

Table Talk

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



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Christ is Risen!

Hallelujah!

Special Interview:

Robert Jenson

This past February Robert W. Jenson participated in the Theological Conference on The New Church and its Ministry, which met in Chicago during the same time as the Council of Seventy, that group commissioned to design a new Lutheran church.

The theological conference was both "an enormous success and failure," said conference planner and lecturer Jenson. It accomplished what it set out to do, namely to provide a forum for theological discussion on a national level, "the sort of thing that used to happen at synod and national conventions." But it also failed, according to Jenson, because the intended beneficiaries of such discussion, the Council of Seventy, were unable to attend; dates for both meetings coincided.

"Originally, the two meetings were to have run back to back," said Jenson, "but the Seventy deliberately changed the date of their meeting so none of their members could attend. Rather, a compromise was struck so that both meetings could be held in the same city. Only three or four of

the Seventy bothered to attend the theological conference," Jenson said.

A particularly important lecture was delivered by William Lazareth, director of the Lutheran World Federation. Lazareth delivered "an impassioned plea for the Seventy to take seriously the 'Lima Document,' the very important study on Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry," Jenson reported. This document is expected to be the basis for all ecumenical discussions for the next generation. Among the points in the Lima Document are a call for the historic episcopate and a return to the three-fold ministry: deacon, presbyter, and bishop.

Jenson's lecture was "The Nature and Location of Sovereignty," an attempt to locate with whom the last word rests in the church.

According to Jenson, the transcripts will be published in the Spring issue of Dialog and in a volume by Fortress Press sometime this summer.

Kurt S. Strause

The New Church

"The New Church" is a phrase that conjures up all kinds of personal visions of how we think the Gospel message should be proclaimed to the world. We all have our ideal, preconceived notions as to what the Lutheran church should look like in 1988 when the merger comes, and how it will minister to its people in the future.

The bishops' colloquy, held March 21-22 at the seminary, brought together members of the three Lutheran communities that will merge in 1988. Bishop Herbert Chilstrom,

from the Minnesota Synod, L.C.A., led the discussion with a talk on church polity; Bishop E. Harold Jansen, Eastern District, A.L.C., addressed the effects of the merger on the congregational level; and Bishop Rudolph P. E. Ressmeyer, East Coast Synod, A.E.L.C., spoke on the Lutheran evangelical witness to the world. Each bishop provided a basic outline on which to focus our vision of The New Church.

I would venture to say that of the hundred or so clergy and seminarians in attendance, there must have been a hundred or so different and contrasting visions of "The New Church." Now, that's fine; we must start somewhere, pooling our visions together, deciding on what needs to be taken seriously and what visions need to be laughed off the board. But I got the feeling that many of the people who came to the colloquy wanted answers, firmly set and all mapped out. But that was not the reality of the situation. There were no answers to be provided at the colloquy.

Maybe some came out of the colloquy feeling like it was a bit premature to hold a day of discussion at this point. We decided to merge only a few short months ago, and completion is five years away. The committees to decide the shape, nature, and ministry of this "New Church" have barely begun to sift through all the information and work on a plan of action. How can answers be provided now?

I remember Bishop Chilstrom's talk in the afternoon. At one point he mentioned that we really could not go anywhere until we, as Lutherans, identified our idea of the ministry of the church. Mrs. Gritsch asked that very question of him: "What is the ministry of the Church?" The bishop's reply was that the task force on theology was still in mid-course and it would be a while before a statement could be made.

But does that stop us from asking questions and fielding ideas? As Beth Schlegel, one of organizers of the colloquy, mentioned, "We cannot seek answers as of yet, but we can ask questions and reflect on what the New Church can be."

We as seminarians are in a transitional stage. We have entered seminary in the midst of a great change for the church, and we will exit into the parish before that change is completed. It will be an awkward stage, a time of identity crisis, and what we take into the parish will generate as suppress the enthusiasm of the parishioners for this new church.

The colloquy was not intended to provide answers, but to help us reflect on the future. It was conceived as a yearly

event, designed to keep the seminarians and clergy updated and attuned to happening in the merger. We will be able to witness the evolution, and not just step into the merger blind to the happenings over the next five years. The bishops provided principles to go by, directions to head for, and needs to be met. I would hope that those who did attend the colloquy would ruminate over what the bishops said, and I would encourage those who did not participate to look for other, and further discussions on the New Church.

M.D. Stroud

"A Coming Together"

Beginning with singing the hymn, "Christ is Made the Sure Foundation," about 140 pastors and laity gathered last March 21-22 at Gettysburg Seminary to attend an all-day convocation on the emerging Lutheran Church. The guests of honor were three bishops representing the three participating Lutheran church bodies. Bishop Chilstrom, LCA, Minnesota Synod; Bishop Jansen, ALC, Eastern District; and Bishop Ressmeyer, AELC, East Coast Synod all presented a talk about the new Lutheran church.

Bishop Chilstrom began his talk in a humorous, joking manner. As he went on he became much more serious and he spoke very realistically about the new church. "The moment the new church is born it will have all of the failings that are common to human institutions. It will be hobbled by imperfect leadership, restricted by lack of resources, and compromised to the grass roots. The new church will have the marks of death written all over it."

Bishop Chilstrom continued, "At the heart of the theology of justification is that one must die in order to live, that one must abandon all hope in oneself in order to discover the hope that God alone can give. Even in institutions we must accept ashes to ashes, dust to dust before we can accept the saving message of Jesus Christ."

"But there is another possibility. What if a church, at the time it comes to birth, were able to say structure is not of first importance, but service is. We have abandoned trust in ourselves and we have accepted our death to give life to the world. Wouldn't that be quite marvelous! We are dying in order that the living and resurrected Jesus Christ can be seen in this church. We are dying so that justice may prevail in the world, dying to bring peace. We are dying to feed the hungry and heal the sick. Think what that would mean!"

Bishop Chilstrom admitted that he has a master plan for the new church, but instead he made a few suggestions. "The new church must be firmly anchored at the grass roots, responsible to believers." "There is a need for orders of ministry - deacons, ministers, and bishops - in the church." The church should not be exclusively at the grass roots. "I would hope that most of the Lutheran churches have matured enough to see that the local congregation is only one of several expressions of the church." His final suggestion is that he hopes "that the new church will be more attentive to its theological roots and resources."

After a short break where the pastors and laity were able to talk to the bishops over coffee and cookies, Bishop Jansen addressed the convocation. In his talk he emphasized ecumenical and evangelical mission. "The question is not what the Christian should be doing in the church, but rather what the Christian should be doing as the church."

"There is no part of existence that does not call for response by the church. But there must be no messianic pretensions. We are not called to world rescue, but to world witness. We must admit to our intercessory role, loving our neighbors on our knees."

Bishop Jansen stressed, "We must overcome the tendency to privatism, and overcome separation." He hopes that the new church will be inclusive and will "reestablish the congregation with Christ as its base." He expects there to be new roles of the laity and that "the new congregation is going to be more feisty than previously."

That evening Bishop Ressmeyer concluded the presentations telling the story of the Wizard of Oz. "Here we are, Lutherans of three church bodies in search of a variety of gifts, wandering down the yellow brick road which leads to our Emerald City, the new Lutheran Church. We come like those mythical characters, a scarecrow, a tin woodsman, and a cowardly lion, with a variety of gifts, talents, and experiences from years of service to the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our strength is in our unity. And our strength is also in our diversity. United I think we are, we all want to see the end of that journey. We all want to see the Emerald City, all contributing our arrival there to the gracious leading of a God that gives gifts, a God who owns the city."

In his final remarks Bishop Ressmeyer stressed some of the essentials for the new church. "It is imperative that we take as normative the scripture and the apostolic understanding of the gospel, the sacraments and its ministry. We also need to deal seriously with the tradition that has been handed down through the years. If the church is to be catholic and evangelical, then it must see itself as a servant church. Its structure should enable service to its congregations, to its ministers, and to society. We must see the unity of all Christians."

Bishop Ressmeyer expressed a very deep regret that the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod decided not to be a part of the emerging church. He notes that it would be good for both the liberals and the conservatives to be in communion with each other. "We need each other."

After the presentations all three bishops concluded the evening with a panel discussion. Bishop Jansen responded to the question, "Why should we merge at all?" "For the church really to be itself, it must rise above its nineteenth century distinctions of the immigrant church. Those distinctions are no longer valid for the year 2000. We must establish the ground of Jesus Christ."

Bishop Chilstrom shared a personal story about this merger. "My wife grew up with an ALC background and spent her first twenty years in the ALC. We have often bantered about that, her being of ALC background, and I being of LCA. I have always called her a closet ALCer. But a very beautiful and emotionally charged thing happened to us at the LCA Louisville Convention. I was a delegate when the vote to merge was announced. There was a wave of emotion that swept the entire delegation. I didn't get a chance to see my wife until after the vote. When I saw her, we spontaneously embraced right there. And the tears flowed. This thing we had bantered about was more than a good humor. There were those old loyalties that finally came together, and for us in a very personal way it kind of symbolized what it was to be for a new church. A coming together."

Dale Arthur McMillen

Early Garden

I have come to plant, but the earth
is cold
And heavy with barely melted snow
Where are yesterday's warmly whispered
hints
Of Spring the air is but a precursor:
The proof lies in the ground
And I shall sow more
Promises around the edges of winter
Relenting, receding, a sign
It will not always be March
But Visions of May to come
Must be seeded early.

Janet S. Comings

Book Review

Forde, Gerhard O., Justification by Faith - A Matter of Death and Life, Fortress Press, 1982, avail. bookstore, \$3.75

Justification by faith, according to Forde, has always been the red flag doctrine that Lutherans have boldly waved in the face of works-righteous polemicists. Yet, when push came to shove, the bravado of sola fide faded from red to an embarrassing shade of pink. Melancthon's irenic approach in the Augsburg Confession (CA) might be seen in light of twentieth century ecumenism as a further regression: a white flag signal of retreat. Forde points out that current Roman Catholic-Lutheran dialogues have yielded surprising results: "Vinzenz Pfnur, the Catholic historian... develops the thesis that the CA should be seen as a corrective over against those early polemical exaggerations of the 1520s." (p.6)

It is to those "early polemical exaggerations of the 1520s" that Forde says we must return and rediscover their explosive powers. Return he does, in a writing style that is as explosive as the subject. "To the age old question, (What shall I do to be saved?) the confessional answer is shocking: "Nothing! Just be still; shut up and listen for once in your life to what God... is saying to his world and to you in the death and resurrection of his Son!" (p.22) Forde

is not afraid to hoist the red flag. For those who posit that justification by faith suggests "cheap grace," he replies not so; it is free. On the necessity of good works he simply asks: "What are you going to do now that you don't have to do anything?" (p.33) Forde is relentless and skillful in exposing the ever lurking suspicion in the legalism of religion which forever pleads the question, "Don't we have to do something?"

This is not a long book, a mere 103 pages. Forde uses words economically so that reading is brisk. Yet, in that economy one finds constant reason for pause: "We are willing, if need be, to admit that our vices should go, but certainly not our virtues." (p.86) The only problem that I encountered was a slight imbalance in the death/life tonalities. Lots of talk on death, but not enough on life. However, this is insignificant for such a book, which, upon completion, begs a second reading. Now, what are you going to do now that you don't have to do anything? My suggestion: read this book.

Fred Marcoux

New Books of Interest:

Old Testament:

- Craige, P. C., Ugarit and the Old Testament, Eerdmans Press, 1983, \$4.50.
Miscall, P. D., The Workings of Old Testament Narrative, Fortress, 1983, \$6.75.
Noth, M., A History of Pentateuchal Traditions, Scholars Press, 1981, \$13.50.

New Testament:

- Cullmann, O., Baptism in the New Testament, SCM Press, 1950, \$3.00.
Shaw, G., The Cost of Authority; Manipulation and Freedom in the New Testament, Fortress Press, 1983, \$12.75.

History:

- Becker, R. P. ed., Erasmus, Luther, Muntzer, and Others; German Humanism and Reformation, Continuum Press, 1982, \$6.75.
Keller, R. S., Queen, L. L., and Thomas, H. F., eds., Historical Perspectives on the Wesleyan Tradition: Women in New Worlds, Vol. II, Abingdon Press, 1982, \$10.50.

Theology:

- Von Balthasar, H. V., Love Alone: The Way of Revelation, Sheed and Ward, 1968, \$4.17.
Workentin, M., Ordination; A Biblical-Historical View, Eerdmans, 1982, \$6.00.

etics:

ingsen, M., Doctrine and Word; Theology in the Pulpit, John Knox Press, 1973.

Miscellaneous:

Lehn, C., Peace Be With You, Faith and Life Press, 1980, \$7.50.

All new titles from Fortress Press are currently being offered at a 35% discount in the bookstore; this includes many of Dr. Jenson's recent works. CLF

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Ms. Proper

Dear Ms. Proper:

Some people (I won't mention names) drive me crazy when they don't pronounce the "h" at the beginning of words like huge, humor, and human. What can I do?
Mildred Methodist

Dear Mildred:

You could, everytime they mispronounce those words, yell the correct pronunciation: "hyooge!" "hyoomor!" "hyooman!" But they would probably be insulted and never talk to you again. If it saves your sanity, however, it's worth it! (And don't forget Hyooston, Texas.)

Ms. Proper

Dear Ms. Proper:

What's the right way to pronounce forte? Fortay or fort?

Puzzled Patty

Dear Puzz:

Fort (the French pronunciation) is the right way if you mean strength, as in "chemistry is not my forte." Fortay is correct only if you're using the Italian music direction for loud - "sing forte!"

Ms. Proper

Women in Ministry

Women in ministry in the LCA is still a rather new phenomenon. It was not until 1970 that a female could become an ordained minister in the Lutheran Church in America.

A look at statistics at Gettysburg Seminary reveals that the first LCA woman who was ordained was Beth Platz, and she graduated from this institution

in 1965. She eventually accepted a position as campus counselor and assistant to the chaplain at the University of Maryland in College Park.

Further statistics indicate that more women are enrolling at Gettysburg Seminary. The student body was 24% women in 1979; in 1980 and 1981 it stabilized with 31% both years, showing an increase of six women in 1981; and currently 35% of the students are females. This 35% translates to 76 women who are now enrolled. Of those, 60 are Master of Divinity candidates, nine are Special Students, and seven are M.A.R. students.

One has to raise the question of why the recognition of women as called, ordained ministers in the LCA has been so long in coming. It happened six years after the passage of the Civil Rights Act. Also, why were some folks made uncomfortable by all the visible, feminine clerical collars during last year's Bertha Paulssen Conference?

During the recent Spring Colloquium on Women's Issues and Roles in Ministry, many issues and problems pertaining to the subject were aired; much healthy dialogue was exchanged.

One of the colloquium panelists was Beth Neubauer, an LCA pastor who assumed the assistant chaplaincy at Gettysburg College in September 1981. Pastor Neubauer remembers Gettysburg Seminary when there were only three women in her graduating class - when all the female students could be accommodated in Richard House.

A native of Freehold, N.J., and a graduate of Albright College in Reading, Pastor Neubauer entered LTS in 1972, right after college. She completed her seminary internship at Bethel Lutheran Church in rural Frederick County, Maryland.

Beth Neubauer grew up in the LCA as a member of a mission congregation. In this situation she did not see limitations placed upon women in the church. She recalls how at age three she baptized her dolls, and decided early on that she wanted to become a pastor!

In November of 1975 she and her husband, Randy, who is also an LCA pastor, were called to a two-church charge at Catoctin (Md.) Lutheran Parish. (The Neubauers live in Thurmont, and have a four-year-old son, Kyle, and a two-year-old son, Joel. They co-pastored the one call, which was later re-negotiated to a 1½ call.)

Such a unique call made "co-pastoring" and "co-parenting" possible. Conversely, there were the difficulties of dealing with fatigue and the need to find time for

nurturing. In this co-pastoring arrangement Beth and Randy looked at their own individual gifts and abilities. She consequently handled many teaching responsibilities, and he handled many administrative responsibilities.

Beth Neubauer observed that the recognition of individual gifts from parishioners took time. She shared her insights on personal meditation time, support groups, and listening to one's own needs. Personal meditation for her needs to be scheduled. This involves self-discipline for it to take place. She prefers to schedule such a time in the evening.

On the subject of support groups Beth Neubauer feels a need for such a network, but added that at the present time she does not have one. One has to make an effort, she says, to work intentionally at having a support group. She went on to say that family and certain friends, former parishioners, and now college campus contacts do offer such support.

The term "burnout" was used by the panel. Pastor Neubauer noted that for a woman in ministry to escape the "burnout" pitfall, she must avoid the "superwoman syndrome" of having overly high personal expectations. She needs to "let her vulnerable side show," to listen to her own needs, and to avoid becoming too busy. She concluded that we have to take care of ourselves so that we can care for others.

On the topic of authority in the church, Pastor Neubauer stated that her authority stems from the Gospel. The message of the Gospel must be clearly stated. Authority, then, is not an issue of one's gender, not a male vs. female issue.

I wonder what happened with women who were called to ordained ministry in the LCA prior to 1970. Did they accept something less, become accessories to male leaders? Many of us long for the day when we do not have to have women's issues in ministry as opposed to people's issues. But we are far from realizing that day. I feel a sense of pride and a shared joy with my sisters who have dared to be the pioneers in the field!

Sue Mielke

"Thoughts on the Colloquium on Women in Ministry"

The Spring Colloquium on Awareness of Women's Issues and Roles in Ministry, held on this campus April 6 and 7, offered an

experience of education and sharing about several dimensions of Christian ministry. The colloquium consisted of a series of discussions led by a panel whose members were: Pastor Beth Neubauer, Gettysburg College chaplain; Pastor Sarah Heintzelman, Dean of the Carlisle District; Sister Judy Jerabek, deaconess, Friedens Lutheran Church; Pastor Joan Medicke-Wanner, York Springs; Pastor Susan Jensen, CPE Supervisor in training, Washington; and Virginia Knueppel, Director of Christian Education, Camp Hill. Sharon Ross was the committee organizer and moderator.

These women represented a variety of backgrounds, church vocations, and personal styles. All were articulate and willing to share their experiences, reflections, and insights about both the joys and frustrations of being women in ministry.

Specifically, women's issues involve both problems and promise at present. Women pastors are a decided minority in most areas. They do encounter discrimination from some parishioners and male clergy. Women can have difficulties being accepted in roles of authority in the parish.

On the other hand, much of the rumored lay opposition to female clergy is being dispelled as people come into contact with the ever-growing number of women pastors who ably preach, teach, and minister in the church. Christian education workers, in general, remain undervalued and underpaid, but some progress is being made in this occupation as well.

Anyone who avoided the colloquium because of the seemingly exclusive woman's issue actually missed fine discussions of subjects which relate to any church worker. The panelists stressed the importance of continuing spiritual nurture for the well-being of their ministries. Also explored were the challenges of time management, personal support groups, and maintaining family responsibilities in the parish. These practical concerns of the pastor and educator in the field tend to be slighted in this academic environment, and are vital to men as well as women in the ministry.

Part of this business of being witnesses to the Gospel in the world involves acquiring information and insights and the sharing of experiences with others. The colloquium provided just this sort of opportunity for the seminary community. The organizers and panelists are to be commended for their work and dedication.

Chris Ramsey

Washington News

Most of the students at the Lutheran House of Studies either have done or are doing an action-reflection program. Our times together for sharing and reflecting on what we are doing individually within the program are quite interesting. Through this experience we look for the theological implications in what we are doing. After reflection upon our projects, the implications which did not seem obvious now come forth with special clarity and importance. While there is diversity in what we are doing, most of us seem to come up with similar theological thoughts as we work in our particular areas of interest.

My action-reflection experience is with an agency in Baltimore which helps mentally retarded and physically handicapped adults. This program is extremely exciting as we help mainstream into society many persons who have spent numerous years in state institutions. These clients may live in their own apartments or share living spaces, but all are under varying degrees of supervision. Many of them are doing quite well, while others need close supervision and concentrated efforts in teaching to develop simple skills such as learning the alphabet, writing their names, and basic mathematics.

Since in my former life I was an art teacher, the staff in this agency was pleased to have me develop an art program with the clients. Some of the clients have great difficulty in cutting and drawing, so we attempt to develop their fine motor skills with appropriate exercises. Other clients have various artistic abilities and proceed at their own levels. The clients look forward to their art time and willingly accept the challenges. Sometimes the trash can fills rapidly, but nevertheless we usually have some finished products at the end of the art period. They are always excited to show their work to their peers and the staff and to give their masterpieces to relatives and friends.

This action-reflection program, along with all the great opportunities associated with the Lutheran House of Studies, has provided an exciting and challenging year for me. I wholeheartedly recommend the Lutheran House of Studies to all students at Gettysburg. The

diversity of experience throughout the Washington Theological Consortium is fantastic, even to the point of being a Lutheran minority in some of the classes.

Dale Dushman

Table Talk is published with a grant from Aid Association for Lutherans. Articles (including Letters to the Editor and Classified Ads) may be submitted to Ann Yeago by the last Friday of the month. The staff deadlines for the May issue is Wednesday the 4th. The final edition of Table Talk for the 1982-83 academic year will be circulated on Friday, May 13th.

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Coming Events

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| April 20-21 | Pre-Registration for Fall Semester |
| April 20 | Board of Directors on campus; Town and Country Church Inst. |
| April 25 | Rev. John Backe, Lutheran Peace Fellowship, Washington D. C., 3:30 P.M. room 206. |
| April 27 | A.A.L. Senior banquet; Schottie's Restaurant, Littlestown, 6:30 P.M. |
| April 29 | Volleyball marathon for CROP, Plank Gym, G.C., 6:00 P.M. Friday through 6:00 P.M. Saturday. |
| May 1 | Middler class picnic, Caledonia State Park, 4:00 P.M. |
| May 2 | Academic policies committee, room 309, 3:30 P.M. |
| May 4 | SPRING CONVOCATION; John Vannorsdell and George Forell speak on "Proclamation/Celebration: Preaching Justification Today." |
| May 20 | COMMENCEMENT - 3:00 P.M. SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION - 7:00 P.M. |
| May 23-25 | Close of Spring Semester. Intern Team Building Workshop. |