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# A Statement of the Lutheran Church in America

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## **Goals and Plans for Minority Ministry 1978-1984**

### **INTRODUCTION**

During the 1974 Convention of the Lutheran Church in America held in Baltimore, Maryland, the delegates commissioned an inventory regarding the status of minority persons in the church and called for the presentation of a report that would project the long range plans and goals for the decade, 1984 being the 20th anniversary of the LCA Statement on Race Relations. *An Inventory of the Lutheran Church in America: Race Relations* was published in 1976. The Eighth Biennial Convention held in Boston heard the report that goals and plans would be presented at the next convention of the church.

The 1964 statement "Race Relations" was adopted immediately after the President of the United States had signed into law the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In the words of the statement, "the current racial revolution has thrust the church into a time of travail and perplexity but also of opportunity and hope." The *Inventory* shows that during the ten years following the adoption of the statement that the church wrestled with plans for its minority ministry and had growth in this part of its life. The *Inventory* shows a continuing condition of racism, displayed both institutionally as well as personally in the leadership of the church.

Reports of churchwide agencies and synods show a new intention to make the LCA an "inclusive" fellowship, however. The growth of membership of minority group persons during the ten years has given hope for greater diversity in the membership of the LCA. This factor leads the church to broaden its stated goals for this decade. In addition to the emphasis placed in the 1964 Statement on Justice, the church adds the emphasis of a more inclusive membership.

## **THE COMPREHENSIVE GOAL**

**DURING THE PERIOD 1978-1984, THE LCA SHALL CONTINUE TO BECOME MORE INCLUSIVE IN MEMBERSHIP WHILE CONTINUING AND EXPANDING ITS EMPHASIS ON JUSTICE IN SOCIETY.**

The plan in our ministry this decade will be for all members to share "with" each other—both minority group persons and non-minority group persons—to accomplish the goal rather than to structure a ministry "for" minorities.

This will call for a growth in faith and witness, outreach with the Gospel, service in society, development of professional leadership, and a building of fellowship in our task together. The 1964 Statement observes, "Injurious discrimination based on race is a violation of God's created order, of the meaning of redemption in Christ, and of the nature of the church." This plan will assist its members to address the racism in its life and in society.

### **A. GROWTH IN FAITH AND WITNESS**

#### **1. SELF UNDERSTANDING**

The *Inventory* points out that the issue is not "good will" among whites, but self-understanding of the racism of all LCA members both minority and non-minority persons. Our identity is not determined by the racial or ethnic heritages which are our past, nor by the ethnic or racial differences which separate people from one another in the present. God creates persons among many races, but no race can determine the destiny of God's people. Both minority and non-minority group persons must address their own attitudes to eradicate both personal and institutional racism. Whites must be exposed to the prevalence of this problem and their part in perpetuating it. Likewise, minority group persons must believe that change is possible and respond to new opportunities.

The church cannot avoid this issue. Racism in both its institutional and personal forms is disobedience to God and must be aggressively confronted. The biblical witness calls all parts of the church—congregations, synods, and churchwide agencies—to responsible actions that help members deal with this prevalent sin.

Leadership is asked to be aware of this problem and to constantly work toward its eradication in its varied expressions. Indices that can be used to test our progress include:

1. Increase in leadership positions filled by minority group persons in congregations, synods, and churchwide agencies.
2. Integration of cultural variations into all parts of the church's life.
3. Awareness of societal issues reflected by the leadership and in the program of the church.

4. Leaders of the church perceive ministries with minorities a natural part of the church's life.
5. Growth in minority membership.
6. Evidence of hope with the minority group community.
7. Involvement of congregations in programs of social change.
8. Cooperation between congregations in a geographic area in work for social change.

**GOAL: That the leadership of the congregations, synods, churchwide #1-A agencies periodically assess their attitudes and programs for the purpose of eradicating racism, making changes suggested by those reviews.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Establishment of a review mechanism in all churchwide agencies and synods for periodic review on the basis of the above criteria
- Consultations on racism to be held with synods during 1979 and 1981

**GOAL: That (1) churchwide agencies provide appropriate materials, #1-B and (2) synods work with and support leadership of congregations to enable them to examine their racism and devise strategies for working toward the elimination of their racism.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Evaluate existing material
- Development of any additional material that is needed on combating racism
- Synod-sponsored spiritual retreats
- District meetings
- Synod pastoral conferences
- Coalition development
- Use of the resources of existing minority networks and caucuses
- Development of service activities by congregations

**GOAL: That the LCA exhibit a self-understanding consistent with the #1-C Gospel of what it means to be the church in a diverse culture.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Development of the Social Statement on Human Rights in 1978
- Development of a study on the church in a pluralistic society by 1984

## **2. EQUIPPING THE MEMBERSHIP TO REACH INTO MINORITY COMMUNITIES**

In 1974, 28.2% of the congregations of the LCA had 0.1–0.9% minority group members. 68.4% of the LCA congregations were located in communities with at least 1% minority group residents. These statistics indicate both the opportunities available to a large portion of the LCA congregations and the presence of minority group persons in our congregations to assist with evangelical efforts. Efforts should be targeted

at families, children and youth in minority communities. This will include both evangelism visitation as well as work in society which will support young families (such as day care service).

Synodical leadership must motivate congregational leadership by actively supporting efforts of outreach in each local congregation.

The time is conducive to emphasizing outreach in the LCA. Some factors that will contribute to the success of this effort are:

- a. The resources of Evangelical Outreach and Strength For Mission,
- b. Reawakening of an Evangelical Outreach desire in the church, and
- c. The desire of minority group professional leadership to reach out.

**GOAL: That, until the LCA has within its membership a percentage of #2-A minority group persons at least equal to the percentage of minority group persons in the general population, the LCA set as a goal an annual growth figure of at least 15,000 minority group persons and that efforts be made to reach that annual goal as early as possible during the 1978-1984 period.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Congregations commit themselves to intentional outreach among minority persons
- Synods assist congregations in identifying potential for outreach among minority group persons
- Evangelical Outreach
- Strength For Mission
- Educational courses prepared to assist motivation
- Churchwide Agencies assist congregations to introduce elements into worship life that represent the richness of the various cultures
- Provision of Spanish language worship book and other worship materials
- Congregations recognize responsibility for care in receiving and transferring baptized child members of non-Lutheran parents
- Intentional advertisement of Lutheran congregations as "inclusive" fellowships

## **B. REACH OUT WITH THE GOSPEL**

### **1. ESTABLISHING AND SUPPORTING CONGREGATIONS**

An inclusive church will have minority congregations throughout its fellowship. This will call for support of established congregations in racially changing communities as well as initiating new congregations in communities where the residents are Black, Hispanic, Oriental, or Native American. Attempts shall be made to organize these congregations in an area where the synod and local congregations have developed an area strategy and are supportive of such a minority component.

**GOAL: That the LCA enter areas of more than 50% minority group persons for the purpose of establishing within the minority communities at least 40 congregations before 1984.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Seven to eight new minority entries per year for 1978-1984

**GOAL: That, based on the recommendation of synods, the DMNA (1) give up to eight years support to established congregations during the period of racial and cultural transition, and (2) support for an indeterminate period of time congregations in areas where poverty conditions make it impossible for the members to provide funds necessary for the ministry.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Selectivity of support based on developed area strategies
- Study made to determine reasons why many minority group congregations seem to plateau in membership growth. Development of programs to break that pattern
- Stewardship materials in Spanish
- Development of Urban Church Building Maintenance policy so that the future of facilities in the city is secured
- Synodical leadership periodically assess the strength and spirit of the professional leadership serving in the city

## **2. MEDIA MINISTRY**

**GOAL: That the LCA establish broadcast ministries in the Spanish language in six key cities in the United States and Puerto Rico.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Development of Ecumenical relationships that will provide joint broadcasting
- Broadcasting of Spanish programs (Radio and TV)

## **C. SERVE NEEDS IN SOCIETY**

In affirming that God became human for us, we affirm that the church is to be lived in the midst of the physical world. From the solid foundation of the humanity of Christ and the creation of God, we are commissioned to take care of whole human beings, and not only their "spiritual" nature. This puts the baptized community right into the middle of economic, political, institutional, and all other concerns of whole human beings of every race. This calls upon the baptized community to serve basic human needs through "the cup of water given" and through means that ensure justice for all persons by the change of systems. The work must be undertaken by people in all places—suburban, city, and town and country settings.

### **1. ECONOMICS**

The central issue in this function during this decade should be economic justice for all persons. The disproportionate lack of access to

economic resources for minority group persons is a function of racism in our society. Governmental resources and church resources must be used to work on this condition with the hope of maximizing opportunities for minorities.

**GOAL: That the LCA annually adopt a plan for addressing the priority #3-A issue for justice in the economic life of the U.S. and Canada as it specifically affects minority persons, and that in 1978-1979 that issue be the disproportionate number of minority persons who are unemployed.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Advocacy for "full employment"
- Work with other organizations, industries, and professional groups in expanding opportunities for employment of minority group persons
- Development of programs that can impact employment conditions that can be implemented by congregations as they work in their communities
- Educational institutions (colleges) expand recruitment of minority students
- Day Care Programs
- Study of these issues and education of the constituency
- Support of community organizations
- Investment of LCA resources in minority banks and industries
- Stockholders action on domestic issues
- Advocacy by social service agencies and institutions on these issues
- The Consulting Committee on Minority Group Interests (CCMGI) annually recommend to the DMNA an issue of economic justice to be addressed by the division in the following year

## 2. PUBLIC EDUCATION

**GOAL: That congregations, coalitions, districts and synods join with #3-B other organizations in assisting local school districts raise the quality of the education particularly in schools where minority group students are in the majority.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Development of programs regarding public education in cooperation with local school authorities that can be implemented by congregations. Among these include:
  - a. Alternative educational programs
  - b. Tutorial programs
  - c. Supplemental educational programs
- Work with PTAs and other organizations, industries and professional groups in addressing social and educational problems in schools

## 3. HOUSING

**GOAL: That the LCA during 1978-1984 advocate for funding of federal #3-C government programs for the development of appropriate housing for all people.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Development of an advocacy program
- Lutheran Housing Coalition
- Congregations form coalitions to assist their communities to provide (possibly with church sponsorship) appropriate housing, especially for the low income and elderly population

#### **4. CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

**GOAL: That using LCA educational materials on criminal justice, the #3-D congregations, synods and churchwide agencies work in local communities, in states and provinces, and within nationwide institutions to address deficiencies and to support effective programs in the criminal justice system.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Implementation of "In Pursuit of Justice and Dignity: Society, the Offender, and Systems of Correction"
- Chaplaincy and volunteer services in penal institutions
- Ministries for ex-offenders
- Advocacy Activities
- Community-based programs for persons who have been convicted of a felony for the first time
- Support Legal Aid Society and other organizations addressing this issue

### **D. COOPERATE WITH OTHER COMMUNITIES OF FAITH**

#### **1. COOPERATIVE MEMBERSHIP**

Working with other denominations in fulfilling goals of justice in society has given the LCA more effective ministries and exposure to a broader application of resources. Such cooperation has provided learning and mutual support both nationally and locally.

**GOAL: That throughout the period of 1978-1984 the LCA cooperate #4-A with the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., the Lutheran Council in Canada, the Joint Strategy and Action Commission, the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A. and other interfaith organizations and task forces to fulfill Goals 3-A—3-D.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Continuation in and support of: National Indian Lutheran Board, Hispanic Lutheran Caucus, Project North, JSAC, Hispanic Task Force
- Local planning councils among Lutheran church bodies regarding minority ministries

## 2. DELEGATIONS

**GOAL: That the Executive Council of the LCA include minority group #4-B members in delegations to the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A. and the Lutheran World Federation.**

## E. DEVELOP PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

Basic to the fulfillment of the preceding goals is the development of adequate leadership—both lay and clergy. It is recognized that both minority and non-minority persons will be needed to develop ministries in local congregations. It is also recognized that additional exposure is needed for minority professional leaders so that minority group youth will be encouraged to enter professions in the church.

### 1. RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF PROFESSIONAL LEADERS TO SERVE IN MINORITY SETTING

It is recognized that during the period of 1978-1984 most of the minority group persons that will be served by the LCA will be living in cities. The attractiveness of service in the cities has diminished for pastors during the past several years due to a number of factors. Some of these include: (a) identification of new challenges and opportunities in suburban and rural settings, (b) disadvantages (particularly educational) for families, (c) lack of emphasis on city ministries and (d) salary considerations. To assure the placement of adequately skilled personnel, it is suggested that pastors called to city congregations have a minimum of two years service in a congregation where they have been exposed to community work or ministries that will be deployed in the city work.

Churchwide leaders are counseled to identify opportunities to serve among rural minority persons also, and to equip leadership for such service.

**GOAL: That prior to 1984 all seminaries of the LCA develop portions #5-A of their curriculum to address racism and ministry with minorities so all students are given resources from which they can develop self-confidence in relation to these areas.**

Attention needs to be given to the curriculum and staffing of LCA seminaries to assure that appropriate preparation regarding ministry with minorities and consciousness for working with racism be given to both minority and non-minority students.

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- DPL's work with seminaries on curriculum
- Internship experience for seminarians in city churches
- Adaptation of programs to fit the need

- Curriculum that provides for practical exposure in minority settings
- Familiarity with the Spanish language
- Courses on racism
- Employment of minority persons as full or adjunct professors
- Joint teaching of minority and non-minority persons
- Increase in numbers of minority students

**GOAL: That prior to 1984 churchwide agencies develop a program to #5-B identify and prepare professional leaders who have demonstrated skills that commend them for city ministries, and that synodical presidents use this information in making recommendations to city congregations.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Internships in city congregations
- Assignment for short-term assistant pastorates in city congregations
- Continuing educational programs conducted in city settings utilizing the institutions and parishes located in the city
- At least the synod minimum for clergy compensation be paid
- Lay Associate Program

## **2. MINORITY GROUP PERSONS SERVING IN PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS IN THE CHURCH**

The growth in number of minority group persons serving in professional leadership positions has not been as rapid as either the church or minority group persons in the church had hoped.

Congregations are called upon to encourage their minority group youth to consider a profession in the church.

**GOAL: That by 1984 the Division for Professional Leadership in cooperation with synod professional leadership committees enlist #5-C additional persons so that (1) at least 100 minority group persons will be on the roll of ordained ministers of the LCA, and (2) 10 minority group persons will enter the lay professional field or diaconate of the LCA.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Recruitment activities of the seminaries and DPL
- Recruitment activities by pastors in congregations serving minority group persons.
- Recruitment by the special programs created to specifically increase minority group persons to serve

**GOAL: That by 1984, synods will give counsel to congregations so #5-D that at least one-third of the minority group persons serving as pastors in the LCA will be serving congregations where the membership is a majority of white persons (suburban, town and country, and/or city).**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Initiate the process by which the documents of the LCA can be amended to provide for congregations to consider candidates without reference to race or sex
- DMNA will employ minority persons as pastor/developers
- Synod presidents place the names of minority persons before the congregations at the time of vacancies

**GOAL: That by 1984, responsible governing boards of churchwide #5-E agencies, synods and synodical agencies and institutions enlist 60 minority group persons in full time executive or professional staff positions.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Affirmative action goals established by all churchwide agencies, synods, and synodical agencies and institutions (seminaries, colleges, and social service agencies and institutions)
- DMNA maintain file of potential candidates for executive and professional positions in synodical agencies and institutions and make names available to such agencies

## **F. SUPPORT OF THE ORGANIZATION**

### **1. COMMUNICATIONS**

During this period the communication avenues of the church will need to give intentional exposure to minority group persons and the activities of congregations working on the Goals and Plans that have been identified as the LCA's plan for this decade. *The Lutheran, The Congregation, AIM* and other publications of the church are asked to recognize that articles about minority group persons and minority group ministries are of interest to all members of the church and not just minority group people. The entire church will be enriched by the expanded coverage of minority group persons. The 1964 Statement on Race Relations instructed editors to be, "... realistic in their use of pictures and descriptive materials in such publications so as to reflect the inclusive character of the church." This is a period in which extra attention must be given to this.

Publications of the church are asked to review the content of articles published so that the major thrust is that of "minorities and whites working together for social change" rather than the "good will of whites." Attention must be given to occasional publication in the churchwide papers of articles in Spanish.

**GOAL: That during 1978-1984 publications of the church (synodical #6 papers, *The Lutheran, The Congregation*, and other church wide publications) expand their coverage of minority group persons and ministries among minority group persons so that the inclusiveness of the church is apparent through these publications.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Survey in 1980 and 1982 the coverage of minority group persons and minority group ministries by *The Lutheran*, *The Congregation* and other churchwide publications.
- Review of each publication's policy to see if the policies reflect a stance that would include minority interests.
- Encourage *The Lutheran* and other churchwide publications to invite minority group persons to write articles for publication.

## 2. DECISION MAKING

Since the convention is the highest authority of the church, attention must be given to the make-up of that assembly. This means that synodical leadership will need to exercise care in developing nominations for the churchwide convention.

**GOAL: That the number of minority group persons at the LCA convention #7-A shall increase so that by 1984 at least 50 minority group persons will be in attendance as delegates.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Through Synod Mission Profile Consultations encourage synods to include minority persons in their nominations for the 1980 convention
- Development of a list of minority group persons who can serve as delegates

**GOAL: That the nominating committee of the LCA convention #7-B presents at least 10% minority person candidates for positions to be filled at the convention in 1980, 1982, 1984.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Development of a list of minority group persons who can be nominated
- Urge CWAs to recognize same percentage in making their nominations

**GOAL: That minority group persons be appointed to consulting committees #7-C so that by 1984, at least 5% of their membership will be minority group persons.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Development of minority personnel resource bank
- Development of a list of minority group persons who can serve as consulting committee members
- Discussion with Staff Executive Team members

## 3. BUDGET AND FINANCE

**GOAL: That the churchwide agencies, synods and synodical agencies #8 and institutions provide funds in their spending authorization for the accomplishment of the above goals during the period 1978-1984.**

Plans to accomplish this goal:

- Through the Synod Mission Profile Consultation encourage synods to implement the above goals

## **CONCLUSION**

“Injurious discrimination based on race is a violation of God’s created order of the meaning of redemption in Christ, and of the nature of the church.”

“Implicit in such discrimination often are unbiblical views of God and man. The church must oppose such views with all the power of the truth of God; in its prayer and worship, in its theological thought, in its nature of the personal life, in its institutional forms, and in individuals and corporate action in society.”

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