The Rev. Dr. Herbert W. Chilstrom, who served as presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) from its founding in 1987 until 1995, will be the featured speaker at the Sesquicentennial Founders Day worship service, which begins at 4 p.m. on Sunday, April 25, at Augustana Lutheran Church and the Jenny Lind Chapel in Andover, Illinois.

Bishop Chilstrom is a graduate of the Augustana Theological Seminary, which was located in Rock Island from 1875 until 1962. After serving as a pastor in Minnesota and a professor of religion in New Jersey, he was elected bishop of the Minnesota Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, successor to the former Augustana Synod and a predecessor body to the ELCA. [On the following page, please find a more detailed biography, and photo, of Bishop Chilstrom.]

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the establishment of both the Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod and its first educational institution, Augustana College. In honor of this special anniversary, this year’s Founders Day worship service will begin in the sanctuary of Augustana Lutheran Church in Andover then process to the Jenny Lind Chapel.

The Founders Day worship will also include special music provided by Augustana College’s Jenny Lind Vocal Ensemble, directed by Dr. Michael Zemek. Andover is located approximately one mile east of Interstate 74’s Exit 24.

The very first Founders Day was held on April 27, 1905, when Gustav Andreen, then president of Augustana College, called for a celebration honoring the early leaders of the Augustana Synod and the many institutions it helped create, which today include Augustana, Bethany and Gustavus Adolphus Colleges, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Seafarers House in New York, and many others. For more information, call Kai Swanson at 309.794.7419.
The Rev. Dr. Herbert W. Chilstrom was the first ELCA bishop, elected to his post at the church's constituting convention in April 1987. He was re-elected to a four-year term at the 1991 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Orlando, Fla. He is the former bishop of the Minnesota Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, one of the three church bodies which merged to form the ELCA on Jan. 1, 1988.

As bishop of the ELCA Chilstrom was the president and chief executive officer for the church. His responsibilities included oversight of the staff, budget and overall administration of the ELCA.

Chilstrom was the church's chief ecumenical officer and represented the ELCA in several national and international organizations. He served as a vice president of the Lutheran World Federation based in Geneva. He headed a committee for the National Council of Churches who explored special relationships between the NCC and Roman Catholics and evangelicals.

A native of Litchfield, Minn., born October 18, 1931, from 1958 to 1962 Chilstrom served as pastor of the Faith Lutheran Church in Pelican Rapids, Minn., and Augustana Lutheran Church in Elizabeth, Minn. In 1962 he became a professor of religion and academic dean at Luther College, Teaneck, N.J. He held that position for eight years before accepting a call to be senior pastor of First Lutheran Church, St. Peter, Minn., in 1970. In 1976 Chilstrom became bishop of the Minnesota Synod.

He was graduated in 1954 from Augsburg College, Minneapolis, with a bachelor of arts degree in sociology. He went on to receive a bachelor of divinity from Augustana Theological Seminary in 1958. In 1966, he was graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary with a master of theology. Chilstrom earned a Doctor of Education degree from NYU.


Chilstrom is also an author. His works include the book *Hebrews -- A New and Better Way*. He has been a contributor to *Faith and Ferment, Augsburg Sermons*, and *Lutheran Book of Worship Occasional Service Book*. 