

The Rev. Dr. Carl M. Fisher was born in Lexington, N.C., son of the late Rev. Roy Linn Fisher and Ethel Blackwelder Fisher. A high school graduate of the American School in Tokyo, Japan, he received his primary education in Holly Grove, Crouse, and Rockwell, N.C., and his middle school in Nuremburg, Germany. He received his undergraduate studies at Sophia University in Tokyo and Lenoir-Rhyne College in Hickory, N.C., where he received his A. B. degree. He received a Master of Divinity degree from the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, S. C., and a Master of Sacred Theology degree from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. An honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on him by Lenoir-Rhyne College in 1973. He also spent two years at the Government Officers Language School in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, studying Chinese (Cantonese). In 2005 he received the Clarence L. Pugh, Sr. Distinguished Alumnus Award from Lenoir-Rhyne College for his work as an International Church Leader.

Pastor Fisher was ordained on June 8, 1958, by the Lutheran Synod of North Carolina and served for 40 years in [parish](#) ministry at Trinity Lutheran Church, Concord, N.C.; Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Ipoh, Malaysia; The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Ascension, Savannah, GA.; and Cross and Crown Lutheran Church, Matthews, N.C. In 2008, fifty years after serving Trinity, Concord, he was named Pastor Emeritus. He served as a missionary in Malaysia and Singapore for 15 years. His career also included two administrative positions in the church-at-large, one as Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore for eight years, and as Director of the Office on Mission, Service and Development of Lutheran World Ministries, the U.S.A. National Committee for the Lutheran World Federation in the 1980's. In this capacity he worked closely with the World Hunger Projects of the Lutheran Church and was responsible for the allocation of some \$60 million throughout the world. In the 1970's he served on staff of the Lutheran World Federation, Department of Studies, as a coordinator for Asia and Africa on the Self-Studies on Stewardship and Church Economy. Dr. Fisher, it is believed, was the first member of the former Lutheran Church in America or any of its predecessor bodies to hold the position and title of Bishop. As Bishop of the Lutheran Church in Malaysia and Singapore, he was noted for bringing the church to self-support and putting it on track for greater growth and mission in Asia. He also provided much support for work among the Malaysian Aborigine people. In 1997, twenty years following his service there, the Malaysian/Singapore church honored him by making him Bishop Emeritus.

Fisher [has been](#) first and foremost a man of mission serving on the international level for 20 years as a missionary, mission administrator, and providing training and orientation for over 200 missionaries throughout the world. He also served as a mission consultant on many boards and agencies. On the local level, he organized and developed Cross and Crown Lutheran Church in Matthews, N. C., from where he retired in 1998. In 2010 the congregation honored him by naming him Pastor Emeritus. While a student in Seminary he was also responsible for organizing a mission church in Havelock, N. C.

In addition, Fisher also served the church in its wider circles as Asian Consultant for the Department of Studies of the Lutheran World Federation. In this capacity he served Asia, Australia, [Africa](#), and the South Pacific. He was a representative at an all-Asian Lutheran

Conference in Ranchi, India in 1965, and later he organized and directed an All-Asian Lutheran Conference on Stewardship in 1974 in Singapore and in 1976 another All-Asian Lutheran Conference there as well. He is widely known in Asia, Africa and the South Pacific for his expertise in Stewardship. He authored two books on the subject and edited an Asian Newsletter on Stewardship. Further, he served as President of the Board of Governors of Trinity Theological Seminary in Singapore for several years. This is an ecumenical seminary composed of Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Lutherans. A proponent of Asian Theological Advancement, he served as a founding member of the Board of the Lutheran Southeast Asia Curriculum Development Committee in Hong Kong. He “fathered” a Federation of Lutheran Churches in Malaysia and Singapore comprising some 70,000 members linking Chinese, Indians, Batak-Indonesians, and Aborigine into greater cooperation. While serving in Malaysia he was the first person to alert the American Embassy to the first boatload of Vietnamese Refugees to arrive in that country from Vietnam.

He has served for nine years on the Board of Trustees of Lenoir-Rhyne University and was President of the Alumni Association of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary for six years. In 1997 he was given the Benjamin J. Bedenbaugh Award for Distinguished Pastoral Leadership by the Alumni Association of the Seminary. Fisher and his wife, Miriam, have been major financial benefactors to the Seminary, Newberry College, Lenoir-Rhyne University and the Region 9, James R. Crumley, Jr. Archives. He served as Chairman of both the Committee on World Mission for the Southeastern Synod and the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He has also served as a member of the Board of Directors for Lutheran Services for the Aging. He was a delegate to the LCA Convention in 1980. On a number of occasions he has been named to Who's Who among Religious Leaders both in Asia and the World. From 1998 until 2000 he was Co-Director of the North Carolina Lutheran Men in Mission and served the North Carolina Synod as a member of the 200th Anniversary Committee. He has also been a member of the Synod's Historical Committee and a Director of the Region Nine, James R. Crumley, Jr. Archives.

Fisher is an active member of Rotary International first joining in Malaysia in 1967. He has served as Vice-President, President Elect, and President and is a Paul Harris Fellow. He and Mrs. Fisher are second level major donors to the Rotary International Foundation. He has made his entire family of 14 recipients of the Paul Harris Award. In 2008, Fisher was made Honorary Mayor of Cusco, Peru, by the Mayor of Cusco for his Humanitarian work in helping to raise through his Matthews Club some \$50,000 for assistance to Rotary projects for the poor and needy in the Cusco area.

Locally he is active in support of the Siskey YMCA in Matthews, is a member of the Matthews Human Service Council, and for several years served as Chaplain to the Matthews Police Department and as a member of the Board of the Matthews Help Center. In retirement since 1998, he continues to busy himself with preaching, teaching, grandchildren, writing, traveling, (He's traveled in over 130 countries and on all continents). He has a great love for history, especially of Mecklenburg and Cabarrus Counties where his early grandparents had been establishers and founders. He is a member of the Sons of the American Revolution, John Phifer Chapter, named from a great-granduncle who signed the Mecklenburg Declaration in 1775 and who fought in the Revolutionary War. In 1993, at age 60, he ran with the bulls in Pamplona,

Spain, and at age 70 parasailed with Miriam in Cancun, Mexico. In 2008 he climbed Machu Picchu in Peru. He loves the adventure of traveling to new places, experiencing new cultures, and trying new things. He is a lover of Asian foods of all kinds.

After retirement Pastor Fisher and Miriam became members of Christ Lutheran Church where he does some teaching, is active in the Men's group, and serves in the JOY Fellowship as the current President.

Carl and Miriam Eleazer Fisher were married on June 21, 1959, in Orangeburg, S. C. and have four children: Mr. Carl M., Jr. (Engineer P.A.); Dr. Jeremy E.(Banker) married to Dr. Katherine P. Fisher; Dr. Janthi F. (Veterinarian) married to Jonathan Webster; and Chaplain (Major) William Linn Fisher (USAF). The Fishers have six grandchildren: Miriam, Jonathan, and Hannah Webster and William, Samuel, and Gracie Fisher.