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LUTHERAN  
WITNESS  
PUBLISHED IN TWO PARTS  
AUGUST 1967  
Convention Wrap-Up



**Movement** Reflecting secular press appraisal of Missouri's "heart of Manhattan" convention, *Time* magazine saw the Synod as "edging into the ecumenical century." *Newsweek's* view, which had the delegates finding themselves "moving with the times," took a similar tack.

**New Day** Passage of the resolution on altar and pulpit fellowship with The American Lutheran Church was greeted by ALC's Dr. Fredrik Schiotz with a presidential simile: "like the light in the east announcing the dawn of a new day."

The resounding vote of approval, Pres. Schiotz commented, "promises fulfillment in 1969 of that for which thousands in our respective churches have hungered over a long period of time."

**New Stance** New for a Missouri Synod convention (and certainly for a Hilton ballroom) was the Sunday afternoon penitential kneel-in to confess Ebenezer Year neglects and plead for revival of faith and love.

"While delegates kneel" was inserted in the floor committee's prayer resolution for Ebenezer grace by amendment from the floor after a series of spontaneous testimonials by delegates on the deepening of their spiritual life through Ebenezer.

**New Names** The board of social welfare was rebaptized by the convention as the board of social ministry, while the name of the commission on

worship, liturgics, and hymnology was cut down to the first comma.

**New Hats** Delegates took part in the induction of three new executive secretaries: William H. Kohn of the board for missions; Martin J. Neeb, Jr., of the television board; E. Theo. DeLaney of the commission on worship.

They voted a full-time staff secretary for the commission on social action and learned that, after a 2-year search to fill the post, Floridan Marshall Nelson had been named secretary of the commission for services to the mentally retarded.

New hats placed by the council of District presidents are Edwin C. Weber (Michigan) as chairman, replacing Southeastern's Dr. Kohn, and John D. Fritz (North Dakota) as secretary, succeeding Southern Illinois' Alfred Buls, who accepted a call to a Missouri District parish.

Delegates did a bit of hat replacing of their own by electing 8 of the 22 nominated for various boards and commissions from the floor. New on the board of directors are three laymen, all from the Midwest: Rupert Dunklau, Fremont, Nebr.; Milton Isern, Ellinwood, Kans.; John A. Mueller, St. Louis.

In all, 105 elective offices were filled in 23 boards and commissions, but electronic tallying made it the first complaintless convention on voting procedure for delegates and elections committee alike.

**New Affirmations** Parish ed-



General Secretary C. Thomas Spitz, Jr., (right) headed the Missouri Synod contingent of 14 who were installed by Dr. Harms as staff members of the Lutheran Council in the U. S. A.

ucation and services committee's lead resolution (7-01) on parish renewal through Christian education is already being termed a classic worthy of a place beside Detroit convention Resolution 1-01, better known as the mission affirmations.

In 7-01's sevenfold "We affirm," punctuated by a "call to action," congregations can't easily miss the same kind of double-dare to self-examination hurled by 1-01.

Congregations that will take the dare by giving prime time to the two sets of affirmations should have little time for frustration vexation. They'll be wondering rather where the status quo went.

**New Tools** Reformation-anniversary touches at the convention included two "historic" Catechism events: (1) Dedication and presentation of the new *Concordia Catechism Series* and (2) approval of 13 translation revisions which assures the first common "all-American" version of Luther's "Bible in a nutshell" (enchiridion or Six Chief Parts).

**New Pace** Volume of business during the Synod's first

biennial and 7-day convention was little diminished from the 10-day triennials. Resolutions on which action was taken, by this column's unofficial count, totaled 325 (as against 393 in 1965).

Size of "Today's Business," the accumulation of convention working papers in a looseleaf binder, called forth warnings from the chairman to "gallery birds" not to place their copies on overhanging balcony railings lest an accidental push have "serious consequences" for delegates seated below.

One consequence of the business glut: no less than 25 resolutions, many of major import, were tagged "study and report at the 1969 convention."

"Today's Business," it seems, will have a chronic obesity problem — at least for Denver.

**New Breeze** When Southern Nebraska's leading Ebenezer Thankoffering performance prompted a Cornhusker delegate to challenge delegates of other Districts to "try to catch us," chairman Harms hoped Nebraskans would feel lots of breeze "because it means someone is passing you up."

## LUTHERAN WITNESS

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## Working Units

### **Christian life and action cannot really be gauged by convention resolutions**

"LET US REMEMBER that the working unit is not the convention," Dr. Oliver Harms stated in his presidential address to the convention, "but the congregation and the people in it."

What does that mean? •

It does not mean that conventions have no purpose. They do. Conventions make orderly working together in synodical organization possible for churches and furnish opportunities to formulate policy, share inspiration, and adopt platforms. As such they are wholesome.

But Christian life and action cannot really be gauged by convention resolutions. Such evidence can be found far more concretely in what happens in the home, at the job, and in everyday relationships.

When Dr. Harms called the congregation and the people in it the "working unit," he was no doubt referring to the relationship between the large, representative group of people assembled in convention and what follows their deliberations and resolutions. What the convention has defined and declared as good and wise receives its final ratification only when congregations and individuals translate resolutions into action.

In this light another sentence from the same address by Synod's president receives clarity and force: "This address and all the actions of this convention are to be transmitted to each member of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod. To the degree that members do not hear of each transaction here, to that degree we met in vain."

## Open Housing

### **The real test comes in how the convention resolution is implemented**

IF BY NOW most white Americans don't have guilty consciences about treatment of minority groups in housing, jobs, and social acceptance, the race revolution has really been in vain. That people are more sensitive to deprivation and ghettoizing of others than they were becomes apparent now and then in housing bills, employment regulations, and court policies.

It became evident at the 1967 convention of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod that its delegates too have learned to express compassion in new ways. We can rejoice together that the support of the open-housing resolution was expressed so resoundingly.

THE REAL TEST COMES, however, in how the convention resolution is implemented. By its Resolution 9-10 (reprinted on page 7) the convention floor committee, under the deft chairmanship of Dr. Bertwin Frey, provided guidelines for putting teeth into the open housing endorsement. When the convention adopted this resolution, it made possible creative action by all who are in earnest about discrimination.

In our society economics and social structures are closely intertwined. When efforts are made to help people victimized by social wrongs, money is almost always required. To express sympathy is not enough. In order

to bear one another's burden in this area we must be ready to come through with cash.

As of now the board of social ministry at Synod's office in St. Louis is ready to receive "gifts and grants to be used for open housing." The board will not become involved in taking title to or managing real estate. It will, however, make grants, gifts, and loans according to an established procedure. It may also "provide financial assistance to existing ministries of the church and to approved nonchurch agencies."

HERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY for those to come through who have been wondering: What can I do to show that my concern for the deprived is real? Note that the resolution on open housing authorizes no use of funds contributed to Synod's budget but asks for earmarked gifts.

By this resolve Synod has provided one more opportunity for its members to right injustice and serve the needs of others.

We quote with approval the words referred to in the open-housing resolution from a decision made at another synodical convention in 1956: "Since Christians are constrained to do justice and love mercy, we acknowledge our responsibility as a church to provide guidance for our members to work in the capacity of Christian citizens for the elimination of discrimination, wherever it may exist in community, city, state, nation, and world."

## Your Own Birthday

### **No one dictates the direction in which your gratitude must be expressed**

WHEN IT GETS RIGHT DOWN to your own birthday, the Ebenezer Thankoffering suddenly becomes a time for decision.

Then all joking, all mild endorsement, all complacent disinterest get pushed aside for a solemn moment. You ask: Since I have reasons of my own for gratitude to God, shall I join my offering with others in Ebenezer? If so, for what amount?

Examples of gratitude and sacrifice warm our hearts. But it is one thing to admire what others do, another to imitate them.

Once again the New York convention of the church endorsed the Ebenezer Thankoffering and determined to do everything possible to rouse greater enthusiasm for it. Delegates found the cause worthy because the motive stems from a thankful heart toward God, and the needs which the offerings are intended to supply are real.

Some have asked: Granted the reason for gratitude, why must the gift go to Ebenezer? The answer, of course, is that the choice must be yours. No one dictates the direction in which your gratitude must be expressed. But the Ebenezer Thankoffering with its plan to build in our country and overseas so that Christ may be exalted offers a considered challenge.

September will bring a new kind of reminder to all congregations by providing for an exchange of pastors in all pulpits. Speakers will focus on how the Lord has always helped us. But when your birthday comes, it will still be you who must decide whether and how much.

One thing is clear: those who pass by this chance to hear their church's call to gratitude in this specific way had best have a better way at hand to say "the Lord has always helped me."





The lineup of speakers at microphone 3 at the height of debate on the ALC fellowship resolution

## CHURCH RELATIONS



# Toward Full Fellowship

**M**ISSOURI SYNOD LUTHERANS can expect to be meeting and talking with their American Lutheran Church neighbors on more intimate terms in the months ahead. Members of the two Lutheran branches, which developed side by side largely across the midsection of the continent, can also be expected to view one another with clearer and more trustful eyes.

This will be the most immediate "practical" effect of the 4-paragraph resolution adopted on the most-debated question at the New York City convention: altar and pulpit fellowship with The American Lutheran Church.

Arrangements are to be made, according to instructions spelled out in the resolution, to promote among the Synod's entire membership "the widest possible mutual recognition of the doctrinal consensus and its implications for church fellowship."

DISCUSSION OF THE CONSENSUS and what it implies is to receive grass-

roots exposure by being allotted high priority at conferences and District conventions next year. Close scrutiny of the implications of fellowship will take place at local and regional meetings of officials, faculties, pastors, teachers, and congregations of the two bodies.

(The consensus mentioned in the resolution refers to the agreement in doctrine announced in a "Joint Statement and Declaration" early this year by representatives of The American Lutheran Church, the Missouri Synod, and the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches after 2 years of consultations.

(The consultations, the joint statement asserts, "have revealed consensus and mutual trust in their understanding of the following: What commitment to the *Sola Gratia* [Grace Alone] of the Lutheran Confessions involves; the Lutheran Confessions and *Sola Scriptura* [Scripture Alone]; the doctrine of the church in the Lutheran Confessions.")

KEY SENTENCES of the resolution, which the floor committee reminded from recommendations of the commission on theology and church relations, are: We "recognize that the Scriptural and Confessional basis for altar and pulpit fellowship between The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod and The American Lutheran Church exists" and "Synod proceed to take the necessary steps toward full realization of altar and pulpit fellowship."

Among the necessary steps specified in the resolution is that officials and representatives continue mutual study and work toward a unified position and practice in areas of church life where "disturbing" differences exist. Mentioned specifically is the area of "unchristian and antichristian societies" (lodges).

MUCH OF THE DEBATE centered on a substitute motion offered from the floor proposing that the Synod in convention in 1969 "officially declare



whether or not there is altar and pulpit fellowship" between the two bodies. Exception was taken to the original proposal of the floor committee to "authorize" the president of the Synod in conjunction with the president of The American Lutheran Church to declare altar and pulpit fellowship after the latter body had taken favorable action on the "Joint Statement and Declaration."

After recomittal the resolution won overwhelming approval (the secretary noted "less than 10 dissenting votes") when the last paragraph was changed to read: "That the president of the Synod in conjunction with the Council of [District] Presidents make the appropriate recommendations to the 1969 convention."

Floor committee spokesmen and other delegates cautioned against basing decisions in the fellowship question on generalizations from individual or isolated instances of divergence in confession or in church practice.

They also stressed the question of merger (forming one administrative unit) was not involved but rather the question of standing on a common confessional platform so that pulpits could be shared and members could be communed at each other's altars.

Speakers who advocated altar and pulpit fellowship "here and now" were reminded that such a declaration was not possible since The American Lutheran Church could not take action on the "Joint Statement and Declaration" until its convention in October 1968, subject to ratification by its 18 districts in the spring of 1969.

IN A SEPARATE RESOLUTION the convention expressed "joy and thanks for the greater evidence of true unity we have with other Lutheran bodies" but asked congregations to "exercise patience and avoid independent action" by engaging in selective fellowship with congregations of the Lutheran bodies not in full fellowship with the Synod.

Delegates agreed, however, that since the 450th anniversary of the Reformation provides an opportunity for all Lutherans to thank God for a common heritage, there is "value" in giving joint witness with other Lutherans at observances when it could be accomplished in accord with the Synod's doctrinal position.

IN OTHER CHURCH FELLOWSHIP RESOLUTIONS the Synod —

► Declared itself in favor of dissolving the Lutheran Synodical Con-

ference since it saw "no useful purpose" for its continuance and asked the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, the only other remaining member of the 95-year-old federation, to concur in the dissolution.

► Postponed action on membership in the Lutheran World Federation until 1969, directing the commission on theology and church relations meanwhile to arrange adequate consultation with the LWF, to provide discussion guidelines for conferences and congregations on the theological issues involved, and to share all information of its findings (including financial costs) with the Synod and all her sister churches.

► Invited Lutheran churches in America with which the Synod is not in fellowship to consult with us in mutual love and confidence with a view to removing causes of misunderstanding and separation.

► Encouraged the president of

Synod to continue the practice of sending observers to various church assemblies; and encouraged members of the Synod, including pastors and congregations at local and area levels, to continue their interest and participation in ecumenical dialog whenever the opportunity presents itself "with no injury to our confessional commitment."

► Called for study and evaluation of the World Council of Churches and asked the commission on theology and church relations to report its own conclusions on the council.

► Asked the commission on worship to prepare suitable materials for an annual observance of an annual period of prayer for Christian unity, such as the Unity Octave.

► Went on record to cooperate with leaders of church councils, federations, and communions to achieve a fixed Sunday for Easter.

A. W. G.

### Resolution 3-23

To authorize declaration of altar and pulpit fellowship with The American Lutheran Church

WHEREAS, The Joint Statement and Declaration of the official representatives of The American Lutheran Church and The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod and the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches reveals consensus in the preaching of the Gospel "in conformity with a pure understanding of it" and in the administration of the sacraments "in accordance with the divine Word" (Augsburg Confession, Art. VII); and

WHEREAS, It is incumbent upon Christians who discover a wholehearted consensus in their understanding and proclamation of the Gospel to confess their Lord with one mind and one voice and to live together in unity and mutual assistance; and

WHEREAS, Diversities of practice which do not constitute a denial or contradiction of the Gospel can be understood better, and agreement can be developed more easily toward a consistent evangelical practice for mutual edification when Christians are united in the work of the Lord under the Word and sacraments; and

WHEREAS, The constituency of church groups intending to share altar and pulpit fellowship should be well informed in regard to the principles and implications involved; therefore, be it

Resolved, That The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod in this convention herewith express thanks to God for His Spirit's guidance and blessing in the deliberations and consultations with The American Lutheran Church, which resulted in the consensus expressed in the Joint Statement and Declaration; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod recognize that the Scriptural and Confessional basis for altar and pulpit fellowship between The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod and The American Lutheran Church exists, and that the Synod proceed to take the necessary steps toward full realization of altar and pulpit fellowship with The American Lutheran Church, and that the Synod invite the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches to join with us in the same; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod urge all its representatives and officials to work earnestly and sincerely toward a unified evangelical position and practice in areas of church life where disturbing diversities still exist, particularly in reference to un-Christian and anti-Christian societies, through continued mutual study with the officials and representatives of The American Lutheran Church on the basis of the Word of God; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod direct its officials to make arrangements for promoting the widest possible mutual recognition of the doctrinal consensus and its implications for church fellowship among the entire membership of the Synod by making it a primary part of the agenda for conferences and for the 1968 District conventions, and by arranging meetings between District presidents, theological faculties, pastors, teachers, and congregations of the church bodies involved; and be it finally

Resolved, That the president of the Synod in conjunction with the Council of Presidents make the appropriate recommendations to the 1969 convention.





## When Compromise Is Progress



*English District president Bertwin Frey, left, and Synod treasurer Milton Carpenter listen intently to newsman's question during press conference following convention decisions on social action.*

**B**Y WHATEVER MEASURE — column inches, headlines, placement, or exciting reporting — newsmen covering the New York convention found most of their news in social-action decisions. Many reasons for this could be cited. Here are a few:

1. Such issues as Vietnam, open housing, poverty, and discrimination are headliners, of natural interest to a general public which may know little about Lutheranism and much less about the Missouri Synod branch.

2. Resolutions on social issues are relatively new for synodical conventions. Therefore, newsmen could use such verbs as launched or inaugu-

rated, rather than postponed, refined, or reasserted.

3. Because there was no backlog of experience, little history, and hardly any gauge for success or failure in social action, there was no procedure to be amended and hardly any disagreement over practice.

4. Social issues do not easily lend themselves to shades of opinion, to apathy, or to postponement for lack of money.

For Missouri Synod Lutherans the compromises reflected in establishing an open-housing treasury and in endorsing a pronouncement on the in-

ternational crisis in Vietnam, the Middle East, and elsewhere may represent the biggest news of this convention. Usually the word "compromise" has been preceded by "without" in the Missouri Synod, for example in reference to theological decisions. Under such circumstances the phrase itself often became an absolute. But in New York there was compromise of a sort that "launched."

### Church Should Speak Up

On the international crisis the convention in its message to congregations issued a statement that met with almost no opposition on the floor.



despite the obvious "camps" of hawks and doves. Perhaps the statement was "owlish." There's little doubt that most of Synod can live with it.

The pronouncement eliminated two extremes: all-out endorsement of the government's policy in Vietnam, for example, with a call for victory or accelerated war; and condemnation of the war, a de-escalation or other specific directives to the government. The delegates rejected a proposed memorial which urged specific action on President Johnson, but it went further than calling only for prayers for peace.

Prayers are called for in the resolution. But so are such actions as speaking up, counseling, studying, showing concern, and "focusing hope in God."

Crucial is the following: "As a church body we are not to be a political influence group, identified with a particular program for waging and conducting war. However, we believe that in its desire for peace, justice, and freedom, the church should speak in the areas of its competence, according to the measure of its knowledge. In accordance with Scripture the church is to support government while at the same time serving as an instrument of God's grace and healing."

Committee members speaking during the press conference on the resolution hoped that the statement would stimulate considerable attention in the congregations. Even calling it a "message from the convention to congregations" is likely without precedent.

### Convention Commits Synod

There is precedent for the open-housing treasury, another compromise action of the convention; but the precedent is world relief, which no one can reasonably argue against.

On open housing there were probably three camps at the convention: those who believe this is a matter of "individual conscience"; those who believe the church should be directly involved; and those who favor open housing but fear the consequences of church promotion for many members hesitant to accept the concept.

The convention did commit the Synod to a program of education and action promoting open housing, but the program will be financed exclusively by those members who endorse the principle to the extent of making cash contributions. No synodical funds — the "missions" side of those 2-pocket offering envelopes — will be used to finance the program, not

even to the extent of staffing the operation.

There's no hesitancy about supporting world relief, even to the extent of synodical funds, and convention delegates directed the board of directors to reinstate the board of world relief as an item in the synodical budget, if only to cover office operations.

### Commission to Study Issues

Even beyond open housing, world relief, and the international crisis, newsmen found other news in social action. For example, an executive secretary of social action was authorized by a close voice vote after a concern for money was stressed. The new executive would, among other duties, expedite the commission of social action studies of such issues as abortion, another newsmaker.

The work of the commission for services to the mentally retarded will be considerably expanded with their first full-time executive, an office authorized by the Detroit convention but not filled until July 3, four days before the New York convention, which rejoiced at the news.

Federal aid frequently appears in headlines. While the convention did not call for a full-time executive to alert schools to federal programs, delegates did ask the board of directors to coordinate efforts and to publish reports of studies in this area.

### Congregations to Help Poor

Assisting the poor has been traditional church work, but the convention broadened the approach by encouraging congregations "to support such poverty programs as are consistent with our faith" and "to endeavor to change the factors which create poverty." Individuals such as Prince of Peace Volunteers engaged in "changing these factors" were specifically commended.

In another facet of human relations delegates encouraged Synod officials to continue support of equality in business and employment practices.

During a press conference the day before the convention began, newsmen asked synodical president Harms to cite convention issues. He listed: (1) Synod's position under Scripture; (2) church relations; (3) the Lutheran Council in the United States of America; (4) Ebenezer; (5) the new school at Irvine, Calif.; (6) recruitment; (7) social action.

For newsmen at the convention, however, "the last became the lead."

R. A.

### Resolution 9-08

Resolved, That in faithfulness to our Lord and in good faith with the spirit of previous conventions, The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod undertake a program of education and action that would include the following features:

- a. It shall be directed to the membership of every congregation of the Synod.
- b. It shall emphasize every Christian's ministry to the whole man.
- c. It shall urge individuals to support and to participate in housing programs that seek to achieve equality of opportunity for every human being; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod direct the board of social ministry to engage immediately in planning and developing the means and procedures that contribute to the advancement of the cause of open housing consistent with the Synod's financial management policies in other matters.

### Resolution 9-10

The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod commends to the board of social ministry the following guidelines for study and, where feasible, for action:

#### A. Fiscal Matters

1. The board of social ministry shall be empowered to solicit and to accept gifts and grants to be used for open housing. Such funds are to be earmarked and kept separate from other synodical moneys. These funds may be increased by special Synodwide offerings, gifts, bequests, and devises. These funds may be used currently.
2. These funds shall be administered by the board of social ministry in keeping with the Synod's fiscal policies.
3. The board shall establish policies, procedures, and priorities for the making of grants, gifts, and loans.
4. The board may provide financial assistance to existing ministries of the church and to approved non-church agencies, except that the board shall not take title to or manage real estate.

#### B. Responsibilities of the Board in re Open Housing

1. The board shall alert the members of the Synod to the housing concerns of minority groups and individuals. In cooperation with other synodical boards the board of social ministry shall encourage individuals, congregations, groups of congregations in the same area, and Districts of the Synod to carry on open-housing functions in their own localities and shall prepare guidelines for this purpose.
2. The board of social ministry of each District of the Synod shall implement similar programs. District boards shall assist and advise local congregations with regard to open-housing matters. The District boards shall also administer the District's open-housing programs in conformity with policies established by the Synod's board of social ministry and in accordance with District regulations.

#### C. Staffing and Reporting

1. The board of social ministry shall provide an annual report and a financial statement of its activities to the Synod, based upon regular reviews of its programs.
2. The board of social ministry shall be empowered to delegate the administration of this program to a special committee selected by the board.
3. The board of social ministry shall provide for staff services to be purchased and paid for from earmarked funds contributed to this program in order to preclude interference with other staff duties of the board of social ministry.



# Through Mass Media



Dr. Robert Hirsch, state senator in South Dakota and president of the Lutheran Laymen's League, speaks to the convention on behalf of the lay organization.

**T**HROUGHOUT ITS 15-YEAR HISTORY the Missouri Synod's television program "This Is the Life" has consistently urged congregations to make maximum use of the "most widely televised religious program in the nation" in their mission.

Last month in New York City some 800 convention delegates reiterated the suggestion by urging congregations "wherever possible to make 'This Is the Life' an integral part of their local programs of evangelism by a consistent program of prepublicity and conscientious follow-through."

Because a drop in Synod's anticipated receipts is affecting the budget of the half-hour television program, the Lutheran television productions board negotiated with the Lutheran Laymen's League for a grant of \$83,000 and a loan of \$200,000. The budget allocation dropped from \$800,000 in 1966 to \$500,000 in 1967. Anticipated needs for 1968 are \$975,865.

In an open hearing on the continued relationship between the Synod and the 146,000-member auxiliary regarding the television program Synod treasurer Milton Carpenter raised a question concerning the propriety of borrowing money from any source for operating expenses. He said it could set a precedent.

Dr. Robert Hirsch, president of the LLL, noted that "fund raising

was not the deciding factor" in the overture to Synod, approved by the 50th-anniversary convention of the league in Milwaukee in June, offering to assume support of the television ministry over a period of years on a graduated basis.

## Accept LLL Offer

The synodical convention resolved "to accept the generous offer" of the LLL to sponsor the program jointly, and it directed the Synod's board of directors to "study and review" the arrangement over the next 2 years "for purposes of reevaluation and reassessment." The convention also suggested that four members of the board of governors of the LLL be added to Synod's television board.

In other communications matters the 47th convention of Synod:

- recommended that congregations use the RIAL aids as they "deem them applicable." RIAL, Inc., Religion in American Life, is a national organization supported by some 30 service clubs to promote "faith in daily living and worship attendance" through the mass media.

- discussed the LUTHERAN WITNESS and the *Lutheran Witness Reporter* as official publications of the Synod. One resolution directed the editors "to proceed with courage in their task of reporting the news, speaking out on issues that concern the membership of Synod, and setting forth the doctrinal position of Synod

in a truthful and responsible way. In the same resolution the editors were reminded of their responsibility to reflect the position of Synod, since the publications frequently serve as the image of the church body.

- urged parish leaders to make use of the helpful suggestions contained in *Advance* magazine.

- referred the matter of the election of members of Synod's editorial commission for official periodicals to the council of administrators.

## Observe CPH Anniversary

Closely allied with communications are church literature and its major producer, Concordia Publishing House.

In 1966 Synod's publishing arm did a gross business of \$14,809,000 with a net income of \$1,380,000, slightly less than the \$1,400,000 of the previous year.

After the transfer of \$800,000 to Synod last year the balance of the net income was used for expansion and to underwrite the costs of books and periodicals which are not self-supporting. A. L. Leimbach, chairman of the CPH board, told the convention. He also noted that Family Films, the Hollywood film-producing subsidiary of CPH, had gross sales of \$1,700,000 in 1966 with a net of \$170,000.

In other information received by the convention it was noted that:

- CPH will observe its 100th anniversary in 1969.

- work on translating and printing the writings of Dr. C. F. W. Walther will be completed soon.

- the publication of a Bible commentary for laymen is under way.

- CPH is encouraged to publish the Book of Concord in a paperback edition, to publish an index for its periodicals, and to continue to publish the present edition of the Catechism.

The convention referred the matter of the editing of the *Concordia Theological Monthly* to a special committee to be appointed by the president of Synod.

E. F. K.





## Struggle with Communication Gap



Dr. Elmer Witt, Walther League executive, at mike, introduces Prince of Peace Volunteers, from left, Debby Armstrong of Chicago and Ruth and Jerry DeCluitt of New York, to the New York convention. Delegates responded enthusiastically following the brief talks.

**I**N CONTRAST TO SUCH QUESTIONS as fellowship, administration, and social action, few experts took the microphone during the New York convention's consideration of youth work: the board for young people's work is a relatively new operation; its ascendancy over the Walther League as the agency for youth ministry has been fathomed by few; and convention resolutions on youth work sparked no debate.

Even though delegates readily understood and warmly applauded the three Prince of Peace Volunteers as they testified to their reasons for service, the convention found itself in the communication gap the Broadway show tune "Kids" lyricizes.

For example, while the convention endorsed the board for young people's work to date, the resolution requested

the board to detail for congregations its assumption of administrative control from the Walther League. More training in youth ministry was urged for professionals and laymen, and the board was instructed to communicate with youth through existing synodical publications.

### Call for Youth Voice

Memorials to abandon the board for young people's work and *Arena* were sidetracked, although the board was requested to exert a more positive influence on the joint publication with The American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church in America.

Most significant action was the call for youth voice and participation in advisory levels of synodical activity — congregations, circuits, Districts, and Synod meetings. Pastor Thomas

Wilson, Aurora, Ill., offered the example of the Northern Illinois District convention last year:

Youths were assigned to floor committees and to assist the convention chaplain. "The young people were thankful for the opportunity to see the church alive and in action," Pastor Wilson said, "and the adults were pleased with the interest of the young people."

The board for young people's work was specifically commended for its evangelical, Christ-centered approach; its concern to implement the mission affirmations; its cooperation with other agencies and boards; and "the wide diversity of helpful materials and programs." May 26, 1968, was selected to commemorate the Walther League's 75th anniversary.

R. A.





# To Reaffirm Its Faith

IN THIS DAY of "theological unrest," the convention said in the first resolution on doctrinal matters, "we pray . . . that God by His mercy keep us faithful to His inspired and inerrant Word as the 'only rule and norm of faith and practice' and to the Lutheran Confessions as a true and faithful exposition of that Word."

At the final session the delegates voted to "reaffirm our position" that (1) Scripture is the inerrant Word of God, (2) Christ has made atonement for the sins of the whole world, (3) Christ rose from the dead glorified in His flesh (sarx), (4) the soul of man does not cease to exist after death and that only those who believe in Christ receive eternal life; and that "those who teach otherwise are in error."

On the previous evening it was resolved that the Synod "reaffirm its faith in the united testimony of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions" on Creation, the Fall, and related subjects. It was also resolved that the Synod "reject and condemn all those world views, philosophical theories, exegetical interpretations, and other hypotheses which pervert these Biblical teachings and thus obscure the Gospel."

## Thanks for Gospel

Adopting an amendment proposed by St. Louis seminary president Alfred O. Fuerbringer, the convention furthermore resolved that "we sincerely thank God for the precious Gospel given us in the Biblical teaching on the creation, the fall of man, and the grace of God, that we may joyfully bear witness to it and encourage our fellow Christians to do likewise."

Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, the preamble to the resolution declares, teach "that God by the almighty power of His word created all things in six days by a series of

creative acts" and that "Adam and Eve were real, historical human beings, the first two people in the world. . . ."

The preamble also cites the teachings of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions that the fall of Adam and Eve is an historical fact and that "sin had its origin in one man, Adam, through whose disobedience all men were made sinners and became subject to death and the devil."

The clear teaching of God's creation of man in His image and the teaching of man's fall into sin and the subsequent inherent corruption of all human beings, the preamble concludes, "are essential to the clear and pure teaching of the Gospel."

## Woman Suffrage

Because the question of woman suffrage in the church is under study by the Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR), the delegates agreed to "refrain from making any formal statement on this matter."

Congregational policy on woman suffrage is to be established by the 1969 convention of the Synod on the basis of the completed CTCR study. Delegates therefore requested congregations to "wait in patience for this forthcoming action."

It was decided, however, that women be declared eligible to serve as advisory members — by appointment only — on synodical boards, commissions, and committees. The matter of the full membership of women on synodical boards, commissions, and committees was referred to the CTCR for further study.

The resolution on woman suffrage recognized that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are bestowed upon women of the church and that involvement of women possessing special gifts "as members of synodical boards, commissions, and committees would offer opportunity for employing these gifts."

The Commission on Worship — to use the new name of the former Commission on Worship, Liturgics, and Hymnology — was instructed to prepare for publication a supplement to *The Lutheran Hymnal*.

To keep members informed about new materials being developed and to promote workshops or institutes on church music and other aspects of worship, each District was encouraged to establish a committee on worship to work together with the synodical commission.

## Study Documents

The CTCR "Theology of Fellowship" study document was accepted as a synodical document for reference and guidance. The convention urged the church in its practice of Christian fellowship to "avoid the twin dangers of unionism and separatism as defined in the document." It was also agreed that the Synod "continue to uphold the doctrine of the Gospel and its implications as determinative in the theology and practice of fellowship."

Another CTCR study document, "A Lutheran Stance Toward Contemporary Biblical Studies," was commended to the Synod's membership for study and discussion. "The Witness of Jesus and Old Testament Authorship" is to be studied in pastoral conferences, and the CTCR is to issue a reply to the church answering questions and concerns submitted to the commission and clarifying the document's language and content.

The "Civil Obedience and Disobedience" document was received as furnishing instruction and counsel that is in harmony with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. Delegates voted to discourage selective conscientious objection and said, "We pledge ourselves as Christian citizens anew to loyalty and obedience to our





Opening service of the 47th regular convention of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City

government also in this matter of military service."

Thanking the faculty of the St. Louis seminary for its "untiring service as the official censors of Synod's publications," the convention adopted the report and recommendations of a special study committee to set up a new procedure for "doctrinal review."

Numerous doctrinal reviewers "broadly representative of the ministry of the Synod" will be appointed. From their number an 11-member Board of Review is to be selected. This board will set up guidelines for doctrinal review, concern itself with problem areas, and provide an appeals procedure.

Overtures calling for a board of

inquiry and a lay commission to act on doctrinal and disciplinary matters disturbing the church were respectfully declined.

Members of the Synod were "compellingly" exhorted to give active and positive support to synodical and District officials; the Council of Presidents was urged to seek ways and means to "communicate more effectively" regarding the efforts they are making to clear up problems in doctrine and discipline; and writers and speakers were reminded of the nature of "anonymous, irresponsible, and unwarranted suggestions of infidelity of officials" and were exhorted to avoid such suggestions.

In other resolutions on alleged false teaching and doctrinal controversies the convention decided —

— That "we pray earnestly" that the Lord may guide the officials of the Synod to deal properly with both accusers and accused in all cases of alleged false teaching;

— That pastors, teachers, professors, and laymen be reminded of the damage that results from irresponsible and unclear statements and charges and be exhorted to avoid them;

— That all members of the Synod be exhorted most carefully to follow proper procedure whenever matters of doctrinal discipline are involved.

### Selective Fellowship

Acting on overtures to allow congregations to practice selective fellowship, the delegates voted that "we refrain from selective fellowship with 'heterodox congregations or . . . congregations of mixed confessions.'" Members of the Synod were also respectfully urged to refrain from selective pulpit fellowship "with Lutherans not now in fellowship with us."

Because the celebration and reception of Holy Communion "not only implies but is a confession of the unity of faith," the convention decided that pastors and congregations of the Synod "except in situations of emergency and in special cases of pastoral care, commune individuals of only those Lutheran synods which are now in fellowship with us."

Recognizing that godly and dedicated teachers and professors are at all times "a gift of God in His mercy to the church," the assembly thanked God for the teachers and professors at the Synod's seminaries and colleges and encouraged them in their dedicated labors "by the assurance of our prayers and confidence." M. W. M.



# MISSIONS

## FROM Affirmation TO Action

*Dr. Wm. H. Kohn, right, receives the handclasp of Synod's president Dr. Oliver R. Harms as Kohn is inducted into office as executive secretary of the board for missions at the New York convention.*



**H**OW CAN THE CHURCH MAKE its concern for people credible by its actions? This question was urged upon the floor committee headed by Dr. Paul Jacobs of California. Resolutions based on memorials that had been submitted to the convention were formulated by the 35-member committee to bring about action.

One such resolution instructs the board for missions (limited by convention action to 13 members) to select several larger "community" areas — metropolitan and rural — as pilot projects for discovering effective strategy and structure of mission for the church. Another convention vote encourages all congregations to study the nature of their communities in order to proclaim the Gospel meaningfully.

### To Carry Out Mission

To carry out their mission in varying communities, congregations and other "centers of ministry" were urged to examine the existing structures of Christian witness and worship and to modify them as necessary. As objects of specific concern the resolution named college students, young adults, the blind, the deaf, those institutionalized, the poor, the affluent, and people in the armed forces.

In the same resolution a final resolve urges congregations to develop "creative and imaginative new approaches" to the kinds of ministry needed for mission tasks.

Using language not traditionally familiar to the church, the convention also authorized an ongoing study of the central role of the Christian congregation "as healing fellowship and community." The Coonoor conference in India, sponsored by The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod

earlier in 1967, laid the groundwork for such a study. Synod also requested the Lutheran Council in the United States of America to initiate a 3-to-5-year study on the church's concern for the sick and suffering.

More traditional actions were also endorsed and defined by the convention. Among them were a call to active evangelism by each congregation on the basis of the 1965 mission affirmations, an intensification of mission effort among Spanish-Americans, and increased promotion for church extension funds.

### To Restructure

In the area of synodical mission structure the convention determined that the board for missions should have 7 clergy members out of 13, that the church extension board be placed into the division of missions, that the board for missions "pursue fully" cooperative efforts that meet policy requirements of Synod, that methods of transferring members be studied, that a firm commitment be given a year in advance on use of funds available for missions, and that the relationship of the commission on mission and ministry in the church to the board for missions be carefully considered.

Dr. William H. Hillmer's "outstanding leadership" in the mission program was recognized by the convention. For 18 years he has served Synod as an executive in missions. Beginning this month he returns to the parish ministry in California. During convention sessions Dr. William H. Kohn was inducted into the top executive office for the missions department. He called it a "humbling experience" and viewed the task as one of "crossing boundaries to reach people."

### To Demonstrate Concern

The convention delegates and visitors joined in prayer for missionaries and sister churches throughout the world and determined "to demonstrate concern for and support of our missionaries and missions in these fields by increased offerings for missions."

A few items on which memorials had been presented for convention consideration were postponed or rejected. Major among these was the proposal to enter upon a system of "self-financing" by all Districts. This plan, which was referred to the board for missions for further study, seeks District responsibility for mission projects both in selection and specific support.

Declined were resolutions to halt the transfer of work among the deaf to District rather than to direct synodical supervision and to censure a campus pastor.

Basically convention action again endorsed the mission affirmations as they apply to missions and urged that they be studied and followed by congregations and synodical commissions. The broadening influence of these affirmations on the vision of the church could be seen, in addition to instances already cited, in such action as the instruction to the board for missions to help the church "exercise the Gospel ministry not only through the mass media but also to mass media personnel," to equip laymen overseas for mission, and to telecast the Gospel in Japan.

To increase awareness of mission focus in the church, the commission on mission and ministry was directed to develop study guides to "sharpen the implications of the mission affirmations as they apply to the members of Christ's church."

O. S.





# Both Bad News and Good

**T**HE EBENEZER THANKOFFERING became a major concern of the Missouri Synod convention at New York in July, and lagging contributions to the fund-raising appeal affected the mood of the delegates.

For months synodical officials have been noticeably distressed by an apparent lack of interest in the Ebenezer effort, which is meant to raise at least \$40 million for new buildings and other capital improvements for missions and institutions of higher learning. Shortly before the delegates convened, Ebenezer leaders reported that gifts had passed the \$5-million mark. The New York convention provided the setting for a revival of interest and zeal in the Ebenezer cause.

## Delegates Kneel

At one of the convention sessions the delegates knelt on the floor of the hotel ballroom where they met, while Synod President Oliver R. Harms uttered a penitential prayer and asked for divine blessing on the special offering.

To a person entering that ballroom in the heart of the "Fun City" the scene would have been incongruous, possibly even causing such embarrassment as often happens when an outsider inadvertently intrudes on a family's privacy. The delegates, though, did not appear embarrassed as they confessed their financial shortcomings. Instead, in

the name of the congregations they represented, the delegates pledged renewed efforts to meet the \$40 million goal in the remainder of the year.

The act of penitence, coming on the second day of the convention, was a turning point in the sessions. From that point on the delegates were especially conscious of the monetary requirements of synodical operations.

Ebenezer — why it hasn't caught on, how it can be made appealing, what needs to be done in the rest of the year — became one of the main topics of conversation as the delegates clustered in little groups outside the convention hall or chatted over meals.

To some delegates the lagging returns to Ebenezer tarnished the public image of the Synod. To others the meager income reflected "disunity" in the Synod. To still others the failure to give wholehearted backing to Ebenezer demonstrated a distressing reluctance to witness to the Christian faith.

## Hard Work Needed

Ebenezer became the main concern of the convention committee on stewardship and finance, which produced a series of resolutions designed to marshal greater support for the special collection.

Committee chairman Waldemar E. Meyer, president of the Synod's Colo-

rado District, advised the delegates to avoid the fainthearted feeling that Ebenezer is a failure. He added that "God has accomplished much already" through those who have contributed more than \$5 million.

Dr. Martin L. Koehnke, Ebenezer director, said the report of contributions "is both a judgment and a promise, both bad news and good news."

"We aren't praying enough because only God can give a thankful heart, only God can make a thankoffering possible," Dr. Koehnke told the delegates. He said hard work, including personal confrontation and a faithful follow-up, will be required in the coming months.

"Ebenezer can be exciting and rewarding to a church body in love with Jesus Christ," he concluded.

As a result of convention resolutions the congregations of the Synod will be asked to participate more actively and fully in the Ebenezer appeal. A number of special events, including September pulpit exchange, have been planned for the last months of the year. All congregations will be asked to hold Ebenezer festival services on the last Sunday of the year.

By then, synodical officials hope, the Synod's members will be able to join in a joyful singing of the Ebenezer hymn, "The Lord hath helped me hitherto . . ." R. J.

*Most of the delegates and guests at the Missouri Synod's New York convention kneel in repentance for lagging contributions to the Ebenezer Thankoffering as President Oliver R. Harms, at right on platform, prays for divine blessing on the special effort to raise capital funds for mission and education.*





# CONVENTION PHOTO RECORD



After his address to the convention Dr. Fredrik Schiotz, president of The American Lutheran Church, talks to Dr. Karl Graesser, president of the Atlantic District, which was host to the convention.



At the convention secretary's table in the convention hall Dr. Herbert Mueller (right) suggests an answer to a problem presented by Rev. Arnold Wessler (second from right), administrative assistant to Dr. Harms, and Dr. John Gergely, lay delegate from Massachusetts, as Dr. Carl Meyer, assistant secretary, takes notes.

Registering the youngest guest at the convention are Rev. and Mrs. Victor A. Atsinger, who brought their 5-week-old son, Victor, Jr. The Atsingers, from Faith Church, Magnolia, Ark., are being given their convention materials by Mrs. Kay Pfleger, Demarest, N. J.



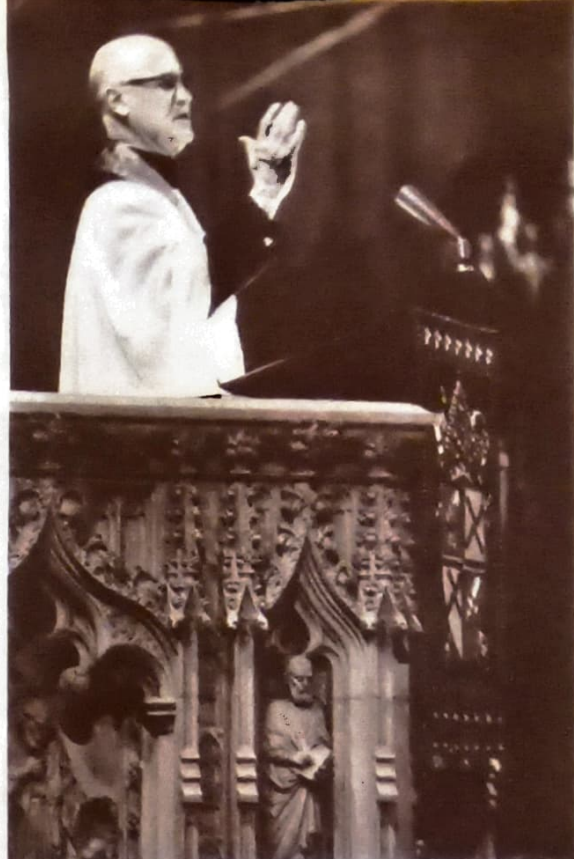
Open hearings at which speakers voiced their concerns to committees were attended also by the press and interested delegates and visitors. Here Dr. Herman Mayer speaks to the church relations floor committee.



Mrs. Bertha Harms, wife of Synod's president, is pinned with a corsage and honored as the first action in the convention's business session.







Preacher at the Friday night opening service at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine was Dr. Theodore Nickel of Chicago, second vice-president of the Synod.



Dr. John Kovac, president of the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (SELC), spoke to the convention of the 65 years of cherished fellowship between the two synods.

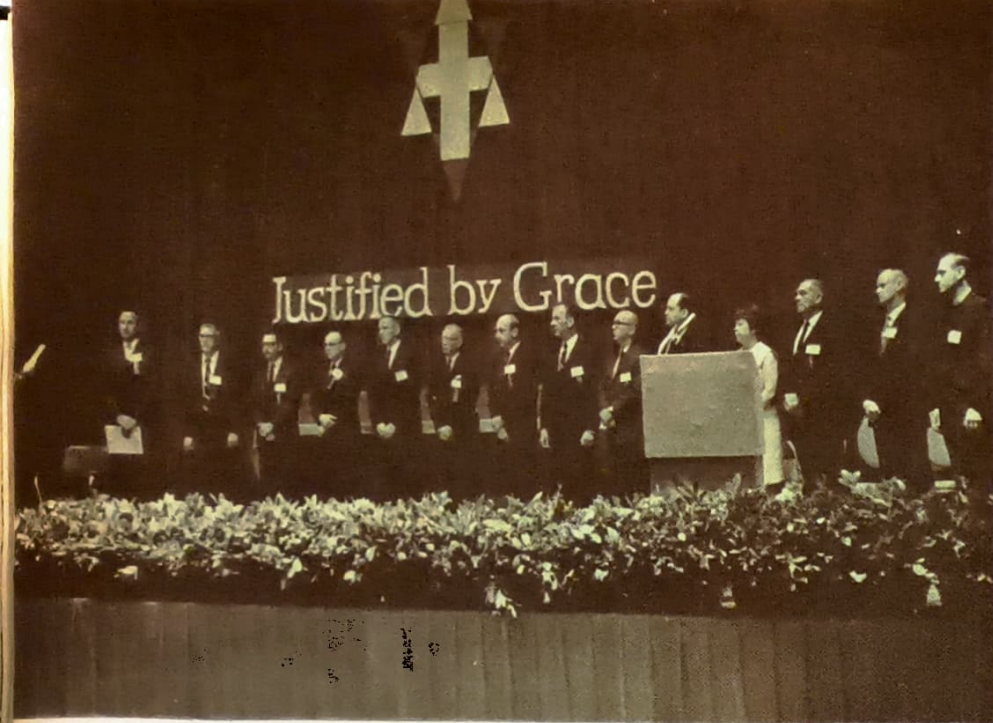


Dr. Paul O. Manz, M. Mus., Litt. D., was at the organ both for the opening service and for the Sunday evening concert at Lincoln Center. He is an associate professor at Concordia College, St. Paul, Minn.



For the first time convention ballots, marked with special pencils by the 800 delegates, were machine-tallied at a synodical convention.





Fourteen members of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod who serve full time with the Lutheran Council in the United States of America are inducted into their staff posts by Dr. Harms.

Typical of many happy moments in which relatives and friends visit with one another at a synodical convention is this chat among three Seltz brothers. Left to right they are: Martin L., pastor of Concordia Church in South St. Paul; Eugene, professor and missionary at the seminary in Hong Kong; and Alfred, full-time District president of Minnesota North, Brainerd.



Lines formed at virtually all of the 10 microphones in the convention hall as the resolution on fellowship with The American Lutheran Church was being read. During the prolonged discussion as many as 47 delegates sometimes stood in line to speak.



Dr. E. J. Friedrich, former synodical vice-president and seminary professor, stands at a microphone to express his opinion of the "censorship" resolution to the convention. Directly behind him is Dr. Alfred Fuerbringer, president of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis.





Dr. Oliver Harms greets Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, president of the Lutheran Church in America, as the latter prepares to deliver what turned out to be one of the convention's most stirring addresses.



Rev. Deane Schuessler, missionary to Japan, tells delegates in session of one use to which Ebenezer funds can be put in that land.



At a breakfast sponsored by the Council of Lutheran Ministries during the convention Ray Scherer, NBC White House correspondent, told 350 guests that the press image of the LCMS, which tags it always as "conservative," needs changing. "What I am trying to suggest," he said, "is that we must get on with the work of changing our image but, more than that, changing our concerns to be relevant to the world of the 1970's that is coming."

Captain Max W. Wilk, youthful LCMS chaplain recently recovered from a back injury incurred in a Vietnam helicopter crash, addressed the convention briefly. Relating the work of the ministry during time of war, he described it as complementing the local ministry of the parish. Military service for many men, he said, is often boredom interspersed with moments of pure terror. Delegates chuckled when he added whimsically — "much like a convention."



For more than 40 years, since 1923, Rev. Waldemar Ferber of Fargo, N. Dak., has been a minister to the deaf in the U. S. and Canada. Here Melvin Luebke of Mill Neck Manor on Long Island presents the John of Beverley medal to Pastor Ferber during convention sessions for his distinguished service.



Debby Armstrong won the hearts of delegates with her frank and direct words on the kind of race relations espoused by those who select some Negroes to "be friends with" but do not really understand nor take up the Negro cause.





# At Least Three Trends

**T**WO YEARS AGO, after the Missouri Synod convened at Detroit, it was possible to speculate that the 1967 convention at New York might give major consideration to the cause of synodical higher education, as the 1965 meeting was dedicated to the cause of missions.

Missions and education, after all, are two of the main functions of the international church body, absorbing about two thirds of the synodical budget.

The New York convention has been adjourned, and many of the educational questions facing the Synod have been left unanswered.

## Attention Diverted

At least three trends affected thinking at New York about colleges and seminaries:

1. An uncertain financial commitment, evident in lagging receipts for both the synodical budget and the Ebenezer Thankoffering, virtually nullified any proposals for expansion of the educational system.

2. An accumulation of administrative and constitutional matters, as well as numerous overtures on issues in the theological and church relations category, limited time for discussion on the report of the Board for Higher Education to the Synod's first 7-day convention.

3. A growing amount of questioning about the value of maintaining the synodical training system for pastors and teachers caused a feeling of hesitancy about expansion moves.

## Building Deferred

Sensing the reluctant mood, the Synod's board for higher education did not press for a commitment to the long-range goals stemming from a major study of the synodical training system.

For the most part, the convention delegates were willing to wait another two years before coming to grips with some of the critical questions centering on the 16 colleges and seminaries.

For example, a resolution asking for an endorsement of plans to build

a new junior college in southern California was deferred until 1969. Instead, the education board was instructed to restudy educational needs on the West Coast.

Opposition to the proposed school, planned for a site near Irvine, about 20 miles south of Los Angeles, was provoked by delegates from northern California who don't want the Synod to close California Concordia College at Oakland, which is part of the plan to open the new institution. But the lack of money was also a major factor in the delay.

The delegates also turned down requests to make 4-year schools out of the junior colleges at Ann Arbor, Mich., and Bronxville, N. Y. Financial considerations figured into these decisions, too.

## Salaries Raised

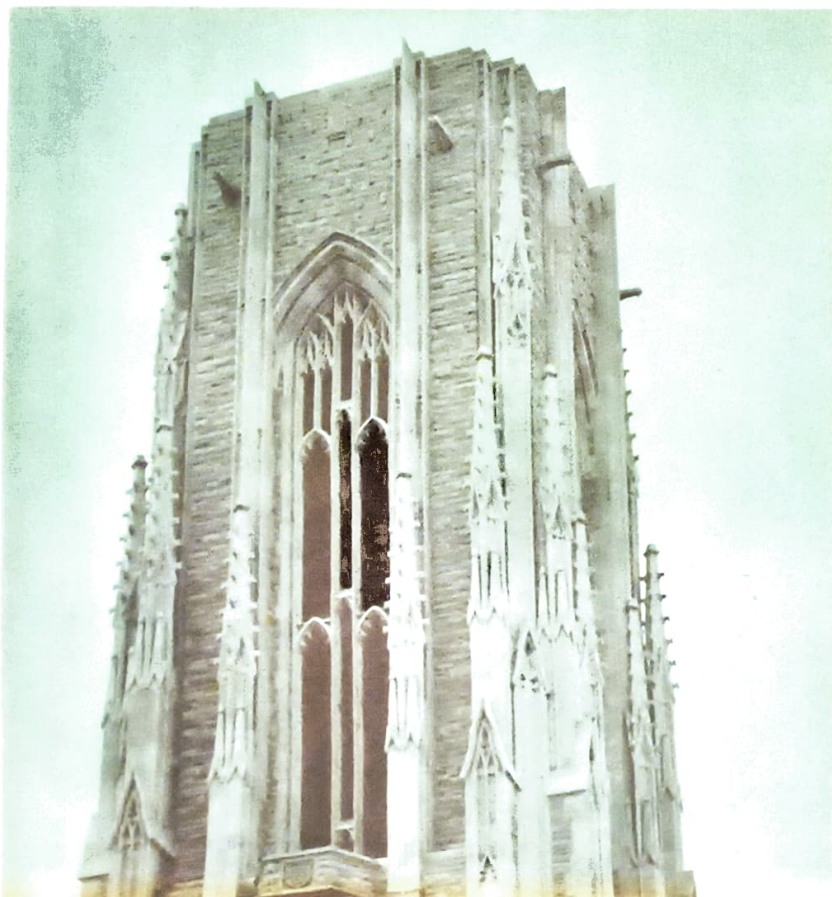
On one point, though, the delegates were not hesitant. On two separate occasions they made it clear they want the faculty members at the synodical schools to get higher salaries. For years the instructors and professors at the synodical schools have been at or near the bottom of the salary range of professors teaching in American colleges and universities.

Until the Synod's board of directors voted to take \$225,000 out of contingency funds last spring for salary increases, faculty members at the synodical schools had not received a general pay increase since 1964.

In adopting work programs for 1968 and 1969 the convention delegates approved proposed outlays of \$450,000 each year for faculty salary increases. Earlier they had voted favorably on a resolution recommending annual cost-of-living increases for synodical professors.

Thus, when the convention adjourned, the delegates had indicated they want to maintain a quality educational program by providing additional funds to support those who are largely responsible for educational quality. They were unwilling, though, to consent to a major expansion of synodical higher education, which feeds the parishes with pastors and teachers.

R. J.





# Church Housekeeping



**Canadian Carl Popkey of Windsor, Ont., spoke as an international delegate. He represented Detroit's central circuit.**



**T**HE LUTHERAN CHURCH — MISSOURI SYNOD will keep its 20-year-old "confessional" name, will continue to explore the possibilities of relocating its headquarters, and will make an intensive study of who shall have the right to submit overtures and petitions to delegate conventions.

These were New York convention decisions on some of the liveliest questions mulled over by the floor committees on administrative and constitutional matters. Between them the two committees processed what appears to be a new high of 80 resolutions.

On the proposal to change to the name "Lutheran Church International" the committee reported that no groundswell of opinion in favor of the name had materialized; in fact, fellow Lutherans overseas regarded the name with disfavor since it smacked of paternalism. Difficulties and embarrassing situations encountered in mass media circles and in areas beyond the Midwest due to the "provincial" Missouri designation, it was noted, are outweighed by the consideration that the name Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod has come to be associated with a "firm confessional position in the theological world."

In accepting an interim report on a board of directors' study of adequate facilities for synodical headquarters and a possible relocation of headquarters (Chicago is mentioned as an alternate site), the convention ap-

propriated \$25,000 for further real estate, financial, and architectural studies and asked for a complete report in 1969.

The board was instructed not to limit its alternatives to those mentioned in the report (downtown Saint Louis, suburban St. Louis, Chicago metropolitan area) but to consider other possibilities which seem practicable.

## Right of Petition

In asking for a special presidentially appointed committee to dig into questions concerning the right of submitting overtures, proposals, petitions, and other matters intended for consideration by synodical conventions, delegates agreed with the floor committee's opinion that it was a problem that merited "deliberate study and ought to be clarified for the expediting of convention business."

Complexity of the problem is indicated by the questions asked by the floor committee itself: "Shall this right be restricted to members of the Synod only? Shall the right be further restricted so that overtures will be accepted from no *individuals* (including pastors and teachers) in the Synod? Shall the right be extended to others, including individual lay people and the governing boards of synodically recognized auxiliary organizations?"

Extended applause followed the passage of a resolution from the com-

mittee on synodical administration according a vote of confidence to the Synod's board of directors and fiscal officers.

This confidence action came in answer to overtures referring to charges of mismanagement and misrepresentation by the board made in a booklet, "A Businessman Looks at His Church," which had been disseminated throughout Synod some weeks before the convention.

In an analysis of the case going back 7 years, the committee reported no foundation for charges of mismanagement could be found. The resolution ordered that the vote of confidence be publicly announced to the Synod by its president.

## Keep Voting Balance

Overtures proposing that each congregation of a multiparish be permitted to have voting representation at District conventions were declined. Cited as the chief reason is the principle held by the Synod "from its earliest beginnings" to keep an equal balance between voting clergy and voting laymen.

Significant changes were made in the method of electing delegates to synodical conventions in order to provide for a more equal base of representation and improved election procedures.

New regulations provide for election (in contrast to selection) of delegates by electoral circuits which will consist of either one or two adjacent visitation circuits, as determined by each District, so that each pair of delegates (clergyman and layman) represents from 7 to 20 member congregations involving from 1,500 to 10,000 communicants.

The new bylaw also stipulates that voting delegates serve a 2-year term, during which they shall function as resource persons in their circuit and assist in implementing the Synod's resolutions.

Overtures to make the second and third vice-presidents of Synod full-time officials and to make the office of executive director an elective office were declined.

Other resolutions raise from 7 to 20 years the limitation on board of directors borrowing power for capital investment purposes; reduce the members of the board of support and pensions from 10 to 5; and urge District presidents and circuit counselors to remind congregations to pay their pastors and teachers adequate salaries.

A. W. G.



Excerpts from the essay read to the  
47th regular convention of  
The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod  
in New York City, July 7—14, 1967,  
on the theme: "Justified by Grace"

# The Unity of the Church Is a Unity of Faith

"Justified by grace" is the motto of our meeting. "Justified by grace" is the Good Word of God to a world where the news is mostly bad. "Justified by grace" is Good News to all men everywhere from God, who justifies the ungodly as a gift, purely of the goodness of His own heart. . . .

"Justified by grace" is God's action in Christ by which the church is born, lives, and grows throughout the world — the church of which we say and confess in the Nicene Creed: I believe one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church.

The church — one, holy, catholic, and apostolic — lives and breathes by the Gospel, summed up in this one promise with all the authority of God's own Word to authenticate and proclaim it: *Justified by grace*.

## The Church Is One

The church is one. . . . There are not many churches, nor even twin churches, but one church. The church has one Shepherd, who has one fold.

The oneness of the church is not a mere academic fact to be disregarded in the practical life of the church. Indeed, the oneness of the church has given hope to people caught in the toils of persecution in our own time, and it has built courage in hearts gone faint in the face of enormous problems faced by the church itself, both within and without.

The church is God's own special product in the world, and He watches over it. He has founded the church, and He keeps it going. It is His seed planted in the world, and He keeps it

growing. It is His doing, and no man is going to take the glory of it from Him.

In every case where the church is spoken of in the New Testament, it is thought of as an assembly or as assemblies acting in unity. It is not that there were no difficulties in that church and in those congregations. There were. Some of those difficulties were probably greater than those commonly met with today. However, it is Christ who gives the church its unity, not the people.

Is the unity of the church perfect? Not here. That is why it has been given apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

No church body, including our own, can lay claim to being the one church of which the New Testament speaks. None is the whole body. Every church body represents a certain historical tradition from which it cannot wholly escape. That is why the search for unity on the denominational or organizational level will probably never supply the answer to our Lord's prayer that "they all may be one."

The search for unity is primarily a matter of repentance and faith, not a matter of organization.

Article 7 of the Augsburg Confession set the tone for considered Lu-

theran action in the very complex picture of disunity presented by organizational structures of the church today. Institutions and customs established by men should not be allowed to stand in the way. The Lutheran Confessions say that the unity of the church is a unity of faith. For such unity there must be consensus regarding the doctrine of the Gospel and administration of the Sacraments. Everything else, including the necessity of identical church constitutions, is secondary.

## The Church Is Holy

The assertion that the church is holy dare not blind anyone to the fact that at least some of the criticism directed at the church cannot be termed groundless, even though it comes from sources that can properly be described as hostile to the church. In fact, a good case can be made for the fact that outright and honest hostility can be more easily dealt with by the church than studied indifference and pious perfectionism. A hostile outsider can be a Pharisee, too, but the finger-pointing, better-than-thou kind of criticism is more likely to come from within than from without. The publican, as our Lord declared, and even the prostitute are likely to enter the portals of the Kingdom before the Pharisee.

We cannot play the Pharisee. There is worldliness in the church and concession to the ethics of the world, its modes and morality. There is preoccupation with the goals of the world which are allowed to influence



*Dr. O. C. J. Hoffmann, convention essayist, has been the Lutheran Hour speaker for 12 years.*



the standards by which the church measures the success of its work. . . . There is professionalism on the part of both clergy and laity, instead of true Christian profession put into genuine practice to demonstrate the worth of the Christian faith for all to see. There are pride, prejudice, and passion, occasionally appearing in forms which would do credit to the world at its worst moments.

The church needs the prophetic voice of protest against the evils of the world and against evils within the church itself. That voice cannot be tinged with cynicism — not in the face of what the Scriptures tell us regarding the holiness of the church. This is the community of the living disciples of Christ. . . . This is God's handiwork in the world — the holy church of the living God.

### **The Church Is Catholic**

Martin Luther again confirmed the catholicity of the church with his grace alone, faith alone, and Scripture alone. This is the teaching of the church catholic, and by it the church lives. The church catholic is made up of men and women scattered throughout the world who agree on the Gospel and have the same Christ, the same Holy Spirit, and the same Sacraments.

Lutherans invested the word catholic with Christological content. Christ is everything. He is all in all. Therefore, the Lutheran Confessions could render the word "catholic" simply with the word "Christian," which is not an institutional designa-

tion but advances the idea that the church exists wherever the Gospel is preached.

The catholicity of the church exists in spite of the fragmented nature of Christendom. The fragmentation is serious. In many cases it is not just historical or traditional but has to do with the heart of the life of the church, its doctrine. Indeed, no single church body and no single denomination can lay full or exclusive claim to the title or the attributes of the church of God as it is described in the New Testament. Yet the catholicity of the church remains.

The ecumenical movement, good as have been some of its intentions, has also been characterized by the mistaken idea that the catholicity of the church has to be restored by putting together somehow the pieces of the church as if it were a gigantic jigsaw puzzle. The trouble with that approach is that the pieces do not fit the picture of the church as it is portrayed in the New Testament. What is needed is that the ecumenical movement be infused with the spirit of true catholicity, the reality and power of which come to the church from Christ Himself, being transmitted to the church through the God-given means of grace, the Gospel and the Sacraments.

### **The Church Is Apostolic**

The Lutheran Church has always declared that the proclamation of the Good Word of God in Christ and the administration of the Sacraments in accordance with the institution of

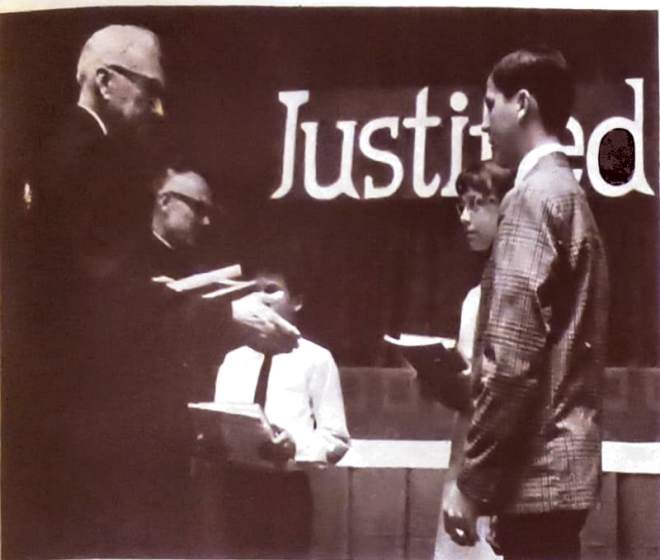
Christ are the marks of the apostolic church.

The church is apostolic when it proclaims the Good News in Christ. The Good News is proclaimed in apostolic fashion when the testimony of the lips is confirmed by the action of the heart. The apostolic church never forgets that people are *people*, bewildered, confused, lost without Christ. The apostolic church never forgets that people are people with bodies as well as souls. Their bodies are redeemed as well as their souls. Therefore, the apostolic church cannot close its eyes to the cries of poor and needy people.

In their outreach with the Gospel the apostles did not distinguish between Jews and Gentiles. . . . The time of grace for the Gentiles is also the time of grace for Israel. The time of grace for white people is also the time of grace for black people or brown people or yellow people. Saint Paul says: "God has concluded them all in unbelief that He might have mercy on all."

In the Nicene Creed, the confession of the church, we say: "I believe one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church." The first word, *credo*, is important — "I believe." Christ may be invisible to the world, but He is visible to faith. The church may be invisible to the world, but it is discernible to faith. The big question that faces us in the 20th century is this: "Is our faith of such a nature that the oneness, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity of the church is discernible to us?"





## Growth in Discipleship

During a convention service to consecrate the new Concordia Catechism Series synodical president Oliver R. Harms receives graded books from Dr. Walter M. Wangerin, editor and project director, and then gives them to catechumens as representatives of the church.

**C**HRISTIAN EDUCATION is not optional; it is an "essential function" of each congregation, the New York City convention declared.

Christian education for discipleship, the delegates affirmed, "involves growth in knowledge, in attitude, in conduct, and in the skills of discipleship."

Noting that the love of God in Christ is the "interpreting key" to the Bible, the convention also asserted that the church must encourage more extensive, intensive, and evangelical use of the Bible in its educational program for the renewal of the church's life and spirit.

The importance of training consecrated teachers was stressed because Christian education is a lifelong process. "Spiritual growth is both necessary and possible at all age levels."

Family attitudes and values were seen as profoundly affecting family members. "We affirm that the Christian family is an influential agency in Christian education and that the church must equip adults for their important Christian mission."

### Threats and Weaknesses

The need to recognize the essential nature of Christian education is urgent, it was pointed out, because of threats posed to the church by the contemporary world and weaknesses in the church's life.

Cited as threats to the church by the contemporary world were:

- A limited, basic religious training is made to seem unimportant in the face of a phenomenal expansion of knowledge and education in other fields.

- The tremendous benefits of science and technology have tended

to augment a spirit of materialism which has led many to consider Christian teachings and practices irrelevant to their lives.

- The growth of the mass media has been accompanied by such a deluge of information and entertainment that the church is faced with the problem of competing for the time and interest of people.

- An increasing divorce rate, a growth in crime and delinquency, the widespread prevalence of immorality, an increased mobility of individuals, constant population shifts, a weakening of church traditions, and the increasing unwillingness of parents to accept responsibility for Christian nurture — all contribute to the weakening of family influences.

"Distressing" weaknesses within the church were also detailed in the "Parish Renewal Through Education" resolution adopted:

- Widespread Biblical illiteracy among church members is coupled with their tendency to remain "audience" or "organization" rather than to become dynamic disciples.

- The growth rate of our educational agencies has declined, our confirmed youth have too often become Bible class dropouts, adult Bible class accessions have not kept pace with our growth in church membership.

- Many congregations not only fail to provide professional leadership for their programs of Christian education but also neglect the training of lay teachers and officers for this essential effort.

- A too-general failure to involve families in a program of planned Christian nurture is symptomatic of apathy toward organizing the local

congregation for a comprehensive program of Christian education.

It was therefore resolved that the Synod encourage each congregation "to make a searching examination of the nature, scope, and effectiveness of its educational program."

Each congregation was encouraged to "act on its findings so that it will maintain its strengths, correct its weaknesses, and provide the maximum possible program of Christian education for the sake of our church in mission."

### To Eliminate Prejudice

A second major resolution which has its applications to every congregation and member of the Synod is titled "To Warn Against Prejudice." It calls for the following action:

*That the Synod acknowledge its failure to be sensitive to the attitudes of members toward people of other religions, races, and ethnic groups and that we ask the forgiveness of those hurt or wronged by prejudicial or loveless attitudes and acts of members of the Synod;*

*That we urge every member of the Synod to restudy the Scriptures and specially prepared study materials on the subject of prejudice in order to be renewed in understanding, love, and concern for all men of every religion, race, and ethnic group because all are loved by the Father, have been redeemed by the Son, and need the quickening of the Holy Spirit.*

*That the Synod call on its members to seek prayerfully to eliminate all thoughts, words, and actions which express and convey prejudicial or loveless attitudes and practices.*

M. W. M.





# SEA OF MISCELLANEA

**C**HARTING ITS COURSE through a sea of miscellaneous items, the convention's special ministries committee sailed along with brief stops at such "ports" as convention sites and anniversaries.

One "iceberg" skirted was Valparaiso University. The convention resolved to study the possibility of reimbursing Valpo for students who elect full-time church service — about

25 percent of education costs. The delegates also endorsed congregational support for the university, suggesting a 50-cents-per-communicant goal.

## Resolve Misunderstanding

Another iceberg concerned a 1917 St. Louis graduate and missionary to Moslems whose ministry as a missionary of the Synod was terminated a

number of years ago. Without re-living on the floor all details of the earlier convention decision, New York delegates "assured Dr. Adolph A. Brux that we desire to resolve the causes of misunderstanding in the spirit of Christian love" and "that we implore the blessings of God upon Dr. Brux in the evening years of his life." The resolution was adopted by a rising vote.

## Convention Sites Chosen

On more pacific waters delegates approved a "forward thrust" theme for the 125th anniversary of Synod in 1972, including authorization for the anniversary committee among other projects "to arrange for sufficient funds" for expansion of Concordia Historical Institute. The estimate is \$500,000.

Despite overtures to make Saint Louis a permanent convention site or to give the board of directors the right of choice, delegates decided to continue the practice of convention selection and picked Los Angeles for 1977 and Kansas City, Mo., for 1979. (Already approved are conventions in Denver, 1969; Milwaukee, 1971; New Orleans, 1973; and Toronto, 1975.)

Noting that 2,815 individuals in Synod had contributed \$102,856 to the American Bible Society in 1966, delegates urged individuals to increase this support. The convention also suggested that Bible societies pick more modern editions to circulate than the King James Version.

R. A.

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## THANK YOU, VONNIE

I learned about you and your love for our Lord Jesus Christ from your pastor, Carleton Zahn. Here are some of the things he wrote:

"I was having difficulty finding a person who would agree to be our director and would do the kind of job the Thankoffering deserved. Finally I learned that I might be looking in the wrong places, that is, in the homes of able-bodied people who tend to take life for granted. I went to a home at which the world would have suggested I had no right to stop. It was the home of a young woman stricken with multiple sclerosis. She is confined to a wheelchair, unable to manage on her own, even with crutches.

"Ebenezer Thankoffering directors don't grow on trees, and one might assume at first (but only at first) that they don't grow out of such conditions as these either. Miss Nehls eagerly accepted my suggestion that she lead our congregation in thanksgiving under the Ebenezer plan. She accepted with tears in her eyes the opportunity to serve her Lord from her pulpit on wheels.

"I mention all this not to glorify Yvonne but to glorify the Lord of her life. Her very words to me were: 'People have often let me down, but Jesus Christ has never let me down!' This was her way of saying that she is glad to be alive (just the way she is!).

"I see her being carried up several steps each Sunday morning by two husky men of the congregation. But I wonder who is carrying whom.

"There are many Sunday mornings when I walk my two blocks to my church. I may feel defeated or full of complaints, tired or disgusted. These are the Sunday mornings on which Yvonne Nehls carries me up that flight of stairs; she lifts my faith to face the gracious Lord. She helps me preach my sermon. She is my crutch that shows me how to be thankful that I am alive, especially alive in the risen Christ. (This is not at all the kind of thanks one feels when he sees someone less fortunate and says, 'I'm thankful I'm not in that condition.' It is thanks anchored in Christ.)

"If it were not for Jesus, there would be neither the reason nor the strength for Yvonne or me to tackle that flight of stairs or anything else.

"Because Ebenezer also means saying something to one another in witness to our faith, I am sending you this story. Perhaps it might help someone else. I keep thinking Yvonne may be part of God's plan to carry our whole Synod 'up the stairs' to thankfulness—Ebenezer style!"

Then your pastor also enclosed the personal doxology, Vonnice, which you wrote sometime ago:

*I'm thankful for . . .*

*The answers to my prayers, even the silly ones.*

*My wheelchair that carries me to places near and far.*

*(It is a magic carpet that even takes me square dancing.)*

*My crutches that are an extension of my arms to propel me on my way.*

*I'm thankful for . . .*

*My eyes that still can see the beauties of the everyday world.*

*My ears to hear the melodies that float on the air.*

*My fingers that can feel the rough and the smooth.*

*My tongue that tells me of the bitter and sweet.*

*My voice to say, "Thank you," or, "Excuse me," or, "I'm sorry."*

*I'm thankful for . . .*

*The time given me to watch, to contemplate, to observe.*

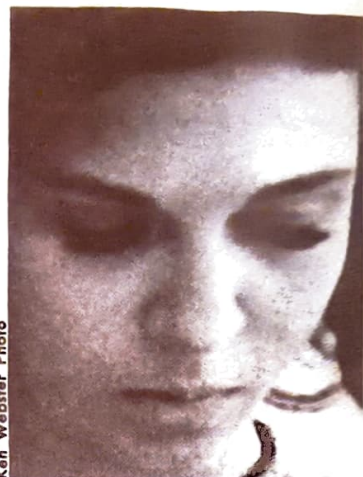
*The ending of a rat race I used to be in though at the time I was not aware of it.*

*The peace given me while the outside world races on and on and on.*

Thank you, Vonnice. Thank You, God, for Vonnice and for her pastor.

MARTIN L. KOEHNEKE

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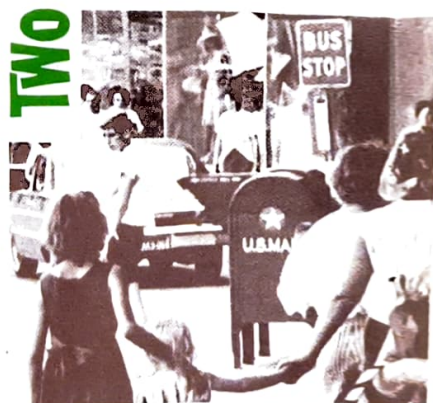


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THE LUTHERAN WITNESS



## Letters from One Apart

Thomas Merton's *Seeds of Destruction* has been around for several years. Its influence has been disproportionate to its size. Merton's style does not seek to impress anyone with its brilliance, nor do the contents labor to sound scholarly. But both style and contents are singularly impressive.

Perhaps it is the utter honesty and openness of a man who has deep places in his soul from which to bring mature Christian thoughts that pulls readers into this little book. In any event Macmillan Company has done a wise and good thing to bring out the Trappist monk's book in a \$1.45 paperback this year.

In a way some of the contents are dated. Observations on civil rights made only a few years ago when read now show us how a revolution ebbs and flows swiftly and unpredictably. The opening 50 pages of the volume offer "Letters to a White Liberal," written in the early summer and the fall of 1963. Though they therefore predate the Civil Rights act, the comments Merton makes dig deep into the struggles and the circumstances that make legislation necessary and also cause it alone to be insufficient.

It is clear to Merton even when writing these letters that the Negro "is going to have to obtain some kind of power" and that violence in the race crisis is likely. Certainly Negroes will not gradually and quietly "fit in" to white society.

The white, Merton warns, should not imagine that the Negro hopes to become like him. With an edge of sadness and chagrin the author says to the white liberal that in the Negro revolution to come "you will prefer your own security to everything else, and you will be willing to sacrifice the Negro to preserve yourself."

### Diaspora Irreversible

In part two of the 224-page paperback edition of his book Merton talks about what he terms The Diaspora, an irreversible situation Christians must recognize: They will never change the City of Man into the City of God.

According to him the impact of the church today and in the future will depend "on the openness, the freedom, the total sincerity with which the ordinary Christian is prepared to meet the non-Christian on his own ground and awaken him to

the truth of the Gospel in terms that he can understand and accept."

His comments on Gandhi are significant. He sees him as exemplary for the way by which men are likely to be influenced most in our time: by gathering in almost monastic groups around an exceptional leader. Merton defines Gandhi's way as "simply to follow conscience without regard for the consequences to himself, in the belief that this was demanded of him by God and that the results would be the work of God."

The remainder of *Seeds of Destruction* brings 35 letters Merton wrote from his Kentucky monastic life to people in widely diverse walks of life and realms of experience. Always his words are warm and crystal clear, his thoughts eminently sane, his approach loving.

In one letter he emphasizes the need for people to cry out to one another with the truth of Christ and states in that context that "faith cannot be preserved if reason goes under, and the church cannot survive if man is destroyed."

On New Year's Day in 1962 he writes: "Our sudden, unbalanced, top-heavy rush into technological mastery has left us without the spiritual means to face our problems." In the same year he wrote in another letter that "the mentality of this country as I now understand it is utterly sinister, desperate, belligerent, illogical." The same letter states: "But one wonders just what can be done, when the country is in the grip of the business-military complex that lives on the weapons and is dominated by them."

There is a sombre tone to this entire book. But it is not pessimism. The joy of life and the vigor of Christian hope penetrate even Merton's darkest forebodings. In a letter to a woman who has asked him whether he is weary he states: "We are like a bunch of drunken men at the last end of a long stupid party, falling over the furniture in the twilight of dawn. I hope it is dawn." — O. S.

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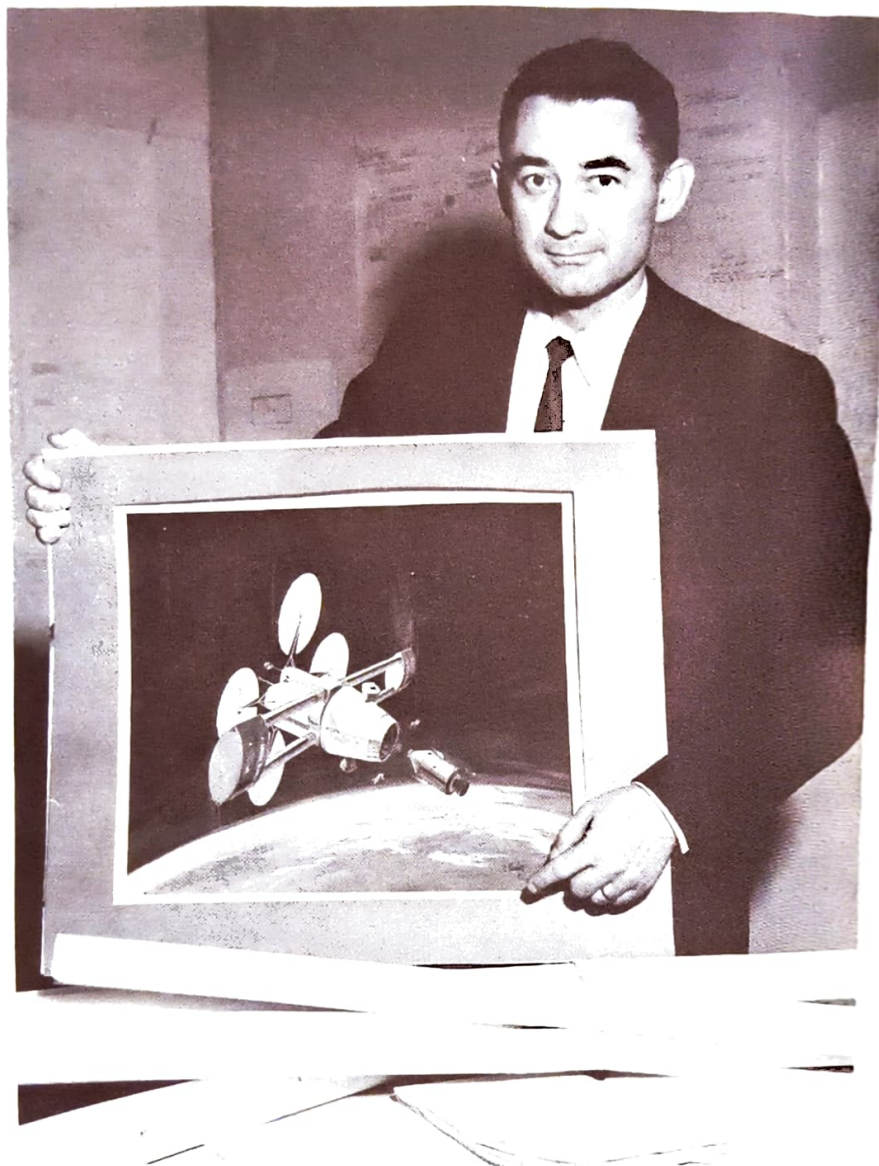
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# Lay Ministries



## Silver Linings

### John Mockovciak, Jr.

Translating Gen. 1:28 into modern idiom, John Mockovciak, Jr., a member of St. Luke Lutheran Church, Dix Hills, Long Island, predicts:

— After landing a man on the moon, an immediate United States goal will be establishing a manned space station for trips to other planets.

— This multimanned space station could be launched by the mid-1970s to begin "a period of extensive manned habitation and exploration of the earth's orbital region."

— By this date there will be unmanned landings on Mars and Venus, and fly-bys of Venus and Mars by the late 1970s.

— Permanent scientific facilities will be established on the moon by 1980.

Mockovciak knows what he's forecasting because he's head of the Advanced Space Systems department of Grumman Aircraft Engineering Corp., Bethpage, L. I.,

which has the prime contract for the lunar excursion module being built for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Apollo program. St. Luke Pastor Lester Messerschmidt says Mockovciak views this work as part of God's directive to subdue the earth and have dominion over it.

Despite a grueling schedule with trips to Houston, Washington, Alabama, Florida, and California, Mockovciak serves as chairman of St. Luke Congregation and as a member of its executive planning council. He and his wife — charter members of the 5-year-old congregation — assist as junior high counselors.

Referring to his congregation chairman, Pastor Messerschmidt adds: "His vast knowledge of space and space technology have served only to reinforce his faith in a majestic God who entered space and time in His Son for our redemption."





## Golden Days

### Albert C. Abel

Envy St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Fort Dodge, Iowa!

In the church office serves a lifelong Lutheran resident of Fort Dodge, a retired assistant postmaster, an acting business manager, a plant overseer, and an office worker for mimeographing, stencil work, financial records, and mailings to the more than 900 congregation families.

Some staff, you say. Not a staff, but one man, Albert C. Abel, who retired Jan. 1, 1955, as Fort Dodge assistant postmaster to begin some spare-time work in the church office. Now he's working 30 to 40 hours a week for token remuneration.

There are other semi-retired and retired men and women who have (1) knowledge of the church and its workings, (2) local background, (3) professional experience, (4) interest, and (5) time. Abel believes that perhaps more retired persons don't take up this challenge either because they are overlooked by their local congregation or because they feel timid about asking whether they can serve.

"Don't be afraid to volunteer your services," says this veteran of 77 years. "With the love of Christ constraining you, the Lord can and surely will use you in that capacity for which you are fitted."

About his business manager, senior pastor Paul R. Heckmann adds: "In his quiet, humble fashion he indicates very strongly that he is serving his Lord and his congregation because it is his privilege to do so. His dedication is boundless."

## Polished Talent

### Rodney Pelander

Ask this 15-year-old accordionist to play something besides "Lady of Spain," and he will.

Both a Minnesota first-place winner and a national second runner-up in accordion competition, Rodney Pelander of Duluth, Minn., is also a member of the Duluth Accordionaires. The teen-age band has won top honors in American Accordionist Association nationals since the band was formed in 1951.

Besides competing, the 23 teen-agers play for school assemblies, for conventions in the new arena-auditorium, and for concerts. Last year's national championship earned the band a tour of Italy and an appearance on Johnny Carson's "Tonight" show on its return.

Despite the natural talent and a rewarding beginning Rodney doesn't plan to follow in the steps of the Harmonicats. Rather he might use his accordion to teach others, helping pay his way to a teacher's degree, perhaps at Concordia College, St. Paul.

In Redeemer Lutheran Congregation, Duluth, Rodney served as head acolyte during the past year, was elected to the Walther League board, and was an assistant during the vacation Bible school. At home he and his two brothers and their father had to share the work, following the death of Mrs. Lester Pelander last year. Together they're doing a fine job.





# Live-in at Selma *why some young Lutherans from the North changed their minds about Negroes in the South*

**T**o see Negro farmers plowing their small fields with mules and hand plows was a revelation to a group of young Lutherans from Bloomington, Ill., who recently made a trip to Selma, Ala.

To see the "broken-down shacks" some of these rural Alabamians call home was another.

And then there were Negroes who seemed to be "still slaves for whites."

But what impressed the youthful visitors even more was the friendliness they encountered.

They left Bloomington in an apprehensive mood, not quite sure how students at Selma Lutheran Academy and College would react to their visit.

"I didn't know how they would act toward us," a 14-year-old high school freshman said. "I thought maybe they would ignore us."

A 15-year-old youth had Alabama pictured as one "great turmoil," the scene of "many race riots."

But to his "great surprise" he found the people "very friendly and very helpful in showing us around."

"My ideas about Negroes really changed after I saw how friendly and polite they were," commented a fellow Walther Leaguer who also came with misgivings.

The Selma students "included us in their activities," she added. "They treated us like 'one of the gang.'"

**P**urpose of the trip, according to Rev. James H. Wessel, pastor of Bloomington's Redeemer Congregation, was to encourage "a positive approach" to the racial unrest "plaguing our country."

The Walther Leaguers, ranging in age from 14 to 18, had a chance to live on the campus with the Selma students.

"By living with the students," Pastor Wessel said, "they had oppor-

tunity to learn to know them as fellow Christians, to share their beliefs and hopes, to talk about their joys and sorrows."

The visitors ate all their meals in the dining hall and attended classes.

"We arranged for a number of informal group discussion periods at which the young people got acquainted and exchanged ideas," said the school's president, Rev. Paul G. Elbrecht. "They talked about their family backgrounds, their interests, and their plans for vocation."

**C**omments of the Bloomington Lutherans show how prejudice withers when Christians meet in a proper setting.

"I thought I would have to stay with a Negro girl," said one with the bluntness typical of youth, "and I didn't like the idea."

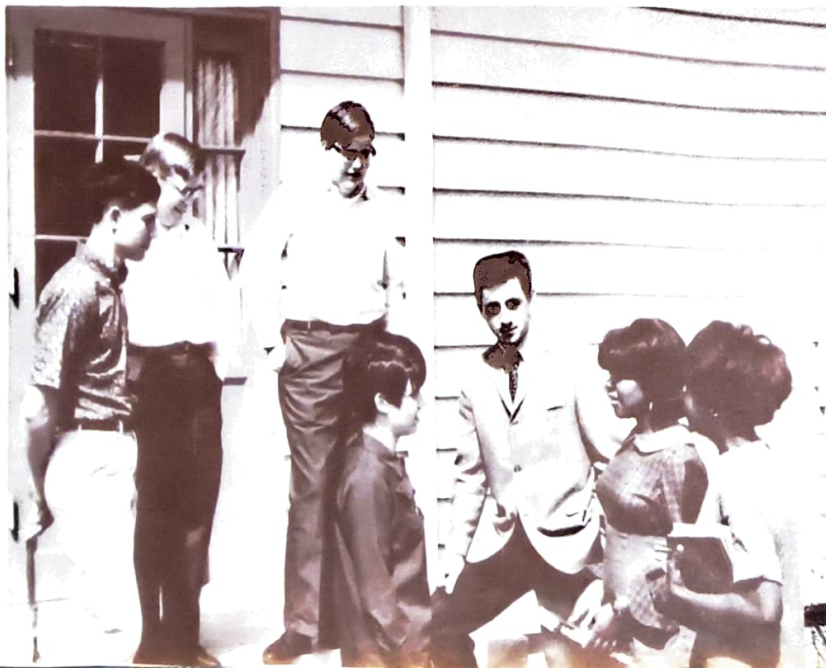
"But all this changed within a little while," she went on. "I never believed that I could be so friendly with Negroes."

"The faculty at Selma and the kids," another Walther Leaguer said, "were some of the finest people I've met — people just the same as me. Wonderful, friendly people."

One of the boys believed that the Alabama school deserves help to provide "a better, more rounded education." Especially needed, he felt, are a new dormitory, a library, and "a good athletic program with a gym."

Another boy feared Alabama Lutheran Academy and College was not being improved "because it might hurt the feelings of Southern whites if Negroes were educated and could hold the same jobs as they do or better jobs."

*At formal and informal get-togethers Selma and Bloomington students talk about common interests and goals.*



*Bloomington girls leaving this hall on the Selma campus will remember the person whose name it bears.*



In Pastor Wessel's opinion the school may not be "the full answer" or "even a part of the best answer." But the Selma campus, he said, is something in which the church "is and has been involved in a positive way."

It is impossible "to sit back and pontificate on the problems of the racial issue and on the work accomplished by our church at the Selma school," he remarked.

Carroll Ohlde, St. Louis seminarian vicaring at the Bloomington church, cited the Selma campus as "an example of Christians caring—caring about the situation of the Negro."

"I was impressed," the vicar said, "by the concern of Selma students to educate themselves and help themselves. They need our help and support. A school like Selma is needed to help them educationally and financially."

Besides attending classes at the academy and college the Bloomington group toured the so-called central Alabama mission field.

"This is the area," says President Elbrecht, "where under the leadership of Dr. Rosa J. Young and, more recently, of Rev. Walter Ellwanger the Lutheran Church has carried on its work among Negroes in the South."

The group stopped at Arlington, which has a new Lutheran elementary school resulting from the consolidation of four rural schools.

"Many readers will remember the *A School for Reggie* filmstrip and the gifts gathered from various parts of the Synod to support this project," according to President Elbrecht.

**Friendliness shown by Selma students quickly dispels misgivings of the young Lutherans from Bloomington, Ill.**



Another stop on the tour was at Vredenburgh, where three small rural parishes have combined to build a new house of worship with the help of fellow Lutherans.

On the tour the visitors saw "quite a few old and broken-down shacks."

"It was hard to believe," one girl said, "that people could live in those shacks."

Particularly in the countryside, Vicar Ohlde observed, "the majority have the poorest homes I've seen in all my life. What my grandfather told me existed 60 to 70 years ago on his farm in Kansas seems to be the situation here—maybe worse."

Again and again he saw "a mule, a hand plow, and a Negro following behind!"

Highlight of the tour for all the visitors was a stop at the home of Dr. Young. The 77-year-old pioneer missionary and teacher, now retired from her faculty post at Selma, lives on a hilltop in a wooded area near the spot where she began her first Lutheran school at Rosebud.

"I had the privilege of meeting the woman behind all the mission schools—Rosa Young," said one of the girls. "She could live in a new home with beautiful furniture, but she chose to live in her old family home."

"She is an example of how the Lord works through one person to accomplish a lot."

Rosa Young "has left her mark," another girl said. "On our jaunt through the country we saw all her work."

The need for workers in missions is "tremendous," she added. "As we were traveling, a feeling came over me. . . . I felt as though I should

do something, and I want to. God bless this work."

The young people returned to Bloomington "richer for their experience, and I'm sure they grew a great deal," Pastor Wessel wrote the WITNESS.

And President Elbrecht wrote: "Our students benefited from the trip. It was encouraging to them to see this interest on the part of a group of young people from another state."

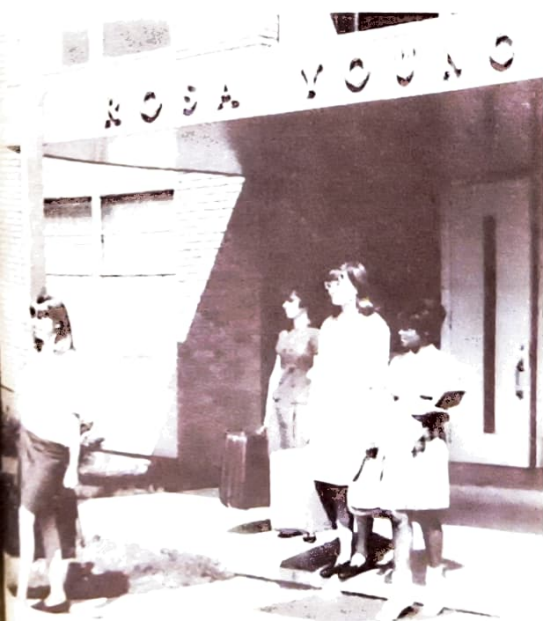
"One thought repeatedly expressed was that this is the kind of experience many more of our young people could benefit from."

"It would, as we see the situation, help many of our Lutheran people to take it upon themselves to become better acquainted with the problems, the aspirations, and whatever else they may find—especially at Alabama Lutheran Academy and College."

Here is how two of the visitors from Bloomington expressed it:

"I feel that if we could only encourage more people to visit Lutheran Academy and College here in Selma, it would change a lot of their ideas about Negroes. Negroes are human just like we are. They should have all the rights we do. People down here are 100 years behind. If only more people would realize this and do something about it—like helping them with a good education—it would be a big step forward."

"I think if every person would put pride and selfishness aside and think about others and help these people get an education, we could then work together with them and get twice as much done for our Lord and His church."





An episode from life told by a 74-year-old Chicagoan whose church and civic activities won for him election to the 1963 "City-Wide Hall of Fame" — the only sightless person to have been so honored.

**"I'll  
Be  
Seeing  
You"**



Arno W. Kupsch and Tex

A loose-leaf binder, I mused. The very thing for the purpose. I had been taking notes from a Hadley School home-study braille textbook, and loose papers were beginning to accumulate. The Eton Shop usually had what I wanted in stationery supplies, so I decided to go there.

"Tex," I said to my Leader dog, "how would you like to go for a walk?"

With a happy bark my ever-willing companion darted to his harness and leash, hanging in their usual place on the doorknob, and waited. I put on my hat and coat, then held the harness for Tex, who stood a bit impatiently while I fastened the buckle and snapped on the leash. We were on our way.

It was a beautiful autumn day, pleasantly cool, and I could hear the occasional sound of a rake and caught the odor of burning leaves. I tried to visualize the gay colors of the foliage and felt invigorated by the stimulating atmosphere and the brisk walk.

Tex too seemed to be exhilarated because he had gradually been increasing his pace and signaled his contentment with his tail, which beat rhythmically against my leg. I reached down with an encouraging pat: "Tex, you're a good boy!"

We had walked several blocks — Tex always stopped to indicate curbs — when we halted again. At 57th Street, I reflected, a busy crossing. I stood with Tex on my left and listened to determine the direction of the traffic flow.

Someone, I became aware, was on my right. Then a man spoke: "May I cross the street with you?"

Clearly his words were addressed to me. Suddenly it occurred to me

that just a moment before I had heard the tap of a cane. Could this man be blind or lame? I wondered.

Without stopping to consider the responsibility I was about to assume, I answered: "Certainly!"

Immediately traffic began moving in our direction, so I quickly added, "Here, take my arm." To Tex I gave the word "Forward!"

The stranger seemed about to falter and started to speak: "Are you blind too? Is that a guide dog?"

"Yes, I'm blind," I replied, "and Tex is a Leader dog."

"I use a cane," he remarked.

Before I could offer any comment, he added: "I still have light perception. Can you see at all?"

"No," was my brief answer.

"But how fast you walk, and how quickly you seem to recognize obstacles!" he exclaimed. Then immediately: "Ever use a cane?"

"For a few months," I told him, "but that did not give me the mobility I desired. So when I learned about Leader dogs, I proceeded to get one. Tex sees for me and relieves me of much anxiety."

Halting at another crossing, my new friend and I agreed that we had reached 59th Street.

"I turn east here," he said, explaining that he was on his way to visit an old man, a paralytic, who had long been a shut-in.

"I read to him from my braille books. Where are you going?"

"Tex is taking me to 63d Street to buy a loose-leaf binder," I replied.

As he moved off to the accompaniment of the soft-tapping cane, his voice came back soft and clear: "I'll be seeing you."

I paused thoughtfully. Then to Tex, "Forward!"

## 450th Reformation Anniversary Tours.

Take one of these tours and you will visit the places where Martin Luther stood up for his beliefs and fostered what was to become the Lutheran Church. The Castle Church at Wittenberg, where he preached, where he posted his 95 theses, and where he was buried. The monument at Worms, where he was asked to recant.

There are 32 tours leaving from March through December. Each tour is led by one of the Lutheran ministers listed below.

Though each tour visits Martin Luther's home and church, as well as Scandinavia, they differ widely in the other places they visit. Some go to Italy, some to the Holy Land. There is even a tour around the world.

The tours start at \$725. For a copy of our complete tour folder call your travel agent and ask him for the SAS 450th Reformation Anniversary Tours. Or write to SAS, Dept. ZS, 138-02 Queens Blvd., Jamaica, New York 11435.

### Tour Leaders:

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THE LUTHERAN WITNESS



# The Day They JAILED the PASTOR



Last April police "raided" the basement of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Chicago, where about three dozen youth had gathered. Two Prince of Peace volunteers and a young member of the congregation were arrested and booked for contributing to the delinquency of minors. When Pastor Larry Morkert went to the precinct station to inquire about the arrest, similar charges were placed against him, and he was held also. Bond was secured for them from other Lutherans who heard of it after some hours.

Behind the incident lay the story of complaints to police by citizens about youth gangs. On that day at Holy Trinity eight youths were charged with truancy and returned to their parents; the rest of the young people slipped away. True, the youths were between 13 and 16 years of age and should have been in school. But is it

reasonable to suppose that had the church been closed to them, they would have been in the classroom?

Holy Trinity is a small congregation serving the densely populated housing area called Robert Taylor Homes. The church is trying to make welcome the kind of youth who have little home life and tend to group into gangs. In this the church is surely not the enemy of law enforcers and actually serves the community's interests also.

When the arrests were made last April, a young Lutheran housewife and mother set down her personal reactions as she heard of the action. Perhaps reading her comments will help others see how complex and difficult the race question is and how important and necessary it is for Christians to get involved in progress toward some solutions.

**I** finally know what it is — humiliation, anger, utter helplessness. And you won't read about this in the paper. That's the ironic thing — something so big in my life, and you won't read about it.

Two years ago we sat in little groups in middle-class living rooms and argued about the problems of the world. The next morning they were forgotten, for they were not to be seen. Then we moved to the city, my family and I, and there was a lot to be seen. Loneliness, mainly, and utter despair. Not only for the Negro — but he stood out. And tonight his problem has been seared into my heart, and my tears of futility are a memorial to his pain and degradation.

Tonight my friend is in jail, and his young wife has frantically spent the day raising money to get him and his youth out. He has been called names and been dragged without ceremony from his world in the sun. He is not Negro, but his life is with the black, and this dear friend tonight must ask an agonizing "Why?"

Why is his church locked tonight and his congregation without their father? For Larry is this, and more. His whiteness has been accepted and, finally, trusted and loved, for his black people know this young man from South Dakota came with love and a dogged determination to find them a place in the sun too.

But at least I'm not ignorant any more, and I pray that God will make me tolerant of those who are. I'm still middle class and white and afraid to be hurt and selfish. But I have children who must grow from the hurt I feel tonight, whose lives are beginning in a world crying for involvement and concern.

Larry is a clergyman who has chiseled his way inch by inch through suspicion . . . his own and his people's.

The first year was hard for his wife because she was soon pregnant and found adjustments tossed her way faster than she could even comprehend them. But together Kathy and Larry took each day as God sent it

and fought for a place — to be recognized as caring.

The women in the community soon took Kathy to their hearts, which was bound to happen, and Larry soon discovered that the gangs, the organized young men in the black community, were drawn to him. And let me tell you that Larry Morkert is a man you automatically trust. And tonight he's in jail, in a dank, stinking cell, on a charge of "contributing to the delinquency of minors."

Because the gangs came to him and ate their lunches in his church and told him their troubles and relied on him for help, that church is locked.

I'm sick with humiliation for him. The shock of realizing that this will never be read in a paper; that people will remain ignorant and safe, makes me wring my hands. How can I help the Larry Morkerts, the thousands in this city who quietly do what they must only to get beaten and threatened? God, give me courage to do what can be done, if only to share the courage of others.



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