# VISION 2000+ "THE NUMBER ONE PRIORITY: REVITALIZE CONGREGATIONS THROUGH CALLED WORKERS."

<u>by;</u> ROBERT GLASGOW

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"The 1989 WELS convention approved a statement mapping out the synod's course, under God, into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

"It is essential," the statement read, "That every member understand and endorse Christ's mission for the church."

This course of action is presented in the mission statement,

"VISION 2000." This paper will present, "VISION 2000+" and examine the number one prioroty of "VISION 2000+, as determined by the Coordinating Council of the WELS. The number one priority ascribed to "VISION 200+" is, "REVITALIZE CONGREGATIONS THROUGH CALLED WORKERS."

#### MISSION

"As men, women and children united in faith and worship by the word of God, the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod exists to make disciples throughout the world for time and for eternity, using the gospel to win the lost for Christ and nurture believers for lives of Christian service, all to the glory of God.

#### OBJECTIVES

- 1. To uphold and testify to the truth of God as fully revealed in the inspired, infallible Holy Scriptures and articulated in the Lutheran Confessions:
- 2. To seize every opportunity the Lord provides to evangelize lost souls and establish ministering churches throughout the world;
- 3. To help each other grow and mature in the faith through public worship and life long study of the word of God;
- 4. To encourage and equip each other for the application of our faith in lives of Christian service, for the lord,

his church, his world;

5. To recruit and train candidates qualified for fulltime ministry and provide for their continuing education
so that the word of God is proclaimed faithfully and effectively
in accord with the Lutheran Confessions.

#### VISION 2000+

#### Vision Defined:

- An outline of what, under God, we hope our synod will be and do;
- An instrument to focus, prioritize, and coordinate planning;
- 3. The application of faith in the Lord's promises and stewardship of his resources to his church's future.

#### Preamble:

It is essential that every member understand and endorse Christ's mission for the church.

# Under Objective One:

- Through an ongoing scriptural study of doctrine in every congregation and conference.
- 2. Through publication and distribution of thorough theological studies on contemporary issues challenging Christianity.
- 3. Through increased use of mass media to proclaim the truth of God's word;
- 4. Through fostering confessional unity of faith among Christians throughout the world;

#### Under Objective Two:

1. To reach new people by planting new churches with the goal of 1500 congregations;

- 2. To reach people of other cultures in our country by establishing 10 new cross-cultural missions in urban centers;
- 3. To expand our world outreach by increasing our expatriate mission corps to 70;
- 4. To reach our lost neighbors through a structured program in every congregation.

# Under Objective three:

- 1. A recognition of every member's need to worship regularly as reflected in an increasing synodical church attendance from 40% to 60%;
- 2. An emphasis on every communicant's need for organized bible study as reflected by an increase in average synodiacl bible class attendance from 11% to 30%;
- 3. Concerted efforts to enroll 100% of the children of our church in formal programs of Christian education;
- 4. Equip all of our members for personal and family devotional life.

# Under Objective Four:

- 1. To reflect the scriptural injunction to give as

  God has prospered us by doubling our personal offerings

  for the Lord's work to a synodical average of five

  percent of income, including a doubling of gifts

  for our mutual mission and ministry as a synod;
- 2. To assist Christian in utilizing their spiritual gifts by providing training for ministry in all of our congregations with 60% of WELS members involved

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- in opportunities for ministry within the church;
- 3. To assist families in our congregations and to reach out to our communities by providing Christian marriage and parenting programs, Christian Schools and day care, youth ministry, family support groups, and Christian counseling with a plan for family ministry implemented in all WELS congregations;
- 4. To respond to special needs and a changing society with Christ-centered programs of ministry for people whose physical, emotional or social situation may require additional forms of ministry.

#### Under objective five:

- 1. To intensify recruitment from elementary, high school, and non-traditional sources with recruitment and scholarship emphasis in every congregation in order to produce 70 pastor candidates and 140 teacher candidates each year;
- To study recruiting, training, certification, and calling process for staff workers other than pastors and teachers;
- 3. To develop a comprehensive program for professional growth in ministry that has all called workers participating in individualized continuing education with the support of their congregations;
- 4. To support the called workers Christ gives to the church with a structure for mutual encouragment, counseling, adequate financial provisions, and staffto-membership ratios appropriate to ministry expectations.

#### GROWING

- 1. In the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ;
- 2. In our ability and zeal to minister;
- 3. In New Christians and Christian congregations.

#### GOING

- 1. To our weak and hurting;
- 2. To the lost of our communities;
- 3. To the world.

#### GLOWING

- 1. In the joy of salvation;
- 2. In the love of Christ;
- 3. In the truth of God's word."

In view of wanting to successfully implement VISION

2000 the Coordinating Council of the WELS, determined a

number of obstacles which provided problems with outreach.

These obstacles were seen to affect the proclamation of
the gospel, thus they are necessary to address. These obstacles
are in six major divisions.

# A. External factors that are assumed to impact upon the WELS 1. SOCIAL:

- INSTITUTIONS (family)-loosly configured, non-authoritative,
   unstable, less social influence, single and/or non genetic parents.
- VALUES & ATTITUDES- idolization of "self" and of "choice," amoral, abuses to self and others, neglect of offspring, absence of godliness.
- LIFESTYLES-<u>heavier emotional and social stresses</u>, volunteerism, <u>earlier but reversible retirements</u>.
- DEMOGRAPHICS-<u>ethnic/racial</u> <u>growths</u>, increased geographic mobility, greater urbanization, higher median ages.

  GENDER-greater influence of women, women in every occupation,

more unisex manifestations, women in leadership functions.

#### 2.ECONOMIC

- INSTITUTIONS-larger concentrations of output and wealth, more influential non-profit entities, fewer farms, globalized orientation.
- OUTLOOK-stability, rapid growth, more discretionary spending, worldwide commerce, steady inflation, high personnel costs.
- WEALTH DISTRIBUTION-wealth concentrated in the elderly, <a href="less savings">1ess savings</a>, more affluent females, <a href="smaller middle">smaller middle</a> class.
- MATERIALISM-acceptance as a social driver,  $\underline{\text{instant}}$   $\underline{\text{gratification}}$  the norm.
- WORK-LESS MANUFACTURING-more service industry, high technology, diversity and specialization, knowledge work, volunteerism.

#### 3. POLITICAL:

- INSTITUTIONS-centralized, <u>crime laden</u>, stable internationaly, overshadowed by informal group structures, pragmatic and not idealistic.
- GOVERNMENTAL ROLE-controls for education systems, <u>welfare</u>

  <u>decline</u>, less military, <u>removal from arts/regional</u>

  <u>supports.</u>
- POWER BASE-special interests groups, inability to accommodate forces of social change.
- SECULARISM-increasing, more separation from religious institutions, some persecution, less private groups' subsidization.
- REGULATION-more informal reporting and auditing, personal security emphasis, economic focused, more liability/torts actions.

#### 4. RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL:

- INSTITUTIONS-numerous, informal, <u>decentralized</u>, <u>independent</u>, not doctrine based, social gospel emphasis, <u>high expectations</u> of,
- GENERAL-not the center of American life, more counseling roles, humanism impacting even more, continued mainline church apostacies.

- DIVERSITY-New Age and cults growth, further shifts from liberal to conservative views, no national faiths or religions.
- EDUCATION-newer technological methods, growing dissatisfaction with public teaching effectiveness, ongoing life roles, home schooling.
- SPIRITUALITY-revived but in unorthodox and diffuse manners,

  non-denominationalism, less appreciation for Scripture,
  less influential.

#### TRENDS THAT HAVE SOME PROBABILITY OF DIRECTING FUTURE EVENTS

- SPIRITUAL REVIVALISM-burgeoning, less doctrinally Christian, social reform & rational bases vs. Great Commission reasons, theatrical.
- DEMOGRAPHICS-Sun Belt growth, stagnating Heartland, aging population, strong overall growth, diversity of cultures in some locale.
- SPECIALIZATION- in work, in volunteerism, in giving, in ministries.
- RATES OF CHANGE-accelerating, pervasive, generally unpredictable, entropic.
- INDIVIDUALITY-"choices" mindset, wariness of formal structures, cell-centered identifications, motivation for participative roles.
- INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY-higher expectations for visibility of programs, resources usage and impacts, the new focus for defining work.
- CHURCH CONCEPT-<u>less organizational structure</u>, independent of central physical plants, worker shortages, more inter parish programs.
- SERVICE/GIVING ATTITUDES- more TTT <u>contributions</u> to <u>designated</u> <u>causes</u>, personally endorsed programs, non-parish institutions.
- MARKET-....laborers are few....

#### INTERNAL FACTORS THAT CHARACTERIZE THIS CHURCH BODY

DOCTRINE-point of member identification and confidence, strong and continued emphasis, mission centered.

LOYALTY-comparatively strong but yet decreasing, based upon

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- pulpit and personality as much as doctrines and origins. STABILITY-enviably strong, cautious of change.
- STEWARDSHIP-TTT growth but patterned regionally, vs. a parish/ synod TTT structure.
- EDUCATION/NURTURING-historic strength and attracting feature, emphasized as a formal & group process vs. as a personal & lifelong means.
- DEMOGRAPHICS-dispersion throughout the world, <u>more ethnic</u>

  <u>variety</u>, <u>rapidly aging</u>, <u>fewer child confirmands</u>,

  plateaued growth.
- OUTREACH-organizationally important, dispensed worldwide through formal institutions more so than members personal efforts.
- ORGANIZATION-"all things in good order," decentralized, pastor focused but not pastor dominated.
- LEADERSHIP-effective staffing selection, concerned for the membership, high reputation, focuses best internally, prone to habitualness.
- CALLED WORKERS-well-trained, dedicated, effective, espirit d'corps, better at indoctrinating than at nurturing newcomers.
- LAITY-conservative, conscientious, values any education, few are agrarian, strong convictions but less convincing lifestyles, resourceful. 3

To determine how each of these obstacles will individually affect the spreading of the gospel is impossible to determine, however the accumulative effect on any number of combinations can be dramatic. A study of statistics taken from the WELS over the past decade confirm this point.

During the past decade the growth rate of the WELS flattened. The fact is, growth during the past five years was virtually non-existent. This can be supported from the fact the WELS gained only 1620 communicants. The growth rate of 3.6%, (communicants) is the lowest gain experienced

during this century and the total net gain is the lowest rise since 1920."4

Children's confirmations were at the lowest level in three decades, confirmations showed a net loss of 1500<sup>4</sup> over the previous decade. This decline accurately reflects the decline of children's baptisms of the 1970's. The most dramatic aspect of this decline is the decline in the ratio of confirmations to baptisms. In 1978 there were 71.8% of childrens baptisms as compared with 1964. In 1989 we confirmed only 66.3% of the number of childrens baptisms of 1975. Indeed this seems to be a frightening statistic, based on these numbers we must conclude we are loosing our children (and parents?) via the back door prior to confirmation.

People entering the WELS by adult affirmation of faith saw a decline of about 1000 per year. <sup>4</sup> This number is based on a comparison of the later half of the 70's when records began being kept. During the past four years WELS experienced back door loses of some 8000 per year. <sup>4</sup> This decline accounts for approximately 10% of the total WELS membership.

The number of new churches organized during the 80's was 101. This constitutes about one half of the number started during the 1970's. This opening rate more closely resembles the opening rate of new congregations during the 40's and 50's.

"In a study by F. Toppe of Kimberly Wisc., a few years ago he concluded 26% of our numerical growth came from 100 of our largest congregations and 21% of our growth has been in mission congregations in the four new districts, (South

Atlantic, North Atlantic, South Central, Arizona-California)<sup>4</sup>
This proportion of growth enjoyed during the previous decades was not shared during the 80's. "86.5% of our communicant growth in the 80's came from our outlying districts, (Arizona-California-26.5%, North Atlantic-12.2%, Pacific Northwest 7.3%, South Atlantic-24%, and South Central-17.4%). In 1989 our largest congregations lost a net of 476 communicants. However, these same congregations accounted for 1285, or over one third of our adult confirmations."<sup>4</sup> In 1989 it took 86 communicants to gain one adult confirmand in our largest congregations. In contrast our 176 mission congregations in 1989 confirmed 512 adults<sup>4</sup> and gained a net of 1018<sup>4</sup> communicants. It took 53 communicants to gain one adult confirmand in these mission congregations.

Such statistics leave us with many questions. One might be tempted to ask, "What can we look forward to in the decade of the nineties?" The answer of course will have to be left up to God, since only he knows. In view of these statistics, in view of what seems like insurmountable obstacles, the synod's VISION 2000+ seeks to coordinate and present the gospel in the most efficient way. The gospel IS the only means to bring about a change in people. Vision 2000+ does not attempt to exchange the gospel for man made means, yet it attempts to reduce the obstacles we ourselves place in spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ.

In view of the broad scope of VISION 2000+, the Coordinating Council of the WELS has prioritized and established four "Key Thrusts" in attempting to overcome the many obstacles

which might stand in the way of presenting Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world. These goals of VISION 2000+ are aimed at presenting the gospel decently and in order. The four "Key Thrusts" of VISION 2000+ are as follows:

- 1. REVITALIZE CONGREGATIONS THROUGH CALLED WORKERS. Planning 1 year, implementation 2-4 years.
- 2. HOME MISSION EFFORT TO EXPAND BASE. Planning ongoing, implementation 1-10 years.
- 3. RECRUITMENT AND EXPANSION OF FORMS OF MINISTRY.
  Plan 1 year, implementation 2-4 years.
- 4.WORLD MISSION ENHANCEMENT:
  Planning 1-2 years, implementation 3-10 years.

This paper will examine the planning and proposed implementation designed to effect change within congregations based upon the number one priority as designated by the Coordinating Council, "REVITALIZE CONGREGATIONS THROUGH CALLED WORKERS."

The work of revitalizing congregations will be assisted by the Board for Parish Services, (BPS). Congregational support will be offered in four major areas and are designed to aid in spiritual growth and renewal to individuals within congregations who seek assistance. These areas of support are (in order of priority) 1. Adult Spiritual Growth. 2. Evangelism and membership retention. 3. Worship. 4. Family Ministry.

Currently there are many random approaches being taken by congregations to meet the various needs of ministry presented. This paper will deal directly with new support material currently being developed by BPS in each of these four areas. The majority of the materials being presented have not been distributed to congregations. Much of this information

was obtained through interviews and manuscript forms of materials still being edited and worked on. The information is the most current available but is still subject to change. Consequently some of the material may be changed. Information gained through interviews was in many cases paraphrased and assimilated and combined with knowledge gained in my training. I took every precaution not to plagiarize those I've interviewed, but to present their though as clearly as possible from my notes. The most direct and in some cases pithy statements were quoted directly. I thank all who helped me in formulating this paper.

Adult spiritual growth affects all categories of ministry, "The value of any congregational activity is gauged in direct proximity to the Word." It is exposure to the Word which permits growth. Underlying many of the internal and external factors affecting the WELS mentioned earlier in this paper have to do with contact with the Word. The greater exposure to the Word, the less of an impact from obstacles will occur. The greater the exposure to the Word, the greater the spiritual growth and renewal. Bible study among WELS Christians has been poor, yet current trends during the past decade show a greater interest among its members to attend bible study.

% of adults  $\frac{1980}{8.4}$   $\frac{81}{8.6}$   $\frac{82}{8.6}$   $\frac{83}{8.6}$   $\frac{84}{9.0}$   $\frac{85}{9.1}$   $\frac{86}{10.1}$   $\frac{87}{10.610.811.1}$  Bible Study.

"Lutheran" approaches to learning have stressed cognitive learning over kinesthetic and affective learning. The result is that our people have known "doctrine" but felt inadequate

to a great degree in applying scripture to everyday life. The "confirmation syndrome" has had its effect in decreased adult bible study, since it was thought learning was for the young. Contemporary realities however, necessitate the traditional method of bible study stressing cognitive learning be supplemented, not supplanted with affective and kinesthetic skills.

In addressing the need to meet all three forms of learning, cognitive, affective and kinesthetic, BPS is introducing the BIBLE STUDY CURRICULUM: TRAINING CHRISTIANS FOR MINISTRY, (TCM). The circumstance which led up to the formation of this curriculum was,"...the small percentage of WELS members attending regularly scheduled Bible classes and the small percentage of members who study the Bible on their own." The curriculum also is in response to, "A growing desire in a number of our people to study the Bible both in a formal setting and in a small group."

TRAINING CHRISTIANS FOR MINISTRY, (TCM) can best be viewed in the light of, "Answering the concerns of Spiritual Renewal." The goals of TCM include: "1. Growing to spiritual maturity through the Word of God. 2. Developing the pattern of a personal devotional life. 3. Appropriating the attitudes and applying the principles of Christian discipleship. 4. Appreciating "member ministry" and growing into roles of service in the Body of Christ." As a means of nurture TCM is designed to permit spiritual growth in, "All who are or who will be serving in a congregation, Sunday School Teacher, Bible Class Teachers, Adult leaders in the Congregation etc."

#### TRAINING CHRISTANS FOR MINISTRY consists of two major divisions:

- A. "A "core curriculum" to revitalize adult members in their faith, equip them for further Bible study and for Christian life, and to prepare them for roles of leadership and service in the church. It is also a continuing curriculum for new members who've completed a Bible Information Class. The curriculum consists of:
  - 1. Twelve week Old Testament survey course.
  - 2. Twelve week New Testament survey course.
  - 3. Twelve week Discipleship course.
  - 4. Six week course on Church and Ministry.
  - 5. Mini-course on Spiritual Gifts.
- B. Ten "tracks" of sequential short-courses that provide biblical orientation and practical training for member ministry, according to the Christians gifts and interests. Two courses- "Communications Skills and Group Dynamics" and "Principles and Methods of Christian Education"- span several tracks as pre-requisites. The ten tracks include:
  - 1. Church Administration
  - 2. Mercy Ministries
  - 3. Christian Education-Children
  - 4. Christian Education-Youth
  - 5. Christian Education-Adult
  - 6. Evangelism
  - 7. Special Ministries
  - 8. Stewardship

9. Ministry to the Inactive 10. Worship. "10

The "core curriculum" is divided in three ways. 1.

The survey course consists of twelve one-half to two hour
lessons that feature a video taped presentation followed
by a group study and application of Scripture. Home study
assignments reinforce principles taught and serve to prepare
for group study. 2. The Discipleship course provides three
home-studies of the Bible chapters each week to prepare
for weekly discussions. The twelve two hour group sessions
review what was individually prepared and focus on one specific
aspect of a disciples life. 3. The "Church and Ministry"
and "Spiritual Gifts" courses combine video presentations
with Bible study applications in class.

For the ten track member ministry courses, the sequential courses in each track will have an audio tape and/or printed materials and are designed for use by individuals. The two pre-requisite courses have video or audio presentations combined with printed material and are intended for use in small groups.

Suggested group size for the "core curriculum" is twelve. The pastor will begin by selecting twelve members "he feels are gifted to teach." When these members complete the class they are asked to teach future classes. Those who complete the class are encouraged to continue in one of two areas: One of the ten tracks according to his gifts and interests for growth and service or further Bible study in classes taught by the pastor or other teacher in the

congregation. Also small group Bible study should be encouraged or personal Bible study using study guides such as, <a href="#">THE</a>
PEOPLES BIBLE.

The TCM curriculum, "Should not take the place of regular Bible study but supplement them." This curriculum is intended to supply additional Bible studies for members of the congregation. Greater exposure to the Word creates many blessings and fruits of faith. "As spiritual priorities are set forth, physical priorities will follow." 12

The Old and New Testament survey courses are scheduled for publication by Northwestern publishing House in January 1992. Subsequent courses will be available in time for their use during the two year sequence. Tracts will be available in '92 and following as well. For additional information contact Rev. Paul Kelm, BPS, Synod Offices, Mayfair Rd.

# EVANGELISM AND MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

The importance of the Evangelism and Membership Retention Committee of the WELS will play an important role in the revitalization of congregations through called. This importance is reflected in the statistics drawn from the previous decade showing a shift in new members and member loss. The role of these committees will be to "Encourage formal and informal outreach, provide resources to individual congregations and provide training for individuals within the congregations." 13

The currently proposed programs and projects to enhance future nurture of congregations include: For Evangelism;
"Training Christians for Outreach, Outreach Programs, Evangelism Resources, Special projects and Future Plans. For Membership Retention; the results and diagnosis of back door loses in the publication, My Brother's Keeper; A Study of Back Door Loses. (August 1991, NPH).

Training Christians for Outreach consists of three major divisions.

- A. I. A Five Year series of District Workshops, with Video.
  - A. Gearing Up For Evangelism, (Other Sheep) 1988
    - 1. <u>Developing a Mission Mindset</u>
      - aa. Motivational tools and strategies.
      - bb. Congregational and philosophical analysis instruments and approaches.
      - cc. Knowing the community and seeing possibilities.
    - 2. Organizing for Outreach
      - aa. Structuring (congregations and committees)
         for the task.
      - bb. Planning for the effort.

cc. Enlisting people for roles.

# B. Getting Everyone Involved 1989 Year 2

- 1. Friendship Evangelism.
- 2. The Role of Organizations.
- 3. The "Friendly Congregation."
- 4. Childrens Evangelism
- 5. Spiritual Gifts Discovery and Employment.

# C. Witness and NURTURE 1990 Year 3

- 1. Developing a Strategy for follow up.
- 2. Recruiting and Training Evangelists.
- 3. Tools and Options to Employ.

# D. Locating the Lost 1991 Year 4

- 1. Letting People Know You're there and You Care.
  - aa. Public Relations/Publicity.
  - bb. Advertising.
- 2. Generating Prospects.
  - aa. Internal Sources.
  - bb. Outside Sources.
- 3. The Responsibility File.
  - aa. Organizing it.
  - bb. Maintaining it.

# E. Assimilation and Retention. 1992 Year 5

- 1. Incorporating New Members.
- 2. Reclaiming Inactive Members.
- 3. "Early Detection" Systems.

#### II. SCHOOL OF OUTREACH

The School of Outreach is an intense one week planning workshop for lay congregational outreach

teams. The goal of this School is to create a five year plan for evangelism within the congregation. The class is held during the summer quarter at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and is designed to accommodate up to twenty congregations. The session highlights include: "1. Motives to awareness.

2. The Strategy of Evangelism. 3. The Strategy and Planning to Evangelize." 14 School Outreach V. will be held June 23-28, 1991 and WLS.

#### III. SUMMER EVANGELISM EXPERIENCE

The Summer Evangelism Experience is for Northwestern College juniors and seniors, serving as students assisting in a congregational outreach program, ten to twelve hours per week, while working in the community. The emphasis of this outreach program is on finding prospects, nurturing prospects and friendship evangelism. This program was begun in 1989, and may be extended to include Dr. Martin Luther College juniors in 1991. Seventeen students participated in 1989, ten in 1990.

#### OUTREACH PROGRAMS.

Outreach Programs by the Evangelism Committe include three major divisions:

#### 1. GO 91

GO (Gospel Outreach) '91 is a Mass Media Assisted Outreach program. Areas involved in planning include; Minnesota-(up to 150 congregations), Western Wisconsin-(to 40 congregations), Northern Michigan-(60 congregations), Northern Michigan and Southwestern Michigan Confrence-

(60 congregations), Seattle Washington-(110 congregations), Toledo and Columbus-(18 congregations), Chicago-(24 congregations), Dakotas-(60 congregations). Go 91 will include mass media advertising, radio, television, newspaper, flyers and sufficient support materials for individual congregations.

#### 2. CHRISTMAS '91

"PRECIOUS IS THE CHILD, SERVES AS THE THEME FOR Christmas '91. Christmas '91 is a Video Christmas Card with synod and nationwide outreach. The goal of Christmas '91 is to enroll some 800 congregations and go national with television spots through the "Family Network" channels. Also included are Christmas cards to be mailed out by congregations and some 75,000 Christmas ornaments displaying the theme for distribution to the unchurched. The anticipated cost based upon 800 congregations subscribing is approximately 800 dollars. 15

# 3. FESTIVAL OF FRIENDSHIP 1990-1991

Festival of Friendship seeks the unchurched of the community through individual members of the congregation.

Members of congregations invite unchurched friends.

These "friends" will have been acquainted with the "Festival" through mass media support. Materials supplied by the Evangelism Committee includes; a radio spot, invitation cards, flyer/poster and newspaper ad mat.

#### EVANGELISM RESOURCES

Evangelism resources will consist largely of tracks supplemented by audio and video cassettes. This information

is being compiled and presented through the "TRACK COMMITTEE."

#### A. TRACK COMMITTEE

- 1. Three new friendship tracks on the topics of Guilt, Uncertainty and Loneliness.
- 2. In 1991, two Lutheran Series Tracks, (Lutheran Differences and One Lord, Many Churches) and three nurture tracks yet to be titled.
- 4. Also being considered, tracks for kids and a cassette for kids.

#### SPECIAL PROJECTS

#### TASK FORCE on RURAL CHURCH OUTREACH

A special grant from Lutheran Brotherhood has been given to the WELS to research and provide resources for rural church outreach. The goal of this task force is "To do some listening and provide some help for rural congregations. Of small towns with populations of less than 1000 we have approximately 300 congregations. We have about another 100 congregations in small towns with rural implications. We need new things in ministry especially in small towns. We need to know what works and why."

# JOINT HISPANIC CONSULTATION

This consultation program is being supported by LB. This program has been made available to WELS, ELCA, LCMS and AFLC. In 1990 WELS received a two year grant of \$36,100 for Hispanic language resources. Later this year the Evangelism Committee will produce a Spanish Language version of SOUL SEARCH. In 1991 WELS will request a three year grant (\$22,000) for Spanish Language resources. This grant is intended

to provide language training and to equip called workers for outreach to Mispanics.

#### FUTURE PLANS

In each of the areas presented, future plans are being discussed in order to supplement those programs which are now being formulated. Future plans for each of the areas include;

# TRAINING CHRISTIANS FOR OUTREACH

- A. Emphasis on witness training, (training and workshops, training worship leaders, developing a workshop for use in districts.).
- B. Congregational evangelism consultations by district coordinators and committees ,(training district coordinators and committees for the consultation process).
- C. Coordinated annual district BPS workshops.

#### OUTREACH PROGRAMS

- A. GO 93 (94,95) a new Mass Media Assisted Outreach Program.
- B. Crossroads, a 90 second radio outreach program to be used three times daily.
- C. A synod wide track give-away, with track packets for individuals.
- D. Fall(2) Spring(2) Congregational Seminars on life related subjects, supported by track/flyer distribution, mailing and personal invitations.
- E. A possible childrens radio ministry.

#### EVANGELISM RESOURCES

A. An introduction to the Lutheran church and an assimilation video, companion videos to SOUL SEARCH.

- B. Continued track program.
- C. TRAINING Christians for ministry, level 5. Training materials for tracks 6 and 9.

#### MEMBERSHIP RETENTION

The work of the Membership Retention Committee is centered in a detailed five year evangelism survey, the results being published (NPH 1991) under the title, "MY BROTHER'S KEEPER:

A STUDY OF BACK DOOR LOSES. The study focuses on critical concerns for the congregation and the congregations ministry to those who might ordinarily be lost through the "back door." These concerns center around ten specific areas.

# 1. ATTITUDE

It is essential that each congregation, pastor and lay people maintain a scriptural concern for the "straying." In most cases the straying are in fact "hurting." These people have problems and should, "Not be looked upon as black sheep." Awareness to these members needs to be addressed both in sermons, Bible study and ministry perspectives. Proper ministry to these people demand that their situations be understood and looked upon with compassion.

# 2. ASSESSMENT

Pastors and members serving the straying must know where these people are at and categorize their situation in order to effectively minister to them. We need to know what are the problems, spiritual condition of the individual, physical condition, motives for their actions, reactions to ministry, etc.

# 3. AWARENESS

Congregations need to know what is happening, not what they think is happening. 17 People must be made aware of the problems faced by many members and reach out to help. Hoping and "ignoring will not make the problem go away." 18

#### 4. ACTION

In order for the congregation to effectively minister to the straying one must plan for action. Action must be more than a vague reference to the straying in the by-laws of the congregation, it must be an actual plan to minister. Relief to the straying is in effect, "A ministry to the inactive."

#### 5. ABILITY

Is a congregation able to minister? Are there enough called workers to minister? A lack of called workers necessitates determining the potential of lay members of the congregation. A danger exists here however, since care must be taken not to overburden "good members" within the congregation. The base of working members must be enlarged to avoid this potential problem

#### 6. ACCOUNTABILITY

"The counting of inactives is in many cases equated to who is in church on Sunday. Accountability has been sold as wanting to know whose not there." Of Accountability should not be understood as a report card. Early intervention on the other hand can only come about if we know what's on within the congregation itself. "Old members take longer

to leave but they are harder to get back. Newer members leave quicker but are easier to bring back." Consequently accountability within the congregation should be viewed as process oriented goals, an opportunity for the gospel to work, rather than result goals, to get back. "Result goals only build up to let down. As WELS Christians we are committed to process goals, caring, listening and presenting the gospel. The results belong to God." 22

# 7. APPLICATION

In order to minister effectively to the straying all the information gathered concerning the straying must be utilized. Congregations deal with limited resources therefore emphasis on action, ability and accountability present the best chances, humanly speaking, to restore the straying. With limited resources we must consider, "to whom will it do the most good— its like a medical triage."

#### 8. ASSIMILATION

Assimilation will emphasize the relationship of the family within the Body of Christ. Making a person a part of something "...is not making,love, another means of grace-NO!- but we must take emotions into account." Heeting expectations is important in membership retention. Assimilation into the congregation has two primary and important stages. They are directly related to the length of membership within the congregation.

#### A. STAGE ONE: "THE FIRST SIX MONTHS.

- 1. Can I make new friends?
- 2. What programs meet my needs?

- 3. Am I needed?
- B. STAGE TWO: "THE FOLLOWING SIX MONTHS TO YEAR AND ONE HALF."
  - 1. Are my new friends as good as my old ones?
  - 2. Do the programs meet my spiritual needs?
- 3. Are my contributions needed and appreciated?" <sup>25</sup>
  Each of these areas in ministering to the straying is important.
  Being lax in even one area can lead to membership loss.

# 10. Appreciation

Appreciation for members falls into two general areas. The first is appreciation for current members. It is important not to overload those members in the congregation who are active in various boards, committees or ministries. For an effective Membership Retention Committee the following guidelines are suggested, <sup>26</sup> 1. Limit calls on straying to five per year or less.2. Terms for service would be two years with a one year sabbatical. 3 Group support to share ministry success and failure. For people who return after straying do not present excess emotions which might cause embarrassment. Simply make these returning members feel welcome.

Review of these ten areas only present the highlights of a very detailed and useful study. The information presented serves only as a very brief summary of some important areas of concern. MY BROTHER'S KEEPER, will prove to be a very valuable resource in the parish ministry. Membership retention is indeed an important aspect of revitalizing our congregations. "During each of the past four years we, (WELS) have experienced back door loses, some 8000 each year. During the past four

years over 10% of our membership was lost via the back door." <sup>27</sup> In view of these statistics greater attention must be paid to this area of ministry. A copy of MY BROTHER'S KEEPER, is scheduled to be sent out to each WELS congregation in summer 1991.

The Evangelism and Membership Retention Committees have compiled a vast amount of material and support for individual congregations. How this information is utilized will be up to each congregation. "The biggest obstacle in getting this information out is the pastors desk and his looking through the information." In view of this comment the importance for every pastor to process the information he receives becomes critical in effective ministry. The gospel centered means are being made available, we need to utilize it.

# WELS COMMISSION ON WORSHIP

Worship has and will continue to be a vital role in the life of the congregation. Worship is the place where the pastor interacts with more members than any other time of his ministry. "Worship is the center of what God gives, Word and Sacrament." <sup>29</sup>The goal of the Commission on Worship is to aid the pastor in making worship more meaningful and helpful, both for himself and for members of his congregation.

"Worship consists of three parts, think of it as a triangle with God at the apex, the worship leader and the members at the base adjacent to each other."  $^{29}$ 



#### CONGREGATION

The interaction of worship is, God to his people, the people to the worship leader and the worship leader to God. This is a careful balance which must be maintained during worship.

"If the leader concentrates on God the people are forgotten, if the stress in worship is horizontal, (too much contemporary language, participation or an extreme case worship as entertainment) worshippers can lose the mystery of coming to God." The purpose of worship is not to entertain, but to receive what God has provided us through Word and Sacrament. Worship should be friendly but a great danger exists in bringing worship down to the least common denominator thus loosing poetic and high language which serves to exalt. A proper balance must be maintained.

It is with these thoughts in mind that the Commission on Worship seeks to increase the awareness and importance of worship both for the pastor and the individual member of the congregation. The Commission on Worship will seek to present these goals in the following ways;

HYMNAL PROJECT (scheduled for completion in 1993-94)

"The new hymnal project will be geared to help people participate in the worship service. Simplified language in todays vernacular will help understanding and participation." It iturgy and hymn revision will simplify words into modern english.

New liturgies are hoped to quell the rising tide of everybody doing their own thing, thus bringing unity of worship among

WELS congregations. Such unity is designed to have a feeling of belonging to members who visit any number of sister congregations.

# FOCUS ON WORSHIP

Focus on Worship is the professional publication of the Commission on Worship and is designed to train pastors, organists and choir directors in areas of worship." <sup>32</sup>Focus on Worship will acquaint congregations with professional advice concerning worship within their congregations and suggest guidelines and new materials.

#### DISTRICT WORKSHOP COORDINATORS

District workshop coordinators will encourage worship workshops "stressing how to bring worship together." <sup>31</sup> It is envisioned these workshops will be free to people who come. They will be designed to aid choirs, organists and church musicians. The "Role of the pastor and cooperation between pastors and church musicians stressed. A simple summary, "PLAN!!! and coordinate." <sup>32</sup>

#### PREACHING

Although one might hardly think preaching be considered by the Commission on Worship the goal here is to teach the importance of coordination of the sermon with the rest of the service. The overall concept is "integrated worship." 33 The integration of hymns, lessons and psalms to present a theme in the service will give more continuity and clarity for the worshipper. Being able to plan the sermon and use all the lessons and Propers and Ordinaries will be beneficial for the worshippers.

#### MORE MEANINGFUL WORSHIP

Worship can become more meaningful to each worshipper through providing daily direction. This direction can come through Bible studies and devotions which center on the following Sunday's worship. Additional means of making worship more meaningful include understanding vestments, banners, paraments, symbols and church art. The commission on Worship would at some time in the future create Bible studies and devotions centering on the Church Year to help increase awareness for members of the congregations.

"Communication acts as a catalyst." In order to convey the importance of worship either to pastors of members simply giving information at a pastors conference is not enough.

"It is not enough just to say, DO, we must show it." He eyes, ears, mouth and body are all included in worship." Participation and appreciation for the liturgical service will enhance worship within congregations. "A worshipper is not a spectator but an active participant."

# FUTURE GOALS OF THE COMMISSION ON WORSHIP

- A. Preparing Bible studies which foster worship appreciation and participation.
- B. Bible classes which present an opportunity to focus on worship.
- C. Devotions in our new hymnal.

"Weakness among our pastors does not come from worship, but their attention is divided," <sup>35</sup> amid the many duties they are called to perform. Consequently pastors lose sight of the importance of worship. Being caught up in the day

to day activities and responsibilities lead some to lose sight of the importance of corporate worship. The Commission on Worship would like each pastor to remember, "The greatest part of my ministry is corporate worship.'"

# FAMILY MINISTRY

The role of Family ministry is new to the WELS. It is not new in the context of overall ministry but in specific models to minister after. Family Ministry is becoming ever more important in view of the stresses placed upon the family and the time constraints of the pastor. BPS is currently working on a "structured" and well organized model of Family Ministry for congregations. This model is divided into two major divisions: Family Devotional Life and Family Task Force.

#### FAMILY DEVOTIONAL LIFE

"Family Devotional Life is intended to positively affect values and attitudes of individual Christians within congregations and thus lead members to a greater appreciation of family roles in ministry. Roles affected include Father/husband, wife/mother, and self as a child of God." A greater understanding of roles tends to reduce worries, improve family priorities and strengthen bonds.

"Six major benefits emerge when through Family Devotional life.

1. People get back to work like the Bereans searching
 the "truth."

- A persons prayer life is enriched, direction from God is sought, a value to life is obtained.
- 3. Attendance to the Lord's Supper increases. Individuals become painfully aware of what the Savior has done for us.
- 4. Over all worship life increases.
- 5. Friendship evangelism increases.
- 6. Offerings, thanks for what God has done for us increases." 38 Family devotional life stresses gospel motivation.

It is a means by which our faith can increase thus enabling fruits of faith to increase as well. Family devotions are "What we must do to go on the attack against Satan and his schemes." Family devotions produce strength and aid in every aspect of our lives, both spiritual and physical.

#### MODEL FOR FAMILY <u>DEVOTIONAL MINISTRY</u>

#### THE PROGRAM

- A. Begin your Devotional life.
  - 1. Accept the great value of family devotions.
  - 2. Agree on a time that works for everybody.
  - 3. Begin with "Meditations " or other booklet.
  - 4. Encouragement to try it for two weeks.
- B. Learn to Pray as a Family.
  - 1. Jesus taught us to pray.
  - 2. Each must learn to pour out his heart to God.
  - 3. Practice overcomes initial embarrassment.
  - 4. Make up prayers for the next two weeks meditations.
- C. Learn to read the Bible as a Family.
  - 1. The Bible is a book that can be understood by all.

- 2. Jesus said we would  $\underline{know}$   $\underline{him}$   $\underline{better}$  by reading the Bible.
- 3. Let's try reading the Bible text with music and prayer.
- D. Learn to Discuss the Bible as a Family.
  - 1. The Bible speaks to the real problems of our life.
  - 2. Luther wanted every Christian to understand the Bible.
  - 3. Use helps and aids in understanding difficult Bible passages.
  - 4. Discuss your Bible reading.
- E. Put Music in Your Meditations.
  - 1. The Bible encourages music with devotions.
  - 2. Luther's history was rich with music.
  - 3. You know many simple musical pieces.
  - 4. Let's practice for a few weeks.

#### THE SPIRITUAL PYRAMID SCHEMA

- A. This is a ten week (although flexible) personal visitation program.
- B. Each phase (A, B, C, D, E) takes two weeks.
- C. Begins with pastor with his own family.
- D. After two weeks, pastor <u>and</u> family personally visit one leading family in the congregation to begin devotions.
- E. After two weeks of phase A devotions, the leader visits two other families to introduce to phase A devotions, and so forth until every family in congregation is conducting Bible reading with discussion, prayer and song."

Becoming involved in this ministry either as a participant

or trainer is brought about because, "Christ's love compells us." 41 Such involvement enables each member to become confident of God's wisdom and grace. Participation in family devotions means, "Plan on people growing." 42 This growth will take place both spiritually and physically, through involvement in the church.

The Family Devotions are expected to be available in spring 1992 through BPS.

#### FAMILY TASK FORCE

The purpose of the FAMILY TASK FORCE is, "To define objectives for family ministry and implement these objectives through individual WELS congregations." <sup>43</sup> These objectives are currently being formulated and are scheduled to be presented at the 1991 WELS Synod Convention. The following information will present the situations leading up to family ministry and the methods suggested to implement Family Ministry within congregations.

"In a relatively short span of 100 years the American family has undergone profound change at its center. From a Christian perspective none of the centering alternatives squares with the biblical family." "As a legal definition our courts have attempted to define the family as "people living together under one roof." For Christians this definition is unacceptable because it legitimatizes arrangements that defy the biblical mode." Examples would include gay marriages, living together out of wedlock, etc. The WELS task force on family ministry has defined the family as, "Two or more

bonded together in marriage or parenthood." Such an understanding is important when attempting to minister to the family.

"We do ministry so that people will know God's plan of salvation for them; and so that their lives on earth find purpose and meaning as they serve their Lord by serving one another." Gonsequently "Family Ministry" can be described as bringing people into contact with God's word. Ministry to the Christian family can be divided into two types, "proactive," and "reactive." Proactive ministry is preventive in nature, it prepares and strengthens families to meet and withstand obstacles, difficulties and stress which are a part of every day life. Because of its nature proactive ministry serves to strengthen families before problems lead to disintegration of the family. Reactive ministry seeks to minister after troubles enter the family and have already taken its toll on family life and seek to overcome these problems which prohibit growth.

The church needs to participate in each of these types of ministry. "But as a matter of course, proactive family ministry will need to be seen as a priority." <sup>47</sup> Proactive ministry brings about change based upon God's word and stresses gospel motivation which is the only effective means of change.

Proactive ministry provides three kinds of experiences:

"experiences with the Word to strengthen faith and increase

love and hope. Experiences with other Christians to develop

a sense of Christian fellowship. Experiences with non-Christians

to instill an urgency about carrying out Jesus' commission

by stewarding the gifts he has given us." $^{48}$ 

Reactive ministry begins by attempting to remove obstacles so that at some point of time proactive ministry can begin.

"Reactive ministry can include intervention work (felt need), support group work, home visitation, encouragement for the terminally ill and grieving. Because of the broad base underlying reactive ministry and proactive ministry member help from the congregation is essential. The pastor will therefore need to recognize the talented people within the congregation and enlist them to meet these spiritual needs.

Ministry of this type often requires going out to meet the individual members in need. Growth among the weak is slow and encouraged by Christian models. "It models love after God's model of love in Christ Jesus, forgiving, caring and sharing." The objectives of Family Ministry are aimed at bringing parents closer to God and each other; at bringing children closer to God and their parents; and bringing families closer to the family of God." 51

In Family Ministry the greatest challenge is to restore the joy of teaching God's word at home. This joy becomes manifest through the Family Altar. The Family Altar is an important aspect of family ministry (see family devotional life). It is at the Family Altar that both worship and nurture are to be found.

# THE PRINCIPLES OF FAMILY MINISTRY 52 (from WELS Task Force on Family Ministry)

- 1. Family ministry needs to be an on-going ministry (a process rather than a program).
- 2. The format must be flexible and adaptable (also casual and informal).

- 3. Family ministry should strive to be proactive rather than only reactive.
- 4. The Word must be central to family ministry. The main task is to get the Word into the home.
- 5. The emphasis must be direct and personal. The gospel should go to the home rather than family always having to go to church.
- 6. Family ministry will have to address the issue of human sexuality because it is critical ingredient in human relationships.
- 7. Family ministry should strive to develop leadership within the family.
- 8. There is a need for support and accountability in any family ministry program.
- 9. Family ministry education must utilize active learning (self discovery) requiring interaction.
- 10 The development of strong families will result in the blessings of a stronger church.
- 11 Pastors and congregational leaders need to be role models.
- 12 Family ministry materials should include diagnostic instruments [for evaluation of both the church's work and the home's work in family ministry].
- 13 There is a need to develop an awareness of the need for family ministry.
- 14 The talents of lay people will be needed and materials must be developed with the awareness that lay people will be used in the training process.
- 15 Preach the ideal; heal the real.
- 16 The trust of pastors needs to be gained so that family ministry resources are utilized.
- 17 Family ministry programs need to recognize and responf to cultural differences.
- 18 Family ministry needs to restore the joy of teaching to the home.
- 19 Family ministry needs to be seen as an opportunity for evangelizing non-Christian members of our families.

These principles lead to  ${\scriptsize { top OBJECTIVES}}$   ${\scriptsize { top FOR}}$   ${\scriptsize { top A}}$   ${\scriptsize { top CHRIST-CENTERED}}$   ${\scriptsize { top HOME}}$ 

- 1. Teach the purpose of  $\underline{\text{GOD'S}}$   $\underline{\text{WORD}}$ .
- 2. Teach people to understand and apply LAW AND GOSPEL.

- 3. Teach COMMITMENT.
- 4. Teach ACCOUNTABILITY.
- 5. Teach speaking the TRUTH in love.
- 6. Teach Christ-like SHARING.
- 7. Teach the meaning of SANCTIFIED LIVING.
- 8. Teach How to build and maintain a relationship in CHRIST.

  Before any congregation can accurately access their Family

  Ministry needs they must first realize the spiritual conditon

  of members. Currently such a congregational survey is being

  conducted at three congregations. Each congregation is

  at different stages. This survey of determining congregational

  Family Ministry needs is called, "THE FAMILY MINISTRY CONSULTANT

  PACKAGE." The cost of this survey is approximately 1200

  dollars. There have been no completed congregation surveys

  and no detailed analysis have been given. The time table

  for general use among WELS congregations is about five years

  to determine reactive ministry and eight to ten years for

  proactive ministry packages. The FAMILY MINISTRY CONSULTANT

  PACKAGE includes;
  - I. The Evaluation phase.
  - II. The Educational phase.
  - III. The Advisory phase.

#### A TYPICAL TIMETABLE FOR A COMPLETED PACKAGE

- 1. Early and decision 3-6 months.
- 2. The Family profile tool is distributed- Three weeks prior to consultant arriving on site.
- 3. Consultant on site tour-4 days.
- 4. Eight classes on the home agenda (lay led)-8 weeks.

- 5. Report submitted to congregation-8 weeks.
- 6. Program Development and Re-evaluation-1 year later.

A guide to equip members of the congregation who desire to become involved in family ministry is also currently being completed under the title," A MINISTRY OF COMPASSION."

"There are always three roles to be aware of in the growing process. The first is the role of helper. In this booklet the role of helper is stated as the objective. The second is Jesus' role as he provides both the motivation and the model. The third is the role of the person in need. This role is always stated as the outcome."

### NORTHWESTERN PUBLISHING HOUSE

"Northwestern Publishing house stands committed to print need@materials for spiritual renewal." This information will be useful in revitalizing congregations through called workers. Interest in revitalization and spiritual renewal is expressed through the Publishing House in that a concern shared is, "To realize that beyond using scripture directly that we have need of materials to help better understand God's will, service to the Lord, Law and Gospel- we are committed to publications that do that."

To aid in spiritual renewal the Publishing house, "felt the needs of a hurting people and desires to speak to specific needs at levels lay members can pick up, provide insights, supply answers God gives and direct people where they can look for help."

Most of the publications the publishing house will be

engaged in have already been mentioned. Their desire to edit, proof and print will be a great help in ensuring spiritual renewal throughout our congregations.

#### CONCLUSION

Having interviewed the committee chairman from each area concerning revitalization and closely reviewed the proposed material (when available) I maintain a very positive view toward the work of BPS. Clearly their work is based upon our Savior's love and his commission to "Make Disciples." All the materials for spiritual renewal and congregational revitalization are gospel centered. They stress "process" goals and not "result" goals. The central focus on revitalization is the individual member of the congregation. It attempts to have members become active within congregations through personal spiritual growth. Such growth will enable the congregation to "reach out," reach out to both strong and weak members to serve real and perceived needs.

The wealth of information coming out means it will be essential for the pastor both to process the information accurately, plan the action of ministry thoroughly and in advance and implement the plan with care and compassion while utilizing lay people from the congregation. To varying degrees this type of ministry differs from traditional form of ministry adopted by WELS pastors. The greatest degree of difference is in lay ministry and affective Bible teaching. Consequently, it is possible that some of this information will meet some resistance among pastors. I would not attempt to be suspect to their motives since change in itself brings

fear and fear leads to resistance. Overcoming this aspect of fear will take time and a commitment by pastors to review these programs on the basis of success by other congregations, but most importantly Scripture itself.

Changes in culture, language, the family and worship suggest these changes in the pastoral ministry are needed. Cursory reading of this information by BPS might suggest potential warnings in some areas such as relying on feelings, making love another means of grace, pietism, but such pitfalls have been taken into account and thoroughly addresses to prevent falling into them, (that is based upon the written material while not addressing the individual pastor or congregational member).

The BPS will supply sufficient Bible based resources to aid in revitalizing congregations. The source of motivation stressed is the gospel, Jesus Christ and what he has done for us. The means to be supplied will help diminish the obstacles we bring ourselves in spreading the gospel. The Word alone is effective. Only the Word can bring about change. Our role in presenting the gospel can only be measured in how we stand in the way of permitting the gospel to work. These materials lessen our drawbacks to preaching the gospel. The greatest change I see in ministering is taking the gospel out to the people rather than waiting for the people to come to the church and a greater emphasis on affective teaching/learning. Affective teaching/learning, being able to affectively apply God's word individually in every aspect of our life will be important, especially in Family Ministry and Spiritual

Renewal.

The implementation of this information into the congregation will require great effort and extra time on behalf of the pastor at first. Therefore in the beginning it might seem easier to "continue to do it myself," yet this greater effort will pay off through individuals who become equipped for works of service in the Kingdom. The extra work at the beginning will serve to strengthen the congregation and its members in the long run.

Providing greater exposure to the Bible and making it more applicable to everyday life can only translate into growth. Adult education is essential for congregations to remain vibrant and alive. The greater the number of opportunities to study the Word the better off each individual Christian will be.

Not to be overlooked nor under emphasized, based upon this information supplied by BPS is the pastor's individual spiritual condition. A great emphasis is being place upon the pastor maintaining personal devotions and growth in the Word. He is an example to be looked up to and emulated. The pastors support for these programs 15 essential if they are to be successfully implemented within the congregation.

As suggested throughout this paper, planning ministry needs, goals and applications will become more important in the days that lie ahead. Effective ministry will mean, PLAN! and IMPLEMENT. An example of how effective planning using all the mentioned means will be included in the final page of this paper. It can serve as a guide to proper and

effective planning.

I cannot help but being enthusiastic and optimistic about what I have learned concerning the number one priority of VISION 2000+, Revitalize congregations through called workers. This wealth of information is useful and soundly scriptural. I will look forward to benefiting both personally and professionally.

## PHILOSOPHY OF MINISTRY STATEMENTS 57

- 1. Adult Spiritual growth is job one!
  - a) a core curriculum of Bible classes designed to "outcomers"
  - b) flexibility and variety in Bible class settings and styles
  - c) personal and family devotional life
- 2. Worship must combine reverence and relevance.
  - a) excellence and awe in liturgy
  - b) excellence and life-relatedness in preaching
  - c) excellence and variety in music
- 3. An outreach orientation must be built.
  - a) into the church's structure, planning and decision making
  - b) into the thinking and life style of members
  - c) into the worship and programs of the congregation
- 4. Involving members in ministry is essential
  - a) by applying the "body of Christ" paradim
  - b) by spiritual gifts and interests, not institutional needs
  - c) by effective recruitment and training
- 5. Spiritual support systems must be nurtured or rebuilt
  - a) minister to the family
  - b) group life and activities to help Christians find each other
  - c) small group structures and support and accountability
- 6. One-on-one, Visitation Ministry is the way we will reach and reclaim people.
  - a) It's evangelical.
  - b) It's personal.
  - c) It's effective.
- 7. Comprehensive, consistent planning will keep our focus and rally our people.
  - a)Mission/Vision long-range planning
  - b)Strategic time lines, owned and operated
  - c) Action planning that assigns what, who, when, where, how, how much.

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