

"Table ~~and~~ Talk"

THE SEEMINGLY FORGOTTEN OF THE CHURCH

Out in the hills and valleys of our nation stand structures built of wood and stone, the rural or country church. Many years ago these buildings were erected by the sweat and toil of many a Christian man and woman. They were erected there so that those who lived in the same hills and valleys might have a place to worship and pray. They were not erected so people could say, we have a church, but because of the need to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ; to take from this same gospel, strength, purpose, and the very will of life itself.

Today most of those churches stand crying for help, a cry so often ignored by the church at large. The echo of their cry seems only to follow down through the valleys until it becomes lost on the plain. Their predicament is not new, it is not something which has just come onto the scene. For years the hierarchy on Madison Avenue has known the situation and for years has soomly done little about it. The only solutions they can come up with are these: a centralized parish where a man becomes lost in time and mileage; close the doors of the church and go elsewhere, or get along as best you can.

Having served an intern year in such a rural congregation, I have come to know the problems they face. I have come to know their hunger and thirst for the gospel. I have come to know how eager they

(Cond't top of page 3)

THE SQUARE

Most every small town has a geographical center which is glorified to some extent. It has been custom, following the Europeans, to ascribe status to this arbitrary point by the creation of a phenomenon known as the Town Square. This particular type of configuration consisting of pavement, buildings and greenery, is known the length and breadth of the United States, and our particular town is no exception.

The local version of the Square is perhaps most significant because of the various establishments located on its curbs. It is here that we find the loci of the town activity.

(Cond't on p. 6, col. 1)

UNDER THE TABLE

With this issue of "Table Talk", a regular feature is born, The intention of the slightly psychoneurotic observer here reporting fabrication, fact and serendipity (not the singers: use dictionary please), is neither to defame, disrepute or derogate anyone or anything. "Under the Table" is designed to enlighten, not offend, and unless the reader has sex, race, is a democrat or a republican, loves his mother, his dog and his autographed copy of "Teaching A Sunday Church School", believes in God and takes Alka Seltzer when he's had too much to eat or drink, he should find nothing at all to insult or affront his fancy.

Thus orientated, let us begin.

The latest (unpublished) statement from Russian Cosmonaut Yogi G. regarding religion, "Yes, I saw God up there. First of all, She's colored..."

Talk about prejudice, what about the Mississippi Baptist who marched up to the pulpit of his church and punched the Pastor in the nose; he called Christ a Jew!

Have you heard the latest theological hit tunes? Really. Dianne Worwick is going strong with "You'll Never Get To Heaven If You Break My Heart," and young J. Frank Wilkins sings about his dead girl friend and declares, "I've Got To Be Good So I Can See My Baby When I Leave This World."

(Cond't p. 4)

CHAPEL CORNER

Evaluative comments about our daily worship together shall appear in each issue of "Table Talk." The purpose is to bring together some of the best thoughts of the previous week so that they may be pondered and examined. The writer hopes that the result of such an examination will be a more serious concern for and a deepening understanding of our life together. This community of the "called" has as much responsibility to be concerned about grace as it does about grades. With this in mind, we consider the spiritual insights which result from our worship together.

(Cond't p.7 Col. 1)

2. FEATURE EDITORIAL

In his book, For the Life of the World, Alexander Schmemmann states that "the first, the basic definition of man is that he is the priest. He stands in the center of the world and unifies it in his act of blessing God, of both receiving the world from God and offering it to God--and by filling the world with this eucharist, he transforms his life, the one that he receives from the world, into life in God, into communion." But Schmemmann goes on to tell us that this world has been rent by sin and has fallen, "and even the religion of this fallen world cannot heal or redom it, for it has accepted to reduce God to an area called "sacred"--as opposed to the world as "profane." It has accepted the all embracing secularism which attempts to steal the world away from God."

I do not think it is erroneous to say that Bonhoeffer had this same idea in mind when he posed the question, "What is the place of worship and prayer in an entire absence of religion?" For Bonhoeffer saw this dichotomy between religion and the world and sought to heal the breach by proposing a faith without religion; that is, a faith that was not restricted to operating in what might be called the "religious" area.

What does all this have to say to our seminary community? A great deal, I think! The life of worship must always remain at the center of our life together (to borrow another phrase from Bonhoeffer), for we need constantly to remind ourselves of the source of life as well as of its content. As such, worship must be the starting point of our thinking and our actions. We need constantly to remind ourselves also that we are primarily priests and that our central position in the world is to offer the whole of creation on the altar of God. Our faith cannot be restricted to any specific area of activity, such as the "religious," nor can it be accorded any position other than a primary one, even in a world that is fallen. For God has offered us the only possible means of restoring the secular to the unity of its creation--Himself--and the totality of our existence must be lived in the context of worship.

Very practically, this means that our academic life, our social life, our family life, and our community life all must be considered as worship. In these areas, as in all others, we are God's priests offering
(Cont'd bottom next column)

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NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

We here wish to announce that a forgiveable mistake has been made in the last issue, viz--it was not Dick Graefe but Dick Graf who suggested the popular name TABLE TALK for this newsletter. Both men have shown a "beyond the call of duty" interest in the newspaper, and as a result, both have been elevated to high positions of responsibility. Dick Graf will present the regular feature - "Under the Table", while Dick Graefe has accepted the office of Managing Editor.

From now on, all articles must be submitted two days prior to publication dates. We might decide to go to press Wednesday morning, and if we do, articles will be due Monday at noon.

We request that heretofore, the Juniors submit their articles to Russ Siler, the Middlers to Dick Graefe, and the Seniors to Jim Mummert.

Up to this point, we have not appointed any reporters--all we have requested so far is contributors. We're going to try to keep it that way for a while; so don't come up to the editors saying: "You ought to write a news article on Santa's North Pole." We feel that you should write the article yourself.

the totality of the creation to Him, and bringing Him to a world in which He is often forgotten or given an inferior position. But let us not forget also that the life or worship must have substance as its point of initiation and its springboard--this substance is offered in our Chapel services and in the many opportunities which each day provides for private prayer and meditation. This substance must always be the beginning--but only the beginning--of our lives in which, as priests, all of our activities are conducted within the context of worship.

By Ed Vogelsong

The Seemingly Forgotten (Cont'd from p.1)

search for fellowship within the rest of the church. I have come to know what it means to run a church on a \$2,000 a year budget.

The rural congregations across the land have been given the short end of the ecclesiastical stick for too long. These congregations have just as much a place in the Church of Jesus Christ as does the suburban and urban congregations. The people who attend the rural church have needs and problems that can only be understood and met within the framework of their situation in life. They cannot be picked up and transported into the thought world of a metropolitan area. Just as the needs of the people in this area are peculiar to their situation so is it in the country.

The work that these small, and in many cases, isolated congregations could do for the whole church surpasses our comprehension. They only need a chance to prove it. People live in the hills and valleys. The people are not a product of our imagination, they are children of God. And because they are His children and our brothers and sisters, it is time we treated them as such. Just think of the ministry that could be ours and theirs if they could financially support a pastor. Think of the, so often forgotten, ones that would come to these parishes if only they had the leadership.

If we allow these churches to close their doors, as was the suggestion given to the congregation I was in, then it is a sorry state we have come to in the church. Imagine the president of a synod saying, we can do nothing for you, disband, and find your spiritual sustenance elsewhere. How low can we go? How shameless?

Christ came to all, He died for all, and His Church was established to include all. The doors of the field must be left open for all to enter in and to find a place. How then is it possible to let these places of worship die a slow death? Money is one important thing, but the rural church gets little understanding from the boards of the church on this matter. Offices in the fashionable part of New York City are more important than filling the little wooden pews in a country church. To many a pastor today the filling of a pulpit in an established and secure congregation is more important than struggling with rural men to make ends meet, to gather in the unchurched, and to establish for them and

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INAUGURATION DETAILS ANNOUNCED

It has been announced that Dean Herbert W. Stroup will represent the Seminary in the academic procession at Dr. Hoiges' inauguration on October 21, at Philadelphia Seminary. In addition, the faculty of our Seminary has been invited to attend. Limited seating will also be provided for representatives of the Student Body.

COMMUNITY INVITED TO SUNDAY BAPTISM

John Mark, the infant son of Betsy and John Hazedorn, will be Baptized on Sunday, September 27, 1964, at five o'clock in The Church of the Abiding Presence.

The Service will be conducted by Chaplain Francis Reinberger. The Seminary Community is cordially invited to attend.

others a place where they can come together to meet their God.

Thousands of dollars are spent on expensive and elaborate houses of worship. All sorts of unique ways are tried in various areas of the church to develop missions and establish congregations. And instead of being practical in building these new churches thousands of dollars are spent - - - to be different.

How little it would take, from these same amounts of money that are thrown away, to re-establish working congregations in rural areas. These congregations could, if they had the leadership and the money to keep them, make a dynamic witness in these areas.

But alas, who cares? These churches have served their purpose, They deserve to die, or do they? I am convinced that God hasn't forgotten them. If He had, they would have vanished long ago. And if the Lord, the Saviour of the world, Jesus Christ, still has room in His heart for them, how can we, called to preach and teach the gospel in the church shut them out? Could the answer be, we are but men and He is God? Or would a more correct answer be, we as men have forgotten the true mission of the church and we leave to God the things that seem unpleasant to us?

By Donald R. Almy

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Read the next issue of TALK for a refutation of Don's approach. The theme might be: "WHO has forgotten the Mission of the Church?")

CHAPEL MEDITATION - Gary Bilbic

Text: Psalm 86 and Ephesians 3:13-21

Most of us begin a New Year - a new task - with at least some enthusiasm. The air is full of new things - of optimistic and promising opportunities. We have learned much from our past failings and mistakes and now we set forth with our newly gained wisdom, fully expecting to reach our re-adjusted goals.

But within an incredibly short period of time even our most conservative hopes begin to buckle under the strain and pressure of papers, assigned readings, class projects, meetings and our own procrastination. An atmosphere which was once fresh and revitalizing becomes dull and cluttered. As the year goes on the situation grows worse. We fall into the same old rut --there is too much to do and too little time in which to do it. Often, even our personal friendships become disappointing --people have too many weaknesses--too many faults--trust and faith in others turn to disillusionment as we discover their failures--their problems, And still the pressure mounts--problems increase--there are deadlines to meet--bills to pay--obligations to fulfill--moments of crisis to be faced--tension mounts to the breaking point--sources of strength dissolve--we need help--is there no solace--no refuge--what has happened to meaning?--to purpose?-- But alas, there is none--there is no where to turn--we are estranged, isolated alone. But such is life--life in a sheltered seminary community--life in a world--life in the parish and in society.

Man has always been faced with this dilemma. Scripture unfolds the drama of man who constantly tries to go it alone--of man who wants to be the master of his own soul--of man who fails miserably. But scripture is also the drama of God's loving action for man in the past, in the present, and for the future. The same God who has mercifully and lovingly attempted to change and discipline man through His judgment and the law has freely and graciously given to undeserving man, to us, the forgiveness and comfort of the cross of Christ. It is with this cross that God has taken us from the dry desert land of lostness and brought us to green pastures which is the breadth and length, height and depth of the Christ--Here on the Cross--the form of Christ stretched out--here in the midst of utter
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defeat and isolation--we hear Him say, "Father forgive" - and a miracle happens--light radiating forth from the Cross breaks through the darkness--we walk into the sun of hope and joy and there is love--we are a new man--there is new life--life in resurrection. We know the love of Christ--filled with all the fullness of God--here is life in and with God. He possesses us, and all we are, and we possess Him, and all that He is.

And so today and everyday we, as Seminarians, as Professors, as Christians, as Servants, humbly and hopefully cry forth in the words of the psalmist:

Bow down thine ear, O Lord, hear me:
for I am poor and needy

Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I
cry unto thee daily.

For thou Lord art good, and ready
to forgive: and plenteous in mercy
unto all them that call upon thee.

Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer:
and attend to the voice of my
supplications.

In the day of my trouble I will call
upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

But thou, O Lord, art a God full of
compassion and gracious: long suf-
fering and plenteous in mercy and
truth.

O turn unto me, and have mercy upon
me: give thy strength unto thy
servant.

Under The Table - (Cond't from p. 1)

At last, a new motivation for morality;
Salvation unto "Going Steady."

After the recent Miss America contest in Atlantic City, all over our country guys are forcing their not-so-well-endowed girls into churches. The reason? The new Miss America, commenting on her victory, proudly thrust out her chest and proclaimed, "I own it all to my faith in God!"

The real question in the upcoming national elections isn't "WHO", but "WHY?"
And that's it. Confused? Disgusted?
Wondering vi heyst dos? Regardless, we'll
meet again under the table.

By. R. Craefe

A hearty "Amen!" to J.A.M.'s counsel last week that preachers should neither tip-toe around political issues holding their cassock up nor climb on the back of the Mule or Elephant. The "in but not of the world" stance is proper in the pulpit as well as everywhere else in the church's life. The preacher can no more banish the political realm from his horizon of concern than any other sector of human life--family, daily work, leisure, etc. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof," and "all things (including voting booths, local Democratic and Republican organizations, and the "corridors of power" in Washington) are Christ's." Yot, as J.A.M. warns, there is a difference between a sermon and a political speech.

My only dissent from his otherwise good advice (even the baby-booby sewing fair on election day is intriguing) is his strong hint that a sermon dealing with anything political will probably be of the species usually labelled "topical." This seems to imply that while Scripture may throw a bright shaft on most every other realm of life, the light suddenly fails when a political issue is the target. I think I know what he's justifiably worried about. He's afraid preachers will simply proof text their private political prejudices or twist a passage way out of its natural shape to make it fit the contours of some election year question. Granted, the danger exists, we preachers could sometimes turn a Master Pretzel Bender green with envy.

But I believe the risk must be taken. In controversial areas, above all places, we need the safe-guard of a text standing in judgment over our inevitably narrow and limited points of view. Furthermore, I can think of few if any pericopes into which political implications would have to be read unnaturally. Scripture unfolds a drama in which political forces are continually operative--from Moses' negotiations with an Egyptian despot through Jesus' execution under a provincial official to John's vision of a new civitas superceding the old order under which the church was in travail. Likewise, our life, to which the Word of God in Scripture speaks, is politically conditioned at every turn. During days when issues of state absorb the interest of both preacher and congregation, it will not be strange

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The 1964 Touch Football Program began in typical style Wednesday afternoon as the Seniors scored four touchdowns to smash the Junior Outfit. Although the Juniors scored no points, they held the seniors to but one TD during the first half. Rumor has it that the Juniors will humble the Middler team in their first encounter on Wednesday, Sept. 30. The new schedule, with new game-time figures, is as follows:

Mon. Sept 28 - Seniors vs. Middlers 3:45
 Wed. Sept 30 - Middlers vs. Juniors 4:00
 Mon. Oct. 5 - Seniors vs. Juniors 3:15
 Wed. Oct 7 - Middlers vs. Seniors 4:00
 Mon. Oct.12-Juniors vs. Middlers 3:15

Fred Eichner--Athletic Ch.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE ACTIVATED

The Social Committee is now in the midst of finalizing details for future get-togethers according to Chairman Paul Henry.

An informal dance on October 30 in the Refectory will inaugurate the social season. Music will be furnished through the modern miracle of the phonograph. Following the Advent Communion Service in early December the residents of the Apartment Dorm will host the Annual Christmas Open House.

To end activities before the Christmas holidays, a formal dance will be held in the Refectory on Dec. 10. Music will be provided by a band from Camp Hill, Pa.

CLASS WITTICISM

Upon receiving a large red and black Goldwater-Miller campaign sticker, "Mr. Hefner (also known as a buddy of "Mr. Jordahl) remarked: "I thought you fellows were serious until I looked at the fine print under these two names--Ace Amusement Co. Printers."

NOTE FROM DEAN STROUP: A meeting of the student body will be held in the Chapel on Mon. Sept. 28 at 3:00p.m. Dr. Heiges will address those of us who will attend.

if, as we ponder an appointed text, we "hear what the Word of God says" about this realm for which He has even more lively concern than we.

By H.G.S.

6.

The Square (Cond't from p. 1)

Gettysburg's financial pillar rests on the southwest corner of the Square. The First National Bank speaks for itself. It stands as a symbol of the community's status in that no community is really considered complete without a First National Bank. Some are even blessed with Secnds and Thirds. Local affluence seems to be unable to support more than one at this point. A horetical splinter bank is located off the Square and does not rate attention as its name contains no number.

The southeast corner of the square is the home of the local pharmaceutical emporium. Rea and Derick's stands as a tribute to that unsung hero of the late 1940's, Albert Fitch, Sr. Fitch was a pharmacist whose only son barely scraped through college, majoring in business. Albert Junior came home with his degree and joined his father in the drugstore business. Under the guidance of his father, the younger Fitch expanded the small store to include various lines of general merchandise. It is precisely this pioneering son of A. Fitch to whom R & D's is a monument.

The northeast corner of the Square houses two local landmarks. The Hotel Gettysburg is about par for the small town course with comfortable rooms, sleepy bellhops and a fatuous deak clerk. Such an establishment is a fixture of every town square.

Faber's is the other northeast landmark. Its significance lies in the vanishing Americana which it houses. It is a typical old-line soda shop, featuring the 10¢ phosphate, which is nearly extinct today. Hardier souls brave the delights of a Chocolate-Marshmallow-Peanut Sundae.

Located on the northwest corner of the Square is Wolfe's—fondly known by its former name, The Pub — the place that holds distinction of being the number one favorite gathering spot for the indiginous multitudes. It is perhaps the most fascinating of all places on the Square to spend an evening hour.

One usually finds several types of patrons in the Pub. The bar area usually houses members of the faculties from the two institutions of higher learning in the town, as well as selected members of their respective student bodies. The outer restaurant area is somewhat more cosmopolitan. There one can find the bulk of the student clientele from the two schools. Usually one notes rather equal representation of the 4 classes of the one school and the 3 classes of students from the "hill".

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Almost every evening a few of the town residents are there, sometimes including members of the staff of the local newspaper. Occasionally the atmosphere is enlivened by the presence of a Greyhound bus driver or an itinerant tourist. But no matter what the composition of the clientele, the fact remains that the cold spirits constantly enter their bodies.

As a sidelight, the area provided for the exit of same is significantly unimpressive although not entirely devoid of an atmosphere of its own.

A final note concerns the employees of the establishment. They seem to be perhaps the only uniquely interesting persons to be found of the premises. One in particular, a slim, middle aged Italian woman with a bright smile and a devastatingly deep voice could probably supply observations and information for an extensive Sociological dissertation. However, the pleasure of her verbalizations is confined to a small few patrons whom she seems to trust.

When these lines are completed, their writer is preparing to visit the Square, specifically the northwest corner, and merge into the activity being pursued by the others there. Why? As Edmund Steinle once observed in a sermon, a few beers are "...an escape, an opportunity to forget ourselves..." Excuse me now as I begin my escape.

By F.P.K.

A PLAY IN SEARCH OF CHARACTERS

This could be the case. Therefore you are invited and needed, for we need characters, to become a member of the Chancel Players. This throng of thespians will be meeting every Monday evening at 8:30 p.m. in the Old Chapel (now known under the innocuous title of Room 206). Our illustrious leader will once again be Dr. Ralph D. Lindomann from the English Department of Gettysburg College.

While there is to be no major play produced this year there will be a number of readings to be given. One of these will be Audon's For the Time Being. All of the community is invited, this includes wives, to help prepare these readings for presentation throughout the year to the student body and to visitors on campus.

Look upon this as a "need meeting" occasion. The Chancel Players needs actors, ideas, behind the scene help, encouragement, YOU!

B.P.

It is obvious this year that the Chapel program has been enriched by the use of two faculty members each week. This not only relieves the pressure on the students, but more importantly, it gives the student body the benefit of the experience and wisdom of our professors. Whoever is responsible for this change should be commended.

The most memorable meditations have been those delivered by the faculty. The service of worship through music presented by Mr. Clippinger on the theme of St. Francis of Assisi's Prayer was particularly worthwhile. After being "shot at" with words all day, this turned out to be a refreshing change. But the "change" is not the definitive point. The music is spiritually edifying in its own right through the able interpretation of our own "Clip." The hymns scale new heights and exhibit hidden grandeur at the master's touch, too. The whole community is indebted to our organist for his service here.

On the theme "Our Common Life," Dr. Folkemer awakened our hearts and minds to the reality of a responsibility that each of us has for building up the "body of Christ." We are "keepers of our brethren" and "We are members one of another." With the gifts that each of us has been given, we must work together as a corporate body and as individuals toward that maturity that is "measured by nothing less than the full stature of Christ." This is a challenge to each of us; to grow up to "mature manhood" in this Seminary community.

With the theme of "Elijah's" "Divine Comedy" Dr. Gritsch revealed that our service to God can be exciting and humorous even with all of its seriousness. We are called to be "fools for Christ's sake." Just as Elijah's ministry seems foolish to the observer, the end result is that God appears in strange situations and uses sometimes even stranger talents to reveal his will. We are asked to place an open mind at the center of our service to God so that He might use us as he will in his "divine service."

The Chapel services conducted by the students have been valuable to the community too. The Litany by Mr. Bruggeman and Mr. Avery was well done and provided an opportunity for reflection on the ways in which each of us is dependent on God for all that we are and have. The mimeographed sheet was good procedure. Someone should
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The Student-Faculty Relations Comm. met Thursday afternoon in its first meeting of the year. The task before them was to re-evaluate the purpose and function of the committee as it exists today. Gary Bilbie, chairman of the committee, stated that the secretary, Lanny Coffman will publish for public digestion the minutes of each meeting.

At the present time, there are two newly-elected representatives from the Junior class—Paul Showalter and David DeLong. The Middler's are represented by Lanny Coffman and George Buechner. Stan Trout and Gary Bilbie speak for the Senior class. Faculty members are Dean Stroup, Prof. Reinberger, and Prof. Stuempfle.

Faculty and students are urged to contact their representatives for any problems they have that would pertain to this committee.

AN ETHICAL MUDDLE

The Instructor of Ethics calculatedly yet calmly remarked to his cute student during class discussion: "We seem to be operating under some sort of confusion."

FUTURE ARTICLES TO APPEAR IN TABLE TALK

- Interviews with our visiting professors
- Biographies of new professors
- Biographies of special students

COMING EVENTS

- Sept. 25-27 -Group Work Institute for Junior Class
- Oct. 2-3 - Student Retreat at Camp Nawakwa
- Oct. 21 - Lecture by Dr. Eddy Asirvatham, Jabalpur Univ., India
- Many exciting football games

find a way to have pads put on the kneelers, however.

It is the sincere hope of the writer that the services in the Chapel continue with the same high quality with which they have begun. The attendance and prayers of each of us can make this a reality.

R.J.Richards