

FORUM LETTER

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The aspirations of the saints



“The service for the congregation’s worship must be a common service. It must voice the common confessions, supplications, and thanksgivings; it must be Scriptural, not only in harmony with its teaching, but permeated with its tone and language; it must be historic, voicing the aspirations of the saints of the ages, hallowed with the fragrance of antiquity, sacred with the memories of the past, a holy bond, binding into one the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of martyrs, the holy church throughout the world, and the present congregation; the church in heaven and on earth. While fixed in its essential features it must be sufficiently flexible to admit present and special wants and thanksgiving. It should thus have room and encouragement for free prayer, which must always bear the character of common prayer.” –G. H. Gerberding, *The Lutheran Pastor* (Augsburg, 1902)

Houston, we have a problem (or two)

by Scott Yakimow



I’d like to begin by pointing out that the number 64 is actually somehow more important than any other integer. Unfortunately, I can’t come up with a single idea as to how that might be the case.

What I do know is that the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod will be “celebrating” (is this the right word?) her 64th Regular Convention and will be doing so in Houston. Yup, that’s right. Beautiful Texas once again (well, beautiful in an awfully flat sort of way, based upon my sole visit to the locale). And I hope you can see the rolling eyes from this Michigan boy jumping off the page.

By most accounts, this will be one of the most significant LCMS conventions in many, many moons. After all, it is entirely possible that the “Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod” will cease to exist, in favor of such alternatives as “The Lutheran Church in America,” “The Lutheran Church,” or, if I could insert my personal favorite proposal (since it is mine, after all), “The Lutheran Church – Lutheran Orders Rectifying Disasters in Keeping with New Opportunities While Serving Western Environs, Rehabilitating Each Region In God’s Holistic Teaching” or “TLC-LORDKNOWSWE’RERIGHT” for short.

Avoiding the cumbersome

But let’s take things one at a time. First, there are the proposals about changing the governance of synod. These were put together at the request of President Gerald Kieschnick by the “The Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod

Structure and Governance,” better known by the catchy acronym BRTFSSG. Concerned that the synod was not fulfilling its purpose as well as it could, Pres. Kieschnick deputed this task force to assess the current “system of governance and organizational structure” of the LCMS and recommend improvements that would offer “a form of structure and governance for the decades ahead that is appropriately representative, incorporating sufficient checks and balances of authority without being cumbersome.” Prayerfully, the work of the task force “will serve to knit The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod together as ONE PEOPLE, proclaiming ONE MESSAGE of Jesus Christ, engaging in the ONE MISSION of making disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ” (BRTFSSG Final Report, 6-7).

Now, a quick perusal of the blogosphere indicates quite a variety of opinion on both the proposals themselves as well as their purported purpose. There are some folks out there who bill the task force as being created in order to settle a perceived disunity in synod via a shift in governance. Governance shift, in other words, as both the instrument of settling disagreement and the endpoint in such a process. Given the language of Pres. Kieschnick’s “original assignment” that I quoted above, I see how such a perception could arise.

Instrumental change

However, it seems to me that a better way to understand the goals given to the task force by Pres. Kieschnick would be to view them as *merely* instrumental – not only in settling disagreements in synod but also in accomplishing the other tasks the synod is supposed to be doing. That is, Pres. Kieschnick’s memo does not envision a change in governance as a “magic bullet,” fixing any problems that come along and setting the synod out on the right path. Rather, such change would *merely* provide a better mechanism for the synod to do what it should be doing. And here the use of the word “merely” does seem appropriate, not because the task is unimportant but rather because the goal seems more modest than some think.

In any case, the proposals themselves are sure to spark a lot of debate, as well they should. Some may be relatively uncontroversial – like extending the time between conventions from three years to four (who likes to attend conventions, any-

way?) – but others will likely set some folks (ahem) ablaze. One that seems to have garnered considerable opposition is the idea of proportional representation, giving large congregations more delegates than small ones – proposal #6, for those playing at home. This would be a dramatic shift in a principle that has been operative in the LCMS for many a year where each congregation is “equal” to any other congregation since both are the body of Christ in that place. No particular body is greater or more important than another.

Yet by raising the question, the task force is suggesting that in terms of governance, the principle of exact parity need not apply when it comes to voting. The task force is quick to point out, however, that this isn’t a “power grab” in favor of large congregations, because other component parts of the proposal give more votes to small congregations by allowing vacant congregations their full two representatives and giving two representatives to each congregation in a multi-point parish. Nevertheless, I sense that this proposal will, uh, spark quite a lively discussion, especially since the “stakes” for district conventions would be raised significantly by another proposal (#10) that gives them the responsibility of electing delegates to the national convention.

The flames of partisanship

Which brings me to the other issue on the minds of many and why I bring up “stakes” in scare quotes – the election of the synodical president. Maybe it’s just me spending too much time reading blog sites, but the level of partisanship seems to be running quite high this year. Not in the parish I attend, mind you. Nor with most “normal” LCMS folk I know (“normal” meaning laity, as we all know that pastors can rarely be described as “normal” in most any sense of the term), though perhaps I need to get out more. Yet if the internet is any way to judge, cries resembling “I’m of Kieschnick” or “I’m of Harrison” do seem to be on the rise.

Not that either candidate would countenance such a thing, nor do I think that folks who certainly sound partisan intend to fan the flames of partisanship. It is almost as if elections in the LCMS take on a life of their own, encouraging folks to take a side. Which is why I’m almost embarrassed to say that I have no strong opinion as to who I think should win the election. (Full disclosure: I know Pr. Harrison

personally, having worked with him on issues in East Africa; I have met Pres. Kieschnick only in passing.)

Such a statement may spark many an LCMS-er to wax eloquent on hot, cold and lukewarmness. Yet the decision to elect one qualified man or another (and both are well-qualified) to leadership is not a matter of divine doctrine and so does not require taking a stand, especially as there already appears to be no shortage of people who will gladly tell you whom to support. Unless you are a delegate and have to vote, you don't have to choose. So just as I see the governance proposals as *merely* instrumental in helping the synod discharge its duty, so I think that the election of a president should be seen as *merely* instrumental in that same task. There are no "silver bullets" here, structural or personal.

A host of others

While these are perhaps the two main issues before the convention, there are a host of other proposals to be considered as well. For example, the convention workbook contains many different over-

tures to terminate relations with the ELCA, ranging from proposals to cease cooperative/joint ministries to those recommending ending theological discussions or the severing of "all endeavors" between the two church bodies. To be fair, I also see two overtures that seek to continue cooperative ministries, but to do so pending an evaluation of the relationship. The floor committee will have its hands full here, and I'm sure the discussion on the resulting motion will be lively.

Perhaps the final thing to note is the sheer length of the convention—July 10-17, eight days of pure convention joy. I know what you're all thinking: "God only took six days to create the universe, so why on earth do you need eight to re-organize yourselves?" But remember, this is the LCMS. And I'm sure we're right.

LCMS Pastor Scott Yakimow is a doctoral candidate at the University of Virginia. He will be Forum Letter's correspondent at the LCMS convention this summer in Houston. Go to www.alpb.org/forum for his on-the-scene reports, beginning July 10.

On shopping local



I live in a community without a shopping mall, without a new car dealer, without a Target or Costco or even a Wal-Mart. We do have a J. C. Penney, but it is very small. This being largely a retirement community, we also have an abundance of pharmacies. But if you want to buy a lot of things, you pretty much have to drive "down the hill" to the closest large shopping complex, about 45 miles away.

The local merchants have a constant campaign to "shop local," and while I don't agree with their grammar, I understand their point, and I try to honor it. If I can find what I want in a local store—which generally means a "specialty shop"—and if I can find it at somewhere near the shopping mall or discount store price, I'm likely to buy it at home. I want to support local merchants when I can, and I want to keep my sales taxes in my own county. Even more important, I really don't want to spend the time and gas money to drive down to the land of traffic and crowds. I live in a beautiful place, and I don't care to leave it if I can help it. Especially to

shop.

But sometimes there's not much choice. If I have to, I'll make the trip, or, more likely, I'll add an item to my list of things to buy when next I have to make the trip for some other reason.

Something of the same principle applies to ordering church supplies and books. I'd really rather shop at Augsburg Fortress. Now that they've closed most regional stores and stopped doing displays at synod events, that means shopping on line. But I'm a 21st century kind of guy in at least some ways, and I buy a lot of things e-tail.

There are limits

So the other day I needed to order something from Augsburg Fortress—something peculiarly ELCA, so really there was no choice. It was on the expensive side, in my opinion, but what are you going to do? I remembered hearing something about free shipping on orders over \$150, and my item cost enough that I thought maybe I could find a couple of things to add to the order and qualify for it.

I subsequently found out that was a “limited time offer,” so it wouldn’t have mattered, but I didn’t know it at the time. I went shopping and found a book by Lutheran theologian Robert Kolb that looked interesting. It was even on sale—\$35, marked down to \$28. I added it to my shopping cart. Then there was another that intrigued me called *Norwegian Folk Songs*, described as follows: “Beautiful and lyrical Norwegian tunes from new and old hymnals, sensitively arranged in a variety of styles. . . [S]ure to delight listeners and tug at the hearts of worshippers.” I spell that last word with one “p,” but I’m a hymn buff, so I added it to my cart.

Then, just for the sake of being a wise comparison shopper, I went to amazon.com and checked out the Kolb book. They had it for \$23.50—a savings of \$4.50 over the Augsburg Fortress “sale price.” I’m an “Amazon Prime” member so I don’t pay for shipping. (That’s not quite true; I pay an annual fee for this status, but I did the math and we order enough things from amazon.com in a year that I save a good bit of money.) For reasons obscure to me, Augsburg wanted to charge sales tax while amazon.com didn’t, so that would save a bit more. I ordered the book on amazon.com and deleted it from my Augsburg shopping cart.

I couldn’t find anything else I wanted, but I went ahead and left the *Norwegian Folk Songs* in the cart, along with the original item for which I was shopping. I figured I was paying the shipping on the other item anyway, so might as well add the songs. I

placed the order to Augsburg.

Capitalism at its best

The amazon.com order arrived at my door the very next morning, even though I hadn’t ordered “next day shipping.”

The Augsburg Fortress order arrived two weeks later. And when it arrived, imagine my surprise when I discovered that *Norwegian Folk Songs*, those “beautiful and lyric Norwegian tunes from new and old hymnals,” was actually a book of organ settings. They looked lyrical and beautiful enough, but I don’t play the organ and my organist doesn’t do Norwegian folk songs, no matter how lyrical or sensitively arranged they may be. I went back to the web site to see if I had just missed something that would have told me this was organ music. Nope. The only description was the one I quoted in full above. So now I have to pay the shipping to return the lyrical though useless book to the publisher.

I really do prefer to “shop local,” both in a geographical and a denominational sense. Augsburg Fortress is having a tough time, and I want to support them. But sometimes that gets really frustrating. Sometimes it even seems like a bad stewardship decision. I sympathize with the challenges to the “local” venter presented by competitive marketing strategies. But I’m not a fool. Better prices and better service sometimes just have to trump loyalty to local merchants.

— by Richard O. Johnson, editor

Quo vadis, Valpo?



Today it seems being the president of an institution, especially a university, only bestows upon you the privilege of choosing whom you want protesting outside your office. Given that you can’t please everyone, whom are you willing to alienate with this or that decision? Sure, as president you get a nice big office, even a private restroom, but only because you may have to camp out there until the rampaging mobs go away.

A couple of examples. Marquette University in Milwaukee offered the job of provost to a lesbian activist. After questions were raised, the president of Marquette rescinded the offer as not being pursuant

to the university’s Roman Catholic identity. Naturally, some people are protesting. But there would be people protesting no matter which way he made that decision—it would just be other people. He merely got to choose whether to irritate the traditional Roman Catholic crowd or the sexual libertine, academic freedom crowd. Judging by the news photos, he boldly chose to have the smellier of those two groups of potential protestors outside his office.

Meanwhile, the president of Goshen College, a Mennonite institution where half the students are not Mennonites, has been under fire since deciding to allow the playing of the national anthem before

home sporting events, something long considered taboo by Mennonites. Again, he had to choose whom to irritate – the traditional Mennonites who founded the place, or the increasingly numerous non-Mennonite students who fund the place. His controversial choice to allow the anthem was perhaps less bold, given the unthreatening nature of Mennonite mobs, but it is still an example of one in charge being forced, perhaps against his will, to pick a side in a battle between competing constituencies.

Doing it our way

So it is not without a degree of sympathy for those in this predicament that I once again raise a voice of protest to my alma mater, Valparaiso University. I freely admit the only way I would be perfectly happy with the place would be if someone from the secular world or left side of the ELCA were hopping mad about it. I'm not saying President Heckler's or the Board of Directors' job is easy, but if you're going to get complained about anyway, you may as well have the force of your convictions.

When Valpo decided to call an ELCA pastor – and specifically an ELCA woman pastor – to serve the campus community, I felt somewhat betrayed and said so in these pages (“The University with a Lutheran heritage,” *FL* February, 2008). A woman pastor is to the LCMS as the national anthem is to Mennonites, and why should “our” place not do things our way?

That opinion didn't sit well with some (e.g., “Why we need Valpo: two responses to Speckhard,” *FL* May, 2008). Who did I think I was, thinking of Valpo as an LCMS institution? Didn't I know it was independent? Yes, indeed I did know that, but had considered that independence to be a matter of separate institutional control, not separate identity and mission. Not everyone has always agreed about that. Valpo has long had competing constituencies, so to speak. But just as Marquette could not both rescind and not rescind the controversial offer, and as Goshen cannot both play and not play the national anthem, so Valpo cannot both have and not have women pastors. It isn't a matter of balancing or compromising; it is a matter of taking a side.

From the archives

There was a time when Valpo knew about the side-taking ramifications of having a woman

pastor. The minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of April 30, 1995 show trouble brewing at Valpo the same as at Marquette, Goshen, or anywhere else. The following resolution passed at that meeting. For the sake of those who find reading the minutes of meetings tedious, I've highlighted the parts I find relevant but reprinted the whole resolution for the sake of context:

“WHEREAS: The Board of Directors of Valparaiso University received a petition from some members of the Valparaiso community requesting the Board of Directors to ‘adopt a policy that permits ordained Lutheran women to serve as preachers and as presiding ministers at Eucharist services in the Chapel of the Resurrection,’ and

“WHEREAS: The Board of Directors understands that a variety of opinions exist on the University campus in addition to that opinion reflected in the petition, and

“WHEREAS: *The Articles of Incorporation of Valparaiso University clearly state that Valparaiso University will conduct its educational mission ‘pursuant to the ideals, principles and traditions of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod,’ and*

“WHEREAS: It is the unique responsibility of Boards of Directors to determine the missions of colleges and universities, and

“WHEREAS: The Boards of Directors at church-related colleges and universities have the sole authority to determine the nature of the church-relatedness of such church-related colleges and universities, and

“WHEREAS: *The Board of Directors of Valparaiso University does not choose to address the fundamental question of Valparaiso University's relationship to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod through a substitute issue as the question of the ordination of women into the pastoral office, and*

“WHEREAS: One year ago the Board of Directors invited the members of the Valparaiso community to discuss the issue of women's service in the Chapel ministry, and

“WHEREAS: The petition sent to the Board of Directors includes no new information or rationale that it might consider, and

“WHEREAS: The Board of Directors acknowledges that the issue of the ordination of women continues to be an important subject of debate and a cause of divisiveness in the Christian

Church,

“THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That the Board of Directors of Valparaiso University reminds the members of the Valparaiso campus community that the Board of Directors welcomes specific recommendations from the campus community about how to resolve the issue of the appropriate role of ordained women in the Eucharist services sponsored by the Chapel of the Resurrection, and

“BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED: That the Board of Directors expresses its willingness to consider alternatives from the position it has set forth *providing that such proposed alternatives do not alienate Valparaiso University from the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, nor should such proposed alternatives deviate from the spirit and content of the statement of affiliation that is set forth in the Articles of Incorporation.*”

Time to hit the reset button

Where to begin? The chapel program is in turmoil after the reshuffling of roles and duties of the pastoral staff. There is now no Dean of the Chapel, but only three campus pastors, and only one Sunday service. Then the campus was sent reeling by the tragic death of Pr. Darlene Grega, the first ELCA campus pastor. Such a time of tragedy, turmoil and structural change provides a much-needed time to reflect and rethink. Where is Valpo going,

and why?

Why not start from scratch on the issue of the chapel? If one wanted to create chapel policies, staffing, and services in the spirit of an educational mission pursuant to the ideals, principles and traditions of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, what would that look like?

If Valpo wishes to remain true to its Articles of Incorporation (and I admit that is a big IF), the thing to do is hit the proverbial reset button, call a Dean of the Chapel from the LCMS clergy roster, perhaps from one of the seminaries or Concordia Universities, and task him with crafting chapel programming and staff in keeping with those articles. If, on the other hand, Valpo wishes to scrap the spirit and content of those articles in favor of a new vision, the Board of Directors should come out and say that, formally and officially. Make a clean break from the past rather than trying to tack a new thing onto a heritage inconsistent with it. Both options will result in protests, to be sure. But nobody protests a thing they don't care about, and everybody respects something done honestly and openly. Since the leadership of Valpo must betray either the founding or the new vision of Valpo and offend many people deeply, they may as well do so with the force of their convictions.

— by Peter Speckhard, associate editor

Canadian silver lining

by Brad Everett



The old saying about “dark clouds” and “silver linings” holds true, even in the midst of the sexuality storm cloud that now threatens the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), and, by association, other Canadian Lutherans. The silver lining here is a series of informal meetings between pastors from Lutheran Church-Canada (LCC, the Canadian version of LCMS), Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations (CALC), the Confessional Ministerium (a group of pastors working for reform in the ELCIC and a member of Lutheran CORE) and Solid Ground (a movement of lay and clergy in the ELCIC). The purpose of gathering is to explore the possibility of working together to be a public witness for confessional Lutheranism in Canada.

On the face of it, this is a rather odd bunch. The LCC contingent includes, among others, LCC President Robert Bugbee and Alberta-British Columbia District President Don Schiemann. CALC, (“a community of independent Congregations living together” which consists of a handful of congregations) is represented by its president, Edward Skutshek. The Confessional Ministerium cohort consists of parish pastors from Alberta, and Solid Ground’s president Keith Odegard represents that group at the table.

Courageous Lutherans

It began in June 2009, when the Confessional Ministerium organized a conference in Edmonton entitled “The Courage to Be Lutheran,” with Carl

Braaten and Robert Benne as the keynote speakers. Schiemann was interested in attending but contacted the organizers to make sure his presence wouldn't be a problem. Conference organizers assured him he was welcome, and invited him to bring greetings to the gathering from the LCC.

A few phone calls, a couple of face-to-face meetings, and by February the group was having its first meeting in Calgary. President Bugbee opened with Scripture and prayer. Schiemann began with a presentation entitled "At the Crossroads: Recapturing what it means to be Lutheran." He gave an overview of Lutheranism in Canada, in particular describing groups and bodies concerned with confessional Lutheranism. The Rev. Dr. Ed Kettner, professor at Concordia Seminary in Edmonton (LCC) presented a paper entitled, "What Makes One a Confessional Lutheran?" As a means of giving the group some background on the current struggles affecting the ELCIC, Pr. Karl Johnsen of the Confessional Ministerium laid out a timeline of events concerning the sexuality debate in the ELCIC. Pr. Peter Van Katwyk, a former ELCIC pastor who recently moved to the LCC, spoke on "Polity, Practice and Position: Discovering What We Share" as a means of staking out some common ground.

Frank but respectful

The day was a good one, consisting of respectful but frank theological discussion and opportunities to address stereotypes. This latter aspect cut both ways, as participants not only recognized characterizations they held about others, but came to understand the stereotypes others had about them, based on the particular group of Lutherans to which they belonged.

At the end of the day, all agreed another meeting would be worthwhile, but some questions were raised about expanding the circle by inviting other Canadian Lutherans. The consensus was that it might be early to bring in new participants before some more ground work was laid to determine how feasible it would be to have this common confessional voice.

There was a specific request from ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson to be included in future meetings. President Bugbee brought this forward on Bp. Johnson's behalf, as she had raised it with him when as a courtesy he informed her of the initial

meeting. Bugbee said he had no objections to her attending, but as this group was working by consensus he thought it should be decided on that basis. When the dust settled, it was the ELCIC pastors who were not interested in having Bp. Johnson attend, stating she had shown little or no interest in confessional matters in the past. In the end, both questions were left open for reconsideration should it be warranted in the future.

Church-dividing?

The next meeting is set for late June and one of the topics will be the ordination of women, with papers on both sides of the question being presented. It should make for some lively but fruitful discussion; the goal isn't to determine who is right and who is wrong, but to see if this difference of opinion is an insurmountable obstacle to the members moving forward and working together.

Will this inter-Lutheran dialogue process be successful? It all depends on how one defines success. If success means the creation of a Canadian pan-Lutheran confessional voice, perhaps — though given the Lutheran propensity for coming together and then splitting apart, who's to say yet another group would be a "success"? On the other hand, it could be argued it is already a "success" since it has allowed Lutherans to come together for prayer and theological discussion, to have opportunity to get past old stereotypes, and to give and receive pastoral care from fellow Christians as we go through the various struggles. One bit of evidence for "success" along these lines is the willingness of the LCC to consider providing healthcare and pension benefits for pastors and congregations who may find themselves outside of a denominational body for a time — with no expectation that they join the LCC.

With the release of the ELCIC's draft social statement on human sexuality (the most positive quality of it being that it is only 11 pages long, including a cover letter), a dark cloud remains over Canadian Lutheranism. But a silver lining, a bright light, the light of Christ, is still visible because of two or three gathered in His name — regardless of which Lutherans they happen to be.

Pastor Brad Everett, our occasional Canadian correspondent, is pastor of Nazareth Lutheran Church (ELCIC) in Standard, Alberta.

Omnium gatherum



The limits of conscience • You have to hand it to the Florida/Bahamas Synod of the ELCA. First their synod council refused to allow St. Peter Lutheran Church, Ft. Pierce, FL, to withdraw from the ELCA (required because this is a former LCA congregation). This has some interesting ramifications, since the congregation has voted to affiliate with Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, and the ELCA has been insisting that this is grounds for removal from the ELCA. Maybe that was the intent of the synod council: you can't divorce us, we're divorcing you. Then the synod council declined to renew the "on leave from call" status of Pr. Rebecca Heber, a pastor in the synod for some ten years, who has been a vocal spokesperson for Lutheran CORE. She served a Reformed Church in America congregation for a few years under a letter of call from the F/B synod council, but left that position last April. Normally granting "on leave from call" is pretty routine in such a situation for up to three years, and sometimes longer. There's nothing routine about the current unpleasantness, however, and Pr. Heber seems to be yet another casualty — well, I guess I have to call her Ms. Heber now, since she was informed by certified letter from the bishop that she "must no longer perform any duties or acts associated with ordained ministry." Further, she is "not to use the title 'Pastor' or 'the Rev.' . . . [neither is she] to baptize, preside for [*sic*] Holy Communion, perform marriages, or wear vestments normally associated with an ordained minister such as a stole or clerical collar." We

asked Bishop Edward Benoway to comment, and he said simply that the council, in its "discernment process," had considered how "approval of an extension . . . would relate to the furtherance of the mission and ministry" of the synod and ELCA, and discerned, it seems, that it wouldn't. It wasn't, he said, because of her involvement in CORE ("Why, some of my best friends . . ."). His letter to Pr. Heber did express his prayer that she would find "new ventures and avenues of service" (evidently meaning "somewhere else"). Bound conscience: it's a wondrous thing.

We're number one • At the Associated Church Press's annual convention last month, *Forum Letter* received the "Award of Excellence" (translation: first place) in the category "Best in Class: Newsletter." "The writing," wrote the judge, "is what made *Forum Letter* the winner in this category. I was intrigued by the honesty of the writers and their ability to express themselves so clearly about matters of faith." We also took an "Honorable Mention" in the category for written humor, with Peter Speckhard's spoof on temple prostitution. It was once again overall a good year for the Lutheran press, awards-wise; altogether LCMS publications (*Lutheran Witness, Reporter*) took home seven awards, ELCA publications (*The Lutheran, Lutheran Women Today, Café, and ELCA News Service*) six, and independent Lutheran publications (*Forum Letter, Metro Lutheran, The Cresset*) received five. Congratulations, one and all.

— roj

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