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How Can I Thank Thee, Lord?

In the midst of the Thanksgiving Day clamor, the clatter of pots and pans, the rich aroma of turkey and stuffing and cranberries, the annoying pious phrases of a proud and affluent society, the Christian longs for much more. He longs for a word from his God. And so he goes to the house of God. A beautiful setting, full of promise and hope.

As we sing "Now Thank We All Our God" our hearts stir to the rousing melody. We have a good feeling inside. We know that we are worthless beggars who have been made rich by a bountiful God. We recognize that all our blessings are undeserved favors from a Father who has made us His children and wants only the best for us. Our hearts cry out in a need and desire to say Thank you, God, for everything. Anxiously we wait to hear what He will say.

The minister begins to read the text of Isaiah 1:

Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord has spoken.

We recognize that God alone has the right to address the hosts of heaven as well as the hosts of men on earth. For it was He who brought them and us forth out of nothing. The heavens are telling the glory of God and the firmament proclaims His handiwork. We want to join our voices to theirs to thank and praise the glory of our God who alone does wonders. The sermon goes on:

Sons have I reared and brought up, but they have rebelled against me. The ox knows its owner, and the ass its master's crib; but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.

The minister places the text in its historical setting: Jehovah called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldees and promised to make of him a great nation as numerous as the stars of heaven and the sand of the seashore. Afterwards, when Abraham's descendants had served as slaves in the land of Egypt for over 400 years, God led them out with a mighty hand and adopted them as His children with the words: I will be your God, I will be a Father to you, and you shall be my children, says the Lord almighty. Day after day as they traveled in the wilderness, and year after year when they reached the promised land of Canaan, He showed them every conceivable kindness and favor. And all He ever got in return was grumbling and complaining against their God-given leaders, worship of the golden calf, and adultery and fornication with the daughters of the heathen nations around them, who only led them farther and farther away from their God. When Jehovah sent His prophets to call them back to be His children they would not listen.

Certainly we recognize that God had every right to address them as He does in this text. They are worse than the ox and the ass, which at least know enough to go to their master's crib to find food. But Israel turned away from the green pastures of their Good Shepherd in favor of the barren

wastelands of human theology and religion; to idols made by men's hands, to birds and beasts and creeping things. Little wonder then that Jehovah's wrath was kindled against them. That He continues to address them:

Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evil-doers, sons who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the Lord, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged. Why will you still be smitten, that you continue to rebel? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but bruises and sores and bleeding wounds; they are not pressed out, or bound up or softened with oil.

So far the sermon has been describing only something which happened thousands of years ago. But often a strange thing happens here. The good feeling we had when we entered service gives way to a comfortable one. A smug one? For Satan goes along to church with us. We reason something like this: God does not mean me. He is talking only to Israel. He can't mean us. It is the other people He is talking about. It must be. After all, they don't go to church, they curse and swear, they don't read the Bible. They have rebelled against God. They have it coming.

Or our thoughts may go to how much we go to church, how much we put in the offering plate, how we say our table prayers before devouring the turkey or duck, how we love our spouses and children; will the minister and service be done in time for the Thanksgiving Day football game on television?

As citizens of our self-centered and pleasure seeking nation, we are reluctantly forced to confess the horrible truth of our Thanksgiving text. We are not a Christian nation, we are not a people filled with all our imagined good qualities. We are the children of our sinful age and sinful parents. We have forsaken the Lord. We are a sick and depraved body. Our bones are full of the cancer of too many years of praising ourselves and looking down on our less fortunate neighbors. We look at everything from our cars to our television sets to our space exploration — and give the credit to

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our ingenuity, industriousness, hard work, and education. Pride in man rules out true thankfulness.

Is God any more pleased with the quality of Lutheran thanksgiving? How easy for Satan to lead us into a thinking which goes like this: we are the true visible church of God on earth, we are the good people of God, we are the true church of the pure doctrine. And we thereby give the credit to our courage, our zeal for the truth, and our rugged individualism. We forget that only God can look down on the rubble. We are the rubble and can only look around and up. In truth, the praise belongs to our Lord and His unwillingness that any should perish; His determined efforts from the beginning that His Zion should not fade away altogether.

And the daughters of Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard, like a lodge in a cucumber field, like a besieged city. If the Lord of hosts had not left us a few survivors, we should have been like Sodom, and become like Gomorrah.

The church is left like an abandoned farm house in the midst of the field of our nation. A field which is ripe for the harvest with luxuriant crops, the best that the mind of man has been able to develop. A field which is ripe for judgment because of our unthankfulness. The abandoned house is part of the field and is equally ripe for judgment — if the Lord of hosts had not . . . All glory be to God *alone*. We are part of our sinful nation. We are children of this evil age. We are ripe for judgment — for judgment begins at the house of God.

Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom! Give ear to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah! What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the Lord; I have had enough of burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When you come to appear before me, who requires of you this trampling of my courts? Bring no more vain offerings; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and sabbath and the calling of assemblies — I cannot endure iniquity and solemn assembly. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hates; they have become a burden to me, I am weary of bearing them. When you spread forth your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood.

Let us have an end, then, to our habitual Thanksgiving Day debacle. This one day of pious offerings and ritual sacrifices; this one-hour fast in sack-cloth and ashes; this momentary flurry to get rid of God and our duty to Him for another year so that we can get back to important things. Thanksgiving is not a day, it is a way of life. It is a way which begins on the kneecaps and in the closet of every child of God. It is a way which recognizes that David cannot think and praise God while Bathsheba is in bed with him, all the while he self-righteously sits in judgment on others. It is a way which admits to God what He already knows: that we cannot

thank and praise Him while we try to cover up and explain away our many pet sins of pride and arrogance. This way begins with the penitent prayer of David: Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. May the mercy of our God who has spared our thanklessness so often in the past not lead us to lift ourselves up in pride but to cast ourselves down before Him in penitent thankfulness which shows itself in a really new way of life. As Isaiah calls for it:

Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow.

In all our respectability and religiousness we need to remember that we are not to be aloof or above helping widows and orphans and unwed mothers and convicts and slum-dwellers. What are our prayers and sacrifices and offerings but pious-sounding emptiness if we feel free to go out and cheat a little in business here and a little on our employer there? It is not hard to live up to the Ten Commandments. It is extremely hard to be a follower of Jesus, a true servant of Christ the Master. All our best acts, all our righteousness need a daily bath in the purifying blood of the Son of God who loves us and gave Himself for us. And our Father wants to give it to us.

Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are like crimson, they shall become as wool.

Who can deny the scarlet letter of our lives? What child of God would care to deny the imperfectness of his faith, the lack of conviction in his confession, the feebleness of his efforts, the coldness of his love of Jesus and the brethren. We need again the refreshing words of life from the Word of Life. We need the body and blood of the Lamb to put and keep new life in our dead bones.

Perhaps here we can paraphrase the psalmist: O (how) give thanks unto the Lord? For He is good and we are so imperfect. We cannot give thanks by merely saying or doing something. How, then, does a sinful people give thanks to a holy God? A selfish people to an all-giving God? How can we who are always striving after our own personal needs thank a God who gave up His dearest treasure, His own Son? By receiving Him in arms of faith as the most perfect gift from a perfect God. As the complete fulfillment of our every need. In short, we give thanks by receiving more. Not by grasping after more of life's empty and fleeting good things, but by receiving the wondrous promises and good intentions of our God in penitent and believing hearts. Only then shall we sing with David:

O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise. For thou hast no delight in sacrifice; were I to give a burnt offering, thou wouldst not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou

Religious Freedom on Way Out?

Do religious denominations enjoy the right to operate their own schools on their own principles? This question has arisen in several states during recent years, in connection with such religious sects as the Amish and the Mennonites.

The latest fracas is in Hillsdale County, Michigan. For the Michigan State Board of Education has commenced legal proceedings to close the Amish school there. Why? Because the teacher in this rural school does not have a state teacher's certificate. She is a member of the Amish community, and her co-religionists declare they want no teacher but her.

State licensing of teachers has been used, now and again, to harass church-sponsored schools — though less frequently in recent years than formerly. At one time or another, at least three states have tried to forbid the wearing of clerical dress by teachers — this was meant as a blow at priests and nuns conducting Catholic schools.

Although of course state authorities have the right to prescribe certification for teachers in publicly supported schools, it seems to this commentator that the Michigan Board of Education treads on dangerous ground when it interferes with the personnel of a church school.

If a private school is subversive

This item is from the editorial pages of the *Los Angeles Times* of October 9, 1965. Copyright by General Features Corporation. Permission to reprint granted. The author is Russell Kirk.

of public order, or if it leads the young into immorality, political authorities are entitled to intervene. But can they justly meddle with schools which, like those of the Mennonites and Amish, harm no one and are an integral part of a religious community?

The Amish believe that their children do not need schooling beyond the eighth grade. If we can judge schools by their fruits, the Amish seem to succeed. Their children are at least as good in reading, writing, and arithmetic as are typical pupils in an average public school. And Amish people are most notably industrious, law-abiding, and well-conducted.

If their children were sent to public schools, the Amish fear, they would be taught concepts contrary to Amish religious doctrines — and so they would. Moreover, in public schools they would be denied by the Supreme Court the religious instruction and Bible study essential to the perpetuation of the Amish communities.

The typical American public school is scarcely so perfect an institution that a child must be mentally and morally crippled by studying elsewhere. And as for state certification of teachers — why, most courses in "education" are so boring, and such boondoggles, that certain private schools boast that almost none of their teachers hold state certificates — they have spent their time studying "subject matter" courses, instead.

American society and American

schooling need more diversity, not one vast educational monotony. Only a totalitarian state refuses to tolerate the existence of such groups as the Amish.

And have we forgotten about the guarantees, in federal and state constitutions, of freedom of religious

belief? Destroy the Amish schools, and in time you destroy the Amish sect. If the Michigan Board of Education persists in this bureaucratic interference, I trust that the Amish will carry their appeal to the highest court in the land.

Nurturing Tender Plants *In Christian Giving*

Many children never learn to give of their own money. Parents give them money to put in the offering at Sunday school and worship services. After confirmation parents are still "kind hearted enough" to fill their children's offering envelopes. Thus, while there is always a donation listed after their name in the record book, these children have never really given to the Lord a thank offering of their own material gifts.

As a result, when these children get jobs of their own they have not been trained in giving. Some do not give at all. Others give very little. They have been taught to keep their own money and give that which their parents hand to them. They simply continue in that which they have been taught. They have *not* been trained in the joyful virtue of giving as the Lord has prospered them and many of them never do learn to give.

Children, too, should give to the Lord of their increase, even though it is not much in dollars and cents. St. Paul says to all Christians: "On the first day of each week *every one* of you should set aside a cer-

tain amount, in proportion to his weekly income." (2 Cor. 16:2, The Letters of Paul) According to God's way of figuring it, the widow who gives 100 percent of her small income gives just as much as the rich man who gives 100 percent of his large income.

Children ought to be trained in giving by giving of their own income. Each week they should take a proportion of their income from allowances, baby sitting earnings, gifts, paper routes, or other jobs and give to the Lord a thank offering of their own. If they have been trained up in this way, they will also be ready to enjoy the blessing of giving when they are on their own.

It is, of course, also very evident that the parents not only teach their children in words but that they must also set them a good example of giving a goodly percentage of their own income. "The man who sows sparingly will reap a sparse crop; the man who sows liberally will reap a liberal crop. I want each one of you to give what he has already made up his mind to give. Do not treat it as though

it were a painful or compulsory due you had to pay! No! God loves a giver who gives joyfully. And God is able to bestow every grace on you in overflowing measure, so that at all times and in all circumstance you may be adequately provided and may over-

flow with every kind of good work. That is what the Scripture means when it says: He scattered abroad; he gave to the poor; His piety abides forever." (2 Corinthians 9:6-9, The Letters of Paul, by F. F. Bruce)

RUBEN UDE

REMEMBER THE DAYS OF OLD — IV

The Wisconsin Heritage

The only thing Wisconsin had in common with Missouri in its development was that both were miracles of God's grace. But God's miracles have great variety. As Missouri had the blessing of a giant, Wisconsin had none. As Missouri was a picture of the mustard seed growing under God's gracious hand into a huge tree, Wisconsin was a picture of hundreds of pieces of driftwood, washing about in the ocean and miraculously gathered together in a building of the Lord.

Confessional Weaknesses

In Wisconsin itself the early pastors were extremely varied. Some were anxious to be Lutheran, some were of a unionistic spirit and were willing to work with the Reformed. The German Mission Societies supporting the efforts in Wisconsin were in the main lax and unionistic. Even the better Lutheran pastors in the work were opposed to what was called "old-Lutheranism" as

typified by the Prussians in Buffalo and Saxons in Missouri.

There was no strong leadership. Muehlheuser simply was not a leader, and no one arose in the formative years to assume that leadership. The more confessionally minded men felt compelled to take a tolerant attitude in view of the mission societies in Germany and for the sake of harmony with their less confessionally minded colleagues.

There were also great educational differences. Wisconsin did not create its own clergy. Desperate for men, they took them from many sources. The picture can be seen by a conflict around 1860 with the Missourians, who charged Wisconsin men with unconfessional practice. Men like Koehler, Reim, and Bading had shown their correct understanding by taking a pastor in the Northwest Conference to task for supporting the Prussian Union.

When Bading became president (about 1861) he immediately asked Reim to prepare a paper on the position of the synod. Reim defended Wisconsin and demonstrated that Wisconsin was a true Lutheran synod and required proper confessional subscription of its pastors and congregations.

But the essay was weak in that it did not go into the question of the practice of many of the men, since this would have denied his statement of position. The synod drafted some paragraphs stating their confessional position and expressing a desire to be sound Lutheran; at the same time the paragraphs condemned the strict confessional practice of the Missourians and wanted no part of Missouri's sharp denouncing of error in other bodies.

But the desire for confessionalism was there. When God sent Wisconsin Dr. Adolf Hoenecke, a sound theologian and dogmatician, the position of Wisconsin was crystallized and unity with Missouri achieved. Unfortunately, Wisconsin could never close the large gap between its position and its practice. It learned to live with grave inconsistencies.

The picture is not complete without a glance at two other synods which later united to form the Joint Synod of Wisconsin and other States. In Minnesota the situation was even worse. Though there were several good men in the early years, the leadership of G. Fachtmann from Wisconsin was almost disas-

trous. It was indeed a miracle that this synod reached confessional agreement and that Dr. Hoenecke could report, after meeting with them in 1869, that complete harmony existed between Wisconsin and Minnesota. But again, there still remained a great spread among the clergy in Minnesota, ranging from very bad to fairly good. Some improvement came after Albrecht established the seminary in New Ulm in 1883 and a sound theologian was called from Missouri in 1889.

In Michigan the situation was the worst of all. Here the work was begun by Schmid, the Suabian working in the Ann Arbor area. The Bavarians in Saginaw Valley and Hattstaedt in Monroe were anxious to form a Michigan group together with Schmid, but they had to withdraw when it became clear that Schmid was not sincere in his claims to want a confessional Lutheranism. The Bavarians and the Monroe people turned to the Saxons and with Wyneken and Sihler formed the Missouri Synod. A Michigan Synod developed, but it was very lax in regard to unionism, and lodgery in particular. Some Michigan Synod congregations were even formed by lodge members who had been excommunicated by Missouri congregations.

Other Early Weaknesses

We can gain a fuller picture if we turn briefly to the educational institutions of Wisconsin. Northwestern University was established quite early at Watertown, Wisconsin. Two things went wrong here. There was an incorrect desire to

have a recognized college which could compete with the secular universities. This gave a wrong emphasis to the program. The second bad thing was that the Wisconsin pastors acted as a group of ministers in getting the college started. It did not begin with congregational discussion and participation. Later, when, in financial trouble, they would admonish the congregations to bail them out, they did not meet with much success. Though Wisconsin men were much less self-conscious of themselves as clergy as compared with Prussians and Saxons and Bavarians, yet they were unable to adapt to a congregational approach, so necessary in the American environment. Here too a serious inconsistency developed. Wisconsin insists there is no difference in rank between clergy and laity. Yet, the form of government has been very paternalistic in most congregations, a "papa knows best" approach. After the pastors decide, the laity must be convinced. As a result, resistance to synod and synodical projects has not disappeared to this day. There is a distrust of the clergy and the roots go back to the very beginning.

Efforts to establish a seminary were made several times. After Wisconsin joined with Missouri in forming the Synodical Conference in 1872, the agreement was to share Northwestern College and the St. Louis Seminary. Dr. Walther was anxious to form district synods along geographic lines and erase synodical distinctions. But Wisconsin did not keep its part of the

bargain and remained a separate synod. Dr. Hoenecke, for various reasons, could not get himself to accept a call to St. Louis. Eventually a seminary was established in Milwaukee which later moved to Wauwatosa, a suburb of Milwaukee.

Northwestern College developed into an excellent pre-theological school with great emphasis upon the study of the classics. The university concept was still there and too often there was too much emphasis on the classics for the classics' sake without sufficient relation to the Gospel and the school's purpose. Yet the curriculum was well developed, and to this day it would be hard to find a school where one could gain a B.A. degree with more meaning and substance.

Wisconsin's Golden Age

Dr. Adolf Hoenecke was an excellent dogmatician, but not the leader that Walther was. He was a rather cold man except to a few intimate friends. He had little interest in missions, which is significant in the Wisconsin development. He considered the Apache mission a foolishness.

The very lack of strong leadership in Wisconsin was used by God to develop a variety of gifts. Without a dominant mold into which people were fitted, a John Schaller could develop at New Ulm to his maximum. And to Wauwatosa the Lord brought two men who developed into outstanding theological gifts, J. P. Koehler and August Pieper.

John P. Koehler was called in 1900 to be professor of Church History, New Testament Exegesis, Hermeneutics (principles of Bible interpretation), Liturgics, and Music. August Pieper came in 1902 and took the chair of Isagogics and Old Testament Exegesis. We ask you to recall that at St. Louis Concordia Seminary the subjects of Church History and Exegesis were considered much less important than the study of doctrine (dogmatics). By God's grace, A. Pieper developed into an outstanding master of Scripture with a comprehensive understanding of the books of the Bible. He also became a Hebrew scholar of the first rank and an exegete with real creative depths. J. P. Koehler became something very rare in the long list of religious scholars, and certainly new in Synodical Conference circles, namely, a master church historian. He acquired an encyclopedic knowledge of secular history, church history, philosophy, culture, but more important, coupled this knowledge with a deep understanding of the Good News of Jesus Christ. This understanding was drawn from deep work with the Scriptures, that Spirit-worked understanding which goes beyond the intellectual grasp of the correct doctrine.

Thus as she enters the 20th century Wisconsin is not only producing its own clergy but amazingly is surpassing the Missouri Synod in the theological training it is offering its students. Dr. Hoenecke died in 1908, and rather than choose between Koehler and Pie-

per, the seminary board called Professor Schaller from New Ulm to be the new president and to succeed Hoenecke in the chair of Dogmatics.

At this point in time Lutheranism flowered into its greatest moment in America. This amazing triumvirate of three totally different personalities supplemented and complemented each other in a unique and never repeated fashion. They shared a deep love for the good news of Jesus. And that good news was central in their thinking and their work. They were in perfect agreement on all major thinking of their day. They agreed on the evaluation of the condition of the churches in America. They sounded the alarm on the dangers and decline of true Lutheranism, warning of the judgments to come.

They also agreed on the remedy. They knew it did not lie in the shackles of rigid and legalistic enforcement of doctrinal formulation, for they knew the meaning of Christian freedom. They believed the power must come from the Gospel itself, therefore they were evangelical in the best sense of that word. They knew the answers did not lie in preserving traditions, and they tried to turn their synod to earnest and penitent work in the Holy Word, to sound historical exegesis. Many of their students and followers have made the error of choosing one teacher and rejecting the other. Alas, to choose Apollos, or Cephas, or Paul is to lose the witness of all three, a united voice in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of the Lord."

But let the record stand clearly, they were united and their witness was clear. The raucous and clanging cymbals of the partisanship of many followers can never drown out the trumpet tones which still sound forth from the pages of the *Quartalschriften* from 1908-1920.

Though John Schaller was not the creative giant Pieper and Koehler were, yet he had a remarkable gift for assimilating the thoughts of others and recasting them in new form with great clarity. He had the gift of communication and was from his student days at St. Louis a master of the English language, an unusual feat for those days. He was willing to give dogmatics a much more Scriptural basis with careful exegetical work, willing to discard some pet theological distinctions of the 17th century, such as active and passive obedience and also the three kingdoms. Schaller also subjected all customary proof passages to re-examination to make sure their use was valid. Many were discarded as proof passages.

Perhaps Schaller's greatest gift was to serve as a catalyst and to keep things in harmony, which is not easy when one has geniuses on his hands. They tend to become prima donnas. But during these years the energies of these men were directed to creative Gospel work. The *Quartalschriften* of this period contain some of the best theology since Luther's day. Though all three had extremely heavy classroom loads, and served the synod in many capacities, yet they poured out article after article of original work, comprehensive in

scope, and scholarly in form.

It is amusing to read in conservative diatribes today about the evils of restudying and rethinking theology. Kohler, Pieper, and Schaller did this at every turn. They brought fresh light from the Scripture on every doctrinal problem. They did not give pat answers. They cheerfully disagreed with Luther and Walther and any other church father, when this was necessary. Above all, they brought self criticism into the Synodical Conference and removed all idols from their illegitimate thrones.

Koehler's genius stands out in his *Church History* (*Kirchengeschichte*), the only book of its kind and caliber ever written. He stands apart from the vast majority of historians who view history superficially, that is, placing all importance on the great accomplishments of men without understanding and without relating these accomplishments to the eternal things, to the activities of Christ the King. On the other hand he stands apart from the many pious historians who view the Church under the ruling of Christ, but who isolate the events and trends in the churches from their contemporary earthly cultural setting. This makes Koehler a truthful historian. And that is unique.

A. Pieper's greatness can not be questioned by anyone who has used his commentary on Isaiah 40-66 (*Jesaias II.*). This is historical exegesis at its very best. As Koehler's *Church History* gives no simple answers, but directs the reader to individual work, so Pieper's *Isaiah*

does not give a slick "Lutheran" interpretation to every verse and section. Though he sees the beauty and greatness of Jesus as Isaiah's Servant of the Lord, he always remains true to the historical setting in which Isaiah is writing. Pieper is a truthful exegete.

The truthful witness of these men fills the pages of the Wisconsin theological journal of those years. The articles shine with the light of truth as they treat of the legal spirit in the churches, institutional and organizational sickness, the inroads of Calvinism, or when they show forth the mysteries of the Kingdom, the beauties of the Lutheran congregational hymn, the meaning and value of parochial schools.

Never did students have such an excellent balance in theological instruction. Pieper brought a new concept of Isagogics where the students were led into the contents of the books of the Bible, instead of talking about them. From Koehler they received historical insight and the historical approach, and an understanding of the Lutheran chorale as a potent force of the Gospel. From Schaller they received the art of Gospel preaching and pastoral theology liberated of its rigid formalism. Each professor was required to teach a class in Bible interpretation to remain in the heart of Scripture.

This was the only generation which learned that confessionalism and freedom were not opposites, but corollaries; that one can be faithful to doctrine and yet free in form; separate from error, yet ecumenical in outlook; submissive to the in-

spired and inerrant Word, yet never guilty of fundamentalist literalism and Biblicism.

These three men were students of Walther, schoolmates in fact. They brought everything from Walther and went on from Walther into the 20th century and to a deeper and richer understanding of the Gospel. The zenith of their labors coincided with the First World War. This war signalled the collapse of the superficial optimism of liberal thought. These men by God's grace knew that the answer to liberal and Scripture-denying religion did not lie in rigid traditionalism or fundamentalism. For these pervert the Gospel as much as liberalism. They but produce the monsters of invincible and infallible visible churches which have mastered God.

They pointed us in the right direction, but who has heard their report? In 1919 a Barth would search for the answers to the same problems. But he and his followers would do so without a sure Word of God as their guide, without that trust in the perfect forgiveness of Jesus. Most of Lutheranism has rejected the witness of Wauwatosa and turned to the Barthians. The remnant has also failed to hear the message and seeks refuge and hope in a legalistic traditionalism.

He who can inherit the richness of the heritage from Walther and from the Wauwatosa faculty has a rich heritage indeed. Have we received it? We must in another issue trace our heritage from 1920 to the present day.

W. S.



Sanctuary of St. John Lutheran Church, Clarkston, Washington

Dedication

CLARKSTON, WASHINGTON — On September 5, 1965, St. John Lutheran Church dedicated its new house of worship. Pastor Robert Reim of Spokane, Washington, preached the sermon in the Service of Dedication. Pastor Gilbert Sy-dow, New Ulm, Minnesota, was the guest speaker in the Dedication Vesper Service.

A Symbol and a Creed

The symbol the worshiper sees above the altar is one of the oldest and perhaps one of the favorite, symbols of the early Church. It is the symbol of the fish. It is found marked on gravestones, found on rings, lamps, vases, and pictures.

What does a fish have to do with the Christian faith? The English word *fish* of course does not sug-

gest anything particularly Christian. But then, the early Christians did not speak English but Greek. The Greek word for fish is *ichthus*. The letters are used in this way: I=Jesus; CH=Christ; TH=of God; U=Son; S=Savior. In other words, the early Christians formed a confession of faith from the word *ichthus*: *Jesus CHristos THEou Uios Soter* (Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior). Hence, the symbol of the fish expresses simply that tremendous truth of Christian faith, that Jesus Christ is God's Son, the Savior.

A Look to the Past

Under the above caption, in an attractive dedication booklet, Pastor Leonard Bernthal tells us that a group of Lutherans organized themselves as the St. John Luth-

eran Church on April 30, 1912. They made their plea for a pastor to the Wisconsin Synod and in September of the same year they installed W. Hass as pastor.

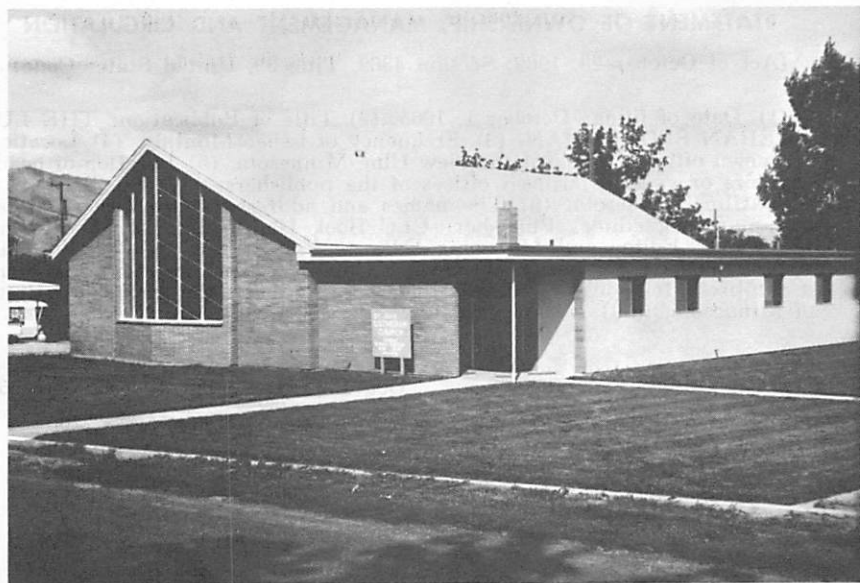
During the first years of their history the members of St. John congregation had no church building of their own. It was not until 1921 that they bought their own property at Seventh and Diagonal in Clarkston. The decision to construct a church was made in May, 1923 and on November 18, 1923, the congregation dedicated their first house of worship. Pastor Soll of Yakima, Washington, and Pastor A. Sydow of Tacoma, Washington, were the guest speakers.

The church building at Seventh and Diagonal served the congregation for the next 40 years. Then on July 21, 1963, the congregation

decided that it would be in the best interest of the Gospel to rebuild at another location. The congregation resolved to sell the property. The final service at Seventh and Diagonal was held on August 25, 1963.

Once again the congregation was worshiping in a temporary place of worship, while St. John set about to build a new church. In September they resolved to purchase their new property at 14th and Birch. The cost of the land was \$5,500.00. The following months were spent making plans for the building so that construction could begin early in 1964.

The ground breaking ceremony was held at the new site on February 16, 1964. Work at the site began the next day and progressed steadily even though it was being



St. John Lutheran Church in Clarkston

done by volunteer labor. Except for the cement flooring and the glass and brick work, the labor came from willing members of the congregation. Mr. Albert Gebhardt served as general supervisor of the project.

Although the building was not yet completed, the interior of the worship area was far enough along that the first service of the new church was held on November 22, 1964.

Finish work went along at a more leisurely pace. The carpet was laid during the last week in April and on May 9 the congregation enjoyed the comfort and beauty of the new pews.

Some cabinet work and landscaping still remained to be done at the time of dedication. With the building fund donations, the sale of the

old property, and with the help of volunteer labor, the congregation dedicated the new church debt free. The cost of the materials and furnishings, in addition to the cost of the land, came to \$16,000.00. The congregation numbers about 55 communicants and forms a joint parish with Peace Lutheran of Orofino, Idaho. It affiliates with the CLC because it felt it could there more faithfully serve the Gospel than in its former fellowship.

Pastor Leonard Bernthal has recently followed the call that came to him from Orthodox Lutheran Church in St. Louis, Missouri. The congregation is currently calling a pastor to fill the vacancy. May the Lord bless St. John congregation as He so richly did in the past!

D.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

(Act of October 23, 1962; Section 4369, Title 39, United States Code)

(1) Date of filing: October 1, 1965. (2) Title of Publication: THE LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN. (3) Frequency of issue: Monthly. (4) Location of known office of publication: New Ulm, Minnesota. (5) Location of headquarters or general business offices of the publishers: 1106 So. Broadway, New Ulm, Minnesota. (6) The names and addresses of publisher, editor, and managing editor: Publisher: CLC Book House, Box 145, New Ulm, Minnesota; Editor and Managing Editor: W. Schaller, Jr., 8624 Valjean Ave., Sepulveda, California. (7) Owner: Church of the Lutheran Confession, a non-profit religious organization incorporated under the laws of the State of Minnesota. (8-9) Not applicable.

	Av. number ea. issue Oct. 1964 - Oct. 1965	Single issue September, 1965
(10) A. Total Number copies printed	2100	2100
B. Paid Circulation		
(1) To term subscribers	1850	1850
(2) Other sales	none	none
C. Free Distribution	50	50
D. Total Number Distributed	1900	1900

I certify that the statements made by me above are correct and complete.

W. Schaller, Jr., Editor

CHRISTMAS RECORDS

Time seems to have flown more swiftly than ever since our last year's Christmas suggestions. Again your attention is directed to treasured albums that will not be found in most record shops, as well as to some of the more traditional records that have better than usual content and performance. Any of these (except MHS albums) can be ordered through the *CLC Book House; Box 145; New Ulm, Minn. 56073*. But time is short; place the order at once.

IN DULCI JUBILO, Ancient Choral Music for Christmas, by Oslander, Lassus, Morales, Guerrero, Scheidt, Agricola, Ockeghem, Eccard, Vulpius, Constantini, Bodenschatz, Buxtehude, Praetorius, Paminger, and an anonymous composer. *TELEFUNKEN AWT 9419-C* or stereo *SAWT 9419-B*, \$6 for either. The composers' names speak for themselves. Chorale settings range from the 15th through the 18th centuries. There are three arrangements of the title number: one by Scheidt for two 4-voiced choirs; another is the best recording of Buxtehude's lovely cantata based on that tune; the third is sung simultaneously with two other Christmas tunes. No single high point can be named; settings are exquisite throughout. There is an anonymous arrangement of a charming French carol, also the cradle song in which Mary begs "Joseph, dearest Joseph, mine" to help her rock Christ's cradle, and many other treasures. The performance is splendid. While the stereo could be more directional it does help to add the full churchly sound. This album has our highest recommendation. Well suited for pre-worship playing. Text is included, but notes and translation must be requested from *London Records, Inc., — "Imports" Division; 539 West 25th St.; New York 10001*.

THE PLAY OF HEROD, A Medieval Christmas Drama. Performed by a boys' choir and vocalists and instrumentalists of the New York Pro Musica, Noah Greenberg directing. Two records. *DECCA DXA 187*, \$10; *DXSA 7187*, \$12. In June we mentioned Decca's *Play of Daniel*, which

was usually performed for Christmas because it closes with a prophecy of the coming Messiah. The present album is a worthy successor, done by the same forces. It begins with the angels' announcement to the shepherds and their *Gloria in excelsis*. The worship of the wise men is set to some of the most tender music. When Herod sends his soldiers to kill the babes of Bethlehem, the marching feet are heard — closer and closer — and one's pulse actually begins to race. Rachel's mourning is ever so vivid. The closing *Te Deum* (We Praise Thee), with bells ringing in the distance, casts a spell not to be forgotten.

The total effect is one of quaint and fetching simplicity. Performance and sound are so good and stereo so effective that one has the uncanny feeling of having been transported right into the front pew of some great 12th century cathedral, watching the story unfold. That audience of 600 years ago must have sat spellbound, both children and adults, as this drama was repeated year after year to teach them about God's gift of grace in the Redeemer-Christchild. Translation and historical notes are included. Truly a remarkable album.

THE MESSIAH, by Handel. Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra, Klempner conducting. A new release, three records. *ANGEL CL3657* at \$14.39, or *SCL 3657* for \$17.39. Diction is very clear; moods are well expressed, whether tragic or joyous, tender, or majestic. This is a *scriptural* performance that treats the story of Christ's birth, death, and resurrection in a manner that will please every Christian who loves this work. The recorded sound exceeds all other albums; the stereo just right.

Anyone desiring a bargain mono-only album will not be disappointed in the good performance and sound of the Sir Adrian Boult version on *RICHMOND 43002* for \$7.50.

CHRISTMAS ORATORIO, by J. S. Bach. The Heinrich Schuetz Choir of Heilbronn and the Pforzheim Chamber Orchestra. Three records; new release.

MHS 571/2/3, \$7.50 for mono or stereo. Dignity, brightness, and feeling combine to make it the best album of this masterpiece. Sound is good; stereo separation fine. Bach's treatment of the Christmas story, interspersed with many fitting chorales, should not be passed by. A fine album; a bargain price. No risk involved; MHS albums can be returned within ten days if not wanted. Must be ordered directly from *Musical Heritage Society, 1991 Broadway; New York 10023*.

OUR MOUTH IS FULL OF LAUGHTER, Cantata No. 110, for Christmas Day, by J. S. Bach. **MHS 561**, \$2.50, mono or stereo. A splendid, colorful work, well performed and recorded. Overseas is No. 8, "Dear Lord, when will I die?" Order as above.

MIDNIGHT MASS, by Marc-Antoine Charpentier (1634-1704). **MHS 522**, \$2.50 for mono or stereo. This is the liturgy of the ancient midnight Christmas service. The parts of the liturgy — *Kyrie, Gloria, Credo*, etc. — are set to the tunes of eight French carols, some of which are easily recognized. This spirited mixture of voices, organ, and instruments makes for the most enjoyable forty minutes of recorded Christmas music to be had at this price. Order same as above.

A JOYOUS FRENCH CHRISTMAS OF THE 17TH CENTURY, By Charpentier, Du Mont, and Monteclair. **MHS 576**, \$2.50, mono or stereo. Thanks to the continuing efforts of MHS we are being offered many of the works of these great French church composers. They are masters in the art of expressing the pure joy of Christian faith in colorful but dignified music. These are short motets, mostly words of Scripture, about the shepherds, the angels, the wise men. The Du Mont is his setting of Psalm 95. Orchestral interludes depict the shepherds' slumber, a gay celebration, etc. These are noble compositions of Christian joy. Try this. Order as above.

O GREAT MYSTERY, Unaccompanied Choral Music of the 16th and 17th Centuries, by the Canby Singers. **NONESUCH H-1026** or stereo **H-71026** for \$2.50. A first-class choral group presents early music about the great mystery of our Savior's birth.

This performance rates high in all reviews. Both the sound and the stereo are good. Translations and notes. A bargain.

The nature of the above albums is such as to make them enjoyable the year around. The following records are more seasonal, either entirely or partly suited for playing before Advent and Christmas services.

A GERMAN CHRISTMAS, by the Bielefelder Kinderchor. **CAPITOL T-10308**, \$4, or **ST-10308** at \$5. This children's choir is expertly trained in precise diction and broad range of expression. The voices ring with Christmas jubilation. After hearing these 21 German carols one wishes for more. This is one of the finest records of children's choirs. It is further enhanced by cathedral chimes and the accompaniment of several organs.

IT CAME UPON A MIDNIGHT CLEAR, by the Roger Wagner Chorale. **CAPITOL T-1760**, \$4, **ST-1760**, \$5. Why "Jingle Bells" should begin this record is more than we know; but the other 12 carols are all well sung by this famous choral group, even if the instrumental accompaniment is at times too stepped-up. Sound is superb. The special charm of this record lies in the beautiful rendition of the tender Italian carol, *Gesu Bambino* (Little Baby Jesus). Our CLC Book House can supply the peaceful Christmas Eve organ arrangement of this carol, so fitting for the children's service.

SONGS OF CHRISTMAS, by the Norman Luboff Choir. **COLUMBIA CL-926**, \$4, or the "electronically re-channelled" stereo **CS-8846**, \$5. A tasteful selection of 22 traditional carols, sung in English. The performance is pleasing in every way, as one has come to expect from this well-knit choral group.

CHRISTMAS IN THE OLD WORLD, by various instrumental and choral groups and artists. **PHILIPS PHM-200 036** at \$4, or **PHS-600 036**, \$5. A prized collection of 16 carols from 9 European countries. Performance and sound are superb.

C. THUROW

TREASURER'S REPORT

July 1, 1965 to November 1, 1965

BUDGETARY

RECEIPTS:	October, 1965	Total to Date
Offerings	\$11,336.75	\$31,425.63
Memorials	5.00	5.00
Revenues, Tuition	847.00	5,937.00
Revenues, Board & Room	1,456.00	9,934.00
Revenues, Other College	85.00	365.00
Interest Earned, 1964-1965	160.26	160.26
Total Receipts	\$13,890.01	\$47,826.89
DISBURSEMENTS:		
General Administration	\$ 1,337.22	\$ 2,487.80
Home Missions & Administration	3,639.84	13,106.04
Japan Mission	550.00	2,200.00
ILC Educational Budget	4,060.71	14,956.68
ILC Auxiliary Services Budget	3,319.36	8,248.24
Journal of Theology	64.55	64.55
Total Disbursements	\$12,971.68	\$41,063.31
Cash Balance this Period	\$ 918.33	\$ 6,763.58
Cash Deficit July 1, 1965		—5,386.46
Cash on Hand, November 1, 1965		\$ 1,377.12

* * * * *

C.L.C. Classroom Building Fund

October Offerings	\$2,245.19	Total 3,011.83
		Respectfully submitted,
		Lowell R. Moen, <i>Treasurer</i>
		1309 7th Avenue N.W.
		Austin, Minnesota 55912

* * * * *

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

	October	Four Months
Budgetary Offerings Needed	\$ 8,522.00	\$34,088.00
Budgetary Offerings Received	\$11,336.75	\$31,425.63
Surplus	\$ 2,814.75	
Deficit		\$ 2,662.37
Budgetary Offerings 1964-1965	\$12,057.10	\$24,778.36

Board of Trustees
L. W. Schierenbeck, *Chairman*

Installation

As authorized by President Paul Albrecht, I installed Leonard G. Bernthal as pastor of Orthodox Lutheran Church, St. Louis, Missouri, on the Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity, October 3, 1965.

Roland A. Gurgel

Installation

As authorized by President Paul Albrecht, assisted by Pastors Daniel Fleischer and Gordon Radtke, I installed Gilbert Sydow as pastor of Faith Lutheran Church of New Ulm, Minnesota, on the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity, October 10, 1965.

Paul F. Nolting

The Bread of Life

Date	Reading	Hymn
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The Coming Redeemer

Dec. 2	—Luke 17:20-25	67,1
Dec. 3	—Hag. 2:1-9	67,2
Dec. 4	—Rev. 1:4-8	67,3
Dec. 5	—Rev. 2:1-7	67,4
Dec. 6	—Ps. 50:1-6	67,5
Dec. 7	—Rev. 3:14-22	67,6
Dec. 8	—Is. 35:1-7	67,7

Our Lord's Forerunner

Dec. 9	—Luke 1:57-70	75,1
Dec. 10	—Luke 3:10-20	75,2
Dec. 11	—John 1:6-16	75,3
Dec. 12	—Is. 62:1-12	75,4
Dec. 13	—John 5:30-36	63,1
Dec. 14	—Hos. 14:4-10	63,2-3
Dec. 15	—John 1:29-34	63,4-5

The Approaching Joy

Dec. 16	—Is. 45:1-8	62,1-2
Dec. 17	—Luke 1:39-56	62,3-4
Dec. 18	—1 Cor. 2:6-10	80,1
Dec. 19	—Jer. 31:1-14	80,2
Dec. 20	—Is. 40:9-11	80,3
Dec. 21	—Is. 52:13-53:5	80,4
Dec. 22	—Rom. 5:12-21	80,5

The Birth of Our Lord

Dec. 23	—Micah 5:1-4	77,1-5
Dec. 24	—Is. 9:1-6	77,6-10
Dec. 25	—Luke 2:1-20	77,11-15
Dec. 26	—John 1:1-14	81,1-2
Dec. 27	—Psalm 2	81,3-4
Dec. 28	—Acts 4:23-30	81,5-6
Dec. 29	—Titus 2:11-15	97,1-4

In the Name of Jesus

Dec. 30	—Luke 2:25-32	137,1-2
Dec. 31	—Rom. 8:31-39	137,3-4
Jan. 1	—Psalm 121	528,1-3
Jan. 2	—Is. 43:1-7	528,4-6
Jan. 3	—Rom. 8:24-30	528,7-9
Jan. 4	—Acts 4:8-13	528,10-12
Jan. 5	—Joshua 1:1-9	528,13-15

Call for Nominations

Nominations for president of ILC for the period July 1, 1966 to July 1, 1968 are requested from the constituency of the CLC. Please have these in the hands of the secretary of the Board of Regents by January 15, 1966.

James C. Pelzl, *Secretary*

Notice

Services are held in Chicago every Sunday at 4:00 P.M. at the YMCA, 3333 North Marshfield. Sunday school follows at 5:00 P.M.

David Lau

Notice

Holy Trinity congregation, Missoula, Montana, is conducting services every Sunday at 11:00 A.M.

Anyone knowing of interested persons in Missoula is urged to contact the secretary, Mr. Alfred Siltman, 618 West Kent, Missoula, Montana, or the undersigned vacancy pastor.

W. Karnitz
West 3811 Lyons
Spokane, Washington 99208