What America wanted and Swedish American youth

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When Mark Granquist and I were working on the history of the synod, we divided up the work according to our areas of interest and experience. I had spent time in Sweden researching immigrant language and letter writing, and so the early part of the history was something I was very eager to work on, but then we had to divide up the later period according to other criteria. When we decided that I should research Augustana's youth work I did not realize at the time how formative this assignment would be, and how it would tie so many elements of the Augustana Story together. So, I am very happy to be with you here this afternoon, to make an argument about how important it was, and still is, for a church to take young people seriously.

One thing I learned in studying this work with youth and young adults was that every early initiative of the pioneer leaders involved a serious attempt to provide leadership training for young Augustana people. Through building congregational schools, and training pastors, and finally through the colleges and youth conferences, Augustana's leaders were working constantly with young people. The records that we have of speeches and sermons, of young people's magazines, and planning documents for youth conferences show that youth were on the center stage. Augustana's leaders knew that if they did not teach the youth to honor their heritage, to be proud of being Swedish, and Lutheran, and American, the synod would not have a future. And to do this, leaders realized that young people needed to learn something about the history of their church and culture. Without any knowledge of history, the leaders felt, it would be impossible for the young people to feel any pride in their family, their church, or their associations. And, since they were an immigrant people, trying to assimilate into American society, they had to

compensate for the negative stereotypes that adhered to immigrants. They did not want to lose their young people. So, it was a matter of survival to take young people seriously.

The kind of history that Augustana taught its young people is not the kind of history we would tell today. Magnificent glorification of Gustavus Adolphus, Carl the 12th, Martin Luther, George Washington, and other 'greats' filled the pages of *Ungdomsvännen,* the precursor to *Youth's Companion,* which later became *The Lutheran Companion.* The evolution of the youth magazine into the church magazine is instructive, also, since it shows that the youth culture became the church's culture. Even *Korsbaneret* started out as a youth journal!

Today, for our study, I want to draw attention to something else, which on first glance might seem to be a very different approach. Instead of magnifying the wonderful accomplishments of great men of the past, - which was the style of history writing familiar one hundred years ago – I will do a more critical assessment of a dynamic that affected all Swedish immigrant communities in America. I will try to unpack some of the unspoken assumptions of the surrounding culture, especially the competition among all the different ethnic groups over social prestige and place in American society. Swedish immigrants came out pretty well in this competition, mostly for superficial reasons – they looked like the kind of people who would fit in well with American society. Blond hair and blue eyes are still attractive to Americans. So, Swedish Protestant immigrants had a relatively easy path towards acceptance. And they could maintain elements of their distinctive heritage more easily in America than some other immigrant groups were able to do. I have found that looking at Augustana's heritage through the perspective of America's ongoing story of continual absorption of immigrant groups can be a way that we can continue to draw on our heritage to help us become more deeply committed to the task of building up our society for all people.

This account will also have a youth focus, but a more critical one. I will examine some of the ways that Swedish Americans were influenced by the values and politics of American society. Assimilation can happen on an individual level – a person leaves behind any trace of a heritage and just tries to blend into the broader American society –or it can happen on a collective level, through churches, societies, and private associations. Augustana's heritage was not only a church heritage, but also a vehicle for Swedish immigrants to fashion a new, Lutheran or Protestant identity and ministry, in a very new environment. The reason we are here today is that the attempt to fashion an Augustana Lutheran collective identity in America was so successful, that it is still serving an important purpose. When we come together in these biennial gatherings, nostalgia is a very important element, but I also detect another impulse even more life giving. We are extending our memories to learn more about the past than to just capture a feeling. We are arguing about the nature of our legacy, and continuing to shape a collective response to American society. The Augustana Heritage is still evolving and showing some life and energy to adapt to new challenges.

First I will look at the early stages of Swedish immigration and the American welcome, then at the role of Swedish American colleges like Bethany in shaping the contours of a Swedish American leadership corps, and finally at the development of a denominational youth ministry, where the heritage of Augustana – with its familiar intergenerational network - became less visible, but actually more crucial, since it provided the informal structure that made the programs succeed.

Model immigrants

Swedish immigrants who came to America in the second half of the nineteenth century followed several well-worn paths. Many followed earlier rural migrants from Norway and came

to farmland in the Midwest. Later migrants, experienced with industrialization, found jobs in growing mill towns and cities of the United States. While they were choosing a place to work, the cultural and political leaders in these cities also played a role.. American Protestants in particular sought ways to influence the types of immigrants who would settle in their towns. They wanted a certain type of immigrant, so that they could advance their own political, religious, and cultural ideals. After the Civil War, too many Catholics were coming to the United States. So, American Protestant home mission societies directed their efforts to the newly growing immigrant communities, while city councils enacted laws to restrict tavern keeping and limit leisure time. American employers began to selectively recruit new employees to fashion a workforce that was compliant, hard working, and devout.

Even modest efforts could have significant effects on the pattern of migration, for the chain of events following successful migration by a group of individuals was that others followed and created a settlement. Another effect of active recruitment by interested American employers or state officials did not leave obvious immediate traces on American society, but may have had a more lasting effect on the people who were subjected to it. Americans who worked to entice people of Nordic descent into coming to their businesses or communities were motivated to do so by their interest in promoting the settlement of immigrants with desirable "racial" and religious qualities. This explicit motivation was not well hidden; Swedes and other Scandinavian immigrants were well aware that they were seen as desirable settlers, and this favorable context affected the way that they themselves assessed the contribution they would make to the newly evolving population of the United States. One of the most immediate effects of being perceived as desirable because of their Nordic features and their Protestant faith, was that immigrant leaders – preachers, college presidents, and politicians - drew on their desirable

features, and emphasized them when they began to tell their own story to the rising generation of young Swedish Americans.

Church groups actively lead the process of assimilation into American society. Swedish Americans formed other societies not connected to religious purposes, but especially when the Swedish language was no longer used, the work of creating a Swedish-American identity fell to the churches, where the many anniversaries, building dedications, and graduation ceremonies gathered the people. It is important to listen in on those occasions to learn what the immigrants heard, but we must also be aware that these religious gatherings made the immigrants visible also to the watching Americans who wondered what to make of these new foreign workers.

From "A City on a Hill" to "A People Wonderfully Made"

In New England, where a puritan ethos still evoked strong nostalgia from increasingly beleaguered factory owners and establishment figures, newly arriving Swedish immigrants received increasingly favorable attention. Beginning with the recruiting trips of Maine's William Widgery Thomas, who served as President Lincoln's envoy in Stockholm during the Civil War and who later returned to Sweden to entice Swedish settlers to come to the far northern reaches of his home state, established leaders in New England's Congregational, Baptist, Episcopal, and Methodist churches raised money for church buildings, preacher salaries, and Sunday School work all on behalf of what they felt was a favored population of fair haired, blue eyed, hard working, Protestants. In Worcester, Massachusetts the political ascendancy of Swedish immigrants was achieved when Pehr Gustaf Holmes became the city's first Swedish American mayor. A first step in his assimilation into the establishment was becoming a Congregationalist, which in fact was another name for being a Mission Friend, or a member of the Evangelical Covenant church. For Americans, these Swedish debates over religion were confusing, it was

easier to just think that Swedish immigrants were new pilgrims, and, it was not hard for the immigrants to go along, naming their churches Pilgrim Covenant church, and so on, and affiliating with the Congregationalist Association.

This favorable churchly and political alliance characterized encounters between Swedes and Americans in the Northeast, as they together worked on promoting temperance, Sabbath keeping, and congregational life within urban and industrial immigrant neighborhoods. By comparison with the 'Irish' and other newly arrived radicals, like the Finns, or Czech workers, Swedes appeared again and again as the favored immigrant group in the city. What the collective presence of pious Swedish immigrants said to their American neighbors was that these immigrants, as opposed to their Catholic neighbors, stood for the traditional, Protestant values, and would as a community defend and advance these American ideals. For public consumption, and in the English speaking press, the many disagreements and diverse views present within the Swedish immigrant community were almost invisible. One would hardly know there were any Lutherans around.

This New England episode happened in a favorable and hospitable Protestant culture. The anecdotes I cited have to do mostly with the experience of Swedish revivalists, who later formed the Mission Covenant denomination. Immigrant young people in the Midwest, who grew up in rural communities, or in much larger Swedish dominated immigrant neighborhoods certainly did not have the same degree of contact and influence on American opinion. In Minneapolis, the full range of Swedish leisure time behavior was evident in the naming of Snus Boulevard. No such slang evolved in New England, where every Swede could enjoy a reputation for hard working industrious piety.

The raw material for the development of a Swedish American identity sends a historian in many directions, and defies simplification. Even though we live at the far reaches of a long process, it can be extremely valuable for us to look at the beginning stages of this encounter between the 'established' American society and the Swedish immigrant community, because this process of assimilation to a functional American identity is ongoing for many new immigrant groups today. We who benefitted from the wise and shrewd as well as prudent and plucky advances of our forbears, stand in a new position today in relationship to newer communities of immigrants from Africa, South America, and from Asia. Knowing our heritage better will make us better fellow citizens, and people of faith.

Those of us here, who know something about Swedish American identity in the United States, realize that there are many regional differences in the process of assimilation into an American identity. The Swedish American heritage that we celebrate here was shaped by many diverse impulses, including many varieties of religious striving. It would be difficult to draw any conclusions about the construction of a Swedish-American identity, and its racial dimensions, by looking only at this isolated New England example. A Midwestern small town perspective, or the important pluralistic, and experimental environment of the Western states can significantly add to our understanding of how, in the Augustana Synod, it became possible for Swedish immigrants in such far flung and diverse places to develop a national, Swedish American, religious and cultural identity.

There are other examples I would like to briefly point to, to show that the self-conscious exploration of cultural transition, of the relationship between Swedish religion and culture—even the physical, or racial dimensions of culture—and the American context in which this should be expressed, was also explored in other, Midwestern settings, and particularly by Lutheran Swedes.

Occasions for extended, public reflection on Swedishness in America occurred when immigrant leaders felt it necessary to define and express a common understanding of being Swedish in America, as the second generation of Swedish-Americans came of age. Still largely Swedish speaking, these young Americans lived in a new, bi-lingual and bi-cultural world. It was not necessary for Swedish-American leaders to teach Swedish youth how to be American, for the surrounding culture was doing that adequately enough. The pastors and teachers at Swedish American colleges did feel, however, the necessity of teaching youth how to be Swedish. At jubilee celebrations marking significant historical moments, and through occasional as well as more permanent publications, the particular import of a Swedish, Nordic identity in America was communicated to a rising generation of these college-educated Swedes.

1893 was a jubilee year commemorating the 300 year anniversary of Sweden's acceptance of the Lutheran Augsburg Confession. Augustana's old guard of Hasselquist, Carlsson, and Norelius were more estranged from the Church of Sweden, and would perhaps never have thought of extending a hand of welcome to a Swedish bishop, but a new team of leaders had arrived on the scene and now wielded some influence on Augustana's national stage – CA Swensson, LG Abrahamson, and Olof Olsson, though they didn't always agree, invited the bishop of Visby, Knut Henning Gezelius von Scheele, to visit Augustana churches in America.

Von Scheele's visit thawed the relationship between the synod and the Church of Sweden. It would not become a warm friendship right away, but Von Scheele put the immigrants on speaking terms with the church at home. The tour also provided an occasion for this Swedish visitor to observe the "coming of age" of Swedish- Americans.

At Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kansas, the 1893 commencement exercises demonstrated to von Scheele that the Nordic spirit could still exert its influence on the coming

generation: How good and beautiful that our Nordic spirit can yet be preserved as their descendants use the Swedish language; but also how necessary for them to completely master the tongue of their new fatherland, so that this spirit may infuse itself into life in this country as well, and that this spirit may not be completely overrun and overpowered by other nationalities, which do not stand in front of the manly power and the womanly beauty of the Swedes.[1]

Von Scheele's interest the Nordic spirit surfaced in most of his many talks to Swedish Lutheran audiences across the United States, at Gustavus College in St. Peter, Minnesota, and at Augustana College and Seminary in Rock Island, Illinois. In the address quoted from above, which was entitled *A Swedish-American Declaration of Maturity*, von Scheele's notion of a cultural, Nordic spirit was linked with a clear reference to the physical beauty and strength of the young Swedish American women and men that assembled before him when he addressed college audiences. But there was some danger: Swedish women with their beauty and Swedish men with their manly power were threatened by the overwhelming presence of other nationalities, other languages, and other religious commitments.

The Swedish-American youth who graduated from Bethany College on that summer day in 1893 demonstrated a bilingual and cultural competence that impressed their Swedish guest. The college's president, the Rev. Carl August Swensson, was a second generation Swedish-American, totally familiar with two cultures, who knew the value of mastering the language and spirit of America and of Sweden. He collected the impressions and the speeches that had been made during the jubilee year of 1893 and produced a volume for the youth of the whole

[1]Knut Henning Gezelius von Scheele, *Hemlandstoner*, (Stockholm, 1895), 81.

Augustana Synod entitled *Forget Me Not,* a book of vignettes, exhortations, poems, and inspirational addresses.

Swensson's opening greeting or preface addressed the imagined audience of Swedish youth in America with a personal, heartfelt invocation: "Every time I think about the large multitude of manly youth and blue-eyed maidens, who together constitute the Swedish-American youth, my heart beats faster than otherwise, while memory and hope with racing speed compete in each their separate direction to command my attention."[2]

Similarly, in the greeting from Sweden that followed Swensson's introductory greeting, von Scheele sketched out his vision of Swedish-American loyalty to Sweden's rich, spiritual heritage of confessional freedom. He closed with a reference to the "Forget me not" flower, with its blue blossom and yellow sun-filled center. This flower said the same thing as the Swedish flag, he noted, which, having a yellow cross on a blue field, combined the wisdom of time immemorial with the sunny warmth of youth. "Remain true to this banner, you blue-eyed, golden haired descendants!" He also reminded his readers that the Swedish flag bore the sign of the cross, and that this sign was the only power that was worthy of their allegiance.

Swedish-Americans in New England and in Kansas as well as those reading these flowery orations, participated in an elaborate sizing up activity, as dignified Swedish visitors helped them explore aspects of their common and apparently much exalted heritage. Augustana leaders who published these remarks were clearly intent on keeping a Swedish image of piety and vigor alive in the coming generation. Carefully crafted jubilee events, commemorating heroic sacrifice were consciously connected to the new task at hand: preservation and advancement of a new kind of Swedishness in America**.** Those reading or hearing this message

[2]Carl August Swensson, *Förgät mig ej, Ungdom's Kalender för Jubelåret 1893,* p11.

may well have also heard the implicit message that their physical features were a prominent and favorable aspect of their heritage. As surely as Swedish settlers experienced a welcome from American Protestants that was not extended to other immigrant groups, they learned to congratulate themselves on those aspects of their heritage that had already been singled out by high-profile Americans.

Fortunately, suffused throughout von Scheele's message were other themes that would resonate beyond ethnicity, especially his emphasis on faith, and on church loyalty that certainly could have, and hopefully did provide an antidote to racially derived theories of nationality. Thirty years after the 1893 von Scheele visit, another high profile Swedish Lutheran, the archbishop of the Church of Sweden, Nathan Söderblom visited Augustana churches and schools. The kind of naïve nationalism highlighting racial characteristics and essential national ideals that flowed so easily from the lips of Carl Swensson and von Scheele had been put to the test by the World War. Now Söderblom visited a people in America who were very proud of their Swedish heritage, even though the themes of Swedish beauty and youthful vigor were not in the foreground of his message. For the most part the younger generation no longer spoke the language, and the archbishop realized that new aspects of their shared heritage needed to be emphasized.

Speaking at Augustana College, Söderblom became an ambassador for something else: a dramatic new Christian movement among students, a movement that would build a foundation for the ecumenical peace movement of the churches.

Instead of Swedishness, he spoke of faith as the connecting point between the students of Sweden and America. American generations of Swedes would need new reasons to maintain relationships with their homeland, and this student oriented peace work of the churches could

became a primary means for young people on both sides of the Atlantic to negotiate a new Lutheran identity in the world. Söderblom's recognition that his audience would need a new call to inspire them was in part recognition that these Swedes were no longer Swedes as such, but American students.

By the time of Soderblom's visit, Augustana's young people had indeed become something other than vessels for the continuation of a Swedish American identity. They were fully engaged with the modern student Christian movement, and had been pioneers in creating a vital, youth oriented ministry: the Luther League.

Augustana=s Luther League affiliated with the inter Lutheran Luther League movement founded in 1895. Augustana Luther League promoters were prominent figures in advancing English language work. The modernizers in the synod seemed to split into two camps, a conservative, pietistic bible school wing, and a more liberal, university and campus ministry oriented wing. Both groups in the synod were avid supporters of youth, however, and found that summer Bible camps and evangelistic meetings provided an ideal way to shape the loyalty of a new generation. In the process, using the Luther League, which passed on to congregations the methods and organizational lessons of modern American Lutheranism, Augustana Lutherans began to give their young people significant training in leadership.

Chicago's Lutheran Bible School, a forerunner of the LBI in the Twin Cities, spearheaded the effort to provide resources for local leagues in 1925. *The Manual for Luther Leagues* described the history of youth work, and described the important ministries of the church. There were over 100 tips for a successful meeting. A series of debate topics focused on stewardship, as in: AResolved that the voluntary pledge system is preferable to the stipulated communicant fee system.@ In congregation after congregation, in all the conferences,

Augustana=s young men and women had been targeted for leadership. The program grew, and youth became leaders.

In the middle of the 1940's the Synod prepared to celebrate the founding of the first Swedish congregation in Iowa in 1848. Even though the Synod had not been founded until 1860, the 1948 Acentennial@ celebration provided a remarkable opportunity for retelling the founding story. A stewardship emphasis accompanied the centennial to support the home and foreign mission field and the recovery work in post war Europe. The celebration included the various boards of the church, and the youth board was no exception. Even though youth work was considered the wave of the future Bergstrand knew, as generation after generation of historically minded Augustana youth leaders had discovered, that the way to the future was paved by laying down the stones of history in a telling pattern.

By invoking the past and celebrating it, leaders knew that they could deepen the commitment of members to ongoing work. Wilton Bergstrand knew this basic pragmatic truth about history, and asked Martin Carlson to write the history of Augustana=s youth program. Those consulted about the pioneer years understood how to >use= the occasion of the anniversary for promotional purposes. Since immigrant pioneer pastors and the settlers had come to America as young people, the synod was itself a youth movement.

In the hands of the business savvy stewardship division of the church, much of Augustana=s history threatened to become cliché, but Bergstrand and his staff aimed at something more. They understood that the future of the church depended on cultivating and nurturing a leadership that was informed and loyal to the church. Invoking the longer, historical narrative was a crucial step in cultivating loyalty, because the honor given to the past created generous and enthusiastic support. When Bergstrand communicated to the church that his youth

ministry was for the church, not just for the youth, the flip side of the message was that the church needed to be >for the youth.= Youth programming was not seen transient, focused only on a life stage, or the work of an auxiliary, or as a movement with a fleeting lifespan. Youth work was to be Aon the front burner@ of the church. That meant enough staff, enough funding, and public support on all levels of the church=s leadership.

Augustana's youth program and its leaders were not parochial. When they spoke of the work of the church they meant the wider church, not just the local congregation. Youth were trained for leadership with a vision for a future American Lutheranism that would engage the world in mission and service. Augustana's leaders, trained through this exceptional youth ministry, were builders of the mergers that began to come together in the mid-century. But the fine print of Lutheran merger plans caused Bergstrand, and his staff some real concern.

As the planning meetings for either the ALC or the LCA merger progressed, - at first Augustana was in on the ground floor for both of them – the relationships of the youth leaders in the various churches were important links between the churches. Wilton Bergstrand had stronger ties with youth leaders going into the ALC, and when the decision was made to turn instead to the LCA he began to be concerned, especially with the basic question that he heard again and again from his cadre of local leaders: AWill there be strong youth work in the emerging L.C.A.?@ He wrote to his friend Martin Carlson, now Director of Stewardship and Finance, to seek help in getting beyond the >blueprint= stage to actual budget planning, where crucial things were at stake.

Both men were concerned that the ULCA needed to catch up to Augustana=s standards. The ULCA had just started with four League Leadership Schools, but to serve the 6,000 congregations the new Church would need 120, and provision for counselor training. He had

compiled the statistics on the status of the Luther League in the ULCA, also, and found that there were 2,500 congregations that had not yet organized a league, 2,300 of them were ULCA. Next he noted that the teenage population was >exploding=: AThe new L.C.A. will start out with over a half million youth, going on to a million youth by 1973.@[1]

Bergstrand wrote a five page brief called AWhat=s the Score re: The Youth Work in the L.C.A.?@ sometime in 1961, and it contained a clear expression of frustration felt within Augustana's Board of Youth Activities as their carefully built programs faced a kind of extinction through absorption in the merger. The opening statement makes clear what negotiators were up against, according to the author: ATo understand what has happened in the youth work of the LCA you must keep this clearly in mind: Dr. Fry has had a dictatorial stranglehold on every comma of the negotiations that must be experienced first hand to be believed; and Dr. Fry has a notorious and long-standing blind spot when it comes to youth work.A[ii] According to the planning documents, the number of staff would go down, youth leadership schools would be planned by youth in the leagues rather than by professional staff, ACaravaning@ would be cut back, and funding sources would be severely cut back. In effect, the new church would not provide the leadership for youth work that Augustana=s people had come to expect.

When I was growing up in Southern Minnesota and just as I was finishing confirmation, I found out that the Luther League of the LCA had dissolved in favor of a wider participation of youth in the governance of the congregation. We still had a youth group, but it was no longer connected to a system of youth ministry, led and governed by youth. Instead of a youth run auxiliary, with districts, regional, and national meetings and conferences, we would be able to have a youth representative on the church council. But, who and what did they represent? They didn't have any representative work to do beyond the local congregation, and their leadership

skills did not get developed.

The leadership of the Luther League that voted to go out of business also had a strong streak of idealism. Their large budget ought to be spent on social justice and to fight poverty, and not on financing conferences for privileged youth. So the Luther League disappeared just as I was looking forward to joining it. One of the more powerful institutions for cultivating youth leadership in the church was dismantled.

Many people have stories like mine – and some tell me that their experience in the Luther League wasn't all that positive. One woman said "The Luther League was for all the uncharismatic children of pious mothers." Still she went. But her story was not a glorification of the thing. It was an interpretation of the Luther League. When that kind of sharing happens, we have moved beyond memory into honest history.

That history tells us that Luther Leaguers were not isolated from the pastors and other important leaders in synods and churches. When youth came to conferences they meet other youth from other congregations who were leaders, and they met many pastors, parish workers, college professors, and camp directors. In short they became acquainted with the ministries, agencies, and institutions of the church. This familiarity gave them access, interest, and enthusiasm about how their own leadership might some day be tapped. In short, they were, in the jargon we have outworn today, 'empowered.'

The networks of friendship that youth ministry created were probably the most significant strengthening factor in the American Lutheran church bodies in the 20th century. In multiple ways, through Women's church groups, missionary societies, the Luther League, the Laymen's movement for stewardship, and then through more activist networks that bridged the various Lutheran groups like the Lutheran Peace Fellowship, the Lutheran Human Relations Association,

and crossover places like Holden Village, or the many important outdoor ministry camping corporations, Lutherans got out of town and learned to know and trust other Lutherans.

Youth organizations helped Lutherans connect to young leaders in other church groups, and in the college aged and university oriented World Student Christian Federation, there was an ecumenical link for Lutheran students to other Protestant and Orthodox student movements, and also an institutional connection with students throughout the world, even in the mission fields. If you speak to leaders of the various denominations who were leaders in ecumenical work, you would discover that an important part of their formation for leadership came from their involvement in these Student Christian Movements. Mainline Protestant and Orthodox young people who were representatives at the national level got to know each other personally, before they became church leaders.

But in the 1970's these formal, structural links for students were broken down, too. I call what happened to the structure of leadership for youth a kind of infection that wasted the institutional fabric of the church itself. The LCA shared the fate of other Protestant denominations that responded to the movements for social change. The protest movements did have a point. There were structures that prevented the kind of change that was needed, but many other beneficial things were dismantled during these years. A nihilistic virus that spread during the protest years affected so many institutions - the Worldwide Student Christian movement, the ecumenical movement, global mission, and, probably most significantly, denominational strength and leadership.

Augustana was already a part of the LCA when this happened, but Augustana as a heritage has been able to withstand much of the breaking down of the institutional ethos that was so prominent during the 1970's and up to this time. I think the reason for the strength of

Augustana's heritage is based on the strong personal ties that were deliberately created through the many forms of youth leadership training that were created through the first half of the 20th century. These very gatherings have reconnected Augustana people who were shaped by the youth ministry program of the church, and who formed a lasting sense of purpose and identity through the investment that the church made in youth.

Now that I have told you something about the Augustana history we have lived through, through interpreting what has happened to youth, I want to remind you that I am using an old Augustana pattern. Whenever the synod was gearing up for a new initiative – like a transition to English, or a new push for ecumenical relationships – the church told young people about their history. They believed that young people needed to learn who they were, so that they could really belong and become leaders. And so we need to invest the same energy with our youth today. They need to hear stories about their church, about their family heritage, about their own people's story, so that they don't feel like strangers. It is time for our church to recommit itself to training youth for leadership in the church for the world. It is time to give youth responsibility, to treat them as leaders, and to relate to them as people who belong to our communities and not as outsiders.

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[1]Bergstrand to Martin Carlson, October 21, 1960. copy to Malvin Lundeen. ELCA Archives, Bergstrand papers.

[ii]AWhat=s the Score re: Youth Work in the L.C.A.@ Bergstrand papers.