Item 1: The Network to End Sexual Discrimination in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) made its public debut at the 1993 National Assembly of the ELCA in Kansas City. The Network of clergy and lay professional leaders held a press conference August 27th to unveil its roster of over 600 members who have publicly "come out" on behalf of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the ELCA. About 150 people attended the news conference, after which Network members marched from the conference to the assembly and presented a framed copy of their roster to Charles Miller, Director for Church and Society in the ELCA, and the designee for Bishop Herbert Chilstrom. They also presented Miller with a letter inviting Bishop Chilstrom to meet with them and representatives of Lutherans Concerned/North America. The Rev. Kelly Denton-Borhaug, chair of the Network, has since received word that Bishop Chilstrom has consented to meet with the group. The Network gained forty new members at the churchwide assembly.

Item 2: Lutherans Concerned/North America held a reception at the ELCA churchwide assembly and invited former Navy Lieutenant Dirk Selland to share his story with other Lutherans. Selland was dishonorably discharged from the Navy when he "came out" as a gay man. Simultaneous to his discharge, Selland and his partner sought to join Messiah Lutheran Church, Virginia Beach, VA. This generated considerable controversy within the congregation. However, with the support of its pastor, Fred Guy, the council voted to receive their membership. Twenty-five families withdrew their membership as a result of this decision, leaving the congregation financially weakened by their withdrawal. However, as one new member, continued on page 2.
Voice & Vision: Lutheran Lesbian and Gay Ministry (LLGM) is a ministry of advocacy, affirmation and spiritual care for lesbians, gay men and bisexuals in the Greater San Francisco Bay Area. We seek to assist lesbians, gay men and bisexuals to claim a spiritual voice which is life-affirming and self-authenticating.

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Special thanks to Mr. Randy Holleschau, and Mr. Fernando Martinez of Red Tag Mail for their assistance with mailing and distribution.

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Voice & Vision, the newsletter of LLGM, is published quarterly. The mailing list for Voice & Vision is composed of individuals who have indicated interest in the ministry, as well as those recommended for inclusion. If you have names to add, or if you wish to be removed from the mailing list, please let the editorial office know. Voice & Vision will be mailed in plain envelopes to anyone requesting it. Letters to the Editor are welcome and encouraged, and will be printed as space permits.

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It is 3 a.m. as I write this, and all is still in our house. Our two week-old daughter has stopped crying and is peacefully snacking at her other mother’s breast. By two weeks she is smart enough to have figured out that when I pick her up, she’s not going to get the goodies from me- only changed diapers and a pacifier she knows is a scam and which insults her dignity. So I have become the family chronicler of baby development and “precious moments.” In this case, the precious moment is peace and quiet, and an opportunity to work on a past due newsletter issue!

While we have had this sweet terror in our household only two weeks, it feels like two months. We already know that we have, as the hospital nurses so kindly and euphemistically put it, a very “alert” baby with “spirit” (whose spirit, I wonder). She decided to serve notice of her immanent arrival at our October board meeting, when Phyllis began to have regular contractions. We
drove from the meeting to the hospital where our daughter was born a week early on St. Francis Day. The congregation of St. Francis regards this as right on time, of course, and as evidence that she knows she is being welcomed into the world by a community which will positively dote on her.

This little girl has the good fortune to have two moms and two dads, as we are parenting with a gay male couple, Ched Hinger and Jay Beatty. The four of us took Lamaze class together and were all present at her birth. Phyllis had an entourage of coaches at her delivery and Joy Noelle had many arms to catch her wet, new little body as she "came out" to her gay parents.

As any parent knows, but is never fully prepared for, our lives have been fundamentally altered. Not only the present but the future has shifted. The four of us now think concretely in terms of life beyond our own span of years as we care for this new life which hopefully will outlive all of us. "Family values" has a whole new meaning as we contemplate what we want this little girl to receive from us. To inaugurate this new family of five with friends and community, we are holding a special ritual, "In Celebration of a New Family," 2 p.m., November 27, 1993 at St. Francis Lutheran Church. Joy Noelle Hart will be received into the family of God by baptism during this ritual celebration. All who wish to are welcome to celebrate with us. We ask your prayers for our new family at this time.

When I returned to work I was told that someone from the religious right had called three times to ask if it was true that we were parents and that we had artificially inseminated with a gay male couple. When asked the motivation for his inquiry by Sarah Hall, our protective office manager who took the call, he said he just wanted to check the facts to make sure that this wasn't a "grand hoax being perpetrated on the gay community." Well, it isn't a hoax and it isn't something being perpetrated on anybody. It's a miracle, a gift which is being celebrated by our gay and straight community of St. Francis and now with all of you across the miles. We rejoice that our daughter will one day know that so many stood by ready to receive her into their love as they have already received her parents. And given the challenges she may face in her young life, we are glad she is an "alert" child with "spirit." Thanks be to God!

Pastor Ruth