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Augustana Heritage

NEWSLETTER

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The invitation to reach back into the past to reflect upon our experience in the Augustana Lutheran Church brings into focus the unique gifts which continue to bless our lives. Long after Augustana became a part of the Lutheran Church in America in 1962, we bear the imprint of those early years. They continue to define our stance in the world. The memories nourish our souls.

There Were Giants on the Earth in Those Days

by Raymond W. Hedberg '44

There are a number of words that come to mind as we trace the journey over which we have come. Emerging as a defining word is, "integrity." In this context it denotes adherence to what is believed. It is being faithful. It is seeking to speak and act consistent with the truth.

Integrity would describe our seminary education with its emphasis upon sound Biblical scholarship. Examining the scriptures in the light of higher criticism was a freeing experience, enabling us to respond in a positive way to the existential questions with which all of us struggle. With a solid foundation in the scriptures we were given the resources to lead our people to a deeper faith and an understanding of what it means to follow Christ in the culture in which we live. This has been especially helpful as our people struggle with the notions of biblical inerrancy and literal interpretations of the Bible, ideas presented as "truth" by the extravagant claims of fundamentalism. The seminary helped us to see that the church lives to fulfill the divine commission to bring the gospel to the whole world. It is not a cult, an exclusive group of persons, turned in upon themselves, pre-occupied with rituals and ceremonies of little meaning to the world beyond. The seminary drew us in to explore the fundamental questions of our time. It handled its responsibilities with integrity.

The transition from the Swedish language of our Founders to the use of English reflected the seriousness with which our people handled their missionary tasks. While such changes were a struggle in some of the older congregations, it is fair to say that respect for tradition and honoring our forebearers did not get in the way of opening the doors to all people. A mark of faithfulness to the Church's primary mission!

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Reuben T. Swanson '51

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Likewise, addressing social concerns, responding to the needs of poor and hurting people, and challenging the evils and the presumptions of our secular society held a prominent place on the agenda of congregations and the Church gathered for its annual conventions. The establishment of a wide network of social institutions and developing ministries to disadvantaged people were evidence of a people remembering the words of Jesus, "... as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

Integrity characterized the way the Augustana Church did its work in world missions. As mission stations matured into congregations and were increasingly served by pastors from their own culture, our missionaries took the role of partners. This enabled the indigenous people to move more rapidly to take charge of their own destiny and to join with us as equals in advancing the Kingdom of God.

There is no indication that the Augustana Lutheran Church felt that it had a corner on the truth, or that Lutherans held a special place in the household of God. Early on, our leaders took their place in the ecumenical conversations both in this country and abroad. They took part in the formation of both the World and National Council of Churches, and were present in state and local councils. Our theologians and others sat at the same table with representatives of other churches to engage in theological studies and conversations. Such participations were approved by the constituency of our Church as reports were made to annual conventions. Clearly it was seen that this is what people do when they are faithful to the Word of God. Lutheran unity was always high on the agenda of our Church. Our leaders were in the forefront of efforts to bring the Lutheran denominations together in a unity of witness and mission. The Lutheran World Federation, with its ministries in war-torn lands and to mission fields cut off from their home support by the war, received strong support from our people. Augustana played a dominant role in calling for the Lutheran bodies to get serious about the scandal of Lutheran disunity.

When some of the Lutheran church bodies through their leaders expressed a desire for a more selective unity, deciding who should be invited to come to the table, Augustana refused. Our leaders insisted that there was already a unity of faith and witness and each church body should be invited to make its own decision to participate. Further, the ecumenical witness of our church should not be left out of the discussion. As a consequence, hopes for a fuller unity were not realized, and the American Lutheran Church (ALC), the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC), the United Evan-





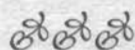
gelical Lutheran Church (UELC), and the Lutheran Free Church (LFC) went ahead with negotiations on their own. This led to the formation of the American Lutheran Church in 1960. Expressing regret for the failure of the attempts to achieve fuller unity, Augustana proceeded to join in discussions with the United Lutheran Church (ULC) the American Evangelical Lutheran Church (Danish) and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church (Suomi). These negotiations resulted in the formation of the Lutheran Church in America in 1962. To relive the history of those days is to become aware that, despite disappointments, Augustana was consistent in pursuing its goal of Lutheran unity.

One further mark of its commitment to the unity of the Lutheran Church was Augustana's willingness to give up its one Seminary in Rock Island, Illinois, to join with four other Seminaries to form the Lutheran

School of Theology at Chicago. Although Augustana Seminary was the largest of the merging Seminaries, it was hoped that such a sacrifice would lead the way to a further consolidation and strengthening of theological education in the new church. A willingness to pay that price was a sign of Augustana's commitment to back up its words with deeds.

Following the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1987, Richard E. Koenig published an article in the Christian Century entitled, "The New Lutheran Church: the Gift of Augustana". Commenting on the election of Herbert Chilstrom as Bishop of the new church, he wrote: "His election was a personal tribute; and it was also a recognition of the integrity of the ethos that shaped him and that provided the partners in the merger -- at their weakest: the skittish ALC, the officious LCA and the truculent AELC -- a zone in which to meet. One wonders how, without something like the Augustana tradition to draw on, the merger would ever have taken place."

One should not conclude that these marks of integrity revealed in these remembered stories from the life of the Augustana Church came easily or with unanimous support. But God gave us strong leadership from men like Conrad Bergendoff, from strong church Presidents like P. O. Bersell, Oscar Benson and Malvin Lundeen. They were ably supported by a succession of Executive Councils composed of Conference Presidents and one layperson from each Conference. Strong affirmative votes came from our people represented at annual church conventions. Clearly, the Augustana Lutheran church made its mark on church history and on us all.



On Molding the Future

Donovan Palmquist '54

In 1961 the Executive Council of the Augustana Lutheran Church invited G. Everett Arden '33, Professor of Church History at Augustana Seminary, to write a history of the Augustana Synod. The result of this work was the book "Augustana Heritage" published in 1963 by the Augustana Press, Rock Island, IL.

Undergirded by the help of God

In the preface, Arden quotes Carl Sandburg who once exclaimed, "We've got to show those who mold the future where things came from." Those who knew G. Everett Arden remember the passion, energy and drama with which he carried out Sandberg's insight. Arden once expressed:

When we think of the founders of Augustana, we so easily envisage a company of aged men and women tired and worn, from whom time had drained away the best energies of life. On the contrary, they were mostly young people, full of enthusiasm, willing to learn the new ways of America, eager to pit their strength against the formidable forces of the frontier, and determined to carve for themselves an honorable niche in the new world. They were not rich or wealthy in worldly possessions, to be sure, but neither were they paupers, for it took some substance to pay for ocean passage and the overland trip to the west. Many may have been broke by the time they reached their destination, but they depended for the future on their own resources of strength, fortitude, and patience undergirded by the help of God.

Augustana Heritage is a panoramic view of the journey of faith initiated by those founders which resulted in the Augustana Lutheran Church. A copy of Arden's work was sent to each alumnus of Augustana Seminary and to each treasurer of the congregations of the Augustana Church. Today, we are especially grateful to G. Everett Arden and Malvin H. Lundeen '27, the last president of the Augustana Church, and to the Executive Council who wanted to "show those who mold the future where things came from."

Gifts molded by Augustana

The "gifts of Augustana" to the Lutheran Church in America and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are many. The Augustana Heritage Festivals are occasions of thanksgiving and celebration for the heritage of faith we treasure. The Augustana Heritage Professorship for Global Mission will be a living memorial and tribute to those who have delivered the faith to us. The Memoirs and Essays of the Augustana Lutheran Church in the archives of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago will be an historical "memory bank" of the spirit of Augustana. The purpose of the Augustana Heritage Newsletter is to be an epilogue to Arden's work from those for whom the spirit of Augustana is a part of their lives.

Thank you for your support!

Your interest and support of the Augustana Heritage Program means so much. We invite you to share your memories, reflections and gifts through this newsletter so that we, too, may be a generation who "show those who mold the future where things came from."

Please see the list on page 15 of contributors to "Memoirs and Essays. Thank you to all!

Endowment Fund Update

The Augustana Heritage Endowment Fund

As of February 1, 1997, gifts and commitments to the endowment for the Augustana Heritage Professorship for Global Mission have reached nearly \$950,000. An Augustana Heritage Room to be established at LSTC will include the photos of classes from Augustana Seminary, historical memorabilia, and donor recognition of named funds and sponsors of the Endowment.

Please consider one of the following ways to continue your support:

A. Sponsorship Gifts (\$500 or more)

B. Five-Year Gift Plans

(Total amount decided by you)

C. A Life Income Gift

(Endowment receives remainder interest)

D. Estate Plan Gift

E. Family Fund

(honors or memorializes family members. Additional names and gifts can be added to the Fund in the future.)

F. The Augustana Heritage Congregation Fund

(honors former Augustana congregations. The congregation would be designated An Augustana Heritage Congregation by LSTC and receive a plaque to be placed in the narthex of the church.)

For more information, please contact Donovan Palmquist, 612 559 5944, or George Schelter at the LSTC, Foundation office, 1-800-635-1116.

I R E M E M B E R . . .

There was seminary matriculation and then the Ministerium meeting at the Synod Convention where we needed their approval. This was the scene. Dr. P. O. Bersell was in charge. He knew my dad very well and on that basis I guess he felt he knew me, too.

Question (Bersell): Do you and your dad ever discuss theology?

My answer: Yes (How could it be otherwise?)

Question: What did you discuss? (At that point I realized that when I answered that question that the next question would be as to what position I took.)

Answer: Liturgy

Question: What was the issue?

Answer: Whether the offering should be taken before or after the sermon

Result: Laughter among the clergy. And no more questions.

- - Stanley H. Swanson, '45



World Missions

Each issue of the *Augustana Heritage Newsletter* will have a special emphasis. In this issue the emphasis is world missions. A history of Augustana world missions, "Foundations for Tomorrow" by S. Hjalmar Swanson '13, was published in 1960. It is a comprehensive summary of how "world concern was woven into the very fabric of our Church's life by the immigrant founding fathers." The concluding paragraphs of the book express the vision of world missions of Augustana:

What must we do? We must send forth missionaries who are specially trained to face the problems and conditions of tomorrow, but who also have the witnessing fervor of a St. Paul. These missionaries must go as brothers(and sisters) to work with and under the direction of native leaders.

And the Church at home must keep its ear attuned to the Master's voice, never forgetting His orders or its errand. Then, in spite of all opposition, the work of the last century may be but the foundation of a greater missionary era tomorrow.

In the appendix of "Foundations for Tomorrow" are the names of all the foreign missionaries who served the Augustana Lutheran Church. A total of 274 missionaries served from 1878 to 1960, including fourteen who served in two countries. We are grateful to four of these missionaries who share their stories with us in this Newsletter. Future issues will have more articles of the world mission story of Augustana.

The Beginnings of Foreign Missions in the Augustana Lutheran Church

Donald E. Trued '56

The etymology of the word mission is "sent," and mission was in the heart of God from eternity. Then "in the fullness of time," God sent forth His Son to seek and save the lost, to give His life. Jesus, in turn, sent forth His disciples, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing...and teaching..." and suddenly, we ourselves, by extension of that great commission become a heart-beat of God, we are the sent ones.

It was almost the turn of the millennium 1000 A.D., before Christianity got a good foothold in Sweden and two hundred years more before it was dominant. Yet another four hundred years passed until Gustavus Vasa, in conflict with the Pope (1523 A.D.) give the Reformation his endorsement and Sweden became Lutheran. Another century later (1638 A.D.), at the insistence of Gustavus Adolphus, a Swedish Colony was founded along the Delaware. This was at least partly "Mission" in that Gustavus Adolphus had in mind not only commerce but also the conversion of the Indians and a Protestant dominance in the New World. While the Dutch eliminated Swedish rule in this colony in 1655, a Swedish population remained, and to it, until 1871, the Church of Sweden sent both clergy and financial aid.

While smaller, intermittent emigrant groups from Scandinavia arrived on US shores from that time forward, the far greater numbers were not to arrive until the mid 1800's. Meanwhile

numerous congregations had been organized, but little of consolidation was achieved until June 5, 1860 in Clinton, Wisconsin with the establishment of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church.

That this new church felt keenly its responsibility to perpetuate the line of "sent ones" was already evident in 1861, with the establishment of a Foreign Missions Committee. Five years later, however, the Convention effectively rescinded that action by creating a consolidated committee for Missions and merging all undesignated funds in the Mission Treasury. Such unenlightened action hindered foreign mission momentum in at least two ways:

1. it seriously blurred the distinction between "home" and "foreign" mission;
2. it blunted interest in, and considerably postponed, Augustana's authentic foreign mission undertaking.

Augustana's first bona fide foreign mission effort was not until 1878 in cooperation with the General Council in Rajahmundry Mission, India.

The first effort, essentially disguised as foreign mission, was a well-intentioned ministry to the recently liberated Negroes. Matthias Wahlstrom began his work in 1879. Inadequate coordination by the Mission Board, governmental interference, and Wahlstrom's ill-health forced his resignation in 1881;

Little more is known of the venture; it was short-lived. Some years later, 1876, there appeared to be support to take up work among American Indians. Ordained on call to this task, the project came to a close.

A third diversion arose when the Synod, in 1882, authorized work among the Swedes in Utah, some yet unchurched and numerous others who had converted to Mormonism. While extremely difficult and often disappointing, the Synod continued the work as a "foreign" mission until 1902, when it became part of the Synod's home missions program.

Still another "foreign" mission was begun, this time more effective and durable, in Puerto Rico. G. Sigfrid Swensson, '04, theological student, initiated the work on Oct. 5, 1898. The General Council sent additional personnel in 1899 and 1905 following which Augustana provided all personnel. The formation of the ULCA in 1918 was to signal the demise of Augustana's involvement, as the new church, ULCA, in 1926, placed Puerto Rico in the portfolio of its Home Mission Board.

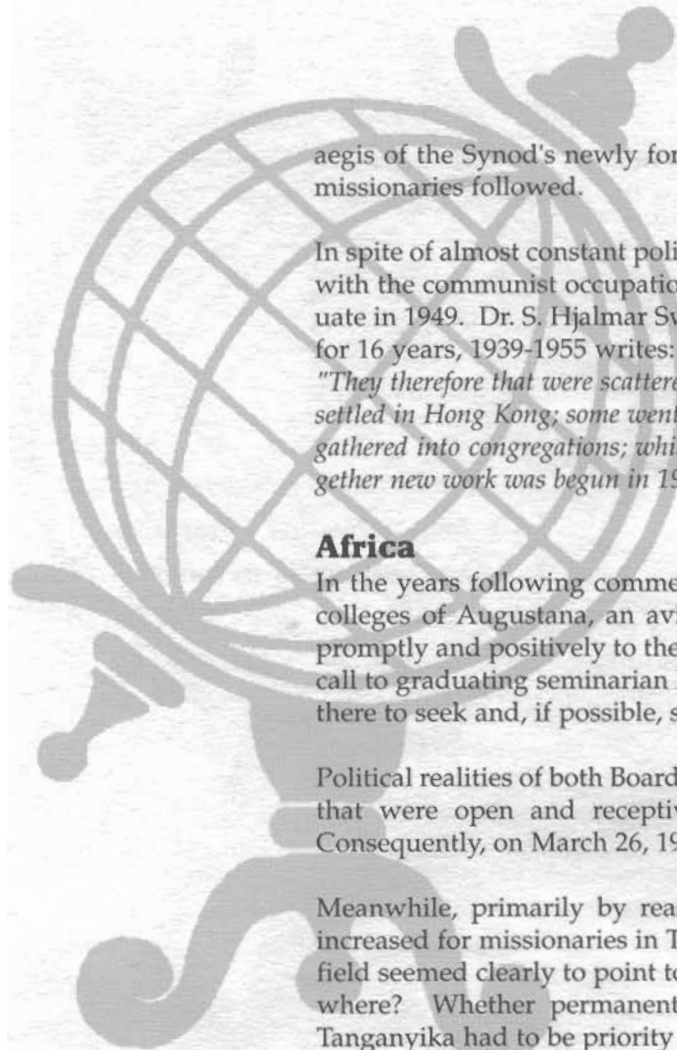
India

Augustana's first bona fide foreign mission effort was not until 1878, in cooperation with the General Council in Rajahmundry Mission, India. There was jubilation that year as Augustana sent out its first foreign missionaries, The Rev. and Mrs. August B. Carlson, 1878. Pastor Carlson's work was altogether too brief. He died after only four years, but not before he had further honed Augustana's mission consciousness. Carlson's successor, after an eight year hiatus (1882-1890), was Emanuel Edmund, both pastor and medical doctor. Since that time there has been a continuous flow of Augustana missionaries to India.

China

In December 1904, the Board for Missions called Pastor A.W. Edwins, '02, as our first missionary to China, Honan Province.

Sensing the great need also for medical missions in China, The China Mission Society, precursor of our Board of Foreign Missions, in 1906, called and sent a nurse, Sister Ingeborg Nystul. Soon thereafter, it succeeded in securing the services of a medical doctor, C.P. Friberg who, in company with Pastor Alfred Trued, '08, proceeded to China in 1908, by then under the



aegis of the Synod's newly formed Board of Foreign Missions. A steady flow of Augustana missionaries followed.

In spite of almost constant political unrest, floods and famine, the mission grew rapidly. Only with the communist occupation did it finally become necessary for our missionaries to evacuate in 1949. Dr. S. Hjalmar Swanson, '13, Executive Director of our Board of World Missions for 16 years, 1939-1955 writes: *The story of this persecution repeats the story given us in Acts 8:4: "They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word." Some of the missionaries settled in Hong Kong; some went to North Borneo; some went to Taiwan where refugees were quickly gathered into congregations; while others went to Japan where with the help of new recruits an altogether new work was begun in 1950.*

Africa

In the years following commencement of work in China, there developed, especially in the colleges of Augustana, an avid interest in and concern for Africa. The Synod responded promptly and positively to these stirrings and, on June 14, 1917, the Board of Mission voted a call to graduating seminarian Ralph D. Hult, '19. Hult was charged to proceed to the Sudan, there to seek and, if possible, secure a "suitable territory as our independent field."

Political realities of both Board and nation conspired against his Herculean efforts. Territories that were open and receptive seemed to be only those under French administration. Consequently, on March 26, 1922 Hult received a cable: "Go to Tanganyika."

Meanwhile, primarily by reason of the internment of German missionaries, the urgency increased for missionaries in Tanganyika. By now the search for an independent, permanent field seemed clearly to point to Tanganyika. The haunting question, nevertheless, persisted--where? Whether permanent or otherwise, the orphaned German missions of northern Tanganyika had to be priority number one.

However, in 1924, the British Government agreed to permit the return of German missionaries. Numerous negotiations, and a year's time witnessed Augustana in Singida among the Ilamba and Turu tribes. The earliest Augustana missionaries to serve in this area, in addition to Ralph Hult, were Pastors Herbert S. Magney, '18, N. Ludwig Melander, '19, A.C. Zeilinger, '13, and George N. Anderson, '12, and medics Selma Swanson, Bertha Anderson and Elveda Bonander.

A World War later (WW II), Augustana was strategically located to once more administer the "orphaned" missions of the north, when German missionaries were again interned, 172 in number. Under sponsorship of the National Lutheran Council, Augustana performed this additional task from 1940-1952, aided substantially by a number of Swedish missionaries. By this time, both political colonialism and missionary paternalism were rapidly declining, and the indigenous church emerging.

Japan

A later undertaking of Augustana was in Japan. In 1949, as doors were closing in China, they were opening in Japan. Augustana's Board of Foreign Missions reacted quickly, carried out the necessary consultations with the Japanese as well as other Lutheran bodies already there. The first Augustana missionaries arrived in Tokyo on September 11, 1950, and others followed very shortly, among them Pastor David L. Vikner, '44 and family, Pastor George L. Olson, '49, Sister Astrid Erling, Eleanor Anderson and Lois Colberg.

Latin America and Indonesia

Augustana involved itself also in cooperative Lutheran work in Latin America and Indonesia. Pastor and Mrs. Paul H. Benson, '52, served in Uruguay, commencing in 1952, Pastor and Mrs. Irven Nelson, '57, arrived some years later in 1958. Pastor Nils Arne Bendtz, '52, meanwhile, served the Batak Church in Indonesia from 1952-1956.

While this necessarily brief and fragmentary account closes the exclusively Augustana portion of foreign missions, "that spirit continues to permeate the body into which we merged, Lutheran Church in America, and subsequently, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We work now through the Division for Global Mission, with its involvement in 53 countries, and with 379 adult missionaries, including spouses."

In closing, I quote Pastor Anders Hanson, '44, second generation missionary to China who wrote with specific reference to that field. When modestly paraphrased, however, it speaks a universal truth for Augustana Missions:

Through these fleeting decades, Augustana has left her mark upon the souls of nations. From our finite, human point of view, this whole undertaking has been a costly one. Many pastors, doctors, nurses, single workers and wives have given all their energy, their strength, their lives to this work. Scores of crosses rising from the soil of these ancient lands mark the graves of Augustana missionaries and their children who made the supreme sacrifice in obedience to Christ's great commission. And many are the dollars that faithful mission supporters have supplied. Yet, most certainly, our beloved Augustana Lutheran Church is the richer for having spent herself, and for continuing to do so, to bring the Gospel to these people. Without question we gained immeasurably more than we have given.

FOUNDATION FOR TOMORROW, S. Hjalmar Swanson, The Board of World Missions, Augustana Lutheran Church, 2445 Park Ave. Minneapolis, MN 1960.

AUGUSTANA HERITAGE, G. Everett Arden, Augustana Press, Rock Island, IL 1963.

I Remember . . . More than a Dream

The decision to be a pastor in the Augustana Lutheran Church has its roots with many of us in the Church of Sweden. My father was confirmed in Varmland, Sweden in 1908 and came to America with his father in 1910. My mother was confirmed in Boheslan, Sweden in 1910 and came to America in 1914. They met in Duluth, and after their marriage lived there the rest of their lives.

I cannot recall any church that we attended other than Bethany Lutheran Church in Duluth. I still have my baptismal certificate printed in Swedish from Bethany Church. I was confirmed there in 1934, sang in the Senior Choir, and preached there several times while at Gustavus Adolphus College.

In the Spring of 1946, our seminary class learned that we were to be ordained in Duluth. I could never have dreamed that I was to be ordained in Duluth. My home church was the synod center; here I met the Ministerium of the Augustana Church. That Sunday, our class of thirty three prospective pastors was ordained at Denfeld High School, where I graduated in 1937. June 16, 1946, was a great day. The decision to be a pastor had become a reality. That day, all my family and friends gathered to pray that I would be a good servant in the Augustana Lutheran Church. Now, fifty years later, I am grateful to my Augustana Lutheran Church and its successor church bodies, that I have been privileged to serve as a pastor this half century.

- - J. Robert Nordlander, '46



Memories of Augustana's Role in Tanzania

by Oscar R. Rolander, '44

Augustana's strong interest in world missions has been a hallmark of its life. Perhaps "the heart of its life" would be a better way of saying it. I grew up in Ironton, Minnesota, a town so small it did not warrant a Lutheran Church, but did have a Sunday School. Here Mrs. George Anderson, a missionary from Tanganyika Territory, came to visit. She held the children belonging to the Junior Mission Band, myself included, spellbound as she related stories of the earliest beginnings of Augustana's mission in that East African country. The seed was sown for my future interest in missions. Later experiences at summer Bible Camps with persons like Martin C. Olson continued my interest.

Considering Missions

The time came to go to college, and Gustavus was the place to go for a boy who grew up in a Lutheran Swedish-speaking family. Deciding to study for the ministry and deciding to become a missionary were virtually synonymous during those years at Gustavus. During my years at Gustavus and at seminary there was a great wave of interest and enthusiasm for foreign missions. In a class of 35 graduating from Augustana Seminary, eight of us opted for going overseas. In fact, we were so keen about it that we would challenge our classmates who were choosing to be pastors in the U. S., that unless there were compelling reasons to stay home there was just as much justification for assuming they would go overseas.

Our second five-year term found us on the staff of a school training Africans to become elementary school teachers. It was part of missionary strategy to "work ourselves out of a job." Augustana's policy in world missions had always been clear. That heritage has carried on into the work of the Lutheran Church in America and now into the work of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as well.

The year we graduated from seminary was 1944. It was also one of the years in which the world was at war. World War II was disrupting the lives of many, to put it mildly, and going overseas as a missionary seemed questionable. I had planned on going to China, but those plans changed when a request came to Augustana to send missionaries to Tanganyika to take up the posts vacated by German missionaries interned in South Africa. Besides, several of my classmates who had grown up in China had the advantage of knowing that language, an asset I did not have, so it was not difficult to change my sights to Africa.

Field Training and Ordination

Preparation for going to a foreign land as a missionary was minimal in those days. We sat across the table from the Executive Director of World Missions of the Augustana Lutheran Church, Dr. S. Hjalmar Swanson, and we heard him ask us how we felt about going to Africa. When we said we were ready to go, he stood, shook our hands and said, "God bless you."

So much for pre-field training. Financial support for world missions was minimal in those days as well, to which Dr. Swanson attested when he related how Augustana received its major support for world missions. He reported that a farmer in Illinois had bequeathed his large farm to the board, and that the other main source of support was from the Women's Missionary Society. So, he said, Augustana's foreign mission program depended upon support from one dead man and a bunch of lively women. Fortunately, we had heard of a "Rural Missions Institute" being held in Swanaaoa, North Carolina, which we were able to attend. Here we learned about inoculations that were necessary as well as many ideas about how to proceed to work in a culture foreign to our own.

Ordination was by class in those days, so I was ordained and commissioned in First Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Minnesota. The major role played by missionary wives was not honored appropriately, so Doris sat unnoticed in the balcony of First Lutheran, as did other wives, while the men received all the attention.

Travel was not all that easy in those war years, since all ships and airplanes had been commandeered by the military for war purposes. Portugal was a neutral nation, so we were able to book passage on a small Portuguese vessel. It took 15 days for that little ship to cross the Atlantic to Lisbon. There we waited for the next two and a half months while the Roman Catholic Archbishop used our ship to go to Beira to dedicate a cathedral. When we did get to Beira we waited a month for passage to Mombasa and then waited for a ship to Dar Es Salaam.

We missed the once a week train up-country, so it meant more waiting. We finally arrived on the Augustana mission field, feeling that America was indeed very far away. Greeted by Pastors Lud Melander and Marty Olson, we went with Marty to Iambi, a mission station some 40 miles up in the bush country, there to begin study of the Swahili language and to gain some orientation as to what missionary work was all about.

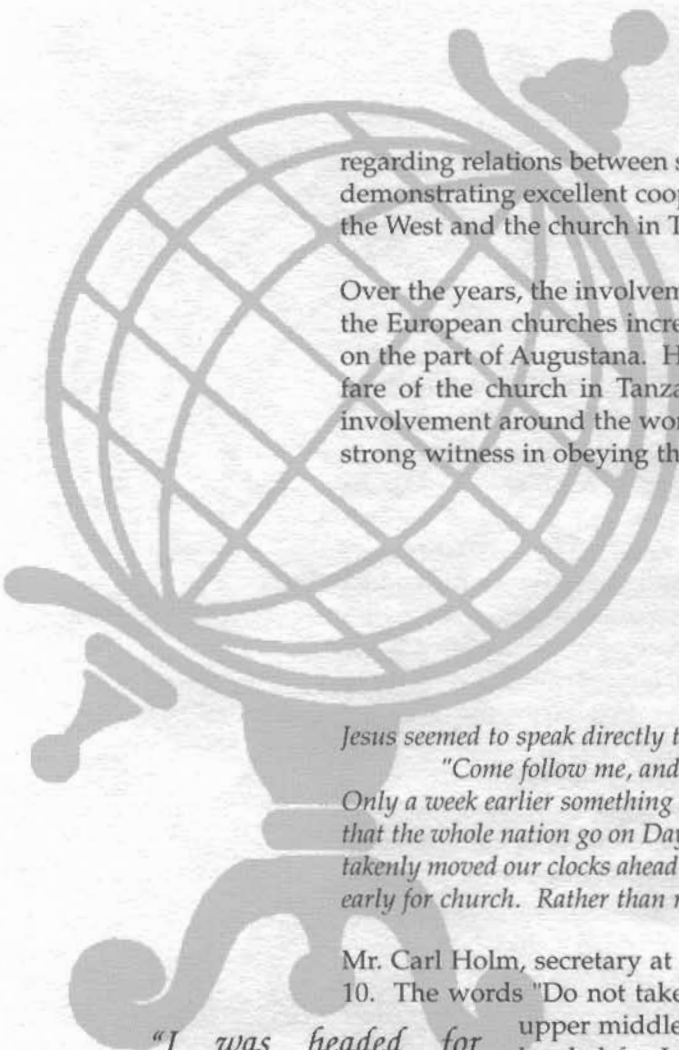
After three months, we were declared ready to assume work on our own. Augustana's work had hitherto been among people called Irambu, but we were to begin new work among a neighboring people called Tutu. The next five years saw us in the midst of opening schools and dispensaries, teaching the fundamentals of the Christian faith to a people eager to learn, catechizing, and baptizing new converts. Reception to the gospel was very encouraging.

Developing the Lutheran Church in Tanzania

Ample evidence of how successfully Augustana worked itself out of work in Tanzania was demonstrated to us in 1988 when, at the invitation of the Central Synod of Tanzania and at our expense, we returned to help celebrate the 30th anniversary of the self-governing of the Central Synod and the consecration of its first African Bishop, Amos Luteri Gimbi. In the early 50's, we had been as many as 75 Americans, including spouses, working as pastors, teachers, doctors, nurses, along with others in more specialized ministries. In 1988 there was one American on the field, Lois Swanson, who served as secretary to the Bishop and did much of the work coordinating with the United States. Over fifty African pastors served the diocese. The older men had been trained in the States, while others had been educated at Makumira Theological School, located in northern Tanzania. Most of the teachers were trained locally, while some got scholarships for higher education in the States. Doctors were trained State-side, while dressers were trained locally. What a living testimony to the effectiveness of a policy of educating Africans to take over responsibilities for taking care of their own.

Apart from its major work among the Iramba and Tutu people, Augustana played an important role in the development of the Lutheran church in the whole country (now called Tanzania), since it had been assigned responsibility for all of what became known as Former German Missions. At first missionaries from the Scandinavian mission societies came to help, and later missionaries from Germany were invited to come as well. The help was certainly welcomed, but it was not very well coordinated.

The answer to that lack of coordination was supplied by Augustana, which sent its Director, Dr. Swanson, to install Dr. George N. Anderson as General Director of both the Augustana Mission and the Former German Missions. It was a good choice, for George Anderson was a man with vision and administrative ability. The work in Tanzania became a fine example



regarding relations between sending agencies in the West and the young churches of Tanzania, demonstrating excellent cooperation between some sixteen mission societies and churches in the West and the church in Tanzania, divided as it became into several judicatories.

Over the years, the involvement of Augustana in Tanzania decreased and the involvement of the European churches increased, but that was not an indication of less missionary interest on the part of Augustana. Historically the European churches had a greater stake in the welfare of the church in Tanzania, and Augustana, now a part of a widespread missionary involvement around the world in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, continues its strong witness in obeying the mandate of our Lord to go to all the nations.

George L. Olson's Story

by George L. Olson, '49

Jesus seemed to speak directly to me:

"Come follow me, and I shall make you a fisher of men."

Only a week earlier something strange had occurred. Because of the War, the government had decreed that the whole nation go on Daylight Saving Time. But my father, following past Indiana custom, mistakenly moved our clocks ahead on Saturday night instead of Sunday. Mom, dad, and I arrived an hour early for church. Rather than return home, we stayed for Sunday School.

"I was headed for Indiana University and a career in law, but was that really what Jesus wanted me to do?"

Mr. Carl Holm, secretary at the Gary YMCA, was teaching the high school class about Luke 10. The words "Do not take a purse or bag or sandals" grabbed my attention. Born into an upper middle-class grocer's home, what had I ever sacrificed for Jesus? I was headed for Indiana University and a career in law, but was that really what Jesus wanted me to do? The following week was a time of searching prayer. The next Sunday Pastor Ragnar Moline shared in his sermon his own prayer that someone from Bethlehem Church would answer Jesus' call to become a pastor and someone a missionary. I guess Jesus had both those callings in mind for me. I applied to Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, and later studied at the seminary there. While in seminary two Chinese students brokered my first date with Miriam Burton. In 1948, leap year, we got engaged and married in '49 after ordination.

Call to Mission

My first call was to China, with Japan as a back-up option. We went to Yale for a year of Chinese study and switched to Japanese in the summer of '50. That September, we sailed on the SS President Cleveland for Yokohama and five months of language study in Tokyo. At the urgent request of Pastor Kiyoshi Watanabe, we moved to Hiroshima, March 1, 1951, to help him re-establish his church amidst the atomic ruins. From late 1952 until 1965, we carried on pioneer rural evangelism in nearby Saijo and environs. Until we moved there with Pastor Takeo Seno, there had been no Christian church among the 130,000 people of Kamo County. We dug in for the long haul, combining evangelism with rural schools of life and kindergarten, and many home meetings in villages.

Evangelism Through Mass Media

Upon returning from furlough in '61, the Sanyo District asked me also to direct the Lutheran Hour Center in Hiroshima. Along with responsibilities in the mission and heading up the national church's social welfare department, I increasingly realized the great potential of

mass media for evangelism.

In 1965, the national church assigned me to become the first director of a new mass media research office, to be opened up in Tokyo under the auspices of the Lutheran World Federation Broadcasting Service. After one year of study leave, I established the Lutheran Office of Communication, Tokyo. Research included an inventory of Christians in the media industries, analysis of how Lutherans related to the mass media, Sunday School children and the mass media, religious coverage in national and local newspapers, motivational surveys of newly baptized and of seekers not yet baptized, and women and the media. We regularly published *Mass Media Report* and a guide to meaningful movies and stage plays.

During 1972-79, our staff carried out the Japan Multimedia Evangelism Project, combining research, lay training, lecture meetings, music camp, pop music concerts, movies, radio and a 25 week national network TV series on *Mothers of the World*. The LWF office always promoted ecumenical cooperation, and I have been active in the Asia Region of the World Association for Christian Communication (AR-WACC) and edited the *Japan Christian Quarterly*, 1982-89. Also we promoted Asian pan-Lutheran cooperation through triennial mass media study institutes, which in 1983 organized into Lutheran Communications in Asia (LUCIA). This I still serve by editing *Asians Share in Action* (ASIA). From 1979 to 1990, I also was associate pastor at Yukigaya Church in Tokyo. In 1977, I was one of the founders of a citizen's movement called *Forum for Children's Television*, now *Forum for Citizen's Television* (FCT). In 1980, we introduced Television Awareness Training (TAT) to Japan, and AR-WACC made me regional coordinator for this until 1993. I now edit *Asian Media Alert* which comes out twice a year.

Full Circle

A key element in my retirement game plan is a trip to Japan twice a year for consultations about the ongoing work. The call to be a "fisher of men" stays with me. Although I never was able to reach China, since 1980 I have been involved in the creation of the Kairos Communication Service based in Alhambra, California, which broadcasts daily to China and soon will be into video and karaoke production.

Thus far, the highlight of retirement was the return to Gary for a cluster reunion. At graduation in '42, I had given the prayer. Now, forty-nine years later, I again was asked to offer a prayer. Life had come full circle. Even though we had been in Japan forty years, my boyhood friends still asked me to pray for them. Thanks be to God! (Psalm 71)

Gary was my home. Dad and his three brothers ran the Olsons' Service Stores. Home was a secure, happy, and often humorous place. I knew I was loved, so I can never tire of praising mom and dad. Although hard to see me leave for the Far East, they always backed us and prayed for our mission to tell of Jesus, the Savior, to the people of Japan, China and Asia.

*"Jesus seemed to speak directly to me:
Come follow me, and I shall make you
a fisher of men."*



Characteristics of World Mission in Our Augustana Heritage?

by Carl Beyerholm, '55

While I am mainly familiar with East African work, I'm sure these five points apply to wherever Augustana has adventured:

1. *The centrality of Jesus Christ as Lord of life, given for us and for our salvation; although there are some voices today calling such theology "spiritual imperialism", we stand by the most ancient Christian creed "Jesus is Lord".*
2. *A holistic ministry for people, touching spirit, mind and body.*
3. *A respect for and the valuing of the language of the people to whom we are sent, and use of that language in our work.*
4. *A respect for and valuing of the stories, legends, proverbs and music of the people among whom we live and work, as ways to understand them and as points of contact in witnessing to Christ.*
5. *The encouragement of and development of indigenous leadership as a way to strengthen congregations and Churches.*

Augustana's global mission heritage came out of times of spiritual awakening . . . and resulted in spiritual adventuring. Today we need to keep on contributing to our present day Church out of that same depth of being alive in Christ.

I R E M E M B E R . . .

The family spirit of Augustana which came as a result of having just one seminary, having class ordinations, and the mobility of pastors from Coast to Coast, and from Canada to Mexico. In my ten years in parish ministry, I served in Los Angeles and Duluth and had calls from Texas, Connecticut and places in California.

The great leaders and personalities we had as role models, such as Conrad Bergendoff, '21, P.O. Bersell, '06, Wilton Bergstrand, '35, S. E. Engstrom, '32, and many others.

Appearing before the Synod Ministerium at an annual Synod Convention prior to my ordination and having as my "shepherd" O. O. Gustafson. As I walked to the platform to be interrogated, he said, "You have nothing to worry about." I passed.

The opportunities to develop my skills as a leader in a new mission congregation in Los Angeles, and having as my mentors Carl Segerhammar, '32, and Ted Matson, '31.

My early awareness of Augustana's World Mission Emphasis through attending Saturday Junior Mission Band meetings. My mother saw that I did not miss a meeting.

- - A. G. Fjellman, '45

Class Reunions of Augustana Seminary

Class of 1947

Will meet at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago the weekend of June 7 and 8. Festivities include a banquet and the LSTC commencement.

Class of 1952

Twenty-two classmates and spouses made a pilgrimage to Tanzania in January, 1997.

Class of 1957

Plans are being developed.

Class of 1962

Reunion will be at the Mt. Olivet Retreat Center, Lakeville, MN, June 3-5. Co chairs are Hugh Gilmore (612 472 3805) and Lynn Strand (612 476 2871).

Memoirs and Essays

The following persons have contributed with articles and anecdotes to the section of the Augustana Heritage Newsletter called "Memoirs and Essays."

Thank you for contributing to the Augustana Lutheran Church in this special way and for sharing your memoirs with us!

Louis Almen '50
Millard Ahlstrom '49
Majorie Axelton
Conrad Bergendoff '21
George Bernard '34
Paul Berggren '42
Wilton Bergstrand '35
Charles Bergstrom '48
Carl Beyerhelm '55
DeVere Blomberg
Perry Carlson '42
Herbert Chilstrom '58
Theodore Conrad '28
Ada Dahlsten
A. G. Fjellman '45
George Hall '34
Raymond Hedberg '44

Richard Hillstrom '42
Eldon Johnson
Reuben Lundeen '46
Erlanne Lundgren
Carl Manfred '43
Eugene Nelson '41
Robert Nordlander '46
George Olson '50
Oscar Rolander '44
Robert Segerhammar '47
Glenn Stone '52
Verner Strand '54
Byron Swanson '56
Stanley Swanson '45
Donald Trued '55
David Vikner '44
Thomas Wersell '42



**Do not miss reading this issue's contributions
of memoirs and essays entitled:
*I R E M E M B E R . . .***

Augustana Heritage Festival of Faith



September 20, 1997
Mamrelund Lutheran Church
Stanton, IA

Schedule:

- 9:00 a.m.** Reception and Reunion
Swedish Heritage and Cultural
Center, Stanton, IA
- 10:30 a.m.** Hymn Sing
led by Joseph Dahlquist '45 Duluth, MN
- 11:00 a.m.** Worship Service
Augustana Liturgy
Liturgist, Joseph Dahlquist
Preacher Reuben Swanson '51, Omaha,
NE
Choral works
- 12:00 p.m.** Heritage Luncheon
"Remembering the Gifts of Augustana"
Master of Ceremonies:
John Swenson '65, Red Oak, IA,

For more information, please call 1-800-635-1116

The Planning Committee is:

Yvonne Johnson (chair) and John Lind, Clarinda, IA; Wayne Almquist and Regina Wallin, Essex, IA; Pat Tillman (secretary) and Carolyn Allen, Pastor John Swenson '65 and Joanne Nelson, Red Oak, IA; Pastor Eric Kutzli, Octavia Levine, Robert and Myra Johnson, Norma Anderson, Stanton, IA.; and Donald Peterson, Director of the the Swedish Heritage and Cultural Center, Stanton, IA.

The Augustana Heritage Newsletter

is established to remember and honor the heritage of the Augustana Lutheran Church and Augustana Seminary.

If you are you planning to...

meet with Augustana alumni/ae or travel together to celebrate an Augustana Church or Heritage related event, please let us know. We would welcome photos and information about all those events for publication in the Augustana Heritage Newsletter.

Augustana Heritage Sesquicentennial Gathering



September 18 - 21, 1998

(Note the date change from previous announcements)

Chautauqua Institution

Chautauqua, NY

Registration:

Friday, September 18, 1998, at 1 pm

Speaker: Bishop Herbert Chilstrom

The Planning Committee includes:

Paul Cornell, Collegeville, PA, chair; Lillian O. Carlson, Bonnie M. Firth, Charles Gustafson, Gerald Heglund, Phyllis Lindstrom, Laurie Livingston, Lillian Nelson, Marshall Nelson, Evelyn Paulson, Durand Peterson and Kenneth Soderquist, all of Jamestown, NY; Mildred Carlson, Harriet Johnson and Curt Westrom, Bemus Point, NY; Fanchon Fuller, Falconer, NY; Robert Mansbach, Oneonta, NY; George Simpson, Yorktown Heights, NY; Betty Cornell, Collegeville, PA; Rebecca Cedrone, Chandlers Valley, PA; Ray Forstrom, Youngsville, PA; Alice Gates, Houtzdale, PA; Charles Lundquist, Youngstown, OH; Bud and Jean Swanson, Lyndhurst, OH; Donovan Palmquist, Plymouth, MN.

Contribute to the Sesquicentennial Gathering!

As of January 1, 1997, 126 Patrons for the Gathering from 21 states had sent in contributions. *The Patron list will remain open through April 30, 1998.* One of the patrons, John Breck, wrote in his note: *When you are my age - 82 - you don't even buy green bananas. And here I am sending \$'s to help undergird an event in September of 1998! Please join John and send your contribution of \$10.00 or more to:*

"Augustana 1998" Scandinavian Studies Program
Jamestown Community College
525 Falconer Street
Jamestown, NY 14701