

## PREPARING MESSENGERS OF PEACE

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1996 Synod Convention Essay*

Peace to soothe our bitter woes  
God in Christ on us bestows;  
Jesus bought our peace with God  
With His holy precious blood;  
Peace in Him for sinners found  
Is the Gospel's joyful sound.<sup>1</sup>

The Apostle Paul, renowned New Testament messenger of the Lord Jesus Christ, is merely echoing the words of his Old Testament counterpart Isaiah<sup>2</sup> when, in writing to the Christians at Rome, he exults in the glory of the public ministry, saying, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!" Romans 10, 15. And just before quoting the prophet's words Paul has asked an important question: "How shall they preach unless they are sent?" v. 15. To which we append another question, which may well be seen as but a subdivision of the previous one: "How shall they be sent unless they are prepared?"

This year the members of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod are celebrating fifty years of involvement in the preparation of messengers of the gospel of peace in our own Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. Those fifty years have seen one hundred fifty-four graduates emerge into the public ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. According to the information available to this essayist, of that total number of Gospel messengers produced by this seminary sixteen have died, ten have retired within the synod, thirty-eight no longer remain in our synod, and ninety-one continue in the public ministry within the Synod. In another assessment of these figures, it appears that the Evangelical Lutheran Synod has retained about seventy percent of its seminary's graduates.<sup>3</sup>

The number of graduates over this span of time is certainly not very large, nor has it even sufficed to fill our own needs, for in the growth and expansion that our synod has experienced over the years we have from time to time had to undergo ministerial transfusion from other sources--in more recent times mostly from our brethren of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, but also from clergymen of other Lutheran bodies who for confessional reasons have sought fellowship in the ELS. The transfusions from the Wisconsin Synod can, in one sense, simply be said to constitute a tradeoff: in the last three decades our Bethany Lutheran College, at the request and with the support of our sister synod, performed an educational preparatory function for many second career men who sought entrance into both the seminary and, eventually, the ministry of the latter synod.<sup>4</sup>

### OLD TESTAMENT MESSENGERS

From earliest times the Lord has provided spiritual leadership for his people. The program for training such leaders in Old Testament days has not been set forth in detail, nor did it apparently always follow the same pattern. Even after the fall into sin God spoke directly to people whom he selected as spiritual leaders. In the book of Genesis, chapters 5ff, it is recorded that God spoke directly to Noah, and in the New Testament writings Peter refers to him as a "preacher [herald] of righteousness." II Peter 2,5. Of Abraham it is written in Genesis 12, 8:

“There [between Bethel and Ai] he built an altar to the Lord and *called on the name of the Lord.*”<sup>5</sup> In his exposition of the book of Genesis Luther expounds on this italicized phrase thus: “[Abraham] erects an altar on this mountain...in order to perform his duty as bishop; that is, he instructs his church concerning the will of God, admonishes them to lead a holy life, strengthens them in their faith, fortifies their hope of future blessing, and prays with them. *The Hebrew verb includes all these things.*”<sup>6</sup>

We have likewise seen from the Scriptures that God directly called Moses to serve as leader of his Old Testament church, the Israelites, yet not until this candidate had undergone considerable training in distant Midian.<sup>7</sup> In addition, Moses was given a brief crash program in connection with his being commissioned to bring a strong message from the Lord to an unrepentant Pharaoh: “Let my people go!” It is not insignificant that this Moses became the prophet according to the pattern of which our God would in his good time raise up the true prophetic antitype, namely, the Lord Jesus Christ, the ultimate Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.<sup>8</sup> And let us not forget Moses' likely training at the hands of his mother before he was turned over to the control of Pharaoh's household.

The Old Testament also records that the prophet Samuel received training at the hands of Eli, who had greater success with this son of Elkanah and Hannah than with his own sons;<sup>9</sup> and that Elisha was trained for the prophetic office under the great prophet Elijah, a double-portion of whose spirit he sought when he was about to bid farewell to his famous mentor.<sup>10</sup> Any thorough concordance of Holy Scripture will have many entries under the word prophet--in both Testaments. Most of these references are to the prophets of God, of whom Jeremiah records the Lord as saying: “Since the day that your fathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day, I have sent to you all my servants the prophets.” Jer. 7, 25. Nor are the words of these prophets to be forgotten even in the New Testament era, for Peter reminds the readers of his second epistle that they “should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets” as well as “the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by [the] Apostles.” II Peter 3,2.

But there were other prophets also--undesirable prophets--of whom the same Jeremiah records: “Thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you. They are leading you into futility; they speak a vision of their own imagination, not from the mouth of the Lord.’ ” Jeremiah 23, 16. And through the divinely appointed prophet Micah the Lord again speaks in the same vein when He refers to “the prophets that make my people err.” Micah 3, 5. In the original Greek version of the New Testament there is even a combined word for the expression “false prophet,” namely, the word which is transliterated directly into the English language as *pseudoprophet*.<sup>11</sup>

### NEW TESTAMENT MESSENGERS

It is this word which the Savior employs when through the Evangelist Matthew he records several serious NEW TESTAMENT warnings such as these: “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves,” Matthew 7, 15; and again, “Many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many.” Matthew 24, 11. The Evangelist St. John was aware of the same reality and therefore wrote: “Many false prophets have gone out into the world.” I John 4, 1. The Apostle Peter was likewise aware of this grievous condition when he reported: “There were false prophets also among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you.” II Peter 2, 1.

Because the Church of God is desirous of producing true prophets of God, it will of necessity have concern for the preparation and training of only those candidates for the office of the public ministry of whom it can be said that they are men after God's own heart. In the early

days of the New Testament our Lord and Savior himself selected twelve of his disciples, or learners, whom he then named apostles. (Cf. Luke 6, 13) He personally instructed these twelve during the three years of his visible ministry upon this earth and placed them in the vanguard when he gave command to his church to “go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.” Mark 16, 15. The Apostle Paul, who had been originally trained at the feet of Gamaliel (Acts 22, 3), one of the leading Jewish rabbis of his time, and “had advanced in Judaism beyond many of [his] own contemporaries,” Gal. 1, 14, was later called by God into his service through a special revelation and a subsequent period of training that apparently included a three-year preparatory stint in Arabia.<sup>12</sup>

When we inquire about the formal manner in which the early New Testament church trained its pastors and missionaries, we find little information either in sacred or profane sources. Apparently the Apostle Paul, as well as the other apostles, trained his co-laborers and successors by personal instruction. The epistles of Paul, therefore--especially his pastoral epistles--are no small help in determining the preparation, as well as the role, of a minister of the Gospel even today. Later in the early Christian church, catechetical schools that had been established primarily for instruction in Christian doctrine preparatory to membership in the church took on the added assignment of preparing men for the holy ministry, but information on the conduct of these schools is very meager.

### THE MIDDLE AGES

During the Middle Ages a decline in the standards for this preparation became quite apparent; it is reported that the training became so deficient “that bishops found it a burdensome task to preach a short sermon, and many priests had difficulty in reading the Scripture lessons for the Sunday.”<sup>13</sup> In the thirteenth century a significant change occurred when the schools for theological training were joined to the universities. When the Renaissance followed in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries, it also left its imprint on the theological training in the church. Of positive influence from this movement was the restoration of the study of the languages in which the Bible was written. Of negative influence was the dominating influence of Scholasticism, in which the attempt was made to comprehend and prove the transcendental, i.e., that which is beyond the experience of the senses, not simply from the divinely inspired Scriptures, but from reason.<sup>14</sup>

### THE REFORMATION ERA

When the Reformation began to take hold in the sixteenth century, the training of pastors again became a very lively concern. Luther discovered in his visitation of congregations in Electoral Saxony and Meissen in 1528 and 1529 that many priests in the church of his day were exceedingly poorly trained for their task. In the preface to his *Small Catechism* he writes:

The deplorable conditions which I recently encountered when I was a visitor constrained me to prepare this brief and simple catechism or statement of Christian teaching. Good God, what wretchedness I beheld! The common people, especially those who live in the country, have no knowledge whatever of Christian teaching, *and unfortunately many pastors are quite incompetent and unfitted for teaching.*<sup>15</sup>

As at least a partial remedy for this deplorable condition, several of the leaders of the Reformation became the core of the faculty at the University of Wittenberg, most notably Dr.

Martin Luther and Philip Melancthon. By the time of Luther's death most of the men ordained into the ministry were quite highly educated, and the standards for ordination had become much more exacting. Furthermore, the foundation for the later division of the theological curriculum into the four departments of the curriculum that even today constitute the educational program at our own seminary had now been laid.<sup>16</sup>

Within a century, however, even the religious training at the universities had become primarily intellectual and philosophical, without sufficient concern for the spiritual. Reaction within the church soon led to the development of Pietism with its great emphasis on personal religious experience. In the nineteenth century Rationalism<sup>17</sup> had become the monster that controlled the theological faculties in the universities, and the effect of this development on the kind of ministers produced for the church can quite easily be imagined. Scientific and liberal thinking came to dominate especially Protestant theology in Europe, and the waves produced by this storm soon lapped also at distant shores. It was not uncommon that under such conditions the schools themselves were undermining the very faith of the church whose future ministers they were now educating.

Interestingly enough, the rise of seminaries, at least as distinct and separate entities, seems to be greatly attributable to the spiritual deterioration of the European universities, especially the theological departments of the same. The establishment of separate theological seminaries seems to have come about largely to counteract the undesirable effects of university training and also to supplement its spiritual deficiencies.

### IN AMERICA

In the early days of the Christian church in America all denominations at first depended on the European schools for their supply of pastors and teachers. But as the various churches in this country became indigenous, i.e. native and self-sufficient, there arose for each of them greater need, as well as desire, for establishing their own educational institutions for the training of their clergy. The early schools in America were church schools--at every level. Well-known institutions of higher learning, such as Harvard, William and Mary, Yale and Princeton, were established also for the purpose of preparing students for the ministry.

Concerning this development Dr. Louis J. Sieck, at one time president of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, writes in 1954:

Today we are familiar with the distinction between college and seminary. In the early days the American college of liberal arts was a distinctively religious institution, and the education offered was centered in equipping men for the ministry. The Bible was taught in the original languages, and all students were obligated to acquaint themselves with its doctrines and precepts. Then followed special chairs of divinity in these schools. The first was the Hollis Professorship of Divinity at Harvard (1721). [S]chools exclusively intended for ministerial training. . . were established at Harvard and Yale in 1819 and 1822 respectively. During this period other schools exclusively devoted to the training of ministers appeared. Some of these were church controlled, some were independent. The first separate seminary was established by the Dutch Reformed Church at Flatbush, Long Island, New York, in 1774.<sup>18</sup>

Many of the American seminaries that now began to proliferate accepted students without college preparation, a condition that continues to exist in some denominations of the Christian church.

The first American seminary with Lutheran moorings, though at its founding not an official institution of any church, is reportedly the somewhat private seminary established in 1815 (incorporated a year later) by representatives of the estate of Rev. John Hartwick and located at Hartwick, New York.<sup>19</sup> The first *official* Lutheran theological seminary in the United States directly related to a church body was opened at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1826 by the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States of America, and it continues to this day, now under the auspices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Far more important to our synodical history and development was the establishment of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and other states. Its early home was a log cabin near Altenburg in Perry County, Missouri, and it was founded as a classical college and school of theology in 1839 by emigrants of Saxony, Germany. The members of its first faculty were young graduates of German universities, namely, candidates of theology C. F. W. Walther, J. F. Buenger, O. Fuerbringer, and Theo. Brohm. Mer the organization of the Missouri Synod in 1847, ownership and control of this institution was assumed by that synod. This seminary's first president--until his death in 1887--was the aforementioned Walther: pastor, professor, editor, and defender *extraordinaire* of the faith.

#### DEPENDENT EFFORTS--TWICE EXPERIENCED

This school was to have profound effect on the Norwegian Synod chiefly for two reasons. When the early version of the "Norwegian Synod" (officially The Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) came into existence in 1853 and found itself for some time without its own theological training school, a specially commissioned search team later in that decade found Concordia Seminary in St. Louis to be the ministerial training school of its choice especially because of the close doctrinal and spiritual bond between the two synods.<sup>20</sup> One of the results of this close alliance was that first Prof. Laur Larsen and, later, Prof. F. A. Schmidt, of the Norwegian Synod were attached to this seminary in order to serve especially the Norwegian students in attendance.<sup>21</sup> Although it founded Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, in 1861 as its pre-theological institution of higher learning, the synod did not boast a seminary of its own until Luther Seminary was established in Madison, Wisconsin, in 1876.<sup>22</sup>

Again, early in the twentieth century, when a conscience-bound minority was unwilling to enter into the fateful merger of 1917, this later version of the "Norwegian Synod" found itself without a preparatory school for its pastors. The previously manifested willingness of the Missouri Synod to open the doors of its schools to the struggling but faithful Norwegians once more was in evidence, permitting this "plucked chicken"<sup>23</sup> to begin the slow and often difficult task of growing feathers again. Besides Concordia Seminary at St. Louis, also its sister seminary at Springfield, Illinois (later relocated at Fort Wayne, Indiana), received for study some of the young men of the Norwegian Synod who aspired to the office of the public ministry.

When relationships in the Synodical Conference grew increasingly tense in the nineteen-forties because of serious doctrinal disagreements which had developed among the synods of that federation, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary at Thiensville, Wisconsin (now incorporated into Mequon) became a haven for three of the Norwegian young men [including your essayist] in the years just before the Norwegian Synod finally established its own seminary, even as the Wisconsin Synod's Northwestern College at Watertown, Wisconsin, became a senior college

preparatory school for several additional Norwegian Synod students [including the current presidents of our synod and our seminary]. (One other Norwegian Synod student, the sainted Dr. Neelak Tjernagel, had some years earlier attended and been graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.)

The members of the synod had been deeply appreciative of the gracious assistance of both the Missouri Synod and the Wisconsin Synod in providing educational training for its prospective pastors and teachers during these early difficult years. Nevertheless, this beleaguered remnant from a large church merger had since its reorganization dreamed of a day when it might again have its own synodical schools to assist it in its God-given task. It had to wait only ten years before it became the grateful and proud owner and operator of Bethany Lutheran College and High School in Mankato, Minnesota. But it had to wait almost two more decades before it could realize its other educational dream, that of possessing its own theological seminary for the training of its pastors.

### MOVE TOWARD INDEPENDENCE

Despite the excellent training that had been afforded by the Synodical Conference seminaries named above, there had been a persistent desire among "synod folk" to establish their own seminary with its own special flavor and under the control and administration of their synod. As the inter-synodical problems in the years that followed revealed again the folly of putting one's trust in men, even such as had at one time been a source of great strength to them in an earlier time of anguish, the desire of not being left in a position of extreme dependency on such friends gained much ground. For thirteen years the people's hope of establishing their own seminary had just lain there smoldering, but in 1931 the synod in convention took its first significant step in fanning the smoldering fire. In response to an urgent petition from some of its pre-theological students, the delegates at that convention resolved to authorize President H. M. Tjernagel to appoint a committee of three to study this matter and to present its findings to the General Pastoral Conference for discussion.<sup>24</sup>

Notwithstanding this action by the convention, not even a tentative plan materialized for another eleven years. But in 1942, at the urging of Synod President Henry Ingebritson, the convention authorized the Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran College to take action to provide that the synod's ministerial candidates have "their last year of training in our own school" and to begin the program that very fall, if possible.<sup>25</sup> When the Board reported a year later that it had been unable to put the desired initial program in motion that quickly, but also that it was convinced that the synod's goal of having its own seminary could best be obtained "by establishing at once a complete theological seminary," the convention upgraded the earlier plan by authorizing that the Board of Regents "establish our own [full] theological seminary as soon as possible."<sup>26</sup>

Because World War II was in progress, the Board of Regents now had to answer also to an earthly authority, this time the U. S. Selective Service Administration, which had strict guidelines concerning the establishment of new seminaries in wartime, particularly in respect to granting seminary students exemption from the military draft.<sup>27</sup> An eventual change in ruling by the SSA finally brought governmental approval for the proposed seminary. The official letter from Selective Service Headquarters in Washington stated: "Bethany Lutheran College comes within the definition of a theological or divinity school." It further stated that when "an institution fulfills the requirements of the Selective Training and Service Act as a recognized theological or divinity school and continues to do so, changes in the curriculum or the addition of graduate courses will not change the status of the school."<sup>28</sup> The intervening end to the

armed conflict in which our country was engaged did not significantly change the course of synodical action, and the 1946 convention finally resolved "in the name of the Triune God [to establish] a full Theological Seminary course at Bethany Lutheran College, this course to begin in the fall of 1946."<sup>29</sup>

### BETHANY LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

That very September the long desired seminary became reality when four students, whose number was to swell to five at semester time,<sup>30</sup> showed up on the campus of Bethany Lutheran College to begin class work under the first and only convention-elected dean of the seminary, Norman A. Madson, and five additional instructors who were merely on loan on a part-time basis from the college faculty.<sup>31</sup> In the early years following his own graduation from the seminary of the pre-merger Norwegian Synod, N. A. Madson had briefly been an instructor at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, missionary on the Iron Range in Minnesota, and a chaplain in World War I before serving as a parish pastor in Iowa and Minnesota from the end of the war until 1946. It was in July of 1925 that he had followed several other clergymen in leaving the "merger church," the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America, for the newly reorganized remnant of the old Norwegian Synod.

This new school of the prophets at Mankato was at its inception, and for some time thereafter, closely tied to the college; Pres. S. C. Ylvisaker explained the reason for this association in his report to the 1946 convention: "From the organizational point of view it will be necessary to consider that as long as the Selective Service Act is in force, the theological seminary will have to remain a part of our Bethany establishment."<sup>32</sup> At least partly because of this new institution's close association with the college, the president of that institution served also as the titular, or nominal, head of the seminary in its early years,<sup>33</sup> with the seminary dean providing the administrative and educational leadership. Its beginnings can be said to have been low-key and unpretentious, and the seminary has over the years not been maintained without a struggle, yet one would be remiss in not recognizing that the Lord's blessing has rested upon it.

Through the first half-century of the seminary's existence the faculty has been composed in great part of those administrators and instructors who were called first of all and primarily to the seminary--though in most instances also they have on occasion taught courses in the college--and in lesser part by professors of the college faculty who were committed to teach primarily in that institution. The second man called in a full-time capacity to the seminary was the Rev. George O. Lillegard, who, together with N. A. Madson and S. C. Ylvisaker, was a graduate of Luther Seminary of the old Norwegian Synod. Prior to his coming to Mankato, he had been a missionary to China and a parish pastor in the synod; in the seminary he concentrated his efforts on courses of Biblical interpretation. On the seminary staff for ten years before physical disabilities dictated his retirement, his theological skill is exemplified in such writings as his monograph on the *Chinese Term Question*. His pastoral strength can be noted, e.g., from his well-received book of sermons on the book of Genesis, entitled *From Eden to Egypt*.

The third full-time professor on the seminary faculty was the Reverend Milton H. Otto, who left the parish ministry in 1957 and taught in the fields of church history, pastoral theology and dogmatics. After Dr. Norman Madson's retirement from his post as dean of the seminary in 1959 under the continuing stress of the problem of fellowship that plagued the Synodical Conference, the deanship was vested for a time in the office of the joint president of the college and seminary, but in 1968 Professor Otto was appointed dean of the seminary and served in that capacity until the office was finally eliminated at the time of the election of the first full-

time president in 1976. Nevertheless, in recognition of Dean Otto's many years of faithful service, the Board of Regents bestowed on him the title of Dean Emeritus.

During these years several other part-time instructors served on the seminary staff. Christopher U. Faye, who had once been a missionary to Madagascar but had spent most of his career as a librarian at the University of Illinois, came to Mankato in his retirement and did yeoman work in trying to bring order to the library. Pastor Joseph Petersen of St. Peter and Pastor Raymond Branstad of Minneapolis also taught courses for a brief time at the seminary. Pastor Julian Anderson joined the staff for several years before returning to the parish ministry. Pastor Juul Madson, after twenty-four years in the parish ministry, joined the faculty as professor in New Testament studies in January of 1970 and later was named dean of students and registrar until being retired from full-time duty in 1991. Pastor Mark Harstad originally came on campus primarily to instruct in the seminary, but later found himself concentrating his teaching in the college department. Most recent full-time additions to the faculty have been Prof. Adolph Harstad in 1991 in the field of Old Testament studies, and Prof. John A. Moldstad, Jr., in 1993 in the field of New Testament studies.

For several years in the last decade Pastor Norman A. Madson reported on campus twice weekly to teach a course in homiletics, the art of preparing and preaching sermons. Special mention must be made of the many years of part-time instruction in Old Testament studies provided by the college's long-time resident Hebrew scholar, Rudolph Honsey. Other college faculty members who have taught courses in the seminary are Professors Erling Teigen, Glenn Reichwald, William Kessel and Steven Reagles. Of most recent addition to the staff has been Professor Thomas Kuster, who, as the incumbent of the endowed Chair of Speech/English Communication, instructs the seminary students in communication skills and assists in homiletical critique.<sup>34</sup>

### SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

Two events of considerable significance to the conduct of the seminary are closely associated in time. After the 1974 convention had resolved "that the office of President of Bethany Lutheran Seminary be administered by one man, and the office of President of Bethany Lutheran College be administered by another man,"<sup>35</sup> the Board of Regents in 1976 called the Reverend Pastor Theodore Aaberg of St. Peter, Minnesota, to be the first full-time president of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary. He was formally installed as the first sole president of this school of the prophets on October 28 of that year.

The 1976 convention had also adopted a recommendation from the Board of Regents to authorize a special thankoffering for the cause of higher education, setting a goal of \$600,000, two-fifths of which was to be allocated to the seminary. Pledges quickly exceeded the goal, and at the very next convention ground was broken for the new seminary building just across the street from the college at 447 North Division Street. In his address at the ground breaking ceremonies President Aaberg reiterated that this edifice would be used to promulgate the three-pronged watchword of the Lutheran Reformation: *Scripture Alone, Grace Alone, Faith Alone*.

The one-story brick and stone building that arose at this time became the first home-of-its-own enjoyed by this institution, a home that is now to be replaced by the new building which can be seen rising on a different site in the northeast quadrant of the Bethany property.<sup>36</sup> It was 1978 before formal dedication of that first building took place during the annual synodical convention. These two developments--the acquisition of its own institutional president and the erection of its own separate home--permitted Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary more readily to gain an individual institutional identity, and its students to live and

learn in facilities and under conditions better suited to their needs and more favorable to fulfillment of the purpose of the institution.

When Professor Theodore Aaberg's increasingly failing health led him to resign from the presidency in 1979,<sup>37</sup> the Board of Regents appointed Prof. Glenn Reichwald of the college faculty as acting president for the 1979-80 school year. Before the start of the ensuing school year, the Board of Regents had successfully called Pastor Wilhelm W. Petersen, at that time pastor of Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in Mankato and president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, to direct the seminary program. After sixteen years of dedicated service to the institution Doctor Petersen continues in the presidency at the end of the first half-century of the school's existence. He has, however, given notice to the Board of his intention to retire from that responsibility at the close of the next school year, at which time the institution should be gratefully and comfortably settled in its new quarters, where, by the grace of God, it will continue the necessary and blessed task of preparing messengers of peace.

### THE MESSENGERS

At certain times in the history of the world the Lord of the church sent messengers from heaven to make specific announcements or to divulge his plans to men. Despite the seeming advantage of employing these holy spiritual creatures for the work of the public ministry of the Gospel in the present New Testament era, we find that our Lord has other thoughts--thoughts superior to ours also in this matter. Paul understood and explained the Lord's choice thus: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." II Cor. 4. 7. Christ has commissioned the spreading of his Gospel to the flesh-and-blood members of his church, whom He has redeemed, justified, and sanctified from their fallen estate. To all of these he has granted the designation of "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, his own special people, [who are to] proclaim the praises of Him who called [them] out of darkness into his marvelous light." I Peter 2, 9. In other words, every one who has been effectively called into the fellowship of Christ's kingdom is a priest before God and has the responsibility, as well as the privilege, of being a witness to the God who has saved him from sin, death and the devil. One cannot show forth the ultimate praise of God without in some way proclaiming the Gospel of salvation in Christ.

In his exposition of the fourth verse of Psalm 110, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek," Martin Luther asserts that every Christian is a priest, having been reborn to that status in Baptism. Peter in the citation a few lines above endorses that claim. Luther understands that Christ is the only High Priest between God and mankind, but then he states that even as we are called Christians after the Christ, so we are called priests after this one great High Priest.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless Luther, in the company of other Lutheran reformers, as well as of the Lutheran confessions themselves, distinguishes between the ministry of the priesthood of all believers and the public ministry of the church.

### THE PUBLIC MINISTRY

The term *public* ministry is often misunderstood to mean merely that kind of ministry which is done in public, that is, out in the open or in the presence of many people. While much of the work of the public ministry may be done out in the open and before many people, that fact is not what makes it *public* ministry in the Biblical and Lutheran sense of that term. What makes it public is that it is done by one who has been called by God through a Christian assembly to perform this office in their name--primarily *on* their behalf, rather than merely *in* their behalf.<sup>39</sup>

A pastor who *on behalf of the congregation* that called him visits the sick patient in the privacy of a hospital room or of the person's own home in order to bring the comfort of the Gospel and Christ's absolution is also at such times functioning in the public ministry of the church. If a Christian friend visits that patient and likewise absolves the troubled but repentant individual, that friend is performing this function on the basis of his possession of the gift of the priesthood of believers and of the office of the keys. He is in such an instance not to be understood as being in the public ministry of the church.

So Luther found himself bound by Scripture to make a distinction "between the office or service of bishops, pastors and preachers, and the general status of being a Christian." While he firmly believed that the office of the priesthood of believers is the common possession of all Christians, he went on to write that

we deal with a different matter when we speak of those who have an office in the Christian Church such as minister, preacher, pastor, or curate. . . . For although we are all priests, this does not mean that all of us can preach, teach, and rule. Certain ones of the multitude must be selected and separated for such an office. . . . The preaching office is no more than a public service which happens to be conferred upon someone by the entire congregation, all the members of which are priests. . .

Every Christian has and practices such priestly works. But above these activities is the communal office of public teaching. For this preachers and pastors are necessary. This office cannot be attended to by all the members of a congregation. Neither is it fitting that each household do its own baptizing and celebrating of the Sacrament. Hence it is necessary to select and ordain those who can preach and teach, who study the Scriptures, and who are able to defend them. They deal with the Sacraments by the authority of the congregation, so that it is possible to know who is baptized and everything is done in an orderly fashion. If everyone were to preach to his neighbor or if they did things for one another without orderly procedure, it would take a long time indeed to establish a congregation. Such functions, however, do not pertain to the priesthood as such but belong to the public office which is performed in behalf of [sic] all those who are priests, that is, Christians.<sup>40</sup>

### QUALIFICATIONS

It is of those who are to hold the office of the *public ministry*, as well as of the preparation for that office, that we now speak when we consider the work of our theological seminary in this year of its golden anniversary. When the Apostle Paul writes to Timothy, his young co-worker in the public ministry, he states that one who desires the office of a bishop desires a good work (I Timothy 3, 1). Then he goes on to speak of the qualifications of such a public minister of the Gospel:

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he

fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. I Timothy 3,2-7

In a letter to Titus, whom the Apostle Paul calls "my true son in our common faith," (1, 4) he both repeats some of the above listed qualifications and adds others when he directs Titus, in the latter's appointment of additional elders, to search for such a man as is

blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. For [he goes on to say] a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convict those who contradict." (1,6-9)

These qualifications, with the possible exception of the aptitude to teach, on the one hand appear to be no more than is expected of any child of God. On the other hand they are enough to trigger in one who aspires to this office the self-examination so strikingly expressed by Dietrich Vorwerk in his soul-searching poem entitled

**A Parson's Sermon to Himself:**

A parson must be, first of all, / Both very great and very small,  
 A king's son in nobility, / A servant in simplicity;  
 A victor who has overcome / Himself and brought his trophies home;  
 One who with God has wrestled and / Received a blessing at His hand;  
 A fount of waters leaping high / In plenitude of sanctity;  
 A sinner living by the word / Of pardon spoken by his Lord;  
 His passions mastered, all intent / To serve the weak and diffident;  
 Not one to truckle to the great, / He stoops to men of low estate;  
 A learner still, but resolute / To lead and guide where men dispute;  
 A beggar in his nothingness, / A herald scattering largesse;  
 A man in battle, womanly / Beside the beds of misery;  
 In clarity of vision old, / A child to trust and cling and hold;  
 Aspiring high, he does not rise / To slight the small, or to despise;  
 To grief no stranger, ever one / To give men's joy his benison,  
 Aloof from enviousness alone;  
 Clean in thought and true in word,  
 Peace is his love, but sloth's abhorred;

**Foursquare he stands and solidly**

-- and he is not at all like me.<sup>41</sup>

Whoever therefore presents himself as a candidate for the study of theology with a view to entering the public ministry of the church ought to bring qualifications with him at entrance into his seminary training program. The seminary catalog, on the basis of the above cited pastoral passages, states that "the fundamental requirements for admission to the seminary are an unimpeachable Christian character and a heart-felt desire to enter the public ministry."<sup>42</sup> To

seek to ensure that students do come with these desirable qualifications, seminaries generally require letters of recommendation from various sources attesting to the good character and perceived potential of the applicants.

Surely it is the desire of the staff at our seminary also to help the students cultivate these qualities more deeply while they are in residence, so that they will be examples to their eventual flocks, even as the staff will have opportunity during the years of study to observe to what extent these qualifications appear to be present in the men before them and to provide them necessary individual counsel also in these areas of their life which will greatly impact their ministry. Especially the admissions committee has great responsibility in seeking to screen out prospects who do not demonstrate the necessary qualifications for the ministry; occasionally the administration has at some later point reluctantly had to dismiss a student from the program for failure to "measure up."

It is the qualification of aptitude for teaching (I Timothy 3, 2 and II Timothy 2, 2) that becomes an important focus for the preparation that takes place in a seminary program. The authors of *Shepherds under Christ* make clear what the goal is in this area:

This [mental endowment] involves the ability to learn, to remember, to use the imagination, to evaluate, to think logically; to present clearly. It also involves being able to communicate by commanding respect, maintaining discipline, speaking distinctly enough to be understood and loudly enough to be heard, and in general to fill the role of a leader. These gifts need to be cultivated and exercised through academic training and channeled by means of a thorough theoretical and practical theological training. The lack of the aptitude to teach disqualifies a man for the office of pastor, the loss of it likewise. . . . Laying a sound foundation for the aptitude to teach is necessary because the pastor is to be "not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil" (I Timothy 3:6).<sup>43</sup>

### THE CURRICULUM

Because the Evangelical Lutheran Synod has for the past fifty years had its own preparatory school for its messengers of peace, it is not inappropriate in review to ask in what that preparation has consisted. From the inception of the seminary it was understood that this institution would be geared to the preparation of individuals for the office of the public ministry, in particular to prepare men for work in the parish ministry and on the mission fields. As indicated in the earlier part of this essay, there is no single outward form or program by which the church has through the centuries prepared people for this office. An effective training program will be geared to the needs of the church, and those needs, as well as the basic means to fill those needs, are clearly set forth in the Holy Scriptures.

Man is by nature a fallen creature, suffering mortally from his self-inflicted wounds. His sin has separated him from his Creator God and has left him sorely in need of being restored to a harmonious relationship with that eternal Being from whom he has been so deeply alienated. That restoration is an impossible task for him to undertake, despite his often ill-advised attempts to seek it on his own. Fallen man will in the end be forced to acknowledge his utter dependence on the mercy of God.

He will not find a satisfactory solution to his problem except in our Lord Jesus Christ, the only Savior of the world, and in the eternal counsels of God, which are revealed only in the divine word which He has chosen to hand down to us through his holy prophets and apostles.

It is therefore to be understood that any messenger training program is to focus on, gain its direction from, and derive its power from that Word of God. On this matter also we are in accord with Martin Luther, who was wont to say: *Die ganze Schrift treibt Christum!* (The entire Scripture urges Christ!) In an age when we are pressured to think that more and more matters extraneous to the Word of God are necessary for the preparation of the messengers of peace, it behooves us to beware of thereby drifting from our moorings.

That the Word of our Lord is the principal focus of the seminary's efforts to prepare messengers of peace is manifested in its curriculum. In the school catalog under "Program of Study" the opening words are those of the Apostle Paul written to Timothy: "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth." II Timothy 2, 15.<sup>44</sup> The reason for concern for the handling of this word of truth is the clear announcement through the same Apostle Paul that "faith comes from a message heard," Romans 10, 17, and in this case the message is that of the Gospel, which is "the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes." Romans 1, 16.

The catalog further states that "all instruction and training at Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary is conducted in the light of the Gospel. The Holy Scriptures are regarded as the inspired and inerrant Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions as a correct exposition of the teachings of the Bible."<sup>45</sup> The curriculum is divided into four departments which coincide with the four major subdivisions of Christian theology.<sup>46</sup>

### BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

The first of these general categories is that of Biblical Theology. In this area of the curriculum there is direct study of the Bible in the Hebrew and Greek languages in which this collection of books was written by the appointed holy men of God as they were "borne along" by the Holy Spirit of God. (II Peter 1. 21) For this reason one finds it readily understandable that one of the academic requirements is "a good working knowledge of Greek and Hebrew."<sup>47</sup> Certain isagogical or introductory courses do precisely what those modifying words suggest, namely, introduce the student to the nature, content and authorship of the books of both the Old and New Testament. In the exegetical courses there is in-depth study of selected books of the two testaments, such as Genesis, Psalms (especially the Messianic Psalms) and Isaiah in the Old Testament, and the Gospels, Romans and Galatians in the New Testament.

A course in hermeneutics helps to prepare the students for the task of exegesis, for it instructs in the history, principles and techniques of interpretation of the Scriptures, while the courses in exegesis put the hermeneutical principles to practice in mining the full and divinely intended meaning from the passages under study. Hermeneutics is thus defined as the art or science of interpretation, while exegesis is the actual practice of this art or science. The desired result of such labors is the arrival not at a "what it means to me" interpretation, but at the "Holy Spirit intended" meaning.

The work of the public ministry has been described as the task of teaching men to listen-to listen to the voice of their Good Shepherd.<sup>48</sup>

Three barriers to this kind of listening exist: the barriers of language, of history, and of the flesh. The barrier of language can be largely overcome by learning the biblical languages, for which task many helps are available. Not all people are in a position to learn the Biblical languages, and it is not necessary that all do so. Nevertheless, "to be able, with a little effort [or even with considerable effort-JBM] to hear the voice of the Good Shepherd more distinctly and more fully, and not make the effort? . . . [W]hat shall we call it but ingratitude to the God who

has given us both the languages and the means of mastering them? The languages are not a burden; they are a gift and a privilege."<sup>49</sup>

For hurdling the barrier of time there is need to retrace our steps in history to listen to what the Voice meant for God's people then and there. It is possible to locate stiles across the fence so that we can better see under what conditions this or that word was spoken. To know the context in which words are spoken is to have a head start on understanding what they mean. This statement is not to be understood, however, as asserting that a total reconstruction or recall of history is necessary to an appreciation of the simple doctrinal truths of Holy Writ.

The final barrier is the most difficult to surmount, the barrier of our natural sinful flesh. No son of Adam wants to hear the voice of God, even as our fallen progenitor stated to a seeking God: "I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid." Genesis 3, 10. Nor *can* he of himself really hear it, as Paul forthrightly states: "The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Corinthians 3, 14. We can teach men to overcome the barrier of language, we can teach them to overcome the barrier of history, but we cannot in a strict sense teach them to overcome the barrier of the flesh. Here only God himself by his saving grace and powerful word can make "willing people out of resisting and unwilling people."<sup>50</sup> And so it can rightly be said: "Unless our preacher and pastor, by the powerful grace of God, passes the barrier of the flesh, his skills in language and his knowledge of history are nothing and worse than nothing; *they feed his pride and inflate his ego*. But when he has learned to deny himself and follow the voice, then this skill and this knowledge are precious things indeed."<sup>51</sup>

### SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

The second category of curriculum studies is designated as Systematic Theology, in which the teachings of the Bible are arranged in a different scheme for study. Systematic Theology is essentially Biblical Theology, and differs from it only in its approach and organization, for instead of studying the Scriptures book by book, it studies that divine Word doctrine by doctrine. This study serially answers the question: What does the Bible have to say about such matters as God, creation, angels, man, Scripture itself, Christ, redemption, conversion, justification, sanctification, the Means of Grace, the church, the public ministry, eternal election, the last things?

A sub-division of Systematic Theology is titled Symbolics, a study of the symbols or confessional statements of various churches, principally the confessional writings contained in the Lutheran *Book of Concord*. These latter confessions, from the Three Ecumenical Creeds to the Formula of Concord, have arisen throughout the history of the New Testament church in response to some particular problem or need. It is still required among us that for entrance into the public ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod one subscribe to the Book of Concord, for these confessions are a correct exposition of the Word of God and define clearly for us what it means to be truly Lutheran.

### HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

In Historical Theology the Christian Church in its life and teachings is studied from the standpoint of history. The seminary catalog declares that "a major purpose of historical theology is to reveal the gracious, always-present hand of the Triune God ruling over His Church."<sup>52</sup> That study is often made according to various periods of history, such as that of the Apostolic and post-Apostolic church, of the church of the Middle Ages, of the church at the time of the Lutheran Reformation in Germany, of Lutheranism in the United States, and various

subdivisions of any of these, especially the last mentioned. One may also find the individual course limited to the study of the history of missions in the church. To learn how the Lord has dealt with His church down through the centuries is to learn much about how He will deal with the church in the future.

### PRACTICAL THEOLOGY

The final category of the curriculum has been termed Practical Theology, so called because it deals with the art of putting into practice, or applying, the teachings of Scripture to the members of the church in their real life situations. Because the *preaching* of the Gospel is at the heart of the practical life of the messenger of God, the study of Homiletics is vital to the curriculum. Throughout the seminary program ample time is therefore spent on the preparation and delivery of sermons,<sup>53</sup> the substance of which is largely furnished from the courses in dogmatics and exegesis. Courses in Pastoral Theology seek to prepare the budding messenger also for the day by day performance of his holy office, both in respect to his relationship with his Chief Shepherd, and in his daily care of the flock entrusted to him.

The pastoral office necessarily involves the care of souls,<sup>54</sup> for which a review of the many situations that will confront a pastor, and the proper application of the word of the Lord to the same, will greatly aid him who desires to be of significant help to his parishioners as he strives to keep them in the saving company of their Lord. And because the forms of worship and the liturgy, as well as the hymnody, of the church continue to have a strong influence on the life of the God's people, examination of the historical development, as well as the importance, of liturgical forms finds a necessary and welcome niche in the realm of practical theology.

For three years academic studies in the above departments of theology are carried on in the environs of the seminary. In our training system a fourth year of preparation is ordinarily added to the three academic school years.<sup>55</sup> This year is ideally spent working in a synod parish under the guidance and supervision of a supervising pastor. In effect this portion of the program would best be categorized as belonging to the department of Practical Theology, for here the student learns first-hand how to shoulder the many responsibilities of the parish pastor, at the same time continuing his pursuit of deepening his Biblical faith and knowledge and of enhancing his confessional understanding. At the conclusion of this final seminary year he will, God willing, be approved by the constituted church authorities for entrance into the public ministry and recommended to the church as a candidate of theology.<sup>56</sup>

All of this preparation of the seminary student takes place in order that he might be a messenger of peace. Though the holder of the office of the public ministry is to proclaim the whole counsel of God (Acts 20, 28), which includes His revelation of both Law and Gospel, the proclamation of the former is to prepare the way for the rightful proclamation of the latter. Surely anyone who finds himself called into this office desires to be known as a minister of the Gospel or a messenger of peace, for it is finally the Gospel of peace alone which can bring comfort and strength to troubled souls.

Peace is of the very essence of the Gospel. Jesus Christ is himself the Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9, 6) This is not an earthly and temporal peace, but a spiritual and eternal peace. Our God is also the author of temporal peace, but he has not promised that that kind of peace will ever be ours in this world, nor is it always necessary to our true welfare. One speaks of peace in contrast to war. The war in question here is the result of man's spiritual rebellion against his Maker, which made him a candidate for eternal punishment. From his sinful side there was no prospect of gaining peace with the God whose will he had grossly violated. Man's rebellion

consisted in his wanting to be like God in ways which were not permitted him. It was man who, yielding to Satan's temptation, started the war, the results of which he could not undo, for he was incapable on his own of reversing his steps. God alone can bring about that reversal; wherefore the prophet prays: "Turn us back to you, O Lord, and we shall be restored." Lamentations 5, 21.<sup>57</sup>

The great message of the Gospel is that God has established this peace with men through His Son. Paul states also that, after having gained this peace for mankind, Christ "came and preached peace to you who were afar off, and to those who were near." Ephesians 2, 17. And the same apostle, when writing to Christians in Rome, exults in the descriptive words with which we opened this presentation: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the Gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!" Romans 10, 15. Because our Lord Jesus Christ is the Preacher par excellence, His feet are, in the imagery of the prophet, more beautiful than all others, and any lesser messenger of that same glorious news should be exceedingly grateful and pleased to be able to walk in the footprints of such a forerunner.

As long, therefore, as our Lord permits us to conduct Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary as a school for preparing messengers of this spiritual and eternal peace, may we heartily support the endeavor by encouraging God's gifted young men to study for this high calling, by continually praying for the success of this preparatory work, and by willingly offering our gifts, in order that the peace of God which passes all understanding may continue to sound forth among us in the manner described by Nicolai Grundtvig:

Peace to us the church doth tell,  
'Tis her welcome and farewell,  
Peace was our baptismal dower,  
Peace shall bless our dying hour;  
Peace be with you, full and free,  
Now and through eternity.<sup>58</sup>

The Word of our God Stands Forever!

### Appendix I

#### Graduates of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary

<b>1947</b> Robert D. Preus	<b>1951</b> Neil Jordahl Ruben Ude	George M. Orvick Glenn E. Reichwald Wilhelm W. Petersen Arthur Schultz
<b>1948</b> Levine K. Hagen Iver C. Johnson	<b>1952</b> Hugo J. Handberg Stanley Holt Paul G. Madson Paul G. Petersen Lyle Rasch	<b>1954</b> Richard Hawley James Hanson Richard A. Newgard
<b>1949</b> Leigh D. Jordahl Reuben Stock Neil N. Hilton	<b>1953</b> Gerhardt Becker Elmer Boniek Otto Drevlow Julius Larsen	<b>1955</b> Keith Olmanson Desmond Jose
<b>1950</b> Theodore A. Aaberg John Moldstad, Sr.		<b>1956</b> Richard Kuehne

Herbert Larson  
Robert A. Moldstad  
Victor L Theiste

**1957**

Norman A. Madson, Jr.

**1958**

Robert Thorson  
Gerhard Weseloh

**1959**

Gunnar Staalsett

**1960**

David Lillegard

**1961**

No graduates

**1962**

George H. Gullixson  
Theodore F. Kuster  
Peter Chang

**1963**

James Olsen

**1964**

No graduates

**1965**

No graduates

**1966**

Wayne L. M. Halvorson  
Thomas A. Kuster  
Erling T. Teigen

**1967**

Rodger M. Dale  
James Lillo  
Steven P. Quist

**1968**

No graduates

**1969**

Roger Fallk  
Paul Jecklin

**1970**

M. Dale Christopherson  
Paul J. Haugen  
Rimald L. Mathison  
David J. Nelson  
John K. Schmidt  
Frederick W. Theiste

**1971**

Warren A. Granke  
Tosten D. Skaaland  
John E. Smith

**1972**

Martin Teigen

**1973**

Mark Marozick  
Thomas Mickelson  
Christian G. Morales  
Paul Schneider  
John Shep

**1974**

Mark O. Harstad

**1975**

E. C. Frederick Stubenvoll  
Howard F. Aufderheide  
Wayne Dobratz

**1976**

Erwin J. Ekhoft  
Theodore G. Gullixson  
Dennis Schlicht

**1977**

Charles J. Keeler  
Nile B. Merseth  
Steven P. Petersen  
Kenneth V. Schmidt

**1978**

Theodore E. Aaberg  
Timothy E. Erickson  
Michael C. Krentz  
Gaylin R. Schmeling  
Otto Trebelliorn  
William B. Kessel  
Juan Rubio

**1979**

Bruce R. Bestervelt

Jerrold R. Dalke  
Philip M. Vangen

**1980**

Joseph P. Burkhardt  
Craig A. Ferkenstad  
Matthew E. Luttman  
Daniel P. Metzger  
John A. Moldstad, Jr.

**1981**

Daniel N. Faugstad

**1982**

Roger R. Fehr  
Russell R. Halverson  
Gregory J. Haugen  
Bradley J. Homan  
David C. Thompson  
John R. Wilde  
Richard C. Long

**1983**

John S. Dukleth  
James A. Krikava  
Glenn R. Obenberger  
Thomas E. Petersen  
Martin J. Doepel  
Allen J. Quist

**1984**

Darryl L. Bakke  
Thomas H. Fox  
Daniel J. Larson  
Daniel F. McMiller  
Steve R. Sparley  
Kenneth E. Mellon

**1985**

Timothy J. Bartels  
Markos DeGarmeaux  
John J. Petersen  
Thomas L. Rank  
Donald L. Moldstad  
Frank Fiedler III

**1986**

Harvey Abrahamson  
Richard Gudgeon  
David J. Hoyord  
Robert A. Lawson  
Jonathan Madson

<b>1987</b> Mark F. Bartels Michael K. Smith	Kurt A. Smith <b>1991</b> Victor Settje Richard Fyffe	<b>1995</b> Joseph C. Abrahamson Ronald E. Pederson Ernest B. Geistfeld Gundars Bakulis Gene R. Lilienthal Michael J. Langlais
<b>1988</b> Micah W. Ernst Daniel K. Schroeder	<b>1992</b> David L. Meyer Alexander K. Ring	<b>1996</b> Erik Gernander Jerome Gernander Konstantin Mamberger Anthony Pittenger Terry Schultz Stephen Schmidt Bruce Schwark
<b>1989</b> Daniel A. Basel Michael A. Madson Richard P. Tragasz Gregory R. Bork	<b>1993</b> Kent T. Dethlefsen Mark W. Tuffin	
<b>1990</b> James M. Braun Mark A. Wold	<b>1994</b> Jon S. Bruss James R. Krueger Roger C. Holtz	

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> N. F. S. Grundtvig, 1845, *The Lutheran Hymnary*, No. 49.
- <sup>2</sup> See Isaiah 52, 7.
- <sup>3</sup> See Appendix I attached to this essay.
- <sup>4</sup> This program was understandably called the Mequon Program in our circles, while in Wisconsin Synod circles it was known as the Bethany Program. (Many of the students compromised by calling it the Meq-Beth Program.)
- <sup>5</sup> *Qarah B'shem Yaweh* in Hebrew.
- <sup>6</sup> *LW*, American Edition, Vol. 2, p. 286. Emphasis added.
- <sup>7</sup> The Holy Record also shows that Moses inadvisedly elected himself to a leadership role before he was sufficiently prepared for it.
- <sup>8</sup> Cf. Deuteronomy 18, 15 and I Peter 2, 25.
- <sup>9</sup> Cf. I Samuel 2.
- <sup>10</sup> Cf. II Kings 2.
- <sup>11</sup> Greek: **ψευδοπροφηται**
- <sup>12</sup> Cf. Galatians 1, 17. 18.
- <sup>13</sup> Prof. Louis J. Sieck in *Lutheran Cyclopedia*, p. 683.
- <sup>14</sup> In dogmatics Scholasticism tried to comprehend, harmonize and prove doctrines rationally.
- <sup>15</sup> *The Book of Concord*, Tappert Edition, p. 338; emphasis added.
- <sup>16</sup> For further consideration of this aspect of the seminary program, see later.
- <sup>17</sup> In the religious context rationalism may be defined as "reliance on reason as the basis for the establishment of religious truth."
- <sup>18</sup> Prof. Sieck, p. 685.
- <sup>19</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>20</sup> The members of the search team were Pastors J. A. Ottesen and Nils Brandt, who in 1857 made their visit to the seminaries at St. Louis, Columbus, and Buffalo, after which they published a lengthy report in *Maanedstidende*, the monthly periodical of the church body.  
For an expression of the theological rapport between the Norwegian Synod and the Missouri Synod, and also the former's use of the latter's seminary, see Carl S. Meyer, *Pioneers Find Friends* (Luther College Press, Decorah, Iowa, 1963.)

- <sup>21</sup> In 1875 the Missouri Synod had moved its so-called “practical” seminary to Springfield, Illinois. At that time the Norwegian Synod placed Pastor Ole Asperheim as its professor on the Springfield faculty, where he served but one year. (See following footnote.)
- <sup>22</sup> This institution began as a “practical” seminary, with Ole Asperheim and F. A. Schmidt comprising the faculty. Two years later, in 1878, a theoretical department was added. That autumn nine students were registered in the theoretical department and fifteen in the practical. Professor Asperheim now resigned under pressure from his colleague because of the former's criticism of the Missouri Synod. (See *Striving for Ministry*, Edited by Quanbeck, Fevold and Frost, APH 1977, pp. 21ff.)
- It is somewhat ironic that in a few short years that same colleague would himself become a bitter enemy of the leader of the Missouri Synod, C. F. W. Walther, in the election controversy of the eighties.
- <sup>23</sup> In Norwegian, **en rybbet høne**, as the reorganized synod was scornfully referred to by one of the merger folk
- <sup>24</sup> 1931 *Synod Report*, p. 131. Could it have been that the memorial service at the convention in honor of the noted theologian of the Missouri Synod, Dr. Franz Pieper, whose death had been reported only days before the convention, helped to prompt the delegates to this action?
- Cf. also *Beretning af Den Norske Synode* [Synod Report] 1931 for three personal testimonies (in English) delivered by clergymen of the Synod who had studied under the venerable Doctor Pieper.
- <sup>25</sup> 1942 *Synod Report*, p. 58.
- <sup>26</sup> 1943 *Synod Report*, p. 70.
- <sup>27</sup> The U. S. government granted bona fide seminary students a 4-D classification exempting them from military service
- <sup>28</sup> 1946 *Synod Report*, p. 62.
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 65.
- <sup>30</sup> Robert Preus transferred from Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN for the second semester.
- <sup>31</sup> Pres. S. C. Ylvisaker, Professors A. Fremder, M. Galstad, B. W. Teigen, P. A. Zimmermann.
- <sup>32</sup> 1946 *Synod Report*, p. 64. The Selective Service Act remained in force also for some time after the conclusion of WWII.
- <sup>33</sup> Following Dr. Ylvisaker's brief years in this office, 1946-50, B. W. Teigen occupied the same for the years 1950-70, and his successor, R. M. Branstad, for the years 1970-76, at which point T. A. Aaberg was elected to the sole presidency of the seminary.
- <sup>34</sup> Eleanor Wilson, former member of the Bethany College Faculty, endowed this chair primarily in the interest of the college, but with the specification that “a portion of the chairholder's time be devoted to training seminary students in communications skills.” *Seminary Catalog*, p. 22.
- <sup>35</sup> 1974 *Synod Report*, p. 83.
- <sup>36</sup> The removal of the seminary to a nearby site permits Bethany College, by its purchase of the existing seminary building, to expand its facilities more advantageously.
- <sup>37</sup> He had suffered for several years from sarcoidosis of the lungs, an illness that increasingly robbed him of a vital oxygen supply and finally brought about his death on January 8, 1980, at the age of fifty-four years.
- <sup>38</sup> Cf. *LW*; American Edition, Vol. 13, pp. 304ff.
- <sup>39</sup> These two phrases, when employed in distinction from each other, have the following meanings: 1) on behalf of denotes as the agent of, on the part of; 2) in behalf of denotes in the interest of, for the benefit of.
- It should be understood without special emphasis at this point that such ministry is always “in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ.” *The Lutheran Hymnary*, p. 16. Cf. also *The Liturgical Service of the Lutheran Church*, by Dahle and Jobnshoy, APH, p. 14: “By the authority of God, and of my holy office.”
- <sup>40</sup> Cf. *LW* American Edition, *Ibid.* p. 329ff.
- <sup>41</sup> Translated from the German by Martin Franzmann; to be found in the November 1952 issue of *The Clergy Bulletin* [Norwegian Synod Clergy].
- <sup>42</sup> Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary Catalog 1995-98, p. 12.

- <sup>43</sup> Schuetze and Habeck, *The Shepherd under Christ*, NWPB 1974, p. 12.
- <sup>44</sup> Seminary Catalog, *ibid.*, p. 12.
- <sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 26ff.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.
- <sup>48</sup> Cf. Franzmann, Martin A., in *Toward a More Excellent Ministry*, edited by Caemmerer/Fuerbringer, CPH 1964, p. 81ff.
- <sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.
- <sup>50</sup> Cf. *Formula of Concord*, SD, Article II, 88 et al.
- <sup>51</sup> Franzmann, *ibid.*, p. 89.
- <sup>52</sup> Seminary catalog, p. 29.
- <sup>53</sup> The terms **sermon** and **homily** are virtual synonyms, the former of Latin and the latter of Greek derivation.
- <sup>54</sup> The endearing terms **Seelsorger** and **Sjælesørger** (German and Norwegian terms, respectively, meaning one who cares for souls) have never seemingly caught on in translation into the English language.
- <sup>55</sup> In unusual cases, such as where older students are deemed by the seminary faculty to have had the equivalent of a vicar year (or internship) in their life and work in the church before attending the seminary--or even during their attendance--the fourth year may be waived.
- <sup>56</sup> Present procedure calls for the seminary faculty to recommend the student to the Board of Regents for the Master of Theology degree and/or the degree of Candidate of Theology, and the Board of Regents to approve the recommendation.
- <sup>57</sup> For a convention essay by B. W. Teigen entitled "Peace-Temporal, Spiritual, Eternal" see 1945 Synod Report, pp. 30ff.
- <sup>58</sup> Cf. note 1.