

Section AC

Anniversary

Celebrants

Fiftieth Anniversary of Ordination

The Rev. James A. Daniels



Fifty years! Fifty years!! God must have a sense of humor to put up with me for fifty years! When I look at those fifty years I must say, To God alone goes the glory!

I was born in 1932 in Philadelphia, PA, attended Advocate Lutheran Church in East Germantown. Graduated from Germantown High School, and Drexel University. Graduated with a B.S. in Electrical Engineering. After serving two years in the U.S. Army, I was accepted to Mt. Airy Lutheran Seminary.

During my Army Service, I was married to Nancy Stephens, in 1955. (Sister to my classmate at Seminary, Pastor Richard Stephens.) We have a daughter, Susan, and sons, James and David. They gave us six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Upon retirement, we moved to Lebanon, Tennessee.

My first parish was a two church parish in Strausstown and Bernville. My engineering experience came in handy as we excavated under the Bernville Church for an all-purpose room. From there I was called to Redeemer Church, Jamison, a mission church. I became involved with the larger church through the Board of Missions.

Next I was called as an Assistant Pastor for Youth and SCS at Resurrection, Levittown. I went there just as they were starting a SCS and office building project. Part of this project included stained glass windows. I had the opportunity of working with the glass company in their design. For the first time I was going to have a group go to the National Youth Event, which was cancelled because Detroit had some race riots. I had my first encounter working with the physically handicapped through a "Monday" SCS.

I was then called as Pastor to Bethany Lutheran Church in Roxborough. I was the first Pastor in 125 years to not speak German. We were able to have a rebuild of their "muddy" old theater organ, adding many new more brilliant pipes. Ken-Crest opened a program there for mentally handicapped children and young adults. We were able to work with establishing a community mental health program (MHMR).

From there I was called to be Pastor of St. James in Pottstown. During my ministry there, I was able to get into my second organ rebuilding project. During my time here, I celebrated my 25 years of ministry with a gift of a trip to the Holy Lands. We conducted a recreation program for mentally handicapped and physically handicapped persons. We also had our first puppet troop, as well as work with a clown ministry experiment.

My next call was as Assistant Pastor at Reformation, Media. We conducted a week long confirmation camp which was a lot of fun. One year we had our camp experience on two rented houseboats on the St. Lawrence River. That followed with a camp on board a 110-foot long double-masted sailing vessel on the sound off the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Also we

picked up a part-time ministry as Chaplain at Elwyn Institute. When we realized we couldn't afford two pastors I went on early retirement but extended my time as Chaplain to Elwyn. We then retired to Lebanon, Tennessee.

Through various training experiences, I was able to work with the Synod Youth Ministry Committee. I served in one way or another for 18 years in a weeklong program for youth at Muhlenberg College. Later we added a weekend all Synod Youth event at Ursinus College.

All in all, a most enjoyable and fruitful ministry led by God's love throughout. I thank the Church for allowing me to be a Pastor and serve my Lord.

Fiftieth Anniversary of Ordination The Rev. William M. deHeyman



I believe my journey toward ordination began even before I was aware of it. I recall family devotions in our home when I was growing up and active years spent in the Church Luther League as a youth. Those years included serving as President of my congregational Luther League, Brooklyn District Luther League and New York State Synodical Luther League. I served as Convention Manager of the National Youth Convention of the Luther League of America, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., 1959. In the summer of 1966 I received the KYW-TV3 Youth Award in Atlantic City on the Steel Pier.

I graduated from Adelphi Academy Brooklyn, N. Y. in 1951, and Wagner College, Staten Island, N. Y. in 1955. I did graduate work at Columbia Teachers College in New York City before attending Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, graduating in 1960. I was a third grade teacher at St. Paul's Christian Day School, Floral Park, Long Island, NY. as well as serving as youth director and assistant to the pastor at St. Paul's. In The summer of 1958 I did work at Transfiguration Lutheran Church, Harlem, N.Y.C. through a grant from the Board of American Missions.

Following ordination, my first assignment was as mission developer with the Board of American Missions where I developed and organized King of Kings Lutheran Church in New Windsor, New York (a short distance above West Point on the Hudson River) and became its first called pastor. Other parishes served were

St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Allentown, Pa as Associate Pastor
St. John's and Central Lutheran Church, Phoenixville, Pa
The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, King of Prussia, Pa
Christ's Lutheran Church, Oreland, Pa, Staff Ministry
and Redeemer Lutheran Church, East Falls, Philadelphia, Pa

I served as Director of Public Relations and Media for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod as part of the Synod's extended staff. Since retiring, I served as Interim Pastor at Living Word Lutheran Church, Roslyn, Pa and Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Narberth, Pa.

I am presently serving on the staff of a large Episcopal Church, St. Thomas, Whitmarsh located in Fort Washington on a 42 acre campus. Here I developed a Sunday worship experience for children ages 5 and under and their families called “First Steps to Worship.”

I have served on numerous boards and agencies of the Synod, to name a few: Chairperson of the Committee on Church Vocations and Chair of the Examining Committee; LCA Convention Delegate, Dean of the Northwest District and the Board of Trustees of the Lutheran Home at Germantown and Silver Springs-Martin Lutheran School where I presently serve as chaplain.

And so the journey continues and I respond with the Song of Simeon --- “Guide *me* waking, O Lord, and guard *me* sleeping; that awake *I* may watch with Christ, and asleep *I* may rest in peace.”

Fiftieth Anniversary of Ordination The Rev. David W. Gieschen



Greetings to all my brothers and sisters in Christ attending this 2010 Assembly of the Southeast Pennsylvania Synod. Fifty years! They have flown by so fast—but not without wonderful and lasting memories. Thanks be to God!

A graduate of Central Lutheran Theological Seminary in Fremont, Nebraska (now one of the seminaries that make up LSTC), I was ordained in Tulsa, Oklahoma within the Central States Synod. Having prepared myself for the foreign missionary field, political unrest forced me to change directions and I took a call to a small rural parish in Perry, Oklahoma. Zion Lutheran Church had been one congregation in a two point parish seeking its own pastor for the first time. It turned out to be a wonderful place for a young pastor to begin his ministry. Few in the congregation had more than an eighth-grade education and only one had been to college, yet they were a people filled with the love of Christ. Oklahoma was on the frontier of Lutheranism at that time. It soon became the “missionary field” I had been seeking. Satellites were flying into space but the church building didn’t have indoor plumbing.

In 1963 I was called by the Board of American Missions (LCA) to develop a mission congregation in Manhattan, Kansas, home of Kansas State University. The university had a Lutheran campus minister, but this congregation was to be developed to reach town and gown, most of whom were faculty and married graduate students. Since this small university town already had two large, established Lutheran Congregations, the new congregation was given the challenge of appealing to a mostly academic community. For this pastor of a small country parish, it was like I had been shot into space. It was also at a time when the Viet Nam war was escalating to a feverish pitch dividing hawks and doves on campus as well as members of our new born congregation. To compound the challenges facing this new ministry, the racial turmoil of the 1960’s brought demonstrations and riots to campus resulting in the burning of campus

buildings. A disturbing time to be alive, but what a time to preach, teach and act upon the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The congregation grew and a first unit building was dedicated in 1967.

In the summer of 1969 I was called to become a resource editor for the Board of Parish Education (LCA) later to become the Division for Parish Services. This was at a time when the LCA was developing a new educational curriculum. Leaving the discipline of parish this move offered a whole new set of challenges and a wholesale change of gears, so to speak! During that time I helped edit and write resources for adults and older teens. I also had the opportunity to share ministry with synods and church school educators from all over the church. And in 1978 I left editing to take the position of Secretary for Families and Older Adults, a position I held until the Division was preparing to move to Chicago as part of the newly formed ELCA. Deciding not to move to Chicago, I continued my ministry by taking the position of chaplain of Germantown Lutheran Home. I remained there until retirement in 1990.

Now I carry out ministry as a member of St. Andrew Lutheran Church in New Bern, North Carolina. I thank God for this travel through time. I have had nothing but infinite spiritual blessings along the way. All praise and thanks be to God.

Fiftieth Anniversary of Ordination The Rev. Norman A. Hjelm

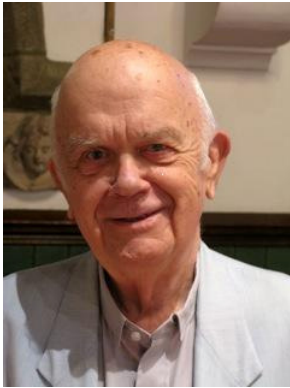


Norman A. Hjelm, a native of Worcester, MA, was ordained in the Augustana Lutheran Church in 1960. He graduated from Princeton University in 1953 and the Augustana Theological Seminary (now the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago) in Rock Island, IL in 1957. He received an STM from Union Theological Seminary in 1960. He also studied at Lund University in Sweden and at Temple University in Philadelphia.

Hjelm's only parish experience was as the first pastor of All Saints' Lutheran Church in Orland Park, IL, now an independent Lutheran congregation. In 1962 he joined the staff of Fortress Press in Philadelphia, serving there – for a number of years as Director and Senior Editor – until 1985. From 1985 through 1990, he was Director of Communication for the Lutheran World Federation in Geneva, Switzerland, during which period he also served one year as the LWF Acting Deputy General Secretary for Planning. From 1991 to retirement in 1996, Norman Hjelm was Director of the Commission on Faith and Order of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. In retirement he is a consultant to the president of the Williams B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Norman Hjelm was married in 1957 to Ingalill Hellman of Karlstad, Sweden; she died in 2006. They had three children and eleven grandchildren. Hjelm now lives in Wynnewood, PA. In 2009, Uppsala University in Sweden conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Sacred Theology, *honoris causa*.

Fiftieth Anniversary of Ordination **The Rev. Dr. Clair Hoifjeld**



Quasi Modo Geniti – The liturgical caption for the 1st Sunday after Easter, April 24, 1960, date of my ordination. It was from the appointed Introit for the day, read in part, “As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, alleluia ... Sing aloud to God our strength” (1 Peter 2:2; Ps. 81:1). The presiding bishop preached with that as his base text, drawing on the New Birth emphasis of Easter and its direct application for one entering the holy ministry. It was a most effective launching pad for me, and it has often resonated with me through the years.

On that ordination day, I recall lengthy reflection on the 30 years of life that led me to this day and this calling: Born in a Lutheran parsonage in rural Iowa – Living in parsonages as my father felt led to various ministries – from Iowa to Minneapolis (pioneering Christian radio broadcasting) – New York City/Manhattan (attended school in which white children were a minority) – Chicago – Ketchikan, Alaska (not a state, but a declared war zone [ww2]) – Eureka, CA (graduated from high school) – Three years of College at Augsburg (then-Lutheran Free Church) College in Minneapolis – Back to California (familial reasons) – Drafted into Uncle Sam’s Army, - (during which term I took leave to return to Eureka and marry Virginia Helberg, who has been a true loving support and friend ever since. The union begot four offspring, grandchildren and great-grandchildren) --- Following military service, we returned to Eureka, founded and operated its first Christian Bookshop – Entered and graduated from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, CA – A wide panorama of people and places and other factors brought to this day of ordination.

The first parish I served as an ordained pastor was Trinity Lutheran Church of Fort Bragg, CA – a seacoast town of uncluttered, hardy, open people. The church was of Finnish (Suomi) orientation – small in membership, but open to outreach and growth. I learned much from these people as we grew and expanded together --- Three years later, when the LCA came into being, I was called to be an Associate Director on the Commission on Youth Ministry staff. My responsibilities included managing church-wide youth gatherings, developing Youth ministry resources, being the LCA liaison on national and world-wide youth-related agencies and involvements, plus a wide variety of other youth-related meetings and events.

In 1973, while the LCA was going through a re-structuring, I already felt a yearning to return to parish ministry and was soon called as senior pastor at St. Luke, Devon – a large congregation consisting of a spectrum of suburbia in membership. The eight years there provided me with input, feedback and learning from people representing a wide variety of vocations, professions, and disciplines. During this time, I began studies with the Doctor of Ministry program at Drew University in Madison, NJ.

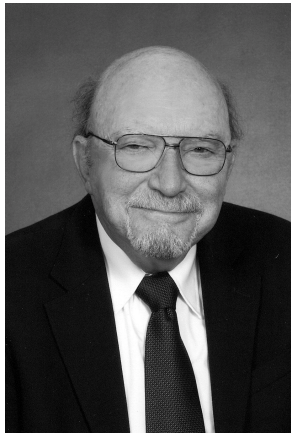
In 1981 I was called to the Philadelphia seminary staff as interim Director of Internships and CPE and to teach two courses, while Dr. Jack White was on secured leave. I gained much in fellowship and ministering with the seminarians and staff, including honest struggle with issues relating to our Christian faith – Following this, I was interim pastor at St. Matthew, Chester

Springs. In 1984, a call came from St. Timothy, Fox Chase/Philadelphia, where I served for 11 fulfilling years, 'til I retired in 1996.

Since "retirement" I've filled six interims in synod parishes, the last one being three years at Calvary, Bustleton/Philadelphia. All have been positive learning and growing experiences for me. My honest (if unrealistic) wish at times is that I could have known when I started what I've learned, including from many who will (hopefully) read what's said here. I suspect that's not an uncommon feeling for one at this point.

I truly, with thanksgiving, "*sing aloud to God my strength!*"

Fiftieth Anniversary of Ordination The Rev. John S. Kerr



I was not active in the church until a classmate in high school, Paul Egertson, who eventually became Bishop of Southwest California Synod, invited me to Concordia Lutheran, a small congregation in the west side of Los Angeles that his father had established. The Pastor at the time, Herbert Loddigs, was one you would probably not hire as a youth minister. He didn't grasp the concept of "youth." He viewed young people as fully responsible participants in God's mission. He engaged them, treated them as adults, and spent a great deal of time encouraging and mentoring them. Almost all of the young people under his ministry either became pastors or, to this day, remain very active in the church. And one, Joanne Trygstad, later became my wife.

After UCLA and active involvement in the dynamic Lutheran Student Association there, I went to Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, CA. All but one of us in the class of 1960 were slated to be mission developers. I was assigned to Spring Valley, an eastern suburb of San Diego. Joanne and I had married in 1959 and together we helped form Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church.

I had worked with the Parish Education committee of the synod and that led to a call from the Board of Parish Education. That call brought us from San Diego to Philadelphia in 1966. I did editorial work for over 22 years, ending, when the ELCA merger closed the offices here, as Senior Editor for Youth and Leadership Resources. I briefly served part time on the staff of St. John's, Allentown, before joining Genesis Communications, a firm established by Mark Staples and Carl Uehling who were formerly associated with "The Lutheran" magazine.

In 1994, George Scheitlin invited me to be the intentional interim minister at Jerusalem, Schwenksville. Delores Littleton and George coached me in this new field. I completed the formal training in 1997. That began an exciting and rewarding ministry in which I am still involved. I have enjoyed five full transitional ministries and six bridge-type situations. Under Larry Hand, we have built an excellent transitional ministry program; I'm proud to be part of it.

In 2000 I became Executive Director of Lutheran Bible Ministries, based in NJ. I worked on developing resources, including a website that offers without charge inductive Bible studies for the full lectionary (www.bibleministries.org).

I thank God for the past half century of ministry, for wonderful and stimulating colleagues, for a variety of tasks and opportunities, and for the many, many people whose faith has supported and enlarged my own. And especially for my wife, Joanne, and three great children, David, Kirsten, and Sean; together, we have walked through five decades of ever-changing history.

Fiftieth Anniversary of Ordination The Rev. Richard G. Miller, Jr.



The Rev. Richard G. Miller, Jr. was born in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, on March 6, 1934. He was baptized on June 17, 1934, at old St. John Church, Shiremanstown, founded in 1787. After moving to Allentown in 1936, his family joined Christ Lutheran Church where Pastor Miller remained active in the youth group and choirs until he began his seminary education.

Pastor Miller graduated from Muhlenberg College in 1956. While there, he was accompanist for the chapel choir all four of his undergraduate years, as well as editor of the college paper during both his junior and senior years. As a student at the Lutheran Seminary at Philadelphia, Pastor Miller was assigned to Gloria Dei Church, Huntingdon Valley, where, under Pastor Ernst Schmidt, he organized and directed the first choir program of the newly relocated congregation. He also did student work at St. Mark, Philadelphia. His year of internship was spent at Holy Trinity Church in Hershey.

Pastor Miller was ordained into the gospel ministry by the Ministerium of Pennsylvania at Christ Lutheran Church, Hazelton, on May 29, 1960. His first call was as assistant pastor at St. Paul, Glenside, where he served with the Rev. Dr. Lester E. Fetter until called to Trinity, Coatesville in August of 1963. In June, 1962, he married Meleny Marion Derr at the Egner Memorial Chapel of Muhlenberg College.

During his seven years at Trinity, Pastor Miller was active as a member of the synodical worship committee, eventually becoming chairman. In 1969, he and Pastor Paul Hamsher worked with their parish leadership to effect the reunion of the two Lutheran congregations in Coatesville, creating the Church of the Good Shepherd.

In May, 1970, Pastor Miller began his work at St. John, Sumneytown, following the 33-year ministry of Elton L. Angstadt. During his years at St. John, Pastor Miller continued his membership on the synod's worship and publicity committees. In 1975, he was elected dean of the North Penn District of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod.

A call was extended to Pastor Miller in 1977 to become pastor of Emmanuel Church, Souderton. A year later Mrs. Miller underwent spinal cord surgery which would confine her to a wheelchair

for the remainder of her 67 years. The members of Emmanuel Church rallied to the challenging circumstances of the parsonage family, enabling Pastor Miller to continue his ministry among them until his retirement in June, 1999.

Since his retirement, Pastor Miller has become a part of the parish life at the Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit, Harleysville, while retaining his Lutheran membership at Emmanuel, Souderton. Since May, 2007, he has resided at The Lutheran Community at Telford where he is actively involved as chapel organist and a member of the resident council and Emerald Evening committees. From here, also, he maintains his ties with sons, Eric Paul and Joel Benton, as well as his grandchildren, Autumn and Maxwell.

Fiftieth Anniversary of Ordination The Rev. Richard D. Stephens



I was born July 9, 1934 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. I graduated from Germantown High School and Penn State University, College of Engineering. After serving with the Corp of Engineers I entered the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. I graduated from seminary in 1960 and answered the call to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Philadelphia as an assistant pastor to The Rev. Theodore Fischer.

I served in that capacity for three years until I was called to be the senior pastor at Good Shepherd. I served Good Shepherd faithfully for the next nine years. During those years I focused on outreach through the youth, the senior adult program, social ministry events, church-community related programs, and Bible study. On a Synod level, I served as Dean of the District, Board member of Lutheran Children and Family Service and the Staff of a weeklong Youth Leadership School (under the able leadership of my brother-in-law, the Rev. James Daniels.)

My time at Good Shepherd coincided with many exciting events in my personal life beginning with my marriage to Nancy Doersam in 1961 and the birth of our children, June, Warren, and Edward.

In 1972, after prayerful consideration the power of the spirit led me to a church set in the countryside of Kulpsville, at Christ Lutheran. Shortly after starting my ministry at Christ Lutheran Nancy and I celebrated the birth of our youngest child, Daniel.

Over the course of the next 28 years I served the growing congregation at Christ Lutheran. I had the distinct privilege to oversee the development of our youth groups, the birth of our senior adult program as well as the revival of the church softball program. It was during this time that I established our outreach with sister-church, Mediator Lutheran Church, Philadelphia.

While serving Christ Kulpsville, we recognized an opportunity to improve the church facilities to support our mission for years to come. We executed an aggressive building renovation that

included the addition of classrooms in the former basement storage area and redesign of the church sanctuary. That renovation was followed some years later with the addition of a main entrance and elevator. Over the years the facilities supported DAAC, Easter Seals, Head start and Come Little Children Day Care.

After my retirement as pastor of Christ Lutheran in 2000, I served as interim Pastor at St. Luke's and part time Assistant to the Bishop. Now that I have fully retired I am spending time with my family and 10 wonderful grandchildren. I continue to find great joy in volunteering, through the Christ Lutheran Shepherd Shelf soup kitchen and a trip with my son to Louisiana to assist in post-Katrina rebuilding efforts.

Nancy and I have been blessed with two wonderful congregations of faithful people, people who have sought to love and to serve their Lord. I want to say "thanks" to all the staffs, councils, members and leaders with whom I have had the privilege of working.