \$5

Swedish-American Historical Quarterly—Augustana/Covenant issue—April-July 2012
From the Covenant Conference Proceedings, November 2010. \$5

CDs and DVDs

Nearer, Still Nearer (CD)
Hymns, Songs, and Liturgy from the 2004 AHA Gathering, St. Peter, Minnesota. (Chicago: Augustana Heritage Association, 2004) \$5

Augustana: Five Pastors Share Their Memories (DVD)
Recollections of Augustana by five pastors: Arvid E. Anderson, Herbert W. Chilstrom, Paul M. Cornell, Donald W. Sjöberg and Reuben T. Swanson. Recorded at an AHA board meeting in 2005. (Chicago: Augustana Heritage Association, 2007) \$5

Join in the Dancing: Swedish Folk Dance Mass (DVD)
Par Harling's Swedish Folk Dance Mass. Filmed at the 2006 AHA Gathering at Chautauqua, NY. (Chicago: Augustana Heritage Association, 2007) \$5

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