

Development and History of the Multi-Ethnic Pre-Seminary Program

Senior Church History

Prof. Brenner

Leonard C. Freeman

January 13, 2004

DEVELOPMENT AND HISTORY OF THE WELS MULTI-ETHNIC PRE-SEMINARY PROGRAM

The background to the current preseminary program for people of other cultures can probably best be understood by looking at remarks made by Pastor Rolfe Westendorf in a paper he wrote in 1982:

The Wisconsin Synod is not an urban church body. After the vast migration to the cities, WELS remained a small-town Synod. Our Synod was rather late in facing inner-city affairs. Because of the way our Synod grew, we had no congregations in the Detroit or Chicago metropolitan areas until the 40's and 50's. These congregations were developed on the outskirts of the city far removed from the center of city. At that time there were relatively few congregations in our Synod that were directly affected by the changing neighborhoods and deteriorating housing that are usually associated with the inner-city. Most Wisconsin Synod people knew nothing about the problems and challenges facing the inner-city churches except for what they read in church and local newspapers.

The one exception to the general situation existed in the city of Milwaukee. Here is where the Synod was founded. Here was a large concentration of German speaking people who organized Lutheran congregations by the dozens. Houses, flats, apartments, cottages built one on top of the other packed so many people into a one block area that large congregations flourished within blocks of one another. This is where the Wisconsin Synod began to feel the realities of inner-city life.

The minority population (Black and Hispanic) of Milwaukee was traditionally very small. But in the twenty years that followed World War II that changed dramatically. In the 50's and 60's a black wave swept through the north side of Milwaukee and toppled Wisconsin Synod congregations like bowling pins. With the influx of blacks and the flight of white Lutherans the inner city could no longer support white Lutheran churches. The great flight of WELS congregations that no longer function at their original Milwaukee location included: Bethel, Bethesda, Divine Charity, Ephrata, Saron, and St. Matthew's. The fact that these congregations could not survive is not necessarily due to lack of dedication on part of their members or the pastors. They did make serious efforts to win prospects from the black community. But their efforts failed because they (white Lutherans) had little or no experience in doing mission work among blacks, and partly because white Lutherans of these developments took place under the social climate that prevailed before the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's. Segregation was a way of life in all aspects of housing and social life. It was not "normal" for blacks and whites to attend church together. If a black Christian sought to attend a white church, he was told to go down the street where he would find "his own kind of people" worshipping. That was a time in the growing process of the white WELS Lutherans. Whatever work was done among blacks was done in a strictly segregated way. In the South, for example, a specifically black mission led to the establishment of a segregated seminary, which accounts for most of the black pastors in the Missouri Synod today. Pastor Henry Grigsby, the only black pastor for the first 135 years of the WELS, was himself a product of that seminary.

White Lutherans also had their eyes opened to mission opportunities in their own cities in the North. A number of black missions were established in the 1960's and perhaps earlier. There was St. Phillip's in Toledo, a St. Titus in Detroit, a St. Phillip's in

Minneapolis and a St. Phillip's in Milwaukee. It was not that white Lutherans didn't want to share the Gospel with blacks; it was that they didn't want to share their churches with them. This seemed normal for white Lutherans because segregation was a way of life.

The Civil Right Act together with the Civil Rights Movement drastically changed the social climate in the area of black- white relations. The old prejudices did not die. But segregation was no longer the "in" thing. This change in social climate was a sign of hope for central-city congregations who had to integrate or die. The government now made discrimination illegal, just as God made it "illegal" long ago. White Lutherans were now free to work in earnest to win black members for their congregations. And their black neighbors could begin to believe that the white congregations really wanted them. [Thanks to Dr. Martin Luther King for his efforts to bring about social justice]. The Wisconsin Synod people in general did not approve of the non-violent tactics employed by Dr. King and his followers. But the Wisconsin Synod would, nevertheless, offer their obedience to the laws passed in the Civil Rights Acts guaranteeing equal access to black citizens. The black Christians were still not breaking down the doors of the white Lutheran Churches. But the results from the Civil Rights Movement made it possible to think in terms of congregations in the inner-city where black people and white people could worship the one true God together.

In the fall of 1967 Pastor Richard Seeger was called from the Synod's mission in Hong Kong to St. Marcus Lutheran Church. St. Marcus was located in one of the poorest sections of the city. It faced a very uncertain future. Pastor Seeger wasted no time in taking action. Upon arriving in Milwaukee, he called for the organization of an inner-city pastors' group, central city responded to the invitation. Initially the group included Pastor Henry Lange of Bethel, Pastor Elmer Mahnke of Grace, Pastor Eldor Toepel of Jerusalem, Pastor Richard Stiemke of Parkside, Pastor Gary Schroeder of St. Phillip's, Pastor Arthur Lengling of Saron, Pastor Theodore Horneber Of Zebaoth, Pastors Wilmer and Rolfe Westen of Siloah, and Pastor Arthur Schupmann of St. Peter's. Pastor Richard Ziesemer also participated since students from his campus ministry at the University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee Campus became involved in inner-city work. For several years Pastor Hoffmann served as chairman of this group.

In a measure this group served as an outlet for pastors who were troubled over the decline of their congregations. They shared their problems and encouraged each other to persevere. But they did not limit themselves to crying on each other's shoulders. As a member of the Synod's Commission on Evangelism, Pastor Seeger proposed an intensive three-year evangelism program which would recruit young people from all over the Synod and train them in evangelism, vacation Bible school teaching, and awareness of the black culture. The central-city pastors, who called themselves the Inner-City Pastors' Council, agreed to the plan. Funding was to come from a grant the Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL). Since AAL only offered grants through authorized agencies of the Synod, the Commission on Evangelism submitted the grant request. For the first time the Synod was officially involved in the affairs of declining inner-city congregations.

The grant was approved and Pastor Gary Schroeder took over the responsibility for recruiting and training the evangelism volunteers. Statistically the program was a huge

success. Over the three years of the project, several hundred young people were trained in evangelism and familiarized with inner-city mission work. Most important of all, the thrilling message of sin and grace was presented over and over to inner-city residents.

As inner-city congregations looked to the future, they saw the very real possibility that they would not be able to continue indefinitely with their own resources. Deaths and transfers were eroding the base of support faster than new members could strengthen that base of support. The trends indicated that even with energetic evangelism programs, the congregations would eventually die, unless they received help from outside sources.

The Synod was the most obvious "outside source." But the Synod policy ruled out assistance to self-supporting congregations. At the same time the Synod, through its district mission boards, expected some congregation supervision over congregations receiving synodical funds. Inner-city congregations had been autonomous for generations. How could they accept Synod control? On the hand, how could the Synod invest money in inner-city congregations without retaining some control over the way the money was to be spent?

In 1970 Pastor Kurt Koeplin formally presented these questions and others to the General Board for Home Missions in a paper. Pastor Koeplin was a member of the Southeastern Wisconsin District Mission Board. He was also a member of Atonement Lutheran Church, which was located on the fringe of Milwaukee's inner city. In his paper he presented the problems facing inner-city churches and asked the Synod to recognize the inner city as a legitimate mission field which deserved the Synod's supports as much as any suburban field.

In response to Pastor Koeplin's paper the General Board appointed a study committee to react to the paper and make appropriate recommendations. Pastor Rolfe Westendorf, Pastor Daniel Gieschen, Mr. John Metzger, and Mr. Arthur Schaefer were appointed to the committee with Pastor Henry Paustian serving as chairman. Pastor Kurt Koeplin and Pastor Norman Berg were advisory members.

The study committee reached a number of significant conclusions:

1. That the inner city was a legitimate mission field, which demanded the attention of the Synod;
2. That support should be given only to those congregations which demonstrated an ability to assimilate the people of its community;
3. That support should take the form of manpower rather than money, with the intention that the manpower should assist in evangelism outreach; and
4. That inner-city missions should be administered through the existing district mission boards.

The findings were incorporated into a policy statement that was adopted by the GBHM on August 5, 1971. The Wisconsin Synod had officially recognized the inner city as a mission responsibility (Westendorf).

The WELS grew and the neighborhoods changed and there was the need for more intensive evangelism work. Reaching out to the new people in the neighborhood of the seemed to offer the best prospects for the survival of the church. The thinking, the attitude of some of those early German Lutherans is still around today, although in some ways it is a little different. People backgrounds other than German are invited to the WELS Churches as long as they keep up the traditional German way of worship. There is nothing wrong with tradition unless it get in the way of the Gospel. Tradition can't save anybody. The Gospel, the true Word of God is the only thing people need. That is the most important thing that can be taught in our WELS churches or any church for that matter.

There were some men of our Wisconsin Synod who not only wanted to invite all people to their churches, but to also train men, minority men to be pastors in the WELS. These minority men would not be trained the conventional way of training young men for the ministry. But they would be trained with the same materials following the same curriculum, and learning the same languages that are taught to any young man that had the desire to be a WELS Pastor.

These Wisconsin Synod men came up with a program especially for training minority men for the ministry. That program came into being the following way. In October 1972 there was a Committee for Minority Ministries that included Rolfe Westendorf, Chairman, Gary Schroeder and Robert J. Voss. This committee had ideas for a pastor-training program, that is, a special pre-ministerial training program for members of minority groups. It was to have been administered by the Minority Ministries Committee, which was responsible for providing adequate instructions to fully prepare a man for Seminary work. The applicants for this program applied to our Seminary's Committee on Special Admissions consisting of Professors Balge, Blume, and Lawrenz. Their recommendation was sent to the Special Committee of the Conference of Presidents, Pastor Carl Mischke, Chairman. In 1973 the CHE report stated that a pre-seminary training program for members of minority groups had been

endorsed. At this time there was one qualified applicant who had indicated a sincere interest in enrolling in the pre-seminary ministerial program. See attachment #1

In 2003 an interview with Pastor Rolfe Westendorf who was then the chairman of the Committee for Minority Ministries:

Leonard: why did you think a program like this was necessary?

Pastor Westendorf: Pastor Schroeder and I were concerned about the lack of Black Pastors and there were some who said that, well, if we don't have our minority men go through the entire system we would create a second rate ministry and we don't want to do that. But on the other hand when people have to leave their community and culture for extended period of time first of all they to learn how to survive in another culture. If they do that a lot of times they are not really comfortable when they get back to their own culture. So we persuaded everybody that people should be able to get their Pre-Seminary training without leaving Milwaukee or wherever.

Leonard: what do you mean when you say, "we persuaded everybody?"

Pastor Westendorf: I mean, "The Committee for Minority Ministries." And so we made efforts to recruit people (to teach) for this one man who signed up for the course and I'm embarrassed because I can't remember his name.

Leonard: What was his nationality?

Pastor Westendorf: he was an African American, I should try to say his name but I can't; he was very intelligent and aggressive and was married to a white lady. But generally speaking, he lacked emotionally stability and he got into some of these courses and Pastor Voss and I was teaching him. We went to his home at 22nd and Center St. and we had classes in his home. But his marriage failed and pretty soon that whole thing came to an end. I remember shortly after that we had nobody in the

system. The system just rusted out liked an old car that sits in the yard and never gets moved. After that a long time member of St. Phillip's by the name of Gesler Safford, he heard about this program and he was somewhat distressed that there was a system in place for men training to become pastors and he didn't know anything about it. He was ready to jump into it but I think he was already in his 60's and his health was frail and a few years after that he died. So, again nothing became of it. So we had meetings. Armin Schuetze was somebody else--I think his name should be mention too [as] somebody that was directly involved. Like it says there [RW points to attachment # 1] the Conference of Presidents said, "Yes, let's do it" but nothing ever came of it. In the meantime Ray Kimbrough and Gene Simms made it through.

Leonard: But they went through the regular system, correct?

Pastor Westendorf: Yes! They went through the regular system. Something else that was kind of tied into this was a congregation does not have to use a seminary graduate as their pastor. You become a pastor because the congregation says you are a pastor. You don't become a pastor because you graduate from the seminary. However, since congregations want well-trained pastors and the seminary wants to put qualified men into the ministry, that's the way it goes most of the time. But what if a congregation did not have a seminary graduate for whatever reason and according to Scripture, a congregation could pick a man to be their pastor and he would preach the sermons and he would teach the Bible classes and so forth. And he would do everything because authority to teach comes from the congregation and not the seminary. The seminary only says these men are qualified. The seminary says you are a (CRM) candidate for the Holy Ministry. And so we picked up on that too and we said if we have men who don't have the opportunity to go through the system, we can nevertheless call men to serve in different kinds of ministry. The first man in that was a guy by the name of Jim Parker; (he is living in Florida now I think). He left Siloah when American Motors moved to Toledo and he remained active there and he served on the Mission Board over in Michigan for awhile but we formally called him as our Lay Evangelist and I probably still have some paper work on that. He was called to

be the spiritual leader of the congregation but he was called to take over certain pastoral duties.

Something like a Vicar and so that was a part of the whole process. It kind of ^{lay} dormant until Pastor Sorum came along and he made up his mind that he was not going to leave Garden Homes until there was an African American who was equipped to take his place and so Leonard Freeman became the first one to make it this far. Well, thanks be to God.

Leonard: What did you see that you thought there was a need to start training minorities like this? Was it the fact that as you stated in your paper, “a lot of Black People (African Americans) started coming into the system (churches)?”

Pastor Westendorf: Yes!

Leonard: I guess the guys on your committee thought you could train (in the midst of strong opposition) minorities?

Pastor Westendorf: Well the whole issue of race and racism is just below the surface here and for the most part our black members are very content with white pastors and white teachers.

Leonard: I think black members are content, because they understand that for a long time blacks were not welcome in the churches and schools so black men and women did not have any reason to pursue a teaching career in the Lutheran Schools or Preaching in the Lutheran Churches.

Pastor Westendorf: Uh hum (yes).

Leonard: I mean, I don't think black members in the congregations today are saying, “Oh, we need black pastors” or “Oh, we need black teachers.”

Pastor Westendorf: No, they are not saying that and that's not a good idea to say we got a black pastor so you got to call him to our congregation. Ideally the issue is really on the other foot, throughout the Synod: moms and dads are saying, “we want our sons and daughters to be pastors and teachers.” And so with the help of existing pastors and teachers they encourage their sons and daughters to go to Watertown and to New Ulm to train to be pastors and teachers since now we have

black members. When it was an all white Synod it didn't make any sense to have anybody but white people at Watertown and New Ulm. But when we became an integrated Synod, then it makes sense that our black members would be just as eager to direct their children to ministry as the white folks. And all things being equal now, how many white families does it take to produce one graduate? Well you can probably calculate that out, if we have 250,000 families and we have 50 graduates that's saying it takes about 5,000 (I'm just doing this off the top of my head) but it takes 5,000 white families to produce one (1) graduate a year. If you say, count all four (4) years at MLC then that's saying we got or it takes roughly a thousand families to produce one student at MLC so how many black families would it normally take to produce one student at MLC.

Leonard: a lot more than that I'm sure, a lot more.

Pastor Westendorf: Yeah, and we don't have many families yet. There might be close to, oh I can't begin to know, oh I could probably say we got somewhere between 500 and 1000 families, black families.

Leonard: The program that I'm in right now, the one I came through; what are the pros and cons concerning the program?

Pastor Westendorf: That would be more for you to say than I.

Leonard: I know what I want to say about the program but looking from your point of view, what do you think?

Pastor Westendorf: the advantage is that people can prepare for ministry without having to leave Milwaukee.

Leonard: but in your mind, that's what?

Pastor Westendorf: That's a Pro. The Con is that they don't have the immersion process that goes on at the college.

Leonard: Do you mean the comrades and friends you gain there?

Pastor Westendorf: Yeah, you know everybody and everybody know you. When you come to the Seminary as a junior everybody knows everybody except you. So without any internationalization or trying to leave you out, that is what happens because everybody goes with their friends. Unless somebody says, "we want you to be our friend" you sort of get left out of the process. When I was going to the seminary, we had a father and son; Chester Cone Jr. and Chester Cone Sr. attended the seminary together. Chester Cone was a pleasant enough fellow but we or I never took him in our circle of friendship. A lot of the time he stayed in the Dorms and would be watching television all by himself, because it was not just that he hadn't gone to college with us but he was 25 years older than any of us were. So as a student I can't say what he did in his classes but in terms of the student body he did not fit in because he was more the age of the Professors than he was the students and that is a major disadvantage.

Leonard: Do you think people in the WELS will ever be able to think of men who went through the program as qualified pastors; do you know what I mean?

Pastor Westendorf: Oh yes, I know what you mean. Can you be accepted? Can you take care of the pastoral duties? My answer would be "yes" just like anybody else. Just like you were saying, we have people that went through the system and they hit their congregation and it is a disaster. I know people like that: everybody tried as hard as they could to make it work for him but all he saw was everybody was ganging up on him and trying to get rid of him. He wasn't dumb, he graduated from the seminary but he did not have the self-confidence and the servant mentality to be a pastor. He felt: in order to prove his worth he had to push people around that say, "I'm in charge, so I must be important." That was a disaster and that's not the only one; there are others as well. But that happens. Semi-facetiously I have said that the reason we need to go to school for 7 years to be a pastor is so that they can keep us busy until we are old enough and mature enough to be pastors. Because all the stuff that was crammed through my head, most of that today is in the garbage can.

Pastor Westendorf: what were you doing in 1973?

Leonard: In 1973 I had been working at the A.O Smith Corp. for 10 years.

Pastor Westendorf: That was before you got in touch with Garden Homes?

Leonard: Yes, we started classes at Garden Homes in August 1975 and joined March 20 1976, 4 days before our second was born.

Pastor Westendorf: Good. So when we got into this, (African Americans in white congregations) we were faced with being white pastors to a black congregation. That was not the problem but the racism issues are always just around the corner waiting to bop you. For instance our black ladies put on a style show and some of the things the models wore were kind of sexy and Mrs. Grigsby says, that should not be in church.” So I went to the ladies that had planned the style show and said, “maybe we should not do this again” and they got upset with me and one of them said, “I don’t know why you are at Siloah?” “It must be because you can’t get a job anyplace else” I hadn’t done anything really to deserve that but it was like they were saying, “you’re scolding us and you’re white and we’re black and race must be the reason.” See I take that if I were black, that would take the reason away and made sense until I figured out or found out. This was kind of hard because you know the white on white or black on black thing makes sense. But listening real hard to black pastors, I began to realize that the shoe is on the other foot. The only reason we have you for our pastor is because you’re black and we’re black. You see, that is almost the worse negative, me getting accused of saying something negative because I’m white. Having a black pastor doesn’t solve all the problems because of all the evil surrounds us. I don’t want it to sound like it’s a major problem because it’s not. It’s not a major problem and not nearly as bad as the problem of stubborn Germans that will have it their way or no way. White congregations have beaten some white pastors up pretty well. Being a black in an all black congregation does not solve the problems, it’s just a different set of problems nor having a white pastor for an all white congregation doesn’t solve all the problems. I think the best way of looking at it is that here we Christian men, black or white who want to serve the Lord in Holy Ministry who feel that God has called them. You know there are going to be speed bumps along the way but if that’s the road the Lord

wants to take you “go” for it. You got one set of problems with a white pastor in a black congregation and a similar set of problems with a black pastor in a white congregation. But if you got a black pastor and a black congregation and a white pastor and a white congregation you still got problems. Out of four situations, I couldn’t begin to say which is harder or which is easier.

Leonard: That’s all I have, thank you very much for your time and honest opinion (Freeman, November 16th, 2003).

The Multicultural Pre-Seminary (MEPP) came to the forefront in 1991. It took a lot of hard work and many dedicated Christian men with the vision of having minorities trained for the ministry in the WELS. As is always the case there is going to be nativism. But with many prayers, hard work and dedication the vision of these men was realized. There were many committee meetings back and forth, committee to committee. I will do my level best to try and let you see some of the planning that went into getting this wonderful and much needed program started.

In 1991 the WELS Multicultural Mission Committee for discussion drew up a program. The Committee felt that our Synod needed pastors from a variety of ethnic cultural backgrounds. Most specifically, it believes that such workers are needed not merely for the sake of variety, but in order that our Synod can effectively carry out the Great Commission among the diverse cultural groups of the U.S and Canada. An ethnic knows better and can communicate better with his own people. Since this committee had been charged with planning and advising our synodical agencies to that end they drew up the following program for discussion. See attachment #2

In 1991 the MC Square committee operated under the guidance of ^tThe Board of the Home Mission. This committee realized that there were many white men who were being trained for the ministry and not many if any, minority men being trained for the ministry. The committee saw that as a problem because the dynamics of the neighborhoods where the WELS churches were changing. The MC

Square committee went to the Board of Ministerial Education (BME) with the problem. The BME understood the problem and they appointed a task force committee. Some of the task force members were John Kuerth (HBM), Pastor A.E. Sorum (Garden Homes Lutheran Church), Dr. Glen Thompson, Prof. A. Panning (Wis. Lutheran Seminary), Robert Voss, and John Braun, Prof. ^{Jerald} Plitzuweit (Martin Lutheran College).

This group of men met for about two years studying minority worker training. Their job was to come up with a program that would be beneficial for the WELS and fair to the minorities coming in. They wrestled with three options, (1) the minorities should be treated like everybody else. What that would mean is that the man would have to move into a small white community. There would be a great age difference. A totally different culture, family situations, education background, language might also be in the mix, and if he were coming from a warm climate he would have a tough time adjusting to the very cold climate. (2) Take them out of the system and set up a special system for them. This option would be viewed as unfair, a dumbing down. One drawback to that system is that they would have no friends in the ministry, no support group, no WELS pastor culture. Making it easy for them to get to the seminary was not an option because it would not benefit the WELS or the men studying for the ministry or anybody else. A system like that might also cause some to think that the minority pastor was something less than other WELS pastors.

The system they chose was a little bit of both, a way to prepare minorities to be accepted into the seminary by distance learning. Why the seminary? The seminary was chosen as part of the program so that those trained pastors would not be looked down on or thought of as something less than one hundred percent pastors.

The task force committee had to decide what to teach the incoming students for their preparation for the seminary, keeping in mind that this would be distance learning. There were two levels the students had to go through. It would take one year to get from level one to level two. Level 1 was set up in a

way to help them know that they were teaching the right people. It consisted of basic background knowledge of Scripture, Christian family, and Christian leadership. Ten courses were offered and if the student got through those courses then he might be right for the program.

In Level 2, the student began his studies in Greek (Professor Joel Fredrich, Professor ^{John} Schmidt). At the earliest stage of the program, still on the cutting floor, a Hebrew Professor was not in place. A seminary senior student, Jeff Samuelson taught the language. Professor Godsdek taught the Smalcald Articles. These men with the exception of Jeff Samuelson were from Northwestern College (Watertown). Professor Lang^e an instructor at Martin Luther College (New Ulm Minnesota) taught the Ecumenical Creeds. It took between two to three years to complete level 2.

The task force committee now had the curriculum set up but it was the BME that had to approve the program, which it did. Dr. Glen Thompson came on board as the director of the program because of his background experience in distance learning, his involvement in the task force and experience as a Professor at Michigan Lutheran Seminary.

Following this, events proceeded as follows:

Date	Event
September 28, 1994	Dr. Thompson appointed as director pro-tem to develop Multi-ethnic Preseminary courses. (see attachment # 3
October 9, 1995	Memo to Conference of Presidents informing them of the formation and the activities of a task force on multi-ethnic training. (see attachment #4)
January 9, 1996	The Board for Ministerial Education resolves to accept the work of the task force for Alternative Education of Ethnic and Cross Cultural Ministers and to establish a permanent committee to oversee the Multi-ethnic Preseminary Program under the auspices of the BME. (see attachment #5
February 12, 1996	BME Administrator Borgwardt sends a letter dismissing the task force and forming the new committee (see attachment #6)

Since Dr. E. Allen Sorum played such a pivotal role in the founding of the Multi-ethnic Preseminary Program, he was interviewed to get his recollection of the program's beginnings and development.

Leonard: How did this program get started?

Pastor Sorum: Dr. Glen Thompson will be a better source for this. I remember that Glen and I as representatives of the Multicultural Ministry Committee (MC2) were asked to meet with Professor Armin Panning and others to discuss training of minority men for the pastoral ministry. Professor Panning was extremely supportive of this effort. You should ask Professor Panning for his recollections. One thing that I remember Panning saying was that our effort to raise minority leadership on the field or within the support and familiarity of their homes and congregations was the same way that the WELS and early Germans trained their pastors when they all first started arriving in America. There were no seminaries in America then. They relied on German mission societies to send missionaries from Germany. Now that the American church was up and running, it made more sense to have future pastors trained locally, so future pastors were mentored within a congregation and at home. Panning said, "We have come full circle."

Glen Thompson brought his experience and passion for future worker training from his work in Africa. I was extremely interested in seeing a program develop because I saw that Garden Homes' future would best be served by locally nurtured leadership. Garden Homes was in a black community. Garden Homes was primarily black in its membership. I felt that the best chance for Garden Homes to get the leadership it needed was from Garden Homes.

Harry Hagedorn was also very supportive of this effort. As is true with so many things regarding our church body's efforts at cross cultural outreach, Harry's support was critical. He called the meetings and invited the right representatives from the different synod divisions. He used his office as head of home missions to drive the discussion.

Our early meetings were warm and interesting but not met with much commitment. There was some natural resistance from the Board for Ministerial Education. Their concerns were about the quality of the training that the men would receive if they didn't get their training from our approved worker training schools. You should talk to Peter Krushel in the synod office (head of BME) about this point. He could explain why people were not excited about the prospect of a multi-ethnic pre-seminary program.

The biggest reason some synod leaders were leery of the program was that it would create a desire for non-traditional white students to circumvent the approved program at our worker training college. I knew early on that in order to get the multi-ethnic pre-seminary programs going, we were going to have to promise to keep white people out. This seemed unfair to me but it was easy enough for me to justify. How ironic that white people would be excluded from a program to recruit and train local leadership for the pastoral ministry.

Other issues that arose were the complaints of affirmative action, political correctness and all those kinds of arguments. But eventually, all those arguments were silenced. The way they were silenced was that our synod leaders and worker training Profs met guys like Leonard Freeman, Fred Brown and Donovan Freeman. These men won the "system" people over. I remember especially a meeting up north somewhere where a bunch of our men were asked to meet with the combined faculty of MLC and the Seminary. Our guys involved in the program had a huge impact on the Seminary and college Profs. The task became easier.

The most important ingredient for the success of the Pre-Seminary Program was a good man in it from the beginning. This is why I said so many times to you, Leonard, that your highest calling was to just

get through the program. Prove that it can be done. Prove that we white leaders of the WELS are serious about integrating the leadership of our church body. Prove it and then go out and do the work and recruit more men. The strongest reason for the program was the quality men we had in the program. They paved the way by their being who they were and doing a good job at actually completing all courses successfully.

Leonard: Why was there was a need for a program like the PSI?

Pastor Sorum: The chief need for the program is that we will not be able to recruit and train minority men to work in minority fields if we ask them to take 8 or 9 years out of their minority communities to prepare to be pastors. It's unreasonable to expect a minority man to move to New Ulm, Minnesota, for a long-term educational career. The cultural sacrifices, the cultural discomfort would be a much bigger issue than the academic rigors. Also, the leadership of that minority man can be better developed where he also has the opportunity to actually serve in the work of the church at the same time he is studying for the work of the church. My happiest memories in ministry is when I would sit down with you, Leonard and plan counseling sessions, elder calls and serving people together. I lost a lot of help when you had to study full time. But it's while serving that we learn whether men are able and willing to serve. The man needs to serve. The church needs the service and both support each other in the early days of the pastoral training program. This program needs to raise up pastors who want to serve in their communities. It doesn't need to raise up professional students.

We also need this program because our church body needs to find ways to reach people from different ethnic communities. We cannot remain so white because so much of North America is not white. We need partners in the WELS to help us reach this growing minority population. We need the heart and the passion and the guidance and the partnership of many people so we can together work at gathering all people into Christ's church.

We need this program also because our white pastors, professors and church members need to have relationships with solid wonderful minority Christian men and leaders. Our white folks need to

outgrow their stereotypes. The best way to do this is to get to know people like Fidel Dazen and Leonard Freeman. If you, Leonard, can't teach white folks to love black folks, no one can.

Leonard: What was your involvement in the program?

Pastor Sorum: My job was to represent my black brothers and sisters in particular and minorities in general to my church body. I was the insider who had access to the system. It was my privilege to talk to the system about the needs and opportunities presented by the multi-ethnic pre-seminary program. What I appreciate so much Leonard is that this system, that is, my white brothers in the WELS leadership was very respectful to me and to my minority brothers and sisters. They listened to people like me and Glen Thompson and Harry Hagedorn and Roger Sprain and many others. And they totally reinvented pre-ministerial training in order to get men like you to be pastors with us. Our church body has come a LONG ways since we initiated this program. Our leadership is committed to doing everything possible to bring in as many of our ethnic minority brothers and sisters as possible into the preaching and teaching ministry. I am proud of you, Leonard. You gave up so much to do this and have endured so much. But I am also so very proud of the leadership of our church body who made it possible for you to do what you have done.

Leonard: Today, what do you think about the program?

Pastor Sorum: I think the program, which has grown into the PSI program, is a glorious testament to the pioneering work of Leonard Freeman and Fidel and also to the men at our seminary who not want to expand the program even farther. All thanks to God.

Leonard: Thank you very much for a heartfelt interview (Freeman, November 21st 2003)

I now thank God for the Multicultural Pre-Seminary Program. I say now because if someone had told me that I would be studying to be a pastor (a WELS Pastor) I would have said "not likely, no way, not in a million years." But here I am studying for the ministry. My family's religion is Baptist. I was Baptized Baptist at the age of 13, yes, by immersion. I really can't say I'm a Baptist because I rarely

went to church. I guess one reason why we didn't go to church a lot was because of transportation problems. You see there were eight children in my family and a family of eight in the South during that time most likely didn't have a car. So I really didn't catch on to church going. I don't know much about the Baptist religion from experience.

I left my home in Memphis at the age of 16. I came to Milwaukee Wisconsin in November 1963 and I've been on my own since. As I look back at my life I can clearly see how God watched over me. I was 17 in 1964 and I worked at a Production Plating Co. for one year and in 1965 I started work at the AO Smith corp. In 1966 God arranged for me to meet the woman he picked for my wife at her college dance. In 1968 we were married and in 1969 God gave us our first son Donovan.

As Donovan grew we started thinking about a school for him to attend. So we started looking around for a school and came across Garden Homes Lutheran Church that had a school. We visited the school and met with the principal, Mr. Duane Polack and we liked him and what he told us about the school and what our responsibility would be. We also visited the church and that wasn't such a joyous adventure: the coldness, unfriendliness and stares. They hardly spoke to us but we signed the guest register anyway and left. A few days later two women from the Evangelism Committee came to our home. My wife was not home yet but I invited them in anyway. They told me all about the church and the school and I couldn't believe what they were saying not about the school but the "church" we were just there. What impressed me the most was the fact that a black woman and a white woman were together talking about God and religion and school. We went back to school and registered our son. My wife and I had to attend the Adult Information Classes and upon completion we joined the church and God had given to us another son. The church was still very unfriendly. We felt like visitors for about five years. I was voted to the Church Council and the Board of Education. My wife joined the Altar Guild, Choir and worked with the PTA group as secretary. The church was a very bad

experience for us. We discussed quitting but God's choice for us was to stay put. Then Pastor Sorum came with a vision and things started changing. It was not easy for him but he had a vision and saw it through. The church for the most part will follow the lead of the pastor. Under his leadership black people and white people started talking and mingling after church.

Pastor Sorum started a program that would allow laymen to read Scripture. I was asked if I wanted to be a reader and I accepted. I was the first Scripture reader and that program is still going today. But then I wanted to do more so I went to Pastor Sorum and he said, "We have to find out what your gifts are." We had a few meetings and he said, "Have you thought about being a pastor?" Time passed with more reading and I went to him and said, "I want to be a pastor." About a month passed and no answer so I said "Remember our conversation about me being a pastor?" He said, "Sure, I just wanted to know if you were serious." He told me about a program Glen Thompson was starting called the Multicultural Pre-Seminary Program and that it would not be easy, it would take seven or eight years to complete. The rest is history.

After three and a half years I completed the program and entered the seminary. I thought this was Garden Homes all over again. I was very surprised because I thought I was going to studying alongside Christian men who were all going to be pastors and I didn't expect any hostility or unfriendliness here. As I said earlier the congregation follows the lead of the pastor so students follow the lead of the professors. If the seminary and its professors are serious about the PSI program training minorities for the ministry, then there has to be more than just lip service. Actions speak louder than words. Students sometimes in their teasing would cross the line from just joking around to saying things that hurt, mocking the way I talk.

You see this is not the normal way of training men for the ministry. People of diverse backgrounds all need to be trained but they should be looked at as individuals with different abilities, different

personalities, different needs, and different backgrounds. You can't just throw your hands in the air and say in a public place, "I don't know what to do with you." This is how I was actually spoken to once by a professor. I know this was not done out of prejudice. It's just that people don't always think about what they say or what kind of impact it's going to have.

Of course this isn't the whole story. I've enjoyed my time here at the seminary and I've made many friends here among the student and the professors. Most professors have bent over backwards to help me out with the time they could spend outside of classes. And there have been students who have been there for me too.

The main thing we have to remember is this: Praise to God that he didn't deal in a hard way with you or me, sinners. When you're talking to people from different backgrounds, you're dealing with real people with real feelings people who hurt and bleed just like you. They may be different than you but have the same goal as you and that is preaching the gospel to all God's people so that all may be saved. I believe in the old saying, "Where there is a will, there is a way." If men have the desire for the ministry there's a way to train them. Even if it means giving up something like traditions, remember: these men are giving something too. They sometimes become distant from their families, they lose their friends. They are in no-man's land, getting it from both sides: being snubbed by the white people and being talked about by the black people who say, "Why are you going to that white school to become a pastor in a white church?" Do you think it's easy to be put down by your own race? Tradition cannot compare to that. Well, God says, "Love one another" and that's what I'm all about and that's what we all need to be about always. This is a worthwhile program and it will succeed. But it takes more than a few students and a few professors. We need the whole synod to make it happen.

October 3, 1972

To The Conference of Presidents
Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod

After duly considering the matter and consulting with various informed individuals, your Committee for Minority Ministries is prepared to submit the following resolution:

WHEREAS it is increasingly desirable that members of minority groups should be included in the ordained clergy of our Synod, and

WHEREAS it is not feasible in the foreseeable future to train such pastors in our regular theological curriculum, and

WHEREAS the Synod has established the procedure of preparing individuals for the ministry under the direction of a duly appointed study committee, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the Conference of presidents appoint such a standing study committee, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the committee consist of a district president or vice president, two members of the Seminary faculty, and two pastors who are serving congregations which include members of minority groups, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the study committee be instructed to oversee the preparation of men who can adequately serve congregations which include a larger number of persons from the same minority group culture.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee for Minority Ministries

Rolfe Westendorf, Chrm.
Gary Schroeder
Robert J. Voss

Insert from original document

The Special Pre-Ministerial Training Program for Members of Minority Groups is administered by the Minority Ministries Committee, which is responsible for providing adequate instructions which will fully prepare a man for Seminary work.

It is the understanding that the applicants for this program do not apply directly to the Minority Ministries Committee but to our Seminary's Committee on Special Admissions consisting of Professors Balge, Blume, and Lawrenz. This committee is asked to review the applications and recommend those to the Minority Ministries Committee who seem to be likely candidates. The committee, of course, retains the privilege to consult further with the recommended applicants and to accept them on their own judgment. The committee will also have the privilege to judge them during their enrollment on the basis of their performance in their actual studies. In outlining the course for the individual applicant the committee will, of course, give him credit for the college work that he has already done which would be the equivalent of any of the courses listed in the survey above.

For the initial recommendation our Seminary's Committee on Special Admissions requests general information concerning the applicant through the application form and a transcript of all of his previous high school and college credits. It likewise requests three letters of recommendation, including that of his pastor, which urge the applicant's acceptance as a likely ministerial student. Three letters of reference are desired in all cases where the application is relatively unknown to the members of the committee. If it is deemed advisable, a personal interview will be requested. Since this is course of study for older, and especially married men, which will require definite scholastic gifts and a great measure of perseverance at study in spite of handicap of age and family obligation going with it. We are interested to be assured that the applicants do have these characteristics in addition to the character qualifications that are essential for the ministry.

The cost of the program is to be borne by the student with assistance from the Synod as necessary. The actual expenses will not be known until the student's prior credits have been examined and the necessary instructors secured.

SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS

Pastor Carl Mischke, Chairman

Report to the Ten Districts, 1974, page 7:

The CHE report in 1973 stated that a pre-seminary training program for members of minority groups had been endorsed. To that report we append the following. For many years these who have met Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary entrance requirements and have been accepted by WLS have come from a variety of sources, e.g., graduates of non-synodical schools, Christian elementary school teachers, graduates of the "Bethany Program," transfers from Springfield, etc. to meet present needs, it is not feasible to train all members of minority groups for the holy ministry by following the normal channels. Furthermore, it is important that this program not be delayed because a qualified applicant has indicated a sincere interest in enrolling in the pre-seminary ministerial program. In light of approval already given by the Conference of Presidents, the Commission on Higher Education, and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, the pre-seminary ministerial program for members of minority groups has been initiated.

Attachment #2

A MULTICULTURAL PRE-SEMINARY PROGRAM (11/16/91)

The WELS Multicultural Mission Committee feels that our synod desperately

4 needs pastors from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Most specifically, it
believes that such workers are needed not merely for the sake of variety, but in order
that our synod can effectively carry out the Great Commission among the diverse
cultural groups of the U. S. and Canada. An ethnic knows better and can communicate
8 better with his own people. Since our committee has been charged with planning and advising
our synodical agencies to that end, we have drawn up the following program for discussion.

12 **RATIONALE:**

Our committee believes that for a variety of reasons pre-seminary
training would be most effective if conducted "on location" in a student's own cultural
16 milieu. Among the reasons for this are:

1. When the local pastor and congregation are involved in the educational process, the
student's dedication and abilities can more accurately be assessed;
- 20 2. The student will often come from an educationally disadvantaged
background and may need individualized remedial work; there may be an
initial problem with the English language.
- 24 3. The student's eventual effectiveness in the ministry of his own culture
could be jeopardized by a lengthy residence in suburban middle-class
schools and communities. Such a period would affect both his own ability
28 to communicate and "fit-in" with his ethnic group and his acceptance as a
leader in the ethnic community.
- 32 4. Students will often be "older" men (not 18-20) when they begin their
training and may well have families to provide for. Hence an 8 or 9 year
full-time residential training program may not be economically feasible.
- 36 5. The student can be a blessing to the mission work in his home congregation
while improving his abilities. Missionaries should not have to choose
between keeping a local leader an encouraging him to train for full-time
40 service as a pastor.
6. The ethnic student is not necessarily an heir to Western civilization,

Attachment #2 continued

and His worldview is certainly different. The liberal arts curriculum of our
traditional preparation for ministry for such students.

CURRICULUM:

48 Our committee further believes that a modified curriculum can best
prepare the student best prepare the student for seminary work. Since it is the task of
Northwestern College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary to jointly ensure that the
52 students accepted into WLS are us curriculum, or committee wishes to work with
these faculties to design an alternative pre-seminary curriculum that would allow
multicultural students to do the bulk of their preparation in their home congregations
and still be prepared to succeed at the seminary. To that end, we have drawn up the
56 following proposed curriculum for your consideration and discussion.

Old Testament Survey	J. Lawrenz, TCM (<u>Training Christians for Mission</u>)
New Testament Survey	J. Gerlach, TCM
Christian Doctrine	P. Kelm, TCM
Church and Ministry	W. Mueller, TCM
Spiritual Gifts	D. Valleskey TCM
64 Greek	J. Walther, <u>N. T. Greek Workbook</u>
Hebrew	M. Mansoor, <u>Biblical Hebrew, Step by Step</u> (2 vols.)
Confessions	<u>Augsburg Confession</u> (and Catechisms?)
68 Thro' the Bible	D. Luetke, <u>Bible Pathways</u> Bible History, Daily
Life, and Geography	G. Thompson, <u>Bible Background</u> (2 vols.)

72 A group of optional "elective" courses (Basic Teaching Skills, Evangelism,
Administration, etc.) could be made available as well. The local pastor and the student
74 could select one or more of these to round out the student's preparation for seminary
and to make him a more effective worker in the local congregation during his pre-sem
years.

Attachment #2 continued

INSTRUCTION:

Two of the numerous says that the curriculum might be taught are
Outlined as follows, just to stimulate thinking and discussion.

80 1. Entirely by the local pastor:

The above instruction if taught entirely in the student's home congregation might be spread out over a number of years as follows:

- 84 Prelim: Spiritual Gifts, Church & Ministry
Yr. 1: Greek, O. T. Survey, N.T. Survey, Christian Doctrine
Yr. 2: Greek, Thro' Bible (1)
Yr. 3: Greek (reading John), Hebrew (1), Thro' Bible (2)
88 Yr. 4: Greek (reading), Hebrew (2), Bible Hist-Daily Life,
 Augsburg Confession

A fifth year may well be necessary to complete the work. Most of course materials are to some extent self-teaching, allowing the student to work at home unsupervised each day. He would then meet weekly with his teacher (in this case, his pastor) for approx. 3 hours.

92 2. Involving the NWC or WLS Faculty:

96 A modification of this program would substantially reduce the 4+ year preparation period, involve the WLS or NWC faculty during summer periods, and reduce the time commitment of the local pastor. Such a program might look like this:

- 100 Prelim: Spiritual Gifts, Church & Ministry
Summer: 8 week intensive Greek course at NWC/WLC
Yr. 1: Greek, O.T. Survey, N.T. Survey, Christian Doctrine
Summer: 8 week intensive Hebrew Course at NWC/WLC
Yr. 2: Greek(John), Hebrew(Ruth), Thro' Bible (2)
Summer: 6 week Bible Hist-Daily Life, Doctrine and Confessions
 At NWC/WLS

If a student is still not quite ready, he could spend a third year reading 108 Greek, Hebrew, etc. Under either alternative, the NWC or WLS faculty would be asked to examine/test the student in January of his final year of study to make recommendations as to

Attachment #2 continued

112 his possible acceptance into the Seminary for the following school year.

LONG RANGE VISION

The hope of the Multicultural Mission Committee is that the Christians
In our Synod would recognize the importance of training our future
116 ethnic co-workers in the same field in which they were evangelized. In
this way we return to the church leaders who evangelized. In this way
we return to the church leaders who understand the needs and the
realities of that church, and who are best able to address those needs.
120 For this reason we envisage that also the seminary program itself will
eventually take place primarily on-site.

It is our sincere conviction that we can provide evangelically committed and
thoroughly trained workers who are in no way inferior
124 to their brothers who have completed the traditional residential training
program.

Attachment # 3

September 28th, 1994

Report to the Board for Ministerial Education

Since being approved in April, the following beginning steps have been made to develop and implement the Multicultural Preseminary Program.

Dr. Glen Thompson of Michigan Lutheran Seminary agreed to serve as director pro-tem for the coming school year. He is being supervised by an executive committee of Dr. Borgwardt and Rev. H. Hagedorn (representing the BME and BHM respectively) and Profs. Sprain and Panning (representing NWC and WLS respectively). A winter meeting of the full task force is expected. In hope that many of the materials for Level One, Dr. Thompson met with Rev. Wayne Mueller to review all of the current materials planned by and available from the Board for Parish Services. He visited NPH to survey other material from other sources. He made contact with the Lutheran Book Concern (ELS) and Concordia Publishing House and received permission for them to adapt select publications for the project. Level Two courses may include existing materials, will be larger development projects. Dr. Thompson met with NWC to develop key biblical language courses.

October 9th, 1995

To: Conference of Presidents

From: Home Missions/hjh

Cross Cultural Worker Training

Task Force recommended by Multi Cultural Ministry Committee of the Board for Home Missions.

BHM endorsed with recommendation to the then Board for Worker Training. Board for Ministerial

Education authorized a task force on the above subject to be made up of the presidents or their

representatives from WLS and NWC/MLC-PT and representatives of the Multi Cultural Ministry

Committee and the Boards for Home and World Missions.

This task force met several times and recommended to the BME that a program be developed to meet the needs of training cross cultural workers and especially older ethnic students. The BME accepted this

recommendation and some of the preliminary work has been shared with the COP previously. The Task

Force for the training of Cross Cultural Workers has established a goal to have the next step at the next

BME meeting 1/96. Present task force is A. Panning, J. Plitzuweit, R. Sprain, L. Olson, G. Thompson,

A. Sorum and H. J. Hagedorn. Hagedorn was selected as chairman.

January 9th. 1996

The task force for the Alternative Education of Ethic and Cross Cultural Ministers prepared a number of pre seminary programs the WELS Board for Ministerial Education dating back to 1995 it had to be worked and reworked until 1996. See attachment #3

The BME resolution 1/30/96

Re: Cross cultural Program

WHEREAS the Board for Ministerial Education has approved a pilot WELS Multicultural Pre-Seminary program; and

WHEREAS that pilot has been guided by a task force (the Task Force for Alternative Education of Ethic and Cross Cultural Ministers), a task force in which representatives from the ministerial schools participated; and

WHEREAS the program has been developed with the assistance of an interim program director; and

WHEREAS portions of level one course work in the program have been implemented in the congregational setting with positive results; and

WHEREAS level two, providing for specific entrance requirements at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, now needs significant development; and

WHEREAS the task force is recommending that the BME take ownership of the program by assuming responsibility for its development and support; and

WHEREAS the task force proposes a program committee, responsible to the BME, for the oversight and development of the program; and

WHEREAS the Conference of Presidents encourages the BME to assume such responsibilities; therefore be it

Resolved, a) that the Board for Ministerial Education assume responsibility for the WELS Multicultural Pre-seminary Program and its further development; and be it further

Resolved, b) that for the oversight of the program's development and operation the BME appoint a Program Committee for Multicultural Ministerial Education; and be it further

Resolved, c) that the program Committee consist of one representative each from the Multicultural Mission Committee of the Board for Home Missions, the Board for Ministerial Education, the Martin Luther College pastoral track, and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary; And be it further

- Resolved**, d) that the BME member of the Program Committee be a member of the BME Curriculum And Student Services Committee be a member of the BME Committee, with initial Representation by Pastor Lynn Schroeder; and be it further
- Resolved**, e) that the initial representative from the Multicultural Committee to the Program Committee be Professor Glen Thompson for the sake of continuity; and be it further
- Resolved**, f) that the budget for the program be included in the system-wide section of ministerial education budgeting; and be it further
- Resolved**, g) that the program committee report annually to the BME through the BME administrator, and that the BME keep the COP informed through its regular reports;
- Resolved**, h) that the BME through its administrator inform the districts of the urgency of proceeding With the WELS Multicultural Pre-Seminary Program; and be it further
- Resolved**, i) that the BME encourage the program committee to proceed after receiving response From the districts; and be it further
- Resolved**, j) that the BME request the Coordinating Council to provide initial funding for the 1996-97 fiscal year through the Schwan Foundation and /or other special gifts, with funding for the 1997-99 biennium and beyond to be included in the regular decision package process; and be it finally
- Resolved**, k) that the BME dismiss the task force with thanks for the development and Implementation of the pilot program.

Task Force for the Alternative Education of Ethnic and Crosscultural Ministers

Page 2

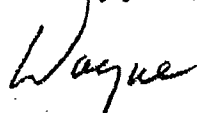
February 12, 1996

- Resolved, b) That for the oversight of the program's development and operation the BME appoint a Program Committee for Multicultural Ministerial Education; and be it further
- Resolved, c) That the Program Committee consist of one representative each from the Multicultural Mission Committee of the Board for Home Missions, the Board for Ministerial Education, the Martin Luther College pastoral track, and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary; and be it further
- Resolved, d) That the BME member of the Program Committee be a member of the BME Curriculum and Student Services Committee, with initial representation by Pastor Lynn Schroeder; and be it further
- Resolved, e) That the initial representative from the Multicultural Committee to the Program Committee be Professor Glen Thompson for the sake of continuity; and be it further
- Resolved, f) That the budget for the program be included in the system-wide section of ministerial education budgeting; and be it further
- Resolved, g) That the Program Committee report annually to the BME through the BME administrator, and that the BME keep the COP informed through its regular reports; and be it further
- Resolved, h) That the BME through its administrator inform the districts of the urgency of proceeding with the WELS Multicultural Preseminary Program; and be it further
- Resolved, i) That the BME encourage the program committee to proceed after receiving responses from the districts; and be it further
- Resolved, j) That the BME request the Coordinating Council to provide initial funding for the 1996-97 fiscal year through the Schwan Foundation and/or other special gifts, with funding for the 1997-99 biennium and beyond to be included in the regular decision package process; and be it finally.
- Resolved, k) That the BME dismiss the task force with thanks for the development and implementation of the pilot program.

As you see, the Board for Ministerial Education is taking ownership of this program, both in terms of its general oversight and its funding. We are forwarding a request to the Coordinating Council for immediate funding for the 1996-97 year. Thereafter we anticipate that it will become part of the decision package process within our division.

I am sure that your interest in this program will continue, even though your service on the task force has been concluded. In point of fact, I will anticipate the participation of a number of you in this work as time moves on.

Sincerely yours,



Wayne M. Borgwardt
Administrator for Ministerial Education

THE WELS
MULTICULTURAL
PRESEMINARY
PROGRAM:

Oversight and Development
Guidelines and Administration

Jan. 9, 1996

Prepared for: the WELS Board for Ministerial Education

by: the Task Force for the Alternative Education of Ethnic and Cross-cultural Ministers

Table of Contents

Program Oversight and Development	4
Program Director	4
Program Committee for Cross-Cultural Ministerial Education	4
Course Developers and Instructors	4
Program Funding	4
Curriculum	4
Administration	5
Introduction	5
Level I	5
Curriculum and Instruction	5
Costs	5
Transcripts	6
Satisfactory Completion of Level I	6
Level II	6
Admission to the Level II Program	6
Curriculum and Instruction	6
Costs	7
Academic Standards and Grading	7
Satisfactory Completion of Level II	7

Program Oversight and Development

Program Director

It is recommended that a program director be called by the BME to oversee the program. He should be a theologically-trained man with cross cultural experience and sensitivity. His position description should include 1) publicity for the program; 2) maintaining student records; 3) budgetary oversight; 4) staying abreast of cross-cultural issues; 5) overseeing the development and updating of course materials; and 6) oversight of the teaching of Level II courses. The program directorship is envisioned as being, at least initially, a half-time position (0.5 FTE).

Program Committee for Cross-Cultural Ministerial Education

It is recommended that a BME committee replace the current task force and be given oversight of the program. This Program Committee would consist of four members, one each from the BME, the Multicultural Mission Committee of the BHM, a member of the WLS faculty, and a member of the MLC pastor-track faculty. The program director would be advisory.

The Program Committee would oversee the program, make recommendations to the BME for curricular alterations in consultation with the MLC and WLS faculties, give input on the acceptance of students into Level II, recommend students completing Level II for admission into WLS, ensure that the program meets its goals and remains financially viable, and initiate any other necessary programs to further biblical cross-cultural worker training within our synod.

Course Developers and Instructors

WELS pastors and teachers who develop courses in Level I will be recognized by an appropriate honorarium. In general, such assignments are to be considered part of their discretionary time. Level I courses will be taught by the local pastor as a normal part of his congregational work.

Level II courses will be developed by WELS pastors and teachers also. Due to the larger task of developing these courses, however, these should be considered part of the developer's work load (FTE). This should be funded by the BME through the Program Committee. If a retired worker agrees to develop a course, this would be recognized by a suitable honorarium. Depending on factors such as course length and size of the class, teaching a course might be considered either part of the teacher's workload or his discretionary time. The Program Committee via its director will make this decision and arrange for suitable financial compensation.

Program Funding

It is recommended that the BME fund the program by making it a separate line item in its budget. We recommend that the initial budget request be for 1.0 FTE. This would allow for a program director (0.5 FTE) and release time for course developers (0.5 FTE). After the courses are in place (3-5 yrs.), it might be possible to decrease the budget again. A restricted fund could be set up to gather scholarship money and perhaps to endow the entire program eventually.

Curriculum

A preliminary curriculum is outlined in the following pages. It is to be emphasized, however, that this curriculum will undergo whatever changes and expansions are found necessary to achieve the program's goal -- to prepare multicultural candidates who can successfully follow the curriculum and graduate from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

Program Guidelines and Administration

Introduction

The Multicultural Preseminary Program is a program of the WELS Board for Ministerial Education. The courses and procedures outlined below are subject to change by the BME as the program develops.

Level I

Level I courses are designed to train minority laymen for service in their congregations and assist the local pastor in determining which men have the gifts and abilities for the pastoral ministry.

Admission to the Level I Program

Level I participants should be invited into the program at the invitation of their pastor and congregation. Participants should also be male confirmed members of the WELS. If a neighboring pastor will be the course instructor the participant should have the recommendation of his own pastor. If English is not the first language of the person, a TOEFL (*Test of English as a Foreign Language*) score of 400 is necessary for participation. While Level I courses are open to all WELS members, only minority students of the WELS will be eligible for enrollment in Level II.

Curriculum and Instruction

The following courses currently make up Level I:

- Old Testament Overview
- Life of Christ*
- New Testament Overview*
- Reformation History
- Law and Gospel*
- Christian Doctrine*
- Christian Ministry
- The Christian Family
- The Christian Elder
- Christian Worship

Courses followed by an * are currently available or in preparation.

Course materials are designed to be taught by local pastors and are available from the program director. Some are designed for intensive week-end classes. Proven competence may allow students to test out of certain courses at the program director's discretion.

Costs

The only costs for Level I courses are for books and course materials. These may be purchased from the program director by students or their congregations.

Transcripts

The program director will maintain a current transcript for each student enrolled in Level I. The transcript will include the starting and completion date for each course, as well as a course grade (A, B, C, D, or Fail). It will also include a record of congregational activity during the enrollment period and may include other written assessments as forwarded by the course instructor.

Satisfactory Completion of Level I

Passing all of the required courses with a C average is necessary for satisfactory completion of Level I. A certificate of accomplishment will be awarded to those students who achieve this goal.

Level II

Admission to the Level II Program

Admission to Level II will be granted to minority members of WELS who 1) have satisfactorily completed Level I; 2) have earned a high school diploma or its equivalent; 3) have an acceptable proficiency in English (TOEFL score of 450); 4) have been recommended by their pastor and congregation; and 5) have been accepted by the program director in consultation with the Program Committee.

Curriculum and Instruction

Currently the Level II curriculum consists of the following courses:

- Biblical Greek (I, II, III)
- John's Gospel (in Greek)
- I Corinthians (in Greek)
- Acts of the Apostles (in English)
- Biblical Hebrew (I, II)
- The Three Ecumenical Creeds
- The Smalcald Articles
- Intermediate Christian Doctrine
- Christian Worship
- English: grammar, outlining, composition, rhetoric
- Computer Skills
- Ancient History
- Basics of cultural anthropology and psychology

Proven proficiency may allow the student to test out of certain courses at the discretion of the program director.

The courses will be taught in a variety of formats by qualified instructors. Most courses will be designed as correspondence or distance learning courses. Some may be offered at a central location. For the non-residential courses, regular contact between the instructor and the student will be maintained via telephone, fax, mail or periodic visits. The local pastor may serve as a tutor. The instructor and the program director in consultation with the student will also set time limits for completion of each course and for completion of the program.

Costs

The student will be responsible for the costs of purchasing or renting course materials. In addition, a tuition fee will be charged for each course. The initial fee of \$50 per course is subject to periodic review. Grants-in-aid and scholarship money will be available for qualifying students.

Academic Standards and Grading

The program director will maintain a transcript for each student. The course instructor will award a grade (A, B, C, D, Fail) for each course. A student must maintain a C average to remain a student in good standing. Grades of D or below in two successive courses will make a student ineligible to continue the program (or the courses must be retaken within an agreed period of time). Grade average will be considered in the awarding of scholarship funds.

Satisfactory Completion of Level II

Students who complete all courses with at least a C average and within the specified time limits will receive a certificate of accomplishment. Such students will then be placed before the Program Committee to be considered for recommendation for admission to Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Harold J. Hagedorn, chair

Rev. John H. Kurth

Prof. Lawrence O. Olson

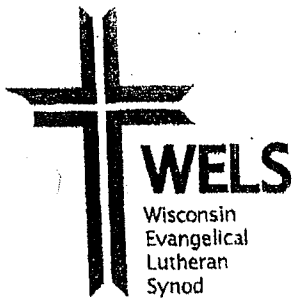
Pres. Armin J. Panning

Prof. Jerald J. Plitzuweit

Rev. E. Allen Sorum

Prof. Roger J. Sprain

Prof. Glen L. Thompson



MINISTERIAL EDUCATION

REV. WAYNE M. BORGWARDT, ADMINISTRATOR

February 12, 1996

Task Force for the Alternative Education of Ethnic and Crosscultural Ministers

Harold Hagedorn
Lawrence OlsonArmin Panning
Jerald PlitzuweitAllen Sorum
Roger Sprain

Glen Thompson

Dear Task Force Members,

I am sure that it is with a considerable amount of satisfaction that you receive this letter.

First of all, it offers the gratitude of the Board for Ministerial Education for the work carried out by the Task Force for the Alternative Education of Ethnic and Crosscultural Ministers. Your work on that committee has helped carry this project through some uncertain times and has led to the accompanying resolution adopted by the Board for Ministerial Education.

I know that your interest in this program will continue, but your specific service on this task force now concludes. You can finish your service with a sense of satisfaction that a job has been well done. The resolution itself follows:

- WHEREAS the Board for Ministerial Education has approved a pilot WELS Multicultural Preseminary Program; and
- WHEREAS that pilot has been guided by a task force (the Task Force for Alternative Education of Ethnic and Crosscultural Ministers), a task force in which representatives from the ministerial schools participated; and
- WHEREAS the program has been developed with the assistance of an interim program director; and
- WHEREAS portions of level one course work in the program have been implemented in the congregational setting with positive results; and
- WHEREAS level two, providing for specific entrance requirements at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, now needs significant development; and
- WHEREAS the task force is recommending that the BME take ownership of the program by assuming responsibility for its development and support; and
- WHEREAS the task force proposes a program committee, responsible to the BME, for the oversight and development of the program; and
- WHEREAS the Conference of Presidents encourages the BME to assume such responsibility; therefore be it
- Resolved, a) That the Board for Ministerial Education assume responsibility for the WELS Multicultural Preseminary Program and its further development; and be it further

2929 North Mayfair Road
Milwaukee WI 53222-4398
Phone: 414-256-3236
FAX: 414-256-3899

Works Cited

Freeman, Leonard. Personal Interview with Rolfe Westendorf. 16 Nov. 2003

Freeman, Leonard. Personal Interview with E. Allen Sorum. 21 Nov. 2003

Westendorf, Rolfe, "WELS in the Inner City," *Conference Paper*. March 1, 1982.