The Augustana Heritage Newsletter

Volume 9 Number 3 Autumn 2015



Nathan Söderblom: Called to Serve

by Norman A. Hjelm

n November 8, 1914, Professor Nathan Söderblom of Uppsala University was consecrated Archbishop of Uppsala and Primate of the Church of Sweden. His appointment to this position was improbable; he was the third of three candidates presented to the King of Sweden for appointment. At the time of his death, July 12, 1931, he was perhaps the world's most prominent Swede: a scholar of international importance, a pioneer of the modern ecumenical movement, a recipient of the 1930 Nobel Prize for Peace.

One of the events of the centenary year, 2014, was the publication of "Jag är bara Nathan Söderblom satt till tjänst." En biografi by Jonas

At the time of his death, July 12, 1931, he was perhaps the world's most prominent Swede.

Jonson, retired Bishop of Strängnäs of the Church of Sweden. The Swedish Academy has awarded Bishop Jonson's book the notable Axel Hirsch Prize for 2014, a prize awarded every two years to two

Swedish works of non-fiction – "a biography of high artistic and culture-historical value or a work of significant historical importance." With support from the Augustana Heritage Association an English translation will appear in the spring of 2016.

Bishop Jonson will be representing the Church of Sweden at the AHA Valedictory Gathering in June 2016: he will lecture on



Nathan Söderblom received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1930 in Oslo. He was the first clergyman to receive the Prize.

Söderblom and will also preach at the Sunday Eucharist. The book will be launched in connection with a reception at the Gathering and will be available for purchase.

Söderblom's career was remarkably rich. Academically, he won renown for his work as a historian of religion, symbolized by his Gifford Lectures at the University of Edinburgh in 1930, *The Living God: Basal Forms of*

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Hail and Farewell!

David Baker, Executive Director

ail and Farewell. What a concept! Not many of us, I suspect, were ever named the "valedictorian" of our high school or college graduating class. Yet all of us, come next June, will have the opportunity to be just that, namely, a "valedictorian" as we together bid "farewell" to one another and to what by then will be a 16-year-old Association.

Never in their wildest dreams, I would imagine, did the founders of the Augustana Heritage Association in 2000 ever imagine that, 16 years later, we would still be here. When we gathered in June 2000 in Centennial Hall of Augustana College. Rock Island, the anticipation was that the Association would continue for 10 years, meeting every other year for a biennial Gathering until the year 2010 when the Association would no longer be a viable entity because we would either all be dead and gone or too old or too decrepit to continue!

Now, however, here we are. The Valedictory Celebration scheduled for June 24-26 next year at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, will be the tenth time, counting the first gathering that was held in 1998 at Chautauqua in Upstate New York two years before the official organizing of the Association in 2000 and its subsequent Biennial Gatherings, that we will have come together as a group of people with shared Augustana roots to "recognize and celebrate" our common heritage and to "promote and perpetuate" our legacy as Augustana Lutherans.

The Valedictory Celebration in Lansdale next June 24-26 will be the tenth time that we will have come together as a group of people with shared Augustana roots to celebrate our common heritage.

At the Valedictory Celebration, we will:

- recognize and celebrate the founding of the Augustana Institute in Philadelphia;
- recognize and celebrate the contributions of former Augustana congregations in the East;
- "hail" some of the "giants" (and perhaps a few "midgets") in the Augustana Synod; and
- bid "farewell" to AHA and one another.

Two years ago in September, while the 2013 Augustana Heritage Association Sweden Tour Group was having lunch with Archbishop Anders Wejryd in Uppsala, I asked him who he would recommend to represent the Church of Sweden at our AHA Festival at Midland University in Fremont, Neb., the following June. He laughed as he recalled the invitation he himself had received several years before to be the Church of Sweden representative at what had been expected to be the final AHA Gathering, namely, the 2010 Gathering at Augustana College in Rock Island. Subsequently, following that Gathering, when I asked him for a recommendation for a representative at the Final "Traditional" AHA Gathering at Gustavus in 2012, he smiled, since he'd been present when the decision was made in 2010 to have that Gathering and he recommended Antje Jackelen, Bishop of the Diocese of Lund and now his successor as Archbishop.

As it turned out, the person who he recommended to me at the lunch in his home that day in September 2013, namely, the Secretary of the Church of Sweden, was unable to attend the Festival in Fremont, even though she said that she would like to, because it was the same day that Antje Jackelen was being installed as the new Archbishop. So, instead of having an official representative of the Church of Sweden at the Festival in Fremont, we invited the Swedish

Ambassador to the United States, the Honorable Bjorn Lyrvall, to attend and speak and he did so, to good acclaim.

Now, as we approach the AHA Valedictory Celebration next June in Lansdale, Penn., we have invited the Rev. Dr. Jonas Jonson, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Strängnäs and author of a new book on Nathan Söderblom, recently translated into English by Norm Hjelm, to represent the Church of Sweden, give a plenary presentation on Nathan Söderblom and preach at the closing worship service. Anders Wejryd must be smiling!

In this issue of the newsletter you will find information about the Valedictory Celebration. I invite you and encourage you, not just to read it and to be informed about it, but to begin, even now, to make plans to attend. You may even want to talk with friends and family members, children and grandchildren, about the event and see if it might be a "once in a lifetime opportunity" to visit that part of the country as a family or a group of friends, take in the Celebration, and couple it with a side trip or two to other places of interest in the East.

Hail and Farewell. Come be a "valedictorian;" it may be your only chance to be one. I hope to see you there!

If you have not already done so, please renew your membership in AHA!

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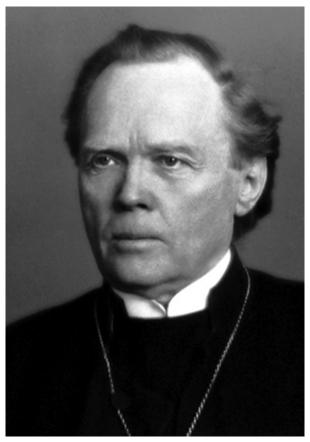
Personal Religion. Ecumenically, the landmark World Conference on Life and Work, held in Stockholm in 1925, was largely his conference. The Nobel Peace Prize was given chiefly for his leadership in the quest for peace in Europe both during and after the First World War.

Many in the Augustana Heritage Association, however, will be most interested in his three-month visit to the United States in 1923. This visit was his second journey to the United States. In 1890 he participated in a student conference led by Dwight Moody in Northfield, Mass., a conference which was decisive for his commitment to the church, its mission and its unity. In 1923 he, his wife Anna, and his son Jon Olof who served as his secretary (he had ten children) spent three months in the United States, mostly among people of the Augustana Synod. Jonson's description of those months is memorable: When he arrived in New York he was taken from the boat to a public welcome given by the mayor of the city. His address to a banquet of about 1500 persons at New York's Hotel Astoria, when he sang all nine verses of Ira Sankey's gospel song "There were Ninety and Nine," was heard across the country on one of the continent's first wireless transmissions (at least to Chicago). He addressed 10,000 people in Minneapolis. He spoke to Congress and had a private conversation with Calvin Coolidge in the White House.

Jonson's description of his encounter with Augustana, however, does not shy away from frequently noted tensions. Söderblom's theology was regarded by some at Augustana Seminary as far too liberal, his ecumenical commitments were seen by some as "unionistic," and his commitment to the office of the bishop was

If you have not already done so, please renew your membership in AHA!

See page 12.



Söderblom's three-month visit to the United States in 1923 was spent mostly among people of the Augustana Synod.

regarded by some as impossible for Lutherans. Yet for others his passionate desire to see the Augustana Synod as a child of the Church of Sweden and his ecumenical initiatives were most welcome and were regarded as a point of entry to a wider world.

Generations later, Nathan Söderblom remains one of the giants of modern church history. His questions remain crucial for Lutherans and for the entire ecumenical movement even if at some points they are now mainly of historical interest alone. His life was rather much that of an ecclesiastical rock star. Bishop Jonson's book – *Nathan Söderblom: Called to Serve* – will remind those who remember the Augustana Church of an important chapter in their history, a chapter which remains compelling and alive.

Jonas Jonson's new book, Nathan Söderblom: Called to Serve. Translated by Norman A. Hjelm. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, is forthcoming Spring 2016. ca. 450 pp.)

Augustana Memories

As we near the end of our time together in the Augustana Heritage Association I thought it would be interesting to invite staff and board members to share with us their motivation for being part of AHA. Here we are, more than five decades past the final year of the Augustana Synod in 1962. Why are we still thinking, talking and writing about Augustana? I invite you to read why some of our colleagues and friends think it worth their time, energy and money to be active in AHA. —George Meslow

Enriching the Church

hen the ELCA was formed, it was to be a "new" Lutheran Church. That was a good idea, since no one church body involved in the three-way merger (AELC, ALC, or LCA) was to absorb the other two. But of course traditions of all three have had a way of finding expression in the ELCA in one way or another. The ELCA could not, and should not, be thought of as entirely "new," as though the past did not exist.

I have been extremely happy that the AHA was founded, and for various reasons. One reason is that it has sought to retrieve and make known the most distinctive and valued elements of the Augustana tradition. I have hoped from time to time that persons in other Lutheran traditions would follow us in doing something similar. From early on, I suggested to various church historians and leaders of non-Augustana background that representatives of all eight of the churches that made up the National Lutheran Council at one time (Augustana, AELC, ALC, ELC, LFC, Suomi, UELC, and ULCA) ought to do what the Augustana people are doing, and do it soon, while there are still persons with institutional memories. For the sake of understanding one another in the ELCA, and in order to retrieve valuable insights and information, we need to know the past. The recent Youth Gathering in Detroit is a case in point. Someone recently remarked that having youth conventions is a brilliant idea, as though it had never been tried before. When I responded that the Augustana Church had youth conventions as far back as I can remember, the person was surprised.

What other delightful traditions exist yet in the living memories of all who have come into the ELCA and the Canadian sister church, the ELCIC? What other ways and ideas of being Lutheran in North America lie buried in the annals of our historical records?

One of the unexpected outcomes of the AHA is that the Augustana tradition has come to be known more widely. In 2010 the *Lutheran Quarterly* was devoted entirely to Augustana. That was followed in 2012 by two other journals. The *Swedish-American Quarterly Review* had several articles on Augustana, and *Currents in Theology and Mission*, published by the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, was all about Augustana. Of course other publications have made Augustana better known as well. But I mention the journals in particular, since they are read by Lutherans (and others) from virtually every Lutheran tradition in North America.

And one can look beyond North America. The AHA has been instrumental in fostering ties between the ELCA and the Church of Sweden. Not least to mention in this regard is the AHA-sponsored tour of historically significant sites in Sweden, led by David Baker and welcomed by church leaders in Sweden, and the visit of the Archbishop of Uppsala to the Gathering at Augustana College in 2010, plus visits of other bishops and leaders back and forth between the two churches.

All this is to say that, well beyond its founders' expectations, the AHA has served not only its own members. It has served the wider Lutheran family in North America and across the globe. It has certainly been worth the time and effort of some very dedicated persons. We can all be grateful.

-Arland J. Hultgren

MESTAND

"You're an adopted Swede now!"

fter having been home with four children until they reached school age, I began looking at returning to teaching. Teaching positions were tight in the early '90s and I wasn't having much success getting back into the work force. One day a seminary friend suggested that I apply for a secretary's position which she was quite sure was going to be opening at the seminary. I patiently waited for about two months, and then in September 1991, the call came that I could come to work in the Development Office of LSTC. Donovan Palmquist was the head of the department, and my assignment was to work with one of the gift officers working under Palmquist.

I soon learned that one of Palmquist's dreams was to establish an endowment for each of the schools representing six seminaries that came together in a merger resulting in the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. The location and new building were near the University of Chicago. Because Palmquist was from the Augustana Seminary and it was one of the larger seminaries of the merger, he began an effort to contact all former graduates of Augustana Seminary. Some area festivals were held to bring some of the Augustana friends together, in such places as Lindsborg, Kan., and St. Paul, Minn. By 1996, Palmquist published a first Augustana Heritage newsletter explaining

y first AHA gathering was the one held at Bethany College in Lindsberg, Kan. I have missed only one since that. Growing up in an Augustana parsonage it seemed quite obvious that the church traditions of Augustana shaped my life.

While we should not live in the past we should not forget it, either. The church, along with other Swedish traditions, was among the important things that made my grandparents feel at home in America. Every time I hear the Augustana liturgy I, too, feel like I have come home. Even though it is now time to move on, I will miss AHA and its gatherings.

the plans for the endowment and highlighting some of the great people who had represented the former Augustana Church. In 1998, Palmquist helped to organize a major gathering of Augustana graduates and friends at Chautauqua, N.Y. At that gathering, it was suggested that an organization should be formed and future gatherings be held. The result was that a non-profit organization was formed and the first major gathering of the new organization was held in Rock Island, Ill., in 2000. A board of directors was elected and by-laws for the Augustana Heritage Association were adopted.

It was one day after that official beginning in Rock Island that Palmquist came to me and explained that it made a whole lot of sense to have the main office of the new organization at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. Palmquist then asked if I would take on the responsibilities of this new organization. My first reaction was, "But Donovan, you want a full-blooded German to work for a Swedish organization?" Palmquist's reply was, "You're an adopted Swede now!"

Ever since that day in 2000 I have been the "adopted Swede" who has maintained the records, processed the memberships, paid the bills, helped facilitate the publishing of the newsletter, and provided the office work for the Augustana Heritage Association. It has been a pleasure to meet and work with so many wonderful people within the AHA. I have truly felt a part of the Augustana organization. As I learned about the history and heard of the struggles those first Swedish immigrants experienced, I felt the same struggles and experiences that my own family dealt with as they immigrated to America. It was the strong faith and trust in God that carried them all through and guided them to be the faithful people to lead God's church in America.

-Ruth Ann Deppe, office manager of AHA

The church was among the important things that made my grandparents feel at home in America.

My Swedish Roots

When you are young, who pays much attention to where your grandmother was born or much about the church you attend?

- Alma Johnson Stoll, my grandmother, had no accent and ran her own business. I knew she was born in Sweden, but many in my hometown were born in Sweden.
- Zion Lutheran Church in Mt. Jewett, Penn., was a place to meet friends; the chance during Sunday School to be chosen to pick one of the hymns you liked to sing from the Junior Hymnal.

Now Christmas — that was special.

- My grandmother's with all the special food and special dress she always had for me.
- The Children's Program Christmas evening which offered a time to share stories about gifts and a time to wear the special dress you were given for Christmas. It was such fun! Everyone received a mesh stocking filled with candy along with an orange.
- Once you were old enough, Christmas Eve midnight service with traditional hymns and singing Lyssna with the choir.

Growing up in the Augustana Church was what a large part of my community did. Augustana became meaningful to me after attending Wilcox District Bible Camp, New York Conference Events and the International Youth Gatherings. It was impressive to be part of these larger groups of young people.

The Swedish part became meaningful when I visited the relatives of my grandmother in Sweden after attending the LWF Meeting in Hannover, Germany, as an Augustana youth delegate. Visiting Sweden was a wonderful experience in a beautiful country. Part of the trip to Sweden included attending worship and experiencing the liturgy connection to Augustana. All this tied together my Augustana experience to its roots and mine to Sweden.

A wonderful opportunity to celebrate both my love of Augustana worship and hymns and also celebrate the Swedish part of my heritage.

Luther League and the opportunities through Luther League were what gave me a foundation in my faith journey. I realized this as I moved from an Augustana area into non-Augustana Lutheran areas. As mergers happened, I realized that those people I met from Augustana had a sense of church, stewardship and importance of worship that others we served with didn't in the same way.

AHA sounded like a wonderful opportunity to celebrate both my love of Augustana worship and hymns and also celebrate the Swedish part of my heritage. And AHA has been that.

AHA has helped me understand what influenced me and why I often think the way I do about the church and my faith. It has helped me enjoy the history, but also the way in which Augustana has influenced Lutherans in the USA today.

There are the friends you make. I did not attend an Augustana Institution, but have made friends over the years of AHA with folks who had some of the same experiences growing up in Augustana especially through attendance at the International Youth Gatherings of Augustana.

It is difficult to let go of the wonderful years of AHA. May God grant us ways in which we can continue to connect with our Augustana and Swedish roots!

—Ann Gardner Kohler

Committed to Preserving the Legacy

couple of years ago two long-time friends and I put together a weekend Luther League reunion in our home parish. In the mid 1950s we had come to know each other in the Luther League at First Lutheran Church, a modest Augustana congregation in downtown Palo Alto, Calif. We agreed that that youth group had influenced us immensely as we were growing up in what would become the Silicon Valley. Besides reconnecting with friends from long ago, we wanted to learn how others had been shaped by that little congregation and its Luther League. It took some sleuthing, but we were able to find addresses for dozens of people. Twenty-five people showed up that weekend, some traveling across the country to attend. Many others sent their regrets.

Although some who attended had not seen each other for 55 or 60 years, it took only minutes to renew friendships. Person after person recalled our faithful Luther League sponsors and pastor, Bible studies, fierce volleyball games, beach parties, singing, leadership schools, California Conference and interna-

Those experiences had molded their faith and vocation commitments for the rest of their lives.

tional youth conventions. And they were clear that those experiences had molded their faith and vocation commitments for the rest of their lives. The gratitude expressed was deep and heartfelt.

If Augustana had that impact through one little congregational outpost on the West Coast, I know it was replicated all across the country. Among other activities, the Augustana Heritage Association has taken on the happy task of reminding us of the life-changing youth ministry carried out by the Augustana Church. If AHA has inspired us to encourage upcoming generations to invest in work to and with youth, it will have served a good purpose.

-Hal Nilsson, President, AHA Board of Directors

Grateful for the Rich Legacy

s I reflect on why I am a member of AHA my first thoughts are of my father, E. H. Baker, a 1933 graduate of Augustana Seminary, ordained that same year on a call to Ham Lake and Fridley, Minn.

Growing up in Augustana parsonages in Minnesota and South Dakota, I learned the fundamentals of the Christian faith in the Swedish Lutheran tradition. And while I'm sure that I did not always appreciate the tradition as I grew up, yet in later years I came to cherish and appreciate it very much. Were it not for that I would not be where I am at today nor would I be the Executive Director of AHA.

My second thoughts are of the Augustana pastor, Evald Conrad, a 1932 graduate of Augustana Seminary ordained that same year. Evald later became the Director of the Lutheran Evan-

gelistic Movement, a ministry of the Augustana Synod that promoted "Preaching, Teaching, Reaching" missions throughout our church. He and I were walking home one Sunday afternoon while he was on a PTR Mission in Sioux Falls when he asked me, point blank, "Have you ever thought about becoming a pastor?" I had to admit I had not, but as the weeks and months went by after that I did start to think seriously. Before long I enrolled at Luther Junior College in Wahoo and then Augustana College in Rock Island as a pre-seminary student.

Other Augustana pastors, agencies and institutions also influenced me over the years and I remain indebted to them all. These first two people started me on a path for which I am grateful, especially grateful for the rich legacy that I inherited from them. Thanks be to God!

Reflections on AHA

y wife, Josephine Larson-Skogman, and I have deep roots in the Augustana heritage spanning from the prairies of Nebraska to the tree covered hills of Northern Michigan. Jo's great grandmother, Mary Larson, was widowed with an infant son and six other children to raise on their Nebraska homestead. The itinerant Augustana pastor who buried Mary's husband baptized the infant John. Like a mother hen with her chicks, Mary led her family across the Nebraska prairie to the sod church where they were nurtured on the Word of God and successfully reared to become responsible adults.

My great grandmother, Brita Skog, provided the leadership for the founding of Zion Lutheran Church in Metropolitan, Michigan in 1895. Determined that the immigrant community should be grounded in the Swedish Lutheran heritage, she set aside a bedroom in her spacious farm house for theological students and visiting pastors to sew the seeds leading to the formation of a congregation that still thrives today.

augustana Heritage Association connected me with people to share common experiences and memories as well as giving me opportunities to learn more about the heritage of the Augustana Lutheran Synod.

I knew of the Augustana spirit in Canada mostly through the pastoral care of dedicated pastors and seminary students. When I was ordained in my home congregation, President Oscar Benson presided. We seemed to take it for granted that pastors - event world missionaries - would be willing to come to our little church.

A French catholic priest in shock after his arrival in the cold of Northern Canada wrote "God must love these people a great deal to send me so far." I feel that love was in the Augustana I knew and in what I have come to learn through AHA.

—Don Sjoberg

With these roots, who would not be deeply committed to preserving the Augustana legacy? At the founding of the Augustana Heritage Association, Donavan Palmquist called me to speak at a gathering of folks rooted in the Superior Conference of the Augustana Synod. The rest is history!

Following Don's initial solicitation we have attended the majority of the AHA gatherings, I have served on the board of directors, been a presenter at gatherings and a contributor to the AHA newsletter. In that context we have renewed friendships, reunited with seminary classmates and professors, toured the college campuses where we went to school, reveled in the four part harmony of the old and favorite hymns, recalled the history of the synod and so much more.

Augustana Heritage Association has provided us the opportunity to recall the deep Christian faith in which we were nurtured, to reenergize for the Christian pilgrimage and to do so in the company of a vast number of "saints" in our shared journey. As the Augustana Heritage Association holds its last gathering we will remain forever grateful for the Christian heritage in which we walked, were nurtured and inspired to embrace the future with hope and assurance.

Indeed the theme song of our journey is reflected well in the refrain of a favorite hymn of Augustana:

Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see; All I have needed they hand hath provided; Great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me!'

If we had one wish and fervent prayer, it would be that our descendants will some day share in a rich, nurturing and inspiring legacy like the one we have experienced in the Augustana Lutheran heritage!

—Dale Skogman, board member

AHA has provided us the opportunity to recall the deep Christian faith in which we were nurtured.

DUBISHO

Augustana is in Our Blood

e are members of AHA because Augustana is in our blood and in our DNA and imbedded in our hearts since birth! Our parents and grandparents and uncles and aunts were Augustana folks, and from childhood it was a happy place to be. Byron was raised in Omaha, Neb., and Kathryn and her twin sister, Kathleen, were raised in Longmont, Colo. Byron's pastor was Reuben Swanson, and Kathryn's pastor was her Dad, Carl Segerhammar. The churches we belonged to were where we worshiped, were baptized and confirmed, and just as importantly — played with our friends. Both of our families were active in the Augustana Synod and for both of us "church" was in many ways the center of our lives! It widened our world. Byron went to Augustana College, Rock Island, and Kathryn went to Bethany College, Lindsborg. Byron graduated from Augustana Seminary, Rock Island, and was ordained at Synod in Moorhead, Minnesota.

His first and only parish was a new Augustana mission in suburban Kansas City, Mo. The congregation met in the basement of the parsonage and the Sunday School met in Byron's study, the living room, and one of our bedrooms. Sunday mornings were wild! We lived there for four years. Byron had dreamed of teaching at a Lutheran college and began that journey by moving to Connecticut as interim pastor for two small Augustana churches in Old Saybrook and Deep River, commuting into New Haven to get a Master of Sacred Theology (STM) degree at Yale Divinity School. Then we moved to Tempe, Arizona, where Byron served as Campus Pastor for Lutheran students and studied German to gain admission to a doctoral program.

The churches we belonged to were where we worshiped, were baptized and confirmed, and just as importantly — played with our friends.

We moved to New Jersey where Byron attended Princeton Theological Seminary, writing a dissertation on Dr. Conrad Bergendoff and the Swedish scholar, Nathan Söderblom. The thesis: that it is possible to be both ecumenical and true to one's own confession. Byron felt that the lives and ministries of these two Lutheran "greats" exemplified that thesis. We were fortunate to move to Sweden for eight months where Byron worked with a Swedish professor, Bengt Sundkler, at the University in Uppsala, and was able to study original documents of Soderblom's writings that confirmed his thesis.

Returning to Princeton, Byron finished and defended his dissertation, and graduated with a PhD.

After 11 years of teaching at Midland Lutheran College in 1979 he accepted a position in the religion department of California Lutheran College where he taught for the next 25 years and Kathryn directed the CLU Women's Programs. While at CLU Byron developed courses in Liberation Theology and Environmental Ethics, and during the January term took students to Europe and Central America.

It was an exciting life! We both retired and moved to Fort Collins, Colorado, to be close to our children and grandchildren. In retirement we have continued to travel overseas once a year (without students these days) and are constantly thankful for and amazed at the wonderful world we live in and the neat people we meet everywhere we go! What a gift the Creator gave us!

—Byron and Kathryn Swanson

Memories and Many Friends

hen my Norwegian-background parents moved to northern Illinois in the 1930s they found no Norwegian (ELC) Lutheran parish in Waukegan. However, they did find a welcome at the Augustana parish of Trinity, which became my home church from birth through my college and seminary years. Sunday Church School, choirs, Confirmation, Luther League, summer Bible camp in Lake Geneva, Wis., caravanning in 1960, volunteering for the summer of 1962 in Holden Village, and being a counselor at Luther Park Camp, Danbury, Wis. — the opportunities all followed each other as I studied and worked among fellow people of the Augustana Synod.

I learned of the mission work of our wider church, both in North America and abroad, especially in Tanzania. I grew accustomed to the typical clergy names of the Augustana tradition, such as Enquist, Peterson, Granquist and Blomquist at Trinity. I experienced the significant youth work emphasis of our church in Chicago in 1957, at leadership schools and district Luther League conferences. And I benefited from the multiple contacts with Pr. Wilton Bergstrand, year after year!

After attending college in upstate New York I returned to Illinois to LSTC at the Rock Island Campus, as part of the last class to graduate from "Zion Hill." I was ordained in my home parish of Trinity, Waukegan, after two years of post-graduate studies in Germany and at Yale. But I learned what parish ministry, pastoral ministry, teaching Christian faith, and the Church's social ministry can be and **is** from pastors of Augustana like Pr. Stanley Sandberg, Emanuel Lutheran, Hartford, Conn., my internship supervisor. I met the woman who has been my wife and love of my life for 48 years at Emanuel. She has taught me how to raise two "above average " children and has introduced me to many of her family members in Sweden - Lutheran, too! My Christian heritage has been entwined with Augustana my whole life, for which I am deeply grateful. I thank AHA for the memories and for the many, many friends and colleagues.

—George Meslow

I learned what parish ministry, pastoral ministry, teaching Christian faith, and the Church's social ministry can be and **is** from pastors of Augustana.



See page 12.

"Augustana: A Living Heritage!"

AHA Valedictory Celebration

Celebrate the years of the Augustana Heritage Association and of the Augustana Lutheran Church

June 24 - 26, 2016

Trinity Lutheran Church, Lansdale, Pennsylvania

Easy access from Interstate 476, train from Philadelphia Airport and Center City Philadelphia

Celebrate through song and liturgy.

- Participate in small group discussions and hear inspirational messages.
- Hear Emily Tepe formerly of the Royal Swedish Opera who also has her own Rock Band.
- Visit the American Swedish Historical Museum, the oldest Swedish-American museum in the United States on Saturday.
- Get to know more about Augustana in the East - New England and New York Conferences.

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The Spring newsletter will have more information, but mark your calendar now!

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AUGUSTANA HERITAGE ASSOCIATION



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Bishop Emeritus
Strängnäs, Sweden

THE REV. DR. MARIA ERLING
Professor of Church History
Gettysburg Theological Seminary

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Augustana and the Global Church

Norman A. Hjelm

N.B. Following is a section of the paper "Augustana and the Global Church," given at the Gathering of the Augustana Heritage Association, June 11, 2010 at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois. The paper was given by Norman A. Hjelm of Wynne-wood, Pennsylvania. Other sections of the paper dealt with the relation of American Lutherans, historically and in the present, to the Church of Sweden, its life and its tradition, and also with the role and contribution of the Augustana Church in the modern ecumenical movement.

E ven though I was involved in making up this title, I am not at all sure what I should have done. "Global Church" was surely not the way people in Augustana talked. "Foreign missions" or "international relief and cooperation" were terms far more common to our self-understanding. In a certain way this topic is, quite simply, anachronistic. Augustana as such ceased to be in 1962 and history has moved on. Indeed, a case might well be made that history has now surely passed us by...

Yet I recall that some years ago I had an exchange of letters with Reuben Swanson, the late president of this Augustana Heritage Association, in which I suggested that this Association served no helpful purpose if it existed merely as a forum for our nostalgia. We are, rather, formed to review, clarify, and understand our history and tradition both appreciatively and critically. We exist for the life of the church today, a church that is increasingly expressed globally and surely can be enriched by a critical appraisal of the Augustana heritage. What follows in this paper is but a segment of that heritage.

Global Tensions, Augustana, and World Lutheranism

E. Clifford Nelson in his extremely illuminating work of 1982, *The Rise of World Lutheranism: An American Perspective* has about as good a description as can be found of the attitude of both American and European Lutherans toward global connections at the beginning of the 20th century:

The idea of a world fellowship of Lutherans was hardly a burning issue among the denomination's leaders in America. A similar attitude prevailed among German and Scandinavian churchmen. The pressure of immediate problems left most Lutherans with little energy and less time to give thoughtful consideration to establishing a Lutheran world organization. In America, for example, parochial and sectional demands seemed to exhaust all available resources. The task of missions to the immigrants, the erection of church buildings, the founding of schools and institutions of mercy, the establishing of a Lutheran presence in a predominantly Anglo-American Protestant milieu – all these matters seemed to require immediate attention and large sums of money, of which there was never enough. Had it not been for the high degree of dedication and Christian commitment of both laity and clergy, the planting of Lutheranism in North America would no doubt have been an unimpressive and less-than fruitful enterprise. [And] although the European church circumstances differed from the American, the lassitude toward global Lutheranism was identical.

But then, Nelson became cautionary:

To assume, however, that Lutherans did virtually nothing to foster their international relationships prior to the distressing postwar circumstances that produced them to engage in united action would be an injustice to history.¹

It is not possible in this presentation thoroughly or even cursorily to elaborate on those international relations which marked American Lutheranism as early as the 18th century.

We know that "the father of American Lutheranism," Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (1711-87) – whose personal motto, *Ecclesia Plantanda*, "The Church must be planted," has provided us with the theme of this Gathering – was sent to the New World at the behest of the famous pietistic foundation at Halle, Germany, and he remained in close touch with that foundation throughout his remarkable ministry here. We know that Wilhelm Loehe (1808-72) was instrumental in enlisting young men for

German-language pastoral service in America. We know that two "practical" seminaries in Schleswig-Holstein, Kropp and Brecklum, provided the Lutheran General Council and General Synod with approximately 350 pastors over a span or four or five decades in the 19th century. (The Swedes should have done as well!) And there have been other fruitful contacts between American and European Lutherans – for example, in the areas of theological reflection, missionary work, and deaconess work

But we want to lay emphasis on the effects of *international tension* – two devastating World Wars – on Lutheran cooperation both within North America and between North America and the rest of the world. These two wars broke transatlantic inter-Lutheran relationships. At the conclusion of each war those relationships desperately needed rehabilitation.

In 1917 the National Lutheran Commission for Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare was formed to minister to American servicemen both in the United States and in Europe; Augustana participated fully in this work. Funds in the vicinity of \$1,500,000 were contributed by American Lutherans acting together in this effort. Interestingly, G. Everett Arden (1905-78) has commented: "What theological debate and doctrinal discussion failed to accomplish, catastrophe achieved, namely, galvanizing Lutherans in America into common action, and creating out of their divided ranks a common front."2 Taking Arden's words, some have spoken about the effects of both World Wars I and II on American Lutherans as "catastrophe producing cooperation."

The second event of importance bringing many Lutherans closer to one another and, again, to their sisters and brothers in Europe at the time of World War I was the formation in 1918 of the National Lutheran Council (NLC). Three particular issues forced the formation of this Council. The first was the matter of "linguistic injustice," particularly felt in churches of German background. A number of American governors and state legislatures took action to forbid the use of German and other European

These two wars broke transatlantic inter-Lutheran relationships. At the conclusion of each war those relationships desperately needed rehabilitation.

languages in public worship and a means of pleading the case for the use of such languages was needed. The second was the matter of developing a home mission strategy that would bring Lutheran church life to communities where defense industries were mushrooming. This was a particularly difficult problem since the Missouri Synod, which was affiliated with the Synodical Conference and not a part of the new Council, was prone to charge other Lutherans with "sinful unionism" since their ministry in these communities was open to all Lutherans, even those with whom there was no pulpit and altar fellowship. And the final issue giving birth to the National Lutheran Council was the need to provide aid to Europe's war-stricken persons and churches.

In this latter connection, the Council in 1919 established a "European Commission" of six persons, including Professor Sven Youngert (1861-1939) from the Augustana Church. This group was instructed to travel to Europe "to investigate and report the situation of each Lutheran group in the war-involved countries; they were to offer American assistance in solving the ecclesiastical problems of their brethren; and they were empowered to spend up to \$50,000."³ Again, Augustana was brought into strikingly new global situations and contexts, largely on the basis of human and church need. Yet it is difficult for us to assess the effects of this European Commission and its work. Once again, Clifford Nelson has shown us where American Lutherans stood at a particular point in history, the end of World War I: "As a matter of fact, nobody could foresee the nature of the problems to be confronted; the implications of American Lutheran involvement in postwar Europe were almost totally unpredictable. One member of the [National Lutheran Council] executive committee, Victor G.A. Tressler, recognized the ambiguities of this venture of faith. Said he, 'The question really is, whether or not American [Lutherans are] ready and able to [assume a role in] world leadership.' In the light of subsequent developments, this opinion proved to be valid. With the benefit of hindsight, about the only safe and unquestioned conclusion we can draw is that, by the NLC's appointment of a European Commission, Americans were taking the initial steps in reestablishing contacts with their overseas brethren, and that is all."4 Perhaps Dr. Arden's words about "catastrophe" and the work of the National Lutheran Commission for Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare apply here too. Human need forces human action, and global need brings about global action. Others have described this as "the calamity theory" - common calamities require common action.

Now the vastness of our topic, "Augustana and the Global Church," requires some decisions as to what we should here cover. At the end of World War I, Augustana and American Lutheranism – indeed American Lutheranism and global Lutheranism - was embarking on an institutional journey that would take them far. And while the story of that journey hardly provides the story line for a Broadway musical, it is fascinating, at least to old guys like me. And it is an important story: The founding of the Lutheran World Convention, Eisenach 1923, where Augustana's president G.A. Brandelle (1861-1936) played an important role, an event within the context of a shattered German economy which caused massive hunger among the people. The second such convention in Copenhagen in 1929 which was almost shattered by the insistence of German Lutherans that a resolution be passed protesting the inhumanity of the Treaty of Versailles that had been signed ten years earlier. The third meeting of the Lutheran World Convention in Paris in 1935 when the shadow of the church struggle in Germany fell over global Lutheranism. And, of course, the fourth meeting of the world group of Lutherans scheduled for 1940 in Philadelphia never took place because of World War II. War, it seemed, was destined to keep Lutherans forever apart from one another.

But during World War II, the leadership of

Human need forces human action, and global need brings about global action. Others have described this as "the calamity theory" – common calamities require common action.

American Lutheranism – through the American Section of the barely breathing Lutheran World Convention and the National Lutheran Council – neither slept nor despaired. In 1940 Lutheran World Action was begun, a program of aid to refugees and to orphaned missions, under the leadership of two of the ablest persons in American Lutheran history, Ralph H. Long (1882-1948) and Paul C. Empie (1909-79). Lutheran World Action was perhaps the most important and successful program of inter-church aid ever undertaken in American Lutheranism; by 1965 Lutheran World Action had gathered more than \$80,000,000 for its work.

And in 1944 the National Lutheran Council adopted a carefully worded statement that brought the Missouri Synod and the Council together to plan for postwar relief. In this effort, the relation of the Augustana Church to world Lutheranism was solidified forever. In early 1945, while war was still raging in Europe, three American Lutheran leaders were commissioned to take a six-week fact-finding journey to Europe: Ralph H. Long, then executive director of the National Lutheran Council, Lawrence B. Meyer, then executive of the Missouri Synod's Emergency Planning Council, and P.O. Bersell (1882-1967), then president of both the National Lutheran Council and the Augustana Lutheran Church. It was Dr. Bersell who gave us the most complete account of this journey. They left Washington, D.C. on February 28, 1945 in a U.S. army transport command airplane, stopping in Labrador and Iceland on the way to London. Bersell described the flight as "hazardous" – German V-1 and V-2 bombs were still falling on London and their later flight to Sweden, aboard a converted Boeing Flying Fortress, was in the dead of a moonless night over the North Sea and German-occupied Norway.

Bersell described the purpose of their trip in the following way:

First, [we were] to observe and evaluate conditions, to learn as much as possible of the state of the Lutheran churches and their present and postwar needs. The magnitude of this prime objective of our mission is quite evident when we remember that eighty-five percent of all Protestants on the continent of Europe are Lutherans, and that no church has suffered as much as ours.

Second, to contact as many Lutheran church leaders as possible in order to set in motion and implement a worldwide program of Lutheran action looking to the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the Lutheran church and its work in all lands.

Third, to contact other Christian leaders, especially the World Council of Churches' Reconstruction Committee in Geneva, for the purpose of coordinating and integrating this work of the Lutheran Church with the work of other churches that are also ready to launch out on great reconstructive and eleemosynary programs, involving the expenditure of millions of dollars. It is obvious that by the very ecumenical character of this worldwide church relief work the Lutheran Church will be the greatest beneficiary. Proportionately the free Lutheran churches should also be the greatest contributors.

Fourth, to contact the United States Army and Navy chaplains, their chiefs and staffs, for the purpose of extending as widely as possible our American Lutheran spiritual ministry to our servicemen abroad...

Fifth, to contact those in charge of the prisoners of war work on the continent and in England, namely, the civilian organizations Y.M.C.A. and World Council of Churches, and the military command, for the purpose of learning how our American Lutheran Commission for Prisoners of War can best cooperate in this service wherein we have already given such a large contribution. ⁵

After nine days of meetings in Great Britain, the three Americans flew, as already mentioned, over Norway to Sweden. In Stockholm they had intense discussions regarding these same issues with King Gustav V, Count Folke Bernadotte, and leaders of the Nordic churches.

Subsequent meetings were held in Sigtuna, Sweden, March 17, 1945, and Geneva, April 2, 1945. The Sigtuna meeting laid the groundwork for the future of world Lutheranism as it would take shape in the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). Bersell maintained that the LWF was "conceived" in Sigtuna in 1945 and "born" in Lund in 1947. During these discussions extremely difficult issues were faced. In addition to the matter of leadership and coordination of the post-war relief work that was to be carried on by the Lutherans from America and Sweden, two countries untouched by the ravages of the war, the role of Bishop August Maraharens (1875-1950) of Hannover, Germany in the future of world Lutheranism was faced. Maraharens was president of the Lutheran World Convention, but the Americans wanted his resignation since, as Bersell put it, he had "blessed" Hitler's armies in their "push to the east." (A forthcoming major study of the role of the Lutheran World Federation during the cold war by Dr. Risto Lehtonen of Finland will shed new light on this judgment. Lehtonen is of the view that the Americans somewhat overstated the case against the German bishop.)6 Only with reluctance did the Swedes, led by Archbishop Erling Eidem (1880-1972), agree to the American insistence.7

Now the story of the establishment of the Lutheran World Federation at Lund in 1947 cannot be fully told here. Jens Holger Schjørring of Aarhus University in Denmark has described the LWF as being founded on "four pillars": rescue for the needy, common initiatives in mission, joint efforts in theology, and a common response to the ecumenical challenge. The Augustana Church lived through the first fifteen years of the LWF, crucial post-World War II years.

And perhaps Augustana's contribution in those early years of the Federation was greatest in the person of Carl Lund-Quist (1908-65), a graduate of Bethany College and Augustana Theological Seminary who was ordained into It is, in the providence of God, a story of the recognition, albeit slow at times and lacking in foresight, of a not-yet-finished search for communion in an ever more globalized yet continuously fragmented world.

> the ministerium of the Augustana Church in 1936. Lund-Quist served as general secretary of the LWF from 1951 to 1960. Those were years when the East-West divide, the Cold War, was at its sharpest. It was under Lund-Quist's leadership that the third Assembly of the LWF was held in Minneapolis in 1957. While Lund-Quist's attempts to bring delegates to Minneapolis from East Germany and Hungary did not bear great fruit, he did secure permission for Bishop Lajos Ordass (1901-78) of the Lutheran Church in Hungary to come to Minneapolis where he preached at the opening service of the Assembly. Ordass had been imprisoned by the Communists for his outspoken leadership of the church and was to be placed under house arrest again. We know that Carl Lund-Quist on at least one occasion traveled into Communist Hungary wearing two suits, one of which he was able to give to Bishop Ordass. Lund-Quist's

health failed largely because he bore within himself the sufferings of the church in a time of world division and tension. Augustana made no greater contribution to the global church than Carl Elof Lund-Quist.

In Conclusion

Many of our forebearers in the Augustana Lutheran Church would be surprised if they heard the contours of a story of Augustana and "the global church" - surprised in disappointment, surprised in gratitude. The story is a human story, marked by insight and stubbornness, by impossible dreams and low expectations. But it is also, in the providence of God, a story of the recognition, albeit slow at times and lacking in foresight, of a not-yet-finished search for communion in an ever more globalized yet continuously fragmented world. Church and unity; mission and world. I hope that running through the catalogue of names and events that this story hurls at you there runs a thread of what God has done in the world through the history of the Augustana Lutheran Church. It is an imperfect history that now lives on in an equally imperfect ecclesial community, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Endnotes

- 1. E. Clifford Nelson, The Rise of World Lutheranism: An American Perspective (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982) 79.
- 2. G. Everett Arden, "Enroute to Unity" in Herbert T. Neve and Banjamin A. Johnson, eds., *The Maturing of American Lutheranism* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1968) 229. Quoted in Maria Erling and Mark Granquist, *The Augustana Story* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2008) 318.
- 3. Nelson, *op cit*, 71.
- 4. Ibid., 88-9.
- 5. P.O. Bersell in *The Lutheran Standard*, May 19, 1945, 14. Quoted in Nelson, op. cit., 353-4.
- 6. To be published by the William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. of Grand Rapids, MI.

- 7. This whole story is told in considerable detail in E. Clifford Nelson, op. cit. pp. 350-404, "The Rebirth and Reconstruction of World Lutheranism, 1944-47." cf. also Jens Holger Schjørring, "The Lutheran Church in the World Today: The Founding of the LWF" in Jens Holger Schjørring, Prasanna Kumari, and Norman A. Hjelm, eds., From Federation to Communion: The History of the Lutheran World Federation (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997) 3-40.
- 8. Schjørring, op. cit.
- 9. On Lund-Quist, cf. Schjørring, Kumari, Hjelm, op. cit., passim and also Emmet E. Eklund and Marion Lorimer Eklund, *He Touched the Whole World: The Story of Carl E. Lund-Quist* (Lindsborg, KS: Bethany College Press, 1990 and 1992). On Ordass, cf. László Terray, *He Could Not Do Otherwise: Bishop Lajos Ordass, 1901-1978*. trans. Eric W. Gritsch (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997).

Auggie Notes

Louis Theodore Almén

Louis Theodore Almén died on June 3, 2014, at age 88. Louis and Donovan Palmquist developed the initial concept of the Augustana Heritage Association over a breakfast table in Phelps, Wis., in 1998. Louis reveled in every Association meeting and friendship. It was one of his joys throughout the final years of his life.

Louis was born in Seattle, Wash., on December 20, 1925. He graduated from Gustavus Adolphus College (St. Peter, Minn.) in 1946. He and Ardis married in 1949. After graduation from Augustana Seminary (Rock Island, Ill.) and ordination in 1950, he served as pastor of Bartholomew Lutheran Church (Elizabeth, N.J.) while on the faculty of Upsala College (East Orange, N.J.) between 1950 and 1953. He taught Religion at Augustana College (Rock Island, Ill.) between 1953 and 1967. Along the way, he earned a Masters of Theology from Princeton Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in Philosophy, Religion from the University of Iowa.

He served the Lutheran Church in America as the Executive Director of the Board of College Education and Church Vocations between 1967 and 1972 and as the Executive Director of the Division for Professional Leadership between 1972 and 1976.

The annual Augustana Worship Service, scheduled for Normandale Lutheran Church, Edina, Minn., on October 11, 2015, has been cancelled due to extensive remodeling of the church. We plan to continue with our annual service in 2016.

—Jack Swanson

He was named President of Thiel College (Greenville, Penn.) in 1976 where he served until 1990. In retirement, he served as interim President of the Lutheran Theological Seminary (Philadelphia, PA).

Louis had a generous spirit, a curious mind, and an infectious enthusiasm for many topics. He was a prolific creator of letters and essays, although it fell to Ardis to do the typing. Examples of his work include "The Augustana Heritage Vis-à-vis the Role of the Church in Society" and "Augustana Heritage: Resource for the Future" in *The Augustana Heritage: Recollections, Perspectives, and Prospects,* published by the Augustana Heritage Association, 1999. His final book was a compilation of his essays entitled *Fighting Crises with a Living Lutheran Legacy* in 2012. The volume covered a wide range of social justice topics including poverty, climate change, marriage equality, and education.

In retirement, Louis and Ardis lived in Phelps, Wis., and St. James City and Oviedo, Fla. His ready smile and generous laughter will be missed by his family, friends, colleagues, and students.

Free for Your Church's Library

Does the library of your congregation have a copy of *The Augustana Story: Shaping Lutheran Identity in North America*, written by Maria Erling and Mark Granquist? If not, a free copy can be obtained from the AHA Office for the asking.

The purpose of the AHA is "to define, promote and perpetuate the heritage" of the Augustana Lutheran Church, and this book is one of the major means to do that. It is especially important that congregations of Augustana background have a copy. But since the Augustana heritage is an important one, among many others, within the ELCA as a whole, and should be known, congregations of other backgrounds are eligible to receive a copy too.

Although the book is on sale for individuals to purchase for their own reading (see the back cover of the newsletter), it can be obtained free to place in church libraries for the cost of shipping and handling. Simply send a check for \$5.00 to cover the shipping and handling to Augustana Heritage Association, 1100 E. 55th Street, Chicago, IL 60615. At the same time, consider ordering additional copies at the regular price for yourself or to give to friends or family members.

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by Maria Erling and Mark Granquist (Augsburg Fortress, 2008). \$20 including postage and handling.

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 including postage and handling.

Songs of Two Homelands–Hymns and Liturgy of the Augustana Lutheran Tradition, 2nd edition
Edited by Ronald T. Englund, Glenn C. Stone and John O. Swanson. (Chicago: Augustana Heritage Association, 2002). \$10 including postage and handling.

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

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 including postage and handling.

Journals

Lutheran Quarterly, Augustana issue, Spring 2010 Edited by Maria Erling and Mark Granquist. \$6 including postage and handling.

Swedish-American Historical Quarterly, Augustana/Covenant issue, April-July 2012 From the Covenant Conference Proceedings, November 2010. \$7 including postage and handling.

CDs and DVDs

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Hymns, Songs, and Liturgy from the 2004 AHA Gathering, St. Peter, Minnesota. (Chicago: Augustana Heritage Association, 2004) \$10 including postage and handling.

Augustana: Five Pastors Share Their Memories (DVD)

Recollections of Augustana by five pastors: Arvid E. Anderson, Herbert W. Chilstrom, Paul M. Cornell, Donald W. Sjoberg and Reuben T. Swanson. Recorded at an AHA board meeting in 2005. (Chicago: Augustana Heritage Association, 2007) \$5 including postage and handling.

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