

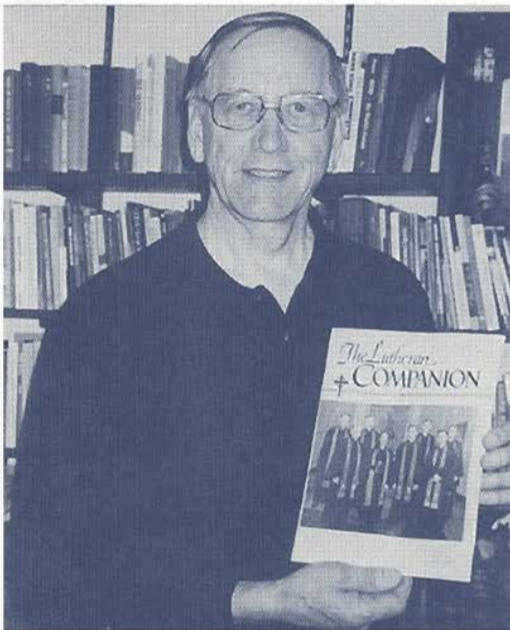


THE AUGUSTANA HERITAGE NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 1

MAY 2000

NUMBER 3



DONALD SJOBERG HOLDING THE JUNE 2, 1954 EDITION OF THE LUTHERAN COMPANION WITH HIS ORDINATION CLASS ON THE COVER. DR. OSCAR BENSON, PRESIDENT OF THE AUGUSTANA CHURCH, CONDUCTED THE ORDINATION.

Greetings from CANADA

A Message from Donald W. Sjoberg

have profound respect and continuing appreciation for their ministry. One of them, the late George Nelson (1948), is the reason I continued in school and became a pastor.

Next to the Texas Conference, the Canada Conference was the smallest in the church, and always seemed to be short of pastors. In 1952, 10 pastors were serving 42 congregations. The need for pastoral supply was acute, so we who were students at the Lutheran College and Seminary in Saskatoon were asked to combine seminary and university courses, in order to graduate sooner.

During my second year, I began serving a parish in Alberta on weekends, and continued as summer student. In the one congregation, one member had vehemently objected to "lawful occupations" in the general prayer, and approval was given for us to use "honorable occupations", which seemed to satisfy the man who did not want to pray for the "beer parlor". For all of the students, weekend supply and summer pastoral ministry was expected.

In the 1950's there were seven of us Canadians at the University of Saskatchewan and the seminary. We were the first pastors to be ordained in Canada with calls to congregations: Harold and Paul Eriksson (1952), Alfred Sander and Vern Sundmark (1953), Donald Sjoberg (1954), Vincent Eriksson (1957) and Ferdy Baglo (1958).

The president of the Augustana Lutheran Church, Dr. Oscar Benson, ordained me, assisted by Dr. Eric Wahlstrom,

continued on page 2

Greetings from friends in Canada and from those who remember the Augustana Lutheran Church, even after two mergers and nearly 40 years. Grace to you and peace.

We are 20 pastors and around 10,000 members in 35 congregations once a part of the Canada Conference. Thirteen of the pastors came from the United States and have put down deep roots in Canada -- two having been resident here over 50 years: Robert Pearson (1948), Floyd Johnson (1949), Edwin Bowen (1955), Delmar Christensen (1955), Corliss Holmes (1958), Ernie Loreen (1959), James Chell (1960), Paul Swedberg (1960), Robert Ek (1960), Leon Linquist (1961), Donald Miller (1961), Ted Chell (1963) and Robert Moland (1966). These are representative of about 200 pastors and students who responded to the need for pastors in Canada.

They came to the northern frontier, a move which caused some to wonder whether they were banished from America. I

Volume 1, Number 3
May 2000

Co-Editors

Arvid and Nancy Anderson

Designer

Terri Nielsen

**Please direct any newsletter inquiries
or manuscripts to:**

Arvid and Nancy Anderson
1234 Colonial Ave.
Roslyn, PA 19001
(215) 887-1224
arvinanc@aol.com

**For general information regarding the
Augustana Heritage Association
please contact Ruth Ann Deppe:**

AHA
1100 E. 55th Street
Chicago, IL 60615-5199
(800) 635-1116 ext. 712

Published by:

Augustana Heritage Association
1100 E. 55th Street
Chicago, IL 60615-5199

continued from cover

Dr. Otto Olson, Dr. Anton Nelson, and Rev. Uno Lundmark. I am astounded that these officials came on Palm Sunday to my home church in Erickson, Manitoba. Their presence left no doubt in my mind as to my place in the Augustana ministerium and the church's call to be a pastor. Signing the Articles of Faith at my ordination, my name and number was entered among the great company of pastors in the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church.

As an added reminder of our ties with the Church, we were approved at a colloquy at the seminary in Rock Island and assigned our first call, formalized by endorsement of the actual call. My letter of call was delayed several weeks because of an airline crash near Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. I still have the charred remains of the letter which was forwarded to me.

The sense of belonging to the Church in its many expressions was fostered not only in the ministerium but, as I discovered, in the piety and attitude in most congregations, one of whom was Augustana Lutheran Church in Edmonton where I was called upon my ordination.

But the Augustana identity did not stand in the way of cooperative work with other Lutherans, which often meant the transfer of congregations. In the two mergers which were to follow, all the former Augustana congregations continued their support in the new with an openness to that which best serves in our witness to the Gospel and service in the world. For that I am thankful and take courage. †

Donald Sjoberg was ordained in 1954. He served as Regional Director of the Board of American Missions in Canada from 1960-70. He became President of the Canada Synod in 1970 and the first Presiding Bishop of the LCA-Canada Synod.

Living in Winnipeg, Canada, Sjoberg serves as the Co-chair of the Augustana Heritage Steering Committee.

CONTENTS

Cover Greetings from Canada

by Donald W. Sjoberg

3 Augustana's Core Center and Expanding Circles

Editorial by Arvid E. Anderson

4 Augustana Lutherans in Canada

by Ferdy Baglo

12 The Education of P.O. Bersell

by George F. Hall

15, 16 Publications & Announcements

AUGUSTANA'S CORE CENTER & EXPANDING CIRCLES



ARVID AND NANCY
ANDERSON

BY ARVID E. ANDERSON

Augustana's "heritage and hopes" might be symbolized as expanding circles of influence from a core center. Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, in his book "Christ as Authority", quotes Einer Billing, the Swedish theologian, in "Our Calling" where he uses the image of Luther's thoughts that "...do

not lie alongside each other, like pearls on a string...held together only by common authority...but that they all, as tightly as the petals of a rosebud, adhere to a common center, and radiate out like the rays of the sun from **one** glowing core, namely, the gospel of the forgiveness of sins" (Billing p. 4).

The same image is reflected in Martin Luther's seal with the cross at the center and expanding circles all the way to eternity. The Genesis creation story has a similar shape: "In the beginning God created..." is the core center and the expanding circles go out through the days of creation. If one looks for an image in astronomy it might be the well known "big bang" theory in which the universe is created at a core center and continues on in an ever expanding universe.

The brightly shining center of Augustana can be seen in the masthead of this newsletter: "Biblia Sacra" and "Sola Fide", (sacred scriptures and faith alone) pointing to the center of our faith, "Christ Alone", which Bergendoff made as his own confessional statement in, "Christ as Authority" (1948).

Our heritage may best be preserved by tracing the pathways of the expanding circles which go out like ripples from Augustana's core center. These expanding circles of

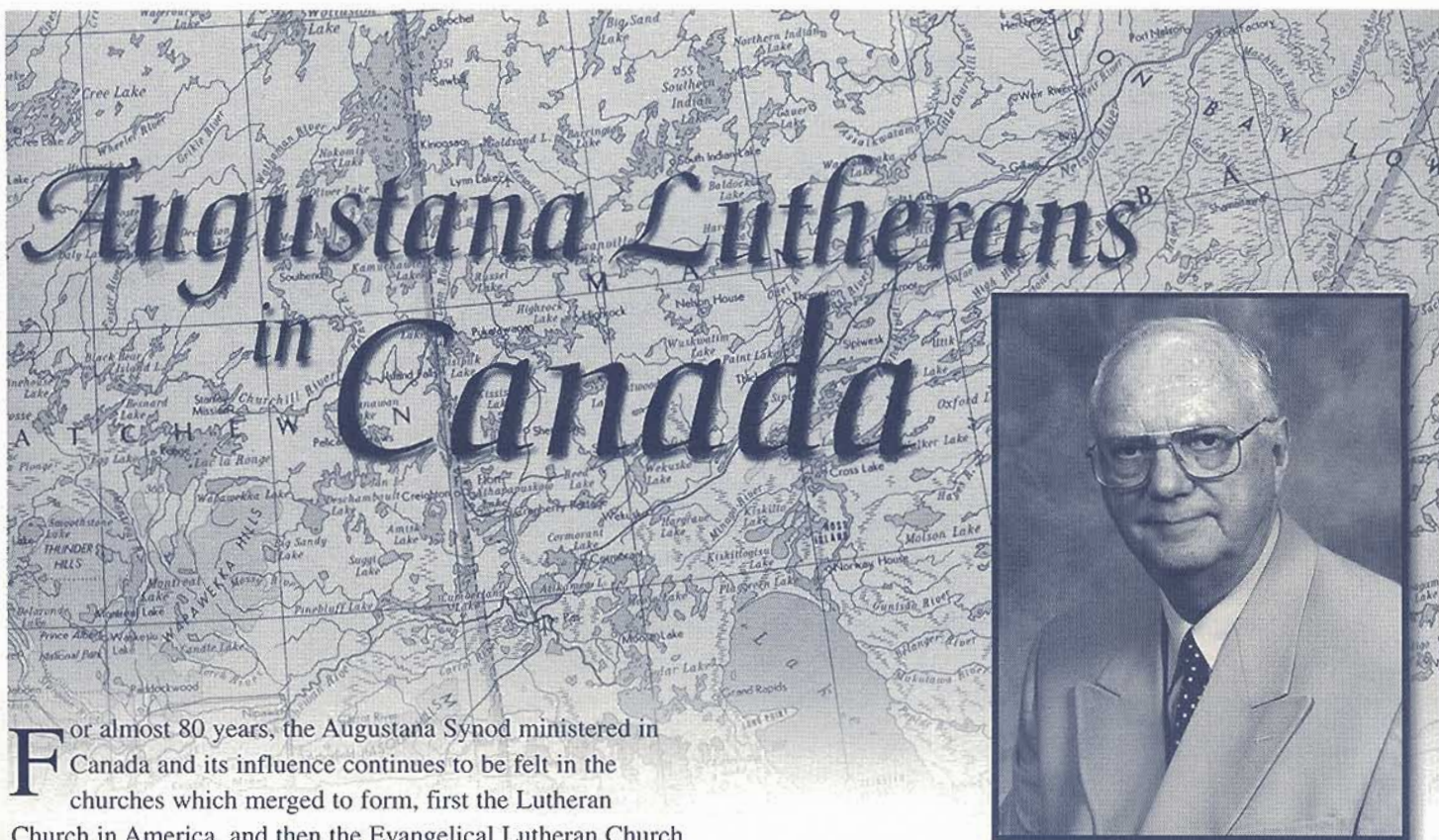
Augustana's influence can be traced from 1860 to the present day in our church and the world around us. The Newsletter provides a way for us to help preserve the heritage of Augustana, by sharing stories and reflections by those who are rooted in this heritage and continue to see the "hopes" of Augustana becoming reality as the circles of Augustana continue to make a mark for the witness of the gospel in both church and society.

In this issue of the Newsletter, we are privileged to read about the geographical circle of Augustana as it expanded into Canada in the early days, by way of the Minnesota Conference of the Augustana Church. Donald Sjoborg, a Canadian born pastor, brings us a greeting from Canada. He served as bishop of the Lutheran Church in Canada and is a co-chair of the Augustana Heritage Association. Ferdy Baglo, in his article, *Augustana Lutherans in Canada*, presents a history of the church. Baglo's fascinating story of Augustana in Canada is a stirring witness to the faith and dedication of those who led the way through tough times in the early days and into the vital life of the Lutheran Church in Canada today.

George F. Hall, who lives in Evanston, Illinois, shares a most engaging story about *The Education of P. O. Bersell* who was president of the Augustana Synod beginning in 1935. Hall is able to give us first hand accounts of his seminary days, and of his acquaintance with a number of Augustana's leaders during his ministry.

Ferdy Baglo, in his story of Augustana Lutherans in Canada, tells of P. O. Bersell's visit to the Canada Conference and the strong impression he made.

Core Center, Expanding Circles continued on page 15



For almost 80 years, the Augustana Synod ministered in Canada and its influence continues to be felt in the churches which merged to form, first the Lutheran Church in America, and then the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. The Synod provided a piety, spirit and leadership, second to none.

The history of Augustana in Canada is rife with periods of disappointment, disaster and defeat. Therefore, it is surprising that out of the turmoil of the early decades, such a vigorous and healthy church emerged in later years. It is a tribute to the clergy and laity who struggled against all odds to lay the foundation for and build a church presence in Canada. This history is dedicated to them.

In the Beginning, 1883-1900

In the early 1880s, the government of Canada and the Canadian Pacific Railway launched a vigorous advertising campaign in Sweden. There were promises of land grants, work animals and farm implements to any who would come. The government was motivated by a desire to settle the prairies in order to protect the 49th parallel from the threat of United States annexation which had been promoted by United States Senator, Charles Sumner, in 1868. Compared with the vast tide of settlers that came to the U.S., however, only a trickle came to Canada. Washington soon changed the immigration policy, and Swedes began to come to Canada in greater numbers. They were joined by many moving up from Minnesota to take advantage of free homesteads.

In the spring of 1883, Pastor Peter Sjoblom of Red Wing, Minnesota, received a letter from Mrs. Tobias Nelson of Winnipeg, Manitoba. She appealed for a Lutheran pastor to come and minister to the spiritual needs of Swedish immi-

grants in Canada. A team of three Minnesota pastors, led by Augustana patriarch, T.N. Hasselquist, headed for Winnipeg, Manitoba, in June 1883. They did not seem to be aware of Mrs. Nelson's letter, however. Rev. Hasselquist described the journey in the July 4 issue of *Augustana och Missionaren*. He was surprised to discover warm weather in the land thought to "belong to ice and bears." Evidently they made no contact with any Swedish immigrants and came home only with the impression that the hotels in Winnipeg "were filthy and expensive."

Several months later, the Rev. L. A. Hocanzon, in a direct response to Mrs. Nelson's letter, made the first of three trips to Winnipeg. He met a "water-carrier" named Petterson who introduced him to some Swedes and to a Methodist pastor who made his church available for a Swedish service and meeting. Despite a snowstorm and temperatures of eight below, a large number of Swedish immigrants gathered to hear the gospel and to receive the sacrament.

Hocanzon was appalled at the living conditions of the immigrants. He found them living in tar-paper shacks made of lumber ends. Women were left alone with their children while their husbands labored miles away. He visited one rooming house where stalls accommodated eight men each. He had come to baptize an infant and found each stall filled with men playing cards with whiskey bottles everywhere. "It was ghastly," he said.

Hocanzon's next visit was in the dead of winter and following a three-day rain which mired the street cars in frozen mud up to their axles. He spent the night in an unheated room. But the next day, 75 people turned out for the Sunday service.

On his third visit, the people pressed Hocanzon to establish a congregation in Winnipeg. He returned to Minnesota full of enthusiasm for the proposal of Augustana work in Canada. His hopes were dashed when Minnesota Conference officials told him that there was neither the manpower nor the means for it.

In 1885, the Augustana Synod, meeting in Rockford, Illinois, granted a Minnesota petition to the synod's mission board for an itinerant pastor to be sent to Canada. However, the board could find neither personnel nor funds, so the petition was referred back to the Minnesota Conference. In September 1885, in response to a conference appeal for pastor-volunteers, the Rev. Svante Udden traveled to Winnipeg, where he conducted a worship service with over 200 persons in attendance. He learned that the Mission Covenant Church was vigorously evangelizing among Swedish Lutherans. He returned to Minnesota to remind his brethren of their obligation to meet the spiritual needs of the Swedish Lutherans in Canada. He feared large numbers were "being drawn into Congregationalism."

In 1888, Udden was sent to Canada and assigned to visit Swedish settlements. He traveled as far east as Rat Portage (now Kenora), Ontario, and as far west as Medicine Hat, Alberta. He visited Swedish communities large and small. His report declared: "Swedish immigration to Canada has begun... Now we do not have to do mainly with a bunch of wild adventurers and railway bums, but the kind of people who have come here to settle down and build homes. May they not suffer the lack of a spiritual home illuminated by the clear light of God's Word."

In 1889, pastors of the Minnesota Conference began a "shuttle-service," volunteering a week or a month to minister to the lonely Swedish settlements. On October 3, 1889, one of the pastors, J.S. Ryding, presided at the organization of the first Augustana Lutheran congregation in Canada, New Stockholm Lutheran Church, Stockholm, Saskatchewan. One year later, on October 4, 1890, Pastor L.G. Almen of New London, Minnesota, presided at the organization of Sion Lutheran Church of Winnipeg. No further pastoral care was available to either congregation that winter.

In April 1891, Pastor Svante Udden re-visited Winnipeg to discover that an Anglican minister had almost persuaded the people to abandon the Lutheran faith and to join his church. He nipped this in the bud. Conference historian, J.E. Samuelson, wrote: "What a proselytizer's paradise Canada has been and still is."

On May 23, 1891, Pastor Almen presided at the organization of the third Augustana congregation in Canada, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, at Erickson, Manitoba.

In July 1892, Pastor Svante Udden accepted the call to become the first resident Augustana pastor in Canada. His salary was \$800 a year with parsonage and traveling expenses. He plunged into the work with great energy. On October 30, 1892, in Winnipeg, Udden took part in the dedication of the first Swedish Lutheran church building in Canada.

He traveled extensively throughout the prairies, visiting and ministering to Swedish settlements. He even took the train as far west as the Rocky Mountains, visiting settlements in the area now known as the Province of Alberta. The work was getting beyond him, so he pleaded with Minnesota Conference leaders for more pastors. Four came before the turn of the century, but each spent barely two years in his parish. Nevertheless, seven more congregations were established; church buildings were being erected; and people were receiving Word and Sacrament. When Udden retired from Canada in 1898 there were ten churches in five provinces.

Decade of Growth, 1900-1910

The first decade of the 20th Century proved to be the period of the greatest growth in the history of Augustana in Canada --- congregations were established in the area spanning from the Great Lakes to the Pacific. At the turn of the century, Canada boasted three resident ministers, ten congregations and a communicant membership of 796. During this first decade, fifteen pastors came to serve in Canada, however, their average stay was only two and a half years.

Pastors and students encountered a mixed welcome in the Swedish communities they visited. Some were grateful for their arrival, others rejected them. The clergy reported that other denominations were vigorously at work among Lutheran folk "sheep stealing" and were worried that Augustana would be shut out of many communities.

In 1902, the Rev. Per Almgren began a whirlwind ministry in Alberta. He had accepted the Synod's call to become Field Missionary. There were an estimated 10,000 Swedes in Alberta, of whom 175 were members of existing Augustana congregations. Building upon the five tiny congregations that had already been established, Almgren toured the province and founded seven more congregations during his four-year ministry.

Laypeople played a significant role in the mission work. The Hanna family established a ministry in Brightview. Mrs. Beda Hanna said: "Mother would send us children out to cut down pine branches. Then we cut them into small pieces and scattered them on the dirt floor of our log hut so that it would smell clean and fresh on Sunday. Mother conducted a type of Sunday School for us, instructing us in the catechism and

continued on page 6

Bible history. When father was home, he read a sermon by Luther every Sunday and led in singing hymns."

On February 19, 1906, tragedy befell Pastor Almgren, then 42. He had just completed a round of services at Pigeon Lake and was returning home in a horse and wagon. Some homesteaders were falling trees near the road. Without warning, a tree fell on the wagon killing Almgren almost instantly. He was the first of 14 pastors in Augustana's 79-year ministry who would be buried on the Canadian field. Almgren's successor, the Rev. Olaf Lindgren was the first pastor to remain in Canada for the entire length of his ministry and the first pastor to stay for a period longer than six years. In 1908, he organized two congregations, the same year that the Alberta Conference of the Minnesota Conference came into being.

Congregations were being established in other provinces. In Ontario, in 1906, churches were organized at Port Arthur and at Fort William (two cities that now form Thunder Bay) on the banks of Lake Superior. In rural Saskatchewan, the decade saw seven new congregations started. In British Columbia, churches in Vancouver and New Westminster were established following visits from Columbia Conference pastors, among them, Dr. C. Rupert Swanson. Other missions were begun in rural B.C. but due to the transient nature of Swedish settlers, none survived.

On March 10, 1910, Augustana Lutheran Church of Vancouver dedicated an impressive church building with seating for 750 worshippers. For many years, it was the largest Augustana church building in Canada.

The Canada Conference

Augustana in Canada continued to grow in the next decade, 1910-1920. There were several contributing causes. In the period, 1908 to 1915, the highest rate of immigration from Sweden was recorded -- 14,813 Swedes entered Canada. The Swedish language had been used almost exclusively in the Augustana churches in Canada until this time, but now a transition to English was beginning to take place. But the most significant event for Augustana during this period was the birth of the Canada Conference.

In 1909, the Rev. L. P. Bergstrom of Winthrop, Minnesota, had been called to become Mission Superintendent in Canada. Bergstrom presided as the number of Augustana congregations in Canada doubled and the communicant membership tripled. In 1910, he reported to the Minnesota Conference that he had traveled 12,093 miles by rail, 1000 miles by horse, and numberless miles on foot with his knapsack on his back. He reported that there were only six pastors and one traveling missionary for the twelve parishes spread from Edmonton, Alberta, to Port Arthur, Ontario. He demanded six more men immediately. Eventually 28 pastors answered calls to Canada during the decade, but the majority stayed for only two or three years.

In 1912, Minnesota Conference president Dr. J.A. Krantz was promoting the establishment of a Canada Conference. This was strange, because the Minnesota Conference had given thumbs down to the formation of a Red River Valley Conference, an area far more developed than Canada. Pastor Bergstrom opposed the idea, feeling it was too soon for such an organization.

At a meeting in Percival, Saskatchewan, July 25-28, 1912, pastors and delegates discussed the issue. Dr. Krantz later reported, "During this exchange of opinion it was seen that the situation and conditions on the other side of the border are peculiar to the provinces and the government under which they live. Whatever is not Canadian has for them a foreign and uninteresting stamp and this is true of our church activities there, as long as they are carried on from outside." The delegation petitioned the Minnesota Conference to permit the organization of a Canada Conference. The Alberta District, however, had met and voted to remain within the Minnesota Conference. Mission congregations were lining up with Pastor Bergstrom and the self-sustaining congregations with the Minnesota Conference executive.

The Percival petition passed and on May 23, 1913, at New Stockholm Lutheran Church, Stockholm, Saskatchewan, the Canada Conference was organized. Dr. P.A. Mattson, who had succeeded Dr. Krantz as president of the Minnesota Conference, chaired the meeting. Pastors and delegates from Alberta were conspicuous by their absence. Eventually, however, the district relented and became a significant part of the new conference. Pastor Claus Thunberg, the first Conference secretary said, "The organization of the Conference was like a shot in the arm... the people showed a great interest in the church's work... Many new members were gained." This, despite the fact that he said, some immigrants were antagonistic toward the church, and even those who did join were not given to evangelistic activity.

The Conference was divided into three districts: Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Ontario. Three area missionaries were assigned. The scattered Swedish communities required itinerant pastors. Pastor Thunberg said, "The people direct from Sweden were poor immigrants, starting 'from scratch'. Often things were more primitive with them. When they organized a congregation, it took time before things ran smoothly. The pastor had to use patience, tact and Christian love. Often, they had very little money so they couldn't give much, but they were always kind and hospitable. A farmer in Percival told me that every time his dog barked he was wondering if a bill collector was coming."

The number of pastors was growing, until in 1918 there were 18, the largest number serving in Canada until 1955. During the period, 1910-1920, 31 congregations were organized of these, only nine remain today. Vacancies, the mobility of population, and premature organization were to blame for the demise of so many mission congregations.

Montreal, Quebec, was the centre of immigration work in Canada for many years. Swedes formed a small colony in the midst of this French-speaking province, and in 1919, Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church was organized with 94 people on the rolls. The congregation became a member of the New England Conference. Strangely, the congregation disappeared from the conference statistics in 1923. Several attempts were made in the next decades to revive the mission. In 1937, the congregation reported 113 confirmed members and 35 children. However, by 1942 it had vanished from records.

The First World War was detrimental to mission development in Canada. The Augustana Synod heard in 1917: "During the four years since the Conference was organized...three have been war years involving a declining population, hard times and industrial deterioration in the big cities." The city missions were struggling. A large number of Augustana young men were at the front in Europe and many perished on the battlefield. Vacant parishes called for pastors in vain. In 1917, five calls were sent to ordinands by the best parishes in Canada -- all were turned down. The reason seemed to be that congregations in Canada could not hope to match salaries with those in the more prosperous American communities. There was great joy in 1918 when seven pastors responded to the appeal for men to enter the Canadian field.

One positive development in the war years was the organization of the Conference Women's Missionary Society in 1917. Their interest and financial support gave impetus to mission advance in subsequent years.

A new approach to mission work in Canada was made when the Conference joined with the Augustana Colonization Association in arranging for the settlement of Swedes in southern Alberta. A thousand acres of good irrigated land were set aside for a settlement tentatively called Uppland, (now Scandia). In 1919, twenty families bought land there. Two hundred persons registered as permanent settlers. One of those settlers, John Bengtson, reminisced in the *Lutheran Companion* in 1944: "It now requires about \$20,000 worth of motor cars to carry us here for worship. How different from pioneer days! Our pioneers often came to worship in weather twenty to thirty degrees below zero, with the family wrapped in blankets. They came in lumber wagons, in grain tanks, on bob-sleds, and even on 'drags' with runners made from fence posts. To church they would go, and to church they got!"

The war was not the only tragedy to afflict the Conference during that time. In the winter of 1918-1919, the influenza epidemic struck Canada; scores of laypeople and several pastors were disabled, and some died. In Edmonton, Alberta, 555 people died in two months. Church services were suspended; people were forbidden to gather together for any occasion. The church at Kingman, Alberta, was taken over by the provincial government and used as an emergency

hospital. Pastor Leonard Heiner wrote to the conference president that he had visited homes where the entire family was ill. He told how difficult it was to get enough people to carry the coffin at a funeral. Nine days after he wrote that letter, Pastor Heiner took ill and died. When he was buried, none of the district pastors were allowed to be present. A memorial service was held three months later when people were permitted to gather.

Pastor Abr. Wattman of Shaunavon was travelling to Kenora, Ontario, for the 1919 Conference convention. He took ill en route and stopped at the home of Rev. Thunberg in Moose Jaw. Pastor Wattman died ten days later. The entire Thunberg family caught the bug but all survived.

Proposals for an Augustana school and publication were brought to the organization of the Canada Conference. Committees were established to look into those matters. The two projects were to be the source of controversy for some years. The need for a Church school in Canada was recognized during the ministry of Pastor Svante Udden. However, it was not until Pastor L. P. Bergstrom became Mission Superintendent that the issue was re-introduced. He visited Saskatoon where the University of Saskatchewan had just been established. A free site was offered for a church-related college. The offer had to be turned down because construction costs were prohibitive.

Pastor Bergstrom was upset when he learned that a Baptist college in Brandon, Manitoba, had hired a Swedish teacher who was travelling throughout the Canadian field, soliciting funds and students from Augustana congregations. He asked student, O.E. Olmon, to set up a school in a room in his parsonage at Percival. On November 11, 1912, the school opened to such a response that many students had to be turned away. Plans for a permanent site for the school at Yorkton, Saskatchewan, were proceeding when the First World War intervened, and the project had to be shelved. When Olmon left to return to seminary in 1915, no one took a real interest in the Percival school, so it withered and died. Though efforts were made to revive the school project in succeeding years, nothing came of it.

The history of publishing in Canada was also fraught with difficulties. In the year 1887, a monthly Swedish newspaper, "The Scandinavian Canadian", began publication in Winnipeg. It was subsidized by the Canadian Pacific Railway and the federal government. It was sent to agents in Sweden, Norway and Denmark to be distributed free of charge. It was distributed free to settlers in Canada. Unfortunately, the editor was not kindly disposed to the Lutheran Church and this was evident in the pages of the newspaper. Pastor Udden, recognized the need for a Lutheran paper and went into partnership with a Mr. K. Fleming. In 1894, "Vaktaren", a weekly paper, was born. It was sold in 1906, becoming the "Svenska Canada

continued on page 8

Tidningen". The Mission Covenant Church had begun a publication of their own, "Canada Posten".

Pastor Bergstrom took up from where Udden had left off. He urged the establishment of a Lutheran paper. In 1914, "Canada Harold", a tabloid-size magazine was born, growing to 16 pages. The First World War created problems for the publication, and it went through several formats before closing down in 1917. A new publication, "Canada News", edited by Pastor Johannes E. Lindberg of Kenora, Ontario, came off the presses in 1919. It was plagued by financial problems and ceased publication within a year. Not until 1955, did the Conference once more have its own publication. "Views", a modest magazine, continued until the merger of Augustana and the United Lutheran Church in America.

The Tragic Twenties

A period of serious setbacks assailed the Canada Conference during the 1920s. The number of pastors declined and congregations were in disarray. In 1920, the conference counted 56 congregations, 2,157 communicants and 12 pastors. In 1926, the numbers had fallen to 43 congregations, 1,478 communicants and nine pastors. At the 1925 Synod meeting, President Dr. Brandelle said, "In Canada, the situation is nothing short of catastrophic in view of the greatness of the field and of our inability to care for it in a proper manner." One factor was still the Swedish language. Dr. Anton Nelson, who later became an influential presence in Canada, said, "One of the weaknesses of our Church when I began my ministry in Canada was that only one other pastor was able to conduct a service in the English language in somewhat of an adequate manner. This meant that our Church failed to minister to the young people, and we had difficulty in convincing the older generation that had any merits."

In 1926, Pastor Nelson who was serving First Lutheran Church, Calgary, accepted the call to be Superintendent of Missions. The system of district missionaries was dropped. Nelson concentrated his efforts in the cities. He said in 1958, "Had our work begun at these points and others at least a decade sooner, our Church would be much stronger in Canada today." Dr. Nelson revealed another factor troubling the Canadian scene. "Canada was plagued with several unfortunate lay-preachers or so-called students." Because ordained men were unavailable, these persons were received "on trial with open arms." There were some, however, who made a significant contribution to the work. Among them, Richard Odelberg and Andrew Lindquist. "They helped to save our Lutheran Church in those trying days when we suffered from an extreme shortage of pastors."

Several pioneering pastors made an indelible mark on Augustana history in Canada during these difficult years. Dr.

Nelson served a quarter of a century in Canada, his entire ministry, until 1957. He served as president of the conference a record 12 years -- from 1927 to 1939. The history of Canadian missions was profoundly influenced by this dedicated man.

Another pastor who began his ministry during this period was Pastor Otto Eklund. He was ordained in 1916 and served Emmanuel, Meeting Creek, Alberta, until his retirement in 1951.

Pastor Klas Bring, from his homestead northeast of Swift Current, Saskatchewan served the entire southwestern portion of that province. Daniel Friberg, writing in the *Lutheran Companion* in 1945 wrote: "With his horse and buggy, suitcase full of hymn books and a storm-proof lantern, he traversed distances as great as sixty miles to minister to pioneer Augustana families on the prairies. He always kept his appointments with his scattered handfuls of parishioners, even when blizzards forced him to walk the last half dozen miles, and he always arrived with his bagful of hymnals."

In 1921, District Luther Leagues were organized in Alberta and Saskatchewan. These young people made an important contribution to missions and the development of leadership in the young church. Many lay leaders and pastors came from their ranks.

The Dirty Thirties

The three "D's" of drought, dust storms and depression made the "dirty thirties," as they became known, ugly years for everyone everywhere, but most particularly on the Canadian field. The majority of Augustana's congregations were located in rural areas. The plight of the farmer had an adverse effect upon the church's work. The Synod president reported that in 1932, national income in the United States was 50 percent below normal, expenditures on luxuries and recreation also 50 percent below normal and contributions to church work 40 percent below normal. These figures were even more drastic in Canada. Pastors' salaries were reduced each year; a single lay-preacher serving two congregations some miles apart received \$600 a year. Some pastors actually borrowed money from friends in order to buy railroad tickets so they could visit their scattered congregations. These were faith-testing times.

The Synodical Women's Missionary Society had been supporting parish workers in Canada. However, in 1934 the Society found it could not continue contributing financially to this mission outreach. It was a real blow to the lone "98 percent mission conference in the Synod." Another blow fell in June 1937 when parish worker Edna Johnson left after a decade of service in Canada. She had made a significant contribution to the strengthening of congregations and their mission.

Students from Augustana and Gustavus Adolphus colleges were coming to spend the summer months serving the many vacant parishes. It was tough for these parishes to manage from summer to summer, but they somehow survived. It was a step forward in 1937, when Ernie Holm arrived to serve for a year; he was the first of many interns who were to serve in Canada.

In 1932, four Lutheran church bodies -- Augustana, the Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Danish United Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Free Church -- sponsored the establishment of the Canadian Lutheran Bible Institute at Camrose, Alberta. Sixty students were enrolled in the fall term. Students from the school have played a significant part in the life of the Canada Conference, some entering the ministry, others parish work and still others world missions.

The first of several young men from Canada who went to the USA to study for the ministry, Nels Norbeck and Edward Vikberg, came from Percival, Saskatchewan. Unfortunately, most of those who were ordained accepted calls in the United States rather than return to Canada. Despite the circumstances, the conference failed but twice in the decade to meet its Synodical apportionment. And while other areas of the Synod were reporting membership loss, Canada reported gains. However, only one of the seven congregations organized during this period has survived to this day -- Messiah Lutheran Church of Saskatchewan's capital city, Regina.

English was now the language of worship in sixty percent of the conference. The conference minutes were printed in Swedish for the last time in 1933. In 1936, only one congregation operated an all-Swedish program; seven were all English and the remainder bilingual. In 1938, Dr. P. O. Bersell was present for the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the conference held in Calgary, Alberta. His "cheerful spirit, boundless energy and kindly advice" inspired the delegates. Bertil Erling reported to the *Lutheran Companion* that conventions were typically held before seeding time on the prairies, but "never before had the weather been such a disturbing factor... The worst storm in decades swept out of the northwest across Alberta and Saskatchewan, piling drifts across highways and railroad right-of-ways... but bringing much needed precipitation... and the best promises of a good season for years. Six delegates on a Canadian National train from Saskatoon were held up for 53 hours at Oyen, Alberta, when a snow plow and two locomotives ahead of them turned over trying to push through 25 foot drifts." Unfortunately, this and other stories published in the *Lutheran Companion* in those years only reinforced the view that Canada was the Siberia of North America. Conditions were different from those in many parts of the United States, but the contrast was not as drastic as the stories seemed to indicate.

Dr. Anton Nelson was alert to opportunities for ministry. He challenged the Conference to use the increasingly influen-

tial medium of radio to spread the gospel. He wrote: "The remarkable invention of modern times, the radio, is often a powerful tool of Satan. It is a great force to bring worldliness into our homes as it is almost monopolized by the big companies which, through their high-pressure salesmen, are advertising floor wax, carpet sweepers, tooth paste, hair tonics, skin lotions, chewing gum, tobacco, shows, dances, beer and the like. May the radio also become an instrument in the hands of God in bringing the Gospel of Christ into our homes." He urged the city congregations to arrange for this ministry. Several projects were launched.

A new Synod plan for a Board of American Missions was voted on. Texas and Canada were the only two conferences opposing it. There was fear that the independence of the conferences would be threatened and that this would curtail mission work. Dr. Anton Nelson admitted later that they were in error in opposing the plan. When the Board was introduced, the Canada Conference lost its president. Dr. Nelson was called to become the first Regional Director for Canada. A new era was about to begin.

War and Aftermath

In its short history, the Canada Conference suffered from the consequences of two world wars. When World War II began for Canada in 1939, mission activity was virtually forced to a standstill. The coming decade was to be one of "holding the fort." However, the war brought about some advances; this was particularly true in the matter of Lutheran cooperation. It was in this period that the seed was sown for a Canadian Lutheran Council; and Augustana began to participate in theological education in western Canada.

The war had many effects. When it broke out, one respected member of a country congregation said: "It's safer these days to sit on a binder in Canada than on a throne in Europe." Wartime shortages made ministry to large parishes almost impossible. However, two congregations were organized during wartime despite the difficulties.

During the 1940s, an unusual mission was established in Vancouver B.C. Veteran missionary Dr. John L. Benson had paid extensive visits to the Chinese sections of San Francisco and Vancouver in the spring of 1942. When he was unable to return to China, he took up residence in Vancouver and began mission work there. Joining him was the Rev. J.W. Lindbeck. Dr. Benson was called back to China to assist in famine relief in 1942 and the Lindbecks returned to China in 1947. Attempts were made to get Chinese workers, but to no avail. The Oriental Mission project died. It is interesting to note that today the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada has three Chinese congregations and several missions in the Greater Vancouver area.

There were some special achievements during the war years. The Canada Conference Luther League was formed in 1940. In 1941, the Conference Old Peoples' Home was established in Wetaskiwin. In 1943, the Synod Centennial Appeal resulted in pledges and contributions totaling \$25,345, marking a turning point upward in Conference finances. Near war's end in 1945, the Conference in convention heard the regional director say: "At the present time definite plans are in the making for the establishment of more than 25 new missions in our Synod during the current year. We deplore that none of these are contemplated for our conference." The fault lay in the shortage of mission developers. Ten pastors and one lay preacher were in the service of the entire Canada Conference at this time.

The mission thrust began to change, too. The Regional Director reported: "Originally our mission field was limited to Swedes or at best to the Scandinavians. Today, there are neither racial nor national boundaries. Some of our Canadian churches now report more than ten different nationalities represented in their membership." There was a new sense of being truly Canadian. Dr. Anton Nelson regularly visited Augustana Seminary on recruitment drives. On one occasion, he spoke at the chapel devotions, describing the vast land of frontier settlements desperately needing personnel to man the spiritual battle stations. When his appeal ended, Nelson sat down, and the vocalist arose with a look of consternation on his face. The assembled congregation of future pastors could hardly contain their amusement when the soloist broke forth with the song: "A Voice Crying in the Wilderness."

Augustana's ecumenical spirit played a significant role in the development of Lutheran cooperation in Canada. The five presidents of the general bodies comprising the American Lutheran Conference met in Regina in December 1931, and the result was a Commission on Canadian Affairs. The commission sponsored the *Lutheran Voice*, an inter-Lutheran news magazine. In 1935, an education committee was established. The committee contacted publishers of Sunday School materials, pleading with them to give more consideration to the Canadian readership, "...that all articles referring either to Canadian or American nationalism be eliminated as far as possible." In 1937, the feasibility of a joint Lutheran Seminary in Canada was discussed. The American Lutheran Conference requested the Commission "to study the possibility of a joint theological seminary as a first step toward... a United Canadian Lutheran Church." Despite the outbreak of war, the churches cooperating in the American Lutheran Conference held a successful mass Luther League Rally in Regina in 1940.

In 1940, the Canadian Lutheran Commission for War Service was organized. The result was that twenty Lutheran pastors were called to serve as chaplains in the military serv-

ice. In 1942, a regional Home Mission Council was organized to iron out the wrinkles in home mission plans of the participating bodies of the National Lutheran Council (USA). This led to a Home Mission Conference at Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, in 1944. The gathering affirmed the hope of one Lutheran Church in Canada and took steps to establish a Canadian Lutheran Council (CLC). Lutheran leaders from all over North America met in Winnipeg on April 5-6, 1945, to draft a constitution for the CLC. However, it was not until December, 1952, that the council became a reality.

An indigenous ministry was needed for Canada. The conference school at Percival was an early attempt to produce home missionaries. In 1923, an offer came from the Lutheran College and Seminary (an institution of the Synod of Western Canada of the United Lutheran Church in America) for the conference to establish a Swedish department. This proved impossible. In 1940, Dr. P.O. Bersell told the Synod: "Synod must give serious attention to the development of an indigenous church in Canada. After all, it is a foreign country. That was never more obvious than today when Canada is at war and we are not. The Canada Conference must develop its own ministry." The Synod approved a plan for cooperative theological work in Canada.

It was not until the autumn of 1945 that the plan was put into effect. A seminary professor's residence was purchased and the Synod extended a call to the Rev. Gilbert T. Monson to become pastor of Augustana Lutheran Church in Saskatoon and Augustana professor at the Lutheran College and Seminary. Interest among conference members was high -- the response to annual financial appeals on Seminary Sunday supported the work proportionately higher than the rest of Synod. The first Augustana student to attend the seminary was the Rev. Bernhard Bengtson. On graduation he accepted a call to serve in Africa.

In 1952, the whole church rejoiced as the first two young Canadians to be fully trained in Canada were ordained on calls to the Canadian field: Pastors Paul and Harold Eriksson, sons of veteran pastor A.E. Eriksson. The Synod granted a petition from the Canada Conference that all Canadian graduates be permitted ordination in Canada. In 1958, a new arrangement was entered into when Luther Seminary, Saskatoon, operated by the Evangelical Lutheran Church, was united with the LCS in a joint operation. Ten young Augustana men were trained and ordained by 1960.

A significant action, the first of its kind by any Canadian Lutheran administrative unit, was taken at the Canada Conference convention in 1951. The Augustana Synod was petitioned to "outline procedures by which the Canada Conference through its duly elected representatives may enter into negotiations with any or all of the Canadian Lutheran bodies with the aim of establishing a United Lutheran Church

in Canada." The Synod agreed with the plan. Friendly informal talks among the Lutheran groups in Canada began in 1952. Regular annual meetings of representatives of all Lutheran groups, with the exception of the Lutheran Free Church, were begun in 1957.

During the latter part of the 1950s there was a great deal of realignment and consolidation of parishes. Numerous congregations were merged or transferred to and from other Lutheran church bodies in Canada. In 1926, the congregations at Port Arthur and Fort William, Ontario had transferred to the Minnesota Conference; in 1954, they returned to the Canada Conference fold. In January 1959, congregations in British Columbia which had always belonged to the Columbia Conference, transferred to the Canada Conference and became the new B.C. District.

In 1950, the Conference reported 46 congregations with a confirmed membership of 2,743. At the end of 1960, the Conference had 48 congregations with a confirmed membership of 5,688. Canada proved to be running neck and neck with California as the fastest growing area of the Augustana Lutheran Church. Never before had there been such a stable ministry and vigorous laity. As the 1950s drew to a close, many congregations were becoming self-sustaining after years of mission aid. Since its inception in 1939, the Board of American Missions had given over half a million dollars in support to Canada Conference congregations. In 1960, the Rev. Donald W. Sjoberg became the first Canadian Regional Director of the Canada Conference.

In 1959, Dr. Otto A. Olson was elected the first full-time president of the Canada Conference. He had been serving as both president and Augustana professor at the Lutheran College and Seminary in Saskatoon. He had made a significant contribution to the work of the church in Canada, ultimately being named Canada's "Mr. Lutheran." The former president of the Evangelical Church of Canada (affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church - USA), the Rev. S.T. Jacobson, wrote some years later: "Due to his efforts in no small part, the present seminary came into being." At the Canada Conference's convention at Edmonton in 1961, Dr. Olson said, "It is a thrilling thing to be part of the merger experience. It is important that we realize that this is not so much an end as it is a beginning. Even more truly, it is a continuation."

Dr. Olson, with the same resolve, had a vision of a Canadian Lutheran Church which would include all Lutherans in Canada. He was instrumental in the formation of the Canada Section-LCA which allowed the three LCA synods to

negotiate and approve a merger in Canada. Unfortunately, Dr. Olson died in 1976 while in attendance at a Canadian Council of Churches meeting and so did not see the outcome of years of merger discussions which resulted in the two-way merger in 1985 which brought about the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

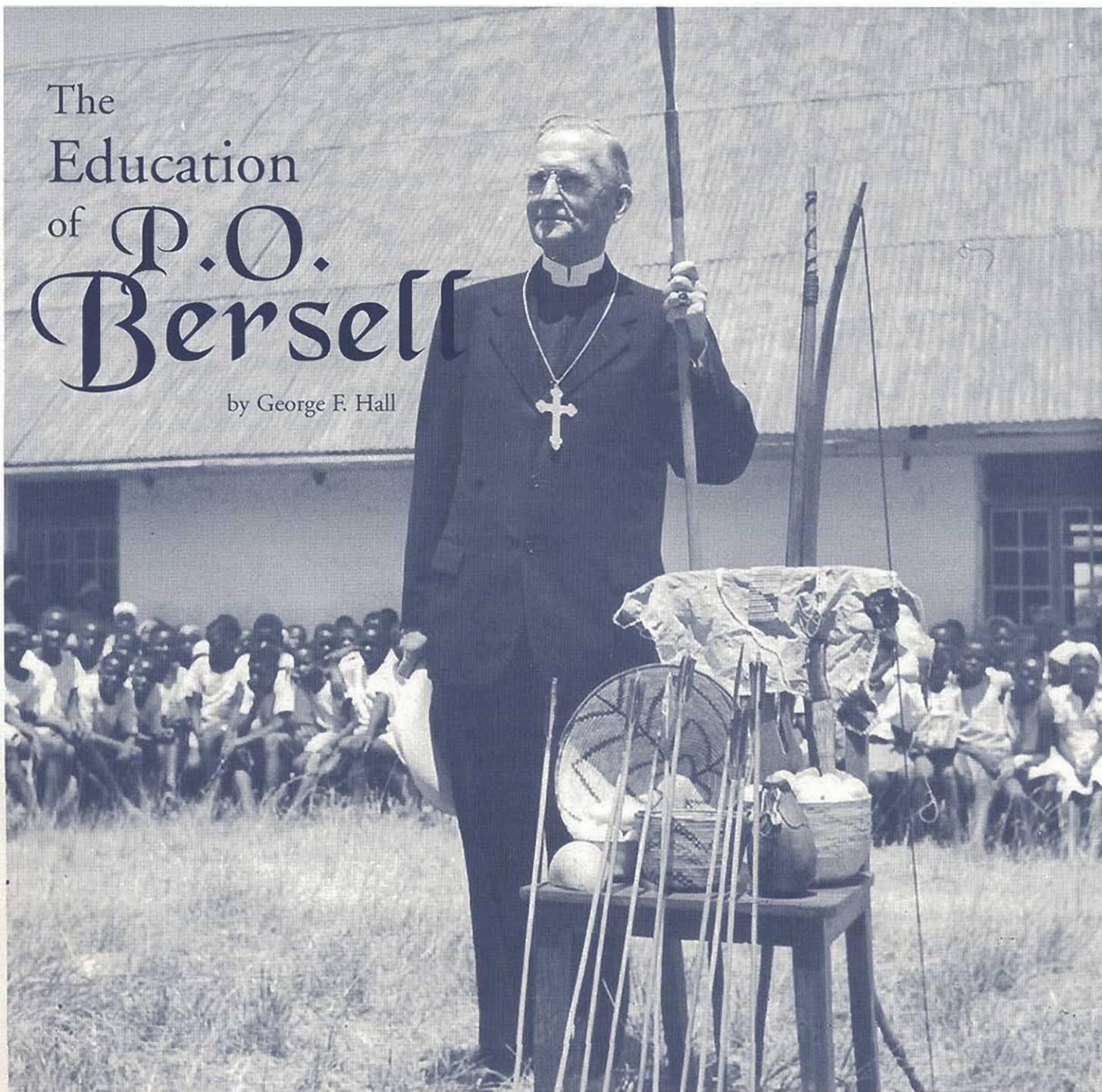
The final convention of the Canada Conference was held on April 25-29, 1962 at Assiniboia, Saskatchewan. At the time of the LCA merger, the Canada Conference had 48 congregations, 10,507 baptized members, and 6,031 confirmed members. During its 79-year history, Augustana had organized 100 congregations of which 48 congregations with 10,507 baptized members and 6,031 confirmed members remained to become a part of the new Lutheran Church in America-Canada Section, on January 1, 1963. At the present time, 20 pastors and 41 congregations can claim Augustana roots.

Following the merger, Augustana pastors figured in the leadership of the LCA-CS. Dr. Otto A. Olson became bishop of the Central Canada Synod and the Rev. Don Sjoberg became Regional Director for the Western Canada Synod. Augustana's contribution to the leadership in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada included: Donald Sjoberg, the first presiding bishop; James Chell, first Director of Canadian Missions; Kenneth C. Kuhn, first Director of Church in Society; and Ferdy Baglo, first editor of the national magazine. The Synod may have been among the smaller Lutheran bodies in North America, but it had a large impact. Augustana's contribution to Canada and the Lutheran Church in the nation has proven to be historically and spiritually significant. †

Ferdy Baglo was born in Vancouver, B.C. and attended the University of Saskatchewan and the Lutheran College and Seminary where he graduated and was ordained in 1958. His first call was to New Stockholm Lutheran Church, the first Augustana congregation to be organized in Canada. From 1961 to 1965 he served in Tanganyika, Africa, setting up the Swahili studios for the LWF Radio Voice of the Gospel. He served several congregations in Canada and was editor of the "Canada Lutheran," the ELCIC's national publication. He has written two books: "Augustana Lutherans in Canada" and "Faithfully Yours", a devotional biography of Dr. Otto Olson. Baglo lives in Chilliwack, B.C.

The Education of P.O. Bersell

by George F. Hall



P.O. BERSELL IN TANGANYIKA, 1951

It was my good fortune my final year at Augustana Seminary to be included in a circle of excellent students and friends. Carl Lund-Quist usually called us together for coffee in my room at approximately 10 p.m., and there we were joined by interesting guests. When they were not there to entertain us, we had the rich resources of Theodore LeVander, who was also a speech teacher, tell remarkable stories in imitation of the ancient worthies of our tradition. When asked about the source of these stories, he credited his father, Pastor Petri Magni LeVander and Pastor P. O. Bersell.

As students and newly ordained, we knew of P. O. Bersell mainly as the terrifying questioner at our matriculation examinations and the pre-ordination examination before the whole body of clergy assembled in convention. Consequently, when he was elected president of the Synod in 1935, we wondered what that might mean for our futures. Ted LeVander, who had worked for Bersell as a student in Ottumwa, Iowa, and knew him personally, assured us that our fears were groundless. He said that we ought to get acquainted with Bersell. So when Bersell's installation as Synod President was scheduled at his church in Ottumwa, Ted and I made plans to attend.

Bersell succeeded Dr. Gustav Albert Brandelle, whom we frequently saw in Rock Island. Board meetings were held at the college's Denkmann Library and the Augustana Book Concern. Delegates stayed in homes and ate in the college cafeteria. They became a familiar sight to us students. Brandelle was short and stocky, had one bad eye and thick glasses. While speaking he cleared his throat in a novel manner, with the sound filling the whole auditorium. His extemporaneous remarks, like the letters of the Apostle John, dwelt on the theme of love, which we, as younger persons, usually misconstrued.

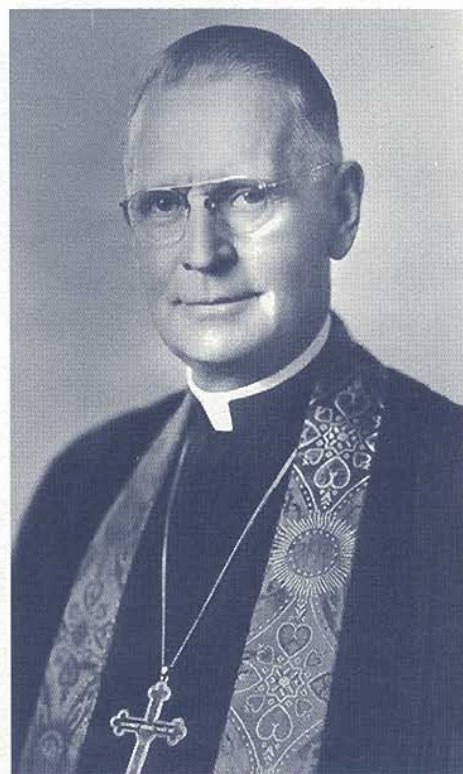
Brandelle was a remarkable leader at the time during and after World War I. He attended world meetings of Christians, was a founder of the National Lutheran Council, and supported missions of the European churches orphaned because of the war. In recognition of this ecumenical ministry he was given a Swedish bishops' cross, which he wore despite objections by some in the Synod. He was nonetheless annually reelected for the seventeenth time before he retired.

In the meantime, P. O. Bersell became widely known through the press by a feature in the rotogravure section of the Sunday papers as a fiery preacher against dancing. Politically, he was joined by A. D. Hult of the Seminary faculty, who was opposed to Archbishop Nathan Soderbloom on all counts, plus a great multitude and their children who had left Sweden and who feared the theology, arrogance, and dominance of the Church of Sweden. World War I, furthermore, was a time of repression of all foreign influences and culture in all the church bodies. Augustana was an "American" Church and, like the nation itself, all foreign relations were to be avoided. Brandelle heroically stood his ground.

But now, what to do about Swedish bishop's cross that was given to the Church to be worn by our President? Most said that it was a personal gift and had no relation to the Church. But what an appropriate symbol to signal the transfer of one's leadership of the Church to the next leader? Bersell certainly didn't want the cross. A compromise was necessary. So our eyes and those of all others watched to see what would happen in Ottumwa.

The ceremony functioned as planned and the cross was placed by Brandelle on Bersell's neck. Our garb in those days was very plain, just a black robe or a "prastrock" with what we called the number eleven, two white tabs flowing from the collar, whose esoteric meaning was lost on all of us, but we obeyed and wore them. There were no stoles, bishops' staffs, so the cross was the only distinctive way to show the transfer of leadership.

To enter the pulpit from the altar area in many churches (also in Ottumwa), one went through the sacristy which had steps and a door to the pulpit. Bersell, on his way to the pulpit to give his inaugural sermon, carefully took off the cross, hung



P.O. BERSSELL WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE SYNOD IN 1935.

it up in the sacristy, and then went into the pulpit, where on seeing him our inquisitive eyes recognized that he had removed the cross. He did not want to wear it, as he had said. Because I was with Ted, the next morning I came along for breakfast in the parsonage with the Bersell family and close friends. It was a jovial occasion and not a little of the joviality had to do with what had happened the evening before when the Swedish bishops' cross was laid aside.

Several years passed, and I was in St. Paul speaking to a confirmation reunion, an event held in most congregations in the fall. Dr. Bersell was in the congregation, and after the service at coffee, we talked with one another. I said that while I was in St. Paul, I wanted to go to the hospital and see a former classmate, Clifford Boren, who was suffering from progressive arthritis, which had crippled him completely. Ruth Youngdale Nelson came regularly to his bedside and copied for him the poems he composed in his pain, which were later published. He died at the age of thirty-one.

Bersell wanted to visit him also, and so we went together. Clifford told us that he was collecting crosses from various denominations and nations, and Bersell, with a sly look at me, said that he had also started a similar collection. Some years later, despite his earlier objections, he did wear a bishop's cross himself, though not the Swedish cross but a cross given to him by a group of friends.

America and our church survived the Depression while enjoying a large expansion in American and foreign missions,



P.O. BERSSELL (RIGHT) WITH CARL LUND-QUIST AT THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION ASSEMBLY IN MINNEAPOLIS, 1957

yet at the same time maintaining the parochialism and "America first" philosophy that was the heritage of World War I. But World War II began and again Lutheran missions all over the world were orphaned and needed the help of American Lutherans. All of us supported the program of the new Lutheran World Convention and later the Lutheran World Federation to assist our brethren in the suffering and work.

Lutheran World Action ("Love's Working Arm") and Lutheran World Relief were always over-subscribed. P.O. Bersell and other church leaders risked their lives in rickety planes near the war Zones to see the work in progress and to bring back information about the critical needs so heroically faced. Dr. Bersell visited the orphaned mission in Tanganyika and came back with his report to the Mission Board. I was chairman of the Board at the time, and Dr. Bersell and I sat side by side. He reported that if we did not send assistance immediately, we would lose the entire Lutheran school system, which the German mission had created in Tanganyika as well as elsewhere.

The Board was stunned by his report and its implications, and how little we would be able to offer. One member spoke up and said, "Dr. Bersell, what do you propose that we do?" Without looking at me he replied, "Send Hall to Africa at once!" I was shocked. He had not intimated anything of this nature to me, although he knew I had once applied to go to Tanganyika, but the passport was denied because of war conditions. When I returned home that evening I told Lorena, my wife, about it. We were both quiet and said nothing. The next

morning she said simply, "When do we go?"

Years later, at the University of Minnesota, Bishop Anders Nygren was a guest lecturer for a quarter. As Easter approached Lorena and I talked about inviting the Nygrens to spend Easter with us. We knew that Bersell had been recently bereaved by the death of his wife, and we invited him to be our guest with the Swedish bishop and spouse. Bersell readily accepted. It was a grand Easter Day at Mt. Olivet. At our home, Dr. Bersell and Bishop Nygren continued their friendship, chatting in both Swedish and English. In sharing this fellowship they were in their glory.

Later I thought of the education of P. O. Bersell and how, with his leadership, we also were educated away from the limits of our parochialism to a broader vision of world wide ecumenism. In those years and the years that have followed we have taken one text after

another, passed from one degree to another, in Paul's words, "from glory to glory" (II Cor. 3:18 ASV). This educational process has not ceased. We have all grown under the leadership of G. A. Brandelle, P. O. Bersell, Carl Lund-Quist, Franklin Clark Fry, and Fredrik Shultz, to mention only a few.



GEORGE F. HALL, 1960

George F. Hall, born in 1908 in Stromsberg, Nebraska, is one of Augustana's living patriarchs. He was ordained in 1934. His descriptive memories going back nearly seventy years give us a treasured window into the lives and work of Augustana's leaders like P. O. Bersell.

Hall earned his Ph. D. degree from the University of Chicago. His ministry included teaching at Gustavus Adolphus College from 1938-58; campus pastor at the U. of Minnesota, 1958-63; professor at LSTC 1963-69; and pastor of congregations in Gary, Indiana, St. Paul, Minnesota, and Lincolnshire, Illinois. He is the author of five college textbooks on Bible and History, a book of sermons, and two study books for religious education in Africa. Dr. Hall lives in Evanston, Illinois and is the Resident Chaplain at the Swedish Retirement Home.

For upcoming issues of the Newsletter I encourage readers to contribute articles that trace the "expanding circles of Augustana" as seen today in our church and society. Thirty eight years have passed since Augustana became one of the four churches to form the Lutheran Church in America.

Examples of the "expanding circles of Augustana" might be the stories of scholars and theologians with roots in Augustana who have served or now serve in ELCA colleges and seminaries, as well as other universities and seminaries; writers with an Augustana heritage; women pastors whose roots are in the heritage of Augustana even though Augustana did not ordain women; former Augustana congregations who have continued to develop creative and vital ministries in changing communities; congregations who were missions in Augustana days and are now large congregations with a dynamic mission in their communities; global missionaries whose roots are in Augustana, stories of their life and work; stories of members of former Augustana congregations who became leaders in government, science, business, service fields, the arts, etc.; WELCA leaders in the ELCA who came out of the Augustana heritage and became leaders in the women's organization of our church today. The "expanding circles" of Augustana go far beyond these limited examples. †

Send your articles, responses, and comments to:

Arvid and Nancy Anderson
1234 Colonial Ave.
Roslyn, PA 19001
(215) 887-1224
arvinanc@aol.com

AUGUSTANA GATHERING 2000

AUGUSTANA

BRIDGES ACROSS GENERATIONS

JUNE 23-25, 2000

(details on back cover)

PUBLICATIONS

Book Recounts the Spirit and Tradition of Augustana

Giving insight into the spirit and tradition of Augustana, the Augustana Heritage Association has published a collection of essays which probe the history of the Augustana Lutheran Church. Titled, "The Augustana Heritage: Recollections, Perspectives and Prospects," the essays recount the Augustana experience and what it contributed to Lutheranism in America and the global church.

Edited by Arland J. Hultgren of Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN., and Vance L. Eckstrom, professor emeritus of Bethany College, Lindsborg, KS., the 27 writings cover all facets of the church's life, including ecclesial and cultural aspects; theology and theological education; evangelism, ecumenism and social ministry; and global missions. Written by people with an "institutional memory" of Augustana, essayists include Louis Almén, Herbert Chilstrom, Bernhard Erling, Norman Hjelm, David Vikner and Lee Wesley.

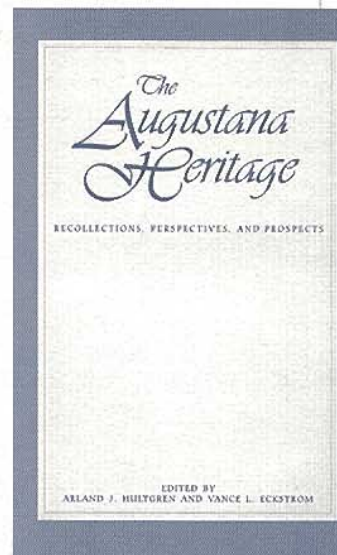
Founded in 1860, the Augustana Lutheran Church joined other Lutheran church bodies in 1962 to form the Lutheran Church in America, a predecessor to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Copies of the book may be ordered through the Augustana Heritage Association, 1100 E. 55 St., Chicago, IL. 60615. The price for one copy is \$25, including postage and handling. The price for two or more copies to one address is \$20 each, including postage and handling.

A Book About Dr. A. D. Mattson

Ruth Mattson Taylor, M. S., daughter of Dr. A. D. Mattson, is the editor of a new book about her father, who was professor at Augustana Seminary from 1931-67, and author of "Christian Ethics." The book, "Evidence From Beyond", was published in 1999 by Brett Books, Inc. 180 pp., \$22.95. It is described as an "An insider's Guide to the wonders of Heaven - and life in the new millennium, More after-death communications received from theologian A. D. Mattson through clairvoyant Margaret Flavell, edited by Ruth Mattson Taylor." She can be reached at:

11 Graffam Rd.
South Portland, Maine 04106
(207) 799-4387.



FINAL REMINDER!

The Augustana Heritage Gathering 2000

will be held at **Augustana College, Rock Island, IL, June 23-25, 2000**. A second registration packet was sent to the entire Augustana Heritage Newsletter mailing list in early April, with the exception of those who had already registered. If you did not receive the mailing, and want to attend, please call **Bonnie Sivill at 1-309-794-7213** or write her c/o **Campus Ministries, Augustana College, Rock Island IL 61201**.

Recent additions/changes to the Gathering Program include a performance by the winners of the 2000 Jenny Lind International Vocal Competition at the Midsömmar Festival, Thursday, June 22nd (an optional event), and a major presentation on Sunday morning, June 25th, on the Swedish Roots of the Augustana Synod by Bishop Karl-Johan Tyrberg, Bishop of Harnosand Diocese, from which both Lars Paul Esbjorn and Eric Norelius emigrated.

The registration fee is \$125 per person (excluding lodging). The optional tour of the Sesquicentennial Congregations, Augustana-Andover and First-Moline costs an additional \$25 per person. Full details are in the registration packet.

The Gathering is limited to 700 participants.

WELCOME TO LINDSBORG!!

Gathering 2002 is going to be held in
Lindsborg, Kansas
on **June 21-23, 2002**.

Look for complete details in future newsletters.

Memberships

Charter Memberships in the Augustana Heritage Association are still available at \$25.00 per person. Send your check, together with your name(s), address(es), and phone number(s) to:

Augustana Heritage Association
Richard A. Swanson, Treasurer
1011 44th Street
Rock Island, IL 61201-3136.