

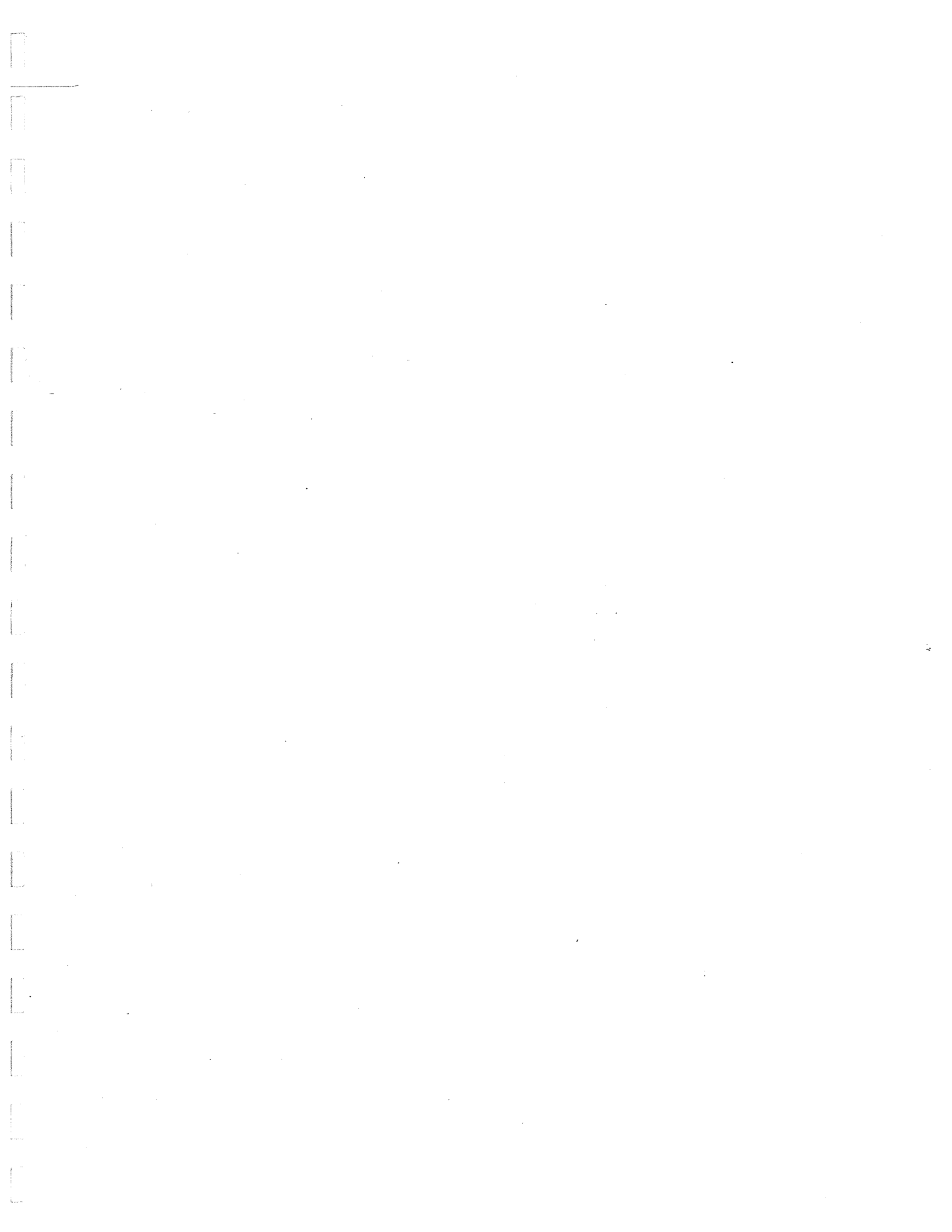
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PRINCIPLES AND PLANS
FOR LUTHERAN LOCAL CHURCH EVANGELISM
IN LIGHT OF THE DEFINITION OF EVANGELISM
BY
THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

by
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To My Little Bread Winner: Fran

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IN LIGHT OF THE DEFINITION OF EVANGELISM BY THE WORLD
COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

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Chapter I
Introduction

PRINCIPLES AND PLANS FOR LUTHERAN LOCAL CHURCH EVANGELISM
IN LIGHT OF THE DEFINITION OF EVANGELISM BY THE WORLD
COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. The Subject

1. The Subject States

It is the purpose of this research to determine how the principles and plans for local church evangelism of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and The American Lutheran Church compare, and in what ways they correspond to the definition of evangelism as set forth by the World Council of Churches.

2. The Subject Justified

A conservative estimate places the population of the United States in 1970 at 208 million. This is a net increase of 27 million - the equivalent of nearly the entire population of Spain - over the population today.¹

With the explosive rate of population growth in the world today, new and renewed efforts by the Church must be made if the dream of world evangelization is to

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1. Robert O'Brien, "The U.S.A. in 1970: A Forecast of Things to Come", The Reader's Digest, January, 1961, p. 25.

be realized. The Lutheran Church has principles and plans for local church evangelism that, it is hoped, will adequately cope with the changing times.

To my knowledge, no one has ever compared the principles and plans for local church evangelism in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and The American Lutheran Church (the two branches of the Lutheran Church commonly considered as the most evangelistic), let alone compared these principles and plans with a standard definition of evangelism as set up by the World Council of Churches. Because of these times of rapid social change, it is necessary to be aware at all times of the effectiveness of principles and plans for evangelism, and wherein improvement or change is needed.

3. The Subject Delimited

As stated the subject is delimited to a comparative study of the principles and plans for local church evangelism in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and The American Lutheran Church. These principles and plans are in turn compared with the standard definition of evangelism as set up by the World Council of Churches.

No attempt is made to compare the practical results of local church evangelism in the two Lutheran

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synods. Only the principles and plans are compared - in the light of the standard definition of evangelism.

B. The Method of Procedure

The thesis consists of five chapters: First, the introduction; second, a study of the definition of evangelism as set forth by the World Council of Churches; third, a study of the principles and plans for local church evangelism in the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod; fourth, comparison and evaluation of materials in light of the established criterion; and fifth, the summary.

In chapter two interpretation is made of the definition of evangelism as set forth by the World Council of Churches. This includes study of the principles and plans set forth, including a standard blueprint for evangelism.

Chapter three interprets the principles and plans for local church evangelism in The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

Chapter four compares and evaluates the principles and plans for local church evangelism in the two Lutheran synods in light of the standard definition of evangelism as set forth in chapter two.

Each chapter has a brief introduction and summary. The chapters, which contain the basic elements

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for comparison, are developed similarly. They include: A Biblical basis of evangelism, exposition of the principles of evangelism involved, the place of evangelism in the congregation and plans for local church evangelism.

For further clarification of the subject, chapter three includes a brief historic glimpse of the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and recent trends therein.

C. The Sources for the Study

Adequate material, both primary and secondary, is available - as indicated in the bibliography. Much of the source material is of non-book form, published by the World Council of Churches and the two publishing houses of the synods of the Lutheran Church considered in this study (Concordia Publishing House and Muhlenberg Press).

Chapter II

The Definition of Evangelism as Set Forth
by the World Council of Churches

CHAPTER II

THE DEFINITION OF EVANGELISM AS SET FORTH BY THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

A. Introduction

The pattern of planting the local church and encouraging it to do the work of evangelism has been the basic pattern in evangelism among all evangelical groups in the United States for some two hundred years or so. Evangelism through the local church is a tried and proved method of getting the work of evangelism done.¹ The Evangelism Department of the World Council of Churches recognizes this and for some time now has been publishing pamphlets as a contribution towards a fresh study of the evangelistic motive, method and message. In fact, one of the functions specifically mentioned in the World Council's Constitution is "to support the churches in their task of evangelism".²

Although the information published by this Evangelism Department covers a wide range of interests in the field of evangelism, selection has been made of only that which pertains to evangelism in the United States of America.

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1. Roy H. Short, *Evangelism through the Local Church*, p. 10.
2. World Council of Churches, *Questions and Answers about the World Council of Churches*, p.8.

B. Definition

1. Principles

a) The Biblical Basis of Evangelism

A cooperative study of "The Use of the Bible in Evangelism" by the Division of Studies is now being made by the World Council of Churches. This study will include: The place of the Bible in evangelism.¹ However, earlier source material of the World Council of Churches clearly indicates that the authority and urgency of evangelism comes from God via the Scripture. The actual ministry of the evangelist is to announce that all events happen within the range of and take meaning from the gospel facts.²

All authority comes from God, and God has given all authority to Jesus Christ. This is the witness of Scripture. Thus, the authority and the urgency of evangelism comes from God. To Christ alone was given full power to bear the sins of the world and to completely overcome all the forces of evil. One might say that "God is a missionary God". He has come into the world through Jesus Christ to save it. He has declared his control of history and He will establish his reign over all creation. But in the meantime, He has created the Church in which

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1. World Council of Churches, Minutes and Reports of the 13th Meeting of the Central Committee, 1960, pp. 47-48.
2. World Council of Churches, A Theological Reflection on the Work of Evangelism, November, 1959, p. 15.

he is present as Head, to carry on his own missionary task.¹

The urgency of evangelism comes from this. Because of the dreadful need of the world, because our fellowship with Him demands it, and because He commands (through the Word), we must bear witness of the one who died for us. Because He is the Lord of Truth, the Lord of Love, and also the Lord of Time, it is necessary for his servants to express this in various and sundry means to other people.²

Thus, the basic urgency of evangelism arises from the nature and content of the Gospel itself as found in the Scriptures, and its authority lies in the understanding by all Christians that they have been claimed by Christ precisely for the purpose of becoming His witnesses.³

The call to turn or return to God is a constant theme of prophetic exhortation in the Old Testament, addressed either to the individual or to the nation as a whole. This theme is continued in the New Testament.⁴ The literature of the World Council of Churches regarding

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1. World Council of Churches, "Consultation on a Theology for Evangelism", Bulletin, Vol. IV, No.1, April, 1958 pp. 6-8.
2. Ibid.
3. A Theological Reflection on the Work of Evangelism, op. cit., p. 15.
4. World Council of Churches, Documents from the Department on the Laity, No. 8, July 1960, p. 3.

evangelism seems to accept without argument that there is a definite Biblical basis for evangelism - that the Church's authority for evangelism comes from God via the Scriptures.

The spoken, read and written Word of God will always remain indispensable to the Church's witness. Be the Church ever so corrupt, the open Word of God in her midst will remain the hope of reformation for the Church, and the promise to men of their salvation.¹ The Bible is the Church's treasure beyond compare.

b) Exposition

When one considers the end result, evangelism is simply and only the work of God. This is true because only God can save men from their sins. What lies at the base of all evangelistic work is the fact that God does give to men the grace of saving faith.² D. T. Niles, in remarking about the pamphlets on evangelism being published by the Evangelism Department of the World Council of Churches, adds to the substance of this truth by saying:

If there is a particular point of view dominating these pamphlets it is the conviction that evangelism is not something we do but something that God does. It is something that God does with everything we do. Evangelism, therefore, is not a separate activity of the Church.³ It is a dimension of the Church's life and witness.

1. A Theological Reflection on the Work of Evangelism, op. cit., pp. 21-22.
2. Ibid., p. 5.
3. George Sweazey, Evangelism in the United States, Foreword.

Because the word Evangelism has suffered much over the years, anyone who uses it should adequately define what he means. This the World Council of Churches does. George Sweazey, at the request of the Department on Evangelism of the World Council of Churches, made a survey of evangelism in the United States of America. He defines evangelism in this way: "Evangelism is a connected series of steps by which a person is brought from outside the Church to a living faith in Jesus Christ and membership in His Church."¹ Particular emphasis is placed upon bringing people to a living faith in Jesus Christ. It not so much elevating those within the Church as reaching those still outside the acknowledged Christian fellowship. Although there is danger of merely adding names to a roll rather than to the Kingdom, Mr. Sweazey feels that evangelism is not complete until it brings a person into the Church.²

The above makes it plain that outside of the life of a recognized congregation there can be no adequate evangelism. This is because only a church can provide for that succession of steps by which an unbeliever can be brought to interest, to understanding, to decision and

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1. Ibid., p. 19.

2. Ibid.

to Christian living.¹

c) Evangelism, the Primary Responsibility of Churches

The World Council of Churches makes quite plain that evangelism is the primary responsibility of all the churches. Stephen Neill said:

Of this I am very sure; that the world will not be saved, and the Church will not really live until we get back to the proclamation of the original Gospel, that this Jesus who was crucified is alive today and demands an answer from men.²

The World Council expresses several convictions: First, all men need the Gospel, and that there can be no substitute for it. Second, there is no race or people in the world which has not the capacity to apprehend the Gospel. Third, there is no class which is inaccessible to the Gospel.³ With such an estimate of the Christian task, one can see the importance of dealing with the situation only as all Churches are banded together in the enterprise, with the duty of evangelism in its proper place, as the first item on the Christian program, and only as every Christian in every Church is brought in to take his share in the work.

Holding such convictions, the World Council declares that it obviously follows that no minister is permitted to say, "I am not an evangelist." Nor, for

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1. Ibid.
2. Federal Council Bulletin, "Evangelism to the Fore", January, 1949, p. 11.
3. Stephen Neill, Evangelism, the Primary Responsibility of All the Churches, Message delivered at the Biennial Meeting of the Federal Council of Churches, Dec., 1948, pp. 3-5.

that matter, is it open to any layman to say, "I cannot be an evangelist." Every Christian must be willing to be a witness, or else give up calling himself a Christian. In fact, the layman is supremely important in the business of making the Gospel known. Many people do not come to church, and these people are beyond the reach of the minister and the professional Christian worker. Thus, the responsibility and opportunity is laid upon the shoulders of the layman. One shouldn't discredit the effectiveness of the layman's witness. Often such a witness is more effective than the most eloquent sermon.¹

It is tremendously important that the spoken word be supported by the evidence of life. Often it is true that one's spoken witness falls to the ground because non-Christians cannot see that the Christian faith has made any very great and visible difference in the speaker. Therefore, it is urgent that one exhibits true joy of service to God.²

It is strongly felt also that witness to the Gospel remains ineffective unless "there is a living fellowship into which we can invite those who are willing to put their trust in Christ and obey Him". The fellowship of the Church plays a very important role in the conversion of the world. In fact, lack of such fellowship is considered

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1. Ibid. pp. 5-7.

2. Ibid. pp. 8-9.

as one of the major hindrances to the conversion of the world.¹

Also, it is important to realize that every failure of the Church is a hindrance to the work of evangelism. Therefore, if the world is to listen to Christians, it must be convinced that it has the answers to some of the problems that it has failed to solve. Yet, it must be remembered that only the Gospel should be preached and nothing else. Jesus Christ should be preached as Lord, and his exaltation is the heart and center of it all.²

2. Plans

a) Blueprint for Evangelism

George Sweazey, in a booklet published for the World Council of Churches, has presented what is being done regarding the practice of evangelism in the churches. His presentation consists of four stages: Contact, Cultivation, Commitment and Conservation; and this arrangement emphasizes the important truth that evangelism includes a linked series of efforts, each dependent upon the others. He says:

A church which neglects Contacts will run out of people to be evangelized. If it neglects Cultivation, Commitments will be impossible or meaningless. If

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1. Ibid., pp. 9-10.

2. Ibid.

its good influences are not fixed by Commitment, they will largely be lost in vagueness. If a church is careless about Conservation, all its Contacts and Cultivation and Commitment will merely swell the ranks of the unfaithful.¹

(1) Contact

Someone's attention must be caught before evangelism begins. Therefore, a church must direct its evangelistic efforts to definite individuals, whom it has identified by face and name.²

(a) The Church School

Since the Sunday School wins more people to the Church in the United States than any other instrument or arm of the Church, it is an important tool for evangelism. The Sunday School also provides the most contacts with adults.³

(b) Making Church Friends

This is an area where rapidly growing churches work hard. Every contact is looked upon by members of these churches as opportunity for bringing someone into the Church. Preaching, prayer, and discussion can develop such an eagerness in a congregation, and eventually, a sort of tradition can be built up. Friendship exhibited outside the church and to visitors inside the

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1. Sweazey, op. cit., p. 20.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 21.

church often pays off in dividends of commitment to the church and to Christ.

Surveys by means of door to door calling are fairly common in most communities. Often co-operation between various churches is enlisted in this endeavor. In this way contacts for present and future reference can be made. However, George Sweazey indicates that a great deal of effort is often wasted on such surveys. This is true because churches are prone to make such surveys before they have planned what to do next. As a result, most of the contacts fizzle, and perhaps more harm than good is done.¹

(c) Pastoral Services

Services rendered in marriage, baptism, and the like should be looked upon as contacts for evangelism. Many of the unchurched seem to think certain functions such as these must have the presence or the conduction by a minister; and so, these are valuable contacts.²

(d) New Comers

Today the mobility of Americans is increasing. Southern California, for example, is a growing basin of 9,150,000 persons which has claimed some 3,500,000 new residents in the last decade. People from all parts

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1. Ibid. pp. 21-22.

2. Ibid.

of the country are coming into this area at the rate of about 4,000 a month.¹ Therefore, each year the average church loses a large section of its membership; and unless churches near their new homes are alert in finding and receiving them, the loss is of terrible consequence. "The modern church must minister to a procession."²

Thus we see that the first step of evangelism is: ". . . to turn toward the Church some of the feet which have been passing by its doors".³

(2) Cultivation

A church must be prepared to do some long-range evangelistic cultivation. Otherwise the contacts disappear, or come into membership before they are ready.

(a) Visitors

According to Sweazey, there are two kinds of lay evangelistic visiting. There are cultivation callers and commitment callers. The former share the church's friendly interest and cultivate interest in what the church has to offer. The latter requires more maturity or skill, because this kind of visitation seeks commitments to Christ. Both are invaluable tools in evangelism.⁴

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1. New York Herald Tribune, "Southern California's Old, New Problems", Jan. 10, 1961, p. 6.
2. Sweazey, op. cit., p. 22.
3. Sweazey, Effective Evangelism, p. 13.
4. Sweazey, Evangelism in the United States, p. 22.

(b) Church Organizations

A well ordered church will be enthusiastic to have separate groups for youth, young adults, young couples, men, women, etc. There should also be groups for special duties in the church such as music, ushering, missions, visiting, and the like. Such organizations can be very active in cultivation of contacts with non-members as well as those already in the church.¹

(c) Intimate Groups

One of the times when evangelism is most effective is when it is employed in the intimacy of a small group. Fireside meetings of college students, meetings of young couples in a home, week-end retreats by a group of men in the church, and many other such small group meetings can, with the proper leadership, blossom into really decisive experiences for many.²

The second step of evangelism is, therefore, ". . . to get those who have turned toward the Church to put one foot inside the door".³

(3) Commitment

Just as cultivation is a step in evangelism to aid the various contacts made, so commitment anchors by definite decision all that has been done through cultivation.

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1. Ibid., p. 23.

2. Ibid.

3. Sweazey, Effective Evangelism, p. 14.

(a) Evangelistic Preaching

Many churches, especially in the south, get most of their evangelistic decisions at a preaching mission (service). Although Sweazey declares that often these meetings are marred with "tawdry sentimentality" or a fiercely negative theology combined with an emphasis upon emotionalism, he admits that the greater number give a moving presentation of a simple Christian faith. Regarding the stirring of emotions, he says: "They stir emotions, but it is hard to think of anything really important that does not."¹

Mass evangelism has been brought to more attention because of the career of Billy Graham. The remarkable ability of Billy Graham to attract large crowds, including ministers, is significant. He works with the churches. Also, he never claims to do a whole work of evangelism or to present the full range of the Christian faith. The churches must take advantage of the situation Billy Graham creates. Thus, mass evangelism is limited, although it has an important role to play. This role is to compel multitudes to turn and face deep issues of life and destiny. With Billy Graham, this role is played with an ecumenical emphasis.²

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1. Sweazey, *Evangelism in the United States*, p. 24.

2. *Ibid.*

(b) Lay Evangelistic Visiting

"In the past three decades some remarkably effective ways of training and using laymen for evangelistic conversations have been developing." There is always the danger that commitment callers may degenerate to the role of mere cultivation callers, with discussion being only church-centered rather than Christ-centered. However, better planning and experience usually helps every situation.¹

Sweazey says,

The marked increase of American church membership is concurrent with the adoption of lay evangelistic visiting as a recognized method. It has always been done incidentally, but as a programme it is being done deliberately and with a plan.²

Thus, one can see that visiting can be an important tool in seeking commitment to Christ as a step in local church evangelism. Deliberate planning of evangelism as in the series of steps of evangelism as suggested by Sweazey, however, is an important key to success.

(4) Conservation

The following points indicate the importance of conservation in the series of steps that make up evangelism (effective evangelism):³

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1. Ibid. pp. 24-26.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. pp. 27-28.

(a) The minister must at once become a personal friend of the new members of his church. One's talk is not finished just because the contacted ones enter the church. They must be kept there.

(b) New members must be given a chance to think and pray about statements of faith or vows before they are asked to sign in writing. This is only common courtesy. Possibly the type of membership classes employed by the Lutherans and Episcopalians should be recommended.

(c) Often a planned reception or similar function increases the fellowship between old members and new members. In fact, alert churches designate people to be the particular friends of new members. This type of conservation is needed to prevent insecurity and eventual loss of new members.

(d) Getting new members active in the outreach of the church, encouraging them along the lines of stewardship and special check on their progress now and then are also important in conservation.

Thus, Sweazey declares that the third step in evangelism is ". . . to get both feet in the Church, as people come all the way into membership and become acknowledged followers of Christ." The fourth step, in close

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relationship to the first three, is one of conservation: "When both feet are inside the Church, the essential next step is to start them to walking."¹

(e) Conclusions

Evangelism is a connected series of steps, each depending on the others. Sweazey declares that these steps, as evidenced in the practice of evangelism in the churches, are: Contact, Cultivation, Commitment, and Conservation.

The first step is to turn toward the Church some of the feet which have been passing by its doors.

The second step is to get those who have turned toward the Church to put one foot inside the door.

The next step is to get both feet in the Church, as people come all the way into membership and become acknowledged followers of Christ.

When both feet are inside the Church, the essential next step is to start them to walking.²

C. SUMMARY

Evangelism through the local church is a tried and proved method of getting the work of evangelism done. Recognizing this, the World Council of Churches is dedicated to support the churches in their task of evangelism.

The principles of evangelism as set forth by the World Council of Churches are found in its concept

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1. Sweazey, Effective Evangelism, pp. 14-18.
2. Ibid.

of the Biblical basis of evangelism, its exposition of the definition of evangelism and evangelism as the primary responsibility of the churches.

It is felt that there is a definite Biblical basis for evangelism, and that the Church's authority for evangelism comes from God via the Scripture. This evangelism is defined as the work of God in a connected series of steps by which a person is brought from outside the Church to a living faith in Jesus Christ and membership in His Church. Finally, this evangelism is the Church's primary responsibility; and since there is no race in the world which has not the capacity to apprehend the Gospel and there is no class which is inaccessible to the Gospel, all being in need of it, the duty of evangelism is placed squarely upon the shoulders of every Christian.

Regarding plans for evangelism as exhibited by the various churches, George Sweazey published a "blueprint for evangelism" that adheres strictly to the World Council of Churches' definition of evangelism. This "blueprint" includes four essential steps, each depending on the others: Contact, whereby some of the feet which have been passing by its doors are turned toward the Church; Cultivation, whereby those who have turned toward the Church are encouraged to put one foot

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inside the door; Commitment, in which it is sought to get both feet in the Church, as people come all the way into membership and become acknowledged followers of Christ; and Conservation, whereby once the feet are inside the Church, efforts are made to start them to walking.

Chapter III

Principles and Plans for Local Church
Evangelism in the American Lutheran Church
and the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

CHAPTER III

PRINCIPLES AND PLANS FOR LOCAL CHURCH EVANGELISM IN THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH AND THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD

A. Introduction

1. Who Are the Lutherans?

Lutherans are a part of the true, holy, catholic church established by Jesus Christ. Their adherence is to the Christian faith revealed in the New Testament and as first summarized in the Apostles' Creed. "They look to the Bible as 'the inspired Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and life'."¹

The Lutheran Church traces its history back to the time of the apostles; and it continues in an unbroken line the faith and teachings of the early church. Martin Luther and other leaders of the Reformation did not start a new church. Their attempts to cleanse and correct the existing Roman Catholic Church proved impossible, and they were compelled to separate themselves from the Roman rule. The term "Lutheran", although at first applied to them in a belittling sense, soon was proudly adopted by the followers of the Reformation teachings. Within a comparatively few years, most of the people of northern Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland and some other

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1. Albert P. Stauderman, Facts about Lutherans, p. 3.

parts of Europe were adherents of the Lutheran doctrines.¹

There are more than 70 million Lutherans throughout the world today, forming by far the largest single Protestant denomination and comprising about one-third of the world's Protestants. Lutheran churches are strongest in Germany, the Scandinavian countries, and the United States.²

In the United States and Canada, Lutherans rank third in numbers among Protestants behind the Baptists and the Methodists. At the end of 1957, Lutherans numbered 7,866,320 members in 17,712 congregations. Each year about 250,000 more members are being brought into the Lutheran Churches. "Lutheran growth is at a faster rate than that of the nations' population and far ahead of that of most other church bodies."³

2. Recent Trends

Differences in time of origin, national background, emphasis on certain points of doctrine, and differing forms of organic structure have kept the various synods separated. However, within the last fifty years there have been notable changes, and the number of major Lutheran groups has now been reduced

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1. Ibid., pp. 3-4.

2. Ibid., p. 5.

3. Ibid., pp. 5-7. Note also Appendix A.

to three.¹

The largest of the "big three" will be the United Lutheran Church of America, resulting from the union of the United Lutheran Church, the Augustana Lutheran Church, the American Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Suomi (Finnish Evangelical Lutheran) Synod. This church will have more than three million members in the United States and Canada and is likely to be the most ecumenical of the Lutheran bodies holding membership in the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches and working together with other denominations in many fields.²

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, allied in the Synodical Conference with the Wisconsin, Slovak and Evangelical (Norwegian) Synods will be second in size. The Missouri Synod, as it is generally known, holds strongly to the verbal inspiration of the Bible and so far has refused to participate in any interchurch movements.³

The American Lutheran Church was created in April, 1960, by the merger of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, American Lutheran Church, and United Evangelical Lutheran Church.⁴ It will commemorate its founding by

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1. Ibid., p. 27.

2. Ibid., pp. 27-28.

3. Ibid., p. 28.

4. E. Clifford Nelson, *The Lutheran Church among Norwegian-Americans*, p. 320.

establishing a congregation in each of its nineteen territorial districts, to be accomplished during 1961.¹ This group will be strongest in the Midwest, and will represent Norwegian, German and Danish backgrounds. Also, it will hold membership in the World Council of Churches.²

3. The National Lutheran Council

The National Lutheran Council is an agency through which most Lutherans have been working together since 1918. The Missouri Synod (Synodical Conference) is not a member of this council, however.³ Regarding the functions of the council, Albert P. Stauderman says:

Functions of the council have included co-ordination of activities and agencies of the churches in the solution of common problems, gathering and publishing information and statistics, providing for the pastoral care of men and women in the armed forces, representing the church's interests before national and state governments, and similar co-operative work.⁴

For the church bodies participating in the National Lutheran Council, there are several undertakings which are of far-reaching importance to their common life. One of these is evangelism, in which these same bodies have together drawn upon their varied experiences. Since 1950 they have been associated in the Lutheran Evangelism Council, the work of which is the Lutheran Evangelism

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1. Christianity Today, "Protestant Panorama", Vol. V, No. 7, Jan. 2, 1961, p. 26.
- 2; Stauderman, op. cit., p. 28.
3. Omar Bonderud and Charles Lutz (ed.), America's Lutherans, p. 19.
4. Stauderman, op. cit., pp. 28-29.

Mission. Regarding the Lutheran Evangelism Mission

E. Theodore Bachman says:

In recent years the LEM has done much to change the often passive acceptance of evangelical faith into purposeful commitment and effective communication. Congregations in cities, suburbs and countryside have found the LEM salutary. Communities have been confronted by the challenge of the Gospel in the preaching, praying, personal visitation and publicized outreach of all Lutheran congregations acting in concert. Synodical walls and geographic barriers have thus been lowered, while regional missions have systematically covered the United States and Canada with a dynamic "preaching, teaching, reaching" ministry. In the words of a keen participant, "The LEM is giving the Church back to the people."¹

B. The American Lutheran Church (TALC)

1. Introduction

The American Lutheran Church uses an Area Evangelism Mission, which combines visitation evangelism with a preaching mission and adds the all-important phase - the training of laity and pastors in through-the-year evangelism, as the major thrust of evangelism. Although it is true that this Mission includes rallies giving opportunity for mass evangelism, its primary concern is the individual congregation. This is found in the Mission's concern with the "inreach" - the members themselves - as well as the "outreach" - the unchurched community.²

The American Lutheran Church feels that effective

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1. Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran Churches of the World, pp. 163-164.
2. Lutheran Area Evangelism Mission Manual, Augustana Lutheran Church, p. 2,

evangelism places major emphasis upon growth in grace, rather than upon growth in statistics. The Report of the Joint Union Committee to the Five Churches of the American Lutheran Conference states:

The congregation must never cease its efforts to deepen the spiritual life of its members and to call to repentance and faith the straying. Those within the fold must ever seek to bring the "other¹ sheep" to the Great Shepherd and Bishop of souls.

2. Definition

a) Principles

(1) The Biblical Basis of Evangelism

That the authority and urgency for evangelism comes via the Scriptures is undisputed in the American Lutheran Church. There is strong conviction that without the guidance of God's Word, without the sustaining power of the Gospel, there would be constant danger of losing one's way. Some of the markers from Scripture for guidance are:²

(a) The State of Awareness - John 4:35 -

' . . . the fields are already white for harvest.'

(b) The Place of Penitence - Psalm 51;10-13 -

Many people have strayed from the fold.

(c) The Narrow Way - Matthew 7:13,14 - ' . . .

those who find it are few.'

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1. United Testimony on Faith and Life, The Report of the Joint Union Committee to the Five Churches of the American Lutheran Conference, Evangelical Lutheran Church, p. 17.
2. Road Maps in Evangelism, Augustana Lutheran Church, p. 1.

(d) The Path of Prayer - II Chronicles 7:14 -
A condition for forgiveness and healing.

(e) The Turn in the Road - Acts 3:19-21 -
Repentance as the basis of forgiveness and reconciliation.

(f) The Mountain Top of Faith - Matthew 17:7 -
Reverential awe.

(g) The Valley of Human Need - Matthew 17:14 - 19

(h) The Highway and By-Way of Concern -
Luke 4:21-23.

(i) The Way of the Cross - Mark 8:34-38 'If
any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take
up his cross and follow me.'

(j) The Way of the Word - Psalm 119:105 A way
of light.

The caution of tempering all evangelistic effort
with the spirit of Scriptural Evangelism is especially
emphasized in the American Lutheran Church:

It is likewise recognized that, in addition to the
regular church services, there is value in special
public gatherings for the purpose of calling to
repentance and faith the unsaved and the carnally
secure. Caution must be exercised, however, not to
substitute mass hysteria for the sound working of
the Holy Spirit through the regular preaching of
the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments.
The Congregation will make certain that its whole
program shall be permeated with the spirit of
Scriptural Evangelism.¹

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1. United Testimony on Faith and Life, loc. cit., p. 17.

That the urgency for evangelism in The American Lutheran Church comes from the Bible is plain. As Arthur M. Vincent says:

Just one Bible verse would be enough to send Christians out to witness. But here God's Book almost overwhelms with many verses blending into a powerful chorus, "Go and witness." . . . you must examine about 200 Bible verses in the New Testament alone before you read all they say about the Christian witness.¹

God witnesses to and through his people. He witnesses to them mainly by the Holy Spirit and through the Word; and He witnesses through them by their words, worship and godly living.

"You Shall Be My Witnesses" (Acts 1:18) These were the words of our ascending Lord to His disciples. We believe that they were also an expression of His will for all His disciples in every generation. It is a glorious fact that Christ expects every follower of His, young and old, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, to be His witnesses. Our Lord takes this for granted, that if you are His, you are also His witnesses. You will witness for Him with your words, your worship, and your godly living.²

(2) Exposition

The Joint Department of Evangelism of the Lutheran Evangelism Council (Eight Church bodies working together), of which The American Lutheran Church is a member, defines evangelism in this way:

Evangelism is winning men for Jesus Christ. It is bringing people to a consciousness of their sins, and to an acceptance of Jesus Christ as their

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1. Arthur M. Vincent, The Christian Witness, A Reprint from the American Lutheran Magazine, p. 3.
2. Witnessing for Christ and His Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church, p. 3.

Lord and Saviour; instructing them, and sending them forth to bear witness to their faith, especially among¹ the indifferent, the un-churched, and the unsaved.

However, The American Lutheran Church believes that evangelism means caring for those who are members of the Church as well as sharing the Gospel with those who have never heard it before. The greatest obstacle in the Church's growth and advance is the indifferent Church member within rather than the irreligious person without. The believer who has failed "to appropriate the fullness of God's grace and to drink deeply of his power and peace - the professing Christian who has failed to discover and claim by faith the fullness, vitality and joyful contagion of the Spirit-filled life" is another barrier to spiritual life and growth within the Church. If evangelism is effective, God's people are led deeper into His Word and Will in order to go farther as His witnesses.²

The basic aspects of evangelism in general and the Lutheran Area Evangelism Mission in specific are Preaching Christ Crucified - for personal commitment, Teaching the Word of God - for deepening of the faith, and Reaching People Everywhere - for Christ and His Church.³

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1. Lutheran Area Evangelism Mission Manual, op. cit., p. 3.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

The Report of the Joint Union Committee to
the Five Churches of the American Lutheran Conference
defined in this way:

By the term Evangelism we designate the work of
applying the Evangel (Gospel) to the souls of men:
to win the unsaved for Christ, to keep the believer
in Christ, and to recall the backslider to Christ.
It is the essential and continuous task of the whole
Church.¹

This definition is accepted by The American Lutheran
Church with a small but significant addition:

Evangelism is applying the evangel (Gospel) to the
hearts of men, to win the unsaved for Christ; to
keep the believer in Christ; to recall the back-
slider to Christ; and to send the believer forth
a witness for Christ.²

(3) The Place of Evangelism in the Congregation

The American Lutheran Church is very definite
in stating that evangelism is not optional in the life of
a congregation:

Congregations do not vote on or decide to do or not
do evangelism any more than they decide to administer
the Sacraments or worship God. If they are to live
out the concerns of the Kingdom of God and to be
obedient to the Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ,
they have no choice but to let a spirit of Scriptural
evangelism permeate every aspect of their life and
activity. Scriptural evangelism has a twofold mission-
to deepen the spiritual life of Christians and to
bring the "other³ sheep" to the Great Shepherd and
Bishop of souls.

Thus, with this consideration in mind, evangelism does

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1. United Testimony on Faith and Life, op. cit., pp. 16-17.
2. Evangelism in the Congregation, The Evangelical
Lutheran Church, p. 3.
3. Ibid.

not take on the nature of a periodic or separable activity within the congregation. Although souls for whom Christ died are its object and concern, it is not a campaign to secure more numbers. Neither is it a method to generate enthusiasm and thus get people to respond to God's call. Rather, it is the congregation's life blood. It is "that quality of God's love and mercy which should saturate every aspect of congregational life and results in work, commitment and renewal of Jesus Christ and His Church."¹

Evangelism, then, is the congregation's primary activity - to win, to keep, to recall and to send. According to the American Lutheran Church's definition of evangelism, it has to do with both winning and keeping people for Christ. Both "Come and see" and "Go and tell" are involved. "It is both receiving the Gospel and conveying it; both partaking of it and communicating it."²

In year-around evangelism, which is the only proper way to consider the program of evangelism in a local church, care must be taken to institute and carry out a well-balanced program. On the one hand, if winning new converts is the only purpose, then little spiritual depth among the members is developed and new members received are quickly

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1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p. 4.

lost. On the other hand, if the congregation's only concern is "inreach" (worshipping, communing, contributing, etc.) there is danger of a blanket of complacency settling upon the congregation with the consequence that zeal for souls is lost. "There must be a Scriptural balance between inreach and outreach."¹

The American Lutheran Church feels strongly that an intensive program of evangelism in congregations has been difficult to carry out partly because it is not an "official" function of congregational life:

For all too long we have said, "Everything we do is evangelism. We are carrying on the work of evangelism all of the time." This is true, to a certain degree. But these admissions usually mean that opportunities for evangelism are being overlooked and neglected. It means also that the congregation has leveled off at the lowest common denominator and is satisfied with minimums. The secondary has replaced the primary.²

Centering the work of evangelism in the Church Council or Board of Deacons is deemed necessary:

Without an official group designated and set aside to be responsible for an intensive program of evangelism, it can only be an "intruder" in congregational life, and instead of the challenges being met effectively and continuously, they are attempted, if at all, sporadically. Therefore, we strongly recommend, if evangelism is to be restored to its rightful place in Kingdom's work, that it be centered in the Church Council or Board of Deacons.³

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p. 5.
3. Ibid. Note Appendix B.

b) Plans

(1) The Life and Growth Plan (The Shepherding Plan)

The American Lutheran Church does not claim that the Life and Growth Evangelism Plan, which is year-around evangelism, is a cure-all for keeping and winning people for Christ and His Church. It is claimed, however, that this plan is about the best plan through which the meaning of the definition of evangelism can be realized.¹

Basically, the Life and Growth Plan, which is also called the Shepherding Plan, is a plan whereby a congregation organizes itself into small geographical areas and appoints a leader or leaders over each area to keep in contact with its members and contact others outside the Christian Church. At the present, it is being used effectively in both rural and city parishes to win and to hold people for Jesus Christ.²

(a) Advantages of the Life and Growth Plan³

-1. Strengthening and enlarging the Christian fellowship.

-2. Developing and training people within the congregation to assume the Christian responsibilities

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1. Ibid., p. 6.

2. Ibid., p. 7. Note Appendix B.

3. Ibid.

of witnessing within and without of the church.

-3. The church membership is bound together in closer Christian fellowship because of the personal touch between church staff and members.

-4. Greater awareness by the congregation of its responsibility to Christ and His Church, the community, and the world.

-5. Greater church membership, church attendance at worship service, Sunday school, Bible school and other church functions.

-6. Discovery of latent talents, interests and abilities, not yet being used in the service of God's Kingdom.

-7. Prospects for membership in the church are uncovered.

-8. Because of being better informed about the needs of people, the Pastor's calling becomes more effective.

(b) Projects

Although the Evangelism Board will determine its objectives for the year, The American Lutheran Church suggests the following projects - some to be studied and carried out directly under the Evangelism Board's direction, and others to be channeled through the Life and Growth structure, namely, the Section Leaders

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and Captains:

-1. Bible Study and Prayer¹

A program of evangelism should begin by evangelizing the evangelizers through helping them to get into the Word of God and to know the value of prayer. The following activities foster this:

-a. Encouraging Bible study in all of the organizations, promoting and stimulating interest in family worship in the homes.

-b. Offering cottage Bible study and prayer opportunities.

-c. Conducting a Bible Conference and Prayer Week.

-d. Encouraging the use of Bible correspondence courses (Lutheran Bible Institute).

-e. Mid-week Bible studies.

-f. Sunday morning Bible classes.

-2. Cottage Home Fellowship Meetings²

There is a great need for a Bible study plan to be used in connection with the preparation of Evangelism Missions in the congregation, as well as at other times.

-3. A Preaching Mission³

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1. Ibid., pp. 12-13.

2. Ibid., pp. 14-16.

3. Ibid., p. 17.

A preaching mission can be used of the Lord to bring spiritual renewal to Christians and to confront the unreached with the Gospel of Jesus Christ much as a Bible Camp can do much by God's Spirit to inspire and to bring young people to new commitment to Jesus Christ.

Not only do "evangelists" have varying gifts of preaching, but a "new voice" is a great asset in a congregation from time to time. And furthermore there is the aspect of the "accumulated Word" brought night after night which the Spirit seems to use more forcibly than with a six day interval hearing of God's Word, to break through the barriers of sin and repentance and faith.¹

-4. Visitation²

A good statement for all congregations to follow is found in the constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Now a member of the American Lutheran Church). Every new Home Mission congregation in the ELC promises to abide by this statement:

To cooperate faithfully with the pastor in reaching out to all the unchurched people in the entire community regardless of race, economic standing, religious background or other circumstances, in order that they may be brought under the influence of the Gospel³ of Jesus Christ and won for Him and His Kingdom.

Reaching out to unchurched people involves a census, keeping a record of worship, visitation among members, visitation among non-members, and the Pastor's

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., pp. 18-22.
3. Ibid., p. 18.

class. Each has an important role in the evangelism of the congregation as a whole.

-5. Tract Service¹

In The American Lutheran Church the Christian tract is assuming an important place in all phases of the vital work of Evangelism.

The growing use of tracts in the total ministry of the church indicates a growing appreciation of the value and effectiveness of good tracts² in the building and the extension of the Kingdom.

Some planned uses for tracts are: Visitation, Mailings, Church Services, Organizations and Special Classes, Personal Work, Discouragements and Bereavements, Public Outlets, and the Activated Tract Rack.³

-6. Parish Conservation Service⁴

The purpose of the Parish Conservation Service is to benefit the individual, the home, the Church, and the community by maintaining the strength of the local church and developing its potential. The Aim is to establish in each local community a Parish Conservation Service Program that will carry out two distinct phases:

-a. Conservation of the Economic Resources of the Church.

-b. Conservation of the People for the

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1. Ibid., pp. 23-24.
2. Ibid., p. 23.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., pp. 25-26.

Lord and His Church.

The following is a good description of the Parish Conservation Service's activities:

Parish Conservation Service is devised to assist our people in conserving the Economic Resources of the Church. These economic resources are the farms, business properties, the income producing enterprises and the job of the people of our Church. Parish Conservation functions as a clearing house of information about these farm sales and tenancy, business and professional opportunities, to bring buyers and sellers together for dealings that will be to the advantage of the congregations. A service of this kind is of value both to the rural and urban church.

Parish Conservation wants to assist you when someone in your community: 1) Moves out, 2) Moves in, 3) Sells property, 4) Changes jobs.¹

-7. Assimilation and Integration²

The American Lutheran Church is well aware of the fact that it is usually easier to win new people for Christ and His Church than it is to keep and sustain them in the Christian faith. Since people come from different backgrounds and have different personalities, the challenge is to mold them into a homogeneous harmonious congregation of God.³

-8. Specialized Visitation⁴

This is strictly for the more spiritually mature, and involves specialized calling on the aged; homes where

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1. Ibid., p. 25.

2. Ibid., p. 27.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., pp. 28-34.

there is sorrow, hardship and tragedy; hospital and other sick visitation; institutional visits to mental hospitals, jails, prisons, etc.¹

(2) Conclusions

(a) Mere activity is not evangelism. The Life and Growth Plan is a plan, not for mere activity for its own sake, but for activity that has a Scriptural balance between inreach and outreach.²

(b) The Life and Growth Plan is not a separable or periodic activity of the congregation, but is the primary and continuous task of the whole Church as it participates in an evangelistic program.

(c) The Purposes of the Life and Growth Plan include: strengthening and enlarging the Christian fellowship, giving careful attention to integration and assimilation, providing periodic lay visits on members and others on the responsibility List, providing for Cottage Fellowship, Bible Study and Prayer opportunities, helping the newly-won in giving expression of their faith, both in the church and in daily living, ascertaining what each member's talents are and enabling and enlisting them to be used to "build up the Body of Christ, the Church", reporting changes in the neighborhood and contacting new

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1. Ibid., p. 28.

2. Ibid., p. 4 and p. 27.

people as soon as they move into the areas, and informing the pastors of various areas of individual need.¹

C. The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (Synodical Conference)

1. Introduction

Today, evangelism is making a strong comeback. It has become a very respectable word in religious vocabulary. Practically every major church body is emphasizing this sphere of Christian activity as never before - due to the precarious situation of the world, coupled with a renewal of interest in religion.²

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod has always been interested in the promotion of genuine biblical evangelism. It is felt that witnessing for Christ is the normal and essential "priesthood" activity of every Christian.³

The area evangelism mission has been one of the recent developments in the field of evangelism. This mission takes advantage not only of the recently rediscovered emphasis on lay visitation evangelism, but also operates on the assumption that the learner learns best by actually doing. "Realizing that evangelism is

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1. Ibid., p. 7.
2. Lutheran Area Evangelism Mission, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, p. 2.
3. Manual for Preaching Teaching Reaching Mission, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, p. 1.

the very essence of the church, Synod's Home Missions board has taken definite steps to rekindle interest in this basic work."¹

2. Definition

a) Principles

(1) The Biblical Basis of Evangelism

The Missouri Synod recognizes that evangelism is nothing new, having been practiced by the Church of Christ from the very beginning:

When we strive to encourage and "provide practical guidance for the active and continuing participation in the work of winning souls for Christ within the local congregation on the part of the entire membership of our churches", we are not introducing either a new thought or a new activity into the life and work of our congregations. Rather we learn from Scripture that from the very beginning of what may properly be termed "church work", it was always the believing and confessing children of God on earth as such that carried on the work of their Lord and of His church.²

When the Scripture therefore records the earliest instance of church activity, the confessing believers are found to be the ones that feel their responsibility and carry it out:

. . . even in the days of the Old Covenant, when God's people often had to be taken by the hand and led as little children, it was never forgotten that the responsibility for doing the Lord's work rested with the Lord's people as such.

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1. Lutheran Area Evangelism Mission Manual, op. cit., p.2.
2. Gaining and Reclaiming Souls for Christ, The Lutheran Church - Wisconsin Synod, p. 5.

Examples of personal evangelism . . . instances of men and women, young and old, people of high station and persons of low degree, actively engaging in the work of winning souls for Christ, occur with even greater frequency in the New Testament. Those who had been brought into contact with Jesus simply must tell others.¹

Thus, the motivation for evangelism in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod comes from the testimony of Scripture. This motivation is intensified by the fact that the Missouri Synod feels that evangelism is a personal obligation - as the result of the Lord's command. Not only that, there are those who see in evangelism, visitation evangelism in particular, Jesus' original New Testament plan of soul-winning, lately rediscovered and modernized.²

(2) Exposition

The various aspects of the term, "evangelism", as considered by the Missouri Synod, are exposed by the following definitions:³

Evangelism is the proclamation of the Gospel; it is also an invitation to an encounter - an encounter with the risen Christ.

Evangelism is not a program; it is a way of life. It is being a Christian witness wherever you are.

Evangelism is the impact of the whole Christian community upon those who are outside its life and fellowship.

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1. Ibid., pp. 7-8.
2. Lutheran Area Evangelism Mission Manual, op. cit., p. 2-3. See also: Gaining and Reclaiming Souls for Christ, op. cit., p. 2.
3. Lutheran Area Evangelism Mission Manual, op. cit., p. 4.

Evangelism is the saving activity of God, active in the means of grace; the impact of the Gospel upon the unconverted in the world.

Evangelism is witnessing. It is one beggar telling another where to get spiritual food.

Evangelism is the activity of the church which has as its purpose the deepening of the spiritual life and faith of the believers and the leading of the non-believers to a living faith in Christ within the fellowship of the church, through the power of the means of grace, through which the Holy Spirit operates.

Evangelism is the evangel in action - living for and sharing Christ.

Evangelism is one sinner going to another sinner for God; the transmission of the Gospel from one person to another by the word (spoken or printed), by worship, and by godly living.

Evangelism is putting the "Go" into the Gospel. The "lo" is for those who "go" (Matt. 28:19,20). We must "go" for Jesus if He is to go with us.

"Evangelical" is considered to mean the maintenance of Gospel teaching; whereas, "evangelism" means to share Gospel teaching. It is strongly felt that the two ought to go hand in hand. "The more Gospel a church has, the more evangelistic it ought to be in the true sense of the word."¹

Although the Missouri Synod is not a member of the Lutheran Evangelism Council, which is an undertaking of the National Lutheran Council,² the Council's definition of evangelism is accepted:

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1. Ibid.

2. Ante., p. 27.

Evangelism is winning men for Jesus Christ. It is bringing people to a consciousness of their sins and to an acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior; instructing them, and sending them forth to bear witness of their faith, especially among the indifferent, the unchurched, and the lost.¹

Sound Biblical and Lutheran evangelism, specifically emphasized in the area evangelism mission, combines worship, instruction in witnessing, experience in visiting, and planning for year-round evangelism as basic ingredients.²

(3) The Place of Evangelism in the Congregation

The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod

specifically states that evangelism is not a thing of option in the life of the congregation:

Evangelism is not optional in the life of a congregation or an individual Christian. Congregations do not vote on or decide to do or not to do evangelism any more than they decide to administer the Sacraments or worship God. Love compels obedience to Him Who said, "Come and see" and "Go and tell".³

Churches are at their best when they are nerve centers of evangelism, when every single aspect of their programs has evangelistic significance. It is true that the more of its faith a church gives away, the more it has left for itself; and churches are usually living churches in exact ratio to their mission activity. "There are only two things a church can do with its faith - give

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1. Lutheran Area Evangelism Mission Manual, op. cit., p. 4.
2. Manual for Preaching Teaching Reaching Mission, op. cit. p. 2.
3. A Guidebook for the Congregations's Evangelism Committee, Effective Biblical Evangelism, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, p. 1.

it away or give it up; propagate it or repudiate it; project it or reject it."¹

That evangelism is the congregation's primary activity can be seen from the Missouri Synod's definition of the local church:²

An ecclesia, a gathering of those who have been "called out" of the darkness of sin into the marvelous light of the Gospel, to glorify God and save souls.

Not just a building with a steeple on it, but a living organism with life and breath and Spirit within.

Not only a gallery for the display of saints, but a workshop for the salvation of sinners.

Not only a reservoir for the storage of the water of life, but an aqueduct to bring the water of life into the hearts and homes of the community and of the world.

Not only a bomb shelter for defense, but an army on the march, with every face pointed toward the enemy.

Not merely an army of occupation, but an army of conquest.

The church is a filling station where people go for fuel for their main task in this world - witnessing.

The church is not only a group to be served, but a force to be trained for active mission work.

Evangelism is never a program, but is a way of life. So strongly does the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod feel that year-around evangelism effort is necessary, an important resolution was passed by the Missouri Synod in the Convention in San Francisco, June 17-26, 1959.

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1. Lutheran Area Evangelism Mission Manual, op. cit., p. 5.
2. Ibid., pp. 4-5.

It was resolved to "establish 1960 as an Evangelism year, beginning with an intensified evangelism effort in the pre-Lenten season for all congregations." It is hoped that such an emphasis will put evangelism back into its rightful place in the congregation - as a way of life.¹

b) Plans

(1) The Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Evangelism Mission

The first Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Evangelism Mission work was conducted in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1952. It grew out of an evangelism conference. Now it is the most important evangelistic thrust in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. Except for a few techniques which tie the three basic concepts together, there is really nothing new in the "P-T-R" - this kind of witnessing has always existed in the Christian Church.²

Oswald A. Waech says:

Basically the program is a sound Biblical approach to Evangelism. In fact, we sincerely believe that if evangelism is practiced within the context of these three concepts, the fruits of faith would be more constant and there³ would be less chance to develop a distorted evangelism.

An area Lutheran Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Mission takes advantage not only of the history of evangelism but also of the new emphasis on lay visitation.

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1. Sharing the Faith in Christ, A Manual for the 1960 Evangelism Emphasis and Pre-Lenten and Lenten Season, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, p. 4.
2. Oswald A. Waech, The Preaching Teaching Reaching Evangelism Mission, pamphlet, p. 1.
3. Ibid.

The program is distinctively Lutheran and thoroughly Biblical.

It has Biblical motivation and direction; it has proper balance and force; it places the emphasis upon the use of the Bible, the use of prayer, and the use of people. An Area Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Mission combines visitation evangelism with a preaching mission and adds the all-important phase - the training of the laity and pastors for an ongoing, year-round evangelism program.¹

Basically, in combining worship, instructions in witnessing, experience in visitation, and planning for year-round evangelism as four basic ingredients of sound Biblical and Lutheran Evangelism, the P-T-R is an intensive and consecrated effort on the part of a group of churches in a given area, which "synchronize their programs for an energetic week of 'inreach' and 'outreach'."²

(a) Advantages of the P-T-R³

-1. Some congregations which, left to themselves, would never reach the point of setting the dates and times for an evangelistic effort of their own, will often do so when encouraged to fall in line with a co-operative endeavor.

-2. There is a good demonstration of united Christian witnessing because of enlistment of lay people for the basic work of the church.

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1. A Lutheran Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Mission Explained, The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, p. 2. See also: Lutheran Area Evangelism Mission, op. cit., p. 5.
2. Ibid. Note Organization structure in Appendix C.
3. Lutheran Area Evangelism Mission, op. cit. pp. 6-7.

-3. Inspiration and practical suggestions are offered for doing what needs to be done, and done continuously all through the year.

-4. As they observe that "God gives the increase", church members gain a new vision of Kingdom work.

-5. The P-T-R can serve to lift the level of Christian witnessing in all participating congregations.

(b) Projects

Although help, inspiration and general "know how" are available from the Evangelism Office of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, the P-T-R is a local area sponsored mission and not run by "officialdom". Therefore, each P-T-R Mission is conducted under the supervision of a local Central Committee. Often an area director is assigned by the Synodical office to offer instruction, inspiration, and motivation.¹

-1. The Preaching

The pulpit has always been central in Lutheranism, and this Mission keeps it there. Each co-operating congregation conducts a Preaching Mission from Sunday through Thursday or Friday evening. A guest pastor, assigned by Synod's Department of Evangelism upon nomination of the local church, delivers nightly sermons.²

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1. Waech, op. cit.

2. Lutheran Area Evangelism Mission, op. cit., p. 5.

Regarding the purpose of the preaching mission, Oswald

A. Waech says:

The three-fold purpose of the preaching mission is by God's grace to deepen the spiritual life of believers, to win the "unreached" for Christ and to provide instruction for the year-around program.¹

-2. The Teaching

In emphasizing teaching, the mission is thoroughly rooted and grounded in prayer and God's Word. There are three teaching opportunities. The first is when lay witnesses are given thorough instructions before and during the mission on how to witness. The second is when pastors (host and guest) meet three hours each morning for a seminar on evangelism, with emphasis on making it a year-round program in the local church. Finally, the third teaching opportunity comes when the guest pastor, in addition to his preaching services, meets with special leadership groups within the congregation such as, the official boards, organizational leaders, teachers, etc.²

-3. The Reaching

The Reaching also consists of three different phases. The first phase is getting to know who are the "reached" and who are the "unreached" in the community. This necessitates the establishment of a responsibility list of both members (the inactive) and non-members who

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1. Waech, op. cit.

2. Ibid., p. 2.

may be prospects for the church. Therefore, a "religious canvass" every two or three years is also necessary.¹

The second phase of the Reaching consists of sending teams of lay people to visit all of the members of the congregation prior to the mission week, in order to enlist their prayer and attendance support.²

The final phase is to send trained lay visitor teams to call on the "unreached". In addition to this, months of intensive prayer preparation is encouraged at worship services, cottage meetings, organizational meetings and in daily family devotions. Bible study is also emphasized.³

(2) Conclusions

(a) The tying together of the three New Testament concepts - Preaching-Teaching-Reaching - has brought the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod a balanced, doctrinally sound, Christ-centered and Holy Spirit motivated program of evangelism.⁴

(b) The P-T-R is worked in and through the local congregations, which, according to the Missouri Synod, are God's basic instruments for effective evangelism.⁵

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1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 3.

5. Ibid., p. 1.

(c) An area Lutheran P-T-R Mission takes advantage not only of the history of evangelism but also of the new emphasis on lay visitation.¹

D. Summary

The Lutherans are a part of the true, holy catholic church established by Jesus Christ, tracing their history back to the time of the apostles. Today the Lutherans are by far the largest single Protestant denomination, comprising about one-third of the world's Protestants.

Notable changes in the last fifty years have now reduced the number of major Lutheran groups in the United States to three; The Church resulting from the union of the United Lutheran Church, the Augustana Lutheran Church, the American Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Suomi Synod; the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, allied in the Synodical Conference with the Wisconsin, Slovak and Evangelical Synods; and The American Lutheran Church (TALC), created by the merger of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, American Lutheran Church, and United Evangelical Lutheran Church.

All of these Lutheran groups mentioned, except the Missouri Synod, work together through the National Lutheran Council - a major undertaking of which is the Lutheran Evangelism Mission (through the Lutheran

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1. A Lutheran Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Mission Explained, op. cit., p. 2.

Evangelism Council).

The American Lutheran Church believes that the authority and urgency for evangelism comes via the Scriptures. This evangelism is accomplished as God witnesses to and through his people. Evangelism is defined as applying the Gospel to the hearts of men, to win the unsaved for Christ; to keep the believer in Christ; and to send the believer forth a witness for Christ.

As to the place of evangelism in the congregation, The American Lutheran Church is very definite in stating that evangelism is not optional in the life of a congregation; but that it is the congregation's life blood. Evangelism is the congregation's primary activity - to win, to keep, to recall and to send. Also, evangelism as a year-around official function of the church is stressed; and centering the work of evangelism in the Church Council or Board of Deacons is deemed necessary.

The American Lutheran Church recommends the Life and Growth Plan for proper year-around evangelism. This plan has many advantages and emphasizes Bible Study and Prayer, a Preaching Mission, Cottage Home Fellowship Meetings, Visitation, Tract Service, Parish Conservation Service, Assimilation and Integration, and Specialized Visitation as its projects.

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The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod has always been interested in the promotion of genuine biblical evangelism, feeling that witnessing for Christ is the normal and essential "priesthood" activity of every Christian. Evangelism is nothing new, having been practiced by the Church of Christ from the very beginning. Motivation for evangelism in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, therefore, comes from the testimony of Scripture. Not only that, there are those who see in evangelism Jesus' original New Testament plan of soul - winning, lately rediscovered and modernized.

The Missouri Synod defines evangelism in various ways, but always includes the following aspects: Evangelism is the proclamation of the Gospel, a way of life, the saving activity of God through witnessing by His children, sharing the gospel teaching, and combines worship, instruction in witnessing, experience in visiting, and planning for year-round evangelism as basic ingredients.

As to the place of evangelism in the congregation, the Missouri Synod specifically states that evangelism is not a thing of option in the life of the congregation. Churches are at their best when they are nerve centers of evangelism, when every single aspect of their programs has evangelistic significance. Evangelism is the congregation's primary activity, year-around in scope.

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The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod recommends the Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Evangelism Mission as a plan for local church evangelism the year-around. The P-T-R takes advantage not only of the history of evangelism, but also of the new emphasis on lay visitation. It is distinctively Lutheran and thoroughly Biblical. The P-T-R has many advantages and emphasizes in particular: Preaching - maintaining the central position of the pulpit in Lutheranism; Teaching - instructing lay witnesses, pastors, and special leadership groups within the congregation about evangelism as a way of life; Reaching - establishing a religious canvass, sending teams of lay people to visit all of the members of the congregation prior to the mission week, and sending trained lay visitor teams to call on the "unreached".

Chapter IV

Comparison and Evaluation of Materials in
Light of the Established Criterion

CHAPTER IV

COMPARISON AND EVALUATION OF MATERIALS IN LIGHT OF THE ESTABLISHED CRITERION

A. Introduction

For many years the major Protestant bodies have indicated earnest desire for cooperation. This led to numerous interdenominational co-operative efforts, including the Federal Council of Churches (1908). Most of the agencies involved were merged into the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. in 1950 (NCC). The social gospel outlook has been a strong factor in limiting Lutheran participation in the Federal Council. However, the theological climate has changed; and today, the American Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Augustana, and the United Lutheran Church participate in the NCC. Several other Lutheran bodies have a consultative relation to various divisions of the Council. There is no doubt that Lutheran influence is being felt, and that there is sharing of benefits across denominational lines.¹

A constitution for a World Council of Churches was drafted in 1938, and plans were made for its First Assembly to be held in 1941. However, World War II interrupted the proceedings with the result that it was not until 1948 that invitations were extended to the

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1. Lutheran Churches of the World, op. cit., pp. 172-173.

churches to unite in the formal organization of the World Council of Churches (WCC). Although most of the Lutherans of the world accepted membership in the World Council, the Synodical Conference churches (Missouri Synod), the Evangelical Lutheran Church (a chief member of the American Lutheran Church - TALC), and the Lutheran Free Church were notable exceptions. Since then, however, the Evangelical Lutheran Church has given an affirmative vote on the question of membership in the World Council (1956).¹ Today, two-thirds of America's Lutherans are represented in the World Council, including the American Lutheran Church (TALC) but without representation by the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.²

B. Comparison and Evaluation

1. Introduction

The basic pattern in evangelism among all evangelical groups in the United States for the last two centuries or so has been that of planting the local church and encouraging it to do the work of evangelism. It is a tried and proved method.³ In recent years, the effectiveness of local church evangelism has been all the more increased by an emphasis on lay visitation.⁴ The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church -

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1. Nelson, op. cit., pp. 328-331.
2. Lutheran Churches of the World, op. cit., p. 173.
3. Supra p. 6.
4. Supra p. 54.

Missouri Synod are setting the pace in typically Lutheran and Biblical evangelism, changing the often passive acceptance of evangelical faith into purposeful and effective communication.¹

2. Definition

a) Principles

(1) The Biblical Basis of Evangelism

That the authority and urgency for evangelism comes via the Scriptures is not disputed in either The American Lutheran Church or the Missouri Synod.² This is a strong conviction and is in perfect harmony with the Biblical basis of evangelism expressed the World Council of Churches.³ The American Lutheran Church emphasizes the use of Scripture as markers for guidance on the path of evangelism, whereas the Missouri Synod stresses the examples in Scripture for intensification of personal motivation.⁴ The latter is more the idea also expressed by the World Council of Churches.⁵ The American Lutheran Church is not without the emphasis upon personal motivation, however.⁶

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1. Supra Quotation, p. 28.
2. Supra pp. 29-31; 44-45.
3. Supra pp. 7-9.
4. Supra pp. 29, 44.
5. Supra p. 8.
6. Supra p. 31.

The American Lutheran Church defines evangelism as applying the Gospel to the hearts of men, to win the unsaved for Christ; to keep the believer in Christ; to recall the backslider to Christ; and to send the believer forth a witness for Christ. Particular emphasis is placed upon the last aspect - that of sending the believer forth a witness for Christ.¹ Evangelism means caring for those who are members of the church as well as sharing the Gospel with those who have never heard it before, however.²

The exposition of the term "evangelism" by the Missouri Synod is very similar. Maintenance of Gospel teaching and sharing of Gospel teaching ought to go hand in hand.³ Evangelism is winning men for Christ, bringing people to a consciousness of their sins and to an acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior - as well as instructing them, and sending them forth to bear witness of their faith.⁴ Although the Missouri Synod is not a member of the Lutheran Evangelism Council of the National Lutheran Council (to which the majority of Lutherans belong), the Council's definition

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1. Supra p. 33.
2. Supra p. 32.
3. Supra pp. 45-47.
4. Supra p. 47.

of evangelism is accepted.¹

The definitions as set forth by The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod correspond very well with that of the World Council of Churches. However, the WCC puts more emphasis upon evangelism as being specifically the work of God - accomplished, of course, through those within the Church already.² Outside of the life of a recognized congregation there can be no adequate evangelism.³

Whereas the two Lutheran groups both believe that evangelism is equally maintenance of Gospel teaching and sharing of Gospel teaching, the World Council of Churches believes that evangelism is not so much elevating those within the church as reaching those outside the acknowledged Christian fellowship.⁴

Also, the definition of evangelism as set forth by the WCC is more precise, building a plan of attack upon their principles of evangelism, The connected series of steps by which a person is brought from outside the Church to a living faith in Jesus Christ and membership in His Church present a natural plan for evangelism.⁵

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1. Supra p. 46.
2. Supra p. 9.
3. Supra p. 10.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. See also pp. 13-21.

Although there is danger of merely adding names to a roll rather than to the Kingdom in the way the World Council of Churches has defined evangelism, it is strongly felt that evangelism is not complete until it brings a person into the Church.¹

(3) The Place of Evangelism in the Congregation

The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod are explicit in declaration that evangelism is the primary responsibility of churches. They correspond particularly on these points:

(a) Evangelism is not optional in the life of a congregation. It is absolutely necessary.²

(b) Evangelism is the congregation's "life blood".³

(c) Evangelism is a way of life, emphasizing year-round evangelism effort.⁴

The two Lutheran groups are in full agreement as to the place of evangelism in the congregation, corresponding to the conviction of the World Council of Churches as it also declares that the primary responsibility of all churches is evangelism.⁵

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1. Supra p. 10.

2. Supra pp. 33, 47. Note the similarity in quotation.

3. Supra pp. 33-34, 47.

4. Supra pp. 34-35; 48-49.

5. Supra pp. 11-13.

The WCC significantly particularizes the responsibility of evangelism in the congregation by pointing out that all Christians are to be witnesses.¹ In connection with this, the World Council stresses the importance of the spoken word being supported by the evidence of life.² Although the World Council of Churches believes that evangelism is not so much elevating those within the church as reaching those outside the acknowledged Christian fellowship, the Council is well aware that witness remains ineffective unless there is a living fellowship into which the "unreached" may be invited. The fellowship of the Church plays a very important role in the conversion of the world.³ Thus, there is very little significant difference between the Lutheran and the WCC interpretation of the place of evangelism in the congregation.

b) Plans

The Life and Growth Plan (the Shepherding Plan) of the American Lutheran Church and the Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Evangelism Mission of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod are similar in many ways. Indeed, the P-T-R of the Missouri Synod was first employed in the

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1. Supra pp. 11-12.
2. Supra p. 12.
3. Ibid.

Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC), which is now a member of the newly organized The American Lutheran Church (TALC).¹

Both plans are sound Biblical approaches to evangelism, emphasizing Bible study and prayer.² Both are plans for year-round evangelism.³ They emphasize lay visitation, including planning for visitation and experience in visitation.⁴ In fact, one of the main advantages of both plans is that of developing and training people within the congregation to assume Christian responsibilities.⁵ As a result, the level of witnessing is raised, new vision of Kingdom work is gained, and the church membership is bound together in closer Christian fellowship.⁶

Central to the plans for evangelism of both The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod is the preaching mission.⁷ However, in both plans, the preaching mission is a means to an end - that of establishing year-round evangelism and emphasizing evangelism as the primary responsibility of the churches.⁸

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1. Supra p. 49
2. Supra pp. 38, 49.
3. Supra pp. 36, 50.
4. Supra pp. 36 & 39; 49-50.
5. Supra pp. 36 (No. 2); 50 (No. 2)
6. Supra pp. 37 (No. 3); 51 (No's. 4 & 5)
7. Supra pp. 39; 51-52.
8. Supra pp. 36 (1st paragraph); 50 (quotation).

Organizationally, the P-T-R and the Life and Growth plan are similar, except that the former usually involves more than one congregation.¹ The Missouri Synod believes that some congregations, left to themselves, would never get around to an evangelistic effort of their own. However, they may be easily encouraged to fall in line with a co-operative endeavor.²

In advocating an Area Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Mission, which combines visitation evangelism with a preaching mission and adds the training of the laity and pastors for an ongoing, year-round evangelism program, the Missouri Synod puts greater stress than The American Lutheran Church on the fact that this kind of witnessing has always existed in the Christian Church.³ Also, the assignment of an area director by the Synodical office to offer instruction, inspiration and motivation is unique to the Missouri Synod.⁴ However, this may be due to the fact that a P-T-R usually involves more than one congregation.

On the other hand, The American Lutheran Church, in advocating the Life and Growth Plan, stresses that this plan is about the best plan through which the definition

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1. Supra p. 50. Note also Appendices B and C.
2. Supra p. 50 (No. 1).
3. Supra p. 49.
4. Supra p. 51.

of evangelism can be realized.¹ In connection with this, the projects of The American Lutheran Church, which include Bible Study and Prayer, a Preaching Mission, Cottage Home Fellowship Meetings, Visitation, Tract Service, Parish Conservation Service, Assimilation and Integration and Specialized Visitation, seem to present a broader and more thorough blueprint for evangelism in the congregation than those offered by the projects of the Missouri Synod.² Although the P-T-R also urges visitation, a preaching mission, training of the laity and pastors for year-round evangelism, various kinds and intensive prayer preparation, and Bible study, the Life and Growth plan adds tract service, a parish conservation service, better assimilation and integration plans and specialized visitation.³

The blueprint for evangelism as set forth by the World Council of Churches, to which the Life and Growth Plan of The American Lutheran Church corresponds more than the Area Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Evangelism Mission of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, presents evangelism as a series of connected steps, namely, Contact Cultivation, Commitment, and Conservation.⁴ The projects

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1. Supra p. 36.
2. Supra pp. 37-42; 51-53.
3. Ibid.
4. Supra p. 13.

of the Life and Growth Plan are very similar.¹ Just as the World Council's "blueprint for evangelism" proceeds from the definition set forth, so it is with the Life and Growth Plan of The American Lutheran Church.² Also, the projects of the Life and Growth plan are similar with the World Council's blueprint in that they are a series of steps, each connected and dependent upon the other for successful evangelism.³

It must be emphasized, however, that both the P-T-R and the Life and Growth Plan correspond well to the principles and plans for evangelism as set forth by the World Council of Churches. At no point are there any major discrepancies, although the P-T-R does not correspond as well as the Life and Growth Plan to the step of Conservation in the World Council's "blueprint for evangelism".

C. Summary

The Lutherans, although more hesitant than certain other major Protestant bodies, have participated in interdenominational co-operative efforts such as the Federal Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and the World Council of Churches. Today, two-thirds of America's Lutherans

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1. Supra pp. 37-42.
2. Supra pp. 9-10; 36.
3. Supra pp. 13; 38-42.

are represented in the World Council, including The American Lutheran Church (TALC) but without representation by the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

The tried and proved method of evangelism, that of planting the local church and encouraging it to do the work of evangelism, is being applied by The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod as they set the pace in Lutheranism in typically Lutheran and Biblical evangelism. Recent emphasis upon lay visitation has increased effectiveness of this "tried and proved method".

The strong conviction in The American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod that the authority and urgency for evangelism comes via the Scriptures is in perfect harmony with the Biblical basis of evangelism expressed by the World Council of Churches.

The definitions of evangelism as set forth by The American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod are very similar, involving applying the Gospel to the hearts of men, winning the unsaved for Christ, keeping the believer in Christ, recalling the backslider to Christ and sending the believer forth a witness for Christ. The definitions correspond very well with that of the World Council of Churches, although the WCC stresses more that evangelism is the work of God and is

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not so much elevating those within the church as reaching those outside the acknowledged Christian fellowship.

Regarding the place of evangelism in the congregation, the two Lutheran groups are in full agreement, corresponding to the conviction of the World Council of Churches that evangelism should be the primary responsibility of all churches. Evangelism is not optional, therefore, and should be the congregation's way of life, emphasizing year-round evangelism.

The Life and Growth Plan of The American Lutheran Church and the Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Evangelism Mission of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod are similar, both being sound Biblical approaches, emphasizing lay visitation and year-round evangelism, being similar in organization, and having a preaching mission as central to the plans for evangelism. Differences may be found in the fact that the P-T-R usually involves more than one congregation and in the understanding that the Life and Growth Plan is broader in scope and more thorough.

Both the P-T-R of the Lutheran Church- Missouri Synod and the Life and Growth Plan of The American Lutheran Church correspond well to the definition of evangelism as set forth by the World Council of Churches.

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There are no major discrepancies, although the Life and Growth Plan of The American Lutheran Church corresponds more fully with the principles and plans as set forth by the World Council of Churches.

Chapter V

Summary

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this research has been to determine how the principles and plans for local church evangelism in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and The American Lutheran Church compare, and in what ways they correspond to the definition of evangelism as set forth by the World Council of Churches. As stated the subject is delimited to a comparative study of the principles and plans for local church evangelism in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and The American Lutheran Church. These principles and plans were in turn compared with the standard definition of evangelism as set forth by the World Council of Churches.

Chapter one is introductory, including statement of the purpose of the research, justification thereof and discussion of the method of procedure that has been used in this research.

Chapter two interprets the definition of evangelism as set forth by the World Council of Churches, and includes study of the principles and plans for evangelism set forth. It was discovered that evangelism through the local church is a tried and proved method of

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getting the work of evangelism done, and that the World Council of Churches is dedicated to support the churches in their task of evangelism.

The World Council's definition of evangelism was found in the principles of evangelism set forth, which includes the Biblical basis of evangelism, exposition of definition and evangelism as the primary responsibility of the churches, and in the plans for evangelism set forth.

Regarding the principles of evangelism, it is felt that there is a definite Biblical basis for evangelism, and that the Church's authority for evangelism comes from God via the Scripture. This evangelism is defined as the work of God in a connected series of steps by which a person is brought from outside the Church to a living faith in Jesus Christ and membership in His Church. Finally, this evangelism is the Church's primary responsibility.

Regarding plans for evangelism, the World Council has presented a "blueprint" that adheres strictly to the Council's definition of evangelism. This "blueprint" has four essential steps, each depending on the others: Contact, whereby some of the feet which have been passing by its doors are turned toward the Church; Cultivation, whereby those who have turned toward the Church are encouraged to put one foot inside the door; Commitment,

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in which it is sought to get both feet in the Church; and Conservation, whereby once the feet are inside the Church, efforts are made to start them to walking.

Chapter three interprets the principles and plans for local church evangelism in The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. These Lutheran bodies are two of the three major Lutheran groups in the United States; and they trace their history, with the rest of the Lutherans, back to the time of the apostles.

Regarding the principles of evangelism, The American Lutheran Church believes that the authority and urgency for evangelism comes via the Scriptures; and evangelism is defined as applying the Gospel to the hearts of men, to win the unsaved for Christ; to keep the believer in Christ; and to send the believer forth a witness for Christ. Thus, evangelism is accomplished as God witnesses to and through his people. As to the place of evangelism in the congregation, The American Lutheran Church definitely states that evangelism is not optional, but that it is the congregations's primary activity and year-round in scope.

Regarding plans for evangelism, The American Lutheran Church recommends the Life and Growth Plan for proper year-round evangelism. This plan has many

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advantages and emphasizes Bible Study and Prayer, a Preaching Mission, Cottage Home Fellowship Meetings, Visitation, Tract Service, Parish Conservation Service, Assimilation and Integration, and Specialized Visitation as its projects.

The principles of evangelism according to the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod are bound up in the fact that motivation for evangelism should come from the testimony of Scripture and that witnessing for Christ is the normal and essential "priesthood" activity of every Christian. Evangelism is nothing new and there are those who see in evangelism Jesus' original New Testament plan of soul-winning, lately rediscovered and modernized. The Missouri Synod defines evangelism as the proclamation of the Gospel, a way of life, the saving activity of God through witnessing by His children, sharing the gospel teaching and combines worship, instruction in witnessing, experience in visiting and planning for year-round evangelism as basic ingredients in evangelism. Finally, the Missouri Synod states that evangelism is not a thing of option in the congregation, but that churches are at their best when they are nerve centers of evangelism. Evangelism is the congregation's primary activity, year-round in scope.

Regarding plans for evangelism, the Lutheran

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Church - Missouri Synod recommends the Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Evangelism Mission as a plan for local church evangelism the year-round. Being distinctively Lutheran and thoroughly Biblical, the P-T-R takes advantage of the history of evangelism and of the new emphasis on lay visitation. It has many advantages and emphasizes in particular: Preaching - maintaining the central position of the pulpit in Lutheranism; Teaching - instructing lay witnesses, pastors and special leadership groups within the congregation about evangelism as a way of life; Reaching - establishing a religious canvass, sending teams of lay people to visit all of the members of the congregation prior to the mission week, and sending trained lay visitor teams to call on the "unreached".

Chapter four compares and evaluates the principles and plans of local church evangelism in the two Lutheran Synods in light of the standard definition of evangelism as set forth by the World Council of Churches in chapter two. This definition is found in the principles and plans for evangelism set forth by the World Council. The principles include the Biblical Basis of evangelism, exposition of the definition, and the place of evangelism in the congregation. The plans include a suggested "blueprint" that adheres to the exposed definition of evangelism.

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The Lutherans have been somewhat reluctant over the years to participate in the interdenominational co-operative efforts such as the Federal Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. and the World Council of Churches. However, today two-thirds of America's Lutherans are represented in the World Council. This includes The American Lutheran Church, but not the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. Both these groups of Lutherans, though, are applying the tried and proved method of evangelism - that of planting the local church and encouraging it to do the work of evangelism - as the World Council suggests has been the procedure for over two hundred years. The American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod Lutherans are currently setting the pace in Lutheranism in typically Lutheran and Biblical evangelism. Their recent added emphasis upon lay visitation has increased the effectiveness of evangelistic emphasis.

The principles and plans of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and The American Lutheran Church for evangelism are in close harmony and correspond closely to the definition of evangelism as set forth by the World Council of Churches. This is especially true of The American Lutheran Church.

Regarding principles for evangelism, the two

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Lutheran groups are in close agreement and correspond to the definition set forth by the World Council. They believe that the authority and urgency for evangelism comes from the Scriptures and that evangelism is essentially applying the Gospel to the hearts of men, winning the unsaved for Christ, keeping the believer in Christ, recalling the backslider to Christ and sending the believer forth a witness for Christ. Evangelism is the primary responsibility of the churches, is a way of life, and should be year-round. The principles for evangelism set forth by the World Council of Churches are followed very closely by both Lutheran groups.

Regarding plans for evangelism, the Life and Growth Plan of The American Lutheran Church and the Preaching-Teaching-Reaching Evangelism Mission of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod are similar in emphasis. The Life and Growth Plan is greater in scope, however, and more thorough. Both plans correspond well to the "blueprint for evangelism" set forth by the World Council of Churches. However, because of close adherence to the definition of evangelism set forth and similar emphasis upon evangelism as a series of steps, each connected and dependent upon the other, the correspondence by The American Lutheran Church's life and Growth Plan is of greater extent.

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Appendix

APPENDIX A

LUTHERAN CHURCHES IN U.S. AND CANADA

With baptized membership as of 1957 and national background where predominantly from one country

Groups replanning merger by 1961-62 are bracketed

*Denotes member of National Lutheran Council

+Denotes affiliation in Synodical Conference

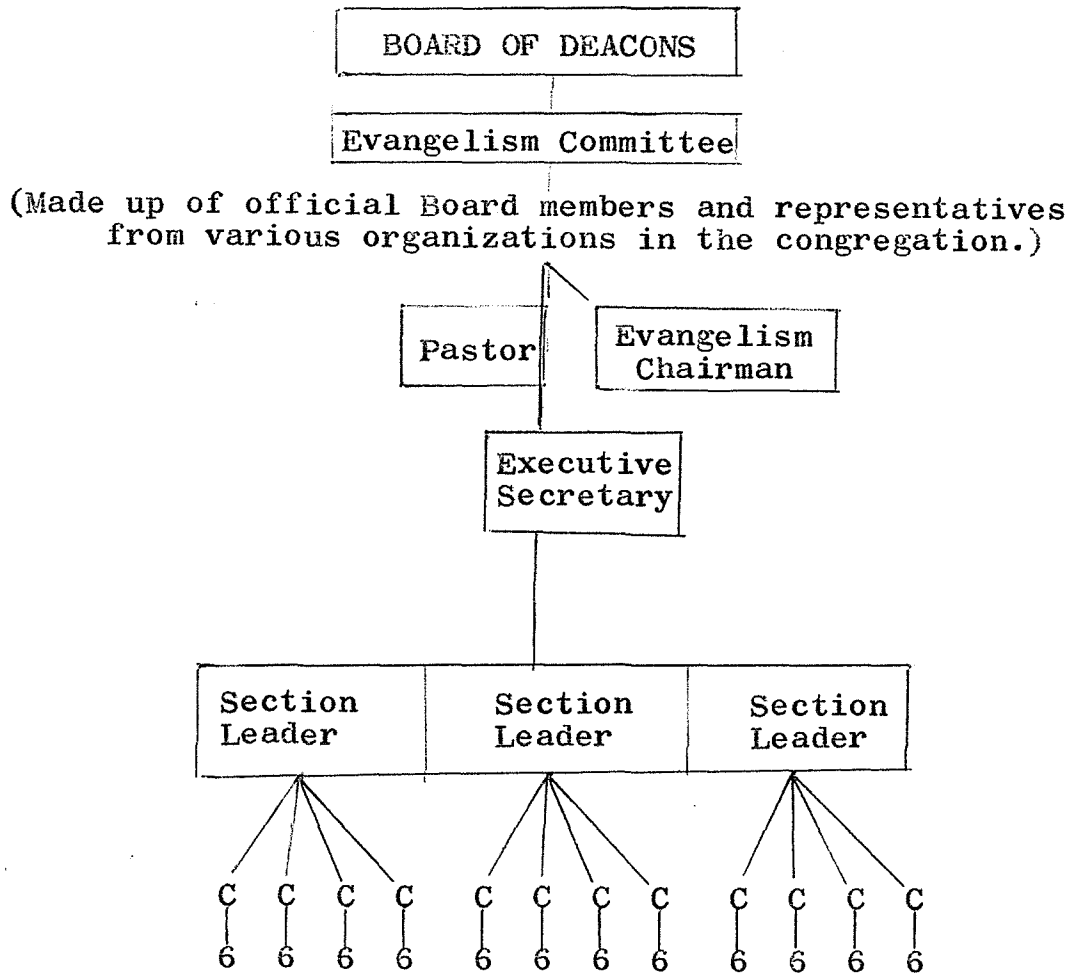
WLCA { *United Lutheran Church in America - 2,395,611
*Augustana Lutheran Church - 576,198 (Swedish)
*American Evangelical Lutheran Church - 23,043 (Danish)
*Suomi Synod - 38,281 (Finnish)

TALC { *American Lutheran Church - 972,929
*Evangelical Lutheran Church - 1,082,809 (Norwegian)
*United Evangelical Lutheran Church - 64,629 (Danish)

"SYNOD" { +Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod - 2,228,133
+Joint Synod of Wisconsin - 342,992
+Slovak Lutheran Church - 20,140
+Evangelical Lutheran Synod - 13,601 (Norwegian)

*Lutheran Free Church - 77,304 (Norwegian)
Lutheran Brethren - 4,220 (Norwegian)
National Evangelical Lutheran Church - 9,500 (Finnish)
Finnish Apostolic Church - 8,001
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - 1,500 (Norwegian)

APPENDIX B



Key:

C - Captain

APPENDIX C

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF A
"CRUSADE FOR CHRIST"
LUTHERAN EVANGELISM MISSION

