

Briefly noted

News in the [July 27, 2004](#) issue

Colorado's highest court has ruled unconstitutional a state law that would have set up a school-voucher program, including religious and other private schools. On a 4-3 vote, the Colorado Supreme Court ruled June 28 that the state's law violated a state constitutional provision regarding local school boards' control over educational instruction in their districts. The program was not put into effect last year because of immediate legal challenges. Colorado's was the only voucher law passed since the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 2002 that an Ohio voucher program that included religious schools didn't violate the First Amendment's ban on government support for religion. Voucher supporters are expected to introduce a new version of the law in Colorado's 2005 legislature that would conform to that ruling.

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod increased its number of congregations by 94 in 2003, the most in the past 15 years. Robert Scudieri, the top U.S. missions official for the denomination, said the LCMS has increased by an average of about 60 congregations each year over the past decade. More than half of the new congregations represent nonwhite ethnic groups, including Hispanic and African immigrant churches. The highest number of new churches—14—were started in the LCMS's Florida-Georgia District.