



May 1998  
Volume 3, Number 4

# Augustana Heritage NEWSLETTER

*A publication of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago*

## SPECIAL EMPHASIS

### Augustana Heritage

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A Reflection on  
Mark 8: 34-35, 9:33-35

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Escanaba, MI  
June 20, 1998

Sesquicentennial  
Heritage Gathering  
Jamestown, New York  
September 18 - 21,  
1998

*This issue of the Augustana Heritage Newsletter is dedicated to the reflection and remembrance of the lives and missions of the Augustana Lutheran Church. When one wonders what has happened to the spirit of Augustana, these stories remind us that it is very much alive in the church today. The Augustana Lutheran Church has given us deep roots of faith that continue to bear the fruit of the Good News in our lives and in the church.*

### **The Beat Goes On** **A Reflection on Mark 8:34-35, 9:33-35**

*Reuben T. Swanson '51*

Our only son graduated from high school in 1971. During his senior year, I could hardly wait for the day when he would leave home to attend college for one reason. Just as his peers, he had a record player that I was convinced had only one volume (loud), could be tuned to only one station (rock and roll) and had no "off" button or knob. The music he played had a distinct beat; it seemed to permeate our home; it came through the floor; it was in the walls, and I believed I could feel it in the headboard of my bed. It went on and on and on. Most of you will remember that during the years of which I speak, there was a song that popularized the beat—it was: "And the beat goes on".

Today, I want to remind you of a beat that is even more a part of yours and my lives than the one made by the music played by our son about thirty years ago. I'm referring, of course, to the reverberating beat of the call of Christ to be His disciples and the continuing beat of the message and emphases of the former Augustana Lutheran Church.

**The first beat that permeates our Augustana heritage and reverberates in our legacy heralds the call of a healthy pietism.**

Jesus said that anyone who wanted to come with Him must forget himself, carry his cross and follow Him. That seems like a simple request, but heeding those words prompts one to adopt a lifestyle akin to that of our Lord—a lifestyle, though pock-marked by sin, is characterized by an unrestricted commitment to loyalty and faithfulness to Christ. That describes the healthy pietism taught and advocated by the former Augustana Lutheran Church.

A number of years ago, I called on a senior pastor of our Nebraska Synod who because of the infirmities of age was pretty much homebound. We chatted

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about his call to the ministry and his service in the church. There was much regret that he could no longer take his place among the ranks of active church members. I'll never forget his words at the end of our visit and conversation when he said, "I can't do anything now but I am still faithful; I can pray." He made no apology for the fact that he knew being a follower of Christ demanded a certain life-style, even in retirement.

Something similar happened in the first years of my ministry while making a call on a parishioner, homebound because of painful arthritis. Her hands were gnarled and knotted. I couldn't shake them. I could only lightly touch. She couldn't do what she once did to evidence her faith, but she said, she prayed. Her faith demanded action and works.

Lars Paul Esbjorn, a founding leader of our Augustana Church, was the first ordained Lutheran pastor to come to America from Sweden. Oscar N. Olson, a chronicler of the early years of our former church body wrote that Esbjorn was greatly affected by the pietistic movement in Sweden that called for a greater understanding and appreciation for the Gospel. He believed his call and mission was to help people *to respond to the call of the Swedish church, to be a part of and active in it, and to respond to the call of the Spirit to be faithful to Christ so that in all of life there would be a consciousness of a fellowship with God.*

Last July, I went for a hair cut to a barber shop in Fort Collins, CO. In my conversation with the young fellow who was cutting my hair, he said he had been cutting hair for five years. He then asked what I had done before retirement. When I told him that I was a clergyman and had been a Lutheran pastor, he said, "That's a pretty good job, isn't it?"

That's not the faithfulness or piety for which Augustana pastors were prepared. They came to the seminary because of being called; they believed the Lord, and their church wanted them to be ordained ministers. Further, they believed they were expected to have a life-style that evidenced their response to that call.

In our Augustana Church, the call to be a pastor (just as the call to be a disciple) was just that—a call. It was not an urging to take up a people-oriented vocation as a career. Equal to and even greater than the emphasis upon academic preparation at our seminary was the on-going and ever-present reminder that students were responding to a call to serve God and God's Church. We were to be faithful to the Lord, whom without reservation we said was the head of the Church.

In the 60's and 70's, it was my privilege to serve as president of the Nebraska Synod. The experiences will be remembered as long as I live because of the impact it made on me when I met with church councils and congregations. Time and time again, I was inspired by the expressions of belief and faith and the appreciation expressed for what an educational institution of Augustana or a congregation of our tradition had meant to them. Augustana was permeated with pietism. Sometimes, we may have let it get out of hand, resulting in legalism and judgmentalism but far more often that pietism evidenced faithful-

ness—faithfulness to Christ and His church. **I can hear it! Can you hear the beat that heralds a call to a healthy pietism?**

**Secondly, this beat that permeates our heritage and reverberates in our legacy emphasizes a dedication to compassion.**

In the second portion of Scripture read before this sermon, the Lord told His disciples that if they were to be first in the kingdom they must make themselves last of all and be servants of all. Because of human nature, that's difficult to do but with the power of God's Spirit, we can be servants of those who need our care and concern; we can be servants of all. We are directed to that as disciples and servants of God.

Our former Augustana Church left a indelible legacy of care and concern. Though it was a small church, it established institutions of mercy and service far beyond what should have been its capability. There were hospitals and homes for the aged; there were family services and ministries to the handicapped. There were educational institutions; our seminary and our colleges. All of these were founded because of a compulsion to care and serve. One of the more memorable experiences of my ministry came in 1953. The impact of it has stuck with me and even haunts me to this day. Our Augustana Church sponsored a youth convention in Boston, Massachusetts to which I accompanied several youth from my parish. Just prior to the gathering, a tornado had brought havoc to an area just west of Boston. The conference leaders decided that an offering should be received to assist those who had been impacted by the tornado. The words of Dr. Melvin Hammarberg still ring in my ears, when he ended his offering announcement, by saying, "Which would you rather be those who are being asked to give, or those who must receive?" Augustana had a compassion for those in need.

The importance of benevolence remittances by Augustana congregations is another evidence of concern and compassion. Few were the congregations that did not attain their allocation or fair share. It was a given that the expectations were to be an expression of the care and concern of the congregation for needs beyond its parish boundaries. As K.G. William Dahl, the founder of Bethphage, had said when he saw the plight of his friend, Gustaf, in a county home, "Augustana saw needs and said, 'Something must be done about them', and then did it."

The beat goes on; the beat that emphasizes a dedication to compassion. For many of us, it became part of our very being from the days of Sunday School and Junior Mission Band. That beat is ingrained in our lives. Our Christ and the Church of our Heritage call and expect no less than that we be servants. **I can hear the beat! Can you hear the beat that emphasizes a dedication to compassion?**

**Finally, this beat that permeates our heritage and reverberates in our legacy is the beat that evidences a commitment to discipleship.**

After a confrontation with Peter when Jesus had rebuked Peter for chiding his master that he shouldn't talk as he did (Jesus had said that he would have to suffer much after being rejected by the elders and church leaders), Jesus called the crowd and disciples together. Jesus said that anyone who wanted to save his own life would lose it, but whoever lost his life for Him and the gospel would save it. The Master was speaking of what is the essence of discipleship—giving oneself selflessly for the sake of the Kingdom.

To be a disciple is to faithfully represent. We see forms, perhaps aberrations, of discipleship in the spokespersons for celebrities, the rich and famous. Few in that category speak for themselves; they have emissaries or representatives who know when to speak and

when not to, who know what to say and what not to say. After the tragic accident in Paris around midnight, August 30, 1997, there were many who reported what had happened. I marveled at the spokesperson for the Fayad family. He was a master at communicating, saying enough but not too much, being a true disciple and representative of his employer.

To be a disciple is to give oneself for his/her cause. Even as individuals are called to give their lives for a cause, so too corporately, church bodies are called. The Augustana Church was as a true disciple; it gave itself for the cause of Kingdom unity. I want you to reflect back upon some of the positions taken by our former church body. Though isolationist in its first decades (when it perceived itself as primarily for immigrants from Sweden), beginning with World War I, it ventured into the ecumenical world. The last Augustana Heritage newsletter included an article written thirty years ago that tells of Augustana leaders meeting with Episcopal leaders in 1935. It was evidence of the willingness of our leadership to look beyond the doctrines and structures of our church.

In the late forties, Augustana was a member of the American Lutheran Conference. Because there wasn't a willingness on the part of other members to give up their identity for a more encompassing Lutheran union, Augustana withdrew and began the discussions that led to the formation of the Lutheran Church in America. It evidenced a willingness to give up life for the sake of the Kingdom. In the years preceding the formation of the E.L.C.A., history will record, I'm sure, that persons from the Augustana tradition gave crucial leadership to the formation of a new church, again, an evidence of willingness to give up life for the sake of the Kingdom.

Augustana was willing to give up its life and did and yet it lives. Is there any other church body from which groups such as this gather to thank God for a heritage, to recommit themselves to faithfulness and to share fellowship? It happened because our church was willing to give up its life and in doing so save it.

To be a disciple is to be telling/witnessing. There were our mission fields. Beginning within a year of its founding, Augustana joined with other church bodies in supporting already established fields. At the second synod gathering in 1861, the following resolution was adopted: "Whereas the extension of the Kingdom of God among the heathen is one of the chief concerns of the Church of Christ, therefore voted: that the officers of the Conference be asked to place this important matter before the Synod at its next convention with a request that a committee for foreign missions be selected and that the cause of missions be earnestly and zealously embraced."

After supporting established overseas mission fields by cooperating with other church bodies for more than 15 years, in 1878, Augustana sent its first missionary overseas. Pastor A. B. Carlson was commissioned to serve the Rajahmundry field in India. Then, with the turn of the century, came a surge of mission interest when work was started in Africa and China. There were the Hults, the Andersons, the Vikners, the Lindbecks, the Edwins, the Hansons, the Swensons and the list goes on. Between 1878 and 1962, the Augustana Church commissioned 242 missionaries to evidence its commitment to discipleship. **I can hear it! Can you hear the beat that evidences a commitment to discipleship?**

The beats we hear and for which we thank our God are marked by: Piety that is not legalistic. Confessionalism that is not arrogant. Church loyalty that is not blind pride. The beats we feel and for which we praise God herald a call to a healthy pietism, emphasize a dedication to compassion and evidence a commitment to discipleship.

To Almighty God be our praise and thanks for Augustana.

## Seeking the Heart of the Augustana Heritage

Donald C. Flatt '54

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Coming from outside in the Augustana Lutheran Church, in response to a call to missionary service in East Africa, I had a wonderful experience, both humanly and spiritually, in fellowship with a large family of very dedicated people. When I heard of the proposal to endow a chair at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago to perpetuate the Augustana heritage, I joined with many others in commenting that Augustana's most outstanding characteristic was its commitment to the mission of the Church, both at home and overseas, and suggested that the chair be a chair of Global Mission.

Growing up in the British Isles, between the world wars in a family that was constantly on the move, I was acutely aware of my parents concern in every location to find a congregation where they felt the Gospel was truly preached with life-changing power. Dr. Conrad Bergendoff had written of the Church of Sweden: "There was a loyalty to the Confessions and the liturgy.... on deeper level the orthodoxy of the official church was pietistic". (The Church of the Lutheran Reformation, Concordia, St. Louis, 1967, p 218). The Church of Sweden and the Anglican Church have long had a close relationship: it seems, however, providential that I was led to a ministry in the Augustana Lutheran Church rather than the Anglican Church. The following is an attempt to pay part of the debt I owe to my adoptive church family.

The name "Augustana" was, I understand, deliberately chosen to affirm loyalty to the Lutheran Church's confessional heritage. This formal orthodoxy, however, was combined with a pietism even stronger than in the Church of Sweden, since the American body was founded by immigrants to the United States much influenced by the revival movements in their homeland at the time. These were men deeply thankful for the salvation freely given by the grace of God in Jesus Christ. Their faith made them deeply committed to reaching out to the world in word and deed, in both inner-missions and world missions. In addition, they brought with them an ecumenical orientation which has been significant in assisting the coming together of different branches of Lutheranism in this country. This still is a factor in the ELCA's greater openness to closer relationships with other churches. This orientation also helped in coordinating the Lutheran missionary outreach in countries where the second world war disrupted the ministries of the German mission societies, and relationships with other denominations on the mission fields.

*It was providential that my fiancée travelled from England to Tanganyika (as it then was named) on the same ship as several Augustana missionaries, including Dr. Stanley and Edith Moris. That was the beginning of a long friendship. Whether the buffalo that charged me a year later, and Stan, who shot it and saved my life, were sent by God is an open question. What is certain is that three years later, when I was left with a motherless baby, it was the Augustana Mission to which I looked and found help. With a two month old child, I was transferred by a sympathetic government (my employer) to the Singida District, where Ruth Safemaster took care of my small child. The Morises had made a strong and generous offer, but they already had three very young children of their own. My little son was diagnosed hydrocephalic, and lived approximately fifteen months. After a brief leave, I was transferred out of the district. In the fall of 1944, Ruth Safemaster and I were married in Kinampanda.*

In 1948, I accepted a call to serve as an Augustana missionary under the National Lutheran Council, U.S.A., and began my service at the end of April 1949. This is how I came to know deeply and personally the special charisma of Augustana. Why did I accept the call?

It was a response to an urgent need, due to historical factors known to many members of the Church. The deciding factor was, however, the great respect for, and confidence in, the mission of Augustana. Bonds of fellowship had already been tied together. I, also, desired to pursue a more completely fulfilling vocation, in partnership with my wife. "The bystander sees most of the game!" Indeed I had had a grandstand seat. More, I was drawn into it by the sympathy, love and support I had received at a time of great loss and stress.

How should I characterize the ethos of the Augustana Church at that time, looking especially from its mission commitment? It cannot be done in generalities, since a major concern which permeated its life was that the one ministering should have a personal relationship with Jesus as Lord and Savior. The goal was that those being ministered to should be drawn into a similar fellowship with the Savior. This conviction expressed itself in all the various avenues of outreach—direct evangelism, education, medical mission literacy and literature, agricultural improvement and many other areas. The commitment to the Lord of the harvest also meant closeness between coworkers, both missionaries and Africans. The mission sought to draw into Christian fellowship all who might be in contact, with an outgoing warmth that flowed from the love of the Lord.

The natural, or rather supernatural, gracious and ecumenical spirit was fruitful for the rooting and development of the Church in Tanzania in many ways. It opened the door for the Africans to trust the missionaries. In the areas where the pioneers had been German citizens and loved as fathers in Christ, it made it possible for their replacements to be accepted without difficulty, for as long as their help was needed. In addition, it furnished a foundation for broad teamwork between various mission bodies from the Lutheran Churches in the U. S.A. and Europe, rallying around the fledgling African churches in a time of great need. This mutual trust enabled a comparatively rapid transfer of authority to the African sister churches in most of the areas evangelized by Lutherans.

Having been brought from outside, into the heart of the family, I have seen and have experienced our unique heritage. This judgment is not based solely on a possibly subjective experience in East Africa. It is also derived from the close friendship of many members of the Augustana fellowship in this country, both lay and clergy. It comes too from observing the operation of the Board of World Missions in the Twin Cities, the former Women's Missionary Society, and knowing first hand the fellowship of the seminary faculty in Rock Island and later at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago. Surely these men and women admirably carried on the legacy of the pioneers to bear new fruit in their time.

I am dedicating these thoughts to the memory of my late wife, a great missionary and loyal partner for nearly 48 years, Ruth Elizabeth (nee Safemaster). If I had to name someone else among my many gracious friends it would be a very hard choice! It might be Stan Moris, without whose steadiness and courage I might not be here now, or Dr. George Hall, steadfast professor, pastor and missionary, who gave me the final push which took me to the seminary, or one of a large number of outstanding people. Yet, I cannot avoid naming Dr. Everett Arden, church historian and Augustana Seminary faculty member, a man of sweet disposition and another dear friend, who especially helped me understand the spirit and charisma of this Church, and who died in a tragic highway accident while on vacation in my homeland. Long live the spirit of Augustana!

If you would like to contribute to the Augustana Heritage Newsletter  
with an "I Remember" article,  
please send it to:

*The Augustana Heritage Newsletter*, The Editor,  
1100 East 55th Street, Chicago, Illinois 60615

## When Does Junior Mission Band Meet?

*Donald Conrad '54*

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Dad has just finished making the announcements with "Are there any other announcements?" when David Olson responded with "When does Junior Mission Band meet?" There was kind of a chuckle in the congregation, but that was Augustana.

Missions, missions, that was the most important word in the faith. Yes, as the pastor's child, I had to sit down in the front every Sunday. Each month there was a Saturday afternoon meeting when the Sunday School children met and learned about the three mission fields; Africa (Tanganyika, in those days), China and India and about our missionaries there. We learned some of the "heroes" names: Elmer Danielson, Herbert Magney, George Anderson, Ralph Hult, David Vikner, Minnie Tack, Dr. Betty, Nels Benson, Anton Lundeen, Agnes Christianson and many more names that I cannot recall now. I think the afternoon finished with Kool Aid and cookies. Junior Mission Band interfered with Saturday play, but was understood as being integral to being Christian.

During my childhood days, the mystery and lure of China prompted me to create my own map of China larger than those in the home atlas which I mounted on my closet door. After I started tithing from my newspaper route earnings, Dad asked what I was going to do with the amount not yet put into offerings. The answer was simple, "Send it to the Board of Foreign Missions." And S. Hjalmar Swanson always sent me a nice letter of thanks. One time I also received a book on David Livingstone. I always claimed I was almost born in Tanganyika, because Dad debated whether his first call should be to Tanganyika (with Elmer Danielson) or to St. Luke's in Chicago. Chicago was the place of my birth. Coming out of seminary, pastors were to await some small congregation or be capable of starting a new mission for the Church.

I became especially proud when Mother was elected President of the Minnesota Conference of the Women's Missionary Society. There were times when conversations addressed the problem of the "great" amounts of money which the WMS had. These funds became important, even essential, for the expansion of the Church's work in the U.S.A., as well as overseas. The national Augustana budget seemed to be "threatened" by the capabilities of the women to raise money through WMS. WMS always seemed to have money when the national Church had to struggle. (In passing, let me recall how great concern was voiced at an annual Conference meeting when three or four or six congregations in the Conference did not fulfill the financial responsibility expected of them. 100% support or more was the norm then.)

In this connection, I want to point out the significance of the perspective for missions which Elmer Danielson professed and demonstrated. I have learned that his objective, from the start, was not to "colonize" but to develop an indigenous Tanganyikan church. More than 40 years of his life were devoted to that mission. It is my perception that he saw this come to fruition to the point that his last years in Africa placed him very much in a servant role for that strong Lutheran Church.

Throughout my ministry, opposition has been voiced by church councils and boards to giving money to "outside" places, to "others". The needs at home often lured thinking toward saying that we do not have enough at home, so we cannot afford to give to others. But I/we grew up under the influence that "we've a story to tell to the nations", and it would be virtually unchristian not to support missions. We were taught to believe it was: **Missions, Missions, Missions!!**

## The Christmas Offering

Howard Palm '49

Fringe benefits, in the call document for a pastor, were unheard of items during most of the history of Augustana. The typical wording in the official call stated the annual salary, use of the parsonage and a Christmas offering.

The Christmas offering was vital for the maintenance of the parsonage life style. Stories are told that pastors and their families would compare notes about the results. More notable was the manner in which it was gathered.

The main service of Christmas typically was held early on the day of the festival. Just about everyone came and the church was filled to capacity. After the sermon, the pastor discreetly disappeared. One of the patriarchs of the congregation came to the front of the church and announced that this was the time for the Christmas gift to the pastor and his family.

Two other men, definitely of patriarchal caliber, moved a small table so it stood at the foot of the center aisle, right in front of the curved communion rail. A huge bowl, much larger than an offering plate, was centered exactly on the table. Then these two chieftains of the flock stepped down into the center aisle and marched out to the vestibule. The word 'narthex' was not Lutheran in those days.

There they organized in ranks the deacons and trustees, all male, of course. These men then proceeded, single file, up the center aisle on their way to the big bowl on the table. The people in the pew were digging in their pockets for a dime or possibly a quarter. But then these elders began their procession of respect and admiration for their pastor. We realize now that we were witnessing a sanctified motivation in giving. Each man had extracted a bill from its hiding place. Each held the bill out in front of him, ready to deposit it in the bowl. The bill was even folded the long way so if one studied it carefully one could see its denomination. This was a big moment in the service as each man passed our pew. We whispered to our brother, "Did you see that? Charlie Swanson is giving the preacher a five dollar bill!"

In the meantime, the two men who had organized the procession were now vacating the crowded balcony, and those folks were soon moving down the aisle. Eventually, everyone who had gathered for Christmas worship had made the walk to the altar to fulfill that phrase in the call once extended to the pastor.

All was complete. Everyone had their opportunity. The two men who seemed to control the operation showed up again, picked up the big bowl and walked out the center aisle. Evidently, their final task was to count the money.

Then, somehow, the pastor seemed to know that he was to show his face again and he came out of hiding and stood before the altar. There were prayers about God's Great Gift, the Lord's Prayer was prayed and then he intoned the Benedicamus and Benediction.

### THE AUGUSTANA HERITAGE ENDOWMENT UPDATE

As of March 31, 1998, approximately \$1,400,000 has been committed toward the endowment for the **Augustana Heritage Professorship for Global Missions at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.**

Thanks to the hundreds of people who have made commitments toward the Endowment.

## Scouting in Augustana

Harry Victorson '40

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As a part of its focus on youth, Augustana embraced scouting. Since the scouting idea didn't come with the immigrants from Sweden, our church folks were not aware of how the Boy Scouts of America could be used to develop character, increase faith in God and be of service to one's neighbor. So, it was to be expected that the adoption of scouting by Augustana as a part of its youth program came after a thorough study, much discussion and numerous meetings.

It took some argument on the part of those interested to persuade others that the BSA was not militarily oriented, that it was not in competition with the church but a movement we could use to enhance our own objectives in the work among boys. The BSA doesn't own or operate a single unit. Each is governed by the institution that sponsors it; a fact not easily learned at the time.

A pamphlet on scouting in the Lutheran Church issued by the American Federation of Lutheran Brotherhood declared, "Scouting is international in its scope, not military in principle and an emissary of peace and international good will." When Dr. Conrad Bergendoff was president of Augustana College, he wrote a brochure for the National Lutheran Committee on Scouting in which he said, "Thank God for the scout movement which takes our boys, if even for a brief moment, out from the ugly, dirty streets which man has made, into the open spaces where the birds sing, brooks play and sky is blue. God gave us a wide, wide world in which to behold his work. We glue our eyes to our own works and are blind to the greatness of the Creator. A church which proclaims 'I believe in God, the Creator, Maker of heaven and earth' ought to welcome a movement which teaches the boys of the church something of that Creator's work."

There was a saying back then, "Boys are our business." Hundreds of laymen came into the picture because the emphasis on boys was so crucial to our future. Encouraged by pastors, our laymen provided leadership. When clergy and laity realized scouting could be used by the church to achieve some of its goals, things went smoothly.

It was a pleasure to sit in on sessions when the clergy, church council and scouts met together to review the meaning of scouting in the church. It was understood in Augustana that the aim of scouting was to assist our boys to develop mentally, physically, and spiritually within the framework of Christian education.

As an added incentive toward spiritual growth and development, the scouts were offered the opportunity to participate in the Pro Deo et Patria program. In the 1944 issue of *Scouting in the Lutheran Church*, published by Augustana Book Concern, was a description of the eligibility for the Pro Deo et Patria project.

The program states, "A scout will demonstrate his knowledge of the cardinal doctrines of the church, give evidence of daily Bible reading and regular church attendance and present a satisfactory Sunday School attendance record. A special project, approved by the pastor, will be assigned when a candidate for the Pro Deo et Patria Award has been approved by the proper authorities."

This award is not a merit badge in scouting. It is a church award by the church for the boys of the church. Among the projects were building a model sanctuary, installing an interoffice communication system, making bulletin boards, planning in-house direction signs, design-

ing and building special furniture for handicapped people and landscaping around the church building. The project also produced manuscripts on church history, the Reformation, the life of Jesus Christ, present church leaders and the life of Martin Luther.

The Lamb Award came into existence later. It is the Lutheran religious award for those adults considered worthy of such recognition. Here the individual does not seek the award, the award seeks the individual. This award has been bestowed on many of our Augustana people. It is the participation of such adults that assure success in all programs of scouting; cub, boy and exploring.

The Augustana Brotherhood supported and promoted the scouting movement on behalf of the Synod. In 1937, it was reported " 'Boy's work' has had a prominent part in the program of the Brotherhood of the Augustana Synod. During the past year, we have cooperated with the American Federation of Lutheran Brotherhood in preparing a pamphlet entitled *Scouting in the Lutheran Church*." We respectfully petitioned the Synod to endorse and recommend *Scouting in the Lutheran Church*. The Synod did so heartily.

The spirit of Augustana was evident as scouting developed into an integral part of our program for boys, a good number of whom entered the ministry because of the faith and concern shared by dedicated leaders.

**TRAVEL WITH US TO THE  
AUGUSTANA HERITAGE  
SESQUICENTENNIAL GATHERING...**  
FUN AND FELLOWSHIP GUARANTEED ALONG THE WAY.

Chartered buses will depart from **Minneapolis, Omaha and Rock Island** on Tuesday, **September 15** and from Chicago on **September 16**. For reservations and schedules, call **JADE TREE TRAVEL, Bloomington, MN 1-800-653-8733** and ask for Katherine. The charter includes motel accommodations for five nights (four from Chicago); four breakfasts, one lunch (guests of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago) and one dinner. Also included are visits to the Lutheran Center (ELCA), Chicago; the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and other sightseeing stops. Roundtrip cost from Minneapolis, Omaha and Rock Island is \$570; from Chicago it is \$540. Checks should be made payable and sent to: **JADE TREE TRAVEL, 3500 WEST 80th STREET, BLOOMINGTON, MN 55431 ATTN: Katherine**. Passengers may board along the bus routes, i.e. Des Moines, Iowa City, Rockford, Madison, etc. The following persons will coordinate plans from each departure area: **Minneapolis**--Thomas Wersell, 5124 Tifton Drive, Edina, MN 55439 (612-941-1980); **Omaha**--Keith Nelson, 120 South 24th Street, Omaha, NE 68102 (402-342-5728); **Rock Island**--Kai Swanson, Augustana College, Rock Island, IL 61201 (1-800-798-8100); **Chicago**--George Schelter, 1100 E. 55th St., Chicago, IL 60615, (1-800-635-1116, ext. 710).

For other information regarding the Augustana Heritage Sesquicentennial Gathering, contact Laurie Livingston at 716-665-5220, ext 350 (phone), 716-665-9110 (fax), or [livingla@JCCW22.cc.sunyjc.edu](mailto:livingla@JCCW22.cc.sunyjc.edu) (email).

## Augustana Heritage

✠ Robert E. Segerhammar '47

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When I was a senior seminarian in 1947, as the time came for the graduates to meet with the ministerium for questioning and approval for ordination, I lay in the hospital with virus pneumonia. A seminary professor called on me. To prepare me for the ministerium experience, he asked if I had a personal experience with Christ and knew that I possessed salvation. When I assured him that this was so, he asked if this personal faith relationship was going to be the main emphasis in my preaching and in my ministry.

The professor's inquiry expresses one of the salient factors in our Augustana heritage. Reflecting the impact of the Swedish pioneers' pietism, this emphasis upon a personal faith relation with Christ was important in the Augustana Lutheran Church. It is reflected in the hymns that were commonly sung, but not so often heard today in our churches: "Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross," "I Look Not Back," "Abide with Me," "Draw Me, O Lord, to Thee," and "O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee," to name a few. No doubt there are many in the ELCA who have this same personal relationship, but the present style of worship and hymn selection that is common in the churches I attend as a retired pastor perhaps offer less opportunity to express faith in that personal way.

And yet, although in Augustana, we had a personal faith emphasis which could be called subjective in character, in our worship services there was a sense of God's presence and the dignity of worship, stressing an objective reference and represented by the stateliness of the Augustana liturgy and such chorales as "Holy Majesty, Before Thee, We Bow to Worship and Adore Thee" and "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates. Behold the King of Glory Waits." These things are not absent now, of course, but today there are many styles of worship some of which place less emphasis on beauty of language and loftiness of expression. I'm not saying Augustana worship was better, but what we took for granted then, we now see as a precious heritage.

Another part of our heritage is the strong emphasis on missions. We no longer have the Women's Missionary Society, the Young Women's Missionary Society, the Junior Missionary Society and the healthy focus these organizations gave to the challenge and support of missions around the world. In Augustana, there was an excitement about a new building going up on a mission field or the sending of a new missionary or mission nurse that gets little notice these days. Again, there are most likely many in the ELCA who support missions and consider this thrust of the Church to be central in their view of the Kingdom, but it seems to me that there was an emphasis and an excitement about missions in Augustana that is largely absent now.

Others will remind us of things in our heritage that I have not mentioned...perhaps things that are more profound. Mine are simple things, but they are cherished, I'm sure, by many.

\*\*\* The Rev. Robert E. Segerhammar was received to the eternal joy of heaven, on December 31, 1997. \*\*\*

**Augustana Heritage Festival of Faith**

**June 20, 1998**

**Bethany Lutheran Church**

**202 S. 11th Street**

**Escanaba, Michigan 49829**

**Coffee Hour--9:30 a.m.**

**Hymn Sing--10:30 a.m.**

**Worship Service --11:00 a.m.**

**Dr. Wilton E. Bergstrand, Preacher**

**Mass choir directed by John Beck**

**Festival Luncheon -**

**Pastor Robert Langseth, M.C.**

**For luncheon reservations,  
please send a check for \$8.00 per person to:**

**Augustana Heritage Festival**

**c/o Ralph K. Peterson**

**Bethany Lutheran Church**

**202 South 11th St.**

**Escanaba, Michigan 49829**

**Members of the Festival Planning Committee are:**

**Ellwood Mattson, Marquette, Michigan, Chair;**

**Edith Edberg, Iron Mountain, Michigan;**

**Marian Gronquist, Montreal, Wisconsin;**

**Lowell Holmgren, Ishpeming, Michigan;**

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**Ralph K. Peterson, Escanaba, Michigan;**

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**Pastor Robert Sutherland, Negaunee, Michigan**

**and Orice Walters, Iron Mountain, Michigan.**