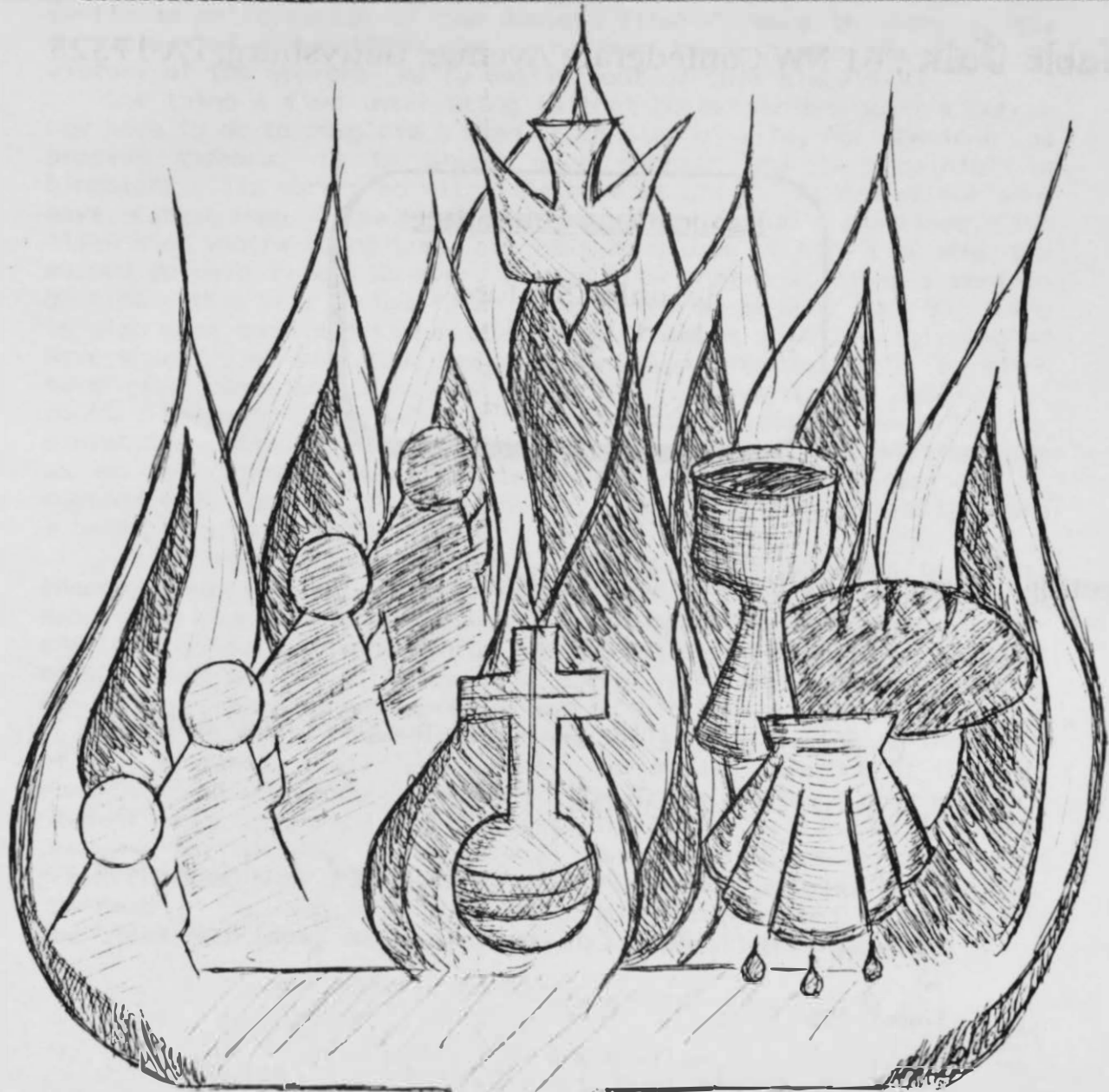




Table Talk

MAY '93

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... I Believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic
Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness
of sins, the Resurrection of the body and the
life everlasting. AMEN.

Table Talk is published monthly by students at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg. The views and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the editorial staff, the student association, or the seminary.

Table Talk , 61 NW Confederate Avenue, Gettysburg, PA 17325

Publications Committee

Jeannine Sanford
Mark Bernecker
Steve Fiechter
Sara Peterson

Greetings from the Publications Committee,

Congratulations Seniors!

Best wishes and blessings to those of you entering
internship and CPE programs.

Thanks to everybody who contributed to Table Talk.
Thanks to Heather Bumstead for the front cover of
this final issue.

Have a safe and fun summer! God bless!!

New Address for Kiren, Blane and Lexi Erwin
c/o Klvac
3 Holbrook St.
Medway, MA 02053

May 3, 1993

Farewell from the Pres . . .

It seems that only a short time has passed since I wrote my first "prose from the pres" article which welcomed you to the 1992-93 academic year here at LTS,G. At that time we had three weeks of classes under our belts and one could see the anticipation of the Juniors, the renewed enthusiasm of the Middlers, and the thrill of victory of the Seniors. Today, with only 2 weeks remaining, one can witness the continued anticipation of the Juniors (there's more to learn!), the enthusiasm of the Middlers (we're halfway there!), and the thrill of victory of the Seniors (we're gettin' out of this place!)

One thing I find interesting is that no matter how much a person may have to do to complete a page or chapter of life, nor how long the process appears, it is always much shorter and less painful in hindsight. 'Tis surely so with life here at LTS,G. As one of our sons says, rather than, "Time flies when you're having fun", sometimes, "fun flies when you're doing time!" We have done some of this time when fun seemed to have flown. However, we can know that most of this portion of time - this year - has flown because there was some fun. But there is also some pain and sadness (which just comes with living), and we have shared that time too. New and hopefully long-lasting friendships have been cemented this year which will prove to be sources of continuing comfort, as well as, in some cases, companionship for our ministries and our lives. May God bless each of these new relationships as we end another year and head off in our many directions to destinations some as yet unknown (!). (Wasn't it in Genesis 12 where I heard this before???)

I will miss seeing you. I will miss our time together in class, chapel, study groups, and also just talking. I am not sure how I will handle the change from having to drive to Northern Virginia every week-end for a concurrent internship! For two years it became a regular part of our lives and now it comes to an abrupt halt. Don't be surprised to see me drive back up in September out of old habit!

As I close this final note for the Table Talk, I want to thank all of you, students, staff, and faculty, for making this one of the most rewarding and enriching years of my life. Thank you for supporting your Student Association and its officers. Thanks for letting Patti and me become a part of your life. We will take you with us in thought and prayer. Please know that our home is always open to you should you have the need or the desire to stop off or stay in Northern Virginia. May God bless each of us as we continue in the service of our Lord.

...peace and health...

Bruce Wilder

Table Talk

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May '93

BOOKMARKS

The end is in sight! Rather, the new beginning approaches. The rhythm of the seminary year is unvarying: each year at this time, juniors prepare for CPE, middlers dread/anticipate internship, muddlers are confused, seniors wonder if they'll ever get a call, and faculty turn to summer projects. The staff, I might add, begins to think they may finally be able to get some work done.

For those facing the parish for the first time, the following is a list of books which might be useful.

Theoretically the library holds several works on entering the ministry for the first time. Unfortunately, a couple of books that seemed very promising were not on the shelves when I looked. Turns out they have been missing since 1991 (which means they are probably gone for good). The mysterious disappearance of books is a common problem in all libraries. It would be pleasant to think that it would be less of a problem in a seminary library, but it doesn't take long for even the most naive 1st semester junior to become enlightened as to the reality of seminary life (*simul iustus* ...).

In order to prevent the disappearance of books from library shelves, the library would have to install an alarm system and ban students during closed hours -- unpleasant alternatives. Once the books are gone, many cannot be replaced, as theological works

go out of print quickly (a factor which may contribute to unauthorized long-term borrowing). The point of this digression is: please don't remove books from the library without signing them out. No matter how good your intentions, you know how easily a book can get lost in the shuffle and end up, however unwittingly, a part of your personal library.

A book guaranteed to be on the shelf is *Beyond the Boundary: Meeting the Challenge of the First Years of Ministry* by Gary Harbaugh, etc. (BV4013 B48 1986), which discusses programs designed to ease the transition from seminary to parish. *Six Stages of a Pastor's Life* by J. Keith Cook & Lee C. Moorehead (BV660 .2 C66 1990) takes you from first parish to retirement. The missing books mentioned above were *First Parish* by J. Keith Cook, Westminster Press, 1983 and *Beginning a New Pastorate* by Robert G. Kemper, Abingdon, 1978, in case you can locate them elsewhere.

You may also be interested in addressing practical issues which arise in the parish. The following is a mere sampling. *Surviving Difficult Church Members* by Robert Dale (BV652 D35 1989) will probably be applicable in any congregation. *The Eternal Triangle* by Robert Randall (BV4013 R36 1992) is written for pastors, spouses, and clergy couples and addresses the conflict between a pastor's commitment to the congregation and to his/her

family. *How Prayer Shapes Ministry* by John Biersdorf (BV4011 B495 1992) argues for a prayerful life as the foundation for ministry. *Surviving in Ministry* (BV660 .2 S86 1990) is a collection of essays which address all types of issues, from clergy spiritual life to burnout to clergy families.

Other books approach the ministry from a theoretical and theological point of view. Augsburg Fortress has printed a translation of selections from Schleiermacher's *Practical Theology* called *Christian Caring* (BV3 S46 1988) which discusses such points as marriage and grief counseling. Those interested in feminism may want to read *Co-Creating: A Feminist Vision of Ministry* by Lynn Rhodes (BV4011 R52 1987). The Classical Pastoral Care Series (various call numbers) collects quotations from authors throughout church history on various topics in pastoral care.

Other books on these subjects can be found under the subject heading "Pastoral theology" and related headings. Books under the call numbers BV660 .2 and BV4011 may also be of interest.

New Books

On April 29 an exhibit of some of the Dead Sea Scrolls opened at the Library of Congress. Coincidentally, several books on the Scrolls have just been published. *Understanding the Dead Sea Scrolls* (BM487 U49 1992) is a collection of articles reprinted from the *Biblical Archaeology Review*.

The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered by Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise (BM488 .5 A3 1992) provides translation and criticism of some of the scrolls which have been withheld from the public until the last two years.

Anchor Bible readers will want to check out *The Pentateuch*, the new volume by Joseph Blenkinsopp (BS1225 .2 B544 1992). Those interested in Reformation history will be attracted to *Martin Luther in Two Centuries*, a collection of lectures by Helmar Junghans delivered during a visit to the States (BR326 J86 1992). Two of the lectures discuss official East German interpretations of Luther and the role of the church in the collapse of the Communist regime. *The Male-Female Church Staff* by Anne Marie Nuechterlein and Celia Allison Hahn (BV675 N85 1990) addresses challenges of dual-gender ministry. *The Acquittal of God* by Uwe Siemon-Netto (DS559 .73 U6S54 1990) attempts to develop a theology of the Vietnam War - probably the first of many such attempts.

Tamara E. Riegel

April 24, 1993

I JUST WONDER.....

I was glad to read in the last issue of Table Talk that a letter was received in response to a signed petition regarding "Guidelines for Inclusive Use of the English Language". Lowell Almen, Secretary of the ELCA, agreed that use of inclusive language is important and that it should be used correctly. He also stated that the booklet is out of print.

Since the use of inclusive language is relatively new in our American society, what resource is there to teach us, especially our Lutheran colleagues and fellow citizens, to be inclusive? To many people, it is an important issue, treating our Christian sisters and brothers in a loving and just way. Inclusiveness helps to free us from the bonds of separation from each other.

What is not clear to me is why this publication was allowed to run out of print? It surprises me that these guidelines for inclusiveness that have been available for almost 20 years, has become a controversial issue. I am also surprised that no one seemed to be aware that the booklet would no longer be available for circulation. When I contacted my Synod relater, she was not aware this action had been taken nor did she think that the Synod was aware of it.

Why couldn't the booklet remain available until a revised edition was released? What is so controversial about it? It has been four years since the last update was made to the current statement which added an explicit affirmation of the Trinitarian name of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I have no problem with that clarification.

Since the National Church does a thorough evaluation before taking a stance or issuing a statement, why after these many years would it find it necessary to withdraw its statement? Yes, revisions may need to be made periodically by looking at current trends in ethical and Christian concerns. Yet, to my knowledge, this document was not out of synchronization with the times. Why is the guideline now not appropriate? Similar questions were asked in the petition sent to Lowell G. Almen. His letter of response did not answer the questions. I am disappointed.

My current concern is how long are we of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America to go without a churchwide statement or resource to ensure that inclusiveness is properly and thoroughly brought to God's people? Because of budget constraints and staff reduction, it is implied that an updated statement on inclusiveness is some distance in the future. What do we do in the meantime?

I JUST WONDERED !!!!!

Mel Stricklin

Senior Reflection
by Douglas Knupp

What a roller coaster ride these last four years have been! September 1, 1989, two van loads carried our family's stuff and we moved into 102 Stuempfle Hall. If you think of things that have happened to our nation, that was before the Persian Gulf war, and before Clinton's election to the presidency. That was also before our current seminary's president, as well as before the arrival of about five faculty members. I can say that I remember Interim President Hale teaching the sociology module for Religion and Human Behavior, as well as Tom Ridenhour directing us through the communication module (flash back to Walter J. Ong and the Presence of the Word). On the family front, Ruthie was about as young when we arrived as what Sam is now. I can honestly say that I have seen a lot of changes here.

Still, the more things change, the more they stay the same. When I arrived, I had no idea how I was going to pay the \$1250 tuition per semester. This semester, I had very little idea how I would pay about that much tuition, but I was going part time instead of full time. Well, maybe there has been change along these lines. Rent used to be \$285 a month. Now it is \$375 a month, and will soon be \$395 a month. Seems like going to seminary just keeps getting tougher.

Mostly, the things I will remember will not so much be the papers, projects and exams. Those things usually took care of themselves. I will remember the struggles to hold things together with jobs, doctor visits, visits to mechanics, moves, etc.... all trying to keep my eyes on being faithful to Christ.

I have had five jobs in addition to being a student since I came to seminary. Both Sharon and I were phone solicitors during that first year, and I stopped that so that I could concentrate on J-term Greek (and recover from a hernia operation). After CPE, I began working at Larson's motel, a job I returned to this past year (full-time, not just part-time like two years ago). When I returned from internship, I worked as an on-site manager for transitional housing for homeless families. Last summer I was a state park chaplain for Codorus State Park. Most recently, I started working at Paradise Lutheran church in Thomasville as part-time help until they call an associate pastor (Good luck Tim Kielley- your call sermon is next week at this writing). Add in odd things like helping Mrs. Nieting cater various engagements and supply preaching at about a dozen different sites, and you'll soon get the idea that I believe that you do what you have to do to make this whole deal work.

Soon and very soon I'll be leaving my current two jobs and starting another, and that will mean moving for the fifth time in four years. We moved here originally, moved to an internship site, (not even a move for CPE, can you believe it?), moved back from internship to the homeless transitional housing, and again into seminary housing. I sometimes still carry my garbage to the place in the apartment where we kept it three places ago. Moving has become more involved, simply because we now

have more stuff, thanks to the smaller members of our family. Universal truths include $E=MC^2$, $1+1=2$, and the smallest person in the car takes up the most room with baby accessories. Same thing with apartments; we now have more stuff than ever: cribs, toys, kid furniture, you name it.

Perhaps the greatest concern of the past four years has been for my family's health. Our four family members have had over 100 doctor's office visits and emergency room treatments since we moved here. Just how many more than 100, I've lost count. I had hernia surgery, Sharon had surgery for Sam's birth and to have a lump on her chest removed. Sam may yet get on the surgery bandwagon as he might need tubes in his ears. Sharon had a miscarriage and depression following. We've also experienced recovering from an auto accident, and Ruthie had her elbow dislocated a few times and once fell face forward pushing her tooth into her gum. Lots of fun things!

So many things, so much stress, many disappointments (like an exasperating internship), yet some good things have happened. Our children are delightful, full of life and smiles. I have been friends with some very neat people here at seminary, and we've hosted quite a number of parties at our apartment. And through all of it, I've found the strength of a deeper faith, a commitment to Christ that helps me to accept why I've gone through four years of seminary and I won't be a pastor (at least not in the near future). Right now, the best thing for me is to keep my eyes on the Lord and His will for me and my family.

Somehow, after I leave this place, the library will continue to exist even if I am not there until 2 in the morning about twice a week near the end of the semester. Somehow, there will be a coffee shop even if my cup isn't on the shelf. Somehow, chapel services will happen even if my well-worn spot on the lectern side third pew is vacant. Someone else will occupy these spaces, sort of an apostolic succession of seminarian stuff.

Soon I'll be saying goodbye. Even for as much longsuffering as I've had to do, saying goodbye will still be difficult because it's the only life I've known these past four years. On to bigger and better things, keeping my eye on what the Lord has in store. As frightening as that might be, I know that I will not be alone in this struggle, for He will shepherd me for every step I take.

Trusting in His Peace,


Doug Knupp

RECOVERING?

"Recovering? From what? From life? Come on! Everyone has bad memories! Why don't you just let it go? What's your problem?"

"Well, it's like this....."

I seem to have this conversation a lot. People wonder what I'm talking about when I say "I'm recovering". They want to know what I'm recovering from. Was I sick? They have bad memories too. There's no such thing as a fully functional family. Why is it that some people have so much trouble with the past?

In some people I sense a true concern and curiosity. Perhaps as individuals they are strong and were blessed with what I like to call "what they needed when they needed it".

In other people, I see the eyes roll back in their heads and can almost hear the words roll off their lips: "touchy-feely". Words and phrases that were principle and essential in snatching me from despair become "psycho-babble". There is a readiness to label all of it weird--and from the vantage of the recovering an all-too readiness to accept that label.

What I see, once those eyes roll back to normal position, is a fear that is only met with externalization. What I "hear" is "I must make you wrong or there may be some validity to what you're doing for my own life."

Granted, the "recovering" are often overly enthusiastic and attempt to push what works for them onto others. That happens for me as a response. When one has been snatched from death and despair, it's sort of NORMAL to respond! (Gasp--NORMAL?). It's kind of like that Gospel thing.

The truth is, we all experience life through unique circumstances. I can no better understand you than you me, except through a God-granted willingness to listen and accept. I think we can come together on this point. I think we can hold each other up in prayer with God's intervention. I think we all have things to learn.

And if you try not to roll your eyes, I'll try not to hug you.

Steve Krechta