

Table Talk

News and Views of the Student Body of The Lutheran
Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.

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October 4, 1966

CHANGE AND REACTION OF OUR CHOIR

Times of transition and of change are, almost without exception, also times of crisis. During such times of crisis certain problems present themselves and challenge those who would seek to make transitions smoothly and implement changes effectively. The recent changes in academic policy which have marked the change from five departments into three closely integrated divisions, the introduction of a middle-year comprehensive examination, and required intern and clinical programs, have not been made without much study, facing of problems, misgivings, and exercise of the genius of our professors in the face of compelling challenge. The changes in contemporary attitudes toward education generally and theological education in particular, have made it necessary and advisable that our school's methods be re-evaluated and amended to conform with current trends in education theory.

But we cannot suppose that Gettysburg Seminary as a community would be unaffected in other areas of her life by changes in academic policy and procedure. I strongly believe that the entire fabric of community life at this school will be dramatically affected in the uncertain number of years of our future existence. One could analyze, I suppose, the effects of the comprehensive examinations upon the morale of the Middler Class each year, or study the social structure of an institution in which an entire class (roughly one-third of the student body) is uprooted for a year and then returned for just one year. But such is not my purpose here.

Rather, the rapid change of the mid-sixties has already produced some startling results on our campus, not the least of which is a crisis which is even now
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Editorial

TOWARD A CREATIVE THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Even a casual study of American history and sociology will reveal the fact that our society and culture are in the process of rapid, qualitative change. The processes of urbanization-metropolitanization, industrialization-cybernation, secularization and racial revolution are glaringly evident. Therefore, the question facing theological education is not whether or not such changes are, in reality, occurring; but what stance should be adopted in relation to them. It seems to me that to ignor them is foolish and to oppose them is impossible. But the remaining alternative, acceptance, carries with it connotations which make its adoption as a stance questionable. In fact, upon closer examination of the suggested three alternatives, we find them to be no less than value judgements. To adopt any one of the three would be constrictive. So the real choice would seem to be between this judgmental and a non-judgmental position. This latter would entail the recognition of these processes of change as neutral factors. Thus the fact that urban living is now more characteristic of American life than rural living is a fact, neither good nor bad. Of course the consequences of these processes are open to question (and such judgement is a proper activity of the church, but the processes themselves are not so open.

It is this non-judgmental stance which should be adopted as the stance of theological education. Only this alternative allows for creativity, for no pre-set, judgmental limitation exist. It is a flexible stance in which answers are not already presupposed by the question. In this atmosphere, a dialogue between church and society can be created and encouraged.
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FOOTNOTE ON SINGING

The other night while I was engaged in what might be termed serious reading, the strong masculine voices of a chorus of "Gospel Singers" resounded down the hall. At first I considered the sound to come from one of the stereos playing a rendition of the 1964 Billy Graham Crusade. However the lighthearted tone variations disclosed the singers to be either fundamentalist proselytes intoxicated with the Spirit, or else fellow Seminarians enjoying themselves with some confiscated Baptist Hymnbooks. The latter proved to be the case. The sounds were reminiscent of an age past -- a time when I was part of and observed young people enjoying themselves at revival meetings. The sounds were also indicative of a good spirit of fellowship and unabated Espre de Corp of those participating. Venturing from seclusion (this being the alternative to closing the door) I confirmed by suspicions. The group involved in this spontaneous concert of "good old time religion" hymns are to be congratulated for both the "content" and "spirit" of their testimony. It was proposed by the Student Body President, and given a hearty AMEN from this writer, that the same thing be done at the Adams County Home prior to Christmas. Those that would consider sobriety and deep creased eyebrows necessary ingredients for such a concert, are not invited. "We want spirited, happy people!", the old and retarded inmates at the Home would say. And I would add a hearty AMEN BROTHER.

C. Pohlhaus

Attention

Dr. Heiges will meet with all students, faculty and staff at 10:30 A.M., Thursday, October 6, in the Chapel.

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Table Talk will regularly appear every Tuesday morning. Anyone interested in writing for Table Talk is encouraged to do so. Articles should be placed in the Managing Editor's mailbox no later than noon on Friday for the following Tuesday's edition.

FESTIVAL OF HARVEST

The Service Friday, October 7, 11 A.M., will mark the Seminary's celebration of the Festival of Harvest. In a technological society, this festival, rooted as it is in agricultural pursuits, presents problems. An effort will be made to introduce into our celebration symbols of the industrial "harvest" of which we are all beneficiaries, without neglecting grateful recognition of the "fruits of the earth" upon which we are dependent for life itself.

Herman G. Stuempfle, Jr.

DEATH REVEALED

It is with deep regret that this paper received word from last year's editor, that Byrde, Table Talk's mascot, "expired" during the summer.

--Editor

LECTIONARY AND PSALM TABLE

A request has been made for a brief explanation of the Lectionary and Table of Psalms which the Worship Committee has distributed for use in morning chapel. The decision for this procedure was actually made by the 1965-66 Worship Committee last spring, and the current Lectionary and Table was prepared over the summer in response to that decision.

Though there is a long tradition in the church's worship for continuous reading of books of the Bible and for use of the Psalms in regular sequence, the Worship Committee's action was a response to current deficiencies rather than an effort to recover an ancient practice. There was general feeling that our corporate worship suffered from the absence of any continuity from one day to the next. Scripture readings, except on Friday and Festival days, were selected on an individual basis without regard to any pattern. The result was that we were never exposed in any sustained way to the Word of God as it speaks from a single book or major section of a book. Likewise, our praying of the Psalms was random, so that some Psalms were never used, while others appeared with considerable frequency. The present Lectionary and Table, therefore, is intended to incorporate a design into our morning worship which will make for continuity and will permit us to listen more intensively to the message of whole books of long portions of books.

The basis of selections for the Lectionary has been two-fold: (1) alternation between Old and New Testament material; and, (2) reference, in so far as this is possible, to the major season of the Church Year through which we are passing at the time. The present Lectionary carries us only to the beginning of Christmas vacation, and the Worship Committee welcomes suggestions from the community with regard to the remainder of the year.

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LECTICARY (Cont'd)

It is hoped that chapel homilies will frequently be based upon the lection for the day, but there is no obligation that this be the case. We do urge, however, that even when another Lesson is used as the text for the sermon the leader read the appointed lection as a second Lesson so that the continuity of our reading and hearing together will not be broken.

It should also be noted that there are sufficient copies of the Gelineau translation of the whole Psalter and of Gelineau's musical arrangements of fifty-four Psalms for use in morning chapel.

Herman G. Steumpfle, Jr.

CHOIR(Cont'd from page 1)

threatening the function and existence of our choir. But our choir is meeting the various manifestations of this crisis. It has always been part of the choir's function to sing for weekday services and for special occasions and festivals. With the advent of the liturgical movement several of these services have been transformed, while others have been replaced or eliminated. As a consequence, for two years the choir had difficulty in realizing its role in a new atmosphere. This year, however, the choir under Mr. Clippinger and Don Main's guidance seems now to have found a home in the chapel once again. This year the choir is increasing its activity in its campus ministry to a level which only our more firmly established professors experienced in the past. After two years of eclipse on the campus the choir is now reasserting itself.

But the choir has not been inactive for two years. It does have another equally important function with its campus ministry. That is its ministry (Cont'd on page 4)

CHOIR (Cont'd from page 3)

to the Christian community at large, realized traditionally through an annual tour to Lutheran Churches in Pennsylvania and beyond. For two years the choir worked primarily in the area of its off-campus ministry, unfortunately to the neglect of its campus ministry. This year, at the outset, promised to be a most successful year, for a balance in function seemed possible, thus strengthening our choir as an effecting and important form of its ministry in our own community and in the Christian community at large.

Almost immediately two problems arose, one of which is directly related to the rapid changes which are now being felt at our school. The first problem is the responsibility of married choir members to their wives. How can responsibility to the choir tour and to the wives be reconciled? This is a question, not entirely unknown in the past, which an increasing number of choir members are finding difficulty to answer. This is a fact which the choir must recognize in its future planning if it is to remain an effective organ of the church in our school. The other problem is completely new and it, frankly, caught the choir and its leaders by surprise. A number of middlers feel that with a choir tour between second and third quarters they will have inadequate time to study for the comprehensive examinations which are expected to be given in May. Thus, they do not want to go on the choir tour. Here, again, the choir must appraise its function of commitment to the Christian community in the face of a problem which may require a fresh approach to the fulfillment of that function.

It is quite alarming to learn that one-half of the choir members have conflicts which preclude their participation in the tour this year. One of the vocal sections is almost completely vacated in the touring choir. In such

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Such a stance, necessarily, has important implications for theological education, concerning both its location and its curriculum. For if the church is to sit in judgment on the many consequences of change today and offer a constructive response, it must first understand this change. And a dialogue between church and society is probably the best method of achieving understanding and forming a response. In order to carry on such a dialogue, an urban location is thus necessary. Consider an analogous situation: in order to understand and help correct the problem of dope addiction, one must go among the victims. (I do not mean to imply that a person must become one). The argument that urbanization can be understood just as well from the outside is simply not convincing. Of course I am aware that location does not guarantee knowledge, but at least the process is available for study. (Our professors have no guarantee that we will learn merely by sitting in class either). And even if some students choose not to learn from the environment, it will have an influence on them which cannot be ignored.

The advantages of such a location are many, but I do not wish to deny its disadvantages. They certainly exist and should not be forgotten. But if the church is to have a meaningful role in the contemporary world, it must utilize the best available resources, the proper environment is one.

Other resources which a school of theology must have at its disposal in order to carry out its task are like that of any educational institution: professors, students, library, classrooms, living accommodations, etc. Other resources are peculiar to a school of theology such as a chapel. Keeping in mind these necessities, how can excellence in theological education be created and maintained?

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CHOIR(Cont'd from page 4)

a condition any choir's attempt to tour would be suicidal. Does the general situation leave us to face the possibility that our choir should not go on tour this year? Certainly we must face the possibility that we may be physically too weak to tour but I strongly believe that if all of us face our *sitz im leben* in Gettysburg we will soon discover that the choir's ministry to the Christian community at large should not be forfeited. We have often discussed the community life of our Seminary. I doubt that any of us fails to appreciate the contribution the choir makes to our local community. We have often discussed Gettysburg's involvement in life beyond our 55 acres. We demonstrate in our field work program, our intern and clinical training program, in our visitations to institutions, in our supply preaching program, in our willingness to open our own facilities to outside groups and ourselves to interdenominational dialogue, and in our annual choir tour along with its related spring concerts. Yet there are those who insist that Gettysburg Seminary exists in a monastic shell. If we forfeit our choir's responsibility in this area of involvement beyond our community, those who see us as a remote monastic community would certainly see their case strengthened proportionately.

The Christian ministry is filled with basic responsibilities to parish, to individuals, to family, to self, to district synod, and to Madison Avenue. How can the pastor find time for all of them? The answer is, "He Must." The discipline we as members of this seminary community develop and exercise in our years here will be carried by us throughout our careers. If we retreat now what can the future hold for us.

I appeal to the community, support your choir; its work is an expression of your own ministry.

Joe Sabo

Editorial (Cont'd from page 4)

An urban setting has already been discussed as providing one part of the answer, but a more complete answer is an urban-university setting. A curriculum which allows for and encourages students to take university courses in philosophy, languages, science, education, psychology, sociology and the like (depending on students' interests) would be an important element in the church's dialogue with society. A flexibility in the curriculum would enable students to prepare for more specialized ministries. There is no necessity of absolutizing the B.D. as the only legitimate educational requirement of the ministry. Some ministries may profit more from a student's spending three years after college earning a Ph.D. An M.A. in education with a minor in religion might be more adequate for some of the church's educational goals. A degree in psychology coordinated with the school of theology would avoid needless delays and raise the church's standards in this field. As a whole, the course requirements could be adjusted to meet the demands of varying ministerial specializations. One program for all is naive at best.

The encounter with students and professors whose ideas conflict with our own is a vitally necessary experience. Experiencing racial and national differences is also necessary. And I do mean to emphasize their necessity.

So given the desire for excellence in theological education, I must strongly affirm that the urban-university context is that which is best suited for a creative dialogue with our rapidly changing culture and society. It might not always be so, but it is now. Taking theological education seriously presupposes taking our contemporary world seriously, and this makes an urban-university context necessary.

Bob Pielke