

**THE END
OF THE
BEGINNING**

**Some
Observations
in June 1971**

Ralph D. Winter

A Report to the Lutheran Church in Guyana

President James Dookram
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New Amsterdam, Berbice River
Guyana, South America

Dear James:

It is my great pleasure now to possess indelible memories of my contacts in June 1971 with you and your people. As I transmit to you this brief report of those splendid impressions, let me mention one which stands out above all others. I only heard part of your sermon in one of the congregations on Canje Creek. But I heard you say something like this:

The sin of the rich man Lazarus was not that he did bad things. It was not what he did but what he did not do: he daily passed by a need he could have done something about, and he did nothing about it.

I believe this is the sermon theme that must ring in the ears of the Lutheran Church in Guyana. I could not discover any church in Guyana-- as I told you when we said goodbye in Georgetown that night--that is more richly blessed in personnel and potential. But in view of your sermon what does this mean?

May God be with you.

Cordially in Christ,

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PREFACE

It was a great pleasure and it was unusually stimulating for me to become involved in the volume of high quality discussion that is surging through the ministry and the membership of the Lutheran Church in Guyana. I was impressed wherever I went by the insight, vision, and initiative of the pastors and people. I kept saying to myself, "Surely these people don't need my help." Not only, it seemed, had all my ideas been anticipated in their discussions, but impressive written reports in the immediate past (e.g. Schaller and Beatty) left most matters better analyzed and chronicled than I could myself have done!

Thus, what I will try to do in my comments here is to reflect and to focus merely on certain aspects of the vast wisdom that is already to be found on the scene in Guyana. It would be useless to try to repeat or even summarize Schaller's report, Beatty's book, or the many conversations which made me aware of all the insight there is already to be found in the situation.

As I write, permit me the one additional privilege of speaking as though I am still among you, and we are talking about the possibilities of "our church". I am, of course, an outsider, and my stay was so brief that you will naturally take this into account when I say things that simply do not apply, or overlook factors of which you are well aware. The point is that in these brief pages I want to be able to write as though I am involved right along with you in these crucial deliberations. However, whether these thoughts will be of any value or not, I will never be able to forget the warm welcome I had among you, and as long as I live I will eagerly devour every scrap of news that comes from the Guyana Lutherans.

I. INTRODUCTION: THE SPECIAL CHALLENGE OF 1980

Looking back across the decades of the exciting story of the Lutheran faith in Guyana, it is clear that at several crucial points external circumstances radically altered the internal character of the church. It was the government, for example, that required the church to reinstitute a regular ministry in 1876, and in effect gently encouraged the ordination of the first Guyanan (Beatty, p. 60). It was the action of a civil court in 1890 that sustained him in this task, and the action of the East Pennsylvania Synod that confirmed his ordination.

So it is today that the government (quite independent of any internal church timetable) has gained total political independence and is striving for economic autonomy as well. Its emphasis upon self-help and its power to exclude non-Guyanese pastors are factors which now impinge upon the church quite arbitrarily, but in the providence of God, these forces may yet be just another external influence that will greatly contribute to the Lutheran church.

As of February 1966 the church became constitutionally independent, but, like the civil government, is still striving for complete financial autonomy. Thus, the LCA-BWM proposal to reduce subsidy to zero by 1980, plus the acceptance of this challenge by the LCG, contribute together another "external circumstance" urgently demanding a whole new strategy for the remaining 9-1/2 years of this decade. What does this really mean?

In Figure One we can see that Guyana giving at present is only about one-third of the cost of running the church. To balance the budget without subsidy, either the costs must be reduced or the giving must increase. Let's try to see which is better.

Figure Two shows a rough breakdown of the present budget with the subsidized portion shaded in. Plan's A & B have no shaded portion, that is, no subsidy. Plan A represents the idea of reducing the expense to the level of the present income. Plan B adopts the opposite course of increasing the income to the level of the present budget.

Plan A may at first seem more prudent. That is, it might appear easier to fire all but one person in the New Amsterdam staff and to try to get along with one-third or one-fourth as many pastors. The danger of Plan A, however, is that if such drastic reduction is made in the parish and church-wide levels of ministry, it might not be possible to maintain even the present income. Fortunately, Plan A would have to be attempted only if the LCA subsidy were to be eliminated all at once.

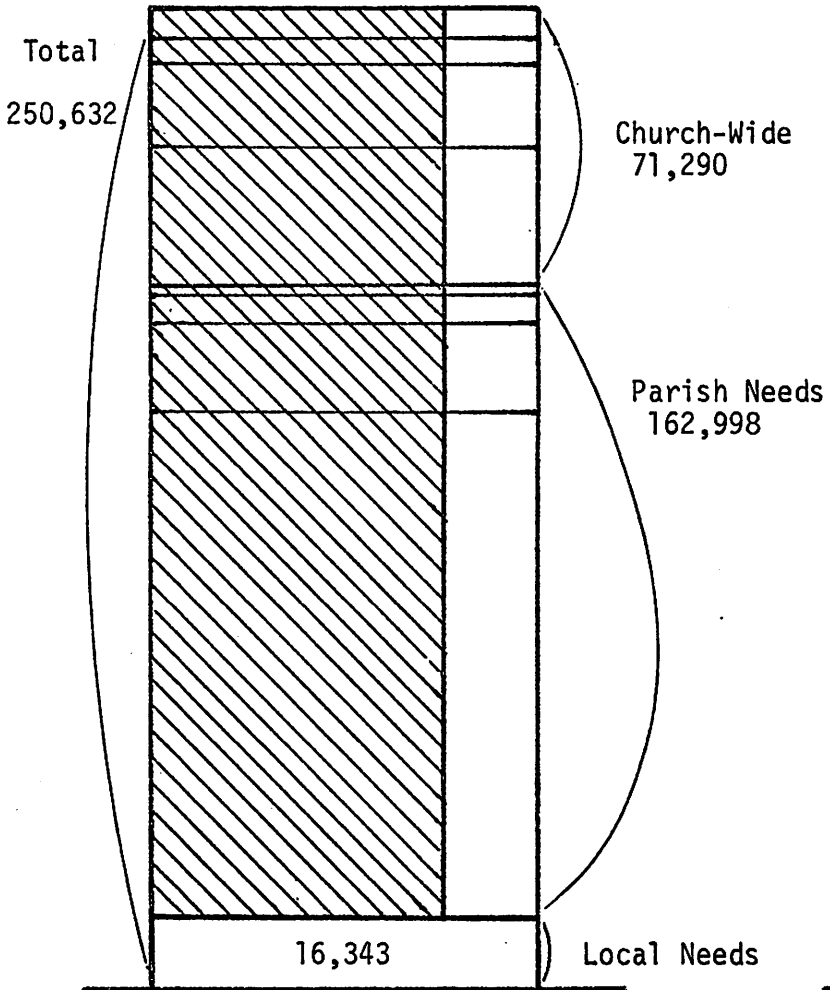
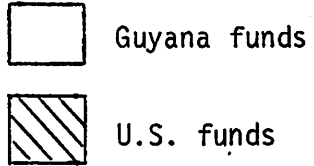


Figure One

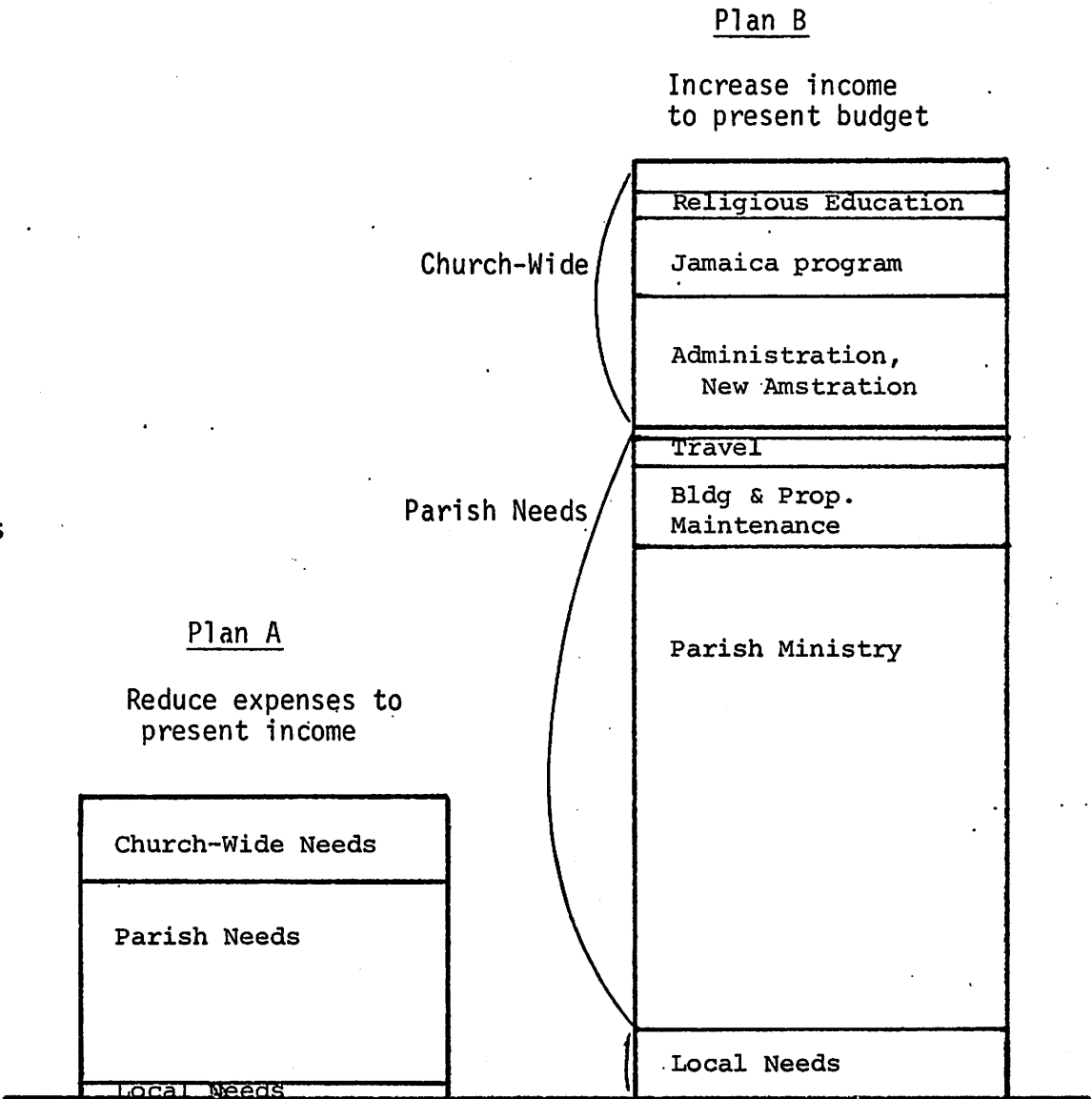


Figure Two

Plan B, on the other hand, requires over three times the present income and may seem as impossible as Plan A is dangerous. The new concept of self-help sweeping the nation may sweep into the church as well. Some of the more affluent parishes are already seriously grappling with total self-support. But for the *present size* of the church to underwrite the *present budget* is to ask the church to pay three times as much. Just as a family might cast about desperately to raise \$2,000 for their daughter's wedding, perhaps Lutherans could conceivably come up with \$250,000 in order to maintain their present staff. There is another way, however.

Wherever I went I heard people talking and thinking eagerly about the idea of the Lutheran church entering into a major new effort, not merely to develop stewardship within its present membership, but to formulate plans to "expand the base", that is, to *increase the number of those who are carrying the financial load* by extending the church itself. In other words, Plan B can come about either by raising more money from the present membership or by expanding the giving membership. Everything depends, of course, on the possibility of expanding the membership without increasing the cost of the operation of the church. Mr. Ramnanan especially asked me to make this clear, and I will take this up in another section. Right now, however, let us note that there are far more noble reasons for expanding the membership than merely paying expenses.

If in the next 9-1/2 years the Lutheran Church in Guyana is going to cast the net of its membership over thousands of new people, it will be-- it must be--a profound act of "obedience in love" which will bind the additional people into a Christian faith and fellowship that is infinitely more valuable than any improvement in the financial dimensions of the situation. But it is nevertheless a fact, I believe, that--to use a Pauline phrase--Lutherans as Christians are "debtors not only to the Greeks but to the Barbarians." This can be a *thrilling* burden, and if we will properly discharge this kind of debt, we may escape financial debts at the same time. Truly I believe this is a case where by seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, all these *things* will be added unto us.

SUMMARY

It seems challengingly true that the present budget overhead for local, parish and church-wide needs is not too big for the kind and size of church that Lutherans want to be by 1980. The burden of this report will be to suggest how this may come about. I realize that some may regard the plan of subsidy reduction to portend the beginning of the end. I profoundly believe, however, that the LCG can take certain decisive steps now that will allow it in 1980 to look back on the present moment as "The End of the Beginning."

The challenge of 1980 is not merely the need to achieve a balanced budget. It is the opportunity to become economically autonomous. Even this is only part of a larger liberation of spirit and simultaneous dedication to service that is commensurate with the high calling of Jesus Christ. The new Lutherans of 1980 must be much more than self-sufficient. Nineteen eighty must not be a plateau of self-complacency but a tried and true basis for further achievement in the remaining two decades leading to the year 2000.

We will hope to conclude this report with further comments on the exciting, full meaning of what it is to be the church of Jesus Christ between now and the year 2000.

II. THE FABULOUS ELEVEN YEARS, 1936-1947

One of the many exciting things I discovered in my short stay--thanks to the wealth of detailed information made available to me--was the outstanding capacity for growth which the Lutheran Church has demonstrated at certain times in the past. Even the spectacular growth of the Assemblies of God in the last ten years (doubling from 1,000 in 1963 to 2,000 in 1969) is not quite the equal of the record of the Lutheran Church during the "fabulous eleven years" 1936-1947 when the church grew from 262 to 1768 communing members (that is, almost *seven times as large* in eleven years). I doubt if any church in Guyana has a record like that.

The question now is whether the Lutherans can do it again. Don't worry! I'm not suggesting that the church try to grow *six* or *seven times* as large by the end of 1980, and I am not pretending that the situation today is precisely what it was during that previous period. But I do believe *those years shed light on our path today*. Let's take a look at that period and see for ourselves what actually happened.

First of all, Figure Three gives us the perspective of the church during the past 100 years. A mere glance at this record reveals two brief periods of spectacular growth (1878-1890 and 1936-1947). Curiously enough, the first took place when the *first* Guyanese pastor was ordained (Mittleholzer) and the second transpired exactly when the *second* and *third* Guyanese pastors were ordained (Bowen and Pat Magalee). Despite the presence of other factors--as we shall see--it is unquestionable that Guyanese leadership was absolutely essential to these two outstanding periods of growth. For example, when Mittleholzer went to work he had no foreigner aiding him at all. There was no question then about dependence on foreign help. He not only did not receive money from the U.S. but records indicate that he actually sent apportionment payments to the U.S., even overpaid the apportionment on occasions (Beatty, p. 67). Even under these circumstances it was he who made the greatest single advance into the Amerindian area and thus first established Guyanese missionary outreach as well.

However, the period of greatest interest to us now in the decade of the seventies is more likely the second period of outstanding growth, 1936-1947, which I have referred to as the "fabulous eleven years." This is the period when the church burgeoned from what was essentially a single parish (plus Amerindian outreach) into a denomination.

In Figure Four this period appears in greater detail, and if you look carefully you will note that over half of the great growth from 1936-1947 took place when only Bowen, Machetzki and Magalee were in the picture. Later, Kunkle, Rohlfing, Slifer, Wolf and Hector Magalee came in, only in

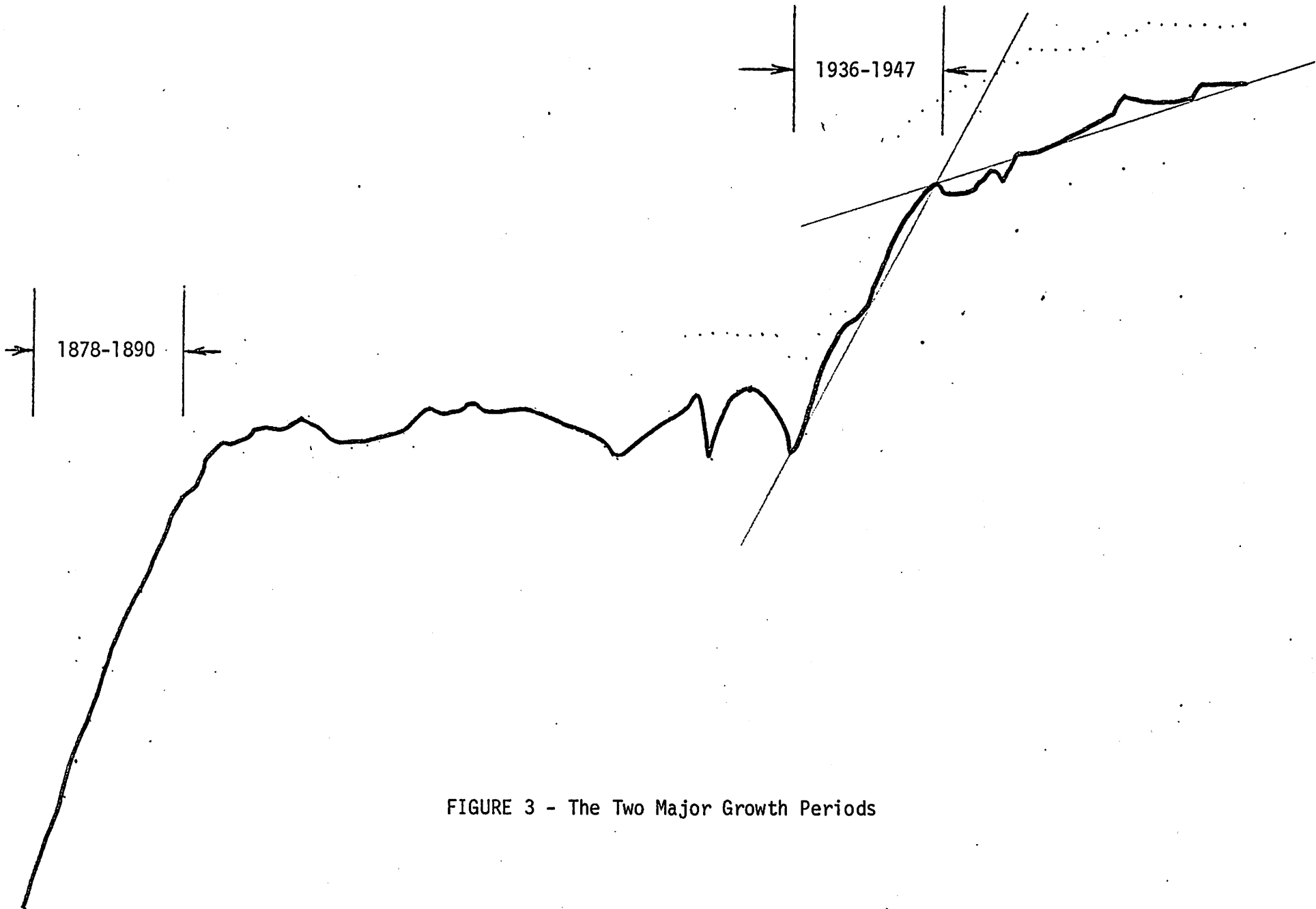


FIGURE 3 - The Two Major Growth Periods

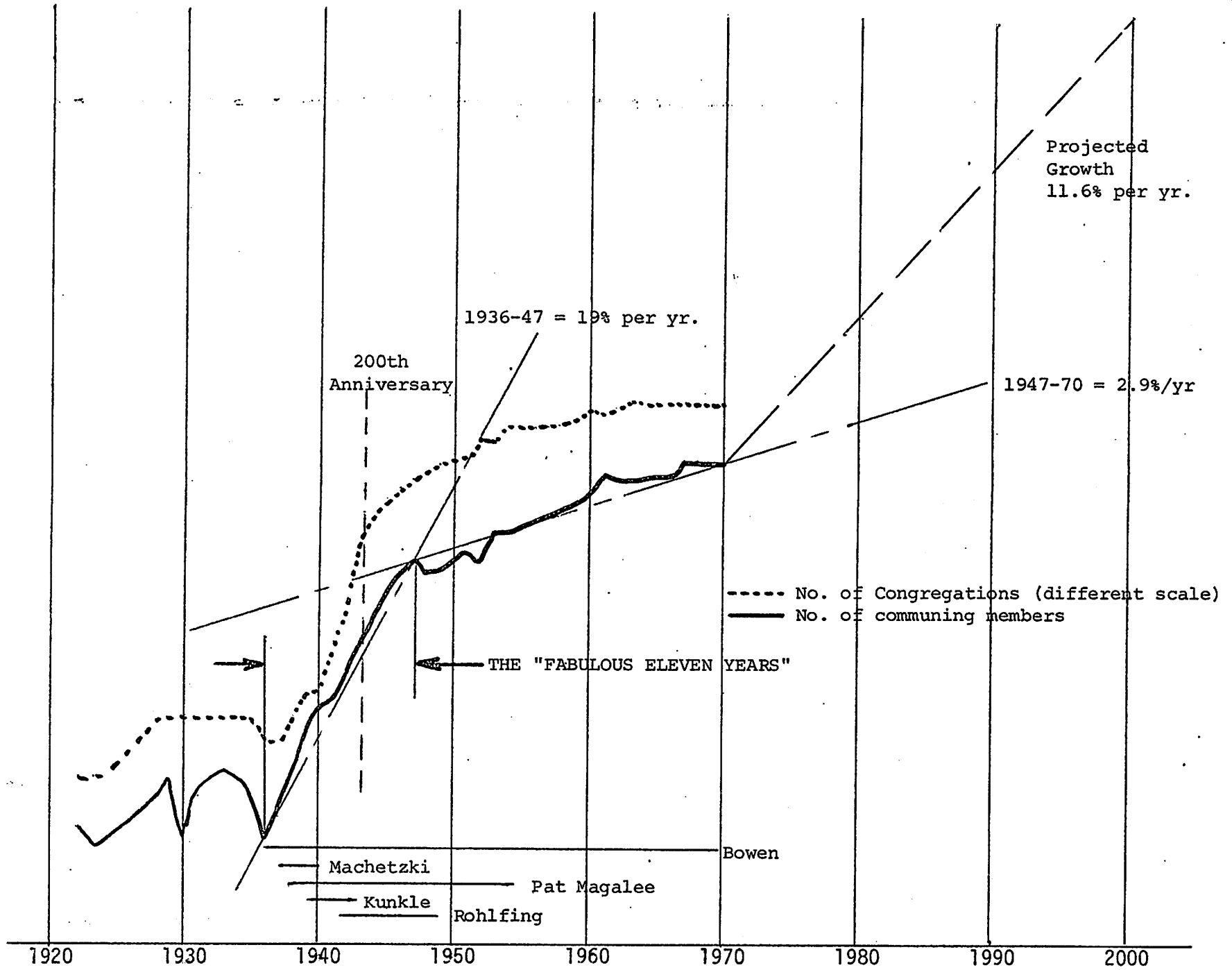


Figure Four

time to assist in carrying the momentum forward; their assistance was not in any case the cause of the upsurge in the initial years, although they no doubt contributed to the continuation of the surge.

As I talked to various people about this period (Chu, Singh, Magalee, Tannasee, etc.) a number of other interesting factors stood out beyond the presence of Guyanese leadership. It appears that Machtetzki brought priceless experience with him from Argentina, and even though he was confined to the sick bed for most of his time, his insights were no doubt invaluable as Bowen and Magalee pursued their work. It is also true that the world was then recovering from the Great Depression and that World War II was greatly escalated as the period wore on. The ripples of commotion hitting the shores of Guyana from events in Europe and around the world, the building of the international airport, etc., probably contributed to the awareness of people and their openness to change. More important factors would include the opening of many schools, the granting of a number of scholarships, the founding of Sunday schools, the appointment of a number of mature catechists, the taking over of already existing congregations (e.g. Seafield and several connected with R. L. Singh, etc.) and the important assumption that a congregation could be organized with only a few members and could meet in a "bottomhouse". Right along this line is the willingness to hold services in Hindi and use indigenous, non-European musical instruments.

One very curious and potent factor in the expansion of the church (and please note this carefully) was apparently the *mere decision to expand*. Somehow in those days there was a significantly different evangelistic tone to the church, and this flame in the hearts and minds of the leadership of the church. Seven new congregations were founded in 1943 alone, five others in 1941 and 1942. The announced goal was "fifteen congregations by the time of the celebration" (Beatty, p. 97). Apparently, everyone tried so hard to reach this goal that not fifteen but nineteen were formed by the end of 1943 (p. 131). and the very momentum of this kind of effort brought in twelve more congregations by the end of 1947!

It was apparently in view of this kind of activity and optimism in Guyana that the U.S. church poured lots of additional U.S. funds into the situation. Note however that the greatest buildup of subsidy clearly took place *after 1947*, and was then no longer paralleled by outstanding growth of the church! Indeed, it is as though something went wrong in 1947. Look again at Figure Four. The line you see drawn from 1936 through 1947 is spectacularly steep, paralleled to my knowledge by no other church in the history of Guyana. But the line connecting 1947 and 1970 represents an entirely different style of life and growth, and, discouragingly indicates a rate of growth no greater than that of the population in general! As a matter of fact, between 1947 and 1952 only twenty-six new members were added. We are told that during this period internal dissention intensified as misunderstandings increased both between national pastors, catechists and missionary pastors, and even within these groups. What I wonder is whether there would have been as much conflict had there been less U.S. money to argue about? (I can only say from my experience in Guatemala that the vast majority of disagreements arise from discussions about how to use foreign funds!)

In any case, the presence of foreign funds is certainly a potential threat to internal harmony in the church. If so, by 1980, as subsidy is gradually reduced, this threat should no longer exist! *What concerns me much more, however, is not the question of what went wrong in 1947 but the question of how the Guyana church can recapture the vision, courage, outreach and purpose of 1936-1947.* Harmony is only half of the job. Passion for service is also needed. (It might be better for the church to be wholesomely at odds within itself about different methods of outreach than to be harmonious and yet lack the desire to reach out!)

Some may say that no matter what happens the church today cannot really repeat the 1936-1947 performance without the kind of expanding subsidy that occurred then. It may well be that some catechists did work that would not have not been done had they not been paid, and that some congregations formed and attracted people by means of nice buildings that could only have been built rapidly by subsidy. All this may be true, but note that the vast majority of the work was nevertheless done by *Guyanese*, for whatever motive. Let us not spend time imputing bad motives to the people back in those days; let us ask rather if there are men and women today who will rise to the challenge with *good* motives! And I believe there are.

In fact I am tremendously impressed by the potential of leadership within the church in Guyana. I came away with the unshakeable confidence that it is perfectly possible for the church to triple its membership by 1980. This means having not 52 but something like 192 congregations, having 16 Guyanese pastors and 192 trained, ordained Deacons. This will be further discussed below. But here you can at least see that I believe that the Lutherans in Guyana, because of the combination today of a number of factors, have arrived at the *end of their beginning*, and that the greatest and most significant role of the church is *ahead* and *not behind*. There are only several things that are necessary for this dream to come true. The most significant has to do with the development of new kinds of leaders.

III. REDISCOVERING PERSONNEL POTENTIAL

A healthy Christian community is not just a mass of people. It is an organism, and has various essential functions to perform! Its internal diversity is guaranteed by the mere fact of differences between men and women, married and single, young and old, educated and uneducated, leaders and followers. Of necessity different functions are performed in different kinds and sizes of gatherings. Different types and levels of leadership correspond to these sub-structures. If you want a fancy name, say that we are talking about the infra-structure of the parish and its leadership categories. Right now the LCG has single and multi-congregational parishes, but in no case is a pastor able to perform all of the leadership functions necessary in a parish.

THE CONVENTION - THE CONVENTION PRESIDENT

The largest unit of the LCG is the Convention, which includes 16 Parishes, 52 Congregations and perhaps 800 households. It is common in some church traditions for the president of such a body to be elected annually and for a secretary to have longer tenure. Whether or not either or both of these men must be pastors is something I failed to ask.

Right now the Convention executive council decides a vast array of things affecting even minor expenses on the congregational level in some cases. As the church grows larger, and Parishes become self-supporting, a good deal of this will devolve upon Parish and Congregational councils.

THE PARISH - THE PASTOR

This is the one level in the whole church for which there is now in existence a recognized leadership requirement of both education and consecration. In the final phase of education for ordination as a pastor, men have usually, but not always, been trained in a foreign country. It is surely desirable to maintain the policy of sending at least some men to theological centers in Europe or the Americas. Other possibilities will be discussed in the next section.

THE CONGREGATION - THE ORDAINED DEACON?

The Lutheran church in Liberia is having great success with a new kind of leader called "an ordained deacon". These men do not work full time. They are not as highly trained as a pastor. If they are paid at all, they are paid entirely from local funds, and the amount is a local decision depending in part on how much time they give.

Is this something that can be done in Guyana? Let me make very clear that such men do not take the place of highly trained pastors. Every church needs some men who have had the finest training available and who are acquainted with the world church in both its historical and contemporary reality. An authentic church anywhere simply cannot be isolated or totally independent of the thinking of the other members of the Christian world family, nor oblivious of the historical roots of the Christian movement. This requires some highly trained men (and women). Those who are ordained as Pastors are presumed to have extensive training in the Lutheran tradition. The LCG has done well in this regard.

Nevertheless, every church needs a far larger number of men (ordained deacons?) who may be neither world travelers nor highly sophisticated, but who can be authorized formally to fill the role of local leadership on the congregational level, where it is difficult and in some cases perhaps even undesirable to place "world-traveled" Christian leadership. It is the task of the pastor not to *substitute* for this kind of local leadership, but to *train* it. This is urgent when you realize that the Lutheran church in Guyana in 1980, if it is to be three times its present size, will need 16 pastors and 192 ordained deacons to provide the formal ministry of the church. Clearly if this is to happen, the pastor must begin to wear a professor's hat. We must recall that Jesus not only preached to multitudes but also spent the necessary time to give special training to twelve men, of whom eleven served faithfully. Each pastor needs to train twelve disciples. Thus every parish should have on the average twelve or more men undergoing serious leadership training under the supervision of the parish pastor or some other framework. (Quite likely the various pastors can combine forces to produce a more rounded faculty for a competent extension system to handle this kind of theological education. This will be elaborated further on.)

Leadership categories, of course, derive from the structure of the church. One thing that struck me forceably as I visited around was the attitude many had that most of the present congregations are "too small". I graphed the size of each congregation and lined them up in order of size. Figure Five shows that the vast majority of the congregations are well under 100 communing members and that only three city congregations are over 150 members. Just for fun, I suggested in several conversations that the large number of *small* congregations are really *normal* in size, and that the larger congregations (Ebenezer, Calvary, Redeemer) are "too fat". To be consistent I even suggested that the three larger, single-congregation parishes might well be divided into sub-congregations with additional decentralized leadership! I hasten to add, however, that I am not opposed to large meetings (I even think that all the Georgetown parishes ought to have a single mass meeting of all their people at least once every three months). But I also think that there is no substitute for the kind of meeting that is small enough for people to know that they will be missed if they are absent. How small is this? Fifty or sixty would seem to be a maximum.

I will admit that I did not develop this idea about the ideal size of congregations while in Guyana. I have long felt that the large city congregations in the U.S. ought not to be examples for overseas churches, since they often are relatively weak and perhaps even unhealthy except where they have developed substructures within which their people can sense the kind of fellowship and community that has always been more readily achievable in

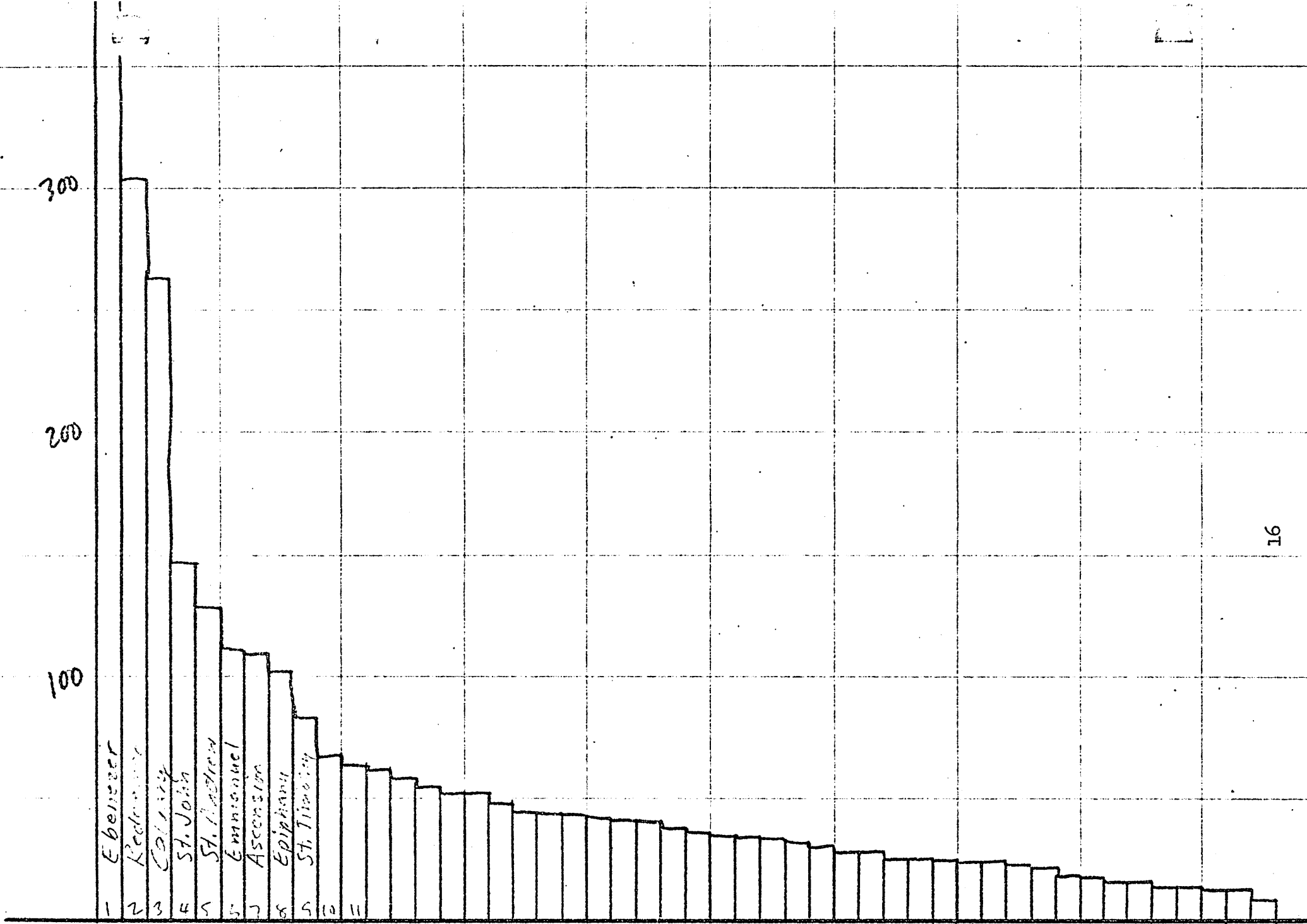


Figure 5

a "small" congregation. Thus ordained deacons may enable both decentralization and a more stable parish even in the case of the large city church.

In the rural areas the congregation will likely be visited monthly by the parish pastor. The other Sundays the worship service will naturally be handled by the ordained deacon. Many a city pastor, however, has had to face this dilemma: as his congregation has grown larger he has found he can readily *preach* to far more people than he can effectively *offer a pastoral ministry*--unless he multiplies his time through laymen who are both trained and authorized to perform an intermediate ministry. In most city churches, however, people get less help from their church than they need: fewer pastoral visits, less opportunity to participate in meetings. Every sociologist knows that more leaders come from small towns than you would expect in terms of population proportions. But if a pastor of a rural parish can effectively use ordained deacons for several "small" congregations separated by geography, why can't a city pastor use such ordained deacons to take charge of sub-congregations which may or may not be the result of geography? Just because it is nice to have "a large congregation" for ordinary worship services, this is no sign it is not still valuable to retain, even in the city, the smaller, congregational structure.

When would these sub-congregations of a large city parish meet? They could meet every Sunday in addition to the parish worship service, just as if they were an adult Sunday School class, but should determinedly resist falling into the mere adult class structure. When they grow to be 70 they should divide into two 35-member congregations. But even if the sub-congregation (in the city) only meets once a month for a "potluck" supper followed by a time of family-by-family "reports" concluded by a brief devotional time this will still allow the ordained deacon, through such contacts, to be able to tie the group together and to build upon previous pastoral contacts with his people on the individual or family level.

However, instead of keeping in view the necessity for personal contact with each member, city churches are commonly tempted to find outstanding preachers whose "preaching ministry" will be so effective that the people will hopefully not miss the personal contact as much as they might!

THE FAMILY - THE HEAD OF FAMILY

The smallest unit combining male and female, young and old, is of course, the family. What happens in the family is often lost in the shuffle of church life. One church tradition, however, strongly emphasizes a Monday evening family worship service which takes place in every church home each Monday. Different members of the family, even children, all participate in a brief worship service, and church members consider this a normal part of their obligation as members of the church. If this is to be effective, some thought must be given so that heads of families can have materials designed for this use. A seriously maintained weekly meeting is undoubtedly better than a hasty, ineffective, or sporadic attempt at daily family devotions, but does not necessarily displace daily family prayers.

(NOTE ON MODALITIES AND SODALITIES)

Thus far we have only spoken of groups I personally call *modal*, which are defined by the fact that they do not restrict their attendance either by age or by sex: the entire Lutheran movement in Guyana, Parishes,

Congregations, Families. Worship services are desirable on all four of these *modal* levels. The corresponding modal leaders are Convention President, Pastor, Deacon, and Head of Family. When a modal group is structured by formal organization it is then called a *modality*.

But there are also groups which I personally call *sodal*, that is, groups like women's groups or young peoples groups or adult groups where either (or both) age and sex distinctions limit the membership. When they are formally structured they are called *sodalities*. Thus the Luther League is a sodality. A Boy Scout group is a sodality. I will not take the time to comment on the well-known sodalities of the church. Let me mention some that may not be so common.

THE LUTHER FELLOWSHIP - THE FELLOWSHIP LEADER

If we need parishes and congregations, what about a still smaller unit which can meet conveniently in the home? I am speaking of a type of "small group" of adults whose function would be primarily that of fellowship and mutual exhortation. Meetings of this sort have dotted the history of the Lutheran and other church traditions, and something vaguely similar has been known in past years in Guyana under the name "Prayer Meeting". However, rather than appeal to the recent past, it may be more helpful to go back to Luther himself. You will find Luther's own words quoted by Donald F. Durnbaugh in the following excerpt from the 1968 MacMillan book, *The Believers Church*:

After successfully defying both pope and emperor with his revolutionary doctrines, Martin Luther was faced with the practical problems of organizing an evangelical church. One urgent need was a revised liturgy which would incorporate the new teachings into the traditional form. In 1526 he published his own vernacular mass. In his preface Luther noted that he would personally be happy with the Latin service of 1523. Still, he saw the need for a mass in the common tongue for the "simple unlearned lay folk," the greater part of whom "stand around and gape, hoping to see something new, just as if we were holding a service among the Turks or the heathen in a public square or out in a field."

What he thought really needful, however, was a "truly evangelical order." This would not be held in a public place for a mixed assembly as were the previously mentioned services, but should be held privately for those "who want to be Christians in earnest and who profess the gospel with hand and mouth." This was his suggestion as to how such a group should be formed:

[They] should sign their names and meet alone in a house somewhere to pray, to read, to baptize, to receive the sacrament, and do other Christian works. According to this order, those who do not lead Christian lives could be known, reprov'd, corrected, cast out, or excommunicated, according to the rule of Christ, Matthew 18 [15-17]. Here one could also solicit benevolent gifts to be willingly given and distributed to the poor, according to St. Paul's example, II Corinthians 9. Here would be no need of much

*and elaborate singing. Here one could set out a brief and neat order for baptism and the sacrament and center everything on the Word, prayer, and love.*¹

Luther never worked out the order sketched here, nor did he establish a group of "earnest Christians". His explanation was the sheer lack of personnel for it. What he could do, though was to "train the young and to call and attract others to faith" until "Christians who earnestly love the Word find each other and join together."²

Later he concluded that this was an impractical dream, and that to be realistic, given the mixed multitude, he would have to turn to the prince in order to get on with the task of securing the Reformation. "Luther's dilemma was that he wanted both a confessional church based on personal faith and experience, and a territorial church including all in a given locality. If he were forced to choose, he would take his stand with the masses, and this was the direction in which he moved" (Bainton).³ As it happens, Luther's sketch of those for whom the third order was intended is an excellent resume of the character and concerns of members of the Believers' Churches. Earnestness, witness, covenant (signing their names), discipline, mutual aid, simple pattern of worship--these are hallmarks of the believing people. The tragedy of Protestantism is that when such groups did emerge in history, Luther and his colleagues could see nothing in them but enthusiasts, fanatics, and rebels. This prejudice has not been completely overcome to this day.

We cannot take the time here to discuss all of the issues raised by these words of Luther and Durnbaugh, but several things are clear. Luther is not talking about a large group since he distinctly says that *it is a meeting in a house*. While he mentions baptism and receiving the sacrament (which *could also be* accomplished in a larger meeting), he mentions a ministry of exhortation and correction within this small group which would probably *not be possible* in a large group. What he refers to, furthermore, is optional. It is a group of committed Christians who voluntarily bind themselves into a type of fellowship that goes well beyond the usual requirements of mere church membership. Note also that Luther's meeting is a much more formal and disciplined relationship than the usual "Prayer Meeting"--to which anyone can come, even sporadically, and may or may not participate. Neither is it the kind of "small group" so popular in the U.S. today which is designed for evangelism, which I will mention in a moment. Yet I feel this type of "order", as Luther calls it, is worthy of serious consideration as an optional, additional level of membership beyond induction into a parish through confession of faith. Can we not allow this type of very serious adult meeting?

¹Ulrich S. Leopold, ed. *Liturgy and Hymns*, Vol. 53 of *Luther's Works*, ed. Helmut T. Lehman (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), p. 53 ff. See George H. Williams, "congregationalist' Luther and the Free Churches," *Lutheran Quarterly*, XIX (August 1967), 283-295, for a discussion of the passage.

²Leopold, op. cit., p. 64.

³Roland H. Bainton, *Here I Stand: a Life of Martin Luther* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1950), p. 311.

Should this type of meeting be attempted, it is likely best to keep the number of people between 10 and 15. And, it will be necessary for the leaders of such groups to be given special training and orientation, especially at first. This gives us, then, an additional category of leadership. If this group can be called for the moment a "Luther Fellowship", we can call its leader a Fellowship Leader simply to distinguish him from the ordained deacon, who is responsible for a congregation, and the pastor, who is in charge of a parish. Once more, then, leadership categories arise from structure.

THE COTTAGE STUDY GROUP - THE STUDY GROUP LEADER

Another kind of meeting worth mentioning is the Cottage Study Group. This in many forms and under many names is becoming more common in the United States, and may possibly be of value in Guyana, too. It is exclusively evangelistic. If 6,000 more members are to be added to the LCG by 1980, they may mainly be drawn through this kind of half-way house. Paul Hansen told me about a series of Lenten "Cottage" meetings in the St. Andrews Parish whose aggregate attendance was far higher than could be achieved in the Parish chapel. He also points out that 25% of the people who came to these meetings were in fact Hindus and Muslims who would have never come to church. What I am talking about, however, is not even intended (as were Hansen's meetings) to pull together the membership of the church. In the Cottage Study Group idea, only the host couple, owning the house, and the Study Group Leader are church members. All the rest are outsiders. Only this way do the outsiders feel relaxed! On the other hand the outsiders are personally invited (by the hosts) to a *study* group, where they will have coffee or tea or Pepsi and will expect someone to conduct a study of, say, the Gospel of John (Matthew is better for Muslims) using a modern speech translation they can take home. A Bible Society "portion", or the whole New Testament in paperback (e.g. *Good News for Modern Man* or some other) might be all that is necessary. The basis of this idea is the fact that there are lots of people who are interested in learning something about the Bible who are not yet interested in church. Some urban churches in California have gained 1,000 or 2,000 members in four or five years by the use of this kind of half-way house. Some groups may run just three or four weeks. It may be possible to invite people for six weeks. This will have to be decided locally, of course, but the leaders need to know what is best, given the group they have. But note: this requires one more kind of leadership to be trained.

THE WORLD OF YOUTH

A significant trend in youth work today utilizes a concentric ring approach that provides one kind of casual "outreach" meeting to which non-church youth are attracted, a smaller, more select meeting for committed Christian youth, and still another for those few who will accept special responsibilities.

The outreach meeting may only be once a month, and might be called a *Teen Breakfast Club*. These meetings can become so popular that they may attract two to three hundred youth to this monthly affair. Special music, skits, as well as spiritual challenge are all ingredients.

The meeting for committed youth is in one case called *Team*, and meets weekly. Here the youth share the results of their personal, daily Bible readings and try to obey Christ in "bearing one another's burdens."

The most select group is composed of those (called *Volunteers*) who offer to shoulder specific responsibility "to pray and to care" for five other youth. They also may be part of the *Team*, but meet an extra time to report on their specific responsibilities.

There is, actually, a still more select group which a young person cannot choose to belong to but to which he must be appointed. This is an inner circle of young people who work very closely with the adult sponsor as a *Youth Leadership Staff*.

These concentric rings are comparable to structures we have already met in the adult world. The *Teen Breakfast Club* is the outreach function, once a month, which corresponds to the *Cottage Study Group* which attracts adults. The *Team* corresponds to *Congregation* except that congregations do not generally meet for reports and dialogue (although they could). The *Volunteers* correspond roughly to the special commitment type of meeting I have called the *Luther Fellowship*. The *Youth Leadership Staff*, would correspond to an (1) *Adult Leadership Staff*, which would include all the workers in the church, from Sunday School teachers to pastor of the parish, and (2) to what might be called the *Ministry Unit* of a parish, which would be the weekly or bi-weekly meeting of Pastor, ordained deacons and Fellowship leaders.

The whole vast array of structures mentioned here (without even referring to the Lutheran Church Women and the Luther League--which latter, incidentally, could be considered somewhat comparable to the *Team* mentioned above) obviously each require various specialized leaders and, theoretically, courses of training. The extent to which this can or should be done formally or not will be discussed in the next section.

IV. ORGANIZING IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Fortunately most education is "caught not taught" and takes place informally, unconsciously, and without any special organization. One of the greatest curses of the Western world is the cancer called diplomaism which is eating away at its vital parts, threatening to push 50% of all the people and perhaps the same proportion of national money into the world of formal schooling. This is why Ivan Illich's new book *Deschooling Society* is must reading.

In-service training is an emphasis that proposes to bridge the gap between the totally unorganized type of daily, informal education that goes on unconsciously and the type of education called schooling which takes place in rooms quite often far removed from the kind of service which is being studied. Schools have tried hard. They have developed "laboratory training" and "simulated" experiences in order to bridge the gap between the classroom and the world, but it would appear that there is still a great deal to be offered by the old-fashioned "apprenticeship" approach and indeed any modern variant of "field education" in which the learning takes place at the very point where the new knowledge or skills are relevant.

The gravest deficiency of conventional schooling is that it *stops* before the person *starts* to serve. It is no secret that the men who get the most out of seminary are those who have had some pastoral experience before or during their seminary years. Thus, "pre-service" education is of limited value compared to in-service education which builds on actual experience.

The greatest single strength, humanly speaking, of the Pentecostal movement is its elaborate in-service training system. First, every single church member is urged to study a series of elementary courses. Then leaders on as many as five levels move up as their experience and success warrants. It may take fourteen years to become a pastor, but by that time a man has proven his abilities in many less-demanding tasks over a period of years. We say they are weak in formal training. But the Assemblies of God, for example, are now moving rapidly to develop their Advanced Ministerial Training Institute. You cannot even enroll in this unless you are already a minister and have completed 1,536 class hours of theological studies on a more elementary level. The men developing this program have doctorates in theology (at the international office). While we look down on their lack of formal schooling, we must admit that they are very keen-eyed in selecting leaders on the basis of *gifts demonstrated in actual service*. This is where we often go wrong. Perhaps it is easier to add training to gifted men than gifts to trained men.

At this point in the U.S. it would appear that thousands of men have gotten into the ministry mainly by virtue of an educational process. As a

result thousands are leaving the ministry while still other thousands of men truly gifted for ministry remain in the ranks of laymen without the opportunity to get the formal schooling required for ordination. This is the logical result of going to extremes on the basis of pre-service education, especially for ministry.

As far as I am concerned in-service training is a synonym for extension training. Extension, by my definition, extends education to a person in the midst of a career of service. Both *extension* and *in-service* are broader than on-the-job training, since the latter is not something you can study at home or over a week-end, while *extension* and *in-service* are phrases that merely require that the education take place without disrupting the basic task one is performing in society.

Since the book I edited, *Theological Education by Extension*, is already known in Guyana, I will not try to repeat things that are there. But specific observations can be made with regard to each type of leader mentioned in the previous section, even if only briefly.

Those who function as executives on the convention level can hardly learn their job out of a book or in a lecture course. They might do better to visit other experienced leaders in other churches in as similar circumstances as possible.

Parish pastors in the LCG have heretofore been given extensive training, so much so that they now constitute a reserve of men who could readily function as professors in an extension seminary that could be organized in Guyana. A church needs to encourage at least one man to get advanced training in each of the basic theological disciplines. In Guyana this should include a man in anthropology and linguistics if the Amerindians are to be taken seriously.

Insofar as possible, if a category of ordained deacon is recognized, all future candidates for pastoral training would best be chosen from among the ranks of the ordained deacons. Deacons, in turn, should be men whose gifts had become apparent in their other roles on the congregational level.

The world of youth and its structured, youthful leadership is of vital importance from the in-service standpoint because many years later, skills and confidence developed in youth groups will blossom on the adult level.

One important factor that must be stressed, is the necessary separation between a *course of training* and the possibility of *being appointed* to some responsibility. A seminary can give a man pastoral training, but only the church can ordain him. An extension program in Guyana, augmenting the opportunities in Jamaica, may give a man the theological education of a pastor, and decide if he is to get a *degree*, but it is still the church that will decide whether he is to be ordained, or not. Similarly, it is one thing for someone to set up the necessary training program for ordained deacons; but it is again the church that will establish the formal procedure to evaluate, approve, and ordain men to the office of an ordained deacon. Furthermore, the church will have to decide (and may later change its mind) whether deacons will be ordained for a certain period, or not, and whether or not their ordination empowers them to minister only in a certain locality, (e.g. parish or congregation). What is true for pastors and deacons is also true of the Fellowship leaders: their courses of training are separate from

their possibility of appointment since again it is the separate function of the church to appoint the leaders for such Fellowships.

In actual practice there are dozens of ways the appointment of any man to any office can be handled. In choosing a pastor, for example, some Menonites elect four men and these men then draw lots to see who will be the one. In some traditions there is no voting, no elections, everything is done from the top down. In others there are no approvals of higher bodies, just elections from the bottom up.

The rediscovery of lay leadership will likely create on the parish and congregational levels mechanisms of appointment that are parallel to the function of the executive council at present. Just as the executive council decides or at least approves who is to be ordained a pastor, the parish council will logically decide or at least approve who is to be ordained a deacon, and the congregational council will decide or at least approve who is to be appointed a Fellowship leader. It is doubtful whether the leaders of evangelistic cottage meetings need to be appointed. This is something in which every layman can take part, although orientation courses may be helpful in the development of such leaders.

It will no doubt be necessary for the whole church seriously to consider the potential contribution to the church in Guyana of the ordained deacon and the Fellowship leader. Yet some parishes may wish to postpone the training and recognition of such leaders until other parishes have tried out the concepts. A good deal of experimentation is no doubt desirable regarding the frequency and exact procedure and structure of these smaller units of the church.

One last observation about in-service or extension training: by its very nature it cannot be intensive. People whose minds are geared to residential programs tend to think in terms of "short courses" in which a lot can be done intensively. If this is possible it is well worth doing, but some of the best men in the church cannot give even two weeks per year *intensively*.

However, even if there is some intensive element in an in-service program it is likely to fail if, for the whole rest of the year, effective use is not made of the spare time available. The typical in-service student can rarely give even two or three days to a study, and unless one system of training can be geared to assist him over a period of years to harvest just an hour a day or even a half-hour a day plus a half day a week, we cannot help him in the way he most needs.

Yet they say that if a person gives even 15 minutes a day to something for his whole life he will be a world expert before he dies! This may not actually be true, but it *is* true that immense and profound learning can take place gradually over a period of time. There is even some conjecture that courses taken intensively over a short period of time, if not then used, will be lost in a short period of time.

Men who are already ordained pastors may do well to organize themselves into an Academy in order to continue their education in disciplined fashion, and be capable of being professors for men who are studying what they themselves learned back in seminary. Deacons must also continue to study, and it might be wise for their reappointment to be conditioned upon such continuation.

All of this reflection about structures, leadership categories, and organization may seem very mechanical unless one recalls that it is the living things on earth that are more highly structured than the inorganic universe. Behind every growing church there is growth and elaboration of internal structure.

V. THE FUTURE: ACT OR ACCIDENT

The year 2000 is really only a series of *months* away. If the LCG can discover the secret of growth, by that time it can be a major force in Guyana and a significant member of the world Christian community. Here are the figures, basing our calculations (1) for the general population, on the population growth rates during the past two decades, and (2) for the LCG, on the growth rate of 11.5% per year (a very modest goal) to 1980 and 11.6% thereafter. To triple per decade requires 11.6% year growth.

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>
East Indians	350,000	465,000	620,000	840,000
Africans	230,000	280,000	350,000	460,000
Mixed	100,000	145,000	200,000	270,000
Amerindians	36,000	50,000	67,000	96,000
Other	<u>22,000</u>	<u>28,000</u>	<u>35,000</u>	<u>45,000</u>
	<u>378,000</u>	<u>968,000</u>	<u>1,272,000</u>	<u>1,701,000</u>
Parishes	16	16	48	144
Congregations	52	192	576	1,728
Fellowships	-0-	288	864	2,592
Communing membership	3,404	9,600	28,800	86,400
% of Population	.46%	1.0%	2.3%	5.0%
Total Lutheran community	10,212	28,800	86,400	259,200
% of Population	1.4%	3.0%	7.0%	15.0%

Figure 6

Is this unrealistic? Yes, if the life is gone out of the LCG. It will not happen by accident. The average Lutheran growth of 19% per year during the "fabulous eleven years" of 1936-1947 did not happen by accident. An average between 11% and 12% won't happen by accident. It will only happen if twelve new people are brought in each year for each 100 communing members. Is this unrealistic? It is six new members per year in each congregation of 50. Is this unrealistic?

Is this financially unrealistic? How can a church expand three-fold and not significantly increase its budget? The secret is the ordained deacon. By 1980 if all 16 parish pastors (which are already included in the present budget) can reasonably have 12 ordained deacons to help them, each in charge of a congregation averaging fifty communing members, this really will be a feasible thing financially--as well as being superior in its ministry. With 16 pastors, 192 congregations averaging 50 communing members, and with (let's guess) about one and one-half Fellowships per congregation, there is every reason to believe that such a church will have achieved complete financial autonomy. With this kind of balance between budget and leaders and people the Lutheran church can then go on expanding without any subsidy at all.

Another approach may wonder if these projections do not cut too deeply into the nominal, non-church going, or non-Christian population. If we assume that the people related to the Lutheran church are three times as numerous as the number of communing members, we note that the present (1970) membership is about 1.4% of the general population, and that this will increase to 3%, 7% and 15% by the year 2000, being 259,200 people by the year 2000. Let us assume that two-thirds of this number are East Indian and one-third are African, roughly. This would leave 667,000 non-Lutheran East Indians, and 374,000 non-Lutheran Africans. Surely this is not to come near exhausting or even "threatening" these reservoirs of humanity.

However, what will be true, if there are 259,200 Lutherans by the year 2000 is a decided change of quality in the very fiber of the country. The Lutherans for their number are the most advanced and progressive of the churches. In the very best sense of the term, the Lutherans are the elite church in Guyana today, and the only church whose internal constituency reflects and safeguards the principle of six nations living in harmony.

In one sense it is not ultimately as important how many people are in the Lutheran church in Guyana as it is how many authentic Lutherans there are in Guyana. The very survival of the nation depends upon that transformation of man's inner being which comes about only as he accepts in repentance and faith the redemption accomplished for him in Christ. What kind of men can build Guyana? Only men who have been renewed by Him in a daily, repeated denial of personal aspiration and the taking up of their own cross of obedience to Jesus Christ can constitute the essential salt of the earth so desperately needed today in Guyana.

Many, many good works are needed to build a new nation, good works in education, business, and government. But these are fruits of the Spirit, and they depend upon the Spiritual roots that are planted and nourished by no other institution in society than the church.

But this fact does not guarantee success for any church. The highest purposes of God for Guyana and the Lutheran Church of Guyana will only be achieved by an *act* not by an *accident*. It is perfectly possible for the LCG

to sit back and not found a new congregation for 40 years (as is the case of the Moravians during the past 40), and to become an ever smaller percentage of the population--or merely to maintain the present percentage (as has been the case during the past 23 years!) But the LCG is not like the Methodist church, which has not a single Guyanan pastor, or like the Roman Catholics, whose top leadership is predominantly white. I believe God can legitimately expect more from the Lutherans. "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required."

The design on the front cover of this report is intended to signify either a setting or a rising sun. Under God, and the Lutherans, the future for Guyana can be either.

APPENDIX

OBSERVATIONS ON FINANCIAL MATTERS

I appreciate very much the excellent records and fine work that has gone into the financial reports. They are, I feel, so very outstanding as to be worthy of improvement even in small ways. Thus I will make a few comments.

Regarding Local Treasurers:

It is quite likely that at present all of the financial matters of all congregations and parishes could be handled by a single person working full time. The advantages of such centralization are nevertheless by no means clearly greater than a whole different set of advantages in encouraging every congregation to do its own. What is very likely is that a full time treasurer could well circulate around and be an enabler at the congregational level, taking the necessary time to sit down and train local treasurers in keeping the right kind of books in the proper way. Nothing is more clearly an essential in the struggle for effective local stewardship than for the local people to be both confident of where their money goes and actual participants both in budget making and money handling.

Regarding the Meaning of *The Lutheran Church in Guyana*:

It seems to me that there ought to be a better term than *LCG* to refer to the church-wide and Parish structure; since logically the congregations are as much a part of the *LCG* as the Parishes. What about "Headquarters staff and program"? "Conference-level program"? "Convention budget"? Church-wide budget? Or simply "The Convention".

In any case, since the "local needs" budget is an essential element in the overall planning process which relates to the Parish and Conference levels, I believe these figures ought to be incorporated into the annual report at convention time.

Regarding the Sparks System:

At present a budget is annually drawn up by the *LCG* Convention office following budgetary planning on lower levels. This budget, according to the procedure defined by the Sparks system, very realistically includes a Pastoral salary category for those parishes where missionaries have been assigned, and even where no one has been assigned. At present, then, money is budgeted for more positions but is not actually sent, and accumulates as a surplus in the hands of the Convention treasurer. In 1970 the report shows an "income" of \$37,933.38 of this sort but only shows a surplus of \$32,318.34 (Note: The difference of \$5,615.44 would have, I believe, shown

up in the report as a deficit had the \$37,933.38 not been returned to the Convention office as "income"). In effect these funds are provided twice--once in the budget (which draws on both Guyana and U.S. funds) and then again in the form of all direct salary payments from the BWM to the missionaries. (But does some of this \$37,000 come from Guyana offerings?)

Rather than abandon the Sparks plan as "unrealistic" it seems to me that it would be better if the amounts budgeted for jobs performed by missionaries in all cases be actually paid to them just as if they were Guyanese personnel. The Calvary parish, for example, being self-supporting, already actually pays a monthly salary check to the pastor, who happens to be a missionary. At present this check, plus other funds designated for other missionary pastors, land in the Convention office and appear in their central report as expendable income. The integrity of the Sparks plan would be preserved if such funds were not sent to the Convention office but to New York (since the missionary personnel probably all have both US \$ and Guyana \$ accounts it would not be difficult for a missionary receiving a Guyana check to turn right around and mail an equivalent amount in U.S. dollars to New York).

A further consideration would be for the missionary to be subject to some of the same contingencies of a national pastor. This would happen if the money budgeted for a missionary's job were deducted from the missionary's salary from New York. Then if it did not fully come in, he would suffer just as would a Guyanese pastor in such circumstances. However, this might cause problems I do not foresee.

Note: Money coming in for "vacant" parishes ought perhaps to be assigned by the executive council to the UTCWI programs. The men studying in Jamaica might appreciate their responsibility in Guyana more if parishes without pastors were helping to provide their education.

Thus, my opinion is that the Sparks plan needs to be better understood and explained rather than seriously modified. For example, the financial report, in an attempt to simplify, says "The Board of World Mission full subsidy of \$168,000 together with our income of \$54,429.17, minus our expenditure would leave us with a credit balance of \$32,318.34." From this one could assume the following picture:

Income:		Expense:	
BWM	\$168,060.00	Actually spent	\$190,170.83
Guyana giving	<u>54,429.17</u>	Surplus	<u>32,318.34</u>
	<u>\$222,489.17</u>		<u>\$222,489.17</u>

However, this is a bit too simple, as the following page shows, since, for one thing, subsidy (in the form of free missionary pastors) of \$37,443.94, plus some other small items (amounting to \$5,006.77) and the expense was correspondingly higher. Furthermore, there was another \$17,000 both contributed and spent locally by the church which further boosts both income and expense. Thus, for example, a picture that means more to me would be as you see in Figure 7.

FINANCIAL REPORT BY LEVELS

A. "Local Needs" Program

	<u>Income</u>		<u>Expense</u>
Guyana	\$ 17,005.43	Actually used	\$ 16,343.44
U.S.	00.00	Added to bank accounts	661.91
	<u>\$ 17,005.43</u>		<u>\$ 17,005.43</u>

B. "Parish Needs" Program

	<u>Income</u>		<u>Expense</u>
Guyana	\$ 41,948.53	Ministry	\$129,161.80
U.S.	<u>121,050.01</u>	Building and property maintenance	22,348.72
	\$162,998.54	Office expense	3,103.76
		Travel	<u>8,384.26</u>
			\$162,998.54

C. "Church-Wide" Program

	<u>Income</u>		<u>Expense</u>
Guyana		Administration	\$ 36,103.91
1) Certain benevolences sent directly to recipients	\$ 1,177.37	Youth	224.87
2) Sent to Convention office	12,480.64	UTCWI Program	20,203.57
3) Interest	1,382.70	Conference, In-service training, retreats, etc.	987.75
4) Miscellaneous	<u>3,624.07</u>	Religious Ed.	5,929.13
	18,664.78	Pres. car	1,000.00
U.S.	<u>47,009.99</u>	Ecumenical relations	1,088.70
	65,674.77	Public education	4,575.91
Deficit (borrowed from Salary ref.)	<u>5,615.44</u>	Benevolences sent directly from Parishes	<u>1,177.37</u>
	\$ 71,290.21		\$ 71,290.21

D. Salary Refurds

	<u>Income</u>		<u>Expense</u>
From U.S. and Guyana?	\$ 37,933.78	Used in Church-Wide Needs	\$ 5,615.44
		Surplus, Convention Treas.	<u>32,318.34</u>
			\$ 37,933.78

SUMMARY:

					<u>Balances</u>
A. Local Needs	\$ 17,005.43+	\$ 00.00=	\$ 17,005.43=	\$ 16,343.44 +	\$ 661.99
B. Parish Needs	41,948.53+	121,050.01=	162,998.54=	162,998.54 +	0.00
C. Church-Wide	18,664.78+	47,009.99=	65,674.77=	71,290.21 -	5,615.44
D. Other	0.00	37,933.78=	37,933.78=	0.00 +	<u>37,933.78</u>
	<u>\$ 77,618.74+</u>	<u>\$205,993.78=</u>	<u>\$283,612.52=</u>	<u>\$250,632.19 +</u>	<u>\$32,980.33</u>

The above figures are all drawn, perhaps incorrectly, from documents given to me in New Amsterdam. I am suggesting this *style* of report not the precise quantities, which in any specific case I may likely have misunderstood.

1970 BUDGET

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Parish</u>	<u>Church-wide</u>
Emmanuel	\$ 9,875	\$ 249	\$ 8,411	\$ 1,216
St. Michael	13,287	559	11,663	1,065
St. John	11,906	608	10,274	1,024
Transfiguration	7,342	96	6,516	730
Ebenezer	10,867	2,530	5,951	2,185
St. Timothy	13,955	705	11,870	1,381
Reformation	13,348	486	10,923	1,939
Good Shepherd	13,477	450	11,936	1,091
Advent	14,678	261	13,560	857
Holy Trinity	16,831	1,196	14,448	1,186
St. Andrew	10,981	350	9,841	790
Redeemer	7,136	1,266	4,457	1,413
Calvary	12,583	2,032	6,601	3,950
Ascension	10,137	1,030	8,116	991
E/B Demarara	3,860	183	3,424	253
St. Jacob	<u>9,204</u>	<u>808</u>	<u>7,925</u>	<u>471</u>
Total Budgeted	179,267	12,809	145,916	20,542
Unexplained increase	<u>71,365</u>	<u>3,534</u>	<u>17,083</u>	<u>50,748</u>
Actual amount spent	<u>\$250,632</u>	<u>\$16,343</u>	<u>\$162,999</u>	<u>\$71,290</u>

Figure 8

REGARDING RACE

It is a fact that in the Lutheran Church in Guyana there is no congregation in which any race is not welcome; neither does the church try to prevent people from going to the congregations which they prefer, which may correspond to their own predominant culture. We do not call it racism that some congregations prefer a white minister from abroad. We must not consider it racism that in some neighborhoods the congregations would likely attract the people in the immediate area, or that others would design their program to make it as attractive as possible to one or other of the six nations. The Chinese, the East Indian, the African all have cultural traditions which are honorable and preservable if they so desire. The Lutheran church is not, in its excellent relationship with all six nations, recommending the abandonment of all but British-American culture.

1. Do not alter present policy which encourages total racial blindness with respect to those who wish to join a given congregation.
2. Yet, do not be surprised nor displeased by the emergence of nearly-solidly ethnic congregations, especially outside of the cities, but also within the cities.
3. Do sponsor as many inter-congregational contacts of every kind as is feasible.
4. Perhaps even generate an annual festival that will expand the present annual conference, and demonstrate to the public the six-nations within the Lutheran church.
5. Allow and encourage various kinds of ethnic sodalities.
6. Determinedly desegregate the convention-level staff?

In Guyana the members of different churches are friendly to each other and have formed what may be the most ecumenical church council of any nation in the world today. (The WCC ought to move its headquarters from Geneva to Georgetown.) Yet efforts at an inter-religion council have been stalled by the simple fact of the unwillingness of the different Hindu sects to sit down with each other, and the same is true of the Muslims.

Christianity is the only religion that is friendly to others. How else can you explain that every phrase of the Koran has been weighed in one or another of well over a thousand books written by Christians about Islam, while to date not one scholarly book on Christianity has been produced by a Muslim.

Warning: In fostering human fellowship the most difficult barriers to surmount are the economic ones. It is easier to pull into a single congregation, or denomination, people of disparate ethnic backgrounds than it is people who are both wealthy and poor. The New Testament does specifically speak of the latter, but not the former. Yet the LCG may wake up some day to find that it has surmounted the ethnic barriers only at a certain, fairly sophisticated level of society. This is not good enough.

REGARDING SIZES OF CONGREGATIONS

My first impression was that the structure of the LCG seems to be more that of 16 dioceses (rather than parishes) with 52 parishes (rather than congregations). Or, call them local and larger parishes, but this must not obscure the community of witness and healing, and the true ecclesiastical structure of the 52 face-to-face parishes. The next thing will be for the larger-parish to encroach upon the functions of the local parish. Indeed, even these 52 parishes may, in some cases, have grown too large to maintain the closest ties of fellowship and Koinonia in their sub-groups. In that case the sub-groups themselves ought to have recognized, duly constituted leadership. Thus the "infrastructure" of the larger congregations requires as much concern as is now evident regarding the smaller local congregation.

There survives in the urban world a kind of myth that says that a city church is just a village church with larger membership. This obscures the essentially different dynamics of a smaller church compared to a big church, and then--note well--it allows some thinkers to go even farther to assume that a valid parish is achievable in the case of small, rural congregations only be grouping them together! This is to move in a complete circle and deny even the original, small parish, its valid ecclesiastical role.

This is not to deny the fact that there is a special value in the large city church, or the "larger" rural parish composed of several local congregations. This truth is the fact that a larger group of people can minister to each other on still a different level. They can conceivably support some specialized, perhaps even full-time ministers, can through periodic contact pass around various other kinds of blessings, etc. But it is a dread process when these secondary blessings of a "larger parish" tend to displace the primary, face-to-face ministry of the local group, which is the chief concern of a local minister.

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REGARDING LEVELS OF TRAINING FOR LOCAL MINISTRY

We must, therefore, in a rapidly urbanizing age, re-emphasize the dignity and purpose of the local minister, be he pastor or deacon. He will likely not be a full-time man in the modern sense of the term: he will keep his hand in some kind of agricultural pursuit or trade or profession. The congregation will help him devote as much time as possible to his pastoral role, and will assist him in his pursuit of special studies. It is not to be denied that the congregation will profit from his involvement over a period of time in at least the functional equivalent of three-years of seminary training, so long as the prerequisites of that training do not require him to detour for years of general education beyond that which is common in the congregation to which he ministers.

The local minister's primary concern is that of fostering the processes of ministry within the local congregation. He will not only preach but both allow and assist others in preaching. He will not only administer the sacraments (which is less demanding of extensive training than preaching) but will allow and assist others to function in this role--men who are elected to the local church council for this among other purposes.

Many today are deeply convinced that if all the various ministries God has in mind are performed in the local congregation, there will be a vast harvest of talent and skill and maturity flow out of this activity that will, for example, inevitably send more men to Jamaica in the long run than would be the case if only a highly trained bishop-level clergy is envisioned, valuable and worthy of continuation though the latter certainly is.

It is necessary for those of us who have university training, and a B.D. on top of that, to burst the bubble, break the spell, remove the roadblocks to other men. This does not mean to acquiesce to little or no training. It means that we acknowledge the true requirements of the local congregation, that we recognize the most important sphere in which men can mature--namely the parish not the dormitory. But this is possible only if the ministry is itself bound up in a disciplined order of study and fellowship.

It is dangerous to assume that all men functioning in any way as pastors ought to be university level trained. The fact that certain denominations have done this in the U.S. ought not to prove that it is desirable, for it has been done at the price of excluding the whole world of trades people and a vast poorer stratum from their membership. Such denominations have not only excluded such people from their constituency, but have reduced their ability to communicate with whole sectors of the population.

MISCELLANEOUS

...The will of God is more, but certainly not less than nation building. Many things must be taken into account in the essential planning required by obedience to Christ.

...There must be, for example, a nation-wide opportunity for people in any station to pass their GCE exams. (There may be a need for someone to challenge the very nature of the GCE. If Bookers, for example, and the government for example, should require something else or something else in addition, it would be something quite interesting.

...National leaders today more and more are aspiring not to live like people in another country but like people in their own country, not to get more than their people but to get more for their people.

...Thus, it is beginning to be true that there is a reinterpretation of the foreign mission boards' apparent desire to keep national pastors "poor": it is beginning to be plain that the missionary has in many ways stepped down in creature comforts from his standard of living at home, and that the national pastor does not have to step up in order to be a minister.

...These truths, however, are plain only to Guyanans who have lived in the country from which the missionary comes. This is why it is a great advantage to have a significant number of pastors with this kind of overseas experience.

...The Lutherans will do no evil--they will do a worthy thing--if they show themselves as willing to cast the net of love and fellowship and service around thousands of the uncommitted East Indians and Africans, as are more recently arrived evangelical groups.

...Multitudes of people are outside the churches, waiting to be asked to do more than join a church. Thousands who are already members are waiting to be asked to do more than attend church. We who prefer to obey Christ fully must not disguise or in any way water down what it is that God calls our people to do. It is in fact our task to help our people fulfill their calling not to encourage them to do the minimum. It is as unreasonable to sit at home and wonder why people don't come to see you, as it is to sit complacently in a pew each Sunday and wonder why people don't come and fill them.

...In looking back on the 1936-1947 period and some of the conditions of those days which no longer exist, it may be necessary to conclude that there is no respectable way to grow. And, the desperation for respectability may hide the paths once trod and thereby conceal the only way forward.