

SEPTEMBER 1980

# Lutheran Women

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To Zion Lutheran Church in Shawano, Wisconsin, thank you for making possible the friendship described below. Through your generosity, an unforgettable Vietnamese boat family became our neighbors in 1975.

Lien Dien Phung, a small Vietnamese in a black suit, was leading his granddaughter by the hand up the sidewalk home from kindergarten. From my view upstairs across the street, I saw the little girl dressed completely in white go floating by like a weightless blossom tethered to the lithe, elderly man beside her. Her jet-black hair was the eye of a bobbing flower that had white-dress and white-knee-sock petals. Like verses from a poem of spring, the pair were a couplet in black and white contrast passing through the shade of tall green elms. Gracefully they mounted the steps of the brown clapboard house that the church had secured and furnished for them. What intriguing people moving into the neighborhood one month later than we! Would we become friends?

Yes, and Grandfather Lien and his wife Le are indeed as he had first seemed, a poem of spring: they, the heads of an extended family of seven, were renowned poets in their homeland. Lien's pen name is Dan Que, "red flower" in Vietnamese, and Le's, Huong Khue, "perfume of the moon."

We made a welcome call with a loaf of fresh sourdough bread, and the friendship was begun. Le's black-enameled teeth signify aristocracy, and her quiet manner and attentiveness pleased us as much as Lien's vivacity. My husband Paul, who is of Belgian parentage, and Lien, who had taught in a Saigon French lycee, could speak French together from

the start. My college French was a little help, too. There was no one else in our small dairy town of German descendants who could converse with Lien.

One evening in the midst of a December snowstorm, Lien and Le knocked on our door. Beneath snow-fringed hats and scarves, they stood doll-like with their American-size overcoats hanging in blanket fashion from their shoulders. Their excitement seemed to send out sparks in the subzero air. Once inside we all bowed and shook hands. Next the guests removed their shoes, handed Paul the wraps, and were led closer to the fire I was poking into new flames.

With initial formality we settled ourselves around the hearth for cups of jasmine tea. Halfway through his, Lien could wait no longer. We learned the cause of his excitement: "*Photographies chez nous!*" he sang out as he waved a packet in the air. "Once we sent them from Saigon to our son studying in Tokyo. Now he sends them to us!" He continued in French, "All we have of home. In escape to boat we bring only clothes on our backs."

Their open faces, small with smooth amber skin over high cheekbones, set off bright black eyes holding emotions that had to be shared. Identifying and explaining the various scenes, Lien passed the pictures to us slowly. Joy, pride, reverie, loss, homesickness were in his voice. He pointed out a striking small woman with his facial structure. "Our eldest daughter, unable to escape with the other seven of us."

Next he showed us photos taken in 1974 and 1975 at an annual seminar of major Vietnamese poets. It was held in a building much like a wharf on a river in Saigon. In one shot, a



## VIETNAMESE poets in dairyland

By CAROL BROUHA

The writer, who is Presbyterian, has taught school and worked one summer, before her marriage, for the American Protestant Congo Mission in what is now Zaire. Her five- and six-year-old children occupy most of her time now, though she is also doing some writing with her husband, a wildlife and fishery biologist.

dozen silk-clad poets stood amidst arrangements of chrysanthemums. In another, the animated face of Lien beamed from behind a lectern as he convened the meeting with a poem.

Le singled out the photo of her daughter before carefully returning the others to the envelope. She sat on the edge of her chair, the picture in her lap, and taking my hand in one of hers began to speak in Vietnamese. The men became silent as the syllables rose and fell from Le's throat like tides seeping through a hole in a dike. With her free hand she drew scenes in the air.



Le and Lien at home

Then Lien spoke encouragingly to her. Nodding, she began to sing what I thought was a dirge. The verses were those she had composed on the escape boat to Guam:

#### Vespertine Warfare

The sand clouds and the dust storms  
flying up  
Covered the sky completely.  
Before my native land suddenly  
overrun  
My soul was pain stricken.  
I saw in four directions the warfare.  
The forest trees burned continuously.  
In three regions of the hostilities, the  
earth sighed bitterly.  
Silently the wild geese passed before  
the gaunt moon.  
Doubtfully, the violet clouds were  
crossing to the hills.  
When will peace come to my country  
so that the myrtle blossoms will  
smile?

Huong Khue

Looking up from my place on the floor by Le's chair, I saw that all of us were weeping.

Lien remembered that night as the "tete-a-tete during which it rained from our eyes." The conversations that followed during the two years we were neighbors he frequently called "exchanges of the spirit." Often during our visits his poems were translated from a classical Chinese form, through the French that he and Paul discussed them in, into an English version that Paul and I handled as gently and respectfully as we, in our inexperience, could.

With only his memory as a guide, Lien began to impart to us the world of poetry that flourished in Saigon even in the war-torn springs of 1974 and 1975. At that time there were 185,000 North Vietnamese combat troops in South Vietnam and 1,000,000 South Vietnamese under arms. Lien said that almost every poet attending the seminars we had seen pictures of had lost a relative or a friend in the war. The inflation rate was 65 percent. Children peeled bark off trees for fuel. Constant police supervision was part of the city life.

Yet, somehow, Lien, Le and their fellow poets had lived in Saigon with unbroken spirits. They were able, in Lien's words, to "brush away the dust of the road," to bring together their ideas and sensory impressions of a still beautiful nature and orchestrate them "with note and melody." According to Lien's 1974 convening poem, the wharf on which they met was often "flooded with vibrant waves of rhythm."

In the spring of 1975, Lien opened the annual seminar with a poem stating the duty of Vietnamese poets during the war. The concluding verse is:

Then under the moon drowning in the  
surface of the waves,

And with the music of your guitar  
vibrating the stars in the firmament,  
My chantress, you are going to  
alleviate the human sufferings at the  
bottom of each heart,  
So that all may find again upon their  
lips their first smiles.

Dan Que

The Dien Phungs repaid us in delightful ways for any help we gave them in translating. Lien typed perfect copies of poems I had written and wrote in their titles in graceful script with bright felt pens. Le carved raw vegetables into exquisite rosebuds for our children and brought us a hot roasted chicken that had been deboned, stuffed with water chestnuts, mushrooms and walnuts, and restored to its original shape. When Paul's mother visited us, we received a great pot of yellow chrysanthemums with this note: "For your happiness by the side of your dear mother."

And again, after Paul had taken Lien two cartons of French books, we received this note: "Never and never I forget the two heavy packages of French books you have been bringing for me in last glacial October's evening."

So that he could better learn English and I the culture of Vietnam, Lien wrote the Vietnamese Embassy for information and then typed it in English in nineteen pages, single spaced. When I had finished "The Moral and Religious Universe" and "The Written and Spoken Language of the Vietnamese People," we were surprised to find ourselves communicating much more easily. His English was improving rapidly, and my college French was coming back to me.

What a humorous picture we must have made as we spoke: Lien in immaculate white shirt and dark tie standing on tiptoe to see the book the tall American woman in jogging clothes was bending over. It was my college





芳草綠如春  
 芳草綠如春  
 芳草綠如春

芳草綠如春  
 芳草綠如春  
 芳草綠如春

The verdant lawns are reflecting their gleams in  
 the entering, creating the spring's color.

The yellow nightingales are hiding below the  
 foliage, tossing in the air their sweet melody.

The wild grass with its suave perfume is tinting  
 the earth like a multi-colored silk.

The fragile willows with their flowing leaves are  
 coloring the heaven like a green curtain.

芳草綠如春  
 芳草綠如春  
 芳草綠如春

芳草綠如春  
 芳草綠如春  
 芳草綠如春

▲ Short poems translated into English and decorated with calligraphy  
 by Lien

◀ Poem of Lien's, in his own script. The verse quoted in the text is  
 taken from this poem.

text of oriental philosophy translated by Lin Yutang, the great Chinese scholar who became a Christian. Lien said he followed the golden mean of Confucius more than the Taoist traditions. I answered that I was Christian and knew the love of the God of the universe through His Son Jesus. Ever alert, Lien nodded as I called Jesus "le pont à Dieu," the bridge to God.

After this conversation Lien made an oriental arrangement from carnations he had carefully nurtured and staked along his front walk. Stepping back after he had presented the cinnamon-scented flowers to us and placed them on our table, he pointed out the gracefully triangular lines of man, earth and heaven.

All the creative energies of the Dien Phungs came together in an exotic New Year's party they gave. Members of the church and other neighbors received invitations in Lien's flowing calligraphy. That day he, in a formal robe, met each arriving group of friends on his porch. Because we had to mount several

steps to meet him, he appeared to be on a stage with thin white curtains of snowflakes falling to either side. Bowing first he extended both arms to receive children, adults and grandparents. All were ushered in to hear the plunking, raindrop sound of monocord music and to feast on sticky rice cakes, shrimp and pork dishes, candied carrots, and colorful glazed candies. On the walls were bright orange strips of Chinese poetry—for example, "The yellow nightingales are hiding below the foliage tossing in the air their sweet melody."

But all the smells, sounds, tastes of Vietnam were suspended the moment we beheld, in the snowbanked bay window of the living room, a six-foot-high peach tree unfurling delicate pink blossoms—in December, in Wisconsin! For a second I wondered how it had been flown into town. Then close examination revealed how the Dien Phungs with crepe paper and paste had transformed a barren elm bough into a vision of spring.

The tree reminded me of our friends themselves. They had adjusted to the tragedy and change wrought by war. Their poetic spirit, like new peach blossoms, expressed the universal hope of spring.

The spring that eventually did follow brought still another change for the Dien Phungs, who moved sixty miles away so that a son could attend college. Before they left, Lien came with an English letter he had written the pastor and congregation of Zion Lutheran Church. "Grammar and spelling correct?" he asked. Yes, they were correct. In his most elegant script he had written a letter closing with, "You have been brother to me in the name of Jesus Christ, and I thank you in His name."

I realized as we began to think of Lien and Le leaving that the two years they had been in our community were ones in which church refugee service in Christ's name had greatly enriched my own family. We were given a warm, bright friendship with gentle Vietnamese poets. ■



# CAUSEWAY TO THE PACIFIC

By DORIS POTTER SVETOKA

Last year Church Women United sponsored a tour of the Pacific—Australia, New Zealand, Fiji—in its series of “causeways.” CWU defines a causeway as “a modern road rising above marshy ground bridging a gap which otherwise mires us down and keeps us from finding each other.”

Doris Svetoka worships with her husband and daughter at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in El Paso, Texas. She is an active member of LCW and of CWU.

September 5 dawned cloudy and cold in Sydney, Australia, but the twenty-five Americans who cleared customs in the airport that morning were warmly welcomed by a large group of Australian Church Women.

The journey of the Americans began on Sunday, September 2, 1979, in Los Angeles and ended on October 1, 1979, in that same city. What an adventure it was! Church Women United, the group sponsoring the “Pacific Causeway,” had been invited to attend the annual National Committee Meeting of Australian

Church Women to be held in Wahroonga, a tiny town outside Sydney. We would meet and worship with the women of Australia, then proceed to New Zealand to worship with women in the many parishes we would visit there, then on to Fiji and a schedule that would be given us when we arrived.

I quickly made several observations about the Pacific that I would like to share with you. First, Australians and New Zealanders eat all the time! Their teas with “pikelets,” “slices” and “pavlova” are out of this world! We had tea each time we stopped in a town or village, whether it was tea time or not.

Second, New Zealand is very cold, and very beautiful. I don't know how the flowers can bloom and the trees bear fruit in such cold weather, but they do. I have never been so cold! The Methodist women in Christchurch took pity on us and opened their Thrift Shoppe for us on a Sunday evening. I purchased a New Zealand red wool sweater for \$1.50 and a wool cap for 50 cents.

Third, New Zealanders waste

nothing—neither time nor any type of commodity. In the kitchens of the various homes we stayed in were bags, plastic and paper, full of something—I wondered what. It seemed impolite for an overnight guest to inquire. Finally, on our return to Christchurch from Queenstown, I was billeted with a family for three nights and summoned the courage to ask my hostess what was in the bags. “Why those are onion skins to dye the wool with” was the answer!

The women of Australia and New Zealand work with wool all the way from sheep's back to finished product. They clip it, card it, spin it, wash it and dye it, then knit it into the most beautiful sweaters and suits, often of delicate design. Knitting continues during meetings and even in church during services.

The further we traveled the more we found things the same! Inflation is running rampant in Australia and New Zealand. Fiji has it, too, though less severely than the other countries. Mothers are concerned about drug and alcohol abuse among their children, and young people are

living together without benefit of marriage.

In Australia we met the first aboriginal woman to receive a university degree. Margaret Valadin, who now has two graduate degrees from schools in the United States, is the director of the Aboriginal Tribal and Cultural Center. She said that unemployment among her people is high and that relations between them and "white people" are poor. "There are too many Christians and not enough Christianity," she said.

We also met with Helen King, the education officer for refugees in Australia. Lutheran World Aid is one of her agency's many supporters.

The Childrens TV and Film Association, a volunteer organization, has succeeded in having a law passed to the effect that throughout school vacations, at least one cinema in each village, town or city must show a film suitable for children. (Each television station in Australia must give 1 percent of its viewing time per year to the churches, free of charge.)

We learned that CWU's Fellowship of the Least Coin has given money to the Aboriginal Women's Resource Center and also to Nungalina College, a school for aboriginal women.

In New South Wales, Christian women trained two thousand volunteers to visit hospitals and nursing homes. They are called Lavender Ladies and Lavender Lads.

Muriell Harrison, a Maguire University professor, was a most interesting new friend. She told us that university students in Australia are assigned a \$90 per



Left to right: Doris Svetoka, Fay Gay, Eileen Stutz

year fee that, for anyone who is unable to pay, is waived. Murielle and her husband were planning to move to a commune. Their children are grown, and they have decided to take up less space in God's world.

We traveled down the coast to Canberra, the capital of Australia. Or was it up the coast? I became convinced that "down under" the sun rises in the west and sets in the east! Everything is backwards from the way we do it. People drive on the left side of the road. Cold and hot water faucets are reversed. The water in the drains runs counterclockwise. The weather gets colder as you go south, and—you guessed it—warmer as you head north.

We had wonderful Bible lessons each morning, led by Dorothy Barnard. She would begin with a minis sermon, then lead us into group discussions with directions such as: "Choose a hero or heroine from the Bible and tell the story from memory." Each member of a group of three told

her story to the others. In my group was a woman from New Zealand who chose the story of Moses' mother. I told the story of Ruth, then another American woman told the story of Esther. Dorothy suggested that each of us had a reason for choosing the story we did and directed us to discover our reasons. It turned out that the New Zealand woman has three adopted children and chose the story of Moses because it is the adoption story of the Bible. I chose Ruth because it's about the way I feel about marriage and my husband. The third woman chose Esther because it was the only story she knew. Two out of three isn't bad!

We visited and talked with the women of Australia and New Zealand on a one-to-one basis. They were eager for information about ecumenical activities. We were impressed with the amount of volunteer work these women do. We found, though, that different denominations do not mix and that Lutherans are almost

## WOMEN IN AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY



Left to right: Jean Skuse, Thelma Skiller, Margaret Valadin

By EILEEN STUTZ

A panel of distinguished Australian women discussed the role of women in Australian society. Coming from diverse backgrounds, they were concerned with the growth of women's work in church congregations and educational opportunities for minority persons. Through years of education and experience, Margaret Valadin, Jean Skuse and Thelma Skiller have become experts in their fields.

Margaret Valadin, born of aboriginal parents, experienced early in life what it is like to be part of the 25 percent of Australia's population that lives in the remote interior desert area of northern and central Australia. Distance from the main cultural centers severely limits the aborigines' educational and employment opportunities.

Language is also a barrier: the five hundred aboriginal tribes, each with its own territory, speak different though related languages.

Margaret Valadin realized that her first need was education. After struggling for many years, she earned a master's degree in education communication at New York State University. In 1973 she established the first Australian Aboriginal Tribal and Cultural Center. For two weeks select tribal members live at the center and attend classes in reading, nutrition, health care, job skills and administrative management. Through this basic education, community tribal groups are prepared to work toward the goal of self-management and to effectively participate in decision-making processes at all levels.

In addition to the aborigines' poor geographical location and

social condition, their church participation is limited. Margaret Valadin says, "The aborigines don't feel welcome in church. They are not allowed to participate in Christian meetings that they are allowed to attend, and the few of them that live in the cities don't have the opportunity to mix with their white neighbors to develop friendships."

Concerned with cultural inequalities between the sexes, the Australian Council of Churches in 1973 set up a Commission on the Status of Women. For a number of years discussions and debates in Australia were part of a worldwide trend to reexamine the role of women in a rapidly changing society. Social institutions were analyzed on the basis of balance, job equality, and

growth potential for both sexes. Some of the fundamental questions the commission used as a basis for its research included: Are women fully able to realize their potential within the churches as they are presently constituted? Do the churches allow women to enjoy real participation in their decision-making structures? Are the churches encouraging, or even allowing, women of all nationalities and ages to work with men to enrich the community and seek answers to its needs?

The commission found that despite women's considerable physical presence in the church, their voice was not recognized. On important matters such as allocation of funds, constitutional changes, and theology, women simply were not consulted. Two members of the commission, Thelma Skiller and Jean Skuse, found that many women saw themselves as the "tea makers" and "money raisers" and were not taken seriously. Feeling undeserving and inadequate, women missed many major job opportunities. They were reduced to accomplishing trivial tasks while the critical decisions were left to men.

Since 1973, Australian women, because of the work of the

commission, are achieving a new sense of awareness. They are no longer satisfied to be the unrecognized minority within the congregation. Dedicated women like Margaret Valadin, Thelma Skiller, and Jean Skuse are energetically reaching out through training programs that are weaving women's abilities into the complex fabric of a wholly representative church.

Dressed in a beautiful handmade woolen sweater and slacks, Fay Gay was one of our hostesses in Australia. Her husband Ron and their wirehaired terrier, Corrigan, complete the family. Volunteering is a fulfilling way of life for this vibrant, middle-class woman living in the suburbs of Sydney. Rolling out cookies, working with crafts, or reading aloud, Fay for many hours each

week acts as substitute grandmother to a severely handicapped little girl who is paralyzed from the waist down. The friendship between Fay and the child has deepened over the years, so that neither one can delineate when they weren't "Grandma" and "Granddaughter."

Fay witnesses to other children, too, by teaching religion classes in the local school. Religion is not part of the school curriculum, but children may attend classes if they are available. The non-denominational material emphasizes the love of God. In the nearby Episcopal Mission Church are needlepoint kneeling cushions decorated with Christian symbols that Fay has made. These material manifestations of her love witness to all who see them—friend and traveling stranger alike.



Fay Gay and kneeling cushion



nonexistent. Lutheran women do not belong to Australian Church Women, but Jenny Langly, a Lutheran, monitored the assembly. The three Lutherans on the Causeway—Peggy Stewart from New Jersey, Eileen Stutz from Ohio and myself from Texas (all from LCA)—met with Jenny and prepared a tape about our work in LCW and the work of CWU for her to take back to her women's group.

You've heard about nuns' cells? Well, I slept in one, and it wasn't bad! Sparsely furnished to be sure, but it was very comfortable after I killed the Texas-sized mosquitoes! Australians don't use screens on windows or doors. The food was wonderful at the abbey, and the sisters gracious and kind.

We arrived in Christchurch, New Zealand, more than an hour late and in a driving rainstorm. The small airport terminal was bulging with hosts who had come to pick us up. New Zealanders are wonderful people, very relaxed and friendly. The couple I stayed with had a dinner party so that my roommate and I could meet their friends. The food was lovely—very different from our American way of preparing things. There was delicious "pavlova" with kiwi fruit picked in our host's garden.

We worshiped each Sunday with our hosts. I attended Baptist, Methodist, Episcopal and Quaker services. We were welcomed and introduced at each church and asked to give a short talk about our Causeway. It was a very rewarding experience.

We visited a "station" (sheep ranch), traveling by boat through gorgeous country. We learned that New Zealanders have always

prized black sheep because they can be found on the snow-covered mountains. To answer a demand for natural-colored wool, sheep owners are developing sheep of various colors—reddish brown, beige, gray and a black that is blacker than black.

Very impressive hydroelectric power dams are being built all over New Zealand, using the runoff from the Southern Alps. The dams are an attempt to avoid dependence on the OPEC countries for power. It takes seven years to build a dam, and because they are built by young men with young families, the government has built cities near the projects. These are completely self-contained towns with schools, entertainment, shopping and medical facilities. When the construction is finished, only a small maintenance force remains to run the dam, and the workers' homes are sold at a modest price. The schools are converted to facilities for senior citizens, and a few homes are kept for guest houses.

We were so cold in New Zealand that we vowed not to complain in Fiji, no matter how hot it was. It was hot, and we didn't complain. The country is beautifully lush and green, and flowers grow everywhere. An annual rainfall of 200 inches makes the grass thick and beautiful but the soil muddy. Hence people do not wear shoes.

In Suva, Fiji, we again started each day with Bible study. Our leader, an excellent teacher, was the executive secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches, Rene Tevi.

We visited Dravo, a typical Fiji village, and participated in the Kava ceremony. We were

entertained with dancing and singing and enjoyed a Fiji feast. This village will become a commercial venture in the near future, but we were the first Americans to visit it.

My host in Fiji for the Sunday meal was a newly ordained Anglican priest. Eileen Stutz and I had a lovely meal with him and his family. We walked on the beach and saw an East Indian using a spear to catch fish.

Australia has its aborigines, New Zealand its Maoris and Fiji its East Indians, who make up more than half the population. Each of the countries also has many immigrants, including refugees. We Americans felt right at home among the mixture of nationalities.

Every day of the month of September was exciting and filled with new pleasures for the American team of women from fifteen states and twelve denominations, including two Roman Catholics. Our ages ranged from twenty-seven to seventy-two, we were all colors and sizes, and our heritages were diverse—African, Asian, European, Hispanic, Native American. We had various interests and expectations, but only one goal—to make the Causeway a true expression of Christian unity. Our theme song during the trip was the beautiful hymn, "Many Gifts, One Spirit." It said our mission far better than I ever could:

Many gifts, one Spirit,  
One love known in many ways.  
In our difference is blessing,  
From diversity we praise,  
One Giver, One Lord,  
One Spirit, One Word,  
Known in many ways. ■

# NO COMPLAINTS

By MARY ANNE WHITEHEAD

Seventeen-year-old Matt Kramer has learned to live with a kidney transplant—and lots of hope.

Mary Anne Whitehead is working toward a master's degree in journalism at Temple University in Philadelphia.



Photo by Dennis Plymette

Matt, who serves as usher and acolyte, gives a Sunday bulletin to George Gause at St. John's Lutheran Church in Hatboro, Pennsylvania.

Like most seventeen-year-olds, Matt Kramer is interested in driving the family car, sports, puttering with old radios, dates and getting a college education. But unlike most seventeen-year-olds, Matt is one of twelve thousand people in the United States who are considered medical miracles.

Matt is alive and well today thanks to a kidney transplant five

years ago.

A serious, soft-spoken, friendly young man, Matt was born with a congenital defect of the ureter (the tube that conducts urine from the kidney to the bladder). From infancy, he had to submit to constant medication, dietary restrictions and a series of operations. After one operation, he had to wear a special pouch to collect urine externally. He wore

the pouch from the time he was six years old until he received the kidney transplant at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children in Philadelphia, when he was thirteen.

"I sometimes think about how hard it was before the transplant," he explains. "The hard part was the diet and the restrictions on activities. Now I wonder if I could have been successful at some

# NO COMPLAINTS

sport, what my life would have been like had I had a chance to try it. But I grew up as a spectator for the most part and I learned to enjoy that. These last two years, I've been the equipment manager of our high school wrestling team and I've really liked it. I'm thankful I could take part that way.

"I don't resent what has happened to me, I don't feel it's unfair. I've accepted it, adjusted to it. That's the way life is. You have to accept what happens to you. . . . I thank God that I was lucky enough to have been given this gift of life, as the Kidney Foundation calls transplants," he continues.

As a child, Matt says, he didn't completely understand why he was always tired, why he had to subsist on a diet of low protein and low salt, why he had to avoid contact sports. Even when his kidney stopped functioning so that he retained fluids and looked as if he had mumps, he didn't recognize the full significance of his condition.

"I really didn't feel any different, I had no pain or anything," he recalls.

In April 1975, he began dialysis at St. Christopher's. Three times a week, from April to August, the dialysis machine cleansed and purified his blood while his physicians searched for a suitable donor. The first time Matt went on dialysis, he had an epileptic seizure, his mother Jean revealed.

"Dialysis was hard to get used to at first," Matt admits, "but not really as uncomfortable as I thought it might be. I usually watched TV or read, and," he laughs, "ate." The one good thing about dialysis, he remembers, was that when he was on the machine he could eat all the forbidden food—chocolate, pickles, bologna.

Just as he had adjusted to the

medications and the restrictions in diet and activities, Matt learned to adjust to dialysis, and gradually, he says, he began putting the pieces together about his condition.

"I learned as I went along," he says. "Before the transplant, I'm sure the doctors explained everything to me, but I guess it didn't really register. Afterward it was like putting a jigsaw puzzle together. I realized how serious things were and how lucky I was to have made it."

Matt's parents, Jean and Dick Kramer, were both tested to see if they could donate one of their kidneys to Matt, but neither of them proved suitable. His two older brothers, Carl and Paul, who were then sixteen and eighteen, were undergoing tests when an appropriate kidney became available in Chicago. The donor was a fifty-year-old man who died and whom Matt knows practically nothing about.

On August 28, 1975, in a four-hour operation at St. Christopher's, Matt received his new kidney, and for the next two weeks it was touch and go. Matt was given massive doses of steroids and other immunosuppressive drugs to help his system accept the kidney and guard against the development of disease. At the end of the crucial two weeks, Matt's new kidney began to function normally.

For Matt this was a new and totally surprising thing.

"When the kidney started to function Matt wasn't prepared for it," explains his mother Jean. "He had never learned to void normally, never was really toilet trained, and so he was mighty surprised to wake up in the middle of the night in a wet bed. He learned to control his bladder very quickly."

Twice his body attempted to reject the new kidney, but each time medication stopped the process. In February 1976, Matt went back into the hospital to have his own kidneys, the size of walnuts, removed. Because he developed abscesses, he had to be readmitted to the hospital two more times within the next four months.

Now Matt's "new" kidney is functioning normally, but still the risk of rejection is real and ever present. There are no guarantees, despite the fact that the kidney has lasted nearly five years.

"I think about it sometimes," Matt says seriously. "I worry about whether or not it will continue to function, whether I'll have to go back on dialysis for the rest of my life. The medications I have to take every day are no big thing. They've become a habit—just like brushing my teeth. Sometimes I forget to take them, but I can't really afford to forget. I have to get back on the track right away. Sure, I think about it. It's always there. I pray nothing will change, that I can stay this way."

Having the transplant changed Matt's life in many ways. For one thing, he became a local celebrity. In 1976, he made a television commercial with actress Julie Harris for the Delaware Valley Kidney Bank and the spot was shown nationwide. He also appeared on local television as part of an Impact Health Week. Then, when the Philadelphia Flyers hockey team won the Stanley Cup, Matt was chosen to escort the coveted award around St. Christopher's Hospital for the other children to see.

Another way in which Matt's life changed is that he became involved in many new activities—activities that before were tiring for him.

"Now I don't have enough time

to do everything," he says. "I like to work in the shop on radios; I like electronics, fixing things, seeing how they work."

He's also up every morning at five o'clock delivering newspapers on his bicycle. He has a 2.2-mile paper route.

On Sundays he serves as an usher or an acolyte at St. John's Lutheran Church in Hatboro, a suburb of Philadelphia.

Matt and his parents have a quiet, reassuring faith, a faith that places their lives in the hands of the Lord, that trusts that He knows best.

"We try to live each day as it comes," says his mother Jean, who sings in the church choir and serves each year as a captain for the March of Dimes Mother's March. "We found out that you can only worry so much and then you have to put it in God's hands. Ultimately it is His decision. We just pray each night, trust in the Lord and look to tomorrow."

Matt believes that since he has had the transplant, his religious beliefs have given him a more positive attitude about life, that he feels different about attending church services and helping other people.

"I have a lot to be thankful for," he continues. "I look forward to going to church now, to serving the church in some way, to helping with the work of the church. I think I've been given a great blessing. I think about all of this, and I think how lucky I am, that God has allowed me to go through this and make it."

Matt also demonstrates his Christian beliefs by the concern and help he gives to other kidney transplant patients.

"I try to tell them to look beyond the bad things, beyond the first part of having a transplant. This is a unique experience, and I tell them it isn't

so bad to be different from other people. I tell them I don't feel odd about it. I feel lucky that it worked. I tell them that at first you feel different, but that eventually you adapt. The nurses, the doctors, your parents help you adjust. I tell them that having a transplant, as scary as it may sound, is a good thing, that it gives you a better life."

Matt's parents frequently talk to other kidney patients and their families, too. They believe this is something they must do, and they do it willingly. It's their way of telling other people about a miracle of modern medicine, but more importantly, about the miracle of the Lord.

Should the kidney be rejected in the near future, Matt feels he will be ready to handle that.

"Well, so far I have a good match. But, of course, the doctors can't tell me that it will stay this way. Each case is unique, it depends on the individual. I try not to worry about something going wrong, but it does hang back there. But I'm not uptight. If it happens to me, I think I could accept it. I think I could keep my cool. Having gone through this, it kind of makes you stronger. I wouldn't break apart. I'd have to accept it. Of course, I hope it continues, but if not, I'm prepared for it, mentally and spiritually."

If he has to deal with this, Matt says, he is lucky because he has the love and support of his parents. He's especially thankful for the warm and close relationship he has with them.

"Throughout all of this, my parents have been helping me along, they were there when I needed them. This experience has made us closer, and now, since the transplant, we do things together we could never do before," he said. One of the things they plan on doing together

is travel to Oberammergau, Germany, to see the Passion Play.

Since the transplant, Matt has grown two inches and gained forty-five pounds. Because all young kidney patients have a leakage of calcium and phosphates, which are needed for growth, Matt's growth was inhibited. The drugs he must take each day to avoid rejection also tend to slow down the growth process, but Matt isn't particularly bothered by the fact that he is shorter than his friends.

He just shrugs and says, "Neither of my parents is very tall."

Since the transplant, Matt has set new goals for himself. One of these is typical of teenagers today. He wants to buy a car, and he's been working hard delivering newspapers to earn the money.

"I set goals for myself," he explains. "I'm happy to say I managed to make the first one. I didn't think I could save a thousand dollars, but I did. Now I hope to improve on that. In fact, I've already sent out flyers asking for summer yard work."

"It might take me a little longer than someone else to do the work," he admits, "but I'll get it done. It's just great not to be so tired all the time. It's a whole new life."

Another goal Matt has is to study engineering at Temple University in Philadelphia. He'd also like to get a part-time job in electronics.

Overall Matt takes a philosophical view of his long and arduous battle for health.

"It's hard at first to get used to the idea, to accept all of this. Sure I think about what it would be like if the kidney failed, and it scares me. But mostly I think how lucky I am to have gone through this and made it this far. I have no complaints," he says simply. ■



# Having This

**The former editor of *Lutheran Women* reports on a conference for ordained Lutheran women. LaVonne Althouse, who was ordained in 1974, is pastor of Salem Lutheran Church in Philadelphia.**

"We work in the context of the priesthood of all believers; the priesthood of all believers is for the sake of God's entire creation. Having this ministry by the mercy of God, we pass on to others what has been given to us by Jesus Christ. We all share God's mandate to love one another, accomplish justice and live in peace."

These words are from the closing paragraph of a pastoral letter to the churches written by Lutheran women pastors meeting in a Conference of Ordained Lutheran Women last April. They express the most important thought the women pastors, celebrating ten years of ordination, would share with sisters in Lutheran Church Women.

The ordained women met to celebrate, to exchange stories of their ministries and the acceptance of those ministries, and to reflect on what has to be done to secure a wider acceptance of the roles women play in the priesthood of believers. Lectures, workshops, reflection times and personal conversations offered opportunities to explore these concerns.

Dr. Elizabeth Bettenhausen, who teaches Christian social ethics at Boston University School of Theology, reflected for the conference on ways theology has defined women. She also specified issues that women should be aware of if we are to take up our roles fully in the priesthood of believers.

Dr. Bettenhausen cited

Augustine and Aquinas as examples of theologians who defined women as on the periphery of the God-man relationship. They attributed the characteristics of God's essential nature to the male of the human species. Luther, she said, was ambivalent about women, but clearly understood that the subordination of woman to man in scripture was a function of sin, following the Fall, and not God's ordering of creation from the beginning. "We need to speak that word to Lutherans who sit out there and tell us we shouldn't support the Equal Rights Amendment because God wills women to be subordinate to men," she said.

Subordination, as Luther understood it, is always a punishment for sin, Dr. Bettenhausen stressed. She reminded her audience that Luther always understood that sin could result from excesses in opposite directions. While we frequently think of the sin of men as chiefly pride, she pointed out, women tend to sin by accepting an inappropriate subordination, by negating themselves, by not accepting their responsibility to act as moral agents. Men sin by not seeing women as moral agents, by expecting subordination rather than responsibility from women.

"Part of our problem today is to break the literalness of masculine symbols of God so that we can understand that God is not identical to that masculinity," she said. She added that "among all other reasons for ordaining women, there is a symbolic function—that God works not only through males as bearers of God's word."

Speaking of the diversity of gifts we have as human beings, Dr. Bettenhausen pointed out that the church needs a variety of gifts from women members. It needs women who are "like the constant and steady pilot light on the stove," always there feeding the flames that do the cooking, and also "women who are like forest fires, unpredictable, uncontrollable, who blaze through in order that new growth can begin again, women who maintain and women who change the picture into a new vision."

Rev. Joan Martin, United Presbyterian pastor who is staff associate for justice for women in the National Council of Churches, spoke of God's grace as nonconforming. It breaks down what we have built up so that we can win the new life God has in store for us. Grace is unpredictable and whimsical, she said.

Using the parable of the laborers in the vineyard, all of whom received the same pay though some had worked longer than others, Pastor Martin suggested the response of grace would be to experience "joy that everyone is included in the householder's generosity." To have experienced grace, she said, is to be called to do actions of love and justice and to be empowered to act in justice and love.

To have experienced grace, Pastor Martin added, is to be empowered to adopt an attitude of inclusiveness toward all persons, regardless of race, sex or class, so that all of us win. Such inclusiveness requires, however, that we "tear down the fear . . . that says we must all be alike."

Grace will move us, she said, from beholding the justice of the householder's payment with joy, to an attitude of thanksgiving that we are included in this just act,



# ministry

By LAVONNE ALTHOUSE

then to an eagerness to engage in similar acts of justice ourselves.

About half of the ordained women in the Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church met from April 13 to 16 at Assisi Heights Christian Community Center in Rochester, Minnesota. The one hundred ordained women and ninety others who met included sixty of 124 women then ordained by the LCA (out of 8,200 total ordained), thirty-eight of the ALC's sixty ordained women (out of nearly 6,800 total ordained), two of three ordained women from the American Evangelical Lutheran Church (out of 589 pastors) and two ordained women from overseas.

Others attending the conference included the three church presidents—Dr. James R. Crumley, Jr., of the LCA, Dr. David W. Preus of the ALC, and Dr. William H. Kohn of the AELC. Other officers and leaders of the churchwide bodies and of their synods or districts, seminaries and agencies also attended. In addition, several nonprofessional church leaders were there.

Both the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America ordained their first women pastors in 1970, the same year ordination of women was approved by the churches' conventions. Rev. Elizabeth A. Platz, the first ordained LCA woman, who serves as chaplain at the University of Maryland, led opening worship at the conference. The ALC's Rev. Barbara Andrews, ordained in December 1970, died tragically in a fire last year.

The first woman ordained by the American Evangelical Lutheran Church is Janith Ott-Murphy, who was ordained in

October 1977. A member of the pastoral staff at University Lutheran Chapel in Berkeley, California, she also works with Planned Parenthood. At the conference she co-edited the pastoral letter to the churches.

Eleven workshops at the conference enabled participants to explore biblical perspectives of women's ministries, lifestyles, nonparish opportunities, ministry with laity, justice in the church, theological perspectives, worship, the gifts of women and the wider struggle of women for justice in society. At a "Life and Ministry Fair" ordained women shared printed resources for ministry, slide presentations about their ministries and displays of handcrafted vestments.

Meeting in plenary session after the workshops, the conference participants agreed that there is still work to be done to help more people accept, support and call women as pastors. As a result of their discussions, they cabled the All-Africa Lutheran Consultation on Christian Theology, which was meeting in Monrovia, Liberia, at the same time, to urge Lutheran churches in Africa to "move swiftly" toward ordination of women.

The pastoral letter from the conference to Lutheran churches in North America, another product of a plenary session, called for the full participation of women on "church boards, committees, commissions, schools, seminaries and agencies" in all Lutheran churches. It also asked "that women and men be involved equally at all levels in the discussions taking place about Lutheran unity."

A paragraph about the "call process" said: "At this conference we found out that many of us had been hurt in the process of receiving calls. Some

congregations have refused to consider women candidates; some district and synod staff have not always known how to help; some candidates have not received feedback on what went wrong. We rejoice with those congregations who have become acquainted with women pastors and urge those who have not done so to invite them to preach and teach. We urge congregations to interview in good faith the women recommended to them for placement. We urge district and synod staff to receive training which will enable them to help professional women to be placed."

An LCA synod president, Dr. Edward K. Perry of Upper New York Synod, said at the last conference session that he had heard "a lot of pain" expressed over difficulties in receiving calls. He encouraged women to translate their stories into data to present to people who can effect change.

He also underlined the need for career planning, especially in the two-career family. Sometimes specific placement problems arise; at other times one spouse's career may demand mobility when the other's requires permanence. Or there may be other special problems. He encouraged clergy to be open with church leaders about their life plans.

Rev. Jean Bozeman, dean of students at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, chaired the conference planning committee. "We needed this conference to be renewed," she said at its conclusion. "Having experienced the power of all of us in one place, we are now sent forth to celebrate. We know we are not alone."■

# Dr. Carol

By MARLENE PLACAK

Dr. Carol Jameson, a missionary, has done a great deal to further the health and education of women in India.

Just before the invasion of northern Africa in World War II, an American Army Air Corps bomber winged its way from the Gold Coast toward southern India with a cargo so precious that two governments had arranged its passage. What was the cargo? A weapon vital to the war effort? A spy? A general? No.

It was a life-jacketed passenger who had zigzagged across the Atlantic all the way from the United States but whose progress had been arrested by the war in Accra, on the Gold Coast of Africa. At this point, the Surgeon General of India telegraphed Allied authorities and stated unequivocally that the passenger was "essential to medical education in India."

The passenger was a grand lady of medicine, Dr. Carol E. Jameson. This quiet, tough missionary from California had a conscious commitment to the needs of people in India, and she was not about to allow a world war to destroy her dream of helping them.

The dream had taken shape almost twenty years earlier. Dr. Carol graduated from Stanford University in 1921 and went on to the Mayo Clinic on a fellowship. There she met Dr. Ida S. Scudder.

Dr. Scudder had gone to India years before, answering a need she'd seen as a young girl helping her missionary father. Women in India were offered no aids to survival. Custom not only prevented them from seeing male doctors; it also kept them out of

classrooms. Dr. Scudder told Dr. Jameson that, in 1920, there was only one woman doctor for every million females in India.

Then she added in her matter-of-fact manner, "You must come to Vellore. Women doctors must train Indian women to help themselves."

Convinced, Dr. Carol Jameson followed Dr. Scudder to southern India, where six women doctors were to staff a teaching hospital called the Vellore Christian Medical College for Women.

Recalling the early days of Vellore, Dr. Carol's face softens into a smile that reflects contentment with the choices she has made. Asked about the obstacles encountered in those early days, she answers sincerely, "I don't recognize obstacles."

A simple philosophy to state, but how does a person live it in the face of odds overwhelmingly against it? Dr. Carol was aware of those odds from her first day in India. She was appalled by the crowded roads, the filth in the gutters, and "when I saw the 'hospital,' I realized that Dr. Scudder, in her enthusiasm, had painted a far rosier picture than was actually the case."

On her second day in India, Dr. Carol was pressed into Roadside Service, a mobile dispensary instituted at Vellore to take medical aid out to the people. Hordes of people swarmed over the ambulance everywhere it stopped, and the young doctor watched as the driver pulled teeth and heated baby bottles over the vehicle's radiator. A religious worker gathered up the well children and told them Bible stories while the medical team offered help to their

families. Before long, Dr. Carol was right in the middle of it all.

"At Mayo, a suitable case load was six patients a day; my second day in India, I treated more than two hundred victims of diseases I'd never seen before: leprosy, cholera, malaria, Guinea worm, scabies, and many others. I had a lump in my throat—I hadn't visualized practicing medicine this way," remembers Dr. Jameson.

In an early letter to her mother explaining an illness she herself had succumbed to, she expressed her bewilderment. She recounted a day on which she saw 560 patients, about three hundred of whom were leprosy victims. That day was followed by an all-night session of maternity cases. She ended the letter with, "It sounds impossible to treat so many."

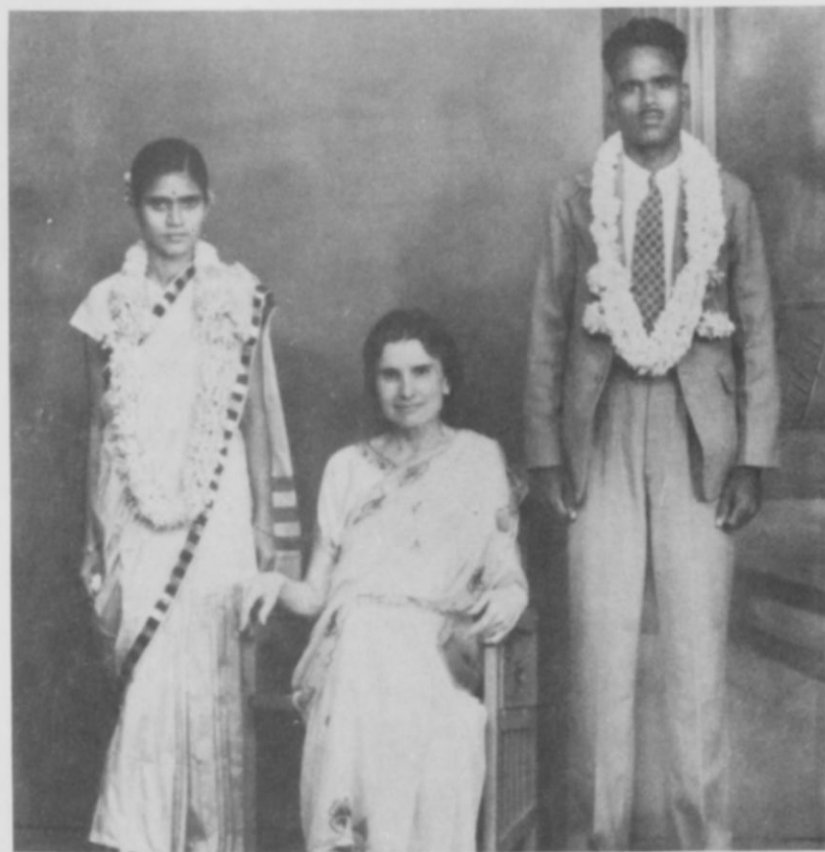
Impossible, yes, but the need was apparent. Thus, Dr. Carol began unconsciously formulating a dream—not an unrealistic, romantic dream, but one that satisfied her needs and those of the people around her. She learned to view the task she faced one patient at a time. She came to understand the Indian mistrust of foreigners and learned to respect their beliefs.

"I remember a Moslem doctor showing me one of his medicines made of crushed pearls and gold. A terrible waste, and it wouldn't cure anything. But I didn't say a word. We all knew these people had to see for themselves that some of our ways were better. We couldn't just tell them they were," says Dr. Jameson.

In a later letter home, she'd obviously sorted out her doubts. She wrote: "I wish I did not have to carry life and death in my hands constantly . . . but the



This 1923 photograph shows Dr. Carol Jameson, left, with her parents and sister just before her departure to India.



Dr. Jameson, center, with her adopted daughter Sugunabai and her husband at their wedding. After the death of Sugunabai's mother, Dr. Jameson raised her and her sister. Dr. Jameson had many foster children at Vellore.

Great Physician obviously meant that we'd be given advances by research, and He expected us to use them. Why else have we come here?"

Dr. Carol never again questioned her mission in life, not even on an occasion when a

person of lesser faith might have. She noticed a lesion on her nose. The verdict of the pathology tests was "suspected leprosy."

"I wasn't too troubled at first—I always try to take things philosophically," recalls Dr. Jameson.

She was sent to the leprosarium at Chinglepat, where she was welcomed by the superintendent. He said, "You will be our house guest, but don't tell anyone why you're here."

"Then I was a little worried. One of the worst aspects of leprosy to me is the secretiveness surrounding it. If it's known that you're a leper, you are shunned, totally."

Two weeks of tests and waiting for results followed for the doctor who had seen all the horrors of leprosy: the clawed hands, the collapsed noses, the ulcerated feet, the open sores, and the total social ostracism. In the end, however, she was given a clean bill of health—and something else. She added to her growing stockpile of knowledge a much greater understanding of the emotional trauma a leprosy patient experiences.

In her specialty of obstetrics and gynecology, Dr. Carol ran headlong into some of the more frustrating customs of old India.

"I was called to a Hindu home, but I arrived after the baby had come. The mother was lying on the dirt floor, which had been nicely packed down with cow dung, the usual practice. I stood by helplessly while an untrained midwife efficiently stuffed ashes from the floor into the baby's cord. They were about to brand the baby (a Hindu practice to avert the evil eye), but I did protest this and they stopped."

Tetanus was common, and this type of "treatment" was a prime cause of it.

"I once tried to set up a class for indigenous midwives, paying them for each class attendance, but the village was several miles



Dr. Carol Jameson, center, with Dr. and Mrs. K. G. Koshy, who recently visited her at her home in Corona, California. Dr. Koshy, at this visit, was Director of Vellore.

away and it simply didn't work out," says Dr. Jameson.

In spite of this failure, Dr. Jameson pursued the topic of preventive medicine. She talked public health at every opportunity. On the occasion of one of her furloughs, the town insisted that she join in a procession behind a brass band. The speeches after the parade were of the usual flowery nature—all but Dr. Carol's. She had a captive audience and decided to make the best use of it.

"Dr. Ida (Scudder) had a stricter social sense than I. She might have been embarrassed at my putting such an occasion to practical use," smiles Dr. Carol. But that is Dr. Carol.

Even though she pushed public health, she wasn't pushy about it. She was asked to give a talk to a group of Moslem boys on the hazards of smoking. She set up all her graphs and charts while the boys were at their prayers. They filed into the room and sat down on the floor with their backs to Dr. Jameson and her paraphernalia.

"I chuckled at myself and then moved my stuff to the other end of the room. The boys, according to their own beliefs, were sitting facing Mecca," says Dr. Carol.

As Vellore passed through its adolescence, the emerging India experienced growing pains, but the government made clear from

the beginning that it expected women to play a more important role in an independent India. For a time it even offered larger scholarships to women than to men, but this incentive proved unnecessary; the women responded with such zeal to the opportunity to improve their lives that Vellore always had a bigger demand than it could meet.

Dr. Carol proudly remembers that Prime Minister Nehru in later years was asked what he considered the biggest advance in his lifetime. Unhesitatingly he answered, "Women's education." Unquestionably, early Christian endeavors in education provided the nucleus from which the mass education of women evolved.

For India, Dr. Carol, and Vellore, 1947 was an eventful year. Dr. Carol E. Jameson, Fellow of both the Royal and the American Colleges of Surgeons, was awarded the Kaisar-i-Hind (Emperor of India) gold medal early in the year for her services to the people of India. On August 15, India achieved independence. And in 1947 Vellore became coeducational.

In the years that followed, Dr. Carol served as vice principal and later as acting director of the college. In 1960 Dr. Carol Jameson retired from Vellore, but since has practiced in other places in India.

Once she traveled to a village that had been ravaged by fire.

Eight hundred homes had been burned out, all but two of them Moslem. A Canadian mission sent a large relief check with specific instructions that it was to be distributed among *all* victims, not just Christians.

"I don't think I was ever prouder of being a Christian," smiles Dr. Jameson.

As Dr. Carol reminisces, one becomes aware that age has not diminished this grand lady of medicine. Her majestic poise belies time, and her ideals, which she professes with faith and humility, are timeless. Dr. Carol Jameson not only loves people, she respects them. And she respects their ability, with the help of God, to cope with their own problems. She and all the men and women at Vellore outwitted circumstances and realized their "impossible dream" by chasing it one step at a time.

And the realization is apparent. Today Vellore has a staff of more than one thousand, only one of whom is non-Indian. It services more than two thousand outpatients a day and more than twenty-five thousand inpatients annually. Vellore is sponsored by forty Christian missions in ten different countries.

All of this grew from a deep faith in God and a determination, with His help, never to let difficulties reach "obstacle" status. With faith and ability, Dr. Carol E. Jameson, five other women doctors, and a strong administration refused to march in step with the possible but, instead, composed their own tune to the music of necessity and human dignity. And the song plays on even now, still refusing to recognize obstacles. ■



# 77 YEARS OF WORK AND FAITH

By KAY CONRAD

A member of the LCW Board of Directors interviews an LCW member of long and good standing.

Miss Mary Barringer attended the June monthly meeting of the Molly Lyerly LCW circle of Union Lutheran Church in Salisbury, North Carolina. Miss Barringer has been attending monthly meetings of this organization for seventy-seven of her ninety-five years.

"I know it was a good program even if I couldn't take it all in, and I always enjoy being there," she says with enthusiasm. Miss Barringer's hearing and vision are impaired, but her alert mind and remarkably agile body let you know that she doesn't miss much even if she can't "take it all in."

Miss Mary, as she is affectionately called in her community, joined the Women's Missionary Society when she was eighteen years old. She doesn't remember why she wanted to join. She laughs as she says, "They were just elderly ladies, and I guess I wanted to be old, too."

The minutes of a 1903 called meeting of the Women's Home and Foreign Mission Society of Union Church record the following:

Miss Mary Barringer sent in her name as a member of the society which we gladly received. We hope many more of our young ladies will join in the future.

When she joined WMS, Miss Mary was an active member of the young people's missionary

society. This organization merged with other youth groups throughout the church at large to form the Luther League. Miss Mary was a delegate to the convention that merged these groups. She served as advisor to the youth groups of Union Church for many years and was the producer of numerous children's programs.



Miss Mary Barringer

Miss Mary recalls that when she first joined WMS, dues were ten cents a month. Members sold eggs and picked cotton to earn the dues. The name of the organization has changed three times since she joined, but her loyalty hasn't. "I haven't missed many meetings," she reports. Miss Mary has served as delegate to many conventions, including conventions of the North Carolina Unit of LCW.

As Miss Mary talks, she frequently reaches out to touch her listener on the hand. She has touched most of the lives in her community in one way or another. One young woman in

Union Church says, "Miss Mary is the backbone of our congregation."

Miss Mary laughs at this and says, "My eighty-eight pounds make a poor backbone. But my doctor says I'm tough."

Miss Mary taught school in the Union Church community for many years and taught the first Sunday School teachers' training class at Union in about 1905. She has written the history of her congregation and has served as church organist. It was "an old pump organ," she gleefully recalls. "I didn't know anything about music, but one of the men in the church said my playing was better than nothing. So I played until someone better came along. We sang, 'Jesus, Lover of My Soul' a lot!"

One would expect that at ninety-five, Miss Mary would have grown indifferent to most of life's frustrations, but when I asked her how she spends her time, she quickly answered, "Trying to do something and not getting it done." She pointed to a *Good News Bible* and *The Lutheran* magazine, which she had been reading. "I can't read as much as I'd like to."

Miss Mary has recently been honored by her congregation and has received letters from the president and the executive director of LCW. She accepts praise graciously but practically. "I didn't do anything spectacular. I just worked hard."

Perhaps Miss Mary Barringer doesn't realize it, but to work hard and to be faithful in an organization for seventy-seven years is spectacular. ■



# an open door

A SHORT STORY BY LINN ANN HUNTINGTON

My husband Mark tells me he knows when I'm worried about something because I always bite my lip. He says it's a nervous habit I should learn to overcome. This morning I'm consciously trying not to bite it so that he will think today is just like every other morning. Of course, it isn't.

It is my son Jeremy's first day of kindergarten, and I, his thirty-year-old mother, am more nervous than he. I watch as he struggles, blond head bent over, determined this morning of all mornings to tie his shoelaces without my help. I can feel the butterflies in my stomach. Why doesn't Mark help him? But my businessman husband is engrossed in his morning paper.

Did my own mother go through this with her brood of five? Did she struggle to untie apron strings as she watched each of us leave the red hills of our farm in Arkansas and embark on our own journeys? Did she ever look at her youngest daughter with the dishwater blond hair and freckles, with the clumsy feet and awkward hands, and long to protect me, as I now long to protect Jeremy? If she did, she never let on.

"Jody," Mark's voice breaks through my thoughts. "The coffee's burning. And honey," he smiles, "you're biting your lip again."

Mark has left for work now and I am relieved. I know he was only teasing me, but then he is not the one who will have to walk Jeremy

to the bus stop and watch his frail little form disappear into a world of noise and confusion, a world where everyone is bigger than he is. Mark has never lived in that kind of a world, but I have. I glance at my son as we walk silently toward the bus stop. How will he survive? Will he find a place of his own?

"Look, Jeremy, the birds are flying south." I speak just to break the silence between us. He glances up, his blue eyes wide, but he says nothing.

Finally we reach the bus stop. He lets go of my hand. "You can go on home now, Mom. It's okay."

"That's all right, Jeremy. I thought I'd stay."

"No, Mom," he shakes his head. "I really want you to go on home. Please!"

Other children are arriving now. Reluctantly I turn to go. The bus rounds the corner. I look back. Jeremy has already climbed inside. I pull my sweater around me. It is early September still, but the wind is cold. The movement in the sky again catches my eye. Wild ducks in perfect formation are flying south. I let out my breath. It feels as though I have been holding it in for a long time. The tightness in my chest begins to ease. Has it really been twenty years since I last saw Clacker?

Papa gave him to me for Easter my tenth year. He was just a little ball of fluff then, didn't even look much like a duck. He was all

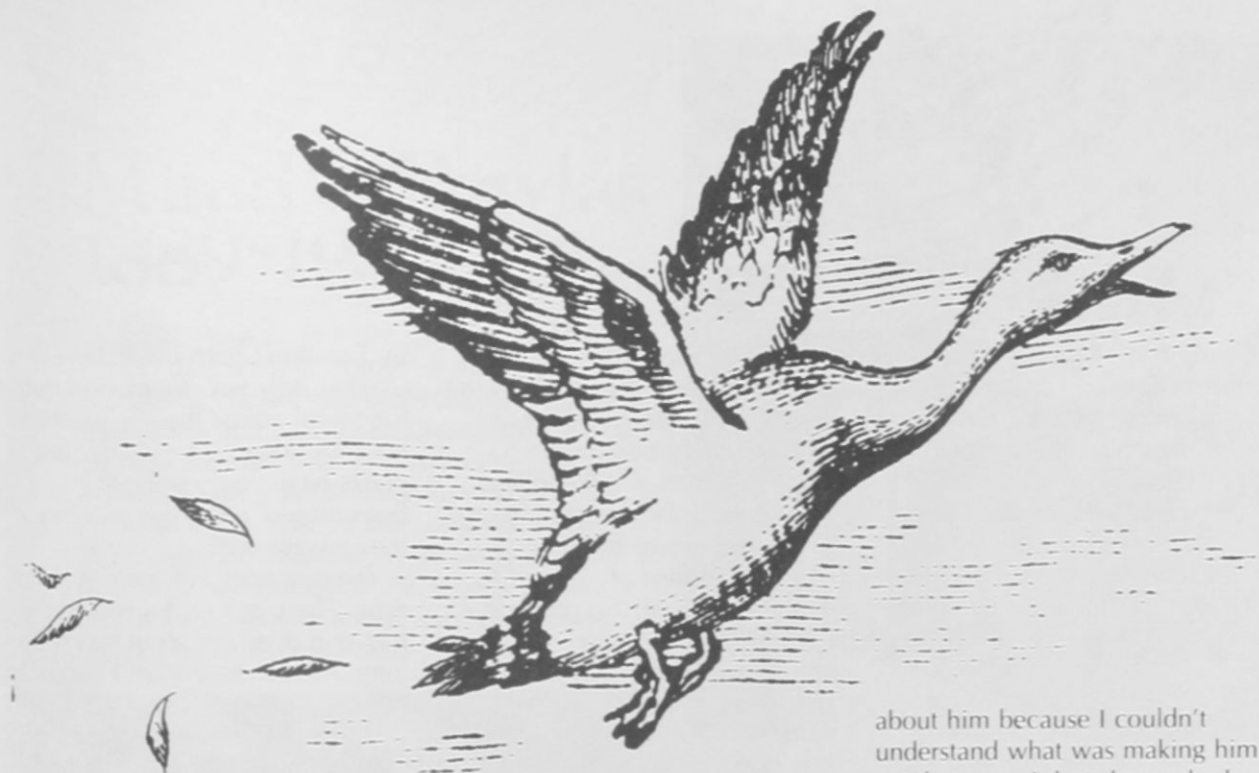
scrawny with a bald head. I named him Clacker.

I don't know where Papa got him; he never did say. Times were hard then and money scarce. Papa didn't put too much stock in fancy notions. Men had to be hard then, women too. That duck was the first present Papa ever gave me—and the last.

Clacker soon meant more to me than anything in the world. Maybe it was because he was the first thing I ever loved, or maybe because he taught me how to love. Maybe it was just because he was all mine.

I was the only girl in the family, the youngest of five children. My brothers all laughed at Clacker because he was so funny looking. That didn't matter to me. I had Clacker, and that was enough.

Clacker and I soon became the best of friends. He'd follow me around everywhere I went. I guess he thought I was his mama or something. Sometimes Clacker would even follow me to school, although Miss Baxter, my teacher, never would let him come inside. (I never did like her too much.) But Clacker would be there waiting for me after school. He was the best friend I ever had.



That summer we had lots of adventures together. We'd set off early in the morning after chores were done and spend all day roaming the woods or swimming in the river. Sometimes I'd just sit and talk to him. He was a good listener. I told that duck all my dreams and secret wishes, and he never told a soul.

Clacker did give me a scare once. He got loose out of the shed I kept him in. (Mama never would let any of us bring animals into the house. She said it wasn't civilized.) That night it rained. There was enough thunder and lightning to make a body wonder what the world was coming to.

Next morning Sid, the brother nearest my age, brought Clacker in while I was finishing breakfast. Poor little Clacker was all limp as if he were dead. My head started spinning and my oatmeal got stuck in my throat and I couldn't say anything.

Mama just looked at me, then at Sid, and said, "Well?"

"Naw, he ain't dead yet," Sid

said. "But he ain't too far from it."

Mama fixed a bed for Clacker by the stove in the kitchen. That was the only time she ever allowed any "varmint" in her house. But nobody said a word, not even Papa.

Mama and I nursed Clacker all that day and through the night. Carl, my next oldest brother, fixed Clacker a special "potion" made out of special herbs. (Carl always was my favorite brother.) I don't know whether it was the potion or just my loving that pulled Clacker through, but he started getting better.

But he never was quite the same after that. He was sort of restless, always flapping his wings. Sometimes he'd even be gone for a few hours at a time, though he always came back. He was never gone for very long.

His baby down had been replaced now by fine long white feathers. He was a most handsome duck. I asked Mama

about him because I couldn't understand what was making him act that way. I thought maybe he was still sick. Mama said that no, Clacker wasn't sick. It was just natural, that it had to happen sooner or later. She said I'd understand better when I got older. I didn't understand what she was talking about then.

Summer passed quickly that year, too quickly. The crops all burned up. That one big rain we had was the only rain all summer. As Papa watched his crops dying in the sun, a part of him began dying also. Everyone had been saying that things were going to get better. Things didn't get any better that year.

I was too busy with Clacker to notice the changes in the household. First thing I noticed was the well went dry. Then there was less food on the table at mealtimes. There was less grain to feed Clacker. (I sometimes had to slip my cornbread out to the shed to give Clacker a little extra food so he wouldn't get hungry. Clacker was getting to be a good-size duck).

Mama hardly ever laughed any more. There were nights Papa didn't come in at all. He, too,



was restless, searching for something. When he did come in, he was usually drunk and had a bottle under his arm. I steered clear of him.

The darkest day of my young life came one day after Papa had come home from hunting. He was drunk as usual and he didn't lock the gate to the pen where he kept his hounds. They got loose just as I went to feed Clacker. Those dogs began chasing Clacker up and down the yard, barking and squalling. I knew they were going to tear Clacker to pieces. I screamed and shouted at the stupid dogs when, all of a sudden, Clacker spread his wings. He lifted himself right from under the noses of those hounds. Higher and higher he flew, testing his wings.

Papa came tearing out of the house, with Mama at his heels, and he quieted those dogs in a hurry. But it was too late. The sky was blue and clear. Clacker was nowhere to be seen.

I waited all that day and the next for Clacker to come back. I knew he would. Best friends don't leave each other without saying good-bye. Once I thought I saw him circling high above the oak tree outside my bedroom window. Sid said it was only an old hawk. Mama told him to hush.

I wouldn't speak to Papa or go near him. The hurt inside me was too great. It was all his fault. I nursed the hurt inside my heart for two days. I couldn't eat or sleep. Every night I'd lie awake straining, listening for a familiar quack to tell me Clacker had come back to me.

Finally Mama made me come down to dinner. She said it wasn't right for me to keep fretting that way. She made my favorite supper, chicken and dumplings with pudding for dessert. Even the boys were all nice to me for a change. The food all seemed to stick in my throat. No one said a word all through supper—not even Papa. I excused myself early and ran up to my room. The hurt inside was just too much to bear. I lay down on my feather bed and cried like a baby. I cried until I didn't think I could ever cry again, until the salt had dried on my face and my heart felt hollow and hard. I got up and slipped downstairs. There was a scene I'll never forget.

By the candlelight I could see Papa sitting at the table, his head buried in his arms, his shoulders slightly shaking. That was the only time in my life I ever saw Papa cry. As I stood there shivering, my cotton nightgown clutched round me, I wanted to turn to Papa, to hug him and tell him everything was going to be all right again.

But I didn't. The words stuck in my throat somehow, and in that moment, which seemed like an eternity, I too cried. I cried for my papa and for Clacker and for an innocence lost. I knew I could never love Papa more than I did in that one moment.

Papa went away soon after that. I never really understood why. But I knew deep within me that he would never be coming back, just as I knew Clacker would never be coming back. The wild ducks flew south that fall before the snow set

in. I couldn't help but believe that Clacker flew with them in perfect formation across the sky—just as these ducks are now flying, just as ducks have flown since the beginning of time, just as I know they always will.

The day does not seem so cold now. The block and a half to the bus stop does not seem nearly so long. I know now what I had only begun to realize then.

It wasn't the dogs or Papa that made Clacker fly away. He had answered a much higher calling. I always wanted to tell Papa that I understood that now, but I never got the chance.

I never did ask any questions about Papa, not even as I watched Mama grow old before her time, her tired, fading eyes searching and watching the long road up to our house.

"Oh, Mama," I whisper, "how do you ever give up the ones you love?" For love must be an open door. To close that door would be like trying to close your hand around a butterfly without crushing its wings.

If you really love something, or somebody, you have to be willing to let go of it. You have to be willing to lose it. Some of God's creatures must be free to be truly happy. Those things, like wild ducks and the human soul, must be free to break the bonds that tie them and fly away to a brighter place under the sun.

Jeremy will be home soon. He will tell me all about his first day of school and the lessons he learned. But the only way I can tell him of my lesson is to live it for him each day of his life.■

# Maud O. Powlas 1889~1980

Maud O. Powlas, founder and developer of JiAiEn, the Lutheran Colony of Mercy in Kumamoto, Japan, and an outstanding career missionary of the Lutheran Church in America for four decades, died at North Carolina Lutheran Home in Salisbury, June 16.

Death resulting from a brain tumor came to the ninety-one-year-old missionary only a half year after her triumphal "homecoming" to JiAiEn for its sixtieth anniversary and eleven months after her alma mater, Lenoir-Rhyne



College, honored her with a doctor's degree for her Christian social service ministry in Japan.

The year before her death was marked also by the appearance of a Japanese edition of her account of her missionary career, *Gathering Up the Fragments*, published in English in 1978.

Born in Barber, North Carolina, February 15, 1889, Maud taught school in Hickory for six years between graduating from college and entering overseas service in 1918. When she first went to Japan, she wrote, "I so idealized missionaries that I refused to permit anyone to call poor unworthy me by the sacred name of missionary."

The twenty-nine-year-old, red-haired young woman was trained, experienced and commissioned for missionary service as a teacher. But at her first annual meeting of Japan Lutheran missionaries in 1919, the body (in which only men were permitted to vote) appointed Maud to carry out a just-made



Above and at left, Maud Powlas at her JiAiEn homecoming last year.

decision to launch a new multifaceted Lutheran social service ministry.

Thus began the story of JiAiEn—which was also Maud Powlas' story (except for the 1941-45 war years) until she retired in 1960. During most of that period her close associate was her sister Annie, who retired in 1961 and died in 1978.

The Colony of Mercy blossomed under a more progressive Japanese government after the war. It has grown to be a network of twenty-one institutions in different localities, caring daily for 1,100 people and staffed by 193 workers. Its budget is almost \$3.5 million a year. Ninety percent of this money comes from the Japanese government, and the rest from fees, gifts and offerings.

In 1959 the Emperor of Japan bestowed on Maud the Fourth Order of the Sacred Treasury. In 1978 she was featured in a television film produced by Japanese Lutherans in their "Mothers of the World" series.

Returning to JiAiEn last September for its sixtieth jubilee, Maud was feted by a large crowd of friends and admirers who included the governor of the prefecture and the mayor of Kumamoto.

Her funeral was held in the Powlas sister's home congregation, Lebanon Lutheran in Cleveland, North Carolina.

Rev. William A. Dudde  
Division for World Mission and Ecumenism  
Lutheran Church in America





## BOOKS OF BEGINNINGS

### OLD TESTAMENT BEGINNINGS: GENESIS • By CAROL BRIGHTON GOLDSTEIN and ROBERT M. GOLDSTEIN

*This is the first session of the 1980-1981 official LCW Bible study. Only the study participant's material is printed in Lutheran Women; remarks addressed to Bible study leaders are available in a separate leader's guide. Both the participant's booklet, which contains all sessions of the study, and the leader's guide are available from any Fortress Church Supply store, as well as from LCW, for \$1.00 each plus 50 cents postage. Study groups need at least one leader's guide.*

*Rev. Carol Brighton Goldstein and Rev. Robert M. Goldstein are co-pastors of Emanuel Lutheran Church in New Brunswick, New Jersey. Both are graduates of Yale Divinity School. The Goldsteins were biblical and theological resource persons for the 1978 consultant-leader training event for the LCW Family and Faith Project. Both have written educational resources for LCW.*

For thousands of years people have asked, "Where did this world come from?" or "Why is the world the way it is?" Perhaps these tough questions have been asked of you, or perhaps you have asked them yourself. The Book of Genesis, as its name suggests, is a book dealing with these questions of beginnings. It is a book of beginnings.

The questions are universal,

asked all over the world at all times. But the answers in the Book of Genesis are distinctive. No other literature answers in the same way. We will attempt, by God's help, to understand more deeply how Genesis tells us where this world came from and why the world is the way it is.

This book of beginnings, Genesis, is for Christians a backdrop for another book of beginnings, the Acts of the Apostles. But do not let the word "backdrop" lead you into thinking that Genesis is of little importance to Christians. Understanding what begins in Genesis deepens our understanding of what began through the Spirit of Jesus in the Book of Acts.

#### SESSION 1. GOD BEGAN IT GLORIOUSLY: The First Creation Account (Genesis 1:1-2:3)

*Prayer:* Open our eyes, our hearts, and our minds, O Creator and Lord, that we might rediscover your world as you have always seen it. Amen.

In the opening chapters of Genesis, there are two answers to the question, "Where did this world come from?" Today we study the first one, called by Bible scholars the "Priestly" version because it was put into its present form by writers who show a strong interest in the priesthood

and the forms of worship. Next time we will study Genesis 2:4-25, which scholars call the "Yahwist" version because the writer uses God's personal name, Yahweh, when speaking of God.

Read Genesis 1:1-2:3.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and earth." This is probably the most familiar verse of the Bible. But how deeply is that sentence and the whole doctrine of Creation really understood? Too often even the words of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth," are taken just as much for granted. Such carelessness uncovers the sad truth that too often we take for granted the whole world and our lives within it. Both accounts of creation can open our eyes to a rediscovery: God's glorious gift of creation includes our lives.

In what ways have you today taken for granted God's gift of creation?

#### God Our Delighted Creator

Not long ago our infant daughter discovered her feet. How amazed she was as she reached to touch them! She grabbed the toes, and when she discovered that she could move them at will she was amazed to discover that those toes were *her* toes.

But look at us. The thrill of



wonder at our own being seldom touches us. We accept the innumerable miracles of life with neither surprise nor joy. We have forgotten to be amazed with the ordinary. And then we forget to be thankful to the Giver for the gift.

Perhaps you have also witnessed your child or grandchild discover. Perhaps, just for a moment, you saw your child as a delightful gift from God, a glorious creation. Your moment of delight was like God's delight when over and over God beheld the work of creation. Look at verses 12, 18, 25 and 31. The Priestly writer grasped God's delight and finally wrote:

"And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good" (verse 31).

God sees the world and us as something "very good." If we can also rediscover delight and amazement, even over our feet, then we can catch part of the truth the Priestly writer wanted to tell us about God's beginning of the world.

Babies, feet, hands, nations and cultures, trees, and lilies of the field! All creation is glorious because God truly delights in all that God has made.

#### God's Choices and Our Partnership

We live in a world that constantly confronts us with choices, everyday choices over what we shall wear and what we will eat, pivotal choices such as going ahead with surgery or separating from a friend or a spouse. Our lives are full of choices we must make. Our Creator has not made us as puppets. We have freedom because we are made in God's image.

But do you realize that God has made some choices too? The Priestly writer does! Look closely at verse 1. And again, look at verses 3, 4, and 5. In fact, there is only one person who is subject,

one doer in the whole chapter—God! Behind all our choices, God has made the basic choices.

The Priestly writer wants to remind us what we too often forget (or even never realize in our self-centered worlds), that, by creating the world and us, God has made some choices for us already.

*Can you think of some of those choices God has made?*

We see divine choices in the fact that we are born into an ordered world of nature, into a universe already ordained, into bodies whose form God chose. God has provided a place in the order for each of us. God has provided an outlet for physical and mental energies in pursuing our calling. In wisdom God has chosen too that we all will die. These are the kinds of choices God has made.

The choices our Creator has made provide the boundaries within which we can make our choices. Those boundaries are not rigid and unchanging. Science, medicine and education are constantly expanding our understanding of the boundaries God provides. A man on the moon. A cure for a deadly disease. A woman president. God's choices for us invite our partnership as we respond to our Creator's gift of dominion. God has left us a lot of choices to make! This is the glorious perspective the Priestly writer wants us to grasp. It is as if the writer is saying, "Why hold yourself back? God has given order and promise to the universe, our world and our lives. Let's live with God!"

But we do hold ourselves back. We doubt the soundness of God's choices. We run away from the choices God gives us to make. We make bad and selfish choices. We forget the relationship of Creator and partner; we usurp God's dominion. We attempt to dominate the creation and the

lives of people.

*Can you give examples of personal and corporate ways we hold ourselves back from God's way—or ways we try to run things without God?*

*How does dominion differ from domination?*

The truths of the Priestly writers' account of creation can inspire us to faithful thankfulness. They can also call attention to our misuse of the world and our choices. The clearer we see the possibilities God has set before us, the more we feel our guilt and shame for falling short. We see that we need a Redeemer to give us a new beginning to partnership and to show us the glory of the Creator again. We have this Redeemer in Jesus Christ.

*Prayer:* O God, through our ordinary feet, through beautiful valleys and mountains, through our relationships, we see your glorious gifts as Creator of all. Grant us your Spirit of love to live each day faithfully in our callings. Guide us in the choices we must make. In Jesus' name. Amen.

#### Looking Deeper

1. Genesis has been a sacred book of the Jewish people for three thousand years and of the Christian church for two thousand years. Yet the Priestly writer of Genesis sees God as Creator of *all* nature. Other religions of the Priestly writer's day worshiped planets, forces of nature, and animals. Genesis says that God created such things. God is not portrayed as just the god of the nation of Israel but as the Creator of all people.

*What can this teach us about how we view God in our parishes?*

*Is God only an American or Canadian God?*

*What are some things we say and do which reflect a limited view of God's nature?*

*(continued on page 30)*

**POPULATION PERILS.** George W. Forell and William H. Lazareth, Editors. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979. 63 pages. \$2.25, paper.

This book took one hour to read and will provide mental and spiritual nourishment for many months to come. It is one of the fine series of Justice Books on public advocacy published by Fortress Press. Editors Forell and Lazareth have skillfully joined contributions by theologians and biological and social scientists into a readable, orderly presentation of the current (and future) problem of population and contingent problems of energy conservation, pollution of the environment and social justice.

In the first chapter, Paul Lutz (professor of biology, University of North Carolina) states the dilemma: "... the current world's population is over 4.3 billion persons. . . . It is my contention that a population much in excess of 4 billion cannot be sustained adequately." Coupling that viewpoint with the prospective world population of 17.2 billion by 2044 (at the present annual rate of increase), we face the need for regulation as well as increased food production.

Arthur J. Dyck (professor of population ethics, Harvard University Divinity School) describes the three major groups whose population policy recommendations vie for acceptance: (1) Crisis environmentalists—as population

increases, pollution, resource depletion and environmental damage increase; at the crisis point, the survival of the planet is at stake. (2) Family planners—if governments make birth control methods and knowledge readily and freely available, people will have fewer children. (3) Developmental distributivists—improvements in socioeconomic conditions lead to lower birth rates; the environment is endangered not so much by sheer numbers as by wasteful lifestyles.

Elizabeth A. Bettenhausen (professor of Christian social ethics, Boston University School of Theology) addressed the debate among the three groups outlined above from the perspective of Christian social responsibility. "The final state of the species on this planet is hidden in God's wisdom. Until then Christian social responsibility must deal with controlling the numbers so that justice and peace may be served." "Starkly stated, a concern for justice challenges both our present systems for the distribution of resources and the affluent consumption enjoyed by developed nations."

Foster R. McCurley and John H. Reumann (professors of Old and New Testaments, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia) show hermeneutical insights toward preaching about historical disasters and final judgment. They point to specific scriptures in the three-year lectionary and suggest ways the texts lend themselves to

the current challenge of "population."

A brief chapter gives three short reviews of other books addressing population, and finally, George Forell states his viewpoint: "The way out of the (population) dilemma by way of a fairer distribution of the available resources seems to show the greatest promise with the smallest danger to freedom and justice. . . . What has to be opposed at all costs is the notion, prevalent even among writers in the field of Christian ethics, that the end justifies any means. . . . In choosing the wrong means, we might succeed in bringing about the continuation of the human race only to discover in the process that the erstwhile human being has become a soulless monster or a naked ape."

—Gretchen G. Marz

**THE FEMININE DIMENSION OF THE DIVINE.** Joan Chamberlain Engelsman. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979. 200 pages. \$8.95, paper.

At a time when equal rights for women is a foremost issue in the economic, social and political arenas of human relationships, Dr. Engelsman's inquiry into the relative positions of men and women in religion furnishes a timely study.

Demeter, the Olympian deity and earth mother figure of ancient Greece, and Isis of Egypt, with her five thousand year history as queen of civilization and protector of marriage, are presented as the

preeminent feminine archetypes in religion. In this same pre-Christian period Sophia, the personification of wisdom—an attribute of God—was the feminine archetype of Judaism. Her status, however, is regarded as different. "Essentially, Sophia had no separate cult . . . as a separate deity in the Jewish tradition." But she became "such an influential figure in Hellenistic Judaism that she functioned virtually as a goddess."

As we read about the "Expression and Repression of Sophia" in Chapter V and are introduced to the Logos concept, we realize that we are moving toward New Testament times. Philo of Alexandria, a Jewish philosopher whose life spanned both reckonings of time, B.C. and A.D., reduced Sophia's importance by reassigning her role to Logos. His attitude toward the feminine sex influenced the early Christian depreciation of women.

Quotations from New Testament writers directly identify and substitute Christ, the wisdom of God, for Sophia, the legendary personification of wisdom. Examples from Paul, Matthew and John show different ways in which "the transformation from Sophiology to Christology" is accomplished.

As both Freud and Jung maintained, what is repressed will sometimes emerge again into consciousness. Dr. Engelsman considers the doctrines of Mariology (Mary), ecclesiology (the Church), and Christology (Christ) to be three major areas of Christian thought with feminine motifs sufficiently important to point toward the return of the repressed. She remarks on a new awareness within the last twenty years. The focus of attention has begun to change. Repression of the feminine dimension of the divine has been identified and exposed. Therefore future shifts in systematic and practical theology are predictable. Progress toward

church unity may be anticipated. Women may yet gain widespread support in their quest for ordination and participation in the priesthood. "When the *ikon* (image) of God the Father is replaced by a multiplicity of images, including the feminine, Christianity may undergo a rebirth which might expand, rather than diminish, its appeal."

—Amanda Langemo

#### MISSION TRENDS NO. 4: LIBERATION THEOLOGIES.

Gerald H. Anderson and Thomas F. Stransky, Editors. *Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979. 289 pages. \$3.45, paper.*

One definition of "theology" is "the sum of the beliefs held by an individual or a group regarding matters of religious faith or of ultimate concern." Under this definition we are all theologians because we all have beliefs regarding faith and all that is of ultimate concern to us, however poorly we may articulate them. This definition agrees with a statement made by one of the writers in *Mission Trends No. 4*. He says, "All theology . . . is contextual and situational." Our beliefs, our interpretation of Scripture, are shaped by the world in which we live and by the societies and cultures from which we have come. Moreover, theologies constantly change as the contexts and the situations from which they came change. Most Christians can look back and see changes in their theologies as they have grown in faith.

This book is a compilation of speeches, essays, open letters, statements and poetry by Christians who are struggling to understand what liberation means for them in their particular context and situation. The writers are black, white, Asian-American, Chicano, native American and feminist. They write in response to injustices in their countries. The writers defend, oppose, enlarge,

rethink Latin American theology and, in so doing, form other liberation theologies, some of which contradict others; some support others.

There are almost as many views as there are writers. But there is agreement on the basic mission of the Church and of Christians in the world: "The Church must speak and act concerning the justice and injustice of given situations." ". . . unless the Church at all levels is an outstanding promoter of the rights of human beings in word and deed, her proclamation will be literally falsified." The gospel itself is revolutionary and those who "hope in the gospel must establish an ongoing revolutionary posture in the world."

This revolutionary posture, while necessary, has inherent dangers. They warn: It is wrong to conclude that the rich are evil and the poor good. All persons, rich and poor, are sinners under the judgment of God. It is also not true that all Western values are evil and all values of oppressed people good. That belief is as mistaken as the assumption that God has so richly blessed the U.S., Canada and other developed countries because they deserve to be rewarded. The writers believe Christians must work to make all people free to live lives of wholeness, and they see that freedom not as a gift but as a risk we must take.

One person writes of three tasks facing all Christians. Our first task is to listen. Our second is to interpret what we hear. The third is to develop an increasing ability to see the world through eyes other than our own. These present a challenge that will last a lifetime. This book can help us meet it. So can the LCA Statement on Economic Justice. And we can help each other as we allow the living Lord to speak to us from his Word and through us to the world. —Edna Wagschal ■

# Letters

First of all, thank you for giving me a chance to tell our story ("My Son Is Gay," February 1980). I did expect some hate mail, but I must admit it hurt when it came (June 1980). However, I have also heard good comments and so perhaps it balances, and I hope someone has gained just a little more understanding.

If you think it appropriate, I would like to reply to some of the comments.

First of all, Mr. Carlson provided a perfect example of the hate and vindictiveness gay people must face. I used to argue with a friend who claimed that a good deal of the cruelty in the world throughout the ages has been done in the name of Christianity. I always told her it was warped Christianity. I still believe that.

Ms. Westerberg, my love for my children is unconditional. It always has been, and it always will be. There would be one large difference in my daughter being a prostitute (if she were) and my son being gay. My daughter would have made a choice. My son did not.

I have noticed many people choose which rules in the Bible they will consider sin and ignore others. I was brought up in a Lutheran church where it was thought sinful to drink alcoholic beverages, go to movies or dance. Some people still think it sinful to drink, but I never hear them mention the other part of the rule—the part about overeating. There are rules about women not speaking in church or cutting their hair. Surely, not all these rules were meant for all time.

It seems to me sin is a matter of choice—and I do not believe that God condemns a person for something he cannot help. Jesus said that the most important commandments were to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and our neighbors as ourselves. To try to point out to someone else what a sinner he or she is, while our own hearts are full of hate, seems to me to help no one.

I appreciate the concern and kindness in Brant

Pelphrey's letter, but at this point I do not agree that it is possible for a homosexual to change. I used to believe just that, but I do no longer. I think the pattern is set too early in life and possibly may sometimes even have a genetic cause. I think, because of the persecution, many try very hard, even deluding themselves for a time. Many marry and have children, trying to fit the accepted pattern, but I don't believe they will ever be truly comfortable in a heterosexual role. I don't blame them for trying.

One word to Ms. Marshall. I am not defending myself. I am trying to defend my child.

Sincerely,  
(name withheld)

... Thank you for the continuing quality and content of the magazine. My daughter and I both appreciated the article by the mother of the homosexual. That situation has come a bit close to home for us, with the son of a good friend and a nephew. Your "Letters" department certainly reflects the spectrum of feelings in your readers on a number of subjects. I hope you don't become too discouraged by the occasional threats of subscription cancellation and other angry criticism. . . .

Best wishes,  
Carol Amen  
Sunnyvale, California

I'm writing to say thank you for publishing the article, "God Is the God of All Peoples," by Pastor Nathan Huang (March 1980). . . .

I believe Pastor Huang has made a 100 percent correct evaluation of the trend of American churches—particularly us, and we need to fear for the future. The church is so concerned and engrossed with trivia, when all the while "pastors here have neglected the salvation of their own people."

Respectfully in Christ,  
Ruth Rydquist  
Valley City, North Dakota ■

## Nancy Stelling Named LCW Secretary for Program Resources

Lutheran Church Women is happy to announce the appointment of Nancy J. Stelling as Secretary for Program Resources. Nancy comes to us from the LCA Division for World Mission and Ecumenism where she served as Associate Editor of *World Encounter* magazine. She is a graduate of Valparaiso (Indiana) University in English and Latin and has done additional work in theology and art. She has taught in high school, served in an experimental urban educational project and held several editorial positions related to Christian publications.

Her responsibilities with LCW include the development and production of LCW Bible studies, devotional resources and program resources.

Her volunteer activities include serving as a Sunday church school teacher and member of her church council in charge of evangelism.



SEPTEMBER



1980

# prayer calendar

We invite you to include the following petitions in your daily prayers this month:

**1** Be with us as we celebrate the contributions and achievements of working people.

**2** Help us to return with vigor to full schedules of work and other commitments.

**3** Lead our children and their teachers to zestful participation in the learning process.

**4** Help LCWs to gear up for a year of earnest study and growth.

**5** Thank you for enabling us to become acquainted through refugees with different traditions and races.

**6** Help Lien and Le and other refugees to make a place for themselves in our society.

**7** Bless those who make possible the immigration of refugees to this continent.

**8** Help those who must learn to communicate in a new language and a new culture.

**9** Thank you for poetry, which sometimes enables us to communicate in spite of impediments.

**10** Bless Church Women United for the cultural bridges its "causeways" provide.

**11** Guide and protect LCW board members as they travel to their first meeting of a new triennium.

**12** Lead the new LCW board as it determines policy for a new triennium and a new decade.

**13** Bless Margaret Valadin and her efforts on behalf of Australian aborigines.

**14** Grant that we may glory in Christ's call to take up our cross and follow him.

**15** Help women in Australia and everywhere to attain positions of equality with men in the Church.

**16** Thank you for the medical knowledge that permits organ transplants.

**17** Help us to live each day as it comes, with faith and hope.

**18** Bless Matt Kramer in his effort to live a full and hopeful life.

**19** Let LCW unit conventions held this month be courageous and prophetic.

**20** Bless the ordained women of the LCW as the church celebrates the tenth anniversary of women's ordination.

**21** Let congregations be open to calling women as pastors.

**22** Let us be aware of and celebrate the diversity of our gifts.

**23** Bless Dr. Carol Jameson and the work she began in Vellore, India.

**24** Let us be mindful of the need to educate women in developing countries.

**25** Bless Miss Mary Barringer and her long service in LCW.

**26** Help us to be willing to let go of those we love.

**27** Bless and preserve the memory of Maud Powlas.

**28** Prompt U.S. citizens to examine the issues carefully in preparing for a presidential election.

**29** Guide the nations of the world to nonviolent resolution of conflicts.

**30** Let the churches of the world speak boldly to issues of justice.



## BIBLE STUDY

(continued from page 25)

What does the Priestly writer's view of God underscore in the church's sense of mission?

2. In verses 26 and 27, God decides to create humanity and does so in the form of male and female. (See Today's English Version for a helpful translation.) This explanation of the existence of male and female sexuality is strikingly different from that of the Yahwist in Genesis 2. The Priestly writer sees men and women in partnership with each other and in partnership with their Creator. He considers sexuality a glorious choice on the part of God. It, too, is delightful and very good.

What attitude toward the gift of sexuality do you see in the church?

3. The theory of the evolution of the species through natural selection seems to present a problem for some Christians. It may be helpful to note these distinctions: The theory of natural selection is only a theory, not a doctrine. It is a useful scientific theory, although not a perfect one. It attempts to describe scientifically *how* the world came to be as it is.

The purpose of the doctrine of Creation in the Bible is not to describe *how* but, through the enlightenment of the Spirit, to reveal to us *who* began it all, to *whom* we offer thanks for these gifts, and *upon whom* we depend to begin life anew in partnership with our Creator. If the Priestly writer were alive today he might well accept the scientific theory of *how* the world came about, even as he accepted the "science" of his day. But he would still exhort us to learn *whom* we should thank and depend upon.

Would you agree with this?

Does one have to be an atheist to accept the theory of evolution by natural selection?

A very helpful book on this topic is Ernst Karsten, *God's Truth in the Hands of Sinners* (New York: Vantage Press, 1976).

### Personal Preparation Worksheet

Read Genesis 1:1-2:3 and the study material. Ponder the various questions in the study material. Then think further on these:

• How important is it for Christians to think about how and why God created the world and us? Suppose the entire first chapter of Genesis was simply verse one—"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"—and that was it? Would you feel cheated? What aspects of the creation story would you miss most? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

• It's interesting to think, as the study material suggests, that God made choices in creating the world. As persons created in God's image we are faced with choices too—big and small. What is one choice you made recently about which you could say, "And it was good"? \_\_\_\_\_

• Note the creation of man and woman in 1:26 and 27. The emphasis is on togetherness and partnership. God creates man and woman in one act and immediately gives them corporate tasks to perform. What does the partnership emphasis of this Priestly account say about man/woman relationships? \_\_\_\_\_

• Part of being made in God's image (v. 26) means being God's representative on earth. Just as God was and is responsible for the world he decided to create, so we, by his command, are responsible for that same creation. What parts of God's creation do you feel especially responsible for? What parts do you feel you

have the most impact on? \_\_\_\_\_

• Note how orderly Gen. 1:1-2:3 is. Before God acted there was chaos (v. 2). But God stepped in and, day by day in an orderly fashion, called into being different parts of creation. Since creation God has been acting to bring order and sense and good to people. What are some examples in your life where, even in the midst of seeming chaos, God has acted for good? \_\_\_\_\_

• This Priestly account of creation is really a hymn of praise to God. It is a piece to be read with the eyes of faith. Now read Psalm 8 and compare the tone found there with the creation account. \_\_\_\_\_

• "Delighted" is probably the right word to describe God's recurring feeling about his creation in this account. Perhaps too often we, his creatures, don't sense that delight unless we consciously stop to think about it. If you had to select one marvel of God's creation, what would it be? Why not thank him right now for that marvel? \_\_\_\_\_

• Note (Gen. 2:2-3) that rest is part of God's ordered creation. How many of us often feel ill at ease and guilty when we are simply "doing nothing"? God had a whole world to care for, once he created it; yet he took time out to rest. Think about it. When was the last time you rested and felt you were doing God's will? \_\_\_\_\_

• Listing all the marvels of creation you can think of in a minute or two, make a short litany or prayer to God in thankfulness for creation. \_\_\_\_\_

# Editorial Comment

At the beginning of the year some five percent of our subscribers received *Lutheran Women* surveys designed to elicit a profile of our readers and of opinion about the magazine. I would like to take advantage of this column this month to thank those of you who responded for your time and your candor. We have reviewed your responses and your comments and will endeavor to shape future issues of *Lutheran Women* with the wishes you expressed in mind.

I would also like to summarize here what we learned from the survey. I think I can say that the results indicated a high acceptance of the magazine. Not all responses were favorable, of course, but a high percentage of them were. Perhaps most significantly, the rate of return of the survey—55.4 percent—was very high. A 30 percent return of surveys of this sort is generally expected.

The survey showed that 84.2 percent of respondents read or look through all or most issues of *Lutheran Women*. A large majority like the magazine and find it fairly interesting (57.4 percent) or enjoy it and look forward to receiving it (31 percent). When they have read an issue, 48 percent of the respondents keep it for at least a year for reference and 24.6 percent pass it on to someone else.

The magazine was rated generally high in physical appearance, interest and value. The subject matter was thought always or usually appropriate by 88 percent of respondents, the articles well written by 91.4 percent, and the language clear by 90.0 percent. The value of the magazine was endorsed somewhat less firmly: 45.8 percent said *Lutheran Women* influenced their opinion on issues, 77.3 percent said it helped strengthen their faith, and 56.2 percent said it challenged them to further study.

The best-liked types of articles seem to be inspiring stories of faith and courage, which were always read by 56.3 percent of respondents; human interest stories (always read by 55.5 percent), and the Bible study (always read by 50.6 percent). Least liked types of articles were "Current Books," which was seldom or never read by 37.6 percent, and the "Prayer Calendar," which was seldom or never read by 34 percent.

Agreement with the magazine's editorial position was generally strong: on women's issues, 48.9 percent agreed; on social issues, 61.7 percent agreed; on world mission, 61.1 percent agreed; on personal ethics, 57.5 percent agreed; and on the church's position and responsibility 68.6 percent agreed.

Our readers attend church regularly (93.1 percent of respondents), find their interest in spiritual matters rising (64.9 percent) or staying the same (30.6 percent), and had very (39.6 percent) or somewhat (51.5 percent) religious homes as children. They are active members of LCW (78.6 percent)

and leaders in their congregations (26.1 percent are church council members). They are disappointed in many of their congregation's programs: Sunday church school, the confirmation program, youth activities, and Lutheran Church Women were rated 1, 2 or 3 on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (outstanding) by a large majority of respondents.

They live predominantly in small communities: 61.3 percent of the respondents live in areas with a population of 10,000 to 50,000, and 29.2 percent live in rural communities of 2,500 people or less. They own their own homes (78.3 percent) and are well educated (25.7 percent completed high school and 24.6 percent have some college) and affluent (the median family income is \$17,854). They are female (91 percent), are not employed outside the home (81.6 percent), and are married once and living with their spouses (64.2 percent) or widowed and not remarried (16.7 percent). Their median age is 59.2 years.

At the end of the survey was a space for comments or suggestions, which one-third of our respondents made use of. What they wrote here was highly supportive of the magazine. A few people thought *Lutheran Women* too "activist" or "political," or "too caught up in social problems." Fewer thought it too difficult or too leftist or liberal. But the vast majority approved. Here are some of their comments:

"I am impressed with the magazine's variety. *Lutheran Women* is literate and well balanced and certainly presents both spiritual prodding and the 'uplift' some of the 'Letters' request. . . . The articles on the ERA, abortion, homosexuality have been strong and sensitive."

"The quality of the paper, printing, artwork, and photography pleases me each time I receive an issue."

"My general impression is that your strong support of ERA is not readily received everywhere—including your views on abortion. However, I approve and believe your stand must be supported eventually."

"You need not be Lutheran to enjoy the magazine."

"I see no reason for *Lutheran Women* to restrict publishing any articles of interest to church women; your articles are always in good taste. I think any current issue can be addressed in this magazine—we are a part of the real world!"

If there is anything to be regretted in this very encouraging survey, it is the extent of uniformity in the individual characteristics of the respondents—particularly with respect to age, the size of the communities where they live, and their employment and marital status. The magazine has potential appeal, I think, to women of all ages, to those who live in metropolitan as well as rural communities and to those who are single (for whatever reason) as well as married. If you agree with me, perhaps you can persuade someone who doesn't fit our present readership profile to give *Lutheran Women* a try.

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