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Lutheran Human Relations Association of
America

1975

The Vanguard (Vol. 22, No. 6), Aug-Sep 1975

Lutheran Human Relations Association of America

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vanguard

LHRAA Plays Role as Racine Desegregates

Tuesday, Sept. 2, has come and gone. The feelings of tension and anxiety have been relaxed. After months of careful planning, desegregation of Racine's schools has gone into effect. It all was achieved with remarkable smoothness.

"To be sure, the school year has just begun and there is more that will have to be done," remarked C. Richard Nelson, superintendent of the Unified School District of Racine. "More than one person has been responsible for the gratifying way in which the new arrangement has been achieved. This entire venture represents the combined efforts of many people in the school district — the board and staff, teachers, parents, and students."

Superintendent Nelson felt it was necessary for "the entire

community to participate and have input. Basically, the efforts of LHRAA and other community groups, speaking to different people in the city, interpreting the issues, and standing up to be counted have been absolutely essential in all this."

Prior to the public hearing last summer called by the school district to allow for community discussion of the proposed desegregation plan, LHRAA — Racine published in the *Sunday Journal Times* a page long statement in support of the principle of quality education for all of Racine's children in an atmosphere of community harmony and maturity. Two hundred thirty-four Lutherans appended their signatures to the statement and paid for its publication. Subsequently LHRAA conducted a day long workshop for Racine pastors to

equip them for leadership roles in the months to come.

Coordinated by the efforts of Orlando Tweet, the LHRAA community of support developed an audio-visual presentation to interpret the issues to the larger community and to enlist positive and constructive support of the desegregation plan. Coordinator Tweet observed that the help of Orin Taylor, who works with the Unified School District, has been invaluable in the development of LHRAA's program in Racine.

In the months ahead, efforts will be directed toward sharing the presentation with churches and other groups in the Racine area.

Grants from Lutheran Brotherhood and the Wheat Ridge Foundation have made the LHRAA-Racine Coordinator site possible.

Vance, Lyons, Kent Win Board Posts

Two women and a man were elected in annual balloting for the Board of Directors of the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America, it was announced at the LHRAA annual meeting on July 27.

Newly elected to three year terms are Mrs. Hattie Blount Vance (Lutheran Church in America) of Houston and Mrs. Dorothea Lyons (Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod) of Cleveland.

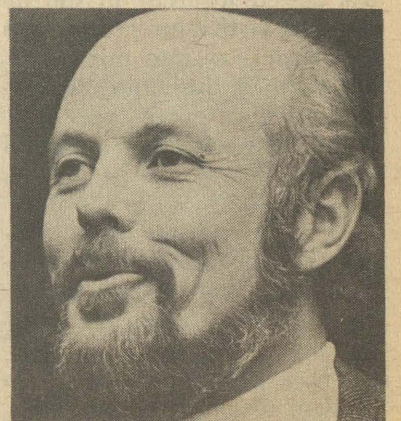
W. Herbert Kent (American Lutheran Church) of Minneapolis was re-elected for a three year term. The former executive director of ALC Men had completed a two year term.

The new board met briefly on Saturday, July 26, and re-elected the immediate past officers to serve also during the coming year: Victor R. Schoonover, Omaha, president, Robert M. Skare, Minneapolis, vice president, Mrs. Caroline Miller, Charlotte, N. Car., secretary,

and J.D. Thompson, Sioux Falls, S. Dak., treasurer.

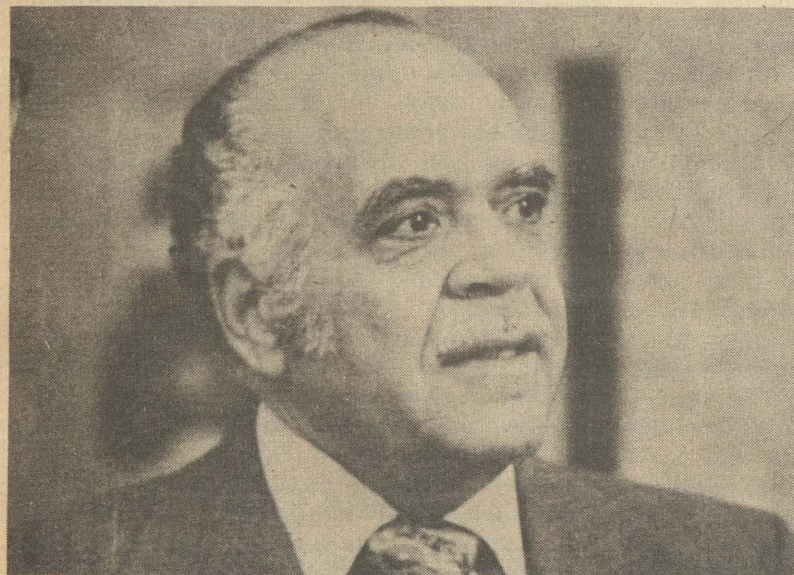
Also continuing to serve on the board are Richard K. Fox, Jr. of Washington, D.C., and Carver Portlock of Philadelphia. Mrs. Margaret Ann Johnson and Dr. Willis L. Wright are retiring members.

The board asked Robert B. Springsteen and Arthur E. Hallerberg of Valparaiso, Ind., to serve as assistant treasurers.



Victor Schoonover

Layman Warns LCMS Convention Racism, Injustice Still Rampant



Dallas Martin

—Photo by Paul Ockrassa

"A strong resolution is sorely needed to remind all Christians that people have a responsibility to insure that justice does prevail for all."

This plea was addressed to delegates at the July convention of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in Anaheim, Calif., by Dallas Martin of Los Angeles, a black member of the church's Board for Social Ministry and World Relief.

"Over the past 20 years," Martin reminded the delegates, "laws to govern discriminating practices have been expected to generate a change which would assure that minorities and women would be included in the mainstream of society."

"Today in 1975," he said, "in spite of the gains made in voter and election laws, minorities are still over-represented in prisons, welfare, mortality tables, and unemployment statistics. During current inflation and recessionary developments, minorities as well as women who were last hired are now being first fired."

He urged, "Stronger affirmative action measures must be undertaken and given whatever financial priority is required to insure positive results."

Martin also reminded delegates that funds designated in previous conventions to combat racism were necessary and well spent.

"The Lutheran Human Relations Association of America," he noted, "has twice put to good use funds made available by the treasury of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod specifically for the purpose of combating racism."

He pleaded, "Funds for such purpose must not be reduced but expanded."

No action was taken on the resolution supported by Martin. Preoccupied with internal and structural matters, delegates twice referred the measure back to committee, and the convention ran out of time before it came to a vote.

Social Forum To Cover Broad Range of Issues

"Humanity: From Bondage to Liberation" will be the theme of the 1975 biennial Lutheran Forum on Social Concern scheduled to meet Nov. 2-5 in Denver.

"Conscientization" sessions consisting of keynote presentations followed by small discussion roundtables will be held each morning. Each afternoon there will be "situation rooms" dealing with a variety of subjects.

Topics include poverty, hunger, migration, administration of justice, population growth, white racism, health care, family, aging, children's rights, black people, Indian people, Hispanic people, Asian people, and other special interests.

Keynote speaker will be the Rev. Jovelino Ramos of the Office on Justice, Liberation, and Human Fulfillment of the National Council of Churches. A native of Brazil, the NCC executive formerly was general secretary of the Third World People's Coalition.

A post-forum retreat will be held Nov. 5-7.

For registration forms and program details, write Lutheran Conference on Social Concern, 315 Park Ave. South, New York, N.Y. 10010.

Vol. 22 No. 6
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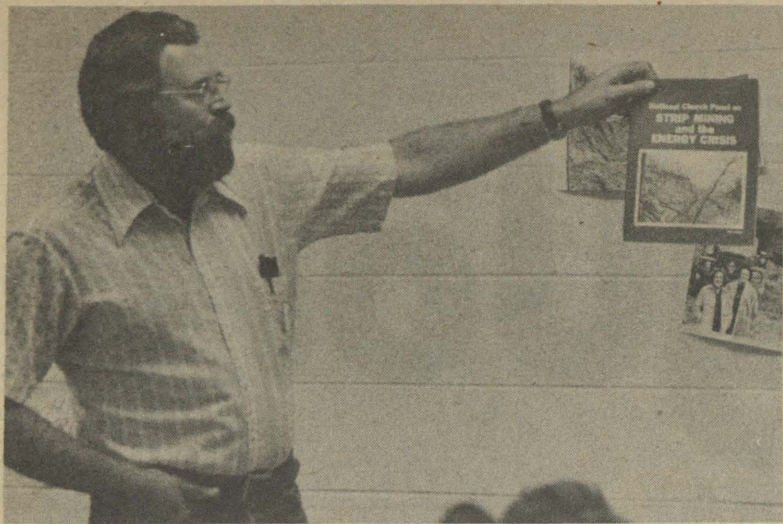
Published ten times yearly by
LUTHERAN HUMAN RELATIONS
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
Valparaiso University
Valparaiso, Ind. 46383

Karl E. Lutze
Executive

The VANGUARD is sent
to all LHRAA members;
membership: \$10.00/yr.

Bulk mailing: \$5.00
per hundred per issue

Application to mail at second-class postage
rates is pending at Valparaiso, Indiana



Don Prange, one of Project Fair presenters

Churches, Others Aid Coordinator Program

In Milwaukee, sponsored by LHRAA, a small group has organized its efforts to work on the problem of vacated city lots. In Washington, D.C., and Springfield, Ill., clusters of women are organized to focus on problems associated with the welfare system.

In Minneapolis, a community has pulled together in the interest of justice for people who find their way into the courts. Members of this group are attending trials every other day, cooperating with the League of Women Voters who sit in the courtrooms on alternate days.

LHRAA-Madison has directed its focus on coordinating, supporting, and recruiting volunteers for a variety of organizations relating to issues dealing with prisoner concerns. In St. Paul plans are underway to purchase and equip a bus for mobile-grocery service to the doorways of residence complexes where the aged, mothers with large families, and people with no means of transportation can purchase food and health needs.

And, as described in an article on page one, LHRAA-Racine has been active in helping the introduction of busing and school desegregation to be effected with smoothness and dignity.

It is important to note that LHRAA's Coordinator Program in all of these sites has been almost entirely without cost to the local community. The three major Lutheran church bodies helped launch the Coordinator Program originally.

Subsequently, Lutheran Brotherhood helped with the cost of selecting sites, preparing the Coordinator for this work, and recruiting and briefing local stimulus committees to support the Coordinator.

Particularly helpful in the actual developing of the projects

described above has been the generous support derived from the Wheat Ridge Foundation.

Wheat Ridge, an organization originally serving victims of tuberculosis a few decades ago, has, with the controlling of that disease, entered into the area of social concern in recent years. It has done a particularly commendable work in undergirding experimental efforts in new areas and styles of ministry.

Financed through the years almost entirely by a Christmas seals program, Wheat Ridge Foundation is prepared to provide materials for youth groups (or other groups) in a congregation to send to each member of the parish shortly before Christmas. The mailing includes a solicitation letter, a brochure describing programs supported by Wheat Ridge, seals to be used in Christmas mailings, and return envelopes.

While the ministry of Wheat Ridge was begun in the "family" of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, it now serves inter-Lutheran efforts in ministry as well.

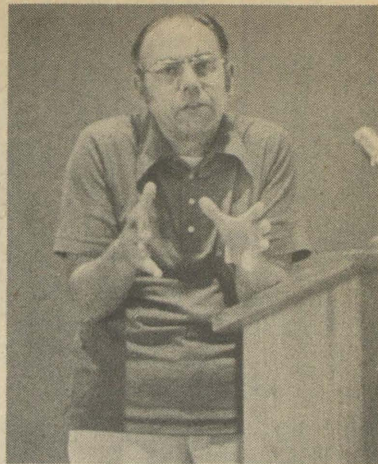
This issue of the VANGUARD is sent to all ALC pastors, many of whom may not have heard of Wheat Ridge before and may be interested in participating in the support of this unique ministry. Information about the Christmas seals program may be had by writing:

Wheat Ridge Seals
79 West Monroe
Chicago, Ill. 60603

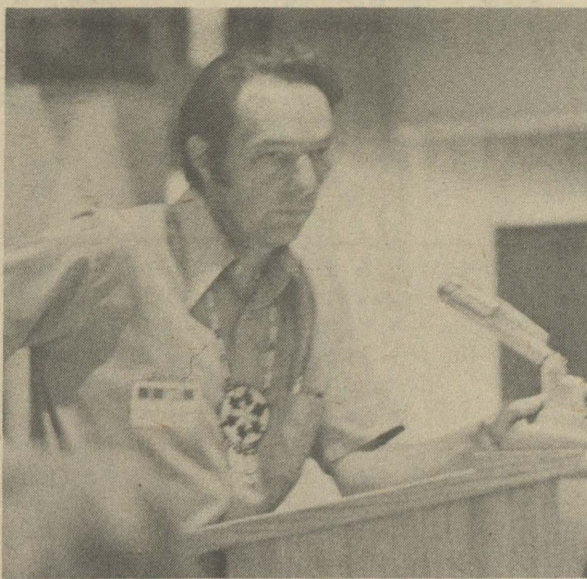
Indians today still call white men Wasichus. Wasichu does not mean white, but describes white. It means "he who grabs everything." . . . Indians are not the "vanishing Americans" they were dubbed to be less than 100 years ago. Their circumstances in many ways are more desperate than ever, but they also are hungrier than ever for the dignity and freedom they know is theirs.

It is not easy for Indian people to share themselves with most of us today. It is even harder still for most of us to conceive that they have anything left to share. But for our own sakes and for Christ's sake, we need desperately to believe this. And we need to devise whatever ways and means we can to share in the struggle together.

—W. Walt Weber



William Lazareth, keynoter



W. Walt Weber

Perspective

Understanding 'Under God'

The final hope expressed in a "Statement of Intent" issued by the Lutheran Church in America's Consulting Committee on the Bicentennial of the United States is "for the recovery of a true understanding of 'this nation under God.'"

In "Some Thoughts on the Bicentennial," chairman Sydney E. Ahlstrom implies that the committee's hope is in response to the expressed fear that nationalism can become an alternative religion. He notes that the words "under God" in our Pledge of Allegiance "invoke the principle that this nation stands under judgment, under a higher law."

"If our efforts to restore the nation's moral health proceed under that standard," he says, "then the Bicentennial as an occasion for moral renewal will succeed."

To counter trivialization and commercial exploitation of the Bicentennial, Dr. Ahlstrom recommends that local congregations and individuals search out their own relationship to the nation's ongoing history and ponder the nature of their responsibility for our way of life.

The committee suggests attention to such issues as the following:

- The requirements of social justice, personal dignity, and civil peace.
- The basis of national unity and purpose in a radically pluralistic society.
- A redefinition of "the pursuit of happiness" in the light of the materialist/hedonist perversion of the American dream.
- The nature and limits of civil obedience.
- A redefinition of national identity and independence in an age of global interdependence.
- The role of the nation-state in relation to emerging international and transnational institutions of civil authority and economic power.

The Bicentennial celebration, the LCA committee concludes, will be empty of meaning unless it is accompanied by creative reminiscence of America's past and courageous commitment in the face of the future's challenges.

To participate with integrity in acts of national reminiscence, it points out, requires that we be both critical and appreciative, both repentant and grateful — critical of the ways in which America has fallen short of the promise of "liberty and justice for all," while appreciative of those democratic values and institu-

tions bequeathed to us by our revolutionary forebears; repentant for the great injustices perpetrated on American Indians, Blacks, and countless others in this land and around the globe, but grateful that God in his mercy continues to give us "time for amendment of life."

Noting that the nation's hundredth birthday in 1876 occurred at a time when, according to the Centennial's best historian, "political and business morality reached rock bottom," Dr. Ahlstrom comments, "Whether or not we are at the lowest ebb since the nation's Centennial is debatable but probably not worth debating."

He adds, "Some Americans may be perfectly content with things as they are, but many, probably most, are dissatisfied. Some feel keenly the brunt of prejudice, or work in demeaning and dehumanizing circumstances; some have been bruised by government coercion; others see patriotism as a dirty word that stands for racism, invasion of privacy, denial of freedom, and the approval of unhindered exploitation."

"The ties that bind us together, however, are moral and ideal; and if we desire to perpetuate the revolutionary commitments which attended our birth as a nation, the next few years should give us an opportunity to show it."

"The results," he concludes, "may deepen our hopes. It was a seventeenth century Puritan theologian who declared that 'hope oils the wheels, warms the heart, and gives activity to compassion,' and we should value this counsel."

"Idealism and realism, hope and compassion, contrition and aspiration — these should be the end and aim of our planning and our thinking as we enter upon these years of remembrance and celebration."

Dr. Ahlstrom is professor of American history and modern church history at Yale University. His publication *A Religious History of the American People* won a 1973 National Book Award. He is the historical consultant for the public television series, "Religious America."

"Some Thoughts on the Bicentennial" and the committee's "Statement of Intent" are available in a pamphlet published by the Division for Mission in North America, Lutheran Church in America, 231 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

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Glimpses from 1975 LHRAA-VU Institute on Human Relations

Photos by Mark Lutze

Indian cultures are different and we disagree on many things. But Indian people recognize that each group has a right to be different and that right is to be admired and protected. . . . A loss of a culture is like losing a life. If we lose the various cultures in our society, we have lost something very important, something that is part of us as a country.

—LaDonna Harris

I have followed the history of this particular group and I have noted the impact which this group has had on the development of a social consciousness among Lutherans in America. I salute you as forerunners — forerunners who have called the church's attention to things it ought to be about.

—Lloyd Svendsbye

We must alter our way of living, our patterns of consumption. And we must form a larger alliance, an alliance which will bring together farmers, agricultural schools, business persons, civic groups, and church groups who are willing to work to solve the problem of world hunger. . . . I believe Jesus who fed the 5,000 hungry men plus women and children has summoned us to a new way of life with less consumption and with some new alliances.

—Lloyd Svendsbye



Program displays fill lobby



LaDonna Harris, banquet speaker

The black concerns of yesterday are the same as those of today and will be the same tomorrow. . . . The main concern of black people today is still to find a lasting solution to the problems of yesterday. . . . Racism is the white man's problem and the black man's condition.

—Onnie Hinkle

Confer Sept. 18-21 On Indian Ministry

"How can we bring the Gospel to the American Indian?" church people are sometimes heard to ask.

Many American Indians rightfully are indignant when the question is raised, because a great many Indians are Christians.

Nonetheless there is serious concern about the great paucity of Indians prepared to serve as Christian ministers.

In a recent communication the Rev. Cecil Corbett of Cook's Christian Training School in Tempe, Ariz., shared these statistics:

- The average age of ordained Indian clergy is 52 years.
- The average age of Indian lay pastors and church workers is 47 years.
- Many in the above categories are near retirement age.
- Although 28,000 students were enrolled in America's 202 accredited seminaries in the year 1973-74, only four of these were Indian.
- In 1974 seven major denominations sponsored 452 Indian churches and chapels, served by only 65 ordained and active Indian pastors.

In an effort to face up to the need for Lutheran churches to focus on the matter of "Gospel sharing," a conference on the theme, "What Do Indians Want in the Christian Churches Today?" is scheduled Sept. 18-21 at Cook's School in Tempe.

The conference is sponsored jointly by Lutheran Church and

Indian People (LUCHIP) and the National Indian Lutheran Board (NILB) in response to requests from the churches that help be given in developing Indian ministry.

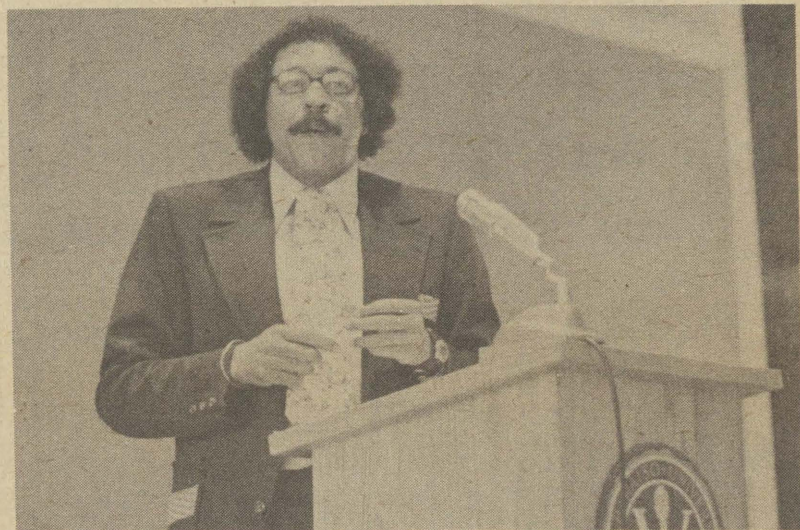
To afford maximum opportunity for dialog and input from laity, the meeting is open to everyone interested — Indians and non-Indians.

A limited number of scholarships to cover the registration fee of \$35.00 are available to representatives (one each) of Indian organizations. Charges for meals and housing will be waived for participants whose sponsoring tribe, organization, or church is unable to pay for them. All travel costs are the responsibility of participants.

Limited dormitory lodging is available at Cook's School. A nearby Howard Johnson motel will provide conference rates of \$14.50 for single rooms and \$10.00 per person for double rooms. Limousine service will be available from the Tempe airport to the school or motel by calling the school, 968-9354, upon arrival.

Meanwhile LUCHIP President Sol Bird Mockicin is endeavoring to gather the names and addresses of all Indian Lutherans — active or inactive — for the purpose of effecting a communications network.

All who have information of Indian brothers and sisters in Lutheran churches are asked to notify Sol Bird Mockicin, 919 Main St., Suite 12, Rapid City, S. Dak. 57701.



Onnie Hinkle

AAL Votes \$5,000 Grant To Develop LHRAA Councils

A \$5,000 grant to the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America to develop its new State Council Program was reported at the LHRAA annual meeting in Valparaiso, Ind., on July 27.

President Victor R. Schoonover relayed the report to LHRAA members attending the annual meeting that the grant had just been voted by Aid Association for Lutherans, fraternal insurance society headquartered in Appleton, Wis.

Blueprinting the plan on the basis of a model initiated in Wisconsin, LHRAA will use the AAL funds to refine and strengthen the State Council there, to undergird a similar program recently begun in Minnesota, and to launch a third program in North Carolina.

The State Council Program, coincidentally, is an outgrowth of another LHRAA program conducted several years ago in Wisconsin and supported at that time by a grant from members of Aid Association for Lutherans.

Called the Rural-Suburban Visit Program (RSVP), the earlier project provided opportunities for innercity children to participate in a sort of "live-in"

with families in rural or small town settings.

Some families who participated in the visit program found the experience one in which they grew both in awareness of problems in repression and racism as well as in determination to become involved in bringing about change.

They voluntarily joined together in a low key organization which they called the LHRA-Wisconsin Council. They met informally once a year. Between meetings they kept in touch with one another through an occasional newsletter edited by Gerhard and Lucy Fischer of Milwaukee.

One of the group's most memorable experiences was a meeting held as a Sunday visit with the small Lutheran congregation on the Stockbridge-Munsee Indian Reservation near Shawano, Wis. Informed of some of the needs of this tribe, the small band of Lutherans offered themselves as allies to the Indians' cause.

Because the tribe needed congressional action for relief from housing and economic deprivation, the Council through newsletters and resolutions at church conventions in the state

gathered Lutheran support and contributed toward an effective approach to congressional representatives with favorable results for the Stockbridge-Munsee.

Impressed with the way the Wisconsin Council functioned, LHRAA has been working to set up a similar structure in Minnesota and has been hoping to initiate the program in other states.

In addition to having 130 LHRAA members in Minnesota to form the nucleus of the group, the program there has been implemented with the names of more than 500 prospective participants suggested by Lutheran church officials in the state.

The AAL grant provides for strengthening the structure and broadening the scope of both the Wisconsin and Minnesota Councils and for beginning a similar program in North Carolina.

A \$1,000 grant received earlier this year from The American Lutheran Church for "initial development of the State Council Program" provides for exploration of other areas in which to introduce the structure.

Cincinnati Lutherans Concerned

Develop Blue Collar Worker Ministry

By Fran Ingebritson
To help combat the Archie Bunker stereotype, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Cincinnati, is attempting to make sure blue collar workers are "all in the family."

Immanuel's pastor, the Rev. Robert J. Grosch, will serve as program director for an experimental Worker-Priest Blue Collar Ministry. Sociological consultant will be Albert Pleasant III, a lay member of Immanuel who helped develop the program.

The ministry calls for placing three worker-priests, recruited from the ranks of Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod teachers, teacher-candidates, or other professionally trained church workers, into blue collar occupations for a two year experimental period.

Each worker-priest will share his ministry with another blue collar worker at the same company. It is the hope of Pastor Grosch that after a period of training this partner will be equipped to carry on the minis-

try and play an important part in the training of others.

The worker-priests will be attached to Immanuel congregation on a part-time basis. Two positions have been filled.

Robert Wentzien, a 1973 graduate of Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebr., and a former teacher in Wilton, Iowa, and Howard Nilson, a recent Seward graduate from Rome, Nebr., have been selected.

The congregation prefers that the third worker-priest be



Robert Grosch

a black or other minority person.

Applications for consideration of a call or contract for the Worker-Priest Blue Collar Ministry may be obtained by writing the Rev. Robert J. Grosch, Immanuel Lutheran Church, 544 Rockdale Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio 45229.

Wheat Ridge Foundation has pledged its support and has granted funds for the first year of the program. Additional funds will be supplied by Partners in Mission.

The concern that Immanuel and its pastor have shown for those who work at the jack-hammers, the pounding machines, the roaring diesels, and a host of other "hard work" jobs has forced the congregation to confront realities like these:

1) Middle class young people, even those with college educations, are opting for a vocational choice so that the blue collar rank is not only for those who couldn't quite make it to the white collar world. Increasingly people are realizing in

such work the deep satisfaction of creative and functional achievement which is often no longer found in the depersonalized systems of the antiseptic, computerized white collar world.

2) The blue collar world, like the white collar one, finds itself beleaguered by elements within its value system — organized labor, distrust of management, racial tensions, a feeling of second-class citizenship (especially outside the "trades"), preoccupation with materialistic life-goals, disregard for production quality, insensitivity toward the personal needs of fellow workers, and failure to see blue collar work as being as dignified and important as other occupations.

3) The church often unwittingly has contributed to the unwholesome self-image blue collar workers have. Usually blue collar occupations are not held out as honorable vocations in the church's educational materials. Most local congregations seek their leadership

among the more affluent white collar workers of the parish as the blue collar workers live out passive roles in this setting.

4) The neighborhoods surrounding Lutheran urban parishes increasingly are becoming filled with blue collar workers who often are ignored or resented rather than welcomed and regarded as an opportunity for the expression of Christian love.

5) The mainline denominations are still middle class oriented institutions which are run by and relate better to middle class people.

6) Blue collar Christians feel the church's lack of interest in them, their problems, their culture, and their perspective. They often evidence this by lack of church participation.

7) A person's church attendance is in direct proportion to his annual income.

8) Blue collar Christians who are involved in the church do not see clearly the possibilities for witness and ministry in their daily occupations,

May we suggest as
a way of remembering
or saying thank you:

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BUT WHAT
YOU ARE
FOR OTHER
PEOPLE IS THE
MAIN POINT



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Current Economic Woes Severely Strike Blacks

"The most recent official figures show that the typical white family's income is \$12,600 while the typical black family's income is only \$7,200 or about 58 percent of the white figure, and the gap is growing. In fact, the typical black family earns about \$1,000 less than the government's own estimate for a "lower non-poverty" living standard.

"Fifty-seven percent of the black unemployed — 640,000 in number — are ineligible for unemployment insurance because their unemployment did not result from direct job layoffs, an essential qualification for jobless benefits."

"Nearly 8 million black people — one-third — live in poverty.



Vernon Jordan

What often has been called a recession in America is a major depression for black people, asserts Vernon Jordan, executive director of the National Urban League.

He adduces these items to support his claim:

"While the national unemployment rate is just over 8 percent, the rate for blacks is around 14 percent, and for black teenagers it is over 40 percent. True unemployment among blacks actually is much higher, since the official statistics don't count those who have given up hopes of finding a job or part-time workers who need full-time jobs.

Programs, Costs Expand

Board Urges Increased Membership Participation

In recommending a larger budget for LHRAA during the fiscal year 1975-76, Treasurer J.D. Thompson noted that in the past five years the total budget has almost doubled.

In addressing the annual meeting of the Association at Valparaiso, he pointed out that

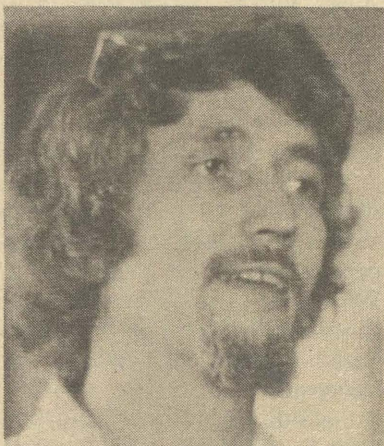
the increase in budget is made necessary in part because of escalating costs of the day-to-day operations, such as phone, printing, and postage. But the increase is also warranted, Thompson said, because of the expanding opportunities for service and the record of increasing support for the Association's programs.

Fund Committee Chairman Robert Skare explained that the ambitious program of the Association calls for recruitment of more new members as well as appeals to the general membership for increased contributions.

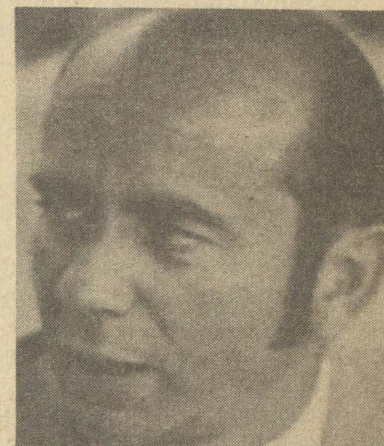
He stated that two efforts in particular deserve special attention and support. A letter has gone out to all members asking them to help remove a \$6,000 indebtedness with which the Association begins its new year. In addition, the no-

tices for membership renewal include a request for pledges of monthly contributions to sustain the ministry beyond the level of the \$10 yearly fee.

The major part of LHRAA's support, Skare noted, is derived from contributions by individuals and congregations.



J.D. Thompson



Robert Skare