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# Connections: An Alternative Model of Adult Education?

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As a group of adults arrived at Truck and Engine Company 14, their host, a firefighter, greeted them, apologizing he really didn't know what he could teach these congregational leaders. There were no chairs, so the group stood, and looking around, asked questions. What happens here? What is God doing here? Two and one-half hours later, as the "fire cat" meowed to be let in, the evening had seemed too short for the connections between faith and world which had begun.

At a time when the church grapples with its theological authority and mission in society, when Christians struggle with ethical issues in a complex world, and when what little adult parish education exists is frequently confined to Sunday morning Bible study, *Connections*, a 30-session experiential education program for adults, has not only seemed like a breath of fresh air but has been changing lives. This article explores the concept, educational theory, theology, method and early findings regarding this empirical model of adult learning.

## The Concept

In early winter of 1982 a group of Lutheran educators (including myself), editors and writers, clergy and lay came together in Philadelphia to share, plan and give birth to what would become *Connections*. From that moment on the project would be a collegial one, important pragmatically and theologically. The members of the Body of Christ do need one another in order to be faithfully in mission in the world. Adult learners, the writers and editors, as well as future participants, can bring their different experiences, languages and gifts together for mutual growth.

Well before that meeting the Lutheran Church in America through an independent movement of laity and through publications<sup>1</sup> had been focusing on what would variously be called the ministry of the laity, of the baptized, of the whole people of God, or ministry in daily life. Other Lutheran bodies as well, in North America and around the world, had been verbalizing the need fully to explore and utilize Luther's important statements on the priesthood of all believers. People in each Lutheran Church body committed to the ministry of the baptized felt laity Sundays or one-day workshops affirmed and excited people. But they wanted something that was more extensive and went deep enough fully to equip adults for the challenges they face in their daily lives. As one woman put it, "It was hard enough going to work; now I feel guilty because I'm supposed to think I'm doing ministry out there." She had caught the concept and now needed something that would more fully equip her for what she now felt called to do. We had to move from guilt to Gospel and beyond "Ministry of the Laity 101".

The field of adult education has grown measurably through the work of such people as Malcolm Knowles<sup>2</sup> and Allen Tough.<sup>3</sup> Likewise people in the field of adult faith development such as James Fowler<sup>4</sup> and Carol Gilligan<sup>5</sup> have written that adulthood is not just one continuous homogeneous line between childhood and death, but an intriguing time of ongoing psychological and conceptual change. All stages of the life cycle and all of the adult's past and present experiences are important resources for adult educational development.

Such experiences can be found beyond the walls of the church building. The adult is more than the volunteer at the usher's post, the committee meeting, or in the choir loft. Those activities are not unimportant, but the Christian's *vocatio* encompasses more than the volitional part of one's life. Clergy may, even unintentionally, communicate the concept that serving God is "helping at church". It is not surprising, therefore, that laity do not feel their identities from the Benediction to the Introit are significant to the church. The view continues that only professional church workers have a Christian vocation, a concept Luther fought to reform.<sup>6</sup>

Likewise the public world considers only some occupations a "vocation" and measures worth by income, standards which

exclude many people. The women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s, which continues to this day, has helped both men and women see their adult lives more wholistically. The nurture of children, charitable work, retirement projects as well as salaried positions are all important. In God's eyes none of these is less worthy nor to be relegated only to one gender, but to be chosen and pursued on the basis of gifts, and for the sake of the neighbor.

To use another of Luther's terms, all "stations" in life, whatever occupies one's time, work, relationships, or leisure is significant in creation and provides experiences suitable for theological reflection and discernment. The question is how to make these experiences accessible to each other, and to our own cognitive and emotional reflection as well. How do we befriend those experiences when we are not the gathered people of God, but busy being the church in the world? How do we "do theology" in the many technical languages of computers, medicine, agriculture, sports, or advertising in which we live and work each day?

The Planning Group chose to introduce adults to Luther's *Large Catechism*, a document many had never heard about, and reintroduce them to the *Small Catechism*, a traditional bond and base of Lutheran education.<sup>7</sup> Utilizing adult learning theory, it was clear that even though the words of the *Small Catechism* would not have changed since many memorized them as young adolescents, people in various stages of adulthood would fill those words full with ever-new meaning. There was a dilemma, however. The goal was to be existential, yet those documents were written over 460 years ago. The world that Luther knew was just beginning to move beyond the Middle Ages; society was viewed as Christendom, not a pluralistic world. That very distance in years and worldview would call forth the task of befriending. We could not take for granted Luther knew our world anymore than we could take for granted we understood each other's world. Those very problems would focus the challenge.

And so we developed a comprehensive program of 30 two and one-half hour sessions<sup>8</sup> which called for substantial commitment from a group of 12 to 14 within a congregation. Unlike many educational resources for adults, these would not be long printed selections to read. The "text" would not be a book but

a notebook, including some brief selections, but mostly providing space for personal reflection which would lead to group discussion. We would try to connect our own worlds, the tradition and the worlds of one another, utilizing educational methodology to make our own experiences accessible to us, Luther's *Large Catechism*, and visits to the worlds of the participants.

## The Educational Theory

Malcolm Knowles coined the term "andragogy",<sup>9</sup> contrasting it with pedagogy, the familiar mode which assumes domination and sustains political control. Whereas in pedagogy the learner is assumed to be dependent, directed, receptive, subject-oriented, with self-concept as student and experience as that which happens *to* them, in andragogy the learner is assumed to be relatively independent, self-directed, mutually oriented, problem-solving centered with self-concept as person in society and experience as who they *are*.<sup>10</sup>

Pedagogy is habit forming, so educators may receive dutiful but false messages from adult learners in the parish. They will agree to and perhaps even ask for adult classes in which they sit and listen to a lecture. They protest they don't know enough about a book of the Bible or a theological issue to contribute anything. That may be so, but continuing in that dependent, receptive mode while inwardly desiring a more active role leaves them with the sole role of critique, in which they become quite skilled, as many pastors commiserate.

Pastors, often intimidated enough by the criticism of adult members, may be hesitant to encourage any deeper or more involving learning, reasoning that that would cause the pastor to lose the authoritative position. Actually, the opposite may be true. When adults are taken seriously, invited to assume responsibility for their own learning, they become less critical, more engaging and often more appreciative of the theological role their pastor can play.

The Toronto-based adult educator, Allen Tough, also believes that adults are problem-solving oriented. In *The Adult's Learning Projects* he says that most adults are engaged in a median of eight independent learning projects each year, spending some 700 hours.<sup>11</sup> Many of these are invisible to professional educators: the adult may not enroll in a class. (Seventy percent are self-planned.) Their learning begins because they need

to know and to do something, often because of a developmental or situational change. Perhaps they want to fix the car, or they have given birth to a cerebral palsied child, or the time has come to decide if a parent needs to go to a nursing home, or they now have teen-age children, or they want to go on a vacation across the continent. They will find a book, explore community resources, ask other people in the same situation, talk, cry, share or all of the above. The role of the one who nurtures this adult in faith learning is to support, resource, listen, and provide a trustworthy learning environment in which the adult can clarify the questions, relate them to God at work in this world, find meaning, learn, and make decisions. The Christian believes this is done most helpfully within a community of faith.

The adult may not need and will probably resist or ignore a lecture. Or they will attend lectures, read assigned books, listen to sermons, but disconnect those from the "real issues" they face each day. But once adult learners take responsibility for their own learning, gain skill in theological reflection, learn to appreciate sharing their worlds with others in the church, they also listen to sermons in a totally new way, begin to hear Scripture with new ears, ready to receive new insights for their own connecting with the adult learning project they are pursuing.

One may worry that such individual, independent learners may misinterpret, distort the faith, become heretical. I believe there is greater danger in adults not engaging the faith at all, dispensing with and despising adult education in the church, turning more and more to theologies of the worlds in which they are actors upon which to base their ethical decision-making. Left alone each of us will turn gospel into law and become heretical, making gods of ourselves. But the Christian community brings the biblical and theological tradition in which they have been steeped with them as they gather together. They become the supportive corrective to one another. In the midst of discussion and reflection the pastor, listening carefully, will have opportunity to speak the appropriate biblical word, share yet a deeper theological insight which relates to the discussion at hand. Such teaching is in many ways more difficult than delivering the prepared lecture, but also more intriguing and more satisfying. There is a satisfied fatigue after an evening session of such sharing of the faith.

Knowles says that in the pedagogical approach the learner is subject-centered. A child is designated "third-grader", told not to move ahead to the next story, "that is for Monday", learns the sixes in the multiplication tables because that is the subject for the day. Adults rarely define themselves by an educational category; they seek relevant subject matter, appreciate learning at their own pace in a chosen style. They (and perhaps children as well) want to be seen as whole people. How can we welcome all facets of people's lives into the Christian adult educational setting, saying, "You need leave nothing outside!"? God's care encompasses it all, including people's success, failure, joy, sorrow, even anger. The Christian learning community is a place to bring everything, as untidy as that may seem, together to discern meaning and God's will and calling. Adults, eschewing a pedagogical approach, welcome adult methods which encourage them to think and feel and relate faith to daily life. This is connecting the "What does this mean?" of Luther's Catechism with "What in the world does this all mean?" of daily life.

## The Theology

"On Tuesday afternoon, who or what are the gods that you trust above all things? In the middle of the night, what is that which you fear above all things? On Sunday afternoon, who or what do you love more than all? Those are your gods." Luther's "We should fear and love God so that..." which begins the catechetical responses to "What does this mean?" are perpetual, permeating human questions. No matter what one's station in life, everyone has a propensity to take other, less worthy gods. "That to which your heart clings and entrusts itself, is, I say, really your God."<sup>12</sup>

The Theology of *Connections* is basic. In keeping with andragogical educational theory, and cognizant of the human condition, it begins with the situation of the participants in their worlds. It is not so much a matter of remembering or forgetting Sunday's sermon by Wednesday. Each moment one lives a theology. The key is discerning which theology and how it is or is not the theology of the baptized. Having begun with the experiences and dilemmas of adult human life, these Christian participants return once more to the catechisms. One woman,

upon hearing Luther's words on the Seventh Commandment, said, "When, again, was that written?"

Stealing is a widespread, common vice, but people pay so little attention to it that the matter is entirely out of hand. If all who are thieves, though they are unwilling to admit it, were hanged on the gallows, the world would soon be empty, and there would be a shortage of both hangmen and gallows.

Far worse than sneak-thieves, against whom we can guard with lock and bolt... are the others (against whom) no one can guard.... These are called gentlemen swindlers or big operators.... They sit in office chairs and... with a great show of legality they rob and steal.... Those who can steal and rob openly are safe and free, unmolested by anyone, even claiming honor from men [sic]. Meanwhile the little sneakthieves who have committed one offense must bear disgrace and punishment so as to make the others look respectable and honorable.<sup>13</sup>

Basic to every consideration of the adult life is law and gospel. By whatever name, Christians can begin to see the alienation and rebellion against God, the thicket of human sin resulting in broken relationships and a sick society. God's grace is always a surprise: God's merciful, unconditional love centered in the forgiveness of sins, empowering people for radical servanthood in the world.

If indeed human beings are always living by some theology, then discernment of those popular theologies which are the basis for daily decision-making is essential for the Christian seeking to connect faith and world. Participants are invited, at one point, to think of slogans, bumper-stickers, daily sayings, advertisements which capture these popular theologies. They are quite able to come up with many, and then upon selecting one—any one—together they exegete. Whether it is "Be # 1" or "You deserve a break today", further examination shows the desperate need to prove oneself, to "get what you can". Significantly different from passively listening to a lecture or sermon is the participant's own discovery and discernment process which in turn equips them to "do theology" in the vernacular. Soon people themselves are seeing that " 'I deserve' assumes that others may 'deserve' to wait on me night and day"; "God's sabbath rest is a gift... a needed gift which I sometimes put off until I'm no good to anybody."

The paradoxical nature of much of Lutheran theology tempts people to simplify into legalisms and moralisms. But

adults, unlike children who are at a concrete-thinking developmental stage, can benefit from struggle with the subtleties of paradox in such documents as "Martin Luther's Treatise on Christian Liberty". His "A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none" (so reminiscent of Paul) and "A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all"<sup>14</sup> invites people to share their own bondages, as well as the Christian liberty they have tasted which empowers them for servanthood the world simply does not comprehend.

That liberty is not, as many Christian adults reason, to be equated with the freedom of religion. Foreign to the culture and basic to Christians is the forgiveness of sins. For Luther, life organized around the forgiveness of sins is vocation. As certainly as God's grace lifts people infinitely above everything that everyday duties could give, "just that certainly the call does not take us away from these duties but more deeply into them."<sup>15</sup>

One example of liberation for vocation arose in a *Connections* group discussion. In diads people had shared their own experience of bondage and freedom. Returning to the large group, one older woman said, "I'm a 'pink lady' ", going on to explain that that meant a hospital volunteer.

My husband lay ill in that hospital for two months. After his death I couldn't go back there. But then someone invited me to volunteer with her in that place. I didn't want to, but she urged me. It was a long time before I was able to go by Room 309. But now I can go in and can ask if the person in that room needs anything.

In her own words she described her own alienation, perhaps even her rebellion against God. Through the ministry of her friend which she at first resisted and then accepted, she was called to a new vocation. But it was only through the forgiveness of sins, perhaps including her own unarticulated inability to forgive her husband for dying, that she was released from her bondage for servanthood, manifested in seeing what her "neighbor" in room 309 needed.

Using Luther's concept of station and vocation, relating them to creation and redemption, participants note their myriad of roles and occupations: mother, son, neighbor, citizen, client, manager, friend. Everyone, by virtue of creation, has a station in life, and not one is intrinsically more holy than the next, Luther would contend, and although his world was

vastly different, that concept remains true. By virtue of the forgiveness of sins, Christians are called to vocation in those stations. "What is my vocation to my young adult children? How is it different from when they were toddlers? What is my calling as a potential client of two competing insurance plans? What is my vocation as personnel director over someone who is not carrying his or her work load? What theology informs my decisions? Luther's Treatise says we should not allow people to walk all over us. How can I live out the Gospel without abdicating the power of my position?" Individuals need the Christian community to discern with clarity their vocations of radical, powerful servanthood rooted in the forgiveness of sins.

## Method

Although there are many methods employed in the 30 sessions, most are inductive. Core is discussion, whether in diads or triads or whole group, depending upon the depth of material to be shared. There are readings, respecting the variety of learning styles of adult learners, from Elie Wiesel's *Night* to H. Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture*. Co-leaders, a layperson and a pastor, share the facilitation, realizing that the learners themselves fill full the "lesson".<sup>16</sup> The process, therefore, is designed never to be above or below their "learning level". The content is their adult lives as they connect with the tradition, the Word of God. Such teaching-learning is open, but profound, inviting, not coercive or intimidating, yet passionate. In addition to discussion, sessions include journal-keeping, role play, film, even mime. Most participants find connecting faith and world becomes most clear on the visits to participants' worlds.

In one particular study group, participants were hosted by a middle school guidance counselor in Orlando, Florida. As the group approached the school they noticed a plaque on the outside of the building commemorating the Challenger crew which had been killed the previous February. The children had witnessed the explosion from their school yard. Once inside, the counselor shared his concerns of how quickly Orlando was growing, so fast that there are not maps with street names of where some children live. Many families, having visited Disneyworld, return to Orlando's sun, expecting jobs but experience transient and insecure living. The counselor obviously

cared deeply about these children and described how he provided children to escort newcomers each step of the way for the first two weeks after their arrival. A layman in the group listened intently and then reflected that the guidance counselor's ministry in this place was to be a modern day shepherd.

In Oakland, California a group visited a metropolitan newspaper, the workplace of their Lutheran host. They toured the building from the bottom to the top where they sat in the man's office. As publisher this Christian had thought through the implications of the faith decision to purchase a paper which existed in the shadow of San Francisco newspapers. He struggled with hiring practices and civic responsibility. The themes of his faith were gifts, justice, stewardship and the challenge of the gospel. He knew who he was and the responsibility and power he handled. He drew on the strength of his local congregation more than many in his public world or his congregation had previously realized.

Another group visited a mall where one of the participants was a security guard. The mall is the public square of today, although it is privately owned and the activity which unites is consumerism. Others went to a downtown public library in Colorado Springs, Colorado, asking hard questions of what it means to care in one of the few remaining truly public places. "Can you become the *de facto* child care agent, or the place the homeless wash up? If not alone, then what catalytic action in the community is called forth?" On and on, to a participant's main place of occupation in retirement, his home, to a place of volunteer service, to an insurance agency. One group learned about making choir risers, thus celebrating God's magnificent gifts of music. Another heard that a college sports information director sends out stories to home town papers not just of the stars of major sports, but on the wrestlers and the second string players who volunteer to tutor junior high children. Group members watched and saw in her the third article of the creed, someone who appreciated the diversity of gifts in the Body of Christ rather than succumbing to the primary sports' goal of "making it to the big time".

In each of these places participants, who at first said they had little to say but could "show people around", soon heard their companions asking with them, "What is God creating

here?" "What is God forgiving here?" "How is God shaping community here?" Without exception they found themselves using the images of that world and the terminology as well. The farmer who had to supplement his farming, clearly his first love, with driving heavy road repair equipment, felt guilty about not "thinking about God more". Others encouraged him, noting that moving the earth and "making the road straight" had biblical precedent and that good roads were important in a modern world of fast moving traffic. A woman who described each child she helped in her morning and evening job as crossing guard was reminded by others that the phrase she used, "crossing the children", reminded them of baptism.

Participants learn much in simply being with their brothers and sisters in Christ in *their* worlds. But over the course of time together the sharing of the pain is real as well. And the catechism, which, after all, encompasses all of God's life with God's people, has structure for the struggle.

The fireman in Syracuse spoke clearly about the difference between a truck and an engine company. When asked, he could reflect that the firefighters were respected in this inner city community. A group member saw the activity of the Protector God. The petitions of the Lord's Prayer are the basis for visits in sessions 18-20; therefore, one person asked, "What is evil in this place?" The questioner had expected an answer such as "fire" or "death" with which the fireman was well acquainted. But, no, those were part of life. He answered quickly, "Unnecessary death," and told of a fireman being killed on an arson call, and of children dying because of a landlord's negligence in meeting building codes.

With greater subtlety and clarity this small group of Christians that night moved beyond interest and even admiration to understanding and insight and mutual support. Except for the fire bell going off early in the visit, as if on curriculum cue to draw people to the "lesson", the night had been a quiet one. The fireman raised the large door to let the cat in, as he shared once more the importance of the community of firefighters. "It's hard for others to understand how close we get because we have to depend on each other." He now knew he had a broader community of those who understood, at least a little, people from his own congregation. They prayed together, his prayer, in that place, and the evening was complete.

## Findings

This article is descriptive rather than research-oriented. However, the Department for Research, Planning and Evaluation of the Division for Parish Services of the Lutheran Church in America conducted evaluations of the first years (1985–1988) inviting the 40 initial congregations to respond. Responses were received from 30, but only 20 of those had completed the 30 sessions at the time of the survey.<sup>17</sup>

The size of congregation groups ranged from six to twenty, larger groups dividing. On average, two persons out of three who started the program continued to the end of the 30 sessions.

Year end reports from co-leaders were all positive, listed in order of priority:

1. Intimacy—much sought by many of our people.
2. Community—an interesting side effect of *Connections* was increased participation in other church activities, including worship by the participants.
3. Support and personal attention through being visited.
4. Deeper understanding of the faith—many mentioned this.
5. Deeper awareness of individual ministries—this happened to a degree, but not as profoundly as we had hoped.<sup>18</sup>

Written reactions from co-leaders said the most frequent positive responses were in community building, the visits, Luther's Catechisms, use of Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture*, the concept of inductive learning, the strengthening of confessional roots and the ability to make connections. Weaknesses included the difficulty of some of the material for leaders or participants to handle (Niebuhr's material was included here as well) and the time scheduling problems. Leaders noted sessions lagged when they tried to provide a lot of information via lecture. Underscored was the importance of the team of co-leaders, both being present at all times, the importance of being comfortable with silence and strengthening listening skills.

Participants' reactions were highest in interpersonal relations and group support:

My most vivid memories will always be the coming together of strangers... now my friends and not just fellow believers. While we have conflicts and differences, we shared our beliefs, differences and shortcomings with love and understanding.

The various visits made to the "world" of our classmates made an indelible impression on me. They helped considerably to understand and appreciate the many ways in which people minister to each other.<sup>19</sup>

Among weaknesses they noted unclear objectives, lack of time to visit all workplaces, disorganization in the teaching team in letting the discussion get "off the subject". Some wanted more help in being a "change agent" in the congregation.<sup>20</sup>

Some bishops and pastors have been very interested in adult education which equips laity for their vocation whereas others have been more hesitant believing such a program might be anti-clerical. Congregational participation is not as high as it is for *Word and Witness* and *Search*, programs of similar length with publishers noting biblically-based materials usually "sell themselves".

Most people said the 30 weeks were indeed needed, even though there were scheduling problems. The evaluations reflected that the program did not result in simple moralistic solutions, although even more time together may be necessary to clarify struggles in the workplace and move toward being change-agents in society.

I am much more aware of God working through everyday moments, even in evil situations or unjust systems. It is much harder for me to flatly condemn an organization like the military... (one visit was to a military installation, a visit for which weeks were required to secure permission.)

I feel more than ever that my actions and responses and the actions of others are inter-related and that what I do will affect the responses and actions of others for good or ill.

I find myself looking for connections in TV programs, books, newspaper accounts and in my social and recreational activities. I have become more mature in my theology.

My understanding of baptism, communion, confession and absolution is vastly different.

Richard A. Olson, Division for Parish Services, Lutheran Church in America staff member in adult education during that time, reflected on the findings: "A surprising development for me was the recognition that the program provided

extra services to the congregation: new Lutherans were incorporated into the life of the congregation, timid new members began to see the depth of Christian faith and the connection to people in the congregation.”<sup>21</sup> Paradoxically the going forth into the world connected people more closely with the congregation. Clergy, trusting their laity as adult learners, discovered their own clerical roles were needed not less but more. By looking more clearly at 450-year-old Lutheran foundations *and* at today’s world, alienation and irrelevancy were replaced with binding connections.<sup>22</sup>

## Notes

- 1 “Laos in Ministry” was a vital and far-reaching network of laity. Fortress Press published Laity Exchange books such as William Diehl’s *Christianity and Real Life* (1976) and *Thank God, It’s Monday!* (1982). Parish Life Press of the Division for Parish Services of the Lutheran Church in America provided adult educational resources such as Nelvin Vos, *Monday’s Ministries: The Ministry of the Laity* (1979).
- 2 See Malcolm Knowles, *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Andragogy*, revised (Chicago: Follett Publishing Company, 1980).
- 3 See Allen Tough, *The Adult’s Learning Projects* (Austin, Tex.: Learning Concepts, 1971 and 1979).
- 4 See James Fowler, *Stages of Faith* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981).
- 5 See Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982).
- 6 See Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, trans. Carl C. Rasmussen (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957).
- 7 Phillip E. Pederson, *Luther’s Catechisms Today* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1979). Pederson relates how through every century, through pietism, rationalism, and in many political situations the catechism has consistently been a cherished tool for grounding faith in ever changing social situations (22–30).
- 8 Norma J. Everist and Nelvin Vos, *Connections: Faith and World, and Leader Guide*, Raymond Tiemeyer and Carol L. Weiser, (eds.) (Philadelphia: Division for Parish Service, Lutheran Church in America, 1986).
- 9 “Andragogy” comes from the two Greek words: *Aner*, man, and *agogus*, leader of. Had he delayed his work just a few years he might have realized the male character of that Greek-based term and used another word such as “anthropogogy”.
- 10 Malcolm Knowles, “Andragogy: A New Idea for New Times” in Leon McKenzie, *Adult Religious Education* (Mystic, Conn.: Twenty-Third Publications, 1975) 31–39.

- 11 Tough, *The Adult's Learning Projects*, 1.
- 12 Martin Luther, *The Large Catechism*, in Pederson, *Luther's Catechisms Today*, 57.
- 13 Ibid. 93-94.
- 14 Martin Luther, *A Treatise on Christian Liberty*, trans. W.Z. Lambert and Harold J. Grimm (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1957) 7.
- 15 Einar Billing, *Our Calling*, trans. Conrad Bergendoff (Rock Island: Augustana Press, 1958) 6.
- 16 That is to say, the co-leaders, a layperson and a pastor, do not lecture, nor fill the session with content they provide. They facilitate the learners bringing the content of their own lives. The session is filled with the experiences of each participant and the group's theological reflection upon that experiential content.
- 17 Edward W. Uthe, "Co-Leaders' and Participants' Reactions to *Connections* in 1985-1986" (Philadelphia: Department for Research, Planning and Evaluation, Division for Parish Services, Lutheran Church in America).
- 18 Ibid. 13.
- 19 Ibid. 23.
- 20 Ibid. 34-35.
- 21 Ibid. 85.
- 22 For information about the program and training events for co-leaders or a videotape of a training event, contact Dr. Judith Kowalski, Division for Congregational Life, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago, Illinois 60631.