

Table Talk

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



Volume XIV Number 5

February 20, 1978

OUR LUTHERAN FAMILY by Jo Serratelli

Welcome back to all our Seminary Family, and a special greeting to all who are new to our family this semester. I would also like to extend a special welcome to Dr. G. Everett Arden who is teaching two courses at LTSG this semester on Lutheranism. Dr. Arden is emeritus professor of Church History at The Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

Now down to business. I did find some statistics on the number of women in M.Div. programs in LCA seminaries, as I had promised. The combined enrollment of women is 194. This represents 17% of all Master of Divinity students in LCA seminaries. I also found that there are presently 57 women who are now ordained in the LCA. Throughout the world across all branches of our Lutheran Family, there are 573 ordained women. These pastors reside mostly in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Germany.

I thought it might be interesting, in light of this scant number of ordained women, to check out just how many Lutherans there are in the world. The number published by the Lutheran World Federation is 70.4 million. That is all people who declare themselves Lutheran under any branch. I guess it goes without saying that they are men and women. But, to be fair, women have only had a chance at ordination since 1970. We'll catch up.

The last word, you'll remember, on the new Lutheran Book of Worship was, of course, that LCMS would not participate in its use. You have probably heard that LCMS is working now on their own new service book. The Augsburg Publishing House, who will publish the LBI, has requested that LCMS not use the title Lutheran Book of Worship in any form as the title of their new book. The Concordia Publishing House will be working with the Missouri Synod in the planning of its new service book. LCMS will have the right to use any of the copy-righted material prepared by ILCW, as Missouri is a co-copy-right holder in the material. LCMS had been part of ILCW that planned the Lutheran Book of Worship. Missouri's Concordia Publishing House will not be listed as a publisher of the LBI.

It looks like it is not just American Lutherans who are displeased with their family's behavior, nor is it just the "little people" who often react. Ernst Kasemann has resigned (you all know Ernst, don't you?) from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Wurtemberg, Germany. It would appear that this was a protest reaction after that denomination cut off funds from the student congregation at the University of Tubingen. (Lutheran Standard, Feb. 7th) Kasemann is thinking about becoming a Methodist.

Did anyone notice, back in December, that the letter "O" had fallen off the sign identifying LTSG on Highway 30? The remaining letters made for very interesting reading: The logical Seminary. Perhaps this was a "sign" of a different nature. I wonder if that had any effect on our "Brother Martin" who is sitting on his cement pedestal a few hundred feet away. He seems to be bleeding an excessive amount of green these days. Could that also be a "sign"?

In the Dec. 12, 1977 issue of Table Talk, Jo Serratelli reported on the decision of the LCMS's so-called "Blue Ribbon Committee to challenge several of the hymns proposed for inclusion in the new Lutheran Book of Worship. Much of what she says is true: if we look too closely at their theological content, we could indeed eliminate quite a few hymns - or at least stanzas of hymns - from the SBH and TLH: her criticism of "Away in a Manger," (that it compromises the humanity of Christ) is, I think, well taken. To these, one might add that Missouri is apparently once again pretending that its political and theological apprehensions are wholly theological and not at all political.

But I, for one, appreciate the fact that there are Lutherans who take the theology of hymns seriously enough to examine them carefully before consenting to their popular use. Were we to do the same, perhaps we too might find that stanza 2 of "Amazing Grace" - a hymn whose "Lutheran Orthodoxy" is praised by Ms. Serratelli's article - is indeed objectionable on 2 counts.

That stanza goes like this:

"'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed"

Line 1 is a classic illustration of how not "rightly to divide law and gospel." That God's accusing, crushing, convicting word of law is not a function of God's grace is central, I think, to the Lutheran understanding of the whole and mutual exclusivity of law and gospel. As Herner Elert asserts, "The idea that God speaks only grace to man is a fundamental error. With the statement that God speaks only grace, the divine law is rendered impotent."¹ The sentiment of line 1 is far more akin to the Calvinistic notion, "The very fact that God speaks to us, that, under all circumstances, is, in itself, grace."²

I find line 4 objectionable on both theological and pastoral grounds. Theologically, I would argue that pointing to a "first hour of belief" reinforces a

a sloopy, born-again, instant conversionist theology is a la "The 700 Club." Surely not all the Lutherans who would sing the hymn (at least not this one) could point to the hour they "first believed," nor would we want (and here's the pastoral objection) to suggest that they ought to be able to point to such a moment. Our people have a hard enough time maintaining that one not necessarily experience a "heartwarming feeling" in order to be a true believer without their hymnal possibly reinforcing the contrary notion by the inclusion of this stanza.

Now, in spite of the above, some might want to argue for the inclusion of this popular American Protestant hymn for ecumenical reasons which, for them, override most other considerations. In that event, we ought at least to be aware of the compromise being made. As you might have surmised by now, I am somewhat reluctant to make such a compromise.

But should the hymn be included in the LBH anyway - as it in all probability will - that self-same American Protestantism does provide us with an out: "My Christian brothers and sisters, our next hymn will be Amazin' Grace, and we'll be singin' stanzas 1, 3, and 4!"

¹ Elert, Herner, Law & Gospel, Fortress, Philadelphia, 1967, pp. 5f.

² Barth, Karl, Community, State & Church: 3 Essays, Doubleday, N.Y., 1960, p. 72.

ATHLETIC NEWS

There is a ping-pong tournament in progress, both singles and doubles.

The Basketball tournament will start soon (Feb. 20). If anyone wants to play and didn't sign up on a team earlier, can see Martin Nale about it.

Martin Nale

The editors must apologize for not getting this article into the December Table Talk but due to finals and other pit-falls of the season communication between the two editors sometimes broke down.

However, due to the nature of Dr. Phelraditch we are going ahead and publishing it in February's T.T. in spite of the seasonal title.

DOCTOR PHELRADITCH PRESENTS A DOCTOR PHELRADITCH PRESENTATION:
A DOCTOR PHELRADITCH CHRISTMAS PLAY IN ONE ACT ENTITLED:

"A CHRISTMAS PLAY"
by Doctor Phelraditch

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Nick - a virile youth

Bordonzo - rich merchant from the port of Oslo

Uncle Willfred - his uncle (friend of Dominic)

Professor Smyrne - noted philatelist

[Professor Smyrne as a youth]

Hugh Beaumont - the huntsman, recently deceased

Elvira Smyre - the Professor's wife and local gossip

Fifi - the housekeeper

[Fifi as an old woman]

Lucinda du Lake - a fair virgin

Little Chuck - the crippled boy - deaf & Dumb

Smacky - his lovable dog - also deaf & dumb

Theodore Bouvier Remington IV - rival to Nick

Rosalita - the barmaid

Pietro - the starving artist

Mama Dorsey - the jolly cook

Ivar Smythe - ruthless TV repairman and lackey of Basil Bartholemew

Bjord Njttogen - the gardener

Duke Street - local nobility

Basil Bartholemew - owner of the hotel and mayoral aspirant

Tony - the cabby

Donelda - Tony's absent-minded wife

Father Christmas - as himself

and Jerry Mathers as the Beaver

ACT I, SCENE I

The Scene: Christmas Eve. A Baronial mansion; the Claireborne's living room. Snow is falling [outside]. Through the large picture window we see Tony's wife Donelda throwing the remains of Christmas dinner from the window of her third floor walk-up. Below, on the corner, Little Chuck and Smacky are engaged in selling newspapers to Pietro, hoping to raise enough money to purchase presents for the little match girl. A cab approaches with Tony at the wheel. The door opens and Nick gets out. He walks toward the mansion; he is coming to see the fair Lucinda.

Meanwhile, Theodore Bouvier Remington IV, Nick's rival for the hand of fair Lucinda, is approaching the Claireborne's from the opposite direction. He stops momentarily to polish the silver head of his walking stick on the cap of Bjord Njttogen, who is lying in the gutter in a drunken stupor and bleeding slightly from a small stab wound. Just down the street, Rosalita and Hugh Beaumont can be seen entering the Fairview Hotel. Basil and Duke Street are just ahead of them, yet out of earshot, carrying on a heated discussion. Ivar, meanwhile, has intercepted Bordonzo on the way to the mansion, and passed him a small manila envelope.

"A CHRISTMAS PLAY" CONT.

Inside, Uncle Willfred hides a smoking pistol under Prof. Smyrne's chair. The good Professor does not take notice because he is occupied with thoughts of his former lover FIFI who is now (unbeknownst to the good professor) the Claireborne's housekeeper and is presently (as an old woman) standing beside him dusting a picture of the Professor as a youth. Elvira Smyrne appears to be reading quietly in the corner but she is really eavesdropping on Lucinda, who is carrying on a hushed telephone conversation. From the kitchen we hear the familiar sounds of Iliama Dorsey busily at work preparing the Christmas dinner. All anxiously await the arrival of Father Christmas.

[Enter Takio, running out of breath]

Takio: Ah, . . . Godzilla!

[All exeunt stage left and right, with the exception of Little Chuck, who having lost his crutch in the confusion, struggles vainly to crawl to safety.]

-Curtain Falls-

-FIN-

REPORT FROM THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE

by Thom Thomlinson

Here is a list of the events which your social committee sponsored last semester. It began with the Annual Picnic which involved over 130 people gathered together in good fellowship for the first time (as 1st year students) or after C.P.E. or Internship. During the semester there were several successful "Keg Klub" get-togethers held in Heiges Hall community room and one outside by the fountain. Halloween (or Reformation Day) was celebrated with a well attended square dance in the Refectory. [50 students, spouses, and friends came out to share in the fun.]

Christmas brought a cookie and hot-chocolate caroling event. During the January blizzard, the parking lot clearing gang got together with some "munchies" to break the boredom of being snow-bound.

This spring semester your money will go towards the refreshments at Jubilate. March 3rd (requested by popular demand) you will have a chance to attend another square-dance celebrating "St. Patrick's Day two weeks early". Hopefully, this time the faculty and staff will join us. The 25¢ admission price of last semester will be waived this time to encourage all to attend and aid those who must hire a baby-sitter for 3 hours. So mark your calendars with a big green shamrock on Friday, March 3rd, from 8 to 11. Door prizes and party favors will be given away. (Don't forget the color green is the attire for this evening . . . but above all else make sure you wear soft soled shoes or plan on dancing a your socken feet--Mrs. Hess does not want a marked-up floor and if we had to clean it we wouldn't either!) Refreshments will be served. Following this event April hopes to bring a repeat performance of a successful dinner-theatre-nite that 50 people shared April 1977 at Oregon Ridge in Cockeysville, MD. Last year's incredible fare included a smorgasboard of shrimp salad, lobster newburg, vegetables, sundae deserts, all the soda and set-ups a person needed and a light-hearted comedy play topping the evening. (No wonder we want to do it again!) Plans to return there are in the initial stages, but hopefully the cost can be kept around six dollars per person (which isn't bad considering this includes the feast, gratuities, a corsage for one of you, and a token to remember the evening by.) Sounds good!

CONTINUED ON THE BOTTOM OF PAGE 5 . . .

9.5 THESES
ON THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY OF THE GOSPEL
AT GETTYSBURG SEMINARY

- Thesis 1. The true treasure of the church is the most holy Gospel of the glory and the grace of God (Luther).
- Thesis 2. Those who are called to preach stand under obligation and conscience to make certain that the Gospel is preached purely according to the Word of God revealed in Scripture, interpreted by established hermeneutical procedures, and distinguished in terms of Law and Gospel. Anathema on those who preach a Gospel which is contrary to this Gospel we have received (Gal. 1.9).
- Thesis 3. It follows, therefore, that a sermon cannot be an exegetical study conducted from the pulpit. Proper biblical exegesis, though indispensable in sermon preparation, does not in itself constitute a sermon.
- Thesis 4. It follows, also, that a sermon is not a bible study with occasional "applications" made to today's life.
- Thesis 5. It follows, also, that sermons are not gatherings in which Christians share their "spiritual" experiences.
- Thesis 6. Grandiloquent language and delivery will never substitute for the pure Word of God.
- Thesis 7. In recent years and especially in these latter days, the preaching of the Gospel has fallen captive to the errors listed above. This tendency, with few exceptions, has reached such proportions that "a famine for the Word of the Lord (Amos 8.11)" now casts its shadow over us.
- Thesis 8. The unwritten but commonly-held prejudice that student homilies in chapel are inferior in quality to the sermons of professors in chapel is a pious illusion, for "all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3.23)" - and the preaching of the Gospel.
- Thesis 9. This disputation is not written in a spirit of anger, vindictiveness, or self-pride. It is not written out of a spirit of cynicism or despair, though recent sermons have not helped matters any. It is written in the hope that chapel preachers will examine themselves and commit themselves to future excellence in preaching, so that "He who began a good work in us will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1.6)."
- Thesis 9.5. "Test the spirits, to see whether they are of God" - I John 4.1. Ecclesia Semper Reformanda Est.

by Daniel V. Biles
15 Feb. 1978

SOCIAL COMMITTEE REPORT CONT.

May brings many good things besides call committees, C.P.E., and Internships. Such as a grand finale of a picnic sponsored by you and the Athletic Committee. So when this snow stops you can set a date.

Of course, those "Keggars" will be interspersed here and there when they are wanted (and needed)!!

So this is basically what we have done with this social year at the seminary. Come join us in the activities . . . it's your money and I believe we've done a good job so far.

HOUSING SURVEY: SINGLE STUDENTS

There were nineteen responses to the housing survey for single students. Of those, thirteen had received their housing choice this year. As might be expected from that statistic, most gave favorable answers to the question, "How well does the current housing procedures match up students with their choice of housing?" (Very well: 5; Well: 6; Adequately: 7; Inadequately: 1 Do they try?: 0)

In spite of their positive evaluation of the current system, most respondents (16) thought that single students should be given the option to live off-campus or in apartments. Two said that the current system discriminates against single students, and one mentioned that many students grow accustomed to living in apartments before they come here and find it difficult to adjust to dorm life. Of the three who thought that single students should be required to live in dormitories, two mentioned the importance of the community.

Interestingly, although most students wanted the freedom to choose to live off-campus, most (10) still would live in dorms were the off-campus option available. All who answered the survey found the price of rent very reasonable (14) or reasonable (5).

The question, "Should dormitory residents be required to live in the refectory?" drew 15 "No" responses and a host of heated comments. This question was included in the survey in order to determine whether single students' complaints about their living situation were directed primarily to the housing itself or to the dorm-refectory combination. The response indicated that the latter is probably the case. Still, most found the total price of room and board either very reasonable (9) or reasonable (4).

Most thought that when there is not sufficient dorm space for single students, alternate housing should be offered on the basis of seniority (13) and/or age of students (5). Two thought it should be determined by chance, one by date of request. One respondent said that living off-campus should always be an option.

There were a number of final suggestions, of which several were not related to any other question in the survey. One student suggested making housing available during the summer, "especially at close of semester before CPE begins and following CPE before fall begins." Another student requested restricting some housing to non-smokers, especially those allergic to smoke. And there were three comments about the parking situation (2 negative, one positive).

Several students mentioned that they understood the seminary's difficulty in coming up with an alternative to the current system. On the whole, while those who answered the survey wished for more freedom of choice, they indicated that until a better system can be worked out they are willing to live with the present one.

MACRAME - Sue Solan will demonstrate knitting techniques and let us create our own designs. This meeting will be held Wednesday, February 22nd at 7:30 p.m. in the Heiges Hall Lounge. If you wish to join us, call Joan Willse at 334-6529 after 5:30 p.m.

SPRING PLANT EXCHANGE - Start cuttings from your plants now to share with others. Trade in cuttings for new plants. Details later. Joan Willse

A SPECIAL THANKS to "Blacky" and Billy for the excellent job of clearing the parking lots after the blizzards. They waited while we shovelled our cars out and put in a lot of extra time.

FEBRUARY
by Mark Swanson

T. S. Eliot once made the claim that April is the cruelist month, but I think that this insane statement merely points up two facts: (i) Eliot never lived in Gettysburg; (ii) he was never a theological student. It becomes very clear to me that February should win the honors, as I sit and observe clean snow turned into filthy slush and my brain turned into raspberry jello.

One of the evidences of this second phenomenon is that, while attempting to churn out a few metrical lines for this literary publication, everything I wrote seemed to have a sense of being "pre-owned", as they say of used Mercedes automobiles. Unfortunately, I have been unable to do better. I beg your Christian patience.

Lines Inspired by January Greek

I think that I shall never see
A verb as lovely as εἶμι,
A verb whose principle parts are stressed
In Blass and Debrunner, and the rest.

I thrill to the loveliness - oh my! -
Of ἡμεθα and εἶσομαι!
We all know εἶτε, sein, to be,
But only God could make εἶμι.

Life in Valentine Hall

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou are not so unkind
As our steam radiators
Nocturnal bangs and taps
Remind of dwarves, perhaps
Or Roman gladiators.

Heigh-ho, sing heigh-ho, unto the green holly:
Most rooms now are steambaths, most plumbing mere folly:
The Heigh-ho! the holly!
This dorm is most jolly.

The Intern Scramble

It is an ancient clergyman,
And he stoppeth one of three
'By they long grey beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

'The refectory doors are opened wide,
they've slain the fatted calf;
My bill is paid, the fesst is laid:
May'st hear Joe Tursi's laugh.

He holds him with a skinny hand,
'There is a church," quoth he.
'Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!
Eftsoons his hand dropped he.

FEBRUARY CONT.

He holds him with his glittering eye -
 The middler he stood still,
 And listens like a three year's child:
 The clergyman hath his will.

(There are 138 more stanzas of this one, but that should be enough to give you the flavor.)

Do you hear what I was speaking of - the intimation in these lines of a former existence, of another life? Perhaps the problem is that all the Muses available in February are "pre-owned." We shall see. March is less than two weeks away.

A member of the junior class submitted this ad to Table Talk.

ΖΗΤΕΙΤΑΙ: ΔΙΔΑΣΚΟΛΟΣ
 καλὸ Μισθὸς Ἑπταημέριον ἔπιζόματα
 Ὀρεσ Ἑργασίας: 8πμ - 3πμ
 Τηλεψωνήσαστε 334-9096

translation:

Wanted: teacher
 Good Pay - benefits
 hours 8am - 3 pm
 Call 334-9096

Something may have been lost in the typing of this ad --- my apologies as I am not a Greek scholar (nor will I ever be!).----the editor who is doing the typing.

ADAMS COUNTY CRAFT FESTIVAL
March 10-17, 1978

The festival is coordinated by the Gettysburg Handcrafters and the Adams County Agricultural and Home Economics Extension Service and the Adams County Arts and Crafts Guild.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- March 6 & 7 - Entry Days for Juried Craft Show and Exhibit
- March 10- Juried Craft Show Begins (Opens 12 noon at the Gettysburg National Bank, York Street. 5-3 p.m.)
- March 10-17- Juried Craft Show and Craft Exhibit--Juried Craft Show at the Gettysburg National Bank. Craft Exhibit at the Adams County Library.
- March 12- Studio Tour---10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Craftsmen will be demonstrating and selling in their studios

CATEGORIES:

1. Clay
2. Manipulated Fibers--weaving, macrame, rug hooking, etc.
3. Printed and Batik Fabrics
4. Creative Stitchery
5. Metal--Including Jewelry
6. Wood
7. Other Media

There will be two divisions of these seven categories: high school students (grades 9-12) and adults.

For more information there are posters and pamphlets at the Adams County Public Library and the Gettysburg National Bank, York St.