

LUTHERAN PARISH RESOURCES:
PILOT PROGRAM IN CHURCH GROWTH

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Church History 373
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April 27, 1987

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Library
11831 N. Seminary Drive. 65W
Mequon, Wisconsin

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FOREWORD

Writing this was made difficult by two factors: 1) Nothing has ever been written and published about Lutheran Parish Resources, Inc.; and 2) This writer was not in Columbus when he wrote this paper. Thus he was forced to rely on copies of the minutes and notes which he took at seemingly countless meetings, and on his own memory. Another source of information which proved essential for corroboration of the facts was the telephone interview method. This writer owes a debt of gratitude to all five WELS pastors in Columbus and vicinity, to Rev. Roger Zehms, who not only answered many questions over the telephone but also made many photocopies and sent them to me, and who was kind enough to serve as the central distributor of the Survey/Questionnaire. The writer also would like to express his thanks to Mr. George Skestos, Mr. Floyd Stolzenburg and Rev. Walter Oehlhafen for taking time out of their busy schedules to give telephone interviews. Mrs. Kathy Glende also deserves his thanks for patiently answering the questions of her former Vicar. Special thanks are extended to all those who filled out the Survey/Questionnaire and sent them in to the writer.

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INTRODUCTION:

In the autumn of 1985 and the winter of 1985-1986, a truly momentous step was taken by the five Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) congregations in the metropolitan area of Columbus, Ohio. The five pastors and lay representatives of those churches organized and incorporated Lutheran Parish Resources, Inc., the first Church Growth institute in the WELS. Lutheran Parish Resources, Inc. (LPR) is dedicated to the concepts of the Church Growth movement only insofar as they agree with the Scriptures and as taught by the WELS--that is, Church Growth with Lutheran theology rather than Evangelical, and without the typical Church Growth emphasis on quantitative measurement of growth. Kent R. Hunter's definition of "Church Growth" justifies the use of this term in describing LPR:

"Church Growth: That science which investigates the nature, function and health of Christian churches as they relate specifically to the effective implementation of God's commission to "make disciples of all peoples" (Matt. 28:19). Church Growth is simultaneously a theological conviction and an applied science,...." Foundations for Church Growth, p. 187.

But here Hunter's definition and LPR begin to part. Hunter's emphasis is decidedly on external growth, i.e., growth in numbers. (This is not to imply that he ignores internal growth, i.e., growth in knowledge and sanctification in those who are already disciples of Jesus, but internal growth is not Hunter's emphasis.) LPR, on the other hand, tries to strike a balance, emphasizing both internal and external growth. In a bulletin insert introducing LPR to the five churches in metro-Columbus,

LPR was defined as an organization:

...established to aid in our spiritual enrichment and, as the name implies, to serve as a resource clearing house in support of our efforts as part of Christ's community here in Columbus.¹

"...our efforts as part of Christ's community" are further defined in another bulletin insert (produced by LPR for the same purpose) as "our efforts in Christian Growth and outreach."² LPR was created for the purpose of aiding WELS pastors, congregations and organizations, primarily in metro-Columbus, Ohio, in their two-fold mission of bringing people to Christ *and* helping WELS people grow in Christian discipleship.

LPR also fits under the label of "Parachurch Organizations," as defined by Rev. Paul Kuske:

A Parachurch Organization is a group that

- 1) is incorporated separately from any congregation, and
- 2) is designed to address a closely circumscribed aspect of the church's work, and
- 3) is connected to a church body by limitations on the voting constituency.³

LPR fits the above definition because:

- 1) It is incorporated separately from any congregation;
- 2) Its work is carefully defined, circumscribed and monitored in order to prevent it from doing the work that the pastors and/or the congregations themselves should be doing; and
- 3) Its voting constituency is limited (as are its services) to members of congregations in fellowship with the WELS.

The purpose of this study is not only to explain what LPR is and does, but also to examine its conception, inception and operation, and to evaluate its performance during its first year of operation in terms of its original conception.

I. CONCEPTION

A. *The Situation in Central Ohio*

In order to understand the "whys" and the "wherefores" of LPR,

one must bear in mind that LPR is intimately wrapped up in the situation of the WELS congregations in central Ohio, i.e., metro-Columbus. Columbus is a major metropolitan area, surrounded by suburbs, and comparable in size to Milwaukee, Wisconsin and Phoenix, Arizona. Columbus is the home of The Ohio State University, the state capital, Capital University and Trinity Lutheran Seminary (ELCA). ^{Home territory} (Hotbed of the old Ohio Synod and the ALC, Columbus is also headquarters of the LCA's Ohio Synod. WELS presence in Columbus is quite recent. In 1964, St. Paul's Ev. Lutheran Church left the ALC because of the former's confessional, biblical stance and the latter's departure from orthodox Lutheranism. The following year (1965), St. Paul's pastor, Rev. John O. Lang, a former professor at Capital and Trinity, applied for membership in the WELS and was received by colbquy. However, St. Paul's has remained an independent congregation in fellowship with the WELS to this day. Because St. Paul's has a WELS pastor, five WELS Lutheran Elementary School teachers, and a WELS vicar, and because almost all educational materials ~~are~~ used at St. Paul's are from WELS, and because St. Paul's' mission offerings go to WELS, most of the members consider themselves WELS people, and, for our purposes, we will consider St. Paul's to be a WELS congregation, just as it is listed in the 1987 Yearbook of the WELS. ⁴

Nevertheless, the fact that St. Paul's is not a member of WELS (and still has women's suffrage) often causes difficulties in terminology, and the WELS people in metro-Columbus must carefully couch their words in such a way that nobody gets their feathers ruffled. Quite a few people at St. Paul's feel that they have already been burned by a church body (the ALC), and thus they treasure their independence. Others would prefer to simply join WELS de jure, since St. Paul's seems to be a de facto member anyway, and they would like the privilege of voting membership. A third, small group at St. Paul's prefers to remain independent

because they do not feel prepared to relinquish what they perceive to be "the women's right to vote."⁵ However, the four WELS congregations in metro-Columbus consider St. Paul's to be WELS, and so most joint activities, services, and meetings of the five churches and their organizations take place at St. Paul's, which is the most centrally located of the five, and has the largest facility. The present pastor of St. Paul's is Rev. W. Keith Roehl.

When Pastor Roehl graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in 1966, he was assigned to serve a small group of Lutherans in Grove City, Ohio. Rev. Lang had already been meeting with this group, but was too busy with St. Paul's to take on an additional charge. Rev. Roehl and this group founded Beautiful Savior Ev. Lutheran Church in 1967, and Pastor Roehl continued to serve this mission church until he accepted the call to succeed Rev. Lang at St. Paul's in 1975. Since that time, Beautiful Savior has seen some controversy, and has had more turnover in its membership than one might expect if all were going well. Some say that the problems which negatively affected Beautiful Savior were the pastors who succeeded Rev. Roehl. However, stability seems to have been restored to this congregation since Rev. Paul Kuske was called from Michigan Lutheran Seminary to serve as pastor. Beautiful Savior worships in a lovely chapel with an attached two-room Day School. It is located in the heart of a typical suburban neighborhood on the south side of Grove City, which is the largest suburb on the southwest side of Columbus.

Another shot in the arm for the WELS presence in Columbus came on the northeast side of the city where a small group of Christians decided to form Lamb of God Ev. Lutheran Church, founded in 1969. Pastor Roehl met with this group regularly at first, and commuted all the way across Columbus to serve them. This congregation has also suffered

a large turnover in membership, which seems to be largely the result of a lack of solid lay leadership. This is still the chief problem which Lamb of God must face today. Lamb of God is served by Rev. Roger Kovaciny, and is located about one block north of a main intersection (Morse Rd. and Sunbury Rd.), but is not visible from the intersection. The fact that it is situated inside Columbus but between Westerville and Gahanna has made it difficult to identify with any particular community, since it seems to be just another Columbus church. Although there is a lot of housing being built in the area, Lamb of God's lovely chapel has Alum Creek in its backyard and has a hill across the street. A better location could have been picked, but there is still plenty of potential for growth even where it is today.

1976 saw the establishment of Prince of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, located on Gender Rd. on the southeast side of Columbus, between Pickerington and Reynoldsburg. Because its address is Reynoldsburg, Prince of Peace has found it easier to identify with this suburb. However, its present WEF (Worship-Education-Fellowship) unit has been sold, and ground has been broken for the construction of a new church building in a superior location on McNaughten Rd. in the Smith Farms subdivision. The new site is still in Columbus, but it is right next door to Reynoldsburg, and will probably prove to be too long a commute for the few members from Pickerington. Prince of Peace has been blessed with excellent lay leadership and with Rev. Marc Schroeder, who has served this group of Christians since his ordination in 1976. Several of the laymen are financially well-to-do, and are major contributors; thus Prince of Peace has fewer financial difficulties than many churches. The biggest problem which Prince of Peace had to face during LPR's first year of operation was deciding what to do about the fact that they were outgrowing their WEF unit, and that it would be unwise to build another chapel on the

present Gender Rd. site, since most of the land around the site is to be developed for industrial use rather than residential, and the architects have identified a drainage problem which would cost too much to correct.

On the northwest side of Columbus is Shepherd of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church. Founded in 1982, Shepherd of Peace dedicated their WEF unit in September of 1985, during the early stages of the planning for LPR. Shepherd of Peace has the best location of our five churches. Located on the corner of Hard Rd. and Smoky Row Rd., Shepherd of Peace is surrounded by major housing developments which are under construction, and a shopping center has recently been built across Smoky Row Rd. Located inside the city of Columbus proper, Shepherd of Peace has a Worthington address (formerly Powell), and a Dublin phone number. The church is basically identified with Worthington, however, and it is listed as such in the 1987 Yearbook of the WELS.⁶ The pastor of Shepherd of Peace is Rev. Richard Starr.

Because LPR's very existence is intimately connected with the situations of the various WELS congregations in metro-Columbus, it is important to have this background in mind when any study of LPR is done.

Chart of the WELS Situation in Metro-Columbus⁷

	Beautiful Savior, Grove City	Lamb of God Columbus	Prince of Peace Reynoldsburg	Shepherd of Peace Worthington	St. Paul's Columbus
Year founded	1967	1969	1976	1982	1821
Baptized souls	232	86	140	79	743
Communicants	162	58	80	54	566
Average attendance	117	50	94	57	267
Number of services	1	1	2	1	1
Pastor	Kuske	Kovaciny	Schroeder	Starr	Roehl
Year ordained	1953	1977	1976	1978	1966

B. The Origin of the Concept

Who first thought of starting LPR in the first place? Like all other organizations, the concept of LPR as it exists today is a product of a lot of thought on the part of many. However, the concept of LPR can be traced to the Church Growth Seminar held at Upper Arlington High School in Upper Arlington, a Columbus west-side suburb. In all, 46 members of St. Paul's attended this seminar,⁸ which was sponsored by Zion Ev. Lutheran Church (LC-MS), Columbus, and organized by Rev. William J. Britton of Zion. The Seminar was held in February of 1985, and, within one month, St. Paul's began to hold "Church Growth" meetings in their own auditorium. At these meetings, different books of the bible are studied and discussed, with applications made to both internal and external church growth. These meetings began at St. Paul's in March of 1985, and began by studying the book of Acts, observing how God granted growth to his early Christian church. This bible study was authored by Mr. Floyd Stolzenburg, a new member of St. Paul's as of February, 1985.

Mr. Stolzenburg is a native of Bexley, an island suburb surrounded by the city of Columbus. He received his B.A. in Education at Capital University, Columbus; his B.D. and M.Div. at Concordia Seminary, Springfield; his M.Ed. at the University of Missouri, St. Louis; and Ph.D. candidate status from St. Louis University. He is a former LC-MS pastor, having served at Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Orchard Farm, MO, and as Senior Pastor at Salem Ev. Lutheran Church, Black Jack, MO. After serving in the parish ministry from 1968-1984, Mr. Stolzenburg left the ministry and returned to his hometown in December of 1984 because he was having marital problems. Feeling very uncomfortable with the liberal theology at all but two of the LC-MS churches in metro-Columbus (for personal reasons he could not attend either of those two), Mr. Stolzenburg

chose to join the independent St. Paul's. He felt right at home in short order! After making himself available to Rev. Roehl as a resource should Pastor Roehl ever need him, Mr. Stolzenburg began to offer ideas and suggestions quite often, and most of his ideas proved to be of value. Because of his intense interest in Church Growth, Mr. Stolzenburg helped Pastor Roehl set up and run the local Church Growth meetings at St. Paul's, and has written many bible studies and articles for the WELS pastors and people in metro-Columbus.

One of the laymen at St. Paul's who attended these meetings (including the original meeting at Upper Arlington) was Mr. George Skestos, a man whose heart is on fire for missions and Church Growth. Mr. Skestos is a very successful businessman, and he owns Homewood Corp., a major construction firm in Columbus. He also owns several companies which are subsidiaries of Homewood Corp. Mr. Skestos has the distinction of being a voting member of BOTH St. Paul's AND Prince of Peace (and is an elder at the latter church). Mr. Skestos began talking to Mr. Stolzenburg after the Church Growth meetings, and found that they both had a common interest in Church Growth. He also discovered that they shared the concern that there was much that could (and perhaps should!) be done among our existing five WELS congregations in metro-Columbus. As the two men talked, they identified problems with our mission outreach programs and concepts, the lack of communication and cooperation between congregations, and the need to better train and use our lay people in these capacities. Many possibilities were discussed. Out of their conversations arose the idea that it would be ideal if we had a Church Growth specialist who could serve as a full-time consultant to the five churches and their pastors. Mr. Skestos indicated that he would be willing to employ Mr. Stolzenburg in such a capacity if the five pastors and churches would be willing to accept such help.⁹

What Mr. Skestos and Mr. Stolzenburg were proposing was totally novel in the WELS. We have had Mission Counselors, District Missionaries, Mission Boards, Evangelism Commissions, and other such official synodical positions and boards, but, to the best of this writer's knowledge, what Mr. Skestos and Mr. Stolzenburg were proposing was (and still is) unique to the WELS. Never before has the WELS had a privately funded, not-for-profit Church Growth consulting firm whose services are limited to WELS congregations. What really concerned Mr. Skestos and Mr. Stolzenburg was how this idea would be received by the pastors and congregations.

A caricature of the WELS has it that new ideas are seldom well-received by WELS pastors. Much to the surprise of Mr. Skestos, when he presented his proposal to Pastors Roehl, Schroeder, and Kuske, although they seem skeptical at first, they quickly became interested in the concept. In a telephone interview Pastor Kuske said that he would characterize the overall attitudes of the pastors as "interested, but cautious," and that they had a lot of unanswered questions and foresaw many complications.¹⁰ After discussing it informally among themselves for a month or so, the subject was formally discussed at their MCMMM (Metro-Columbus Monthly Ministers' Meeting--the monthly meeting of the five WELS pastors and the vicar at St. Paul's) at St. Paul's (in this writer's office) on September 6, 1985.

The five pastors expressed several concerns at this meeting. Was this proposed consulting firm being proposed simply so George Skestos might find a job for his friend Floyd Stolzenburg? How much authority should the consultant have? How would the parameters of the consultant's job be determined? What were the circumstances under which Mr. Stolzenburg left the ministry, and how might that affect the acceptance of his proposals and his credibility? And how might we sell this concept to our congregations if we decide to go ahead with this concept? These

questions and many others needed to be answered before any official steps could be taken to start such a firm as Mr. Skestos envisioned. It was agreed that the pastors would ask their respective church councils and/or congregations for their initial reactions. (At this meeting Pastor Kuske was chosen to chair the MCMMM.)

Up to this point the proposed firm was being called LAGA ("Lutheran Association for Gospel Advancement"). At the church council meeting at St. Paul's on September 17, 1985, Mr. Skestos presented his proposal that LAGA be established in order to provide consultation services for the WELS pastors and churches in metro-Columbus, in order to help everyone concerned in their God-given assignment to "make disciples of all nations," and to help organize and coordinate inter-congregational activities and services. In spite of Mr. Skestos' impassioned plea, his proposal received less than enthusiastic support at St. Paul's. A few members of the council were very supportive, and a few were not at all in favor of such a group. Most felt that they needed to have more specifics before they would be able to decide. The greatest objection to the formation of LAGA was the fear that "we would be opening ourselves up to inviting an outsider to come in and tell us what to do and how to do it." It is no surprise that such a reaction was heard at St. Paul's, since it is not a member of WELS, as was stated before. This was typical of several of the comments this writer heard at that meeting. Nevertheless, a vote was taken and the council decided to throw its hat into the ring with the other WELS congregations in support of the establishing of such a consulting firm. Mr. Phil Glende, Principal of St. Paul's Lutheran Elementary School, was designated by the council to serve as the lay representative of St. Paul's on the proposed Board of Trustees for LAGA. Mr. Glende was one of those who had expressed serious misgivings about

the proposed consulting firm, and this writer perceived his selection to be St. Paul's council's means of keeping a very close eye on the development of LAGA.

The reactions of the other four church councils were all much more favorable. Beautiful Savior's council, which was not very well organized, was "generally favorable" and "willing to accept any help available," according to Rev. Kuske.¹¹ Lamb of God's council was almost non-existent; their lack of laymen willing to serve has left Pastor Kovaciny with only three men for a council. Realizing their problems, they were very willing to try such a consulting service. "All reactions were and are uniformly positive," said Rev. Kovaciny in a telephone interview.¹² The first time Prince of Peace's council heard the proposal from Mr. Skestos, they were very supportive of the concept. Pastor Schroeder told me that his well organized council was willing to make use of such a service should one be available.¹³ Shepherd of Peace also had (and has) a very well organized church council, and it was very excited about the proposal when it first considered the potential for helping all five churches grow. Pastor Starr called their reaction "guarded enthusiasm": guarded only because they wanted to know more specifics.¹⁴ So all four of the WELS member church councils reacted more positively than did St. Paul's'. All five councils designated a lay representative to the proposed Board of Trustees, and the official planning process was in motion.

C. The Planning Process

When Mr. Skestos and Mr. Stolzenburg first came up with their proposal, they placed it before the pastors. At their MCMMS the pastors wrangled over their concerns and practical matters, envisioned the potential, and modified the proposal. They put it in the form of a working document which stated the purpose, objectives, and policies of the organ-

PURPOSE OF THE ORGANIZATION

To provide resources to help the pastors and churches of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod in advancing the cause of Christ and the spread of the Gospel.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ORGANIZATION

- 1) To enlist the talents of a man who has a proven capability in church administration as a resource for pastors and churches of the WELS.
- 2) To offer such man as a resource person or consultant, first to Columbus area WELS congregations (i.e., to member congregations of the Corporation), and then to WELS congregations outside of the Columbus area.
- 3) Through this resource person/consultant to help our pastors enhance their personal ministries.
- 4) Through this resource person/consultant to help our pastors in their work of equipping the saints for ministry.
- 5) By means of this resource person/consultant to research and develop new concepts and methods of ministry.
- 6) By means of this resource person/consultant to assist in organizing congregational activities.

POLICIES OF THE ORGANIZATION

- 1) The corporation shall be empowered to hire and employ the resource person/consultant.
- 2) The corporation shall provide the services of the resource person/consultant on at the request of a.) a pastor or b.) a pastor together with his church council
- 3) The corporation, through its Executive Committee, shall have sole responsibility for assigning and scheduling the duties of the resource person/consultant.
- 4) The corporation shall charge a nominal fee per communicant, as established by the Board of Trustees, if a congregation which is not a member congregation of the corporation wishes to use the resource person/consultant.
- 5) The Board of Trustees shall annually review the personnel and program and submit a written report to each Columbus congregation.
- 6) The corporation shall be funded by private donations and not by congregational budgets. Therefore there will be no impact on the budgets of any of the member congregations involved.
- 7) When mission congregations are involved, the corporation shall regularly inform the Michigan District Mission Board and Mission Counselor of its activity.
- 8) When missions seek to utilize the resource person/consultant, it shall be the responsibility of the congregations to consult with the District Mission Board/ Mission Counselor prior to applying to our Board.

ORGANIZATION

- 1) The organization will be a non-profit, tax exempt corporation.
- 2) The chief governing body will be a Board of Trustees, consisting of one (1) pastor and one (1) layman from each member congregation.
- 3) Administrative duties will be carried out by an Executive Committee consisting of two (2) pastors and one (1) layman elected by the Board of Trustees.

ization. This working document was placed before the entire Board of Trustees as a starting point at which the Board could begin its work. The Board first assembled at St. Paul's on Sunday, October 6, 1985.

Original Board of Trustees of LPR

NAME	TITLE	CONGREGATION
Rev. Paul Kuske	President	Beautiful Savior
Mr. Duane McCoy	Vice-President	Shepherd of Peace
Mr. Kenneth Hard	Secretary	Prince of Peace
Rev. Marc Schroeder	Treasurer	Prince of Peace
Mr. Ronald Cooper		Beautiful Savior
Teacher Philip Glende		St. Paul's
Rev. Roger Kovaciny		Lamb of God
Rev. W. Keith Roehl		St. Paul's
Rev. Richard Starr		Shepherd of Peace
Mr. Lester Stauske		Lamb of God
Mr. George Skestos	Statutory Agent	[ex officio]

When the Board first met, they had no elected officers as yet. Because Rev. Kuske had been elected chairman of the MCMMM, it was the consensus of the Board that he should serve as acting chairman until elections could be held. Rev. Kuske consented, and appointed Mr. Kenneth Hard as secretary for the meeting. The Board proceeded to adopt the necessary resolutions for incorporation as a "Not for Profit" corporation, and this information was passed along to Mr. Skestos' attorneys in order that they might draw up the legal paperwork. The Board agreed to use the working document proposed by the pastors as the framework for the organization and a guideline for the pro tem committees. Dissatisfaction with the name LAGA led to the decision to select another name for the corporation. "Lutheran Parish Resources, Incorporated" was chosen. The Board then split up into three pro tem committees which met in other rooms, did their work, and reassembled with their reports for the entire Board to act upon. The committees were: Administration, Budget, and Personnel (which later became the Search Committee).

The Administration Committee proposed a job description for the

consultant to be hired (see pages 13-a and 13-b, which are photocopies of the job descriptions proposed by the Administration Committee and amended by the entire Board), and the composition of the Executive Committee, which was to be responsible for the daily operation of the corporation and the supervision of the consultant. The Executive Committee consists of the President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Both recommendations of the Administration Committee were adopted.

The Budget Committee proposed a budget for the first year of operation. Mr. Skestos agreed to provide LPR with office space and supplies, telephone, equipment, furniture, use of a photocopier, and receptionist services at his Homewood Corporate Offices, 750 Northlawn Drive, Columbus, OH, 43214. This alone was figured to be worth \$8000. Mr. Skestos also agreed to provide a cash grant of \$45,000 to cover:

Salary-----	\$30,000
Payroll Taxes-----	3,500
Auto Allowance-----	3,000
Health Insurance-----	2,400
Professional Development-----	500
Contingencies-----	5,600
	<hr/>
CASH NEEDED-----	\$45,000

Mr. Skestos himself moved passage of this budget, which easily passed.

The Personnel Committee recommended a procedure to fill the position of consultant:

- 1) Appoint a search committee;
- 2) Develop a list of candidates by soliciting names from Synod and District Presidents, and from members of the five churches;
- 3) Solicit applications from the candidates;
- 4) Interview qualified applicants before the entire Board for final selection and hiring.

This recommendation was accepted, and the Personnel Committee was appointed to be the Search Committee, with the addition of Mr. Lester Stauske, who is a personnel specialist by trade.

The Board of Trustees then held election of officers. Winners are listed on the chart on page 12. The Board agreed to meet the following

JOB DESCRIPTION

DRAFT COPY FOR ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING 10/6/85

FOR: The Consultant Hired by "Parish Resources, Inc."

- I. GENERAL: The Consultant shall provide aid and information for the Pastor and congregation according to the policies determined by the governed board.
- II. SCOPE:
 - A. The consultant will develop defined short term projects within congregations.
 - B. Among congregations he will carry out ongoing programs as directed by the governing board.
- III. RELATIONSHIPS: All job-related activities of the consultant shall be defined and controlled by the governing board. Whenever the consultant is working in a congregation, he shall always function in an advisory capacity and must subordinate himself to the Pastor whenever the Pastor is exercising his role as the shepherd of the congregation.
- IV. THE CONSULTANT AS A RESOURCE PERSON FOR THE PASTOR:

Upon Request from a Pastor and as approved by the governing Board:

 - A. To offer counsel in the areas of administration, i.e., to offer counsel regarding time-management, forms, labor-saving devices, and other administrative tools.
 - B. To help the Pastor in developing skills, such as those that are needed in canvassing, calling, communications, etc.
 - C. The consultant may be directed to do research or to develop materials.
- V. THE CONSULTANT AS A RESOURCE PERSON FOR AN INDIVIDUAL CONGREGATION:

Upon request of the Pastor and Church Council through the governing board:

 - A. The consultant will provide evaluative services.
 - B. The consultant will counsel with leaders in the local congregation in order to enhance their leadership.
 - C. The consultant will develop programs for equipping the saints in their Christian discipleship.

VI. THE CONSULTANT AS A RESOURCE PERSON FOR THE COLUMBUS AREA CONGREGATIONS:

As directed by the governing board:

- A. The consultant will plan and supervise workshops for various groups within the congregations (e.g. treasurers, Sunday School teachers, elders, etc.)
- B. The consultant will plan and supervise other types of activities between our congregation (e.g. youth rallies, retreats, etc.)
- C. The consultant will plan and supervise cooperative programs of the member congregations.

month. The Search Committee had a month to work, the pastors had two MCMMMsto discuss LPR's progress, and the lay delegates had a month to think about it and discuss it among the members of their congregations and church councils. The Executive Committee had a month to work.¹⁵

The Board of Trustees met at Beautiful Savior on November 14, 1985. All Board members had to sign the incorporation documents for the lawyers, and were informed that an application for tax exemption had been submitted. Highlights of this Board meeting are as follows:

- 1) "Request for Consultant" form was submitted and approved. The Vice-President was designated as the person to receive all requests for services of the consultant.
- 2) Objective #6 of the "Working Document" was amended to read as follows:
"By means of the resource/consultant to assist congregational leaders in organizing congregational and/or inter-congregational activities."
- 3) The resident Statutory Agent was redesignated as Pastor Kuske, on the advice of Mr. Skestos' lawyers.
- 4) The Search Committee named eight men who had been nominated for the position of consultant. The interviewing procedure was further discussed, and the time and place of the interviews was set, as well as the time and place for the Board's final vote to determine who would be the consultant.¹⁶

D. Hiring the Consultant(!!)

So far the Search Committee had four candidates who had expressed interest in the position: Rev. Burton Stensberg, Schofield, WI; Rev. Larry Zwieg, Milwaukee, WI; Rev. Roger Zehms, St. Louis County, MO; and Mr. Floyd Stolzenburg. However, by the time the Board met on December 5, 1985 at Homewood Corporate Offices, the first two pastors had withdrawn their names from consideration, and the field had been narrowed to two. Undaunted, the Board went ahead and paid Pastor Zehm's airfare to Columbus, and interviews were held before the entire Board. Mr.

Stauske was chosen to conduct the interviews, since he is Human Resources Director of White Consolidated Industries, Inc., and is more than qualified to conduct such interviews. After explaining the interviewing process to the Board, Mr. Stauske interviewed Rev. Zehms and Mr. Stolzenburg. Each candidate was given the same set of questions, with follow-up questioning by the Board members. Mr. Stolzenburg's qualifications have already been discussed. Rev. Roger Zehms received his B.A. at Northwestern College, Watertown, and his B.D. (M.Div. equivalent) at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon in 1966. (He was a classmate of Rev. Roehl.) He served as an undergraduate tutor at Northwestern College (West Hall) during the 1964-1965 school year, and as pastor of two mission congregations in the St. Louis area: Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Owensville, MO, 1966-1972; and Martin Luther Ev. Lutheran Church, St. Louis County, MO, 1967-1985. He was Circuit Pastor of the Southern Conference of the Minnesota District of the WELS, served as area director of Reaching Out, editor of GENERATIONS from 1975-1982, and civilian chaplain on three military bases. The Board was highly impressed with the qualifications of both candidates.

After Mr. Stolzenburg's interview, the Board felt prepared to vote. Each member had used a uniform system of awarding points to each candidate in several different categories, all specifically related to a point in the job description. This writer was also present at this meeting, and, both because he was not a voting member of the Board and because he was a Vicar, this writer was chosen to tabulate the total points on all the ballots. However, an unforeseen problem arose! No method of tabulating the ballots had been chosen. Mr. Stolzenburg received

a majority of the votes on 6 of the 10 ballots cast; Rev. Zehms was the winner on only 4 ballots. However, when total points were tabulated, Rev. Zehms received 483 points to Mr. Stolzenburg's 467 points. Now the Board had a real dilemma: which candidate should be awarded the position? After much discussion late into the night, a secret ballot was taken, and Rev. Zehms was chosen by a vote of 6 to 4. Pastor Schroeder, as head of the Search Committee, was given the task of informing Rev. Zehms that the position was his if he was willing to accept it. Mr. Stolzenburg was informed when Rev. Zehms accepted the position.¹⁷

Mr. Skestos had not attended the interviewing session because he did not want the Board members to think that, just because he was providing all the funding, he would be calling the shots. It became his custom to avoid all Board meetings except when explicitly requested, for the same reason. This impressed the Board with the knowledge that they would indeed run the corporation, and not be a mere puppet, or front, for the benefactor. For this reason, Mr. Skestos' absence put a lot of minds at ease.

On December 6, 1985, the morning following the interviewing session, the pastors held their MCMMM in this writer's office at St. Paul's. Several concerns were expressed. As Mr. Stolzenburg's pastor, Rev. Roehl wondered how he was going to deal with Mr. Stolzenburg in the future. Obviously his feelings would be hurt after putting in so much effort at developing the LPR concept in the first place, and then losing out to a WELS pastor who had also served many years in St. Louis! The pastors expressed concern over the fact that both men were in the process of obtaining divorces. Pastor Kuske called both

Rev. R. Mueller, President of the Michigan District, and Rev. G. Birkholz, President of the Minnesota District, and learned that, in spite of the fact that Rev. Zehms was obtaining a divorce, he was the injured party and is still eligible to serve in the pastoral ministry of the WELS. Mr. Stolzenburg's marital situation was familiar to Pastor Roehl, and his word was accepted by the others that Mr. Stolzenburg could still serve in a consulting position without giving offence. (To this date, Rev. Zehms is listed as "CRM," i.e., he is eligible for a call into the preaching ministry of the WELS. On the other hand, Mr. Stolzenburg has not yet requested a colloquy, and is not eligible for such a call. Although Rev. Zehms' name was inadvertently omitted from the clergy roster in the 1987 Yearbook of the WELS, he was accepted into voting membership in the Ohio Conference and the Michigan District in 1986.¹⁸) Several reasons for the voting results were suggested and discussed, but the consensus of the pastors was that the members of the congregations would probably feel more at ease working with Pastor Zehms, but that his background was essentially the same as any other WELS pastor. Mr. Stolzenburg, however, graduated from Concordia Seminary in Springfield, where there was more emphasis on practical theology, and his experience in the LC-MS, usually perceived to be a more progressive church body than WELS, would give him many different ideas that our WELS pastors never thought of. Even though Rev. Zehms had been chosen, the pastors were not satisfied, yet they realized that they would not have been any more satisfied had Mr. Stolzenburg been chosen. Their felicitous dilemma was that they had two superb candidates, both with unique qualities,

and they did not want to lose out on either one! But the decision had been reached by the entire Board of Trustees, and that decision was final.¹⁹

As was said before, Rev. Zehms accepted the position, and requested a peaceful release from his call at Martin Luther Ev. Lutheran Church in St. Louis. This writer had dinner with Mr. Skestos that evening (December 6, 1985). Mr. Skestos said that he had met Rev. Zehms while he was in Columbus for the interview, and that he was favorably impressed with him. However, Mr. Skestos had hoped that Mr. Stolzenburg would be selected. He was absolutely convinced that Mr. Stolzenburg had the very qualities which the WELS needed in Columbus.

Because Mr. Skestos felt so strongly about this, he attended the Executive Committee meeting on December 12, and learned that the Board felt that Rev. Zehms was even better for the position, even though the vote had been extremely close. Since the Board felt that Rev. Zehms was so good, Mr. Skestos offered to provide the necessary funding to hire BOTH men, if the Board of Trustees would be willing to accept his offer. Nevertheless, he was willing to go ahead with the project without Mr. Stolzenburg should the Board prefer not to accept his offer of additional funding. After much discussion as to whether or not this would change Rev. Zehms' decision to accept the job and how the two would work together, the Executive Committee agreed to recommend Mr. Skestos' offer to the Board of Trustees for their action.

At the Executive meeting on December 19th, it was decided that Rev. Zehms should serve as "Administrative Director" because he was chosen first by the Trustees. This title was modified to "Director/Consultant" at the Committee's December 26th meeting. Mr. Stolzenburg's title would be "Consultant." The Committee recommended that the two consultants

work closely together, with Rev. Zehms receiving the work assignments from the Executive Committee, and dividing the assignments with Mr. Stolzenburg. Because, as Director/Consultant, Rev. Zehms would be responsible for regular supervision and evaluation, it was decided to set the Director/Consultant's salary at \$30,000 and the Consultant's at \$27,600 for the first year. Although Mr. Skestos was not enthused about the distinction made between the two consultants, he agreed to allow the Board of Trustees make the final decision at their first annual meeting on January 9, 1986.²⁰

The first Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees of LPR was held at St. Paul's. The Board of Trustees membership changed somewhat, since Mr. Hard had transferred his membership from Prince of Peace to Beautiful Savior. Prince of Peace's new representative was Mr. Andy Schut. Because Mr. Hard was doing an outstanding job as Secretary, it was decided that he would continue to serve as Secretary of the Board, but that he would not have any voting privileges. The Board seriously considered the recommendations of the Executive Committee, and voted (not unanimously) to hire both men--Rev. Zehms as Director/Consultant, and Mr. Stolzenburg as Consultant, both at the recommended salary levels. Both men were to begin their work as of January 15, 1986.²¹

II. INCEPTION

A. *Putting the Consultants to Work*

During the month of December, most of the Board members had a hard time envisioning there being enough work for one consultant, much less two full-time men. But the closer the proposed January 15th start-up date approached, the more proposals and requests for help were directed toward LPR. Rather than saving the pastors and laymen time, the work load was already beginning to snowball by the first of the year. The advisability of having two consultants became more obvious when the

two men received their initial work assignments. Plenty of work had already been planned for them when they began to work in mid-January. The Board of Trustees, at its first Annual Meeting (January 9th) agreed that the Executive Committee should meet weekly with Rev. Zehms, and give him as assignments the work which had been requested and approved by the Executive Committee, which would be approved or disapproved on the basis of the adopted objectives and policies of the corporation. The Executive Committee would prioritize each request which LPR had and would receive, and Rev. Zehms would divvy up the work with Mr. Stolzenburg. (Specific projects of LPR will be discussed under "B. The Consultants' Work.") At the same Board meeting, the four officers were reelected, and the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLVED 1) that LPR, Inc. allow itself to be used as an agency through which the goals of Christian education will be supported, and be it further

RESOLVED 2) that LPR, Inc. will hereby establish an irrevocable endowment fund, to be called "The Columbus Christian Education Endowment Fund," and be it finally

RESOLVED 3) that LPR, INC. establish an operating fund that will receive and disperse the earnings of the endowment fund as well as other gifts given for the immediate use in the Christian education fund. This fund will be called "The Columbus Christian Education Operating Fund."

The Board was broadening its sights as to the potential services of LPR! ²²

On January 15, 1986, LPR official began its operation, and the consultants moved into their office space on the second floor of the corporate offices of Homewood Corporation. Rev. Zehms met with the Executive Committee to receive his first work assignments the next day. Both consultant were invited to attend the January Ohio Pastor/Teacher/Delegate Conference at Jenera, but only Rev. Zehms was directed to attend conferences unless Mr. Stolzenburg would be specifically directed to do so by the Executive Committee. Rev. Zehms was directed to use the title "Pastor," but all requests for him to preach or conduct worship services were to be approved

by the Executive Committee for at least the first six months. Both consultants were directed to rotate between the five churches for their worship and fellowship activities. This was intended to give them more exposure to the people, as well as to give the consultants first-hand impressions of the people among whom they would be working. Rev. Zehms was encouraged to be creative about suggesting projects which would benefit the WELS in metro-Columbus, but he was directed not to respond to requests for LPR's services until the Committee had given approval. He was directed to prepare news releases about LPR, and periodic newsletters (in the form of bulletin inserts) to let the members of the five churches know what LPR is all about and what it is doing. Pastor Zehms was also directed to give the Committee periodic reports on the progress of LPR's projects.²³

B. The Consultants' Work

From the very beginning, it was the general attitude of all concerned that LPR was not going to be a slipshod organization, and no expense was spared to give LPR a very professional beginning (within the limits of good stewardship). All minutes and records were carefully kept and filed. Business cards, envelopes, and custom stationery were obtained. LPR soon began to produce its monthly "UPDATE," which gives the members information about LPR and its projects, and it is distributed in the Sunday bulletins at all five churches. LPR also developed a uniform, neat, methodical, and well-organized means by which it reports to the Committee on the progress of its work. This report is indexed in the sequence based on the date the request was first received. For our purposes, rather than reproducing these materials, here is a list of the projects which LPR undertook during its first year, January 15, 1986-January 15, 1987. This listing is not chronological, but is based on the Consultant's Job Description (pp. 13-a & 13-b).

PROJECTS UNDERTAKEN BY L.P.R. DURING ITS FIRST YEAR

- IV. The Consultants are to serve as resource persons for the Pastors:
- A. Administration:
 - Held a time management seminar for the pastors, June 12.
 - Produced a job description for pastors.
 - Produced a design for better vicar evaluation for Rev. Roehl.
 - B. Personal Ministry Skills:
 - Evaluated preaching for Rev. Kovaciny.
 - Held a time management seminar for the pastors, June 12.
 - Held a campus ministry seminar for the pastors, August 22-23.
 - Developed a "Pastoral Support Program" for Rev. Kovaciny.
 - Began preaching and teaching evaluation for Rev. Schroeder.
 - C. Research and Develop Materials:
 - Prepared Outreach Bible Study Program for Prince of Peace to use at new location.
 - Trained Prince of Peace layman in community relations for new location.
 - Developed new brochure for Prince of Peace.
 - Developed Campus Ministry program for Rev. Starr.
- V. The Consultants are to serve as resource persons for the individual congregations:
- A. Evaluation:
 - Evaluated boys' program at Lamb of God. Recommended co-ed program.
 - Studied choir participation problem at Lamb of God.
 - Began to develop total discipleship program for Beautiful Savior (postponed).
 - Studied mission strategy on the East side of Columbus for Executive Committee.
 - Served as professional consultants for Prince of Peace's Building Committee.
 - Developed new brochure for Prince of Peace.
 - Trained Prince of Peace layman in community relations for new location.
 - Developed Growth Plan for Prince of Peace's move.
 - B. Enhancing Leadership Skills of Laypeople:
 - Trained area Youth Leaders--both adults and high school-age leaders. Helped them organize a new area youth program, coordinating the five groups.
 - Began on-going Elders' Training Program at Prince of Peace.
 - Assisted with VBS planning and teacher training at Prince of Peace.
 - Assisted new Stewardship Chairman at Prince of Peace with setting up Stewardship program (based on biblical principles).
 - Planned retreat for Prince of Peace's Church Council.
 - C. Programs for Equipping the Saints in Christian Discipleship:
 - Conducted Witness Workshop at Lamb of God (June 1) and St. Paul's (August 24).
 - Helped Rev. Roehl set up Lay Caring Ministry at St. Paul's, and train the lay Caregivers.
 - Assisted in starting MOPS (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers) at Shepherd of Peace.
 - Developed Sponsorship Program for integrating new members into Shepherd of Peace.
 - Recommended that programs for grade-schoolers be handled by Lutheran Pioneers.
 - Began to assemble materials for anti-substance abuse brochure and program.
 - Set up Church Growth Program for Beautiful Savior, including Parish Enrichment Program (PEP).
 - Held Evangelism Training Seminars at Shepherd of Peace in September.
 - Assisted with the organization of a new adult education program at St. Paul's.
 - Trained lay evangelists at Beautiful Savior.
- VI. The Consultants are to serve as resource persons for area congregations:
- A. Workshops for Groups:
 - Sunday School Teachers' Institute organized and conducted August 16.
 - Held Forum for Education Chairmen.

LPR's First Year's Projects , continued

B. Activities in General:

- Conducted two three-day summer camps:
 - 32 attended the high school camp;
 - 63 attended the grade school camp (Includes adults).
- Began to set up 1987 Adult Bible Study Retreat.
- Conducted Pathfinders' Retreat (college students and young adults).
- Organized LWMS Fall Rally, which was held October 18.
- Set up Area Reformation Service.
- Assisted in setting up Area Ascension Day Service.

C. Cooperative Programs:

- Assisted with publicity of area VBS programs (newspaper and radio).
- Planned model Area Youth Program, and conducted several activities.
- Helped organize summer softball for children and adults of all five churches.
- Began to investigate setting up a WELS Speakers Bureau for metro-Columbus.
- Studied demographics and other information in order to recommend an area-wide mission strategy. Recommended that the next WELS mission in metro-Columbus be established in Pickerington, OH.
- Began to review WLC&FS Family Life Series materials for use by the churches.
- Studied feasibility of obtaining a camping area for WELS churches/groups in Ohio.
- Organized and began to operate the Lutheran Bible Institute.

Other projects not spelled out in the Consultant's Job Description:

- Served as a sort of "front" organization by sponsoring the Free Conference held September 27.
- Assisted Rev. Starr in compiling concepts and teaching methods for his intermediate level bible study on 1&2 Peter.
- Conducted a Lay Leadership Seminar in Findlay, OH, also on September 27.
- Assisted the Michigan District Mission Board by spend a week helping Mission Counselor John Chworowsky do a demographic mission study of the Detroit, MI area.
- Provided guidance and advice to both WELS Lutherans for life of Metro-Columbus, Inc. and the Lutheran Pioneers--Mohawk District during their formative stages.
- Assisted in setting up a schedule of events for St. Paul's Lutheran School's Parent/Teacher Organization.
- Provided much off-the-record advice to the Pastors, Vicar, Teachers, and lay leaders at the five WELS churches.
- Produced and published a small "hymnal" for use on retreats and at fellowship activities.

III. EVALUATION:

A. Initial Remarks:

It must be conceded that the above list is quite impressive, since it represents a tremendous number of man-hours of labor on the part of the two consultants. But we must remember that LPR was designed as a one year pilot program only. The question that must be answered is: Is it worth the money and the effort to continue LPR for another year? This is the question to which the Board of Trustees addressed itself at its meeting September 11, 1986. Mr. Skestos attended this meeting and addressed the Trustees. He restated his purposes in financing LPR

as:

- 1) Uniting the five churches into a more close-knit fellowship;
- 2) Enhancing the ministry of the pastors;
- 3) Training and motivating the laity; and
- 4) Developing programs to promote spiritual growth in the congregations and outreach to the unchurched community.

Mr. Skestos then expressed his delight and approval of the work which LPR had accomplished during the first three quarters of 1986. He agreed to provide funding for another year, and offered the following guidelines:

- 1) Confine LPR to the Columbus area during 1987; and
- 2) Reduce supervision of the consultants, giving the Director more latitude in decision making.

Mr. Skestos was specifically invited to attend the annual budget meetings and the mid-year review meetings. Agreeing to this, he excused himself from the balance of the September Board meeting.²⁴

But is LPR really worth the money and the effort of one more year? In order to address this question, this writer devised a Survey/Questionnaire in order to solicit the opinions of the members of the Board of Trustees, Teachers, church councilmen, and interested laypeople. Realizing that the constituency of each of the church councils is different, and that the selection of interested laypeople deemed appropriate by each pastor will lend a certain degree of added subjectivity to the data, this writer makes no pretense of this as a scientific survey. However, he does believe that the results will help assess the success or failure of LPR to achieve its stated objectives.

B. Survey Says!:

Rev. Zehms was kind enough to assist this writer by distributing the questionnaire to the pastors, and LPR provided some photocopying.

When this writer sent the master survey/questionnaire to Rev. Zehms, he included a cover letter explaining his intentions. (This cover letter is reproduced on page 25-a.) This letter also explained to whom the survey/questionnaire should be given, and how it was to be filled out. Section A dealt with personal information, in order to help this writer categorize the responses. No names were to be given (although it was not difficult to determine exactly who filled out several of the survey/questionnaires). Section B referred specifically to the stated objectives of LPR. Section C referred in general to the consultants' job descriptions, or to concerns which the LPR Board of Trustees dealt with at one time or another. (This survey/questionnaire is reproduced on pages 25-b and 25-c.)

Unfortunately, of the approximately fifty people who were invited to respond, only twenty survey/questionnaires were received by this writer. Yet this is still sufficient to give us a good picture of the general attitude towards the work of LPR, and give us a fair basis for evaluation. This writer tabulated the twenty responses (without benefit of any data processor), and his results are recorded on page 26. This writer's observations of the data are as follows:

Section A

All five pastors responded. So did at least one other layperson from each congregation. Although it appears that St. Paul's has a disproportionate number of responses which might discredit our averages, it must be borne in mind that St. Paul's has more total members than the other four churches put together, so it is appropriate that St. Paul's have heavy representation. It should also be pointed out that, although all five teachers at St. Paul's responded, neither of the two at Beautiful Savior did. Also, only three of the laymen on the Board of Trustees responded. Nevertheless, here are the data:

1420 Henry Street
Watertown, WI 53094
January 4, 1987

Rev. Roger Zehms, Director
Lutheran Parish Resources, INC.
750 Northlawn Drive
Columbus, OH 43214

Dear Pastor Zehms:

Enclosed is the Survey/Questionnaire which I have devised to help me assess the success or failure of LPR to achieve its stated objectives. Please make the necessary copies, and distribute them to the pastors of the 5 churches at the January Monthly Ministers' Meeting, and ask them to distribute and collect them for you. When you have received the completed Survey/Questionnaires, please return them to me. I will be glad to reimburse you for the copying and/or postal charges.

These are the people whom I would like to have complete the Survey/Questionnaire:

1. All 5 pastors, but not the consultants
2. All other members of the LPR Board of Trustees
3. All other members of the 5 church councils
4. All other Christian Day School teachers at both schools
5. Any other individuals any of the pastors deems appropriate

I realize that the constituency of each of the church councils is different, but that is not important to my study.

Please explain the Survey/Questionnaire to all 5 pastors, and give them each one copy of this letter. They may wish to read the following paragraph to their councils before asking them to complete the forms.

"Please do not write your name on the survey/questionnaire! Section A will give me all the personal information I will need to categorize your responses. The questions in Section B refer specifically to the stated objectives of LPR. If you are unsure, have no first-hand information, or have no opinion concerning any of these questions in Section B, please do not answer. I need accurate, informed opinions here. The statements in Section C refer in general to the consultants' job descriptions, or to concerns which have been addressed by the LPR Board of Trustees at one time or another. If you have no information or opinion concerning any of these statements, please write the number '3' on the line provided."

Thank you very much for your help in conducting this survey. If I can ever be of help to you, please let me know. A copy of my completed paper, which will contain the results of this survey, will be kept on file in the Seminary Library. Should you or anyone connected with LPR or our WELS congregations in the Metro Columbus area ever need a copy of the paper, Prof. Westerhouse would be glad to send a copy.

May God continue to bless you and the work of LPR!

In His Service,


David G. Peters

Dear Friends in Christ:

Greetings from Wisconsin! May our gracious Lord bless you during 1987. I am now a Senior at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Divinity degree, each senior is required to do a research project and write a paper on his findings concerning some facet of Lutheranism in America. This paper is to be written on a topic which has never before been written about. I have chosen to write my paper on Lutheran Parish Resources, Inc. In order to fairly and properly evaluate LPR, and to determine whether or not LPR has actually accomplished what it was designed to accomplish, I have devised a survey/questionnaire. I would appreciate it if you would kindly fill out the survey/questionnaire, and return it to either your pastor or Rev. Roger Zehms, who has agreed to assist me in this survey. Remember--the purpose of this survey/questionnaire is merely to assist me in evaluating the success of LPR, and nothing you say will affect LPR, in the present or in the future. This is for my educational purposes only.

Thank you for your cooperation and help! In Christ, David G. Peters
 ++++++

SURVEY / QUESTIONNAIRE

Please do not identify yourself by name!

Section A: Please circle the letter before each answer which applies to you:

1. I am a:
 - a. Lay member of church council.
 - b. Lay member of LPR Board of Trustees.
 - c. Christian Day School teacher.
 - d. Pastor.
 - e. Other (please specify position): _____
2. I belong to:
 - a. Beautiful Savior.
 - b. Lamb of God.
 - c. Prince of Peace.
 - d. Shepherd of Peace.
 - e. St. Paul's.

Section B: Please write the number of your answer on the line provided in front of each question:

- 1--has been invaluable*
2--has helped a lot
3--has helped a little
4--has made no difference
5--has been detrimental

3. _____ Has LPR really helped your pastor enhance his personal ministry?
4. _____ Has LPR really helped your pastor in his work of equipping the saints for ministry?
5. _____ Has LPR really helped congregational leaders in organizing congregational activities?
6. _____ Has LPR really helped congregational leaders in organizing intercongregational activities?
7. _____ Has LPR really researched and developed new/different concepts and methods of public ministry--and presented them to your pastor and/or congregational leaders?

Section C: Please write the number of your answer on the line provided in front of each statement:

- 1--strongly agree
2--generally agree
3--ambivalent/no opinion
4--generally disagree
5--strongly disagree*

8. _____ LPR has been valuable as consultant(s) to my pastor.
9. _____ LPR has been valuable as consultant(s) to the leadership of my congregation.
10. _____ LPR's workshops/seminars have been valuable for personal growth.
11. _____ LPR's workshops/seminars have been valuable for congregational strengthening.
12. _____ LPR has provided valuable aid in congregational administration
13. _____ LPR has been a valuable source of new ideas, methods, and concepts of ministry to my pastor.
14. _____ LPR has been a valuable source of new ideas, methods, and concepts of ministry to my congregation and its leaders.
15. _____ Brochures, pamphlets, and inserts prepared by LPR are professionally done (appearance, content, and overall quality).
16. _____ LPR has been a valuable aid to my congregation's evangelism program.
17. _____ LPR has been a valuable aid to my congregation's overall spiritual growth.
18. _____ LPR consultants should be more involved in my congregation.
19. _____ LPR consultants do thorough research.
20. _____ LPR is so valuable that it should become a permanent fixture in our midst.
21. _____ I believe that other metropolitan areas should consider establishing corporations such as LPR, in order to assist them in their mission.
22. _____ LPR duplicates services available from WELS or Michigan District Mission Boards.

Additional comments, if desired:

Question / Pastors / Teachers / Councilmen / Lay Trustees / Total Board / Other Laymen / St. P / L of G / Bt. S / P of P / Sh of P / Total Congregations

Section A:

1.	5	5	5	3 *	8 *	4 **	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2.	--	--	--	--	--	--	9	4	2	2	3	2	20

Section B:

3.	2.2	2.6	2.4	2.33	2.25	1.75	2.56	1.5	2.5	2.0	2.0	3.0	2.30
4.	1.8	2.4	3.0	2.33	2.0	1.25	2.62@	1.25	2.0	2.5@	2.5@	2.5	2.22 ***
5.	2.4	2.8	2.6	3.67	2.88	1.5	3.0	1.25	3.0	1.67	3.0	3.0	2.45
6.	1.6	3.0	3.0	2.67	2.0	1.25	2.89	1.25	2.5	2.0	2.0	1.5	1.75
7.	2.6	2.8	3.0	2.0	2.38	1.75	3.0	1.75	2.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.45

Section C:

8.	1.2	1.6	2.2	2.33	1.62	1.25	1.67	1.25	2.5	1.33	1.5	1.5	1.60
9.	1.8	2.4	2.4	3.0	2.25	1.25	1.67	1.25	2.5	1.0	2.5	2.5	2.05
10.	1.6	1.4	2.0	2.0	1.75	1.25	1.78	1.25	2.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	1.60
11.	1.8	2.2	2.2	2.33	2.0	1.25	2.22	1.25	2.5	1.33	1.5	1.5	1.85
12.	2.0	2.6	3.0	3.0	2.38	1.75	2.78	2.0	3.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.30
13.	1.4	2.2	2.4	2.0	1.62	1.25	2.11	1.25	2.5	1.33	1.5	1.5	1.80
14.	1.8	2.6	2.4	2.33	2.0	1.25	2.67	1.25	2.5	1.0	1.5	1.5	2.00
15.	1.4	2.0	1.6	1.33	1.38	2.0	1.89	2.25	1.0	1.0	1.5	1.5	1.70
16.	1.6	3.4	1.8	2.67	2.0	2.0	2.78	1.75	1.5	2.0@	1.5	1.5	2.21 ****
17.	2.0	2.2	2.6	2.67	2.25	1.25	2.44	1.25	2.5	1.67	2.0	2.0	2.05
18.	2.4	3.7	2.2	3.0	2.62	2.0	3.05#	2.5	2.5	1.67	2.0	2.0	2.58
19.	1.2	2.2	1.6	1.33	1.25	1.5	2.0	1.5	1.5	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.60
20.	2.2	2.4	1.6	2.0	2.12	1.5	2.22	1.5	2.0##	1.67	1.5	1.5	1.90
21.	1.4	2.2	1.6	1.67	1.5	1.25	2.0	1.25	2.0##	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.60
22.	4.4	2.6	3.6	4.0	4.25	4.75	2.78	4.75	4.0	4.33	4.5	4.5	3.70

*--Lay representatives of L of G and P of P did not respond, and are not included.

**--Other Laymen includes three from L of G and one from P of P.

***--No opinion was expressed on two survey/questionnaires; thus only eighteen are averaged here.

****--No opinion was expressed on one survey/questionnaire; thus only nineteen are averaged here.

@--One survey/questionnaire indicated no answer.

#--One answered "4/3" and was averaged in as a 3.5.

##--One survey/questionnaire did not respond; however, a 3 was assigned due to additional comments which shed light on the opinion of the respondent.

ASSIGNED VALUES: Section B:

- 1--Has been invaluable
- 2--Has helped a lot
- 3--Has helped a little
- 4--Has made no difference
- 5--Has been detrimental

Section C:

- 1--Strongly agree
- 2--Generally agree
- 3--Ambivalent/No opinion
- 4--Generally disagree
- 5--Strongly disagree

Section B

The pastor whose personal ministry was most enhanced by LPR is the same man who felt the greatest desire for assistance. Lamb of God also feels most strongly that their pastor has been helped in his work of equipping the members of his congregation for their own personal ministries. Lamb of God also gave LPR the highest marks for helping congregational leaders plan activities--both intra- and intercongregational. They also gave LPR the highest marks for researching and developing new and/or different concepts and methods of public ministry and presenting their findings to them. Their rave reviews are probably due to the very extensive work which Mr. Stolzenburg has done at Lamb of God, especially the Parish Enrichment Seminar, the evangelism program, and the individual attention he has given Rev. Kovaciny.

In general, the lowest marks given LPR were given by St. Paul's, an older, well-organized congregation, not a member of WELS, and wary of outside interference. In view of their initial reaction to LPR (the Church Council's support was not overwhelming), and the congregation's generally-perceived self-sufficiency as an independent congregation, their reaction is not unexpected. Even so, in all five categories, St. Paul's gave LPR credit for helping at least "a little."

In every category, the pastors gave LPR higher marks than did the teachers and the church councilmen. This writer feels that both of these groups are generally inclined to be a little bit more conservative in their approaches to the ministry than are the pastors, since pastors are usually trying to find new and/or different ways of doing the work of ministry, whereas teachers and councilmen tend to be more wary of change for fear that the congregational applecart might be overturned. The Laymen on the Board of Trustees gave LPR higher marks than did the pastors in only one category--#7, which deals with new concepts of

ministry. These men are more familiar with the work that LPR has been doing than are the teachers and councilmen, but less qualified to judge what is new and different than are the pastors, so their response is understandable.

The scores which LPR received in Section B indicate that the consensus of those who responded is that LPR has done a fine job of fulfilling its stated objectives. According to this data, the objective which LPR fulfilled best deals with the organization of intercongregational activities, thus addressing a primary concern of Mr. Skestos that more and better cooperation and fellowship is needed between the five churches. The lowest scores were given in categories #5 and #7, indicating that perhaps the consultants did too much of the organizing of the intracongregational activities themselves, rather than actually training the congregational leaders to do the organizing; and that this first year of operation was a learning year for the consultants, as they spent much time learning what the situation was in each of the five congregations, which they needed to know before they would be able to introduce new and/or different concepts of ministry within the congregations. Both of these objectives should be addressed in 1987.

Section C

Who has benefited more from LPR's consultant services? According to our data, the pastors were benefited more, by a margin of 1.8 to 2.0. The pastors themselves recognized this, and they gave LPR higher marks for their role as consultants to themselves than did anyone else. Together with the "Other Laymen" they gave LPR very high marks for LPR's services as consultants to the congregations. (Bear in mind that 3 of the 4 "Other Laymen" who responded were from Lamb of God, which has the smallest average Sunday attendance, and no "Other Laymen" from St. Paul's responded, so this statistic is of dubious value at best.)

Those members of St. Paul's who did respond gave LPR a lower rating here (2.56) than did any of the other churches--certainly for the same reasons as stated earlier. Among pastors, it appears that Rev. Kuske of Beautiful Savior got the least amount of value from LPR as consultants, but that is based on only two responses.

Most respondents agreed rather strongly that LPR's workshops and seminars have been valuable for both personal strengthening (1.60 for #10) and congregational strengthening (1.85 for #11). St. Paul's teachers agreed more strongly about # 10 than about any other statement on the survey/questionnaire. It appears that they were greatly edified by the workshops and seminars offered by LPR--even more than the pastors and the laymen.

Most respondents generally agreed LPR provided valuable aid in congregational administration. However, this category is their weakest showing among those statements dealing with the Consultant's Job Description, so this is an area which deserves LPR's attention during the coming year. Apparently the lay trustees and church councilmen are not as convinced as are the pastors that LPR has been much help in administration.

How valuable a source of new ideas, methods, and concepts of ministry has LPR been to the pastor, or to the congregation and its lay leadership? High marks were given by the three mission churches; much lower marks were given by St. Paul's (2.11/2.67) and Beautiful Savior (2.5/2.5). Pastors gave higher marks in both categories than did teachers or lay councilmen and Trustees. Even so, very strong marks were given to the consultants for introducing new ideas, which speaks well for the two men.

LPR was given very high marks in category #15. Almost everyone felt that the materials produced by LPR are of very professional quality, both in appearance and in content. The lowest marks were given by

Lamb of God, which is atypical of their other marks. (Quite likely this is due to the fact that most of the work done at Lamb of God was done by Mr. Stolzenburg, who is not well known for his spelling prowess!) But the high scores in this category demonstrate that the people do not perceive LPR to be an amateurish operation.

Statement #16 dealt with the evangelism programs of each church. Here the pastors gave LPR the highest marks, while the teachers gave the lowest. Yet only one of the five teachers at St. Paul's was actively involved in the evangelism program there, and their marks significantly dropped St. Paul's average score, making it by far the lowest score. Evangelism is where LPR received their second-worst marks (although 2.21 is certainly not bad!), perhaps because it was not until the last part of the year when evangelism began to receive a top priority. This was recognized as an area which needed more emphasis, so Mr. Stolzenburg's title was officially changed to "Evangelism Consultant" at the January 15, 1987 Board of Trustees meeting, and 1987 was declared to be a year of evangelism emphasis among the WELS congregations in metro-Columbus.²⁵

Statement #17 was something of a summary statement, dealing with LPR's role in the overall spiritual growth of each congregation. As one would expect, the best marks were given by Lamb of God, as well as the other mission congregations. The lowest scores received were from Beautiful Savior, which is somewhat surprising in view of the fact that Mr. Stolzenburg conducted a Parish Enrichment Program there which was very similar to the PEP which he conducted at Lamb of God, and yet the marks given by the two churches represent opposite ends of the spread. Again the pastors felt that LPR was more beneficial to overall spiritual growth than did the teachers, the lay Trustees, and the church councilmen.

Statements #18-#22 deal with issues discussed at one time or another by the Board of Trustees. Only Prince of Peace wanted LPR to become

significantly more involved in their congregational life. The 3.05 score given by St. Paul's is not a surprise, for the same reasons previously mentioned. Their low score is primarily due to the negative response of the teachers, who awarded LPR a 3.7--in otherwards, they are not in favor of LPR increasing its involvement at St. Paul's. We cannot interpret this score as a reflection of the St. Paul's teachers' disaffection with LPR as a concept. However, the overall total average of 2.58 means that, in general, those who responded to our survey/questionnaire feel that LPR should increase its involvement in the individual congregations only slightly.

It is interesting to note that the teachers gave LPR the lowest score on the thoroughness of LPR's research. The pastors gave the highest marks. The 1.6 overall score shows that research is one of LPR's strongest suits.

Is LPR so valuable that it should become a permanent fixture in metro-Columbus? The mission churches say "Yes!" but the two established churches are not quite as enthusiastic. This is to be expected, since mission congregations generally have more enthusiasm for church growth than do established churches. (This is not without its exceptions, of course.) Laymen agreed that LPR should become a permanent fixture, while the pastors and teachers were a little less likely to commit themselves after only one year of the pilot program. (It would be interesting to ask this question again at the end of 1987.)

Should other cities consider establishing an organization such as LPR in order to assist them in their mission? A very positive response here (1.6) indicates that LPR is highly thought of by the twenty respondents. This novel concept has worked well in Franklin County, and might be beneficial in other metropolitan areas where WELS is represented. Perhaps cities such as Phoenix, Tucson, Minneapolis/St. Paul, and Detroit

would be candidates for such an organization, since they have enough WELS churches to make it worthwhile, and have plenty of potential for both internal and external church growth.

The final statement on the questionnaire dealt with a primary concern of the Board: Does LPR duplicate services already available from the Board for Home Missions or the Michigan District Mission Board? The cumulative average is misleading because St. Paul's score is obviously out of line. The four WELS churches are much better informed about the services and activities of the Mission Boards than the independent St. Paul's. That explains the scores given by the laymen at St. Paul's. But what about the teachers'? They gave a 2.6. Pastors gave a 4.4. None of the five teachers at St. Paul's comes from a mission congregation, and none of them have any significant dealings with the Mission Boards. Therefore we can discount their scores on this point, and look at the fact that all the other churches gave a 4.0 at the worst (here LPR wants to see as high a score as possible, indicating that they do not duplicate other services available).

The overall conclusion we can draw from this survey/questionnaire is that those who responded do recognize the value of LPR, and, in general, give LPR very good reviews. Our results indicate that LPR has been a successful pilot project during its first year, and that it has earned its second year of operation.

C. Additional Comments:

At the end of the survey/questionnaire respondents were given opportunity to express their own comments if desired. The following are selected representative comments:

"I felt this was too 'pastor oriented.'"

"The concept of LPR has valuable possibilities."

"Generally like what work they have done for our congregation

and look forward to additional help in the future in strengthening our leaders."

"I think it is too soon to tell [whether or not LPR should become a permanent fixture in Columbus, and whether or not other cities should try it]...Where rubs have occurred, we have to sort out whether it is caused by personality or whether it is endemic to the idea."

"[LPR] has helped us overcome great odds & hold together with much enthusiasm."

"LPR has been one of the best programs that has happened to WELS and I hope that it will be used in other places."

It is not necessary to address each of these comments. They are all very valid. Let us address only three:

If the teacher who felt that LPR has been too "pastor oriented" means that in distinction to "teacher oriented," then it would be important to remember that LPR was not set up with the existing schools in mind. It was intended to help pastors and laity better carry out their mission. But it is also true that LPR's Board of Trustees and Mr. Skestos have both expressed a great interest in Christian education. Perhaps this is one area where LPR might play a greater role in the future. But if the teacher meant "pastor oriented" as opposed to "congregation oriented," he or she is not alone (cf. the cumulative scores for #8 vs. #9, and #10 vs. #11). LPR might strive for better balance in the future.

The pastor who said that it is too soon to tell whether LPR should become a permanent fixture in Columbus has a valid point. Just because LPR has earned a second year does not mean that the time will never come when LPR has outlived its usefulness in Franklin County. This writer does believe that the concept of LPR should be exported to other carefully selected cities, based on existing WELS strength, potential, need, and funding. Funding is probably the biggest factor, for without Mr. Skestos' financing, LPR would not exist.

The Layman who commented that "LPR is one of the best things that has happened to WELS...." also answered #22 with a 5. He believes that LPR does not duplicate services available through the Synod and

District Mission Boards. However, the Chairman of the Michigan District Mission Board does not agree (though he does share the sentiment). When this writer interviewed Rev. W. Oehlhafen, he said that the District Mission Board believes that in many cases LPR does duplicate Mission Counselor Rev. J. Chworowsky's services. But rather than using the term "duplicates," he prefers the term "compliments." Rev. Oehlhafen felt that LPR has an advantage in that it is able to provide concentrated service in one locale, whereas Rev. Chworowsky has to serve 35 missions between the Michigan and North Atlantic Districts. LPR actually helps the other 32 mission congregations by reducing Rev. Chworowsky's workload. Concerning the value of LPR in another synodical setting, Rev. Oehlhafen encouraged LPR's Board of Trustees "not to be myopic in their thinking," in the context that he would like to see LPR's services and concepts made more available to a larger number of congregations. After expressing his gratitude for the aid which Rev. Zehms gave Rev. Chworowsky in the Detroit area in the summer of 1986, Rev. Oehlhafen said, "Both Roger Zehms and Floyd Stolzenburg are excellent at what they do!"²⁶

CONCLUSION

One of the great blessings with which the Lord blessed LPR from the very beginning was the personnel on the Board of Trustees. President Kuske is also Vice-President of the Michigan District, and President of LACE (Lutheran Association for Church Extension). His contacts as a member of the District Praesidium have proven quite helpful to LPR. His experience with another parachurch organization made him an able leader. Rev. Starr is on the District Mission Board, so he can serve as a liason and a sort of watchdog. Rev. Roehl is Circuit Pastor for the Southern Ohio--West Virginia Circuit, and spiritual leader of the Circuit. Rev. Schroeder, as one of Mr. Skestos' pastors and confidant, has been able to help Mr. Skestos find opportunities to exercise good

stewardship of his material blessings, and has been able to work with the financial people at Homewood Corporation. Rev. Kovaciny has been a very strong supporter of the whole concept of LPR from the very beginning, and he has been very open to new/different concepts in ministry.

But the laymen on the Board of Trustees have been every bit as important (if not more important) than the pastors. One would have a difficult time finding a group of laymen among the five churches more qualified to establish such a corporation. Mr. Ron Cooper is employed by Ohio Bell. He has a background in engineering and personnel management and is an efficiency expert. Mr. Duane McCoy is a manager for AT&T, has a computer programming background, and is involved with training and troubleshooting. Mr. Ken Hard, a former career man in the Air Force, is also the former owner/operator of four Burger King Restaurants. Mr. Les Stauske (who is no longer on the Board, but was the man who conducted the interviewing sequence) is Human Resources Director for White Consolidated Industries, a conglomerate of four major appliance manufacturers. Mr. Andy Schut is Circulation Director for Suburban News, and is in charge of putting out 25 suburban newspapers. Mr. Phil Glende is Principal of St. Paul's Lutheran School, and has a masters degree in Education Administration. Every member of the Board is highly qualified to be a part of the formation of such an organization as LPR.

This writer believes that Rev. Oehlhafen's assessment is correct. In some areas LPR does duplicate services available from the Mission Boards (e.g., consultation for mission churches and pastors). However, LPR does compliment these services, because the two consultants are able to dedicate full time service to the five congregations and their pastors, which the Mission Counselor could never have time to do. Add to this fact that Rev. Zehms' presence in Columbus means that one more ordained man is available for substitute preaching, etc., and the advan-

tages of LPR become increasingly clear. Both consultants are to a certain degree expert in the establishment of "home missions." While pastors in the St. Louis area, both men were heavily involved in area surveys, demographic research and mission planning--Rev. Zehms in the WELS, and Rev. Stolzenburg in the LC-MS.

Rev. Schroeder spoke of the need for such a Church Growth firm in a letter to Rev. Winfred Koelpin of Livonia, Michigan. While stating the intent of LPR, Pastor Schroeder wrote:

Often our pastors are too much involved in day-to-day maintenance (whether spiritual or other) and are too little involved in the greater task of equipping the saints for ministry. We operate at the level of "survival tactics in the church" rather than at the level of "creative church leadership." We lose sight of the beckoning fields ripe for harvest because we're preoccupied with our little patch of wheat and weeds. We need help, and Lutheran Parish Resources is intended to provide that help.²⁷

This writer believes that almost every experienced pastor would have to agree with Pastor Schroeder.

In spite of all LPR's good points, it is not without its weaknesses. Rev. Oehlhafen identified what he believes are the biggest problems of LPR: "Congregations may not properly use and/or respond in ways they might." He is correct on both accounts. Good planning by the local congregation is necessary before requesting the services of LPR if true church growth is to be accomplished. LPR has generally kept in mind that they are not to provide services which have not been specifically requested and approved, but the danger always exists that the consultants could begin doing the work which is the responsibility of the local pastor and/ the congregation. This writer also believes that Pastor Oehlhafen has also mentioned another important point: if congregations are to get the greatest benefit from LPR, they will need to respond in greater measure. This could be in the form of nominal payments or free-will offerings for services rendered, thus shouldering some of Mr. Skestos' financial

burden, and growing in Christian stewardship. Greater attendance at the workshops and seminars offered by LPR would also be a great benefit to everybody involved.

But LPR is a program with tremendous potential for Church Growth as pastors, teachers and laity alike learn to grow in their service in the Lord's harvest of souls. LPR has certainly helped expand the vision of the WELS churches and pastors in metro-Columbus, for without LPR, few if any of the programs and services performed by LPR during 1986 would have been done at all. The pastors and congregations simply lacked either the time or the ability to carry out these functions. Did LPR fulfill its purposes, objectives, and goals? The answer to this question will always be a matter of opinion; but, from this writer's perspective, LPR has been a highly successful pilot project, either fulfilling or making great strides toward fulfilling the expectations of its founders. In terms of its original conception, Mr. Skestos certainly agrees that LPR has been successful during its first year. That is why he has invested \$84,600 in a second year of operation for Lutheran Parish Resources, Inc.!

LPR'S 1987 BUDGET²⁸

Salaries:	
Director/Consultant-----	\$31,500
Evangelism Consultant-----	31,500
Payroll Taxes-----	7,300
Auto Allowance-----	6,000
Insurance-----	4,800
Professional Development-----	1,000
Contingency-----	1,000
Office Supplies-----	1,200
Telephone-----	300
Office Space and Furniture-----	donated
<hr/>	
TOTAL-----	\$84,600

ENDNOTES

- ¹Bulletin insert in early January, 1986, entitled: "Introducing Lutheran Parish Resources, Inc."
- ²Bulletin insert in early March, 1986, entitled: "Have You Thought About...?"
- ³Kuske, Rev. Paul. "Parachurch Organizations and Their Relationship to the Called Ministry of the Church." Unpublished essay, delivered at the 1986 Fall Pastors' Conference in West Newton, PA, October 20, 21, 1986.
- ⁴p. 37, column 2.
- ⁵During my vicarship at St. Paul's, I heard the very words used by several women (and a few men) who could not accept the WELS position.
- ⁶p. 38, column 1.
- ⁷According to the Statistical Report of the WELS, 1985.
- ⁸St. Paul's Lutheran Messenger, March, 1985, p. 3.
- ⁹Telephone interview with Mr. Skestos, April 22, 1987.
- ¹⁰Telephone interview with Rev. Paul Kuske, April 23, 1987.
- ¹¹Ibid.
- ¹²Telephone interview with Rev. Roger Kovaciny, April 23, 1987.
- ¹³Telephone interview with Rev. Marc Schroeder, April 23, 1987.
- ¹⁴Telephone interview with Rev. Richard Starr, April 23, 1987.
- ¹⁵Details of this meeting were gleaned from the minutes, as recorded by Secretary Ken Hard.
- ¹⁶Ibid.
- ¹⁷Ibid.
- ¹⁸cf. the Proceedings of the Michigan District Convention, Saginaw, June 16-18, 1986.
- ¹⁹No minutes were taken at this meeting. Details are gleaned from my own notes of that meeting.
- ²⁰Details of these meetings were gleaned from the minutes of the Executive Committee Meetings, December 12, 19, 26, 1985, and January 2, 1986.
- ²¹Details of this meeting were gleaned from the minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, January 9, 1986.
- ²²Ibid.
- ²³Details of this meeting were gleaned from the minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting, January 16, 1986.
- ²⁴Details of this meeting were gleaned from the minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, September 11, 1986.

²⁵Details of this meeting were gleaned from the minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, January 15, 1987.

²⁶Telephone interview with Rev. Oehlhafen, March 14, 1987.

²⁷Letter is dated October 16, 1985.

²⁸Recorded in Rev. Zehms' Report to the Board of Trustees, January 9, 1987 (Note that the salaries of the two consultants have been equalized, and that both received a raise over 1986 salary levels.)

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