ELCA AND EC-USA CELEBRATE NEW RELATIONSHIP

WASHINGTON, D.C. (ELCA) — In a “house of prayer for all people,” the ELCA celebrated its new relationship of “full communion” with the Episcopal Church in a gala worship service here at the Washington National Cathedral on Jan. 6 — the day Christian churches around the world celebrate the Epiphany.

After more than 30 years of conversation between Lutherans and Episcopalians in the United States, about 3,500 members of the ELCA and the Episcopal Church shared Holy Communion in the inaugural celebration of full communion.

“One of the gifts full communion brings is the opportunity to discover gifts that each of the churches have, which can be used to share with the other,” said the Rev. H. George Anderson, ELCA presiding bishop, at a press conference Jan. 5. “In my view, [full communion] is one example of God’s continued gathering of God’s people.”

Full communion is not a merger of the two churches. It commits the churches to share locally and internationally in their mission and to develop procedures whereby clergy in one church body may serve as pastors in congregations of another church body.

“Full communion is an organic relationship. It is not a document nor a set of legislative criteria. Being in communion, which is a very ancient principle, does not mean merging. Being in communion means respecting one another’s traditions — be they liturgical, linguistic, cultural or theological — but recognizing that there’s a sufficient commonality of faith so that those two entities can share life in Christ to the full,” the Most Rev. Frank T. Griswold, presiding bishop, Episcopal Church, said at the press conference.

The two-hour worship celebration marked the beginning of the new relationship made official on Jan. 1. The celebration began with music and processions entering the incense-fragrant cathedral. Representatives of ELCA synods and Episcopal dioceses formed one procession. Other processions included international ecumenical guests, members of the churches’ full communion dialogue and writing teams, and staff from both churches. The internationally known St. Olaf College Choir, Northfield, Minn., performed.

“As we are rooted and knit together by the Spirit in fellowship and full communion, we are called to common mission; and the mission we share is none other than the mission of Christ and the mission of Christ’s body, the Church,” said Griswold. “While Lutherans and Anglicans and many other communities of believers subsist within the Western tradition and have much of our inheritance from the Church of Rome, we do not stand apart from the ancient churches of the East from which so much of our life and tradition have come, as the Feast of the Epiphany makes plain.”

“It is, therefore, my prayer and earnest hope that full communion between the Evan-

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New Equipment Added to God’s Gym

Seminary students work out on two of the new treadmills added to God’s Gym in the basement of Stub Hall. See page 7 for more on this story.

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Letter to the Editor

Editor's Note: While The Concord will publish most letters to the editor without any alterations outside of regular grammatical correction, we would ask that those who are connected with Luther Seminary would include in their submissions some indication of the nature of said connection. Such indication can go a long way toward fostering a more open and honest conversation regarding the issues being addressed.

What a dilemma the December 11, 2000 issue of The Concord creates for many of us. Specifically, the articles by Scott Johnson on “Forcing the Issue,” relating to the ordination of Anita Hill, and by Lesley Goodwin, regarding bias against those with different views from our own. I admit I was put off a bit by Scott Johnson’s article. I even went so far as to rewrite part of his article in my head. Johnson said, “First, let me say that I do not support the ordination of practicing homosexuals. I know that to some my opinion seems hateful, and I suppose there’s no better way to say it than just to be blunt about it.” He went on to say, “I remain unconvinced that homosexual relationships are part of the natural order God intends.” It was easy enough to rewrite that in my head to say, “First, let me say that I do not support the ordination of practicing bigots. I know that to some my opinion seems hateful, and I suppose there’s no better way to say it than just to be blunt about it.”

How do we engage those we fundamentally disagree with? I believe I would have had just as strong a knee-jerk reaction to Johnson’s article, had he made the same remarks about a racial minority or women. In fact, people throughout history have used the Bible to justify their oppression of those particular groups. I oppose that just as vehemently as I oppose Johnson’s remarks. Interestingly, I think reading and studying the books of Amos, Micah, Obadiah, and the Gospels since I have been at Luther Seminary have made me even stronger in my opposition to oppression. Amos’ call to “let justice roll down like water” strikes a real chord within me.

So then, the question remains, how do we engage those we fundamentally disagree with as part of Christian response? You see, I have to believe that Scott Johnson is not some hate monger. In spite of that, I vehemently disagree with his views. It has also been my experience that there are a lot of Scott Johnsons in the world (and not just because this is Minnesota). There are a lot of people who carry a different worldview than I. As we enter ministry, how do we engage them in respectful dialogue? Lesley Goodwin makes a point that I think bears repeating: “Perhaps we should be more mindful of our identities, and the attitudes, values, and assumptions that go along with them. Certainly there is more to being Lutheran than being prejudiced against Catholics and Fundamentalists.” That may be a good beginning.

Robert Waterman

Three ELCA Pastors Receive Faithfulness in Ministry Cross

Luther Seminary Press Release

[St. Paul, Minn.] – The Rev. Richard Beckmen, ’58, Minneapolis, the Rev. Omar Otterness, ’44, Apple Valley, Minn., and the Rev. Grace Swanson, ’90, River Falls, Wis., were recognized as this year’s Faithfulness in Ministry Award honorees. The three received their awards during Mid-Winter Convocation at Luther Seminary, Jan 3-5.

Faithfulness in Ministry honorees are selected annually based on their work in the areas of urban/suburban ministry, rural/small town ministry or specialized ministry. This year’s honorees are pastors in the ELCA and are the tenth group to receive this award, Luther Seminary’s highest honor conferred upon alumni/ae by colleagues and peers.

A pastor for 42 years, Beckmen was recognized for his contributions to urban/suburban ministry. For 17 years, he served as a pastor at Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, where he established the congregation’s Sunday evening prayer service for healing. He has been a regional and national chaplain for the International Order of St. Luke, an ecumenical healing ministry. He has also served several parishes in North Dakota.

Beckmen has authored several books on prayer including “A Beginner’s Guide to Prayer” and “Time for Us.” His books “Prayer: Beginning continued on page 6

The Concord
A journalistic ministry of Luther Seminary students

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Readers are encouraged to submit articles and letters to the editors for publication. All submissions should include the author’s name, telephone number and, if a student, class standing. In addition, all submissions to The Concord should be prepared in typed, hard copy form as well as on disk if the item is so prepared. It is preferable that documents be in PC format. All submissions should be delivered to our mailbox in the Olson Campus Center (705) or at our office, Gulliveron 10.

The Concord reserves the right to publish, edit, or disregard all submissions. "Letters to the Editor" submissions should be limited to 200 words or less while "Guest Columnist" submissions should not exceed 450 words.
Practice or Promise?

By Scott Johnson, M.Div. Middler
Managing Editor, The Concord

What happens when practice trumps the practical realities of those in the pew? What when what is central is no longer the promise of the Savior but the tradition built around it? This story from Boston might illustrate my point a bit more precisely.

Jenny Richardson is five years old. She has celiac disease, a condition which causes her to get sick when she eats gluten, a protein in wheat and other grains. She can, however, eat rice. Her parents asked their priest if a rice communion wafer could be substituted for the traditional wheat wafer when Jenny took her First Communion at age seven. Their parish priest said no, offering communion in one kind as a substitute. This was unacceptable to Jenny’s parents. “She feels different wherever she goes, but shouldn’t be made to feel different in church,” Jenny’s mother Janice said. Interested readers can find the story as printed in the Star Tribune News Section for January 31.

It’s hard not to feel sympathetic for all parties in this dilemma. One can understand that Jenny’s parents care quite a bit for their daughter’s health, both in body and in spirit. One can also understand why they would feel that communion in one kind would be yet another blow to the child, another reminder of how different she is.

At the same time, the Roman Catholic parish in question is not in an easy position either. The Roman emphasis on tradition is well-known, and in some cases it is admirable. It would appear that, with the offer of communion in one kind, the parish has offered a compromise worth considering, a compromise which allows the integrity of tradition to be maintained while still offering the sacrament to one of God’s children. Surely, this is a worthy option the church is offering, is it not?

The problem is not one of mean-spiritedness; the problem is with the church’s law-oriented outlook on the situation. John Walsh, a spokesman for the Archdiocese of Boston, offered this explanation for the church’s actions: “This is not an arbitrary sort of thing, and we’re talking about a religious sacrament. Bread is central to the Eucharist because of the imagery of Scripture, because of the prayers of the Christian community going back thousands of years.” Sounds fairly reasonable on the surface, right? But notice who is missing from the description: Jesus Christ, who I gather is a fairly important participant of Holy Communion, being that He’s the one who instituted the meal in the first place. This is the problem: the practice has become more important than the promise, the Word which is truly central to the sacrament because of the One who spoke it. This Pharisaic (yes, it is just that) devotion to practice is hardly confined to the Roman Catholic Church. We the ELCA find ourselves in nearly the same boat these days. How many of you know of a church where Holy Communion has been neglected simply because no one who wears a collar has been called there to say the magic words? How many of you tell jokes about “change” with equal parts self-consciousness and humor? Dare I argue that our present difficulties regarding Called to Common Mission stem not from a dislike or mistrust of Episcopalians or CCM proponents but a sense that the document itself raises tradition to an undeserved level of importance? Yes, I do argue that this is the case; in our desire to find common ground (a laudable goal which is easier said than done), we have based it on a tradition and not on the One who gives us all the unity we need.

So, what happens when practice is elevated above the promise of the Savior? Looking at Jenny Richardson’s case, it appears that what happens is alienation, a sense of unworthiness and division that stems not from any kind of sin but from the church’s refusal to make the tangible elements of Christ’s Promise available to all who desire them. Tradition is a fine thing, kept in its place. I particularly enjoy traditions such as Luther Brass gathering to play hymns on the Friday before Reformation Sunday. But when tradition causes alienation where there is no sin, when practice preaches not Gospel but Law, how can our devotion to such tradition be justified? When the central issue of our sacramental practice becomes our remembrance and not the One who is remembered, we give our sisters and brothers in Christ exactly what Jenny Richardson was given: a half-hearted gesture of reconciliation which is not sacramental but sanctimonious. We should know better.

Lesley Says . . .

By Lesley Goodwin
M.Div. Middler

"April is the cruellest month." So said T.S. Eliot. He was wrong. My fair readers, I’m here to tell you that it is in fact January that is the cruellest month. The month started off innocently enough. I was still nursing a case of bronchitis I got for my birthday (December 5th), which unfortunately turned to pneumonia. At the beginning of the month I was told that it had turned to pleurisy, and if you have to ask what that is, believe me, you don’t want to know!!! Anyway, so now it’s late January and I’m officially bored out of my skull after a steady diet of J-Term nihilism. But there is hope for me, you see. I get to write this column for you.

You see, gentle readers, I envision myself to be not just a highly-paid columnist for the Concord. I also like to think of myself as Lesley Goodwin, Investigative Reporter. My investigations during this cruel month of January led me in several different directions. How did the Har Mar Mall get its name? Does the Taste Of Scandinavia really taste like Scandinavia? How did I get ice on the inside of my windshield? Who invented mukluks and why? But I knew that in order to be the kind of investigative reporter this fine publication deserves I would have to go into the belly of the beast and uncover that most untamed subject of all: SEMINARY DATING PRACTICES!!!

I know, you might be thinking “Who cares?” Fine, don’t read anymore. I’ll see you next month. Don’t let the door hit you where the Good Lord... oh you’re back. I knew you would be. Yes, I said seminary dating practices. There are several key groups of people to know about if we are to truly investigate this phenomenon. First, there’s the Single Folk. They roam the campus in search of True Love. Then there’s the Smug Marrieds (SMs). They can be found in the cafeteria or in class rooms, listing to the Single Folk’s tales of woe in pursuit of the ever-elusive True Love. SMs can be heard making such comments as “I’m glad I got married before I came to seminary!”, always accompanied with a chuckle and a knowing look to the other SMs in the room. Then there are those people, both married and single alike, whom I like to call the Third Base Coach of Love (TBCoL). The TBCol usually is someone in love who wants...
As my purpose throughout the Fall semester has been to write about my experience at Luther Seminary as an "ecumenical" student, I thought it might be a good idea to tell you a little bit about my church, House of Mercy in St. Paul. House of Mercy is a "Baptist" church, but is probably unlike any other Baptist church, at least any that I'm aware of. I must confess that I am quite proud of my church and have a deep sense of conviction regarding God's call on my life to serve His Church at House of Mercy. Bear with me, then, if I brag a little bit while I tell you about House of Mercy. As much as possible, I will let the pastors at House of Mercy speak for themselves.

House of Mercy was "...founded in May of 1996...by three pastors who wondered why none of their friends believed in Jesus any more." In its official lingo, the congregation has sought specifically to reach "cynical Christians and the spiritually curious." As one pastor put it in September 1997, "House of Mercy is a new church that targets late baby boomers and the Generation X crowd. We seek specifically to attract the un-churched and 'bruised fruit,' those who at one time attended a church but left for one reason or another." A widely used brochure put out by the pastors reads, "Did you ever used to go to church? Did you ever think about going again? You should try going to House of Mercy. It's not that bad."

One of the things that I like best about House of Mercy is the refusal of the pastors to adopt what they call "popular church growth schemes." The pastors have a keen understanding of the reality that people have been doing church for 2000 years, and they are not so arrogant as to think that they have suddenly figured out the "right" way to do church that no one else has thought of before. Instead, their goal is to draw from and incorporate the best of 2000 years of church history. They call this philosophy "liturgical eclecticism." Indeed, a "House of Mercy progress report" dated March of 1997, reads: We seem to have done a lot of things wrong. At least, that's the impression we get when we look over the current array of schemes and formulas presented in books on church growth. We are not led by a single, authoritative pastor, but a team of three group, somewhat cynical (yet thoroughly convinced) believers. We don't sing contemporary choruses, we do traditional hymns and old gospel songs that are often based on strange metaphors. Congregational singing is led, not by an all-American looking "praise team", but a scruffy, flannel clad band. We preach from the lectionary. We serve the Eucharist every week. In short, we don't dispense with the Church's traditions, we try to reinterpret them. Yet, in spite of all the things we've done wrong there's something happening here. Folks are coming to the House of Mercy and learning the story of God's love, revealed so clearly in Jesus, the Christ.

Nonetheless, the pastors at House of Mercy are openly critical of the institutional church and its shortcomings. In a written statement they note, "While we affirm the historical creeds and confessions we do so in full knowledge of the genuinely disturbing political associations of Christianity that history so amply exhibits. Thus we are people who live according to the hope that acts of violence and oppression are not the necessary effect of Christian beliefs."

Another foundational theme at work in House of Mercy is the shocking assumption that the role of a pastor is not to give people all the answers or tell them what to think, but instead to invite and engage them in the process of "doing a little theology" for themselves. The pastors assume that the people they preach to each Sunday are at least as smart as they are. Consequently, questions become very important. Indeed, "A commitment to asking questions about assumed traditions has continued to help us change and feel free to do so." The goal of the pastors' preaching, then, is to "give people permission to ask questions..." One pastor talks about questions this way: The Christian faith I hope for is something that is hard to pin down, to state, because it is anything but static, because it has less to do with a belief system than a relationship with a living being. Faith is relentlessly relational, thus unsystematizable. Its character prohibits unambiguous adherence to a system - it has to do with what is unfamiliar, leaves room for astonishment, amazement, and asks more questions than it answers. Faith is not a nest where I may cease to struggle, but a restlessness that, when it comes, enables me to sense the ambiguities, uncertainties, and promises of life more deeply. It has to do with willing to be myself, a self transparent before God, which may at times be more like confessing unbelief than claiming belief.

A final important theme at work in House of Mercy was alluded to above and is undoubtedly House of Mercy's primary missional objective: reaching the "unchurched" and "overchurched" with the good news of the Gospel. In the pastors' words: "Having seen the power of the Jesus story at work in our lives, we seek to tell that story to people around us. While we seek the healing and forgiveness of all people, we see our special mission as that of ministering to those who have, for a number of different reasons, come to understand the Good News of Jesus' gospel as bad news."

This approach has clearly worked, as House of Mercy has grown exponentially in its brief history. Why is it called "House of Mercy?" The metaphor, of course, comes from the Biblical story of the pool of Bethesda, where it was said that an angel came down to stir the waters, bringing healing to those who entered in. Yet (according to some Biblical manuscripts) only the first person to enter the water after the angel came would be healed, leaving many to wait for a long time for their chance to make whole. Into this situation comes the invinted Jesus, bringing unexpected wholeness to one who otherwise would not dare hope for it or imagine it to be possible. I invite you to join me on the water's edge.

House of Mercy 499 Wacouta St. Paul, MN 55101 651-298-0858 Sunday Worship at 5:30pm
Touched by an Atheist

By Trudy Tannen
M.Div. Junior

My younger sister is an atheist. That must be clear before I begin this story that I’m about to tell. She is not an agnostic (that would describe our youngest sister—and would be another story). This particular sister is a genuine atheist. In her understanding of the world, there is no God, no “higher power,” nothing beyond the physical senses and reason. For her, there is no such thing as an eternal spirit or immortal soul; there is no eternal afterlife in either heaven or hell. There is simply the physical life here on earth in a physical body—nothing more. Although when or why isn’t clear, at some point, my sister chose to reject Christianity in favor of an atheistic philosophical system known as Objectivism.

Of course the rest of us in the family still love her and accept her. But it isn’t always easy—especially when she insists we show consideration and respect for her philosophical views. None of us truly wants to offend her (or her like-minded husband). However, some of her beliefs are antithetical to Christianity and that situation creates difficulties from time to time for our parents and for me—especially at Christmas.

My sister sends holiday cards that reflect her wacky humor; I send cards that reflect my beliefs. Fair enough, I suppose. A few years ago I sent her and her husband a card with a rather pointed statement about the Word of God made flesh in Jesus. Her response was an angry tirade demanding I show respect for her chosen philosophy.

Then there is a possible family gathering for Christmas at my parents’ home in Albuquerque. In 1999, all of us were there. This past year, my sister and her husband declined to join us. It’s hard either way. We do miss them when they aren’t there. But when they are present, an element of tension is present as well. Dad says grace whenever the family is gathered for a dinner. My sister and her husband aren’t asked and they aren’t exempted. We just do it and they, in keeping with the family custom, join us in holding hands around the table. But it isn’t a relaxed moment; the tension is perceptible. There is also Mom’s ritual invitation to Christmas Eve services. She asks, as they know she will; they decline, as she knows they will. Thus even when we are together in town, we are never together for that high holy moment that, for Dad especially, is the heart of Christmas.

My sister and her husband do give gifts at Christmas. I don’t know why. Maybe it’s just fun. This year, their gift to my children, my husband, and me came as an incredible surprise. The gift was a boxed-set of illustrated editions of the series of books by C. S. Lewis known as The Chronicles of Narnia. I would never have suspected a gift like that to come from my atheistic sister and her husband.

I’ve never read the books…but my sister has. A long time ago, way back before she started reading Ayn Rand, she read these same books. And she hasn’t forgotten them. I know because of the note she attached to the set. In her note, she informed us that the volumes in our set are numbered differently from the original order. Then she listed the original order of titles. By her gift and her note, I know she still remembers Narnia.

That in itself may be the best gift among the many wonderful things I received at Christmas this year. For the first time, I glimpsed some embers of the faith my sister once had. She has not fully abandoned all she once believed. In fact, she has even given me help in passing on my faith to my children. So with renewed hope, I can continue to pray that the Spirit of God will blow on these embers and bring faith to life in her once more. After all, nothing is impossible for God—even sending a blessing through an atheist.

Notes from the Parish Nurse

By Lydia Volz
Luther Seminary Parish Nurse

As we begin a new year, we think about making a new start, or perhaps more than one in our personal, family and work lives as we continually strive to be good stewards of our body. Fit and fat may seem like opposite terms, but the truth may not be so obvious.

There has been much research over the years on the relationships between weight, exercise and health. We have usually thought that thin is automatically healthier and better. In reality the result of the most significant research is this; fit, but overweight persons enjoy better health and less risk of premature death that thin persons who are not physically active. Regular exercise can reduce your risk of heart disease, diabetes, breast and uterine cancer, colon and prostate cancer. Physically active, not body size or shape seems to be the key issue. Doing 30 minutes of moderate activity 5-7 days/week is enough to enjoy many health benefits. It is true that regardless of height, men with waists over 40” and women with waists over 34” are at a much greater risk for poor physical condition, higher cholesterol levels and diabetes.

Tips for keeping a healthy balance:

Forgive past failings and forget past behaviors. Christ makes all things new...so give yourself permission to make a fresh start (Eph. 4:23-24)

Focus on regular physical activity rather than the scale.

Eat a variety of foods with plenty of complex carbohydrates, fruits and vegetables and very little fat and refined sugars.

If you would like more information on specific areas of healthy living, call Lydia x 537.

The Sharing Group for Healthy Living will meet on Tuesdays at 3 p.m., beginning February 6. Join us for hints on eating healthfully, exercising and relaxation techniques.

An introductory class on yoga is scheduled for February 6 at 12 noon in the Olson Meditation Chapel. The cost for this session is $7.50. If there is sufficient interest, additional sessions will be scheduled.
California, Deregulation and You!

By Nathan Loer
M.Div. Middler

If you know anyone from California—or for that matter, if you haven’t been on a deserted island for the last few months—you know that California is in the midst of an energy crisis.

On the one hand, it might be mildly amusing to imagine wealthy movie stars sitting in their luxury homes in complete darkness, forced to entertain themselves like the rest of us by playing Yahtzee by candlelight (all of you do that, don’t you?). On the other hand, Californians will be suffering from this crisis for years to come and deserve our empathy, because the same thing could happen to us.

Twenty-five states have either legislation or regulations that would bring about the same utility deregulation that created California’s current crisis. Other states, including Minnesota, are considering such actions. Granted, in the wake of California’s errors, many states have delayed such plans, but the issue will no doubt resurface again.

Deregulation is based on the good old American principle of competition, allowing customers to choose their electric provider. Currently, most electric utilities do not compete with one another for customers. The industry is regulated in such a way that the company you purchase your electricity from depends on where you live. Deregulation would open that market up to the lowest bidder, which, according to the theory, would make electricity cheaper. One need only look at California’s situation to see just how wrong that theory is.

Admittedly, deregulation is not the only force working in California. Environmental regulations have shut down a number of electric generating plants, tightening up an already scarce supply of electricity in the area. However, without deregulation, those plants probably would have stayed open. Utilities would have spent the hundreds of millions of dollars to bring their plants up to snuff and passed the cost on to their guaranteed customer base over the next twenty or more years. However, with no guaranteed customer base, those utilities simply shut down their non-compliant plants and made the decision to purchase power from the wholesale power market. Unfortunately, the wholesale power market has been unusually high this year, because of the high cost of natural gas (which is used to generate power during peak electrical demands) and cold temperatures nationwide. To make matters worse, the state of California stepped in to cap rates for customers, forcing utilities to sell electricity for less than they were paying to buy it. Once again, utilities with guaranteed customers could have passed the effects of a high-cost season on to their clients over a long period of time. However, without such guarantee—coupled with the state mandated price cap—many utilities are at risk to go out of business.

However, you can take away all of those factors and utility deregulation would still be the most ill-advised move since Coca Cola tried to corner the clear cola market by introducing a transparent, colorless version of Tab. It was soon sold to employees for $.25/case. But I digress.

Let me say this simply. Deregulation will not make electrical prices go down. They may go down for some big industrial customers, but not for you and certainly not for rural Americans. Like my dad says, big dogs eat first. And rural America is not a big dog. In the wake of deregulation, utilities would fight to win big industry contracts to the point of significantly lowering their profit margins to do so. Once the dust settled, they likely would make up the lost profits by raising rates for small time customers. Furthermore, because utilities would be uncertain of their long-term future, they would be reluctant to make long-term investments in new power plants and would likely buy more of their power from the unpredictable wholesale power market. If that happens, you can expect the prices to be as volatile as the stomachs of participants in a chili catin’ contest.

So what does this have to do with you? Plenty. If an energy crisis like California’s were to happen in the Midwest and coincide with several bad growing seasons, many folks could lose the family farm and local processing plants might go out of business. A pastor or church worker who was vocal about the “benefits” of competition in the utility industry or perhaps even made an offhanded remark about it during coffee one day, might be rendered impotent in terms of providing care in such situations. However, no matter where you live or work, deregulation would seriously jeopardize the ability of a farmer or small business owner in rural America to make a living. And it is precisely our neighbor’s means of making a living that we are urged to help protect in Martin Luther’s explanation of the seventh commandment. I am not trying to be un-American. I like competition as much as the next person, but utility deregulation is simply a bad idea whose time has not yet come.

Faithfulness in Ministry Cross—

continued from page 2

Conversations with God” and “Praying for Wholeness and Healing” are part of Augsburg Fortress Publishers’ resources on prayer ministry for congregations. He also authored “Toward a Healing Ministry,” a resource guide for congregations.

Ottermess was recognized for his work in specialized ministry. His work focused on cultural and societal divides. After graduating from Luther Theological Seminary, now Luther Seminary, he was a missionary to China and studied in Beijing. From 1960 to 1987, he taught at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn., where he developed the school’s study of Asian religions.

In 1987 Ottermess founded the Cooperative Older Adult Ministry, COAM, a ministry that supports lifelong learning as well as the ministries of older active adults.

Swenson serves as director of adult and family ministry at Gethsmane Lutheran Church, Baldwin, Wis. She was honored for her work in rural/small town ministry.

Known for her faithful community service, Swenson has served as a leader of the Lutheran Student Association and board member of her local Girl Scouts of America. She has also worked with the American Association of University Women and chaired an ecumenical committee that assists refugees who are resettling in River Falls. She was a member of the first church council of the ELCA’s Northwest Wisconsin Synod, Rice Lake, Wis.
Outlets for Physical Health

By Kjell Farris, M.Div Middler
Community Life committee

As we know, health is a multifaceted issue. We can talk about spiritual health, mental health and physical health. Although they are often looked at as being separate issues, many resources now say the different "types" of health are intertwined. It is believed our spiritual health, physical health and mental health greatly impact each other.

With this information in mind we want to let you know about some opportunities to improve your physical health. First, the gym in the basement of Stubb hall on Luther's campus is always open. All you need is the security key that opens Stubb's outer door (same key that opens Bockman's outer door). Our gym is home to two treadmills and a bike that are great for indoor cardiovascular workouts. If you want to build or tone your muscles the gym has plenty of free weights and a universal machine to help you.

Luther Seminary has joined with the surrounding community to offer us off-campus opportunities to improve our health, as well.

Leslie says . . .

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everyone else to be also. You can almost hear their frantic cries "Come on! Our team's down by one! Let's go! RUN!" What's a single seminarian to do? Well there are several dating practices I and my investigative team have noted. This is by no means an exhaustive list, but it does scratch the surface.

First, there's the ubiquitous method of dating, so called because it basically consists of spending so much time with another person that the rest of the world thinks that you're dating. The (obvious) hope is that the object of one's affection will think the same. This has been used with varying degrees of success, as well as varying degrees of utility. Always interesting and even entertaining for others to observe. That's if we were observing, which we're not. Life at seminary provides ample opportunity to make oneself ubiquitous to another: strategic seating arrangements in chapel, class, and the café; strategically timed "study groups," and contextual education arrangements. These and other situations have been used to one's advantage in this method.

Then there's a newer method that my team of investigators has unearthed. Some like to call it the Uncle/Auntie Laban method, but I prefer to call it the "Fiddler on the Roof of Bockman" method. This generally consists of matchmaking, and believe it or not, there have been promises of seven years' labor made to a would-be Uncle/Auntie Laban for finding one's future spouse. (You know who you are, let's just say.) This method could have some merit given that there is a biblical precedent for it. But only time will tell. No mention has been made of whether Uncle/Auntie Laban will actually marry one off to the wrong person, though. I think this would be something very important to find out should you choose to go this route.

Thirdly there's the dating someone from another venue method. This is just what it says. My investigators really didn't find out anything unusual about it (blah) although several did say they recommended it.

Well, let's just say my team of investigators did uncover other aspects and evidence of seminary dating, but this is all that's fit to print in this column at this time. It's my hope that this investigation will be taken, as always, with a grain of salt, and that if anyone should perchance be offended by the findings of this investigation, remember that I and my team of investigators are in the same boat. And if you just didn't like my column this month, don't blame me, blame January. It is, after all, the cruelest month.

At Murray Junior High, located one block east of Luther, an open gym for basketball is available on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-9:00 pm. Murray's pool is open Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:00-7:00 pm for water aerobics and 7:00-8:00 pm for lap swimming. Water aerobics is $2.50 per session and lap swim is $2.00. For questions about the activities at Murray call 293-8738.

Celebration Service

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gelical Lutheran Church in America and the Episcopal Church of the United States will lead to ever-widening and deepening relationships of shared life and mission with other churches of the Reformation, as well as the Church of Rome and the churches of the East," Grissow said. "How right it is that as we come together to affirm our call to common mission as two households of faith within one holy, catholic and apostolic Church in full communion with one another, we do so within the context of the Eucharist.

"On this occasion the Eucharist, in conjunction with the renewal of our baptismal identity is not an adjunct — an appropriate ceremonial addition to our call to common mission — but rather, it is the ground of the communion we share. The Eucharist both summons us and sustains us as we face the future in all its challenge and complexity, as well as its possibility," he said.

"Our formal declaration of full communion is just the beginning of the journey," said Grissow. "Where we will be led God alone knows."

Grissow also presided over the renewal of baptismal vows. Anderson, Butler, Campbell and Grissow gathered around a baptismal font, located at the center of the church, to affirm the churches' mutual recognition of Baptism. The entire assembly was sprinkled with "baptismal water" as a sign and reminder of each participant's Baptism.

The liturgy blended resources from the Lutheran and Episcopal churches, as well as new liturgical material commissioned for the worship service. Vestments worn by ministers at the service represented the variety of traditions from the two churches. The "Prayers of the People" were led in a variety of languages by members of the Lutheran and Episcopal churches. Ministers and the congregation greeted one another with expressions of peace following the prayers. An offering was collected to help support the ministries of the Episcopal Relief and Development Fund; Lutheran Disaster Response, a ministry of the ELCA and the LCMS; and Lutheran World Relief, the overseas relief and development ministry of the ELCA and LCMS.
The WordAlone Network &
Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ

We thank God for calling wonderful people like you to preach and teach in our congregations. As you prepare for the ministry of Word and Sacrament, we want you to know that we are concerned about the confessional crisis within the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

As God's call to ministry begins to unfold, you probably have questioned the mandatory imposition of the historic episcopate. Maybe you just aren't sure about its implications for ordination and what this will mean for your ministry under Called to Common Mission. You are not alone!

You have options and there is help. We would like an opportunity to listen to your concerns and talk with you about your future. Come for a special gathering of Luther seminarians and meet WordAlone board members, Luther Seminary professors and other seminarians with similar concerns.

We invite you to learn more about these important issues and about your options and viable first call opportunities.

Please join us for sandwiches and dessert at:

Roseville Lutheran Church, Thursday, February 15, 2001, 6:30 p.m.

If you would like to learn more about WA and LCMC contact:
Prof. Paul Berge @ 651-641-3245 Or email: Pberge@luthersem.edu

Give us a call and let us know you're coming!

Roseville Lutheran Church
1215 West Roselawn Ave. Roseville, MN 55113
(651) 487-7752