

Beretning

om

Det niende aarlige aarsmøde

af

Den norske Synode

af den Amerikanske Evangelist
Lutherske Kirke



Afholdt i

Rock Bell norsk evangelisk lutherske menighed,
Bellevue, Minn.

1926

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fra den 23de til 29de juni, 1926



Synodens ordning og medlemmer

Den norske Synode af den Amerikanske Evangelisk Lutherske Kirke afholdt sit niende ordentlige møde i Rock Dell menighed, past M. F. Mommsens kald, fra 23de til 29de juni 1926.

Nabningsprædiken holdtes af past. S. M. Tjernagel over Ef. 2, 19—22. Efter endt gudstjeneste hilste steds præst synoden velkommen og formand Gullixson udtalte følgende midlertidige fuldmagtskomite: Past. R. A. Widvey, C. F. Quill og Ole Kittelsland. Senere gjordes denne komite permanent. Besluttet at møde kl. 2 eftermiddag.

Staaende medlemmer.

a) Stemmeberettigede: Chr. Anderson, R. Blæfkan, D. M. Gullerud, G. A. Gullixson, L. S. Guttebø, G. Guldberg, E. Hansen, H. Harstad, B. Harstad, John Hendricks, S. Ingebritson, L. P. Jensen, J. M. Møldstad, C. M. Møldstad, M. F. Mommsen, Norman M. Madsen, C. R. Peterson, Justin M. Peterson, C. F. Quill, S. Sande, J. E. Thoen, H. F. Torgerson, Jos. V. Unseth og S. E. Møisaker.

b) Raadgivende: S. M. Breus, E. G. Møller, R. A. Widvey, Oliver Harstad, Oscar Levenson, D. B. Overt og J. F. Strand.

c) Graværende: G. P. Nesseth, D. G. Naber, S. Nafstad, D. A. Sauer, M. Fr. Wiese, B. Horde, J. Johansen og Geo. D. Lillegard.

d) Raadgivende ved dette møde: Prof. Holden M. Olsen, kand. Joseph R. Runkholt, past. G. W. Scheitel, past. Ad. E. Fren, past. J. Brauer, Peter Anderson, A. Martinson, Siver Runkholt, R. G. Larson.

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D. M. Gulleruds kald: John M. Johnson og Ole Olmanson.

G. A. Gullixsons kald: R. L. Guttebø.

L. S. Guttebøs kald: S. B. Stephens og C. D. Fjelland.

E. Hansens kald: Ole P. Tveden.

Adolf Harstads kald: Alfred og Olaf Tjernagel.

B. Harstads kald: Theodor Ellingson.

S. Ingebritsons kald: John Førde, Martin Stene, L. E. Ludvig og Ed. Rusten.

R. A. Madsens kald: Elling Georg.

M. F. Mommsens kald: Ole Kittelsland, Wm. Hesse, Ole Dahl og Gust Thiel.

C. R. Petersons kald: L. M. Thoreson, Knut Opheim, Ole Strøm og Charley Eghverson.

J. A. Petersens kald: Nils Fangstad, E. A. Subeland, Oscar Gryte, S. M. Hanson og Peter G. Kloster.

C. S. Quills kald: J. G. Sime og Nels Spangelo.

C. Sandes kald: John L. Johnson.

S. M. Tjernagels kald: Fred Omman, Oscar Jirkenstad, Iver Natvig og John Norlaug.

J. E. Thoens kald: N. J. Løberg og Johannes Berge.

N. J. Torgersons kald: Anton Ringsen og J. S. Gopperstad.

C. E. Olvisakers kald: G. H. Riland.

Delegerer.

Fra Richland menighed, N. Garstads kald: Søren Peterson og Hans Petersen.

Hudskyldninger.

For ikke at jende repræsentant: C. A. Moldstads kald, J. Blækfæns kald og L. P. Jensens kald. For sildig ankomst: C. E. Olvisaker og prof. D. B. Overt. For at forlade mødet: N. J. Torgerson, Oliver Garstad og Thomas Heller. For fravær: G. P. Nesseth og hans repræsentant.

Optagelser.

Past. Adolf Garstad: „The Morgan Evang. Luth. Congregation,” Trail Co., N. Dak., og „Den Første Syd Wild Rice Ev. Luth. Menighed,” Clay Co., Minn.

Gjæster.

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Uabningsprædiken

(Pastor S. M. Tjernagel).

Gimmelfste Fader, vor skaber og opholder, Jesus Kristus, vor forløser, du værdige Helligaand, vor helliggjører, vi beder dig, treenige Gud: styr vore tanker, ord og beslutninger. Vi vil dit riges udbredelse, dit navns forherligelse, dit dyrebare ords og sakramenters bevarelse saa at dyrefølte sjæle kan frelles. Vi beder dig i Jesu navn velkommen til den ende vort møde. Amen.

Løst: Saa ere I da ikke mere fremmede og udlandinge, men de helliges medborgere og Guds husfolk, opbyggede paa apostlernes og profeternes grundvold, idet Jesus Kristus selv er hovedhjørne-

stenen, i hvem den hele bygning bliver sammenføjet og vokser til et helligt tempel i Herren, i hvem ogsaa I blive medopbyggede til en Guds bolig i Manden. Efeserne 2, 19—22.

Kjære præster, delegater og gæster, naade være med eder fra Gud vor Fader og den Herre Jesus Kristus. Amen.

Vi staar netop isærd med at aabne det niende aarlige møde af vort samfund. Hvad er vort samfund for noget? Repræsenterer det et af mange partier inden den kristne kirke? Er det en gren af den lutheriske sekt? Er vort samfund en samling af menigheder, som holder sig til visse opfatninger, meninger og kirkesikke, medens andre samfund med lige stor berettigelse hylder sine forskellige anskuelser og opfatninger? Bør det, derfor, som et lidet samfund i broderlig fordragelighed, ta sin beslektede stilling blandt kirkes mange store og smaa samfund?

Det vi gjerne vilde være forvisjede om, ja, det vi maa være forvisjede om, for at vi skal kunne arbejde med iver, glæde og sikkert haab, ikke alene nu under vort møde, men ogsaa enhver især i sit kald er, at vort samfund er en samling af rette Guds menigheder, og at dets arbejde er en fortsættelse af den apostoliske kirke.

Forvisning herom vil vi søge, idet vi under bøn om den Helligaands vejledning, sammenligner Guds kirkes grundvold og hovedhjørnesten med vort samfunds grundvold og hovedhjørnesten.

Først maa vi have rede paa, hvad Guds kirke er, dernæst hvad dens grundvold og hovedhjørnesten er, og saa kan vi foretage sammenligningen.

Hvad er Guds kirke?

Guds kirke er, efter vor katekisme forklarings ord, „de helliges samfund eller sande troendes forsamling.“ Efter vor teksts ord er den samlingen af alle dem, som ikke mere er fremmede og udlændinge, men de helliges medborgere og Guds husfolk. Disse er ifølge Heb. 12, 22—24 komne til Zions bjerg og til den levende Guds stad, til det himmelske Jerusalem og til englenes mange tusinder, til de førstefødtes forsamling og menighed, som ere opstrebne i himlene, og til Gud, alles dommer, og til de fuldkommede retfærdiges aander og til den nye pagts midler, Jesus, og til bestænkelsens blod, som taler bedre end Mabel.

Guds kirke er alle dem, som forhen vandrede efter denne verdens vis, efter den fyrste, som har magt i lusten, den aand, der nu er virksom i vantroens børn, blandt hvilke ogsaa vi forhen vandrede i vort kjøds begjærigheder, idet vi gjorde kjødets og tankernes vilje og vare af naturen bredens børn, ligesom de andre, men Gud som er rig paa barmhjertighed, har formedelst sin store kjærlighed, med hvilken han elskede os, gjort os, da vi endog vare døde i vore overtrædelser, levende med Kristus (af naade ere I frelst) og med ham vpreist os og sat os i himmelen i Kristus Jesus, forat han i de tilkommende

tider kunde vise sin overvættede rigdom i godhed mod os i Kristus Jesus. Ef. 2, 2—7.

Hvad er grundvolden og hovedhjørnestenen?

„De helliges medborgere og Guds husfolk“ det er kirken der er opbygget paa apostlernes og profeternes grundvold. Apostlerne og profeterne, som kirkens lærere, ikke alene i sin tid, men, gennem sine skrifter, er for alle tider grundvolden. Apostlernes skrifter i det nye testamente og profeterne i det gamle, indblæste som de er af den Helligaand, er Guds kirkes grundvold. Denne grundvold skal ikke røfkes, naar himmel og jord forgaar, thi Jesus Kristus selv er hovedhjørnestenen, og derfor kan selve helvedes porte ikke faa overhaand over den. Jesus Kristus er nemlig indholdet af apostlernes og profeternes skrifter.

Altsaa Guds kirke bygges paa Guds aabenbarede ord, hvis indhold er Jesus Kristus. Bibelen eller Guds ord, uden det forsfæstede og gjenopstandne Gud-menneske Jesus Kristus, er som en grundvold af „concrete“ uden cement, lutter grus og sand. Den, som bygger paa en grundvold, hvis hovedhjørnesten ikke er Jesus Kristus, bygger ikke Guds kirke men Satans rige.

Bygger vort samfund paa apostlernes og profeternes grundvold idet Jesus Kristus selv er hovedhjørnestenen?

Guds ord er eneste regel og rettesnor for os i lære og liv, og det ikke alene i vor skrebnе bekjendelse, men for vor forkyndelse i skrift og tale; for vore beslutninger og resolutioner; for samfundets hele gjøren og laden.

Naar der 2. Tim. 3, 16 staar: Den gaulste skrift er indblæst af Gud, og 1 Kor. 2, 13: Hvad vi og taler, ikke med ord, som menneskelig visdom lærer, men med ord som den Helligaand lærer, idet vi talsker aandelige ting med aandelige ord, saa tror og forkynder vi, at Gud gav de hellige Guds mænd ifinde alt hvad og med hvilke ord de skulde skrive, og den eller de, bære de indenfor eller udenfor samfundet, som ikke lærer saaledes betragtes og behandles som falske lærere.

Udviplingslæren forkastes fordi den strider mod det 1ste kapitel af 1. Mosebog og mange andre steder. Af samme grund forkastes den populære og meget almindelige mening, at de seks skabelsesdage maa forstaaes som seks perioder af ubestemt tidslængde.

Enhvert forsøg paa at forringe og beskjære det gamle testamente ansees som et forsøg paa, at berøve os vor frelser, thi vi har ingen anden frelser end den forfættede Messias, hvorom hele det gamle testamente dreier sig og som i tidens fylde kom født af en kvinde.

Naar vi læser Ef. 2, 8—10: Thi af naade ere I frelst ved troen, og det ikke af eder, Guds er gaven, ikke af gjerninger, forat ikke nogen skal rose sig. Thi vi ere hans verk, skabte i Kristus Jesus til gode gjerninger, da ved vi, hvorfra vor frelse kommer, og vi forkynder det, ikke som en „opfatning,“ men som en evig Guds sandhed, at et men-

neske bliver rettfærdiggjort ved troen uden lovens gjerninger. Rom. 3, 28.

Naar Jesus siger: Tager dette hen og æder det, dette er mit legeme, som gives for eder, og drikker alle deraf, denne er det nye testaments kalk i mit blod, som udgydes for eder til syndernes forladelse, da beskjæftiger vi os ikke med at udgrunde, hvorledes det dog kan lade sig gjøre, men tager fornustens fangen under troens lydhed.

Gjor retfærdigt og rimeligt det end kan synes, at kvinden skulde have stemmeret i menigheden, og dermed nødvendigvis taleret, saa kan det dog ikke af den, som har Guds ord til regel og rettesnor, tilstedes, thi 1. Kor. 14, 33—35 siger: Ligesom i alle de helliges menigheder, tie eders kvinder i menighederne! Thi det er dem ikke tilladt at tale, men at være underdanige, ligesom og loven siger. Men ville de lære noget, da spørge de sine egne mænd hjemme! Thi det er usømmeligt for kvinder at tale i menigheden.

Gjorbøl det efter fornustens beregninger maa gaa det samfund ilde, som tør vise modstand mod det tilsyneladende almægtige logebæsen i vor tid, saa gjør dog vi det, fordi Guds ord siger: Drager ikke i et fremmed aag med vantro! Thi hvad fællesskab har retfærdighed med uret? Og hvad samfund har lys med mørke? Og hvad overensstemmelse er der mellem Kristus og Belial? Eller hvad delagtighed har en troende med en vantro? Hvad samfund har Guds tempel med afguder? Thi I ere den levende Guds tempel, ligesom Gud har sagt: Jeg vil bo iblandt dem og vandre iblandt dem, og jeg vil være deres Gud, og de skulde være mit folk. 2. Kor. 6, 14—17.

Broderfjærlighed og kristelig fordragelighed benævnes det nu, at man stiltiende taaler falske lærdomme, og tiltrods for uenighed dog hilser hverandre brødre i Herren. Vi er i denne henseende nødt til at udsætte os for verdens spot og haarde domme, thi Guds ord siger: Over den, som afviger og ei bliver i Kristi lære, har ikke Gud; den som bliver i Kristi lære, han har baade Faderen og Snnen. Derfor som nogen kommer til eder og ikke fører denne lære, saa modtager ham ikke i eders hus og byder ham ikke velkommen! thi den, som byder ham velkommen, bliver delagtig i hans onde gjerninger.

Er vort samfund ligegyldigt for et eneste Guds ord? Er det villigt til stiltiende at taale, at der slaes af det allerringeste paa en eneste Guds ords sandhed for freds og mageligheds og mulig vindings skyld? Anerkendes i aller fjerneste forstand nogen hovedhjørnesten uden Jesus Kristus, Guds og Marias søn, sand Gud og sandt menneske, korsfæstet for vore overtrædelser og opreist til vor rettfærdiggjørelse, hvem betsignelsen og æren og visdommen og taffigelsen og prisen og magten og styrken tilhøre i al evighed?

Kan du svare nei herpaa saa kan vi med fuld frimodighed, tro og erklære at vort samfund ikke er en sekt, ikke et parti, ikke en flok

der hyllder visse opfatninger og anskuelser men bærer Guds kirkes segl.

Spvad betyder dette for det enkelte medlems vedkommende?

Kjære samfundsmedlem, for dig personlig betyder det, at dersom du ikke mere er en fremmed og udlænding, som gjør fjødets og tankernes vilje, saa er du en af de helliges medborgere og Guds husfolk, som ved den levende sten Jesus Kristus selv er borden som en levende sten opbygget til et aandeligt hus, et helligt presteskab til at frembære aandelige offere, velbehagelige for Gud ved Jesus Kristus! 1. Pet. 2, 5.

Svortil bør dette tilskynde dig?

Til at bryste dig ligeoverfor andre? Vil du hovmode dig, du affuelige ormesjæf, der laa død i dine synder og overtrædelser; et aadsef for helvedes rovfugle, men som blev reddet og vasket til live alene ved et Guds naades mirakel? Dig sømmer sig dit ansigts blussel. Idmyghed maa være dit særpræg, du, den største blandt syndere. Men just derfor bør ogsaa din iver og trofskab i at forkynde hans dyder som kaldte dig fra mørket til sit underfulde lys (1. Pet. 2, 9) være overvættets stor.

Gud give at vort samfund og hvert enkelt medlem af samme maatte erkjende denne sin ene, store opgave og troelig anvende sine evner og midler dertil, og til den ende velsigne ham nu vort møde. Amen i Jesu navn.

Formandens synodaltale

Der er meget i kampen for Guds riges bevarelse iblandt os, som virker nedslaaende og stundom frister til modløshed. Kun det, som er stort i verdens øine, synes at vinde nutidens opmærksomhed og tilslutning, og denne tilbøielighed griber ind i vort kirkearbejde og gjør arbeidet ikke lettere for os. Mægtige fiender reiser sig imod os, fiender som er baade hemmelige og aabenbare, og mange fristes til at sige: Det nytter ikke at søge at stevne imod strømmen. Dette kan i det første øiekast synes at være en berettiget mening; men bliver vi ved disse vanskeligheder drevne til at søge vor trost og vor hjælp hos ham, som alene kan hjælpe, og som har lovet at hjælpe; og fører dette os til fortvilelse over vor egen styrke i kampen og til stærkere tro paa ham, som har al magt, da vil disse forhold, som vi lever i, blive os til gavn og velsignelse og ikke til skade.

Vort samfunds hovedformaal er at bevare Guds ord som vor eneste regel og rettesnor for tro, lære og liv og at forkynde dette ord for andre. Til vor fælles opmuntring og glæde vil jeg minde eder om, hvad Jesus siger om dem, som bliver i hans ord. I Joh. evangelium, 8 kap., 31te og 32te vers siger Jesus til de jøder, som havde troet paa ham: „Dersom I blive i mit ord, ere I i sandhed mine disciple, og I skulle erkjende sandheden, og sandheden skal frigjøre

eder." Enhver, som kjender noget til reformationens historie ved at hemmeligheden ved Luthers store seier var, at Luther tog fast stilling paa Guds ords grundvold og lod sig ikke bevæge af noget til at forlade denne stilling. Dette skal vi, kjære venner, tage til indtægt for os selv i vore kampe og i vort arbejde for Guds riges fremme. Gjør vi det, vil vi aldrig blive overbundne; og gjør vi det ikke, da vil vi lide nederlag i kampen for sandhedens bevarelse. Det oplæste Guds ord er et af de klare bestemte skriftsteder, som tro lutheriske kristne aldrig bliver træet af at glæde sig over. Den katolske kirke siger, at Guds ord og pabeskirkens traditioner er højeste autoritet i lærefager. Den reformerte kirke siger, at Guds ord og fornuften er regel og rettesnor for tro, lære og liv; men sande lutheriske kristne siger med Luther, at Guds ord fortolket af skriften selv er eneste regel og rettesnor for vor tro, lære og liv; thi Jesus siger: „Der som I blive i mit ord, ere I i sandhed mine disciple.“

Paa dette grundlag blev den Augsburgske Konfession bygget, som for 396 aar siden, den 25de juni, blev oplæst for første gang for kejser Carl V paa rigsdagen i Augsburg. Det er mit haab, at der under dette møde paa 396 aarsdagen, fredag den 25de juni, bliver anvendt en del af sessionen for at betænke Guds store velgjerning imod kirken deri, at han lod denne betjendelse blive forfattet af Luther og Melancthon og oplæst paa rigsdagen for den ganske kristenhed.

Mange anser den 25de juni 1926 for den lutheriske kirkes fødselsdag. Den katolske kirke benytter sig af dette og siger: Deraf kan I da se, at den lutheriske kirke ikke er den sande kristne kirke paa jorden; thi den kom først tilkve paa Luthers tid. Den katolske kirke er den sande kirke; thi vi har baade den historiske og apostoliske succession ned gennem tiden fra Jesu tid. Vil I da høre til Kristi rige, saa maa I slutte eder til den katolske kirke. Udenfor den er der ikke frelse. Den er det, som har den af Gud faarede prestestand, som har sit kald og sin autenticitet (ægtthed) fra Peter, som var Jesu vikar (stattholder) paa jorden, og paverne er hans eftermænd i uafbrudt rækkfølge. Kun saadanne prester kan føre menneskene til Kristus, som har sit kald og sin ordination ifra paven. Guds ord alene virker ikke frelse, men kun naar det flyder ifra en rettelig ordineret prests mund. Baade pabeskirken og den episkopale kirke, (den engelske kirke) lærer, at kirkens organisation eller forfatning blev først ordnet af Gud, og saa fulgte Guds ord som frugt deraf. Ikke omvendt, som vi lutheranere lærer, at kirken er en frugt af Jesu Kristi ord.

Hvad siger nu Jesus om dem, som bliver i hans ord? Jo, han siger: „De er mine disciple, og I skulle erkjende sandheden, og sandheden skal frigjøre eder.“

Her i dette skriftsted finder vi vor apostoliske succession, bort svaar til alle angreb, som pabeskirken og andre gjør imod den lutheriske kirkes ægthed eller guddommelige berettigelse. Ved den Augsburg-

ffe Confession erklærede vore kirkesædne, at de vilde staa med apostlerne og evangelisterne paa Jesu ords grundvold, og de forfæstede derved alle andre grundvolde. De vendte tilbage til den sande apostoliske grundvold og blev saaledes den rette fortsættelse af den sande synlige kristne kirke paa jorden. Omend det kan siges, at den lutheriske kirke, hvad ydre forfatning angaar, blev dannet ved antagelsen af den Augsburgske Confession, saa er det dog uigjendriveligt sandt, at den ved denne bekjendelse viser, at den er bygget paa „apostlernes og profeternes grundvold; idet Jesus Kristus selv er hoved-hjørnestenen.“ (Ej. 2, 20).

Jesus siger jo: „Derfor I blive i mit ord, ere I i sandhed mine disciple.“ At være en Jesu discipel er jo det største gode, som kan vederfares en arm synder paa jorden. Hvem er nu en saadan discipel? Den som bliver i mit ord, siger Kristus. Dette er klare ord. Men nu kan der spørges: Hvilke ord siger Jesus til? Er det bare de ord, han har talt til jøderne, som kom til troen paa ham paa den tid? Selvsølgelig er det ikke det; men alle de ord, som han har talt, og som findes i bibelen. Er det alt? Nei. Jesus Kristus er sand Gud. „Den ganske skrift er indblæst af Gud,“ derfor er bibelen Kristi ord. Gjennemgaaende i det nye testamente finder vi, at de hellige forfattere bruger Guds ord og Kristi ord som en betegnelse paa et og det samme. Den hellige skrift. Guds ord er Kristi ord, baade loven og evangeliet. En Jesu Kristi discipel er en, som tror paa Kristus. Jesus sagde: „Gaar derfor hen og gjør alle folk til disciple, idet I døber dem i Faderens og Sønnens og den Helligaands navn, og lærer dem at holde alt det, jeg har befaleet eder. Og se, jeg er med eder alle dage indtil verdens ende.“ (Math. 28, 19, 20).

En discipel er efter dette ord en, som er døbt i den treenige Guds navn, en som ved troen er forenet med ham, og som holder alt, hvad Jesus har sagt er guddommelig sandhed. Han erkjender Jesus som sin lærer og mester og vil gjerne holde alt, hvad han har befaleet. Dette gjælder ikke bare dem, som levede paa Kristi tid og fulgte ham i hans synlige nærværelse, men som ogsaa efter hans himmelfart var hans disciple. Hvorforhelst apostelen virkede med ordet og grundede menigheder, blev de troende kaldte disciple. Hvorledes kunde dette ske? Jo, siger Jesus i sin yppersteprestelige bøn, Joh. 17, 14: „Jeg har givet dem dit ord,“ og i vers 17: „hellige dem i din sandhed, dit ord er sandhed.“

Lukas 10, 16: „Hvo der hører eder, hører mig; og hvo der foragter eder, foragter mig; men hvo der foragter mig, foragter den, som har udsendt mig.“ Heraf følger, at hvo som troede apostlernes ord — som var Kristi ord — blev Kristi disciple. Apostelen Paulus siger, Kol. 3, 16: „Lader Kristi ord bo rigelig iblandt eder, saa I lære og paaminde hverandre i al visdom.“ Og ved dette ord er ogsaa vi blevene troende og Jesu Kristi disciple.

Hører nu, hvem Jesus kalder sine disciple: „De som blive i hans ord,“ holder sig til hans ord, antager hvert ord just som det lyder.

En troende er en discipel, en lærling; Kristus er lærermesteren. Men en discipel, en lærling er ikke over sin egen mester, tviler heller ikke paa sin mesters ord og hæver sig ikke over hans ord. Gjør discipelen det, er han ikke længere discipel. Han siger ikke: omend Mesteren har talt dette, saa tror jeg dog det ikke, fordi jeg ikke kan begribe det med min forstand. Dertilmod, han siger: en er min mester, Kristus. I hans ord vil jeg blive.

Det var Luthers stilling til Jesu Kristi ord. Trods fornuften og pavens myndighed blev han i Kristi ord og sejrede.

Hvem er nu Mesteren, Kristus? Han er den almægtige, alvidende Gud selv. Bover vi da arme stov at tage ifra eller lægge til hans ord? Gjør vi det, da bliver vi ikke i hans ord, og da er vi ikke hans disciple, da er vi ikke lutheranere. Skal vi da ikke takke Gud, som har bevaaret os i et rettroende evangelisk lutherisk samfund, hvis maal er at høre sig for hvert Kristi ord og antage det som et ord talt af Herren; thi alene paa den maade kan Jesus sige om os: „I ere mine disciple i sandhed.“

Men Kristus har ikke alene sagt, at de som blive i hans ord er hans disciple, men han siger videre: „I skulle erkjende sandheden.“ Gud gibe os at erkjende denne herlige forret. Hvilken herlig fordel er ikke dette i en tid som vor, hvor tvil og uro, uvished og famlen raader i al tænkning; tænk, at komme til erkjendelse af sandheden, den absolutte sandhed.

Men er vi sikre paa, at vi har sandheden, naar vi bliver i hans ord? Ja, derom er der ingen tvil. Hvoraf ved vi det? Kristus har sagt det. Tag mit ord, hør det, læs det, og holdt eder til det i troen, og I skal erkjende sandheden. Han siger ikke: læs det, og dersom du ikke forstaar det, saa forkast det, som du ikke forstaar. Men han siger: bliver i mit ord, saa skal I erkjende sandheden.

Kristus siger om sig selv: „Jeg er sandheden.“ Han kan ikke tage fejl. Som gjenfødte ved den Helligaands kraft ved vandbadet i ordet, har vi troen paa Jesus Kristus som veien, sandheden og livet. I dette lys ser vi lyset fra oven. Bliver vi i hans ord, kan vi ikke tage fejl. Paa livets store spørgsmaal: Hvad er jeg? Hvorfra er jeg kommen? Og hvorhen gaar jeg? Har vi i Kristi ord de rette sanddrue svar, som aldrig feiler.

Er da alle andre svar paa disse spørgsmaal, som modsiges skriftten feilagtige og falske? Dertil svarer Jesu disciple med bestemthed ja. Sandheden fra Gud er absolut, og alt som modsiges den er usandhed. Dette er den lutheriske kirkes stilling til Kristi ord.

Den moderne teologi og tænkning raser imod en saadan stilling. I theologien taler de liberale med større hensynsfuldhed, de siger: Saaledes forstaar vi denne lære. Det er vor anskuelse, andre kan have ligesaa god ret til sine meninger.

Men er dette at forkynde Guds sandhed? Nei, en saadan tale fører til tvil og ubished. Er dette at stride for den tro, som engang er overgiben de hellige? Er dette at ophøje Kristus? Nei, han siger: „Blive i mit ord, og I skulle erkjende sandheden.“ Dette er den ene sikre regel til at komme til sandhedens erkjendelse ifølge Guds forjættelser. Det som ikke er sandhed er løgn. Men en saadan forkyndelse finder lidet medhold i vor tid. Vi besvrides for at være trangsynte, bagstræbere, naar vi indtager en saadan stilling. Welan, vi taaler det; thi heri har vi godt følge. Paulus siger: Gal. 1, 8: „Men selv om vi eller en engel fra himmelen prædiker et andet evangelium for eder end det, vi have prædikeret for eder, han være forbandet.“ Nei, kjære venner, ren lære er ikke en tom frase, som kan foragtes eller forhaanes. Pilatus spurgte Kristus i overlegen spot: „Hvad er sandhed?“ som om ingen sandhed var at finde. Men Kristus har lært sine disciple at bede: „Hellige du os i din sandhed, dit ord er sandhed.“ Saadanne blive i sin Herres ord og kjender sandheden.

Vi tror, at Gud taler sandt, naar han siger: „Den ganske skrift er indblæst af Gud;“ og at de hellige Guds mænd talte drevne af den Helligaand. Her vil vi forblive. Den hellige skrift er Guds ord.

Prøver vi dette, saa erfarer vi dens sanddrøhed. Gud har sagt os, at verden blev skabt af ham i seks dage, som bestod af fire og tyve timer hver, vi tror dette og kjender sandheden om verdens og menneskets oprindelse langt bedre end disse, som gennem hele sit liv har søgt et andet svar.

Skriften siger, at „daaben frelser os.“ Fornuften siger: hvorledes kan vandet udrette saa store ting? Gud siger det, svarer Jesu disciple, og dermed bliver det. Kristus siger: „dette er mit legeme; dette er mit blod.“ Mattæus, Markus, Lukas og Paulus stadfæster dette. Derfor tager vi imod hans hellige legeme og blod i alterens sakramente, i med og under brød og vin. Hvorledes kan dette være muligt, siger fornuften? Vi ved ikke, men Kristus siger det, og ved hans ord bliver vi staaende og derfor kjender vi sandheden her ogsaa.

Vi forkaster al falsk lære i andre kirker, men vi dømmer ikke sjælene. Vi takker Gud for, at han har sine børn ogsaa i dem; men disse fødes ikke af deres falske anskuelse og læresætninger, men af Guds ord — den uforfrankelige sæd som ogsaa i disse delvis udsaaes. Lad os takke Gud, som uden nogen vor fortjeneste har givet os sandheden, som den er i Jesus Kristus.

Men ved at blive i Kristi ord har vi ikke alene den trøst og glæde, at vi er hans disciple og kjender sandheden; men han siger videre: „Og sandheden skal frigjøre eder.“ Frihed, det er vor tids løsen som neppe nogensinde før. I frihedens navn raabes der i mange lande: Bort med al bestaaende orden! Bort med Gud! Bort med religionen, den leder til kapitalismens tyranni! Bort med love og

al regjering! Vort med ægteskab og familieliv, naar dette fter, da vil menneskelivet uddifle sig i frihed! Dette raab griber deres hjerter, som ikke kjender friheden i Kristus. Vil denne frihed nogensinde opnaaes? Aldrig! Det er et irlys, en drøm, som stedse fører længere ned i uordenens sump, stedse længere ned i syndens, Satans og fortabelfsens tyranni.

Men er der da intet haab, eller nogen mulighed for at opnaa frihed for menneskesjælen? Jo, Gud være lobet — Kristus siger: „Sandheden skal frigjøre eder.“ Ikke ved den meget roste tolerance; ikke ved statsforfatninger og love; ikke ved den stolte videnskab; heller ikke ved affasselsen af al lov og orden i verden; men ved sandheden, det er ved Jesu Kristi evangelium, som er en Guds kraft til salighed for hver den, som tror. I saligheden er frihed. „Dersom da Sønnen faar frigjort eder, skulle I isandhed være fri,“ siger Kristus. Det er den frihed, som Jesus, Guds søn, har fortjent for os ved sin lidelse og ved sin død; og denne frihed eier de, som tror paa ham. Det er frihed fra syndens herredømme, frihed fra djævelens anklage, frihed fra den evige død og frygt for den, og frihed fra helvedes evige nød og plage. Og i saligheden faar vi frihed til at gjøre, hvad vi vil; men da bliver viljen fuldkommen renset, saa at vi vil det, som Gud vil.

Den kristne anvender denne frihed saaledes, at han giver dette svar, naar synden anklager ham: „Det er Gud, som retfærdiggjør, hvo er den, som fordømmer.“ Dersom loven truer og forfræffer ham, svarer han: „Kristus er lovens retfærdighed for hver den, som tror.“ Naar dette livs forger og bekymringer veier tungt paa ham, svarer han med apostelens ord: „Raster al eders sorg paa Herren; thi han har omhu for eder.“ Naar døden nærmer sig med sin isnende gru og skræk, kommer sandhedens ord ham til trøst og siger: „Død, hvor er din braad; helvede, hvor er din seier. Men Gud være tak, som giver os seier ved vor Herre Jesus Kristus.“

Dette er den herlige frihed, som Kristus taler om, naar han siger: „Dersom I blive i mit ord, ere I isandhed mine disciple, og I skulle erkende sandheden, og sandheden skal frigjøre eder.“ Er det da værdt at stride for at bevare Kristi ord purt og rent iblandt os? Er det nødvendigt at stride for den tro, som een gang er overgiben de helige?“ (Judas 1, 3).

Tidens løsen er nu: tolerance, tolerance; bær ikke paaftaaelige i eders lære; men bærer tolerante med hemmelige jelskaber, som fornægter Kristus, med katolikkerne og med anderledes troende protestanter og lutheranere. De gjør dog meget godt i verden. Hvorfor skulle vi modstaa dem? Eller skille os fra dem og tage afstand fra dem? Vort svar er: Fordi Kristus har sagt: „Dersom I blive i mit ord, ere I isandhed mine disciple.“ Vi vil blive i Kristi ord; vi bærer ikke at taale med bevidsthed endog den mindste afvigelse fra hans ord; thi vi søger den velsignelse og de store gaver, som vi har

hørt hans Løfter Iover dem, som blive i hans ord. Vi er kaldte til at være hans disciple. Men at der er fare i at være lempelig og tolerant hvad Guds ords Lære angaar, det skal vi under dette møde nærmere betragte under behandlingen af themaet: „Unionismens forbindelse i den lutherske kirke.“

Gud lægge sin velsignelse til vore forhandlinger. Amen.

formandens indberetning

Med hensyn til min embedsførsel har jeg at berette, at jeg har overbæret den almindelige prestekonferens, som holdt sit møde ved Lake Pomme de Terre, Minn., Madison og Chicago special konferens, som holdt sit møde i Chicago og Nordvestlige prestekonferens, som holdt sit møde i Minneapolis; har ogsaa deltaget i 3 fredsmøder, nemlig i Parkland, Wash. den 2—4de oktober; i Mayville, North Dakota den 9de oktober; og i Golton, Mich. i november. Med menigheden i Parkland holdt jeg visitas den 3die oktober. Jeg forrettede ved indvielsen af kirken i Mayville, N. D. den 16de mai og holdt møde med menigheden den samme aften. Har været tilstede ved 3 møder af indremissionskomiteen og 2 specielle møder i anledning missionen i Madison, Wis. Den 3die juli 1925 indførte jeg pastor Norman Madison i Vor Frelses menighed ved Princeton, Minn. Paa indbydelse af nogle venner af vor Synode i Volga, S. D., besøgte jeg dem den 17de februar.

Af missionskomiteens rapport vil det fremgaa, at 3 kandidater har i dette aar faaet kald fra vort samfund, nemlig: Adolph Garstad, som er blevet kaldt til Bethania ev. luth. menighed ved Story City, Iowa, og fra en luthersk menighed i Thornton, Ia. Guldmagt blev givet hans fader, pastor W. Garstad, til at ordinere ham til det hellige prædikeembede; og dette fandt sted søndag den 20de juni; Erling Mvlsaker er kaldt til missionsprest i East Madison, Wis., og Joseph Rumbolt er kaldt til missionsprest i Minneapolis, Minn. Pastor Adolph Garstad begjærer optagelse i Synoden. De to kandidater, som ikke endnu er ordinerede bør optages som raadgivende medlemmer paa dette møde. Alle tre har taget embedseksamen ved Concordia Luth. Seminar, St. Louis, Mo.

Følgende menigheder har begjæret optagelse i Synoden:

Den første Syd Wild Rice ev. luth. menighed i Clay Co., past. C. N. Petersens kald; The Morgan Ev. Luth. Congregation i Trail Co., N. D., past. Emil Hansens kald.

Fra jekkmitéen for indvielsen af Missouri Synodens nye preste-seminar i St. Louis, Mo., fik jeg som Den Norste Synodes formand indbydelse til som æresgjæst at overvære indvielsesfestlighederne, søndagen den 13de juni. Denne høitidelige og storlagne kirkefest var jeg tilstede ved, og takker Gud for den glæde og opmuntring, som blev mig tildel ved paa saa nært hold at se og erfare, hvorledes Herren

fremdeles velsigner dette gamle lutheriske samfund. Storartet som den nye anstalt er, saa sleg det mig, at endnu større er den gave fra Gud, at baade lederne og den næsten uoverskuelige skare af tilhørere med fuldt alvor vil give Herren æren for det vellykkede verk.

Jeg føler det som min pligt at berette, at i aarets løb er der dannet en educational association med navnet: Bethany Lutheran College Association. Denne forening bestaar af omkring et hundrede prestes og lægmand af vort samfund. Foreningen har kjøbt Bethany College i Mankato, Minn., med det maal for øie, at den med tiden kan blive Synodens læreanstalt og eiendom.

G. M. Gullifson, formand.

Kaldet

Spørfor dette thema?

Naar de, der forestaar vort samfunds almene anliggender, har bestemt, at dette emne skal behandles ved et ordentlig synodemøde, saa er det neppe fordi de manglet forraad paa spørgsmaal, som kunde og burde drøftes ved dette møde. Nei, de har valgt det netop fordi, det er helligt paatræbet. Thi ligesom religionsblanderier, unionisme, er en af de farer, som truer Kristi kirke paa en særegen maade netop i vore dage, saa er ogsaa det hellige kald til Herrens tjeneste i fare for at blive foragtet. Na, foragt for kaldet er jo en naturlig følge af unionisme. Svorledes er ikke menighedens hellige ret blit krænk-
ket og dens tro hyrder blit udskjeldt, fordi de ikke vilde sætte sig efter det, som menigheden ivret for. Det er forat vore menigheder, saabel-
som deres haardt betrængte hyrder, kan bestrykes i deres gjerning, at vi samles om dette spørgsmaal. Og da vil jeg sige med det samme, at siden det er godt at hjertet styrkes ved naaden (Heb. 13, 9), saa vil jeg søge efter bedste evne at udrede dette thema alene paa grundlag af den naade. Herren har skænket os i sit useilbare ord; vore skrifttro bekyndelseskrifter, samt kirkens tro lærere; særlig da vor kjære kirke-
fader Luther.

Siden kaldet forudsætter, at der er de, som kalder ligesaabel som de, der kaldes, saa er det nødvendigt for det første at komme paa det rene med

Hvem der har ret til at kalde.

Da det er Guds menighed, den han har erhvervet sig med sit eget blod (Mkta 20, 18), der her er tale om, saa er det selvfølgelig menig-
hedens Herre, som har denne ret. Menigheden er Guds indstiftelse. Derfor Herren ikke kalder til tjenesten, er de lægnere, som profetere i hans navn. Thi saa siger herskarenes Gud ved profeten Jeremias:
„Døgn profetere profeterne i mit navn; jeg har ikke sendt dem og ikke givet dem befaling og ikke talt til dem; lægnagtig syn og sandfigeri og forsængelighed og sit hjertes svig profetere de eder. Derfor, saa

figer Herren om de profeter, som profetere i hans navn, udenat han har sendt dem, og som sige, at sværd og hunger ikke skal komme i dette land: Ved sværd og ved hunger skulle de udryddes, disse profeter." Jer. 14, 14. 15.

Menigheden er Guds hjord, Jesus alene er døren til faarestien. De som ikke gaar ind gjennem ham, kalder Jesus selv ikke bare fremmede men tyve og røvere. Ja, han siger, at de kommer kun, for at stjæle og myrde og ødelægge. Joh. 10.

Menigheden er den Helligaands samfund. Derfor er det ogsaa Guds aand, som alene kan indsætte tjenere til dette samfunds opbyggelse. Thi i sin afskedstale til menigheden i Efesus siger Paulus til menighedens ældste: „Saa giver da agt paa eder selv og paa den hele hjord, i hvilken den Helligaand har sat eder som ovnsuismænd for at vogte Guds menighed." Akta 20, 28.

Arbeidet, som skal udføres i denne tjeneste, er jo indsamlingen af hyrefjæbte menneskejæle. Og siden det er den treenige Gud, som er denne høsts herre, siger Jesus os at vi skal bede høstens herre, at han uddriver arbejdere i sin høst. Matt. 9, 38. Men hvorledes kalder Herren hyrder til at vogte hjorden, hvorledes uddriver han arbejdere i sin høst? Dette fører os over til betragtningen af

Det indre kald.

Ingen bør træde ind i gerningen, uden at han har visshed om, at Herren har kaldt ham til gerningen. Derfor lyder det i Hebræerbrevet: „Og ingen tiltaager sig selv den ære, men den har den, som kaldes af Gud, ligesom Aaron. Saaledes har heller ikke Kristus selv tillagt sig den ære at blive yppersteprest, men den, som sagde til ham: Du er min søn, jeg har født dig idag." Heb. 5, 4. 5. Men da dette ikke hviler paa noget iøjensaldende udvortes kjendetegn, men er en personlig hjertets sag, saa gjør dette spørgsmaal sig straks gjældende: „Hvem kan være forvisset om, at han har det indre kald til at vogte Guds hjord?"

Da man i den romersk-katholske kirke lærer, ifølge Tridentiner Konfiliets XV, kanon (de justificatione), at „derfor nogen siger, at han er vis paa, at han hører til de udvalgte tal, han være forbandet." saa kan jo ingen af paven's tjenere sige, at de er vis paa sin salighed. Men med Paulus skulle jo ethvert Guds barn bekjende: „Seg ved, paa hvem jeg tror, og er vis paa, at han er mægtig til at bevare det, han har betroet mig, til hin dag." 2 Tim. 1, 12. Ja, enhver kristen skulde ogsaa være vis paa, at det kald, han staar i, er Guds kald til ham. Paulus lærer jo udtrykkelig, at vi skal blive i det kald, hvori Herren har kaldt os. 1. Kor. 7, 24, siger han: „I den stand, brødre, hvori enhver er bleven kaldt, i den blive han hos Gud." Til menigheden i Efesus skriver den samme apostel: „Seg formaner eder derfor, jeg, den bundne i Herren, at I skulle vandre det kald værdig, med hvilket I ere kaldte." Ef. 4, 1. Men hvorledes skulde jeg kunne blive i mit kald hos Gud, hvorledes skulde jeg

kunne vandre mit kald værdigt, dersom jeg ikke var vis paa, at det var min af Herren selv anviste gerning?

Troer jeg Guds ord, saa maa jeg ogsaa tro, at Gud har en bestemt hensigt med mig her i livet. Ligesaa vist som jeg er et Guds barn, ligesaa vist vil jeg gjerne gjøre hans vilje. Det blir da ikke længere spørgsmaal om, hvor jeg kan vinde den højeste ære blandt mennesker, i hvilken stilling jeg kan faa det mageligst, eller hvor jeg kan høste den største fortjeneste. Nei, det som da blir det afgjørende er dette: „Hvorledes kan jeg bedst ære Gud og tjene mine medmennesker?“ O, dersom dette bare stod klart for enhver, som vil gjælde for at være et Guds barn, hvor ganske anderledes vilde ikke mange da med mere alvor vælge sit livskald. I fristne forældre behøver ikke at bruge tvangsmidler forat faa eders sønner, som dertil er stiftet til at gaa ind i preste- og lærergjerningen. Hvad I bør se til at gjøre, er, under ordets daglige brug at indskærpe dem den sandhed, at den stand de vælger maa være den, hvori bedst kan ære deres Gud og tjene sine medmennesker.

„Men,“ spørger du, „hvorledes kommer dette indre kald til mig?“ Det kommer igjennem det samme middel, hvorigjennem du er kaldt som en arving til livet, nemlig Guds ord. Det, som kræves fremfor alt, er en barnlig tro paa ordets løfter, som virker kjærlighed til Kirkens Herre. Har du kjærlighed til ham, da vil du ogsaa have kjærlighed til alle af hans faar. At dette er Herrens egen kjendelse i sagen fremgaar klart af Jesu ord til Peter: „Simon, Sonas's søn, elsker du mig? Røgt mine lam.“ Joh. 21, 15. Det er den kjærlighed, som troen virker, der maa kalde dig til gerningen, det er den samme kjærlighed, som maa være drivhjælen i alt dit arbejde i gerningen. Kan du ikke med Paulus og hans tro medarbeidere sige om det, som du gjør i denne gerning, at det er Kristi kjærlighed, som tvinger dig dertil, saa har du intet kald til at være blandt dem, som har det ansvarsfulde hverv, at være opsynsmand for Guds menighed. Du kan mene, at du har særegne naturlige gaver, som kræver, at du skal træde ind i gerningen. Men hvad disse gaver end maatte være, hvor værdifulde de ogsaa kan bli, naar de er viet Kristi kjærlighed, saa er de uden kjærligheden, intetsigende og værdiløse. Thi her gjælder ogsaa det ord af apostelen: „Om jeg taler med menneskers og engles tungemaal, men ikke har kjærlighed, da er jeg en lydende malm eller en klingende bjælde. Og om jeg har profetisk gave og ved alle hemmeligheder og al kundskab, og om jeg har al tro, saa jeg kunde flytte bjerge, men ikke har kjærlighed, da er jeg intet.“ 1 Kor. 13, 1. 2.

Naar Herren har givet os forligelsens tjeneste, saa har han oprettet den alene paa grundlag af forligelsens ord. Det er ordet, du maa holde dig til, det er dets kraft og virkning du maa stole paa. Dersom du skal kaldes til hyrdeembedet. „Om nogen elsker mig skal han holde mit ord,“ siger Jesus. Joh. 14, 23. Men at holde

hans ord er ikke ensbetydende med, at du aldrig har overtraadt Guds bud. Thi da vilde det jo ikke kunne siges om noget menneſke, at det elſket Jeſus. Da vilde jo Peter ha været en løgner, naar han ſvarte: „Ja, Herre! Du ved, at jeg elſker dig.“ Joh. 21, 15. Nei, at holde Jeſu ord, (ſom vi ogsaa lærer af udtrykket i den græſke grundtektſt — *Terco*) vil ſige at vi tager vare paa, holder os til, hans ord. Selv budet reffer os, ja dømmer os paa grund af vor ſynd, ſelv da holder vi os til det; thi ſaaſandt vi vil frelſes fra vor ſynd, blir det os altid en tugtemeſter til Kriſtus.

Men viſtig Hjerlighed er ikke alt ſom kræves af den, ſom kaldes til gjerningen. Der er uden tvil mangen en, ſom gjerne har villet følge Jeſus ſom hans ords offentlige forkynder, men ſom har ſaat høre det ſamme ord, ſom blev talt til den helbrede i Gadarenernes land: „Gaf hen i dit hus til dine og forkynd dem, hvor ſtore ting Herren har gjort mod dig, og hvorledes han har forbarmet ſig over dig.“ Marfus 5, 19.

Om kaldet lærer vor Augſburgiſke Konfeſſion, Art. XIV., fort og æreit: „Om den kirfelige embedsſtand lærer de, at ingen bør i kirken offentlig lære eller forvalte ſakramenterne, medmindre han dertil er rettelig kaldet.“ Dette tager naturligvis ſigte baade paa det indre kald, hvorefter vi nu taler, ſaaavelſom paa det ydre kald, om hvilket vi ſkal høre ſenere.

Af alt det, ſom Luther har at ſige om kaldet, ſkal jeg her kun anføre det han ſkriver i henhold til II Moſebog, kapitel 3 hvor Herren aabenbarer ſig for Moſes i tornebuſken: „Behold vel,“ ſiger Luther, „dette om Moſes's kald; thi ingen bør trænge ſig ind i et offentlig embede uden Guds kald. Dette ſkal du vide for diſſe nye vægeſſinde aanders (Flattergeiſter) ſkyld, der vil trænge og ſnuige ſig ind, endſkjønt Gud har, hverken kaldt eller ſendt dem; ſom vil være prædikanter og lære folk, uden opfordring og kald. I ſin aand havde Moſes for længe ſiden ønsket at befrie ſine brødre fra Egyptens trællehuſ, til hvilket han havde, ſom vi allerede har ſeet, baade aand og mod, da han ſlog egypteren ihjel. Som vilde han ſige: 'Jeg tænkte at jeg ſkulde hjælpe eder.' — Nu vil han ikke vaaſtage ſig at føre dem ud af Egypten. Gud maa 'førſt kalde ham og ſende ham til Iſraels børn.

„Thi det er ikke nok at man roſer ſig af aanden, og heller ikke vil Gud, at vi ſkal tro dem, ſom giver ſig fore og ſiger: 'Du maa tro min aand.' Og ligedan de, ſom ſiger: 'Det er aanden ſom driver mig det er aanden ſom taler' Ellers vilde vi jo alle være i en dyng, og ingen vilde høre den anden rigtig.

„Men hver Gud kalder og uddriver til prædikeembedet, der lyſſes gjerningen og trænger ſig igjennem. Ligeſom Gud her ud-førte et ſtort verk, over hvilket Moſes fortvilede, at han ſkulde føre et ſaa ſtort folk ud af et ſaa mægtigt kongerige, og ſagde: 'Gvad er jeg mod en ſaadan konge? Jeg er ſandelig en vaſſer figur.'

Men det gjorde ingenting til sagen. „Moses,“ sagde Gud, „vær kjæk og ved godt mod, jeg vil forhærde Farao, saa at han skal indespærre sig selv; men jeg vil gøre endnu større undere ved dig, saa at du skal være forvisset om, at det er jeg, som har kaldt dig til gjerningen.“

„Thi den som skal begynde det nye, han maa ikke bringe denne berømmelse med sig: 'Manden har givet mig det i hjerte.' Bringer man dette hobmod og denne ros med sig, saa er man snart slagen. Derfor skal man først gjøre og sige: 'Derfor den Selligaand vil bruge mig til et embede (det være nu, hvad det være vil), og vil Gud, at jeg skal tage fat, og jeg har det i sinde, saa vil han nok give, at de paafølgende tegn ved min senden og indførelse stadfæstes ved himmelske tegn.'

„Thi det er afgjort, at Manden ikke opblæser eller tilskynder noget hjerte uden, at han paa forhaand har bekræftet det med tegn. Det maa have ydre bevis med sig. Det er det indre kald.“ Hvad Luther mener med „himmelske tegn“ og „ydre beviser,“ naar han her taler om det indre kald, skal vi søge at udrede senere, naar vi gaar over til betragtningen af det ydre kald.

I sin „Sjælestat,“ I bind, side 155, siger Christian Scriver om det indre kald: „En retsindig prest, der vil tænke at stifte gavn i sit embede, maa være kaldet og sendt af Gud; han maa gaa ind til saarene gennem den rette og eneste dør, Jesus Kristus, og paa tage sig dette højhelige embede af den Selligaands drit. Vel maa han ogsaa have et retmæssigt og ulasteligt kald af menneiser; men ikke destomindre spørger man med rette og først og fremst efter det indvortes kald af Gud. Ingen menighed og ingen, der i saa maade forestaar en menighed bør kalde nogen til sjælehyrde medmindre de spore det guddommelige indvortes kald hos ham. Der bliver mangen kaldt til det hellige prædikeembede, som var bedre istykket til at være soldat, kjsbmand, jurist, eller statsmand. Disse gjør derfor heller ingen synderlig nytte i en saadan høivigtig syssel. bliver ofte skampletter og værfebylder paa kirken og volde forargelse og hjertesorg. De søge penge og gode dage og lade tingene gaa sin skæve gang. Ved et indvortes kald forstaar jeg en levende og virksom tro paa den Herre Jesus Kristus, en brændende kjærlighed til ham, en gudelig nidkjærhed for hans navns ære, en inderlig attraa efter at udberde hans rige, en rastløs og utrættelig flid forat vinde sjæle, saavel som allehaande andre den Selligaands gaver, saasom visdom og indsigt i de guddommelige hemmeligheder, ret forstand paa ordet, et levende kjendskab til den Herre Jesus, frimodighed i Manden, kraft, styrke, andagt, bøn, erfaring og deslige. Dette indvortes kald, der sfter ved Guds aand og naade, maa gaa forud for alt udvortes og mennefeligt valg, kald og stadfæstelse.“

O, hvor gauffe nødvendig det er for en Herrens tjener at have visdom om, at hans kald er af Herren. Thi har han den visshed, da

kan han gaa til sin gjerning med den største frimodighed. Om sin ordinationsdag og tiltrædelsesprædiken skriver salig afdøde dr. Walthers: „Nigelig styrket ved det forudgangne (i. e. hans vel overstaade prøve og hans kald til gjerningen), prædikede jeg nu over Jeremias 1, 6—8. Denne tekst lyder saaledes: 'Men jeg sagde: Al, Herre, Herre! Se, jeg fortaar ikke at tale; thi jeg er ung. Da sagde Herren til mig: Sig ikke: Jeg er ung! Men til alle dem, jeg sender dig til, skal du gaa, og alt, hvad jeg byder dig, skal du tale. Frygt ikke for dem, thi jeg er med dig for at redde dig, siger Herren.'

„Efterat jeg i min indledning havde paavist, hvorledes min overbeviselse af kaldets vigtighed, gjerningens vanskelighed, og hvorledes jeg ligeoverfor det store ansvar, der med en levende følelse af min almægt og uængtighed idag især vilde gjøre mig forsagt, saa behandlede jeg, forat min fremtidige menighed skulde faa et blif ind i mit hjerte, paa grundlag af oplæste tekst følgende thema:

'Hvad det er ved en kristen prædikants tiltrædelse af gjerningen, som giver ham trøst og glæde.'

1. Han kommer ikke ifølge eget valg, men paa Guds kald.
2. Han kommer ikke med sin egen visdom, men med Guds ord.
3. Han kommer ikke i egen kraft, men med Guds bistand."

Har jeg visshed i denne sag, da kan jeg, naar det ofte gaar tungt under arbeidet, og naar det maasse synes at al min gjerning er omsonst, gjøre Elias's ord til mine og sige: „Dg jeg, jeg sagde: Morgjæves har jeg arbeidet mig træt, og til ingen nytte har jeg foræret min kraft; dog, min ret er hos Herren, og min løn hos min Gud. — Dg jeg er æret i Herrens øine, og min Gud er bleven min styrke.“ Ef. 49, 4. 5. Ja, med den unge Jeremias kan jeg da sige: „Herre! Du overtalte mig, og jeg lod mig overtale; du blev mig for stærk og fik overhaand.“ Jer. 20, 7. Dette være da nok om det indre kald.

* * *

Det indre kald har visseelig enhver alvorlig kristen af det mandlige kjønn i mere eller mindre grad fornummet i sit hjerte. Han har maasse ofte maattet lytte til en vaagen samvittighed, som har hvilstet: „Mon ikke Herren vil, at du ogsaa skulde tjene ham som en ordets offentlige forkynder?" Da er det ham til beroligelse og trøst at vide, at der maa ogsaa et ydre kald til, som Herren visseelig vil sørge for, at han faar, dersom han vil have ham i gjerningen. Thi Herren har ikke kaldt alle til at være hyrder. Skulde alle være hyrder, hvo blev da faarene?

Der er jo de, selv indenfor den lutherske kirke, som beraaber sig paa ret, ja hellig pligt, til at optræde, som ordets offentlige forkynder i menigheden uden det ydre kald dertil. De gjør brug af saadanne bibelsteder som disse: „Gid alt Herrens folk var profeter, gid Herren vilde lægge sin aand paa dem.“ 4 Mosebog, 11.

29. (Moses's svar da Josva vilde, at han skulde forbyde Eldad og Medad at profetere i leiren.) Og dette ord af apostelen Peter: „Men I ere en udvalgt slægt, et kongeligt presteskab, et helligt folk, et folk til eiendom, forat I skulde forkynde hans dyder som kaldte eder fra mørket til sit underfulde lys.“ 1 Pet. 2, 9.

Men medens alle kristne tilhører det kongelige presteskab; medens Herren visseelig vil at alle troende skal forkynde hans dyder, saa er ikke dermed sagt, at han vil de skal optræde som offentlige forkyndere af ordet. Forkyndelsens art er jo forskjellig. Den har ogsaa sin begrænsning. Derfor Sønnen i villig lydighed kunde sige: „Seg er ikke udsendt, uden til de fortabte saar af Israels hus,“ Matt. 15, 24, hvor meget mere skulde ikke vi, som er Guds børn kun i Kristo, villigt holde os indenfor de grænser, som Herren selv har bestemt. Har Gud sagt: „Ic eders kvinder i menighederne! Thi det er dem ikke tilladt at tale, men at være underdanige, ligesom og loben siger. Men ville de lære noget, da spørge de sine egne mænd hjemme! Thi det er usømmeligt for kvinder at tale i menigheden“ (1 Kor. 154, 34. 35), saa vil enhver sand kristen føle sig derefter, selv om han var forvissat om, at hver eneste kvinde i menigheden var et uforligneligt mønster paa belysning. Man gavner aldrig Guds menighed ved at besøge andre regler end de, Herren i sit ord har selv bestemt, enten vi altid kan fatte reglens nødvendighed eller ei.

Og nu har Herren sagt: „Men I ere Kristi legeme og lemmer, enhver for sin del. Og Gud har sat nogle i menigheden, først apostler, for det andet profeter, for det tredje lærere, dernæst kraftige gerninger, derefter naadegaver til at helbrede, til at hjælpe, til at styre, til mangehaande talen med tunger. Ere alle apostler? Ere alle profeter? Ere alle lærere? Gjør alle kraftige gerninger? Gave alle naadegaver til at helbrede? Tale alle med tunger? Ud-lægge alle?“ (1 Kor. 12, 27—30). Til hvilket der svares i Efeserbrevet 4, 11—16: „Og han satte nogle til apostler, nogle til profeter, nogle til evangelister, nogle til lærere, til de helliges fuldkomne beredelse, til tjenestens gerning, til Kristi legemes opbyggelse, indtil vi alle naa til enhed i Guds søns tro og erkendelse, til mands modenhed, til Kristi fyldest alders maal, forat vi ikke mere skulle være børn og lade os omtumle og omdrive af ethvert lærdoms veir ved menneskenes spil, ved tredighed til forførelsens kunstgreb, men, sandheden tro i kjærlighed, i alle maader opvokse til ham, som er hovedet, til Kristus, af hvem det hele legeme bliver sammensøjet og forenet ved al den forbindelse, indbyrdes hjælp giver i forhold til ethvert lems tilmaalte virksomhed, og vokser legemets vækst til sin opbyggelse i kjærlighed.“

Det er altsaa klart, at medens alle kristne er vidner for Kristus, hører til det kongelige presteskab, saa har han forordnet en forligelses tjeneste, hvis sendebud skal gaa ud i verden med den opfordring:

„Lader eder forlige med Gud!“ Men nu blir spørgsmaalet: „Hvorledes udvælges disse sendebud i den synlige menighed?“ Dette leder os til betragtningen af

Det ydre kald.

Under den gamle pagts husholdning kaldte Gud som oftest sine tjenere umiddelbart. Han talte til Moses udaf tornebusken; om Abraham heder det at Herrens ord kom til ham i et syn; om Isak siges det, at Herren aabenbarede sig for ham; om Jakob læser vi, at Herren viste sig for ham i en drøm hin nat ved Betel osv. Apostlerne fik jo af Herren selv befaling til at gaa ud i al verden for at gjøre alle folk til disciple. Paulus fik den Korsfæstede at se ved høilys dag paa veien til Damaskus.

Men paa denne umiddelbare maade kalder ikke Gud tjenere til arbeidet mere. Naar der saa spørges: „Hvorfor kunde ikke Gud ogsaa nuomstunder handle med os paa samme maade?“ svarer vi med Paulus: „Men, o menneske, hvo er du, at du vil gaa irette med Gud? Mon noget, som er dannet, kan sige til den, som dannede det: Hvi gjorde du mig saaledes?“ Rom. 9, 20. Ligesom Gud ikke raadførte sig med nogen skabning, da han besluttede, at rense sig selv et eiendomsfolk, saa har han heller ikke adspurgte skabningen om, hvorledes han skulde regjere dette sit folk. Nok er det for os at vide, at Gud har bygget sin menighed paa klippen, som er Kristus, har overantvordet den naademidlerne, hvori er lagt al magt og myndighed. „Derfor siger Skriften: Han opfor til det høie, bortførte fanger og gav menneskene gaver.“ Ef. 4, 8.

Men, naar vi, paa samme tid, som vi siger, at det er Gud, som har ret til at kalde, ogsaa lærer at menigheden er af ham given den ret under den nye pagts husholdning, saa maa vi for det første bevidne det af Skriften. Har vi noget sted i Skriften, som klart viser os, at vor maade at kalde gennem stedsmenigheden er den rette maade? Ja.

I det 1ste kapitel af Ap. gj. lærer vi, at da en apostel skulde vælges i forræderens sted, tog ikke Peter eller nogen af de øvrige apostle sig selv den ret at udpege ham. Thi det heder: „Og i de dage stod Peter op midt iblandt disciplene, men der var en skare af henved hundrede og tyne personer sammen, og han sagde: I mænd, brødre! Det burde de Skriftens ord at fuldkommes, som den Helligaand forud talte ved Davids mund, om Judas, som blev deres veileder, der grebe Jesus. Thi han var regnet med os og havde annammet denne tjenestes lod. — Derfor bør en af disse mænd, som have været med os hele den tid, den Herre Jesus gif ind og gif ud hos os, lige fra Johannes's daab af indtil den dag, da han blev optagen fra os, blive et vidne med os om hans opstandelse. Og de fremstillede tvende, Josef, som kaldtes Barsabas, med tilnavn Justus, og Mattias. Og de bade og sagde: Du, Herre, som fjender alles hjerter! Giv tilkjende, hvem af disse to du har ud-

valgt til at annamme denne tjenestes og apostelembedets lod, hvorfra Judas veg for at gaa hen til sit eget sted! Og de fastede lod mellem dem, og lodden faldt paa Mattias, og han blev enstemmig optagen blandt de elleve apostler."

I det 6te kapitel af Ap. gj. berettes det os, hvorledes diaconer, eller medhjælpere, blev kaldt til gjerningen. „Men de tolv kaldte disciplenes hele mængde sammen og sagde: „Det sømmer sig ikke, at vi forlade Guds ord for at tjene ved bordene. Udsørg derfor, brødre, syv mænd blandt eder, som have godt vidnesbyrd og ere fulde af den Helligaand og visdom, hvilke vi kunne beskikke til denne forretning! Men vi ville blive varagtige i bønnen og ordets tjeneste. Og denne tale fandt bifald hos den hele mængde, og de udvalgte Stefanus, en mand, fuld af tro og den Helligaand, og Filip og Prochorus og Nifanor og Timon og Parmenas, og Nikolaus, en tilhænger af jødernes tro fra Antiochia; dem fremskillede de for apostlerne, og disse bade og lagde sine hænder paa dem."

Naar det heder i Ap. gj. 14, 23, om Paulus og Varnabas, efterat de havde beskiftet dem ældste i hver menighed og holdt bøn og faste, anbefalede de dem til Herren, saa er det ikke sig at forstaa, at det var disse to apostle, som tiltog sig den ret og ære at udpege ældste (*Presbyteros*); thi det ord „beskikke" i grundtesten heder saa meget som *Keirotonesantes*, i. e. „at give sin stemme tilkjende ved at røffe op sine hænder." Deres beskikken var altsaa gennem menighedens afstemning. Som bevis for dette behøver vi blot at pege paa samme ord i II Kor. 8, 19, hvor det heder at menighederne beskiftede en til at reise med Titus. I det 15de kapitel af Ap. gj. heder det: „Da besluttede apostlerne og de ældste med hele menigheden at udvalge nogle mænd iblandt sig og sende dem til Antiochia med Paulus og Varnabas, nemlig Judas, med tilnavn Varnabas, og Silas, som vare anseede blandt brødrene."

I alle af disse tilfælder som er nævnt, ser vi, at der var visse betingelser, som maatte findes hos dem, som valgtes til tjenesten. I det 1ste kapitel heder det, at de var øienvidner, der havde været med Jesus og apostlerne fra Johannes's daab til Kristi himmelfart. I det 6te kapitel læser vi, at de syv medhjælpere havde godt vidnesbyrd og vare fulde af den Helligaand og visdom. I det 15de kapitel af Ap. gj. fortælles det os, at Judas og Silas vare anseede blandt brødrene. Derfor maa menigheder rette sig efter de regler i denne sag, som ordet selvi anviser. Og medens der er flere steder i Skriften, som taler om disse tjenestens betingelser, saa skal jeg kun anføre her det 3die kapitel af I Tim. — Læs I Tim. 3, 1—13.

Naar Luther i den allerede anførte udtalelse angaaende tjenerens visshed om, at det er et Guds kald, han har til gjerningen, siger, at han maa ha „himmelske tegn," og at det maa have ydre bevis med sig," saa vil han dermed have sagt, at du maa ifølge Guds ords bestemmelse først være skiftet til gjerningen. Ikke alle har de ga-

ver, som menigheden har ret til at kræve hos en ordets tjener. Men nu blir spørgsmaalet: „Hvad forstaaes med det ord menighed?“ Dette fører os over til betragtningen af

Stedsmenigheden.

I sit skrift fra aaret 1523, *Dasz eine christliche Versammlung oder Gemeinde Recht und Macht habe, alle Lehre zu urtheilen und Lehrer zu berufen, ein — und abzusetzen: Grund und Ursache aus der Schrift,*“ siger Luther: „For det første er det nødvendig at man ved, hvor og hvad den kristelige menighed er. — Derpaa skal den kristelige menighed visseelig kjendes, hvor det klare evangelium prædikes. — Derfor er vi sikker paa, at det er umuligt, at der ikke skulde være kristne, hvor evangeliet gaar, hvor saa de end altid er og, hvor syndige og skæbelige de ogsaa er; ligesom det er umuligt at der skulde findes kristne og ikke bare hedninger der, hvor evangeliet ikke har sin gang, men hvor menneskelære raader, hvor mange de end er, og hvor hellig og fin end deres vandel er.

„For det andet, i saadan forretning, nemlig at bedømme læren, at indsætte og afsætte lærere og sjælsørgere, maa man aldeles ikke bry sig om menneskebud, ret, de gamles anordninger, skik og brug, om det saa end var pape eller keiser, fyrster eller biskoper, som havde bestemt det, om saa halvdelen eller den hele verden havde søiet sig derefter, om det saa havde bestaaet et eller tusinder af aar. Thi menneskesjælen er en evig ting, ophøiet over alt timeligt; derfor maa den ogsaa regjeres og gribes af det evige ord. Thi det er skamfuld, hvorledes man hersker over samvittighederne med menneskebud og gamle vedtægter. Derfor bør man i disse ting handle ifølge Skriften og Guds ord. Thi det kan aldrig slaa feil, at hvor baade menneskelære og Guds ord vil regjere over sjælen; vil de stride mod hinanden.“

Paa grundlag af saadanne skriftsteder som disse: „Mine faar kjende min røst,“ Joh. 10, 4; „men vogter eder for de falske prædiker,“ Matt. 7, 15; „Prøver alt, beholdt det gode,“ 1 Thess. 5, 21; „Ser til, at ingen forsøger eder,“ Matt. 24, 4, siger Luther i samme skrift træffende: „Ser ser du klart, hvis ret det er at bedømme læren. Biskoper, paven, de lærde, ja enhver har magt til at lære: men det er faarene, som skal dømme enten det er Kristi eller en fremmeds røst. Hjære dig, hvad kan disse vandblærer indvende herimod, disse som skrige: 'Koncilier, koncilier; man maa lytte til de lærde, biskopperne, mængden; man maa ha respekt for gammel skik og brug.' Tror du, at jeg vil lade Guds ord vige for gammel vedtægt, skikke, biskoper? Aldrig i evighed. Derfor lader vi biskopperne og koncilierne beslutte og bestemme, hvad de vil; men, hvor vi har Guds ord for os, skal vi holde os til det og ikke til dem, naar der skal bestemmes, hvad som er ret og uret, og de skal maatte vige for os og være ordet hørig.“

I vor Augsburgske Konfession, kapitel VIII, lærer vi: „Hvor-

vel kirken egentlig er de helliges og i sandhed troendes forsamling, er det dog, efter som i dette liv mange hyllere og onde er i samme indblandede, tilladt at bruge sakramenterne, om de end forvaltes af onde, efter Kristi ord: 'Paa Moses's stol sidder de skriftlærde og fariseerne' osv. (Matt. 23, 2). Og sakramenterne og ordet er paa grund af Kristi indstiftelse og befaling kraftige, om de ogsaa meddeles ved onde."

Og i De Schmalkaldiske Artikler, „Om Biskoppernes Magt og Myndighed," lærer vi: „Men efterdi der nu efter guddommelig ret ikke er nogen forskjel mellem biskoper og pastorer eller præster, saa er det hævet over al tvil, at naar en prest i sin menighed indvier duelige personer til kirkeembeder, da er denne indvielse kraftig og rigtig ifølge guddommelig ret. Naar derfor de beskiftede biskoper forfølger evangeliet og vægrer sig, for at indvie duelige folk, saa har i dette tilfælde enhver menighed al ret og føie til selv at indvie sig sine kirketjenere. Thi hvor kirken er, der er ogsaa befaling til at prædike evangeliet. Derfor maa menighederne beholde magten til at kalde, vælge og indvie kirketjenere."

Dersom de, der lærer, at det kun er de, som har den levende tro paa Kristus, som udgjør menigheden havde ret, saa vilde man jo ikke kunne handle med menigheden uden, at man først var en hjertefjender. Da vilde man aldrig kunne være forvisset om, at ens kald var et ret kald, medmindre en først havde forvisning om, at de, der udstedte kaldet, var en forsamling af idel hellige. Derfor siger Luther med rette i henhold til Gal. 1, 2, hvor Paulus adresserer sit brev til **menighederne**: „Her maa vi lægge merke til, at de fremdeles kaldes menigheder, tiltrøds for at de paa grund af falsk lære stod i fare for sin tro. Men saalænge de har ordet og daaden, kaldes de menigheder."

Det er den enkelte menighed, som har magt og myndighed til at kalde, ordinere, og indsette ordets tjenere, ingen har den ret uafhængig af stedsmenigheden. Menigheden er altsaa højeste autoritet. Og dette guddommelige princip maa vi nøie holde fast ved, dersom vi vil beholde Kristi kirke iblandt os. Det er jo saa let for os mennesker at mene om denne eller hin høi geistlig, at han uafhængig af menigheden har en slags særegen ret, magt og myndighed, en **Character Indelebilis**. Der er altfor mange Lutheranere, som er mere eller mindre katolske i saa maade. Men nu er der ingen biskoppelig magt eller myndighed hos noget menneske, som ikke er givet ham gennem menigheden. Jeg er ikke prest, fordi jeg har studert saa mange sprog i saa mange aar; har faat godt vidnesbyrd af professorer og lærere, der siger, at jeg er skikket til gjerningen. Det, som alene har givet mig ret til at forkynde ordet offentlig samt forvalte sakramenterne i menigheden, er Guds kald til mig gennem stedsmenigheden. Gvilken som helst kristen menighed har magt og

ret til at udvælge og indsette til hyrdeembedet i dens midte saadanne, som ifølge Guds ord er skiftet til gjerningen.

Man kan jo tænke sig til ekstraordinære tilfælde, hvor der ingen menighed er til at kalde, men hvor man alligevel vilde have en hellig pligt til at forkynde evangeliet. Sedningemissionen er jo af en saadan beskaffenhed, iallesald til at begynde med. Derfor lærer Luther: „Man behøver ikke at vente paa kald, hvor der ikke er kristne, men hedninger.“ Og atter siger han: „Naar en kristen befinder sig paa et sted, hvor der ikke er andre kristne, behøver han ikke noget andet kald til at lære og prædike end, at han er en kristen.“

Et gylbigt kald er derfor et saadant, som udstedes af dem, der ifølge Guds ord har ret og magt til at kalde, det bære nu menigheden selv eller saadanne, som en kristen menighed har givet fuldmagt til at kalde i dens sted. Et retmæssigt kald er et saadant, som en, der af Gud har faat det indre kald, tilstedes af den synlige menighed, uden at han paa nogen maade har brugt ulovlige midler for at komme ind i tjenesten. Dersom en kristen menighed, ifølge de regler, som Herren selv har bestemt, skal bruges, naar en hyrde skal prøves, har kaldt mig til præst og sjælesørger, da kan jeg gaa til mit virke med ligesaa stor frimodighed, som om Gud selv havde talt til mig umiddelbart; thi det er jo Herren selv, som siger om sin menighed: „Gjør to eller tre et forsamlet i mit navn, der er jeg midt iblandt dem.“ Matt. 18, 20.

O, hvilken trøst det er under alle omstændigheder for en Herrens tjener at vide, at han af Guds egen menighed er blit kaldt til sit virke, han har ikke selv tilkænet sig embedet. Men paa den anden side, hvilket samvittighedsnag for enhver, der paa nogen maade har trængt sig ind i menigheden uden det rette kald. Han staar der som en dødsdømt, naar det gjælder virkelig at slaa et slag for den Herre Gebaot. Alt han har i udsigt, saafremt han ikke angreder sin synd og søger naade, er en forræders endeligt og en leiesvends løn. „Jeg havde aldrig prædikaet i Wittenberg,“ siger Luther, „dersom Gud ikke havde tvunget mig, og gjennem kurfyrsten af Saksen havde opfordret mig til, at jeg maatte gjøre det.“ Det er nu hans trøst, naar folket kræver af ham det, som han ikke kan gjøre, at han gjør, hvad han kan. Det er Gud som gjennem dem har kaldt ham til arbeidet, og han vil visse ikke lade ham fristes over evne. I henhold til Moses's undskyldning, at han var tung af mæle og tung i tale, at han var ingen ordets mand, siger atter Luther: „Dersom Gud var saa flog, som vi er, saa havde han begyndt alle ting paa en bedre maade, end han gjorde. Thi her tager han jo til dette store, høje arbejde en, som ikke kan tale videre, som Moses selv betjender; dog siger Gud til ham: 'Gaf hen og udret det vel.' Der jo vilde lyde som, om jeg skulde sige til en blind, at han skulde se vel, til en lam, at han skulde gaa godt, til en stum, at han skulde tale godt. Kunde da ikke Gud finde nogen anden, som han kunde

bruge til dette arbejde? Men det er skrevet, forat vi skal lære, hvorledes Gud er findet. Det som gjælder for noget i verden, det agter han for intet; han forkaster og forstøder, hvad andre river til sig; hvad andre elsker og ophøier, det kaster han væk; og hvad djævelen ikke bryr sig om, det antager han sig."

Men nu blir spørgsmaalet: „Naar ophører et retmæssigt og gylldigt kald?" Til dette vil vi svare at

Præstens kald er et livskald.

Der er desværre altfor mange, som anser præstegjerningen som en hvilkenfomhelst anden forretning. De fratræder gerningen og gaar ind i andre bestillinger ligesaa let, som de vilde borthandle en heft eller sælge sin farm. At dette maa lede til forargelse og forvirring i Herrens menighed, kan enhver Kristen forstaa. Ligesaa sandt som det er, at Herren alene kan kalde dig til gerningen, ligesaa sandt er det, at det er han alene, som kan løse dig fra kaldet. Er en virkelig kaldt af Herren til gerningen, saa vil man ikke saa snart forgabe sig i det, som verden maaffe flatter og beundrer, men som alligevel er lidet eller intetsigende mod denne høieste af alle bestillinger, at være et sendebud i Kristi sted. Det er sørgeligt at se kirkesamfund, som lader sine præster jage efter politiske poster, uden paa nogen maade at tale dem tilrette, men hellere vise dem en særffilt ære for deres færd. Det kan nok hændes, at samfundet ved at smigre saadanne kan for en kort tid nyde verdens velvilje og gunst, men det er neppe til Guds menigheds sande vel. Nei, det bør en Herrens tjener ikke bare at være sit personlige kald bevidst, men at **han ogsaa** er kaldets høiellige betydning bevidst. Har man da laaet sin haand paa ploegen for alvor, vil man ikke saa let fristes til at se tilbage til det, en engang høster paa verdens ager. En vil da kunne sige med hedningernes apostel: „Men hvad der var mig en vinding, det har jeg for Kristi skyld agtet for tab. Ja, jeg agter ogsaa i sandhed alt for tab mod hypperligheden af kundskaben om Kristus Jesus, min Herre, for hvis skyld jeg har lidt tab paa alt og agter det skært at være, forat jeg kan vinde Kristus." Fil. 3, 7—8.

Har jeg antat et kald, som Herren har udstedt til mig gennem en Kristen menighed, saa skal jeg gaa til min gerning der med denne tanke: „Dette er mit virkefelt saa længe Herren ffjenfer mig naade til at arbejde i hans vingård. Vil han gjøre brug af mig paa noget andet sted, saa vil han nok sørge for, at dette blir mig klart tilkjendegit uden nogenfomhelst mine egne anslag." Han skal ikke straks begynde at ønske sig paa et andet sted eller søge et andet kald, naar han maaffe møder modstand og ubvilje, eller fordi han maaffe ikke har saa stor menighed, som han skulde ønske, eller fordi han derved maaffe kunde forbedre sine timelige faar. Herren har lovet, at han skal sørge for ham paa alle hans veie. Og da gjælder det at kaste al sin sorg paa ham. Tror jeg Guds ord, saa vil jeg ogsaa tage disse Davids ord til hjerte: „Jeg har været ung og er bleven gammel,

men ikke har jeg seet den retfærdige forladt eller hans afløst søge efter brød." Hvad bedre kald angaar, saa er det altid bedst at overlade den sag til ham, for hvem en eneste sjæl er af højere værd end hele verden. Og hvad modstand og uvilje angaar saa er det jo netop det, som min Frelser har spaaet, skal bli mig tildel, om jeg er hans efterfølger. Det er bestyrkende, at saa høre en Luthers udtalelser om denne ting, han, som levet, saa at sige sit hele liv under fors og forfølgelse. „Maatte Gud bevare os," siger Luther, „fra saadanne prædikanter, som gjør alle tillags." Paa et andet sted siger han: „Det staaar ikke vel til med en prædikant, naar han har fred og ikke lastes af nogen; thi det er et bevis paa, at han ikke har den rette lære." Endnu paa et andet sted siger han: „Den der lærer saaledes, at han ikke faar fiender, og ikke har hevnjærrige, som følger ham, han er ikke en hel og retskaffen prædiker af Guds ord." Atter siger han: „Det er ikke nok, at en prædikant er vis i sin lære og udfører sit kald med trofast. Han maa gaa djævelen imøde, maa kunne modbevise løgn og falsk lære." Og endelig: „Enhver kristen, men især en prædikant, maa være stivnakket, naar det gjælder Guds ord og ære; da skal han staa som en mur og ikke bige et haarsbred."

Men tilslut bør vi ogsaa saa rede paa

Hvem der har ret til at affætte.

Har Herren oberantbordet menigheden ret til at kalde, saa har han naturligvis ogsaa givet den den tilsvarende ret til at affætte. Men, under hvilke omstændigheder har en menighed ret til at affætte sin prest og sjælesørger? Det er med denne stillsmisse ofte omtrent, som det er med en stillsmisse i det ægtestabelige liv. Man vil gjerne blive mand eller hustru kvit, fordi man har faat hug paa en anden. Verden kalder det „incompatibility," men Gud kalder det ret og slet „hor". Og visse vil mangel en menighed paa opgjorets dag maatte gjøre regnskab for den synd, at den har handlet troløst med den hørde Herren havde tiltænkt den.

Ingen menighed har ret til at affætte sin prest, fordi han er blit gammel og ikke længere har ungdommens kraft og iver: ingen menighed har ret til at affætte sin prest, fordi han ei kan prale, som andre i verdens øine, eller fordi han maafe ikke er saa velkalkende som en Apollos; ingen menighed har ret til at affætte sin prest, fordi den mener at en anden kunde gjøre det saa meget bedre osv. Nei, det, som alene, ifølge Guds ord giver menigheden ret til at affætte sin prest og sjælesørger, er disse to grunde: 1. At han fører falsk lære. 2. At han lever et ugudeligt liv. Og selv der, hvor presten er blit skyldig i en eller begge af disse synder, har ikke menigheden ret til med det samme, at bryde overtvers med ham. Han maa først paa kristen vis tales tilrette og gives anledning til at angre sin synd. Dersom han da ikke vil erkjende sig skyldig, men halsstarrig fortsætter i sin vildfarelse, da har den kristne menighed intet andet valg, end at støde ham ud af sin midte. Thi menigheden har ikke

ret til at gaa paa afford i det mindste der, hvor Herren har talt sit afgjørende „nei.“ At han er suid, elskværdig, lærd, veltalende; ja, sidder inde med al verdens dyder har her intet at sige. Thi Paulus siger: „Men selv om vi eller en engel fra himmelen prædiker et andet evangelium for eder end det, vi have prædikeret for eder, han være forbandet.“ Og Kristus siger selv om dem, som ikke vil høre menigheden, naar de blir tilrettevist paa grund af sin synd, at de skal være for os som en hedning og en tolder. Matt. 18, 17.

Da dette ikke er ment, som et udførlig referat over alt, som burde og kunde behandles under dette thema, men er ment hellere kun som en indledning til en videre diskussion i sagen, saa vil jeg her slutte med det ønske og den bøn, som var saa at sige salig afbøde dr. Walthers sidste ord til vor kjære lutheriske kirke: „Gud bevare iblandt os et fromt presteskab.“ Amen.

Norman M. Madison.

Unionism

INTRODUCTORY PAPER

(HOLDEN M. OLSON)

One of the terms frequently used by conservative Lutherans is the term UNIONISM. The term itself is of comparatively recent origin, as it seems to have been first employed in the year 1817, when it was applied to that movement in Prussia which resulted in the union by imperial decree of the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches. But the principle for which the term stands is much older; it dates back to early Old Testament times and is, in fact, almost as old as the true worship of Jehovah.

The term Unionism played an important role in the recent discussions between the so-called Minority and Majority parties in the former Norwegian Synod, prior to the union of that body with the former United Norwegian Lutheran Church and the former Hauge Lutheran Synod in 1917. The merger of these church bodies was stigmatized as Unionism by the Minority members of the Norwegian Synod, who refused, on that account, to join the new Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, but chose, on the contrary, to continue their allegiance to the confession, principles and church polity of the venerable Norwegian Synod.

To most people the term Unionism has long since ceased to be a term of reproach. It is, on the contrary, almost everywhere regarded as a synonym of Christian wisdom, tolerance, charity and zeal. "All professing Christians are brothers, united in one spirit and one hope, and marching toward one goal. Down with all sectarian barriers and denominational boundaries! One church, or one creed, is as good as another; in fact, all creeds and deno-

minations might as well be utterly disregarded as relics of a bigoted past. The important thing, after all, is 'Christian' or 'godly' life. That makes us one, no matter by what church name we happen to be called. Let us therefore unite and gather around the same altar to worship the same God and Father of us all!" This is the slogan of our age. Unionism is in the air. It is hailed as the sovereign remedy for all our religious ills; the potent means of bringing together the scattered forces of Christianity, combining their material and spiritual resources, and sending them forth a united, irresistible army for the moral and spiritual conquest of the benighted world at home and in foreign lands.

This sounds very plausible. It makes a strong appeal to our carnal reason. Are we not, after all, misguided in our opposition to Unionism? Do we not deserve to be called narrow-minded, censorious, uncharitable, and Pharisaical? Is there not a great deal of truth in the charge that we are undermining instead of building up the Kingdom of Christ? Are we not opposing and frustrating the fulfillment of the high-priestly prayer: "That they all may be one: as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me?"

There is but one way of determining this question, and that is by letting the Word of God determine it for us. If God's Word condemns our position, then it is condemned, and it should be abandoned. If, on the other hand, God's Word vindicates our position, then it needs no other vindication, but we should steadfastly adhere to it, though all the world oppose us.

The scope of this paper, then, will be: first, to show what God's Word teaches concerning church-fellowship with unbelievers and with those who hold doctrines contrary to the Scriptures; secondly, to meet certain objections raised in defence of Unionism; and, thirdly, to apply the Scriptural principles of church-fellowship to actual conditions in the church. The purpose of the other papers of the series will be to trace the history and point out the baleful results of Unionism in certain branches of the Lutheran Church here and abroad.

I.

The Holy Scriptures clearly and positively teach that all church-fellowship with false doctrine is forbidden of God and detrimental to the Church.

That this is true we see, first, from the command which God gives to all preachers and teachers in the Church. They are commanded to teach and preach the Word of God only; not their own wisdom, and not the wisdom of other men. Thus, in 1 Peter 4, 11, we read the solemn charge to the ministers and teachers of the church: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles

of God"; and in 1 Timothy 4, 16: "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine: Continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee"; and in 2 Tim. 1, 13: "Hold fast the form of the sound words." In the Old Testament the same charge was given to those who preached and taught: "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it." Deut. 4, 2. "He that hath my Word, let him speak my Word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord."

How seriously God regarded any violation of this command we learn from such passages as Jer. 23, 31. 32 and Deut. 13, 1 ff. In the former passage we read: "Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the Lord, and so tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord." From the latter passage (Deut. 13, 1 ff) we learn that under the old covenant God even ordered false prophets to be put to death. "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, . . . saying, let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: For the Lord your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God, and fear Him, and keep His commandments, and obey His voice, and ye shall serve Him, and cleave unto Him. And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death, because he hath spoken to turn you away from the Lord your God." In fact, so emphatic was this command, that it required the Israelites to spare no false prophet, though he should be a near and dear relative.

This was the established order in the Old Testament under the covenant of the Law. In the New Testament the old order has changed, the covenant of the Law having vanished away as a thing that is decayed and waxed old. Hebr. 8, 13. In the New Testament, God has expressly forbidden the Church to combat error or false doctrine with the sword or with physical force. "My Kingdom is not of this world," says Christ; and the Apostle Paul lays down the general rule: "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal." 2 Cor. 10, 4.

But we must not think that God is more tolerant of false doctrine or less exacting with teachers and preachers under the new than under the old covenant. Also in the Christian Church the general rule holds: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." This rule applies both to the preaching of the

Law and to the preaching of the Gospel. When we preach the Law, Christ warns: "Whosoever therefore shall break one of the least commandments and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." And should we ever deviate from the Gospel, St. Paul pronounces a curse upon us: "But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

From the divine charge to all Christian teachers and preachers to teach and preach the Word of God only and not error, it is very evident, therefore, that the Lord God will have no fellowship with false doctrine, that is, no Unionism, in His Church.

But the same thing may be inferred also from the charge God has given to all Christians to hear and adhere to those preachers and teachers only who preach and teach the Word of God without adulteration or error. Christ warns: "Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." Matt. 16, 6. By the Apostle Paul He commands: "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." Rom. 16, 17. And by the Apostle John He likewise commands: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your home, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." What the Lord here forbids is not the ordinary exchange of courtesies or acts of kindness and mercy, but what He forbids is that we greet and treat as brothers in faith or receive into our homes as fellow-believers persons or teachers who do not confess or bring to us the doctrine of Christ. In other words, Christ here forbids Unionism, church-fellowship with people who are known to be false teachers. We must not fellowship with such people in prayer, nor at the Communion Table; for, if we do, we partake, as the Apostle says, of their evil deeds. And an evil deed, a grossly evil deed, it is, when a man who professes to be a teacher of Christianity, or a minister of the Gospel, does not bring the doctrine of Christ, but some other doctrine.

To sum up, we may say, that nowhere in His Word does God permit a teacher or a preacher to deviate from His Word, nor a Christian to have church fellowship with a teacher or a preacher who does not adhere to His Word. In short, God requires complete separation from error on the part of both preachers and hearers; that is, He forbids Unionism, or church-fellowship with false teachers and unbelievers.

And this attitude of God is not arbitrary. There is a reason for it: Unionism is a menace to the soul, and therefore a detriment to the Church. When the Lord, who loved us and gave

Himself for us, bids us avoid false teachers, and when He forbids us to salute or treat as brothers those who do not bring or preach the doctrine of Christ, He does it because He does not want us to lose the salvation which He won for us and which we already possess by faith in Him. The salvation which He wrought for us and for all men with His innocent suffering and death has been deposited in His Word, the Gospel of salvation. All teachers who bring us this Gospel pure and complete, bring us the salvation of our souls. On the other hand, all teachers who bring us an adulterated or a different Gospel, endanger our souls and do what they can to rob us of Christ and His salvation. They do not call into being and foster, but they destroy and kill with their preaching that unity of Spirit which makes us one with Christ and one with all true believers in Christ. Outwardly the church may seem to flourish under the ministry of such unionistic preachers, but inwardly it is falling into spiritual death and decay. Hence the earnest warning of the Savior: "Beware of the false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." Matt. 7, 15.

II.

Certain Objections Raised in Defence of Unionism, and their Refutation.

1. Advocates of Unionism contend that we must have patience with the weak. That is undeniably true. God requires preachers and teachers to be patient. "Exhort with all long-suffering," is St. Paul's exhortation to Timothy and to all Christian pastors. But patience with the weak must not betray us into any curtailment of God's truth. That would be changing the great commission of Christ to His Church: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28, 20) into this humanly modified commission: "Do not teach all things that I have commanded, but only those things to which you can gain the assent of those who are weak in knowledge." Surely, this would be taking an unwarranted liberty with Christ's commission, a liberty which St. Paul does not in any way sanction; for he does not merely say, "Exhort with all long-suffering," but he says: "Exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." The God-pleasing way to treat weak Christians is, therefore, to overcome their weakness, their lack of knowledge and insight, by patiently teaching them the whole truth of God's Word until they are thoroughly persuaded. We should not be easily discouraged in our dealings with the weak, but we should continue teaching them patiently, so long as we have reason to believe that there is a chance of bringing them to a knowledge of the truth.

However, we must also note that there is a time when the weak cease to be weak; when they become false teachers and

must be treated as false teachers. This is the case, when they demand recognition of their error by the church, when they deliberately set about to propagate their error, labelling the truth of God's Word as error and branding faithful preachers and teachers as heretics. Here the Word of God makes our duty plain: "A man that is an heretic," (that is, a man who tries to gain a following for his false doctrine) "after the first and second admonition, reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted and sinneth, being condemned of himself." Tit. 3, 10.

2. Another objection raised by the advocates of Unionism is, that it is contrary to Christian love to deny church-fellowship to people who are in error. To this objection we reply: It is not for us, but for God to determine what Christian love requires of us. And God teaches us very plainly in His Word that both love of God and love of our neighbor involves the keeping of His Word. Thus Jesus says, John 14, 23, 24: "If a man love me, he will keep my Words. . . . He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." And in John 8, 51 He declares: "Verily, verily I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." He who surrenders a portion of God's Word for the sake of an alleged love to his erring neighbor, loves neither God nor his neighbor; for, on the one hand, he profanes the name of God, and, on the other, he endangers the soul of his neighbor by his false teaching. Luther takes this position emphatically, when he says: "Do not talk to me about any love or friendship when the purpose is to take away aught of the Word of God or of faith; for we are taught that not love but the Word brings eternal life, the grace of God, and all the treasures of heaven." IX, 831.

3. Another argument based on "love" may be expressed in this way: "You Lutherans admit that there are true children of God also in churches that harbor false doctrine. From these children of God you hold yourselves aloof and thus offend against love, when you refuse to fellowship with their erring churches." To this we reply: It is true, indeed, that all men, who humbly acknowledge their sinful and lost condition and believe in Christ as their only Savior from sin, death and hell, are members together with us of the holy Christian Church. But it is due to weak and imperfect knowledge and it is contrary to the will and ordinance of God that these Christians are practising church-fellowship with false doctrine. They are in the wrong camp. They should come out from the churches which obscure and render uncertain the way of salvation by their unscriptural teachings. The duty of these misplaced Christians is very clear, according to the Word of God: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness

with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." Christian love demands that we steadfastly refuse church-fellowship with all false teaching churches.

4. Still another argument in defence of Unionism is this: It is nothing but sheer arrogance for any individual or church to say: We are in full possession of God's truth; all who teach other doctrines than we teach are in error, and we will have no fellowship with them. This charge of arrogance was brought against Luther and is to this day brought against all faithful followers of Luther. At first sight, it seems a very plausible objection. Can we poor, fallible human beings ever really be sure of God's saving truth? We answer: Yes, we not only can, but we should be sure of God's saving truth. But how? Christ tells us, John 8, 32: "If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed: and ye shall know the truth." But why, then, is it that so many of those who call themselves Christians and Christian teachers are not sure of the truth? This, too, the Scriptures explain: "If a man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes and words." The Word of God puts an end to all uncertainty. It is only when we turn away from the plain words of Scripture and indulge in our own thoughts and surmises concerning any doctrine that we fall into uncertainty and error.

But is this certainty also within the grasp of laymen? Yes, why not? Christ says of Christians, not only of pastors and teacher: "If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth." And when He warns all Christians: "Beware of false prophets, which come unto you in sheep's clothing," He clearly takes for granted that all Christians can be sure of the truth and can distinguish between the truth and error. The same inference must be drawn from His testimony, John 10, 5, 27: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers."

And pray, why should we not be certain of the saving truth? We have not a Savior who permits us to grope around in darkness and uncertainty for the salvation of our perishing souls. Are we searching for an answer to the great question how to get rid of our sins and how to obtain peace with God? The answer is clear: "The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1, 7. "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, His faith is counted for righteousness." Rom. 4, 5. "Therefore, being

justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 5, 1. And so the Word of God does not leave us in uncertainty regarding any of the great questions of faith and life. "Thy Word," says the Psalmist, "is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." And the Apostle Peter declares: "We have also a more sure Word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts." And the same apostle commends Christian certainty, when he exhorts: "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you."

But the objectors still counter with the argument that there are passages in the Bible which are obscure and hard to understand. We grant this. But let him who cannot understand the obscure passages follow Luther's excellent advice: "If you cannot understand the obscure, stick to the clear and lucid passages." God has so arranged the Bible that the entire body of Christian truth rests on clear passages and that no doctrine depends for its interpretation on obscure passages. If we avoid human speculation and cling to the naked words of Scripture, as Luther counsels, permitting the Bible to be its own interpreter, and asking the Spirit of God to make the truth plain, we shall arrive at that certainty which God intends that His children should have.

5. Another argument, finally, which seems to have a great deal of weight with many may be stated thus: If church-fellowship is to be restricted to those only who are in complete doctrinal agreement, there never will be any unity in the Church; certainly no unity which will command the respect of the world. To present a united front against the world, we are, therefore, compelled to accommodate ourselves to various "trends of thoughts" or "parties" in the Church.

This is a way of reasoning quite natural to man, but it has no place in the mind or plan of God. God does not want various "trends of thoughts" or "parties" in the Christian Church. Christians may differ in regard to secular things, such as politics, business, or farming; they may even differ in regard to certain external matters pertaining to the Church,—the so-called *Adiaphora* or neutral things, on which the Scriptures speak no word of command or prohibition—such as the form of church government, ritual, vestments, and the like. But there is one thing on which all Christians should be entirely agreed, and that is their doctrine or their faith. This one essential, iterated and reiterated throughout the Scriptures, we find stated thus by the Apostle Paul: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same

mind and in the same judgment." 1 Cor. 1, 10. All Christians should confess the same doctrine and the same faith. Here they should present a united front against the world. When asked about their faith, some Christians should not say one thing, and some another; but they should say the same thing and mean the same thing. They should be joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. This is the unity of the Christian Church—the unity or oneness in doctrine and faith. This unity is built up not by human but by divine means, by the Gospel, through which the Holy Ghost "calls, gathers, enlightens, sanctifies, and keeps the whole Christian Church in the one true faith." That is the only church unity which benefits the individual soul and benefits the church as a whole; the only kind of church unity which God demands, which actually exists, and which deserves the name of Christian unity.

Let us not be too much concerned for the future of the Church. Let us rather be vitally concerned that we obey God and build as He has directed. "Neither he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth: but God giveth the increase." God is not indifferent to the welfare and growth of His Church. He would have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. If there were a better way to order His Church and direct its work, God would have found it. But we know that He doeth all things well. This too is the unmistakeable lesson taught by church history. Or is it not true that the Church has never had such periods of growth and expansion as when its members, lay and clerical, were zealous in their love and proclamation of the Gospel, zealous in their endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace? Witness the marvelous progress of the Apostolic Church in the face of almost unbelievable obstacles. Witness the rise and growth of the Church of the Reformation, likewise in the face of seemingly insurmountable difficulties. Witness also the inauspicious beginning, but the sturdy growth and sweeping progress of our modern champion of conservative Lutheranism, the Missouri Synod. Let us have no fear, no anxious thought for the future of our own beloved Synod! Our only fear should be that we ever wax cold in our love of the Savior or in our zeal for His truth. As for the future, we can safely leave that in the hands of Him who alone can give the increase.

III.

The Scriptural Doctrine of Church-fellowship Demands Complete Separation from:

- (a) all Unitarian denominations;
- (b) the Roman Catholic Church;
- (c) the Reformed denominations — both the Calvinistic, which claim that God does not sincerely desire the salva-

tion of all men; and the synergistic, which deny that God saves and converts men by grace alone. Unfortunately the latter doctrine has been permitted to contaminate the confessions also of certain Lutheran communions or synods;

- (d) those who deny the efficacy and sufficiency of the Means of Grace;
- (e) those who deny that the Bible is the infallible Word of God.

(a) The Unitarians deny the Triune God, as well as the eternal Godhead of Christ and His vicarious atonement. For this reason we cannot regard them as Christians, i. e., believers in Christ; nor can we fellowship with them. In recent times, especially, Unitarianism has made fearful inroads into several of the Reformed churches. Compare what the *Luthersk Tidende* and *Lutheran Sentinel*, Vol. 9, No. 24, June 16, 1926, has to say on this matter under the heading "Significant Events in the Reformed Church". It goes without saying that the leaven of Unitarianism in these Reformed denominations precludes all church-fellowship with them also.

Unitarianism is essentially the religion of the lodges. Lodge religion may be briefly summed up in the one sentence: Every man may go to heaven by virtue of his own good character and life, without belief in the eternal Godhead of Christ, and without faith in Christ as the one and only Savior and Redeemer. As evidence we may quote from Webb's *Monitor of Free masonry* by Robert Morris, page 280: "So broad is the religion of Masonry, and so carefully are all sectarian tenets excluded from the system, that the Christian, the Jew, and the Mohammedan, in all their numberless sects and divisions, may and do harmoniously combine in its moral and intellectual work with the Buddhist, the Parsee, the Confucian, and the worshipper of Deity under every form." Now we know that there is no other way to salvation than by faith in Christ, the crucified and risen Savior, and that the Christian Church has been commanded to preach repentance and forgiveness of sins in His name to all men—to Jews and Mohammedans, Buddhists, Parsees, Confucians, and all other men who sit in darkness and in the region and shadow of death. With this central aim and work of the Christian Church the lodges are boldly and completely at variance. We have therefore no right to fellowship with the lodges, neither as a Church nor as individual members of the Church.

(b) The Catholic Church does not only deny the central doctrine of the Christian religion, i. e., the doctrine that we are saved by grace alone, through faith in Jesus Christ; but in cold blood the Catholic Church pronounces a curse upon this doctrine and upon all who believe in the doctrine. "If any one says that

justifying faith is nothing else than the faith in the mercy of God, who remits sins for Christ's sake, or that we are justified alone by such faith, let him be accursed." (Resolutions of the Council of Trent, 6 Session, 12 Canon) The Scriptures, therefore, clearly forbid all church-fellowship with the Roman Catholic Church.

(c) Two main trends or schools of theology are discernable in the Reformed Churches: the Calvinistic, and the synergistic. The Calvinists deny the universal grace of God, i. e., they deny that all men are included in God's gracious plan of salvation. Now the Gospel proclaims: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3, 16; "Behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," John 1, 29; "Who (viz. God) will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. 2, 4; and again: "He (Jesus) is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2, 2. Could anything be clearer? And still Calvin and his followers have set aside all this evidence and taught that God desires to save only a comparative few and that He has created all other men to be damned! Compare the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, III, 6: "Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called . . . but the elect only." This is a terrible distortion of the Gospel of salvation; "a message of despair, a deadly stench, death and damnation for a human soul." Dr. Fr. Pieper, *Unionism*, p. 17.

The Synergists teach that the conversion and salvation of man does not depend solely upon the grace of God, but also upon something within man: a greater susceptibility to grace; a power to decide; a better conduct; or a smaller degree of guilt. The Apology of the Armenian Reformed (synergistic) Church teaches that the conversion of man is not the work of God alone, but also and in part the work of man. This error crept into the Lutheran Church, also, after the death of Luther. Melancthon introduced it. The result was a bitter controversy which lasted for thirty years. The error was thoroughly exposed and firmly rejected in the last of the Lutheran confessions, the Formula of Concord. But in the Seventeenth Century the error cropped out again, and in the latter part of the 19th and beginning of the 20th Century, it assumed an important role in doctrinal controversies within the American Lutheran Church. The outcome of these controversies seems still more or less uncertain. The synods of the Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America have taken their stand upon the Formula of Concord and the Scriptures and positively rejected Synergism in all its forms and manifestations. All other synods have sought peace in compromise; but

there are hopeful indications that they, too, will eventually be given the grace to purge out this false leaven.

Two serious charges must be brought against Synergism: first, that it perverts the Scriptures; and, secondly, that it interferes with saving faith in Christ. The Scriptures clearly teach salvation by faith, without the deeds of the Law. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." Eph. 2, 8. 9. "There is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom. 3, 22—24. "We believe according to the working of His Mighty power" Eph. 1, 19. Christ says of those who believe that they "were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1, 13. And the Apostle Paul reminds himself and the Ephesians: "When we were dead in sins" God "hath quickened us together with Christ." Eph. 2, 5.

Surely, there is no hint of cooperation in the act of conversion, and he who gives man any credit for this, (*Intuitu fidei*) or endows him with an alleged sense of responsibility for the acceptance of grace, (*Madison Agreement, Paragraph 4*) comes into direct clash with the Scriptures and robs God of the honor which is His alone. The Scriptural doctrine of salvation by grace demands humility, self-renunciation. Boastfulness rings the death-knell of faith. Hence Christ warns: "Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased," Luke 18, 14. Not the arrogant Pharisee, but the humble publican went down to his house justified.

(d) Salvation, full and free, has been won for all men by Christ the Savior. This salvation God has deposited in His holy means of grace, the Word of God and the Sacraments. By and through these means God ordains that the forgiveness of sins shall be offered and given to all men, and faith engendered, preserved, and brought to full fruition in the believer. The Gospel is God's proclamation of peace to the sinful world. 2 Cor. 5, 19: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name." Luke 24, 46. 47. "Baptism works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal life to all who believe, as the Word and promise of God declare, Mark 16, 16: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"; and Tit. 3, 5: "According to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." In the Lord's Supper Christ unites Himself and offers Himself with

the consecrated bread and wine to penitent believers for the strengthening of their faith. "Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you." "Drink ye all of it: this cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you, for the remission of sins." Now these means of grace come to us laden with salvation. They are channels of God's saving grace. God has bound us to them and their use, and He has promised that they shall not return void, but shall accomplish that for which they were sent.

Now, since the days of Zwingli and Calvin, there have been a great many people within the Reformed churches, who have slighted and despised the divinely ordained means of grace, holding that God works upon the heart and soul immediately or directly, without any external means. As much as in them lies, they destroy the road or the bridge, by which lost sinners may come to faith in Christ and be saved. Neither they nor anyone else can be sure of their state of grace, until they have discarded that illusory grace, which is taken out of the air or out of man's own self-consciousness and is of course without any divine promise or sanction, and until they have returned to the divinely ordained means, in which God has Himself deposited all of His saving grace and truth. With these people we can of course have no church-fellowship. They must come to us; we must not turn to them.

(e) Finally, we must not fellowship with those who deny that the Bible is the infallible Word of God. In our day there are multitudes of professing Christians, both lay and learned, in all Protestant churches, who deny the Doctrine of Inspiration, i. e., the doctrine that the Spirit of God is the real author of the Bible and of the whole Bible. But in doing this, they brand Christ and His prophets and apostles as liars and deceivers. Christ quoted freely from all parts of the Old Testament—from Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets, and He did so without any reservation whatsoever. To Him the entire Old Testament was the infallible Word of God. "The Scriptures cannot be broken," He asserted, John 10, 35. "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself"; Luke 24, 27, and in the 44th verse of the same chapter, He adds: "All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me." The same unqualified endorsement He gave also to the writings of His apostles. In His sacerdotal prayer, John 17, 20, He says that all men who will be brought to faith in him until the end of days "shall believe on me through their (the apostles') Word." And to the apostles themselves He gave the assurance that "The Comforter, which is the Holy

Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you," and "when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth." That the apostles themselves knew that they were the spokesmen of the Holy Spirit, we see from the words of Paul, 1 Cor. 2, 13: "Which things we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

The Church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone. Eph. 2, 20. Those who attack the infallibility of the Holy Scriptures are therefore blasting away at the very foundation stones of the Christian Church. Their success would mean an end of the Church and an end of all Christian faith. Therefore we cannot fellowship with them, but must oppose them and vanquish them with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

I cannot do better than to close with a quotation from the essay of Dr. Fr. Pieper on Unionism, from which I have received the greatest help and inspiration for my own humble exposition:

"God keep us in this opposition to Unionism! This we will gladly do after the manner of our fathers: We will attend so-called 'free conferences' and discuss doctrinal differences with our opponents in all patience and kindness and humility with a view of establishing unity. But church-fellowship we cannot establish and keep save with those who agree with us in the Christian doctrine. Now we have this Christian doctrine in the inspired Word of the Apostles and Prophets, in the infallible Word of Scripture. The Holy Spirit is in and with this Word and teaches us over and over to see in it the Word of God, to regard it as our highest treasure, to love it sincerely and teach it without abridgment or alteration unto the salvation of men's souls, and in conformity with Christ's will and for the furtherance of His glory. Greater cause there never was, nor more momentous. The crusaders of the Middle Ages once cried in their enthusiasm: 'God wills it! God wills it!' Now that was for the greater part mistaken zeal, propaganda for the papacy and its murderous doctrines of salvation by works. When we, by the grace of God, contend for the unadulterated doctrine of the Word of God and avoid all fellowship with false doctrine and seek to hearten one another with the cry: 'God wills it! God wills it!' This is not religious fanaticism but propaganda for the Christian Church on earth which is well-pleasing to the Master. God speed the work! God cause it to prosper! Amen"

The Curse of Unionism in the Early History of the Lutheran Church of America

The early history of the Lutheran Church of America paints a picture that is not pleasant in all respects. It portrays to us a band of ardent Lutherans who came to this country for the express purpose of establishing a Lutheran colony on the western banks of Delaware River. These early settlers ment to be staunch Lutherans in their new home, as they had been in the home they left. But the picture shows us that they little by little fell away from their mother-church and joined a church that did not in all things teach the truth. We ask: What was the cause of this falling away from the church for which their fore-fathers had faught so valiantly? The answer to this question will be the object of this paper; and we shall endeavor to give the answer under three heads, namely:

1. The chief aim of establishing this colony.
2. Did the colonists succeed in reaching this aim?
3. The result that followed of not reaching this aim.

I.

The greatest King Sweden ever had, Gustavus Adolphus, conceived the idea of establishing a colony in America as early as 1624. He planned to form a Free-state in this country where the rights of conscience should be inviolate, and which should be open to the Protestant world, then engaged in a struggle for existence with all the Papal powers of Europe.

The company that was formed for this purpose was sanctioned by the King and incorporated by the States of Sweden in 1627. The aim of the colony is set forth in the Company's Charter in these words: "In all the plans of colonization the aim shall be the extension of Christianity; to provide the means of religious instruction; and to guard against all Calvinistic leaven."

However, the plan could not be executed at once, as it appeared that the very existence of the Reformation was in danger. Gustavus Adolphus therefore resolved to invade Germany and vindicate the rights of conscience with the sword. Although this great struggle detained the King's cherished plan of colonization in this country, it did not drive it from his mind. Only a few days before his death on the battle-field of Lützen in 1632, he spoke about the enterprise, and called it "The Jewel of his Kingdom." The King's wise and noble Chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, renewed the patent in 1633 and thus revived the plan of colonization. On that occasion the Chancellor said: "The consequences of this design will be favorable to all Christendom." The leader of the Company, Peter Minuit, set out from Sweden with two vessels during the fall of 1637; and he reached the

western shores of Delaware Bay in early spring of the next year. He sailed up the bay and river until he reached a suitable place for the establishment of the colony; at this place he built a fort which he called Fort Christina in honor of the Swedish Queen. This fort served for a time as the first church of the colonists. The next year a second expedition arrived from Sweden: and among the passengers were Reor Torkillus, the first Lutheran Minister in America, who came for the purpose of doing permanent pastoral work in the colony. Pastor Torkillus officiated at Fort Christina till his death in 1643. As Peter Minuit died in 1641, a new Governor was appointed by Sweden to serve in his place, namely, John Printz. Upon his departure from Sweden in 1643, he received the following instructions signed by Axel Oxenstierna:

"The Governor will treat with much humanity and mildness the nations bordering upon all the other side, and will see that neither violence nor injustice is done them by the people of her majesty: he must labor on all occasions that these savage people be instructed in the Christian religion and the divine service, or civilized, well regulated, happy, and as such be free.

"Before all the Governor must labor and watch that he renders in all things to Almighty God, the true worship which is his due, the Glory, the praise, and the homage which belong to him: and take good measures that the divine service is performed according to the true confession of Augsburg, the council of Upsal and the ceremonies of the Swedish church, having care that all men and especially the youth be well instructed in all the parts of Christianity, and that a good ecclesiastical discipline be observed and maintained.

"With respect to the Dutch colony which resides and is established in the country of her majesty and of the crown, the Governor must not disturb what has been ordained in the foresaid grant of her majesty with regard to the exercise of the reformed religion."

With Governor Printz came Rev. John Companius, a man recommended by Bishop Svedberg in the following words: "A man most highly to be praised on account of his unwearied zeal in always propagating the love of God." Reverend Companius served the Lutheran Swedes faithfully until his return to Sweden in 1648; and he learned the language of the Delaware Indians and translated Luther's Small Catechism into it.

During this time and up to the time the colony was conquered by the Dutch in 1655, it appears that the colonists remained Lutherans in faith as well as in church practice. Rev. Companius left to his successor Lars Lock about 700 souls. For 22 years

Lars Lock served these many souls alone. In 1677 Jacob Fabritius came to his assistance; and the two pastors divided the field between themselves. But five years later Fabritius became blind; and in 1688, Lars Lock died, so at this time the only pastor among the Lutheran Swedes was a disabled man that continued to serve his congregation as far as he was able until his death.

During this time a lamentable condition became more and more apparent; the younger generation became indifferent to the Church, and the children grew up practically without any Christian knowledge. The true Lutherans in the colony longed for relief, but they did not know from whence the relief should come, as the communications between the colony and the mother-country had long ago ceased. The old Swedes, who had made the long voyage across the ocean, regarded it quite incredible that a Swedish clergyman would come to them. Nevertheless, at two different times they wrote home to Sweden for clergymen, but to no avail. Still, they remained firm in their determination to obtain a pastor from Sweden. At last, one of their appeals for help fell into the hands of the King, Charles XI. The King consulted with Dr. Svedberg, who induced three men to undertake the long voyage. These men were Erick Björk, Anders Rudman, and Jonas Auren. The commission of these pastors is still to be found in the archives of Gloria Dei Church, and it charges them: "To teach without any human addition God's holy and saving Word, purely and clearly, as it is fully presented in the Canonical Books of the prophets in the Old and of the apostles in the New Testament, and briefly explained in the Œcumenical Symbols of the Christian Church, the apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian, as well as especially in the Augsburg Confession, and the other Symbolical Books received by the Evangelical Church."

These three gentlemen left Sweden in 1697 with the following parting words from the King: "Go, now, in the name of the Lord, to the place to which I send you. God be with you, and make your undertaking successful. If any opposition is made, or any injury done you, return. I will remember you."

New life entered the congregations upon the arrival of these pastors. In 1699 the new Trinity Church was built at Wilmington near Christina; and in 1700 Gloria Dei Church was built in Wicaco (Now Philadelphia). The pastors were full of zeal, preaching and visiting from house to house. But Rudman had not been in the country three years before his health declined. He asked the authorities in Sweden for an assistant, and mentioned Andrew Sandel in his letter as the one he desired. His request was granted.

Up to this time, about 65 years from the time the colony was

established, the Lutheran faith and practice had been maintained; but from now on a change took place.

II.

After a brief pastorate among the Swedes Anders Rudman took up work among the Dutch Lutherans in New York first, and then among the Lutherans in Philadelphia, where he also served an Episcopal church until his death. Upon this dark chapter of unionism we now enter Acrelius writes in his *History of New Sweden* as follows:

"The Swedes and English united as ministerial brethren: their object was no other than the promotion and extension of Christianity; they preached English in each others' churches; and, as a stronger token of unity, they sometime sang Swedish Psalms in the English congregations. They annually held ministerial meetings together, and consecrated each others' churches. No letter was sent home to England, or to the King, Queen, Parliament, or Bishop of London, or to the Society, without the Swedish clergy also signing it. So, also, were the Swedish Ministers, when they went home, provided with good testimonials from the English clergy. They were willing to receive the Lord's Supper from one another, as also to administer the Sacrament to each others' hearers.

"Finally, it may also be mentioned that every Swedish Minister upon his return home received from the Society in London 30 pounds sterling in return for their services which he had performed among the English churches here."

(Acrelius, *Hist. of New Sweden*, 1758, page 361 and 362).

That this is a true picture of the condition, we shall verify by the statements of the early Missionaries in words of their own. During the ministry of Björk and Sandel a petition was submitted by them to the Queen of England. In this petition we note the following statements:

"Our Ministers in the mean time studying intirely to unite our hearts and affections to your Majesty's good subjects in this country of the Church of England, wherein it had pleased God to give them so great success, that we scruple not to join in worship with the Church of England; our Ministers frequently supplying the vacancy of their churches where they want Ministers, or when they are absent."

And in 1710 Sandel gives the following report in his chronicles:

"We as preachers and teachers have at all times kept good correspondence and entertained familiar intercourse with the

English preachers, so that we always availed ourselves of each others' aid and counsel. When they held a pastoral conference, we were always in their council. We have often occasionally, when the English preachers, because of a journey or a funeral, had not the time, preached English in their churches. When they somewhere laid the corner stone of a church, we were invited and present. . . . Although some difference exists between them and us as regards the Lord's Supper etc., we enter upon no discussion of these points; neither do we touch upon these things when we preach in their churches, nor do they seek to draw our people to their opinion in this point, but we live with one another intimately and fraternally, even as they call us their brethren."

From the records of Björk we gain the following information:

"On the fourth Sunday after Easter, the 18th of May, I exchanged with Mr. George Ross, (the Episcopal pastor) he preached for me at Christina, and I for him at Chester."

Anders Hesselius, who served the Swedes from 1713 to 1723, used much of his time in serving the Anglican churches. "Besides the care of his congregation," says Acrelius, "Mr. Hesselius also extended his labors to the English. In the month of July 1720, he began to preach for them in the newly built English church at Hwitley's Kill, which was called St. James. He did this every third Sunday." And his brother, Samuel Hesselius, showed such diligence in serving English churches that his Swedish parishioners complained to the authorities in Sweden charging him with neglect of his own people.

When Magnus Wrangel came to America in 1759 to serve his Lutheran brethren, he not only officiated with the Episcopal Church but went to the revival meetings held by Whitefield at Philadelphia, and was among his greatest admirers and imitators; he even introduced prayer-meetings after Whitefield's pattern into his own church.

The plan of Wrangel was to turn the entire Swedish Lutheran Church into the Anglican Church and thus establish a strong Church. But as Wrangel was recalled to Sweden, he was prevented from executing his plan. Upon leaving this country he received from his friend, the Episcopal pastor Richard Peters, a letter of recommendation to the Bishop of London. In this letter we read the following:

"It is not unknown to Your Lordship that the Church of England of this province has always been in connection with the Swedish churches, and that the Missionaries sent from Sweden have been persons of eminent learning and piety, except a few instances. . . .

"The Rev. Dr. Wrangel, whom I have made bearer of this letter on purpose to introduce him to Your Lordship, is of the first rank among those Missionaries and is now on his return to Sweden. . . .

"He knows all the affairs of this province and the state of religion and the situation of our own and the German churches and I most humbly and earnestly recommend it to Your Lordship to enter into a free and full conversation with him.

"The Presbyterians, under a pretence of answering Dr. Chandler, have gone into many abusive publications, and have raised against them all other churches in common from the bitterness and vehemence that appear in their writings. As they are numerous, all other persuasions being to tread and unite against them as people who have more tyranny in their system and temper than any other church whatever.

"Dr. Wrangel wants to take a just advantage of this general antipathy to the Presbyterians, and to unite the great body of the Lutheran Swedes with the Church of England, who you know, are but few and in mean circumstances in this province: but were they united with the German Lutherans we should both become respectable."

The last Minister sent from Sweden to this country, Nicholas Collin, did not only officiate with the Episcopal Church, but he had as his assistant-pastors eight clergymen who all were Episcopalians.

This general practice of unionism did not occur without the knowledge and sanction of the authorities in Sweden and England. From Sandel's chronicles we note this statement:

"Such unity and intimacy with the English Church was always recommended to us by Bishop Svedberg in his letters."

And Acrelius states in his history, after he has enumerated a long array of unionistic practices:

"All this and much more was strengthened by the character of Dr. Svedberg, who was then Bishop of Skara, and by his admonitions to the clergy to continue all this."

That the authorities in England also sanctioned this practice is evident. In a letter directed to the Episcopal pastors in this country written by the Bishop of London, wherein he recommends the Swedish pastors Hesselius and Lidenius, we read:

"I recommend to you these two Swedish Missionaries Mr. Andreas Hesselius and Mr. Abraham Lidenius, who came over to supply the place of Mr. Rudman, whom I desire you to receive with all brotherly friendship and charity, and to cultivate the best understanding you can with them, and to assist them in any directions they may stand in need of, and in my name recommend them to the good will and protection of the Governor."

When the sentiments and practices were of this nature, when a constant affiliation was kept up with a church differing in faith and practice in so many respects from their own church, is it reasonable that such practice and such sentiments should fail to carry with it serious results? These serious result we shall briefly point out in the following survey of the situation.

III.

At Christina the Church Council resolved in 1742 that the services in the church should from now on be conducted according to the Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church of England. And the Vestry and Wardens resolved that men professing the Lutheran or Episcopal faith should have the right to vote in the congregation and be eligible for any office in the congregation.

In 1787 the Charter of Incorporation of the United Swedish Lutheran Churches was changed. Section V should read:

"Some rules or regulations shall be established for the future choice of a Rector and other Minister or Ministers to supply said churches, provided always that such Rector and other Ministers shall be in the ministry of the Lutheran or Episcopal Churches and hold their faith in the doctrines of the same."

A similar change of the Charter of Incorporation was carried out by the Swedish Lutheran Church at Wilmington; and during the change the congregation was served by Joseph Clarkson, an Episcopal pastor.

At last the final breaking away from the Lutheran Church came. In 1846, the Gloria Dei Church made the following change in its Constitution:

"This church acknowledges itself to be a member of, and to belong to the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America. As such it accedes to, recognizes, and adopts the Constitution, Canons, Doctrines, Disciplines, and Worship of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the State of Pennsylvania, and the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States, and acknowledges their authority accordingly."

Similar changes had already been made in the Charter of the Wilmington, Roccon, and Pennsneck congregations. And the churches of Kingessing and Upper Merion followed the other churches into the Episcopal Church.

Thus we see that the name "Lutheran" was eliminated after a generation or two had been trained in the manner that the Lutheran Swedes had been trained. There was a time when the Lutheran Swedes on the Delaware wrote to the authorities in Sweden these words:

"Send us Swedish pastors who are well learned and well

trained in Holy Scripture, who can well defend themselves and us against all false teachers and strange sects which surround us and are in opposition to us in our true and pure, unadulterated worship and Lutheran religion, which we even now before God and all the world always do profess and shall profess; and if need be, which God prevent, shall seal with our own blood."

The pastors were sent. They had learning, and they were well trained for their work. But they failed in one respect: they did not defend themselves and their people, or even try to do so, against the false teachers and strange sects. They even joined hands and hearts with the false teachers in their pernicious work. They knew full well that some differences existed between themselves and the Episcopal Church, but they ignored the differences, and entered into a full brotherly affiliation with them. We ask: Can we expect that the people, who saw their pastor's example and heard them say that they should look upon the Episcopal Church as a "Sister Church," would keep away from this church?

It always remains true, when truth compromises with error truth is always the loser and error the gainer.

John Hendricks.

The Curse of Unionism in the American Lutheran Church of Today

(H. M. TJERNAGEL)

Unionism is a deceiver disguised as a dove of peace carrying the emblem of brotherly love.

Unionism is more dangerous than infidelism. Infidelism comes in the open with drawn knife goary with the blood of murdered souls. Unionism is the poisoned cup.

Unionism is a false principle of conduct and is, therefore, vastly more dangerous than error of conduct.

Unionism is an unerring manifestation of indifferentism. In theological parlance indifferentism means to be indifferent as to just exactly what God says or does not say in His revealed word, commonly called the Bible. Indifference to mathematical doctrines such as, two and two are four, five times five are twenty-five is, obviously, far more detrimental to ones progress in the mathematical sciences than errors of addition or multiplication.

It avails nothing that one vehemently denies the accusation of indifferentism to doctrine if he practices fellowship with error; his actions then belie his words.

It helps nothing that one urges faithfulness and strict adherence to all principal doctrines while he shows laxity in demanding adherence to teachings of lesser importance; he thereby incrim-

inates himself. The Word of God is not a mixture of important and of indifferent doctrines, teachings, words, precepts. Every word is a pearl of great price. "Cursed is every one that continueth in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Gal. 3, 10.

To practice church-fellowship in any form or manner with such as are persistent errorists in practice is sinful unionism just as well as fellowshiping with errorists in doctrine; it is six of one kind and half a dozen of the other. Practice is doctrine in action.

Unionism can be indulged in only by those who take lightly the warning: "Beware of false prophets." Matt. 7, 15; who have little fear that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" Gal. 5, 9 and who do not take God seriously when He says: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Rev. 22, 18-19.

The heart of the unionist can not long remain sensitive to the Word of God nor his ear alert to the voice of the shepherd. The voice of strangers does not cause him to flee—John 10, 5—nor the voice of the shepherd to follow. John 10, 27. His spiritual hearing becomes affected so that he can not distinguish between the voice of strangers and of the shepherd.

This condition must and does necessarily, sooner or later, lead to disaster. Of such disaster history has spoken to you in some of the papers you have heard read at this convention.

Is Unionism threatening the American Lutheran Church of today? Yes. In large areas of the Lutheran Church in America unionism is not only threatening but is strongly entrenched. Unionism is more or less flagrantly practiced by all of the synodical bodies constituting the National Lutheran Council. The National Lutheran Council is, in fact, one of the manifestations of unionism within these bodies.

However, this paper will not give space to a consideration of the National Lutheran Council but will refer to our Synodical report for the year 1920, pages 60—82, where full information on the subject may be found.

The United Lutheran Church is the largest of the bodies forming the N. L. C. This church body is unionistic to the core. As I write I have before me news paper clippings, programs, letters etc. as evidence of 55 instances of disobedience to Christ's "Avoid them." The transgressors are all pastors and congregations of the N. L. C. I shall cite only a few of them and using as few words as possible.

"The Baptist, Christian, Congregational, Episcopal, St. Johns Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian churches, Des Moines, Iowa, co-operated in putting on the 'Anderson Meetings' so called."

"City Churches unite for Thank services." Utica Press, N. Y. Zion Lutheran Church was in it.

"A series of soul stirring sermons by Americas great preachers, Central Park Methodist Episcopal Church Dedication Week." One of the attractions: "Sunday 7:45 p. m. community service with Parkside Baptist and Parkside Lutheran Churches." Buffalo, N. Y.

Headlines New York Times: "Dr. Fosdick praised by city ministers. 198 attend luncheon given in honor of Baptist, subject of Presbyterian controversy." Among the pastors attending, two Lutherans are listed: The Rev. Dr. G. U. Wenner and the Rev. Dr. John E. Heindel.

A Chicago community service is reported: "Dr. Simon Peter Long preached the sermon, Dr. C. Walde Cherry, Presb. presided. Dr. L. C. Manges of Memorial Lutheran Church, read scripture lesson. Dr. C. S. Rasmussen of Messiah Lutheran, offered prayer."

Rev. Yost Brandt's bulletin board carried the following announcements last August: "St. Paul's Ev. Luth. Church. Vacation in August.

Aug. 10—Lutheran Church.

Aug. 17—Baptist Church.

Aug. 24—Presbyterian Church.

Aug. 31—Methodist Church.

Dr. Martin Luther Enders was on for the invocation and also an address at the dedicatory services for Beth Jacob Synagogue.

"The Scottish Rite Masons of Harrisburg, Penn., will observe the day of St. John the Evangelist with special service in the Messiah Luth. Church, 6 and Foster Streets, tomorrow evening at 7:30. The Rev. Martin E. Grove, pastor of the Bethlehem Luth. Ch. will make the address."

Dr. Andreas Bard, St. Marks Luth. Church, Kansas City, at the funeral of Dr. Wm. Kuhn: "Many a time he told his Masonic brethren that the church and Masonry were not rival institutions, but rather cooperative forces toward the establishing upon the earth of the Kingdom of God."

Thus I might continue almost indefinitely but I choose not to. Neither do I feel that comments on the unionistic performances just related are necessary.

We shall go on to the next largest body constituting the National

Lutheran Council, namely: The Norwegian Lutheran Church of America. This body came into being in the year 1917 through the merging of three Synods. This merger is an off-spring of unionism. The merger was not a result of unity of doctrine and practice but of a skillfully wrought compromise between truth and error.

Paragraph 3 of the articles of agreement was, we admit, clear and in no way ambiguous and shut all doors tight against unionism. It reads: "De tre samfund lover hverandre med alt alvor ikke at have kirkelig samarbeide med reformerte og andre som ikke deler samfundenes tro og bekjendelse."

But note well now the fate of this article. A minority within the Hauge Synod took exception to this article and would not be pacified unless their "understanding" of same received recognition. Their "understanding" and which was accepted by the Hauge convention of 1916 reads: "Vi betragter det ikke som samarbeide eller religionsblanderier, naar man leilighedsvis maa delta i brudevielser, begravelser, dekorationsprogram, Chautauqua, graduationsfester, ved de offentlige skoler og lignende, hvor ogsaa prester av andre bekjendelser optræder. Endvidere anser vi det ikke for at være i strid med denne paragraf, at man deltar i saadanne bevægelser, der vistnok er af religiøs art, men som omfatter den hele kristne kirke, som til eksempel: Økumeniske missionskonferencer, Student Volunteer Movement, Student Federation og Laymans Missionary Movement. Vi betragter disse kristelig-religiøse bevægelser mere som praktiske foretagender end som en virksomhed af ren kirkelig art."

The stage was all set and elaborate preparations made for the consummation of the merger on June 9th. At the eleventh hour on June 8 a representative from the Hauge convention appeared before the Synod convention requesting permission to present a petition from the Hauge union-committee. He was given the floor and the above "understanding" was read. A lively but short discussion ensued. The Hauge representative stated that the petition did not involve subscribing to the "understanding," but merely that those who thus interpreted the paragraph in question, be recognized as brethren in faith. The petition was granted, but the right to testify against such practices as enumerated in the "understanding" was reserved. See Beret. '17, p. 166.

Who, but he who will not see, can be blind to compromise here. Truth and error locked, not in combat, but in brotherly embrace is the sad spectacle we here behold.

The reservation of "right to testify against such practice" what is that but an admission of guilt and an effort to appease a disturbed conscience? I make bold to state as my opinion that few, if any, of our former brethren in faith, can think of that

lamentable Friday, June 8, 1917, and not, to this day, wince under the lashings of conscience.

On that day paragraph 3, Articles of Agreement, was neutralised. Neutralise means: to make neutral or inert; to make of no effect; counteract. Deliberately and by resolution the bars were let down for *unionism*—unionism as understood by us and our brethren of the Synodical Conference and as it was understood by the Norwegian Synod of former years, namely: as defined according to the Word of God.—Let me here urge all to read "Unionism" by Prof. F. Pieper. It can be had in pamphlet form by addressing our Book Co.

The voices that were loud in demanding "the right to testify against such practice" have been stilled. During the intervening 8 years two—as far as the readers of the Norwegian Lutheran Church organs may know—have been heard, though occasions to testify against "such practice" have been legion.

Little wonder, therefore, that unionism is rife in the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America today.

Note the fraternal greetings exchanged with:

The Augustana Synod which fetes and banquets and receives into her pulpits the theologically nefarious Nathan Söderblom;

The Lutheran Free Church which to this day has not repudiated "En Aaben Erklæring" but has, if its official organ gives reliable information, discarded the doctrine of verbal inspiration;

The United Lutheran Church where masonry is not only tolerated but by many extolled as a force, cooperative with the church in establishing the Kingdom of God on earth.

This is disobedience to God who says: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." 2 John, 9—11.

What could be a more obvious form of unionism than the invitation extended and the reception given a representative of the decadent State Church of Norway a year ago? It was not the Rev. Mr. John Lunde, a private citizen of Oslo, Norway, that was overburdened with invitations to fill pulpits of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, it was the State Church of Norway, represented by the bishop of Oslo. Seldom, if ever, did the bishop forget to bring greetings from the king and church whose acknowledged representative he was.

That the State Church of Norway is honey-combed by all shades and degrees of modernism from church authorities down to the remotest "nordlands prest" and that all teach and preach

as they please, irrespective of the Lutheran confessions, is lamented by some and applauded by others but denied by none. "From such turn away." 2 Tim. 3, 5.

Can you conceive of Dr. Walther or of Dr. Wm. Koren or of Pres. H. A. Preus worshipping together with the many Lutheran heretics and others, if others there were, who were assembled to attend the Lutheran World Conference at Eisenach? Not as long as they remained true to the principles and confessions of the synods they founded and whose slogan was "It is written."

A representative of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, a pupil of the above named sainted pioneer builders of the orthodox Lutheran church in America, was there and has the effrontery to say that such participation has been "foolishly designated as unionism."

The line of least resistance, and the popular one, is to fall in with unionism. The bars being officially lowered it was but natural that the rank and file of pastors and congregations should find the removal of a disagreeable restraint refreshing, much as we see a herd of cattle enjoying a stubble field in the fall after a summers confinement to the regular pasture. 'Tis true, some of them hesitate to step over even the lowered bars to the formerly forbidden fields, but sooner or later, all enter.

The first instance of unionism practiced by an individual pastor and congregation of the Norwegian Lutheran Church that came to my attention, can be related in sufficient detail for our present purpose by reading the following:

"First English Lutheran Church Meeting, Feb. 27, 1918.

"A communication from Our Savior's Lutheran Church, was brought before the meeting, said communication to the effect that the English Lutheran Church, by having union Services with the Methodists, Congregational and Presbyterian Churches of Crookston, has thereby violated the Constitution of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America."

"The First English Lutheran Church takes this view upon the matter and will govern itself in the future accordingly, that such union services are a great benefit to all concerned and help to create a brotherly feeling among the different churches and at the same time helps to conserve fuel under present conditions."

"Moved and seconded that the First English Lutheran Church recognizes no breach of the Constitution of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, by participating in such union services when no doctrine is concerned, but will not participate where doctrine is discussed."

"Motion carried unanimously.

First English Lutheran Church,

By J. E. ERICKSON, Sec."

In fairness to the memory of Rev. J. M. Sundheim, then district president, I quote from a letter dated July 3, 1918: "I regret very much the unionistic occurrence in Roselands congregation at Crookston. The congregation has now acknowledged its wrong and has asked to be pardoned. Hope such a thing will not occur again."

Since then Roseland and his flock must have come to the conclusion that they had not done wrong after all for we find a Good Friday service of three hours devotion, 12 noon to 3 p. m. announced in the Crookston Daily Times, March 27, 1926 as follows:

— 12 Noon —

"Organ voluntary; Hymn 79; Good Friday prayers; Collects and Gospel; Notices; Hymn 101; Brief introductory address; Hymn 104.

— 12:20 —

Address, 'Father forgive them for they know not what they do.' Rev. L. A. Roseland, Norwegian Luth. Church; Silent prayer and devotion; Solo, 'Come unto Me'—Messiah—Mrs. G. Curtis.

— 12:45 —

Address, 'Verily I say unto thee, today thou shalt be with me in paradise,' Rev. C. H. McCrea—Methodist—(Hymns etc. omitted here and following.)

— 1:10 —

Address, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith He to the disciple, behold thy mother,' Rev. Davis—Congregational—

— 1:30 —

Address, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Rev. F. J. Hibbard—Presbyterian—

— 1:50 —

Address, 'I thirst,' Rev. P. E. Moen—Norwegian Lutheran Church—

— 2:15 —

Address, 'It is finished,' Rev. H. W. Knowles.

— 2:35 —

Address, 'Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,' Rev. G. G. Curtis.—Episcopalian—

The following news items are clipped from the Minneapolis Journal of March 18 and April 14 respectively.

"The Northeast Minneapolis Council of Churches will promote a series of Lenten services to be conducted in the Salem Mission Church, Eighteen and one half and Central Ave. N.E., from 12:15 to 12:50 p. m. daily, beginning Monday and continuing through Good Friday. Pastors of the protestant churches in the district will co-operate." The pastors mentioned as co-

operating were: Rev. A. H. Wilke, pastor of the St. Paulus Lutheran Church, Rev. Fred Stromberg of Ebenezer Methodist Church, Rev. O. L. Grefthen of Concordia Lutheran Church, Dr. C. O. Bemis of Shiloh-Bethany Church and Rev. R. A. Arlander of Elim Baptist Church.

"Rev. Roy L. Smith, pastor of Simpson Methodist church, will speak to the men's club of Concordia Lutheran church (Rev. O. L. Grefthen) tomorrow at 8 p. m., at a meeting to be conducted in the church, Fillmore street and twenty-second avenue N. E."

At Waterville, Iowa, a pastor of the Norwegian Lutheran Church opened the commencement exercises at the High School with invocation and closed same with the benediction after a Presbyterian minister had delivered the commencement address.

The Rev. Norman A. Madsen, while yet a member of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, had this experience: "In the spring of 1924 I was requested to speak at a large gathering of Lutherans near Armstrong, Iowa. When Rev. E. L. Lundy wrote me regarding the meeting he spoke of it as an annual get-together of the Scandinavians of that community. I replied that I would be glad to address the gathering if it were understood that it was not to be a service in which Danes, Swedes and Norwegians of various denominations were to fellowship, for that would be unionism. Some time later I was curtly told that my services would not be required, they had engaged *Formand H. C. Holm* to preach the sermon."

The Minneapolis Journal of April 21, 1926, reports that Rev. Geo. T. Rygh, pastor of Fifth English Lutheran Church, pronounced the benediction at a Good Will meeting conducted at Bethel synagogue, at which Jews were hosts to representative Catholics, Protestants and Negroes.

The hob-nobbing and general love feast indulged in by all shades of Protestants including the First Eng. Luth. church, Rev. Martin Anderson, pastor, at the dedication festivities of the Calvary Baptist church at Albert Lea, Minn., is too lengthy to relate in detail here. See Albert Lea Evening Tribune for March 20, 1926, and subsequent issues.

See also the same publication for the report of a "most remarkable service" held in the Presbyterian church of that city on Feb. 28, 1926, in honor of Rev. and Mrs. Lyle. The Episcopal pastor present is reported as saying: "I am most deeply impressed with the great congregation gathered at the Presbyterian church in honor of Dr. Lyle, and really more than the great numbers present is the diversity of churchmanship. There are those from the Swedish, Norwegian, Danish and German Lutheran churches. Others come from the Baptist, Methodist, and the Episcopal

churches as well as the Jewish synagogue. Verily we feel that one is our master and we are brethren."

This remarkable service whose spirit moved the Episcopal brother present to embrace all, even the Jews, and declare: "Verily, we are brethren" was presided over by Dr. Martin Anderson, a member of the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, who has since been promoted to greater fields of activity in the city of Chicago.

On account of all this display of unionism in the American Lutheran Church of today, we grieve and shudder, for we know unionism to be an insidious cancer from which few are healed. This, however, should not deter us but rather increase our earnestness and zeal in offering the one and only remedy that can effect a cure, namely: the Word of God. Let us not tire in applying this on ourselves, that the contagion may not reach us, and to others who are afflicted that they may by its inherent power and the grace of God be healed.

Triune God in heaven, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, Thou Who in very truth art present in Thy Word with all Thy gifts and all Thy grace, grant, we beseech Thee, that we may be brought to love this word more fervently, to use it more diligently, and if need be to sacrifice all the talents which Thou hast entrusted to us, in order that Thy divine word might be our and our children's joy in life, comfort in death, and exceeding great reward of grace in glory throughout all eternity. Amen.

THE CHRISTIAN DAY-SCHOOL

The committee for the cause of our Christian day-schools is grateful to the Synod for a place on her program. We know that Synod week is a most busy and valuable time, surely a poor time for the discussion of questions of little importance. In this respect, too, we should bear in mind that we are only stewards, who will once be called upon to give an account of the way in which we have used God's golden hours of time. Now were the Christian nurture of our children of little importance, this committee would have acted presumptuously in asking for a whole session for its consideration, and at the same time our synodical officers would have proven unfaithful to the best interests of our Church by the granting of this time-allotment.

Surely none of us consider the feeding of Christ's lambs of little importance. But do we all regard this part of our church work as of *prime* importance? Brethren, is not the danger lurking unpromisingly near to look upon this branch of our Christian work with questioning eyes and faintheartedness, if not downright disinterest, and—am I sinning against charity when I add—with hidden hostility? Yes, but is it not possible to have "zeal of God, but not according to knowledge" in this matter too?

Can we not also here go to absurd extremes? In reply we need only ask: Are any of us *too* enlightened and *too* concerned about the shepherding of Christ's lambs? Can it with a show of right be charged against us, that our zeal for the spiritual welfare of our children "hath eaten us up?" No, as little danger as there is of becoming too spiritual—I mean truly spiritual—just as little danger is there that we shall become over zealous in nurturing our children. Friends, does not all the danger rather lie in the other direction? Oh, that our zeal might here know no bounds, for then we would come close to looking upon our little ones through the eyes of our Savior! And in the hope that our zeal in this respect might be increased, we have chosen as text for the spiritual character-building of our children one of Christ's most heart-searching commands of love, "Feed my lambs." But we shall read the whole verse: "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my lambs." John 21, 15.

The setting of our text is so familiar that it scarcely needs repetition. We at once recall Peter's deep fall in the court of the High Priest's palace. In spite of his carnal boastings to the contrary, Peter had shamefully denied his Savior thrice. But though Peter had denied his Master, Peter's Master did not deny His disciple. While Peter in shame perhaps never would have dared come to Christ again, still the Savior in His compassionate love turns again to Peter. Though Gethsemane lay just behind Him, and Gabbatha and Golgatha just before Him, nevertheless the suffering Savior turns to His disciple, not in reply to a plea for mercy, as was the case with the thief on the right a few hours later; no, entirely unsolicited the Savior turns His weary head, and looks at Peter. What a look it must have been! It pierced his heart, and sounded His soul, for "he went out and wept bitterly." Later, too, it was none other than Peter who was the object of Christ's most tender "sjælesorg." Were not the ladies at the grave to bring a special message to Peter, the very one who had cursed Him? Oh, what a heart our Savior had, and still has, especially for His weak, fallen disciples! No wonder even Moses of old was moved to exclaim: "Yea, he loved the people." Truly He loved His people; He loved them first, and He never ceases to love.

And here in our text we find the resurrected Savior in earnest conversation with repentant Peter. Hear His heart-searching question, which He repeats thrice, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" And thrice the humiliated Simon unhesitatingly answers, "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." Then, upon the disciple's assurances of love, but not be-

fore, the Chief Shepherd solemnly charges His under shepherd, "Feed my lambs."

We cannot but notice that Christ is no longer satisfied with mere word-assurances of love. Peter had used big words before, but they had meant nothing. Now the Savior wants, not words only, but also works, not lip-service merely—how entirely too much of such service we find among His disciples even today—but love-service, real service. Nor can we but notice the nature of Christ's command to His disciple. The Savior does not ask Peter to erect a magnificent memorial to His memory, to institute a crusade or drive for Him, or to spend his life in prayer and meditation in some secluded spot, or to expose himself to self-sought persecution, nay not even to die for Christ's name's sake. No, none of all these things. Our Savior simply says, "Feed my lambs." Fellow disciples, what a lesson!—also for us. We take then as theme:

Christ's Clear Command to His Christians: Feed my Lambs.

1. *Who* shall be fed?
2. *What* shall Christ's lambs be fed?
3. *Who* shall feed the lambs of Christ?

There can be no doubt about the answer to our first question; for Christ Himself answers so clearly, "Feed my lambs." 'Tis true, He later speaks of sheep. He even mentions them twice, but He does not mention them first. And in that He mentions sheep, does He not thereby also include the lambs, just as we include infants in the general term "nation"? In reality then Christ mentions the lambs three times. He is above all concerned about them first; for the Good Shepherd knew very well that there would be very few sheep, if the lambs were not taken care of as *lambs*.

"Feed my lambs." Our Savior here presupposes the new birth through the "washing of regeneration," Holy Baptism; for by nature all of us, parents and children, sheep and lambs, are outside the spiritual fold. The Savior here then is speaking of the little children that have been made His lambs through Baptism. Then the Chief Shepherd in turn gives the lambs back to us—true, they are no longer ours by rights; they are now Christ's lambs, entrusted to our care only. Therefore Christ's clear command ever resounds: "Feed my lambs. I have thought of them from eternity, I have bought them in time, I have sought them and through the Means of Grace wrought the life of faith in their hearts. Feed now my lambs."

The lambs of Christ are to be fed. Only life can be fed; but life *must* be fed, else it will soon cease to be life. Is it not true that all life, as we generally conceive of life, begins with a birth? and is not that life conditioned by the food and care that it receives? If this vitally fundamental law of life is only seen and

admitted—for then we dare hope that some time it will be practiced—we can continue our discussion with joyful hope. But if this truth isn't seen, or, if seen, suppressed, then there is little hope, then almost all is lost. We repeat once more, for it is so important: Oh, that we would only apply the simple laws of physical life to the spiritual life of our children! If we only would, but how many of us do? Verily, here too, "the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light."

Would not most parents feel terrible to hear that their children were being underfed physically? How quickly they would take effective steps to supply this absolutely essential condition for the bodily welfare of their little ones. But how often do we find mothers and fathers among our church people who are vitally concerned about the spiritual, eternal welfare of the immortal souls of these same children, flesh of their flesh, and blood of their blood? Verily, we are "of the earth, earthy."

The feeding of life implies and demands repetition, and the younger life, the greater the need of repetition. The child must be fed often, not only once in a while, but again, and again, and again. Nor is this oft-repeated feeding to be done in a haphazard way. No, feeding also implies regularity. We don't feed a normal child every hour one day, the next day perhaps only once, the next two or three days not at all, and then to make up for past neglect, gorge the child with food again for a couple of days. You are tempted to smile at such physical feeding; rather should we weep over our manner of spiritual feeding.

A distinguished doctor once made the significant statement that most of the stomach troubles that arise in later life may be traced back to malnutrition in the days of childhood. And may we not with like truth state that most of our spiritual and church troubles may be traced back to spiritual malnutrition in the days of childhood? Haven't the brother pastors with a heavy heart often felt that the spiritual life created in Baptism had been starved out of the child's heart even before it presented itself for Confirmation instruction?

"Feed by lambs." The Greek word used here for lamb is the diminutive for lamb, *little* lamb. And the very word *lamb* at once suggests weakness, the most urgent need of solicitous care.

Let us not, therefore, delude ourselves into believing that surely there can be no haste here. Let us not give ear to this lie from the father of lies. The little lambs must be fed as lambs, and delay here may cause damage that never can be repaired in later life. Or is the late summer as favorable as early spring for the sowing of seed? Or can the blacksmith just as well wait until the iron has commenced to cool before shaping? Or

the potter till the soft clay has set? In like manner, friends, we must in the spiritual feeding of our children make use of the golden hours of *now*, lest our hopes shall forever be buried in the graveyard of neglected opportunities. "The warp and woof of Christian character are necessarily wrought out in the school period of life, if at all. All know that ideas cannot become the permanent possession of the world, unless they enter through the doors of childhood." "If we are to stamp the image of Christ on a child's mind, it must be done in the early, susceptible years."

Do not the words "feed" and "lambs" clearly indicate and select the proper schools for our children? Do not these terms place the true, spiritual evaluation upon the Sunday school, the summer school, or the one hour a week school? We do not say that these substitutes are entirely without value, but who among us can, in the light of God's word, seriously and conscientiously maintain that such schools can properly and adequately feed our children, Christ's little lambs? Peter never forgot this clear command, for he comes back to it again and again in his epistles. May we never forget it!

II.

WHAT shall Christ's lambs be fed?

In this connection we are reminded of the famous actor's reply to a foolish preacher's question: "What do you consider the secret of your success as an actor?" he was asked by the preacher. At once came the reply: "The reason of my success as an actor is this, that I have learned to play a fictitious part as though it were real, whereas I have noticed that you preachers often play a real part as though it were unreal."

Surely there can be no question among us Lutheran Christians as to what Christ's lambs shall be fed. Have we in reality other food than the word of God, "the bread of life come down from heaven?" We have a saying that a man is what he eats. This applies also to spiritual life. In fact, spiritual life is *conditioned* by the word of God from beginning to end. Therefore our same Peter later urgently admonishes, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." And our Luther sums up everything in his clear, classic style by saying, "For to feed the sheep is nothing but proclaiming to them the word of God, that is, true faith." As Christian shepherds, parents, pastors, and teachers, we shall lead the lambs and the sheep to the green pastures and the still waters of God's word, and not only "place the food before them," as Dr. Ylvisaker reminds us in his "De Fire Evangelier", but "give them food, wholesome, nourishing food in pure word and sacrament according to the individual needs."

And why is it that the word of God alone can feed the soul? Because His word is "spirit and life," aye God Himself. In the 81st Psalm God says, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." I will be there in my word and speak to you. And does not Paul in the New Testament call the Gospel "the word of faith"? On the strength of this divine statement Laache strikingly says: "The glorified Savior is in the word—Christ Himself, not only His doctrine, and Spirit, and power; He Himself is there, and therefore He is in me, and I in Him."

And friends, should it demand such deep spiritual insight to see the fundamental and vital necessity of a thorough indoctrination of our children in the word of God? Does not this belong to the very a. b. c's of Christianity? And do not the very terms used by God Himself to describe the word indicate this most clearly and emphatically? "Seed of life," "bread of life," "light of the world," "word of reconciliation," "power of God unto salvation," "sword of the Spirit," etc.

And did not the Son of God die on the tree for the sins of the whole world? And are not now all the merits of our Savior's life and death brought to us in and through the word? And does not God the Holy Ghost through this self-same word open our hearts to accept the full and free salvation earned for us all by our Savior-Substitute? Or is not this true? But is not then the WORD our "all in all," the center and circumference, the beginning, the continuation, and the crown of our spiritual life? And should now this word be left out, or at best given a subordinate place in the nurturing of our children, Christ's lambs? When we do so, are we then playing a real part in a real way?

We remind you again of the doctor's significant statement. that most of the stomach troubles of later life can be traced back to malnutrition in the days of childhood. Malnutrition, not caused necessarily by the lack of food, but by the lack of a proper balance. We hear much in our keenly sensitive materialistic age about a balanced food-diet for our children. But can we call this a balanced soul-diet for Christ's lambs. Several hours of the week devoted to stocking your child's mind with interesting knowledge concerning the geography of this world, and then on top of all this hurriedly crowd in a skimp half-hour at Sunday school for instruction in the geography of the land that lies above the skies? Several hours a week to the study of language, in order that our children might learn to master their mother-tongue—and perhaps other tongues—and then just a few minutes a week in learning to speak the language of grace, the *only* tongue that shall be spoken in heaven? As much time as possible, often years and years, to the study of the book of man's mind, but as little time as possible to the study of the *Book* of books, the *only* revelation of the mind of God to our salvation?

Can we as Christians call this a balanced diet for our children?

And can any other school but the Christian day-school offer such a balanced soul-diet to our children? While other schools may produce intellectual giants, or even moral masters—outwardly then—yet there is only *one* power that can produce true, spiritual character, and that power is the *Word* of God. Now parents as a rule are much concerned about good schools for their children, and it is not unusual to see parents moving from place to place, often at a material loss, in order to secure such school advantages for their children. Nor is it unusual, sad to say, to see the unspiritual spectacle of Christian parents passing by, or despising in their mental vanity the *best* school in the world, the school of the Word, where God the Father is the Superintendent, God the Holy Ghost the Instructor, and God's Son, the Savior of the world, the Life and the Light thereof! Friends, we may be certain, that the schools that rank highest in the standards of the world, have no accreditation in heaven.

Yes, all you say sounds good and well, but we have at close range seen the workings of these schools that you in your zeal speak so highly of. We have observed some of the products of such schools, and so far from being a credit to their Savior and His Church, several of them have been disgraces. And nothing that you have said or can say shall alter the true condition of affairs. With sorrow we admit that there is truth, some truth, in what you say, but dare you follow your statements out to their logical conclusions. Would you, for example, urge the covering up of the cross of Christ to the eyes of a sinful world, because humanity in general crucifies the Son of God afresh? Or would you urge the converting of our churches into club-houses, because some church-members, and even pastors, live just like the world? Or because some people in later years take their own life by committing suicide, would you on that account discourage the future physical feeding of your children?

Instead, therefore, of criticizing God's accredited schools of the Word, will you not rather reexamine the relation of your soul-life to this same word of God? Has not the word been the greatest power in your life? What was it that first brought you to see your helpless, lost condition, if not the word of the Lamb? And, then, what was it that brought you to see the glorious grace of God in Christ Jesus, your Savior, if not the word of the Gospel? Is not, therefore, the WORD your light in darkness, your comfort in sorrow, your strength in weakness, your sword in battle, your life in death? And what other plea will you urge before the judgment-throne of the Holy God in heaven than this same word of grace, which assures to you the merits of your Savior? Surely then you won't want to deprive your children of a rich measure of this same treasure-word! For, as Luther

urges again and again, "We can be assured of a certainty that the soul can be without everything except God's word, and without that it has profit of nothing."

As Lutherans, therefore, we must ever insist upon the thorough word-feeding of our children, whom we are to bring up, not for the kingdom of this world, but for the kingdom of heaven. When we cease to do this, we are no longer true Lutherans, no matter how much we may boast of that name. For Lutherans are *word* Christians, and when we cease to feed the word of God, we at once leave the very foundation and condition of our faith; then we deny in reality the way of salvation, and the efficacy of the Means of Grace; we become "sværmere," who rely in the last instance upon the spirit of chance, instead of upon the Spirit of God, Who works in and through the word.

It does not surprise us, then, to find that Luther, our spiritual father, was an ardent champion of elementary Christian education. Hear how powerfully he pleads: "I would advise no one to send his child to a school where the word of God is not in supreme control, and is taught unceasingly, lest the child's soul perish." And in his zeal he even went so far as to urge the placing of the sign "a den of thieves" over every institution of learning where the word of God was excluded. But in spite of all this, is it not a fact of common observance to see those who glory, 'tis true in Luther's name, people who in the heat of doctrinal warfare are apparently willing to sacrifice all things for the truth of God's word, but who later on are not only unwilling to sacrifice anything to *preserve* that same truth, but even turn their weapons against those who are sacrificing and fighting for adequate instruction for their children in this word of truth? Is not that to begin in the Spirit, but to finish in the flesh? Cf. Gal. 3, 3.

No, as long as there are true Lutherans, strong, mature, "erkjendelsesrike" Lutherans among us, so long will our God-given leader's fervent, courageous, almost militant voice be heard above the dust and din of this earth: "I will speak and not be silent, as long as I live, until the righteousness of Christ shall go forth as brightness, and I want to tell you, my friends, with all boldness and confidence, that if you obey me in this matter (Luther is pleading for Christian Schools for the children) you undoubtedly are not obeying me but Christ, and whosoever will not obey me, does not despise me, but Christ."

III.

WHO shall feed the lambs of Christ?

Here too our text answers in no uncertain terms. "Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" Three times Christ asks, "lovest thou me?" But one conclusion can be drawn: Only Christ's disciples, those who

love Christ, shall feed His lambs. Christ has never commissioned the State—though we fully recognize the right and duty of the State to educate those who otherwise would grow up as illiterate, and therefore undesirable citizens, aye as Christians it is God's will that we should implore Him to bless the State also in this work—but never has God commanded the State or any other institution to teach His lambs. On the contrary, His word abounds with clear commands and precious promises to His individual Christians, especially parents then, and to the gathering of His Christians into congregations. "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Dent. 6, 6—7. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Matt 28, 20. "And, ye fathers, . . . bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Eph. 6, 4. And our text. "Feed my lambs."

First of all, love for our children should prompt such feeding. And should it be so difficult for us to love our children, our own flesh and blood? "For no one ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church." Eph. 5, 29. In temporal things there is usually no need of inducements to love our children, but how slow and sluggish we all are in our spiritual concern for them. But powerful as the true love for our children should prompt us to feed Christ's lambs, still more powerful a motive should the love of Christ be, our love to Christ, but even above that Christ's all-constraining love to us, unworthy sinners.

"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" It is very significant that Christ here makes use of the word for love that indicate and demands strong, fervent love. Such love is needed if we are to really *feed* Christ's lambs. Later, in speaking of the sheep, the Master uses a milder word for love, a word that indicates a desire, a longing to love, as much as to say, it takes less fervency of love to feed the sheep than the lambs. And what pastor doesn't find it comparatively easier and more pleasant to preach to his flock on Sunday than to thoroughly instruct the children during the week?

"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me *more* than these?" Christ hereby undoubtedly refers first of all to Peter's boasted more-than-the-others devotion to the Savior. But are we stretching the application too far when we include also other things in the comparative "more than these?" "Lovest thou me more than" public opinion, be it scorn or commendation, "lovest thou me more than" goods and gold, "more than" success and sacrifice,

"lovest thou me more than these," then "feed my lambs." Just you and no one else is to feed my lambs.

But all that you have urged throughout your whole paper can just as well, aye far better, apply only to the home. True, but what is a school but a number of families together? And what scriptural right do we have to entrust our children to any institution that does not continue to build on the foundation of our home, in other words, to a place where Christ's lambs are not fed. If your home is not a Christian home—and we fear that there are all too many such within the very shadows of our churches—then we have little to say, then exhortation and admonition will be in vain; but if your home is a Christian home, and you still send your children to an institution where only the mind is fed, are you not continuing to build on the only foundation, "which is Jesus Christ," "with hay and stubble?" 1 Cor. 3, 11—12.

Christian mothers and fathers, Oh, that you would rise in your love and in your might, and, by the grace of God, resolve: "Our children shall at no cost be deprived of a full measure of what our Savior has called "the one thing needful." If we cannot leave them a piece of property, not a foot of ground, we will leave them the certain hope of the heavenly mansions in the land of eternity. If we can leave them no gold or silver, we will leave them that which is worth far more than fine gold, God's word and Luther's doctrine pure." If we cannot leave our children a memory honored by the vain world, we will leave them that which is far better, the memory of a mother and father whose names are honored in heaven, whose works of love and sacrifice for the word of God do follow them. Cf. Rev. 14, 13.

Oh, the glory of it! To minister in true love to Christ's lambs, our own children, to feed their souls with "the bread of life come down from heaven," to guide them on the perilous way to the promised land, to train them in the skillful use of "the sword of the Spirit," that they might vanquish all their dread enemies with the victorious watchword, "It is written;" and then, at last, to meet them at the golden gates of the heavenly fold, where we can joyfully deliver them over into the loving hands of the Chief Shepherd with the exclamation of triumph, "Here am I, and the lambs which thou gavest me to feed!" What a meeting that will be!

Justin A. Petersen.

What shall the lambs be fed?

Lambs must have milk. They can not do without it. There is no substitute for pure milk. It is easy to digest and contains all the food elements that are needed for the nourishment and development of a growing lamb. For the lambs of Christ there is only one food that will do: the unadulterated milk of the Word. As newborn babes long and cry for their milk and grow thereby to become strong men and women so the children of God, newly born in holy Baptism should have the pure milk of the Word set before them that they may grow thereby in knowledge and faith unto salvation. To feed the sheep, is nothing but proclaiming to them the Word of God, says Luther. By the "milk of the Word" we mean the chief teachings of God's Word as we have them presented to us, for instance in Luther's Small Catechism.

The one and only purpose of Holy Scripture is to make us "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." This saving faith was engendered in the hearts of our little children through holy Baptism, but now it must also be nourished, strengthened, and preserved as they advance in years. That can not be done in any other way than by teaching them the Word of God. Most emphatically Holy Writ, again and again impresses upon us the paramount importance of teaching children the Word of God. In His last great commission to His church, Our Savior did not only say: "*Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,*" but He also added these significant words: "and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Deut. 6, 6, 7: "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Ps. 78, 5—7. "For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments." Eph. 6, 4. "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Notice that Jesus says: "My lambs." They belong to Him. He is their shepherd, their teacher, their guide, their leader. Therefore it is His office to feed them. But now Jesus comes to us and blesses us and feeds our souls only through His Word.

Little lambs of Jesus can be properly fed only when they are brought to Him. Hence also the urgent request of the Savior: "Suffer the little children to come unto me." He says of His sheep: "They hear my voice." They must learn to know His voice. We can not feed them; we can only bring them to Jesus so that He may feed them by making Himself known unto them as their Shepherd and Redeemer. In order that they may thus be brought to Jesus, it is necessary that they be taught the law of God so that they be led to a knowledge of their sin and corruption and the divine curse under which it places them. "The law is our school-master to bring us unto Christ." Its main purpose is to show them their need of a Savior. But above all must they come to a knowledge of Christ as their Redeemer, who atoned for their guilt, imparted and sealed God's favor to them in holy Baptism, daily cleanses them from their sins by His blood, and adorns them with the garments of His merits, so that they stand justified before God; a crown of imperishable glory being reserved for them in heaven. Thus they grow in the knowledge of Christ, so that He becomes more precious to them day by day; thus they have their faith nourished and strengthened and their hope of heaven confirmed. Thus they grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. (Eph. 4, 15). At the same time they learn to distinguish between truth and error, so that they are not carried about by every wind of doctrine. They will follow Jesus only: for they know His voice, "And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." Grounded in the saving truths, they are prepared to give a reason of the hope that is in them and contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. The love of God being shed abroad in their hearts, they delight to live in prayerful communion with Him and to do what is pleasing to Him. Spurning the principles and the ways of the world and of erring Christians, they permit themselves to be governed by God's Word alone and by word and deed reprove the works of darkness. Then little children are brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; thus they are fed by their Good Shepherd.

And this feeding must not be done spasmodically. That will never do. A child that shall grow and develop normally must have frequent and regular nourishment. An irregular diet will soon show itself in the undernourishment of the body. And so the spiritual life of a lamb of Christ must receive constant and regular nourishment in order that it may continue to live, to grow and develop. A brief half hour on Sunday, a few weeks of intensive feeding during the vacation months, will not answer the purpose.

A lamb of Christ should constantly be with Him, be led by Him, hear His voice, be fed by Him. Never should it be allowed

to stray away from "the green pastures and the still waters of His Word." How can this be accomplished? Under our conditions the Christian day-school is without doubt the best means to this end. There is no institution which so well provides food for the lambs of Christ. For here the entire instruction, also that in the secular branches, is permeated by the Word of God. True, we desire our children to be fit for the duties and pursuits of this life, we do not intend our children to neglect the studies of the public school: arithmetic, geography, reading, etc. We want to develop their intellect and increase their knowledge. But above all we want them to solve the Biblical problem in profit and loss. "What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Gain the world, lose his soul. What is the profit? We would have them study geography, we would have them know about the mountains, the rivers, the oceans, the cities, but above all we would have them look to the hills whence cometh our help, the rivers, the oceans of God's love in Christ Jesus, and we want them to know about Jerusalem, the Golden City, and the way that leads thereto. So while we give our children the instruction that they need for this life, we always want to bear in mind that the main thing is to feed their souls, and all instruction, also that in the secular branches, should be subservient to this object.

Our children are not only in need of knowledge; they must also be trained. They must not only learn to know the true way, but they must also be taught to walk in that way. They are constantly in need of reproof, correction, encouragement, admonition. "Teach them to *observe* all things whatsoever I have commanded you," says the Savior. Their old Adam must be drowned, their evil inclinations must be restrained. In other words, they should constantly be under Christian discipline which is nothing else than to apply to them the words of God according to their needs.

Oh, what wonderful fruits we would reap, if the lambs of Christ were thus brought up on the sincere milk of the Word; were constantly at home and in Christian schools under the care and guidance of their Good Shepherd to whom they were given in Holy Baptism.

You do not want to deprive your children of the food that they need for their bodily life. You would rather starve yourself than have your children starve. Should you then want to deprive their precious souls of the heavenly manna? Should you not be willing to bring the greatest sacrifices and to overcome the hardest obstacles in order that their Good Shepherd may make them to lie down in the green pastures and lead them beside the still waters and finally gather them safely within His heavenly sheepfold?

L. S. Guttebø.

Christ's Clear Command to His Disciples: "Feed my Lambs"

John 21, 15.

I.

Who shall be fed? Lambs. Christ's Lambs.

Three times Jesus asked Peter: "Lovest thou me?" Three times Peter gave the earnest and sincere answer that He, the all-knowing God, knew that he loved him. After the first answer Christ gave the command: "Feed my lambs." After the other two: "Feed my sheep."

Note this that the very first command He gave was, "Feed my lambs," note this for this was a command given, not only to Peter but to you, to me, to every one who loves Christ. Our love to Christ shall spur us on to feed His flock, and we shall begin with the lambs as He teaches us here.

But who are the lambs? From John 10 we learn that His sheep are the believers. He says: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life." His lambs, then, are the little children who have become His through baptism.

In Mark 10 Jesus also gives this loving command: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God."

a) *These lambs are your children.* Dear fathers, mothers, the most precious gift God has intrusted to your care, are your children. He has given you many other gifts. He has given you money and property, houses and homes. But all that will perish. All that you must leave behind when you die. But your children you will not leave behind. They will follow you into eternity. Your children, have not only a body, created most wonderfully by the almighty God, but they have a soul. A soul that is immortal. A soul that will continue to live when the body dies. A soul that on the last day, the day of judgment will be reunited with their bodies. Your children, your boys and your girls, will on that last day be placed, either on Christ's right hand, or His left. They shall then hear, either these joyful words: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Or these dreadful words: "Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Yes, your children, your boys, your girls, will then depart either into "everlasting punishment," or they will enter into "life eternal."

You love your children with a most tender love. How does

it not pain you when your children are sick and suffering! How does it not pierce your heart when they cry in pain. How do you not heartily sympathize with them when it happens, f. ex. that they come home from school or from play crying, possibly bleeding, because they have been mistreated by their playmates! Can you then bear the thought that any of these your children shall spend the endless, yes the endless eternity, in the place where there shall be eternal weeping and gnashing of teeth? In the place "Where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched?" Can you bear the thought that any of your children, when they die, shall, like the rich man, open their eyes in hell, where they everlastingly shall be tormented in that flame?

No, you can not. Would you not then do everything in your power to save your children from this most dreadful fate, that they instead may, during all eternity, enjoy the wonderful bliss of heaven? Would you not gladly offer up every cent that you have, if that was necessary, and suffer every inconvenience, if that was required?

Dear parents,—let me appeal particularly to you fathers and mothers in the second division. You will hear that this is something which concerns not only the parents, but the entire *congregation*, all those who love Jesus. Dear fathers, mothers, the main reason why God has intrusted children to your care, is that you shall care for their spiritual welfare, that you shall care for them in such a way that they will not be condemned, but saved. For the Lord says: "Our conversation is in heaven," (Phil. 3, 20), not on earth. For this reason He commands you to bring up your children in the "nurture and the admonition of the Lord." (Eph. 6, 4). He says: "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and His righteousness: and all these things shall be added to you." Matt. 6, 33. Are you doing this? What is it that you *first* of all seek for your children? Is it their bodily or spiritual welfare? What is it that you first of all seek to prepare them for? Is it this life, or is it for the life to come? What is it you are spending the most money for? Is it for their bodily life, or is it for their spiritual life? Are you sending your children to the state schools 8—9 months of the year, where they are prepared for this life only, where they cannot be taught anything concerning the kingdom of God and His righteousness? Are you, possibly sending them to Sunday schools, where they one day in the week, and one hour or less during that day receive instruction concerning the one thing needful? Or are you sending them to summer school, during the vacation, during the hottest part of the summer, when it is exceedingly difficult for children and teachers to do their best? Is that to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness? Is not that to seek first the things of this world, trusting that the kingdom of God shall be added

to you? Are you not also thereby leaving the impression with your children for them to carry through their life, that what one first of all shall strive to obtain, are things pertaining to this world, and that the kingdom of God shall be a side-issue?

Or do you besides sending them to the state schools to be prepared for this life, which also is of importance, teach your children at home concerning the kingdom of God and His righteousness? Do you do this every day, many times a day, regularly, constantly? Do you live up to the command of God in Deut. 6, 6. 7.: "And these words which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest on the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Do you do this? If not, you need the Christian day-school where the teacher, in your stead, will talk to your children about these things many times a day, where your child's entire education will be under the guidance of God's Word.

But it costs money. It may be very inconvenient. You may incur the ill will and even persecution of many of your fellow men. What does that all matter when the question is to live up to the command of God regarding your children? What does it matter when the question is to save your child from spending eternity in the fire of hell that it instead may gain the eternal joys of heaven?

Would you not be willing to offer up all things to save your child? A brother pastor told me a short time ago of a father who had a wayward son. As the prodigal son, he had left his heavenly Father. All admonitions seemed in vain. At last the son landed in the state prison. My friend then went to see the father of this boy, expecting to find him bowed down in the deepest grief of sorrow. To his surprise he found him in good cheer, for now, the father said in explanation, I believe the Lord will find him. And he did. Behind the prison bars his wayward son, by the wonderful grace of God, returned to his Savior and became an instrument in bringing other prisoners to Christ. Now even the great dishonor and sorrow that the son was cast into prison, did not matter for the father, if only his boy was saved.

This should be our attitude. Nothing should matter, if only we and our children become so grounded and rooted in God's Word that we may overcome the temptations of Satan, that we may remain in faith, that we may be saved for heaven. How does a tree become rooted and grounded, strong and mighty, able to stand against all manner of storms? It begins with the seedling, with the twig. From the very beginning it must constantly, day after day, year after year, receive strength from the ground. Constantly it must be under the influence of sunshine and rain.

So in spiritual matters. Now more than ever it is necessary that our children become rooted and grounded in faith that they may be able to withstand the many storms of temptations in the world. From the time they are little children they must constantly, daily, many times a day draw strength from the wonderful storehouse, the Word of God, and thus become rooted and grounded in their faith. Is it not, then, necessary to have a Christian day-school? What does it matter if it costs money. What does it matter if we suffer the ill will and persecution of the world. What does it all matter if only our children are saved!

b) But Christ says: "Feed *my* lambs." They are not only yours. They are His. Yes, above all they are His. They have only been intrusted to your care. They are His, because He has made them: "Fearfully and wonderfully." (Ps. 139). They are His, because He has redeemed them with His life blood. You love your children. It hurts you to see them suffer. You cannot bear the thought that they be cast into hell. God the Father in heaven has an only begotten Son. This Son He loves a thousand times more than it is possible for you to love your children. For God is love. Any love that you have is only a tiny spark of that great flame of love in God. And still He gave that only begotten Son to live a whole life in suffering for your sake and for the sake of your children. The torments were so great, so dreadful that His sweat became as blood and fell upon the ground. He gave this His only begotten Son to be shamefully mistreated by His enemies, to be spitted on, to be hit in the face, to be mocked, to be crowned with thorns, to be nailed to the cross there, to die slowly the most painful death. God the Father gave His only begotten Son to suffer all this, and to die this painful and shameful death in order to save you and your children from eternal suffering. O, how He must love you and your children! What a world of meaning is not contained in this verse of the Bible, John 3, 16: "God so loved the world, that He *gave* His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not **perish, but have everlasting life.**"

By this His redemptive work that cost Him so much, so much pain, and such a dreadful death, He has procured full salvation for you and your children. Surely, you have been "bought with a price." (1 Cor. 6. 20). And this salvation which cost Him his life blood, He gave to your children in baptism. They became *His*. He had bought them with a price. And now He gave them over to you, fathers and mothers and congregation, that you should take care of them for Him, to take care of them in such a way that they do not lose this precious gift of salvation which cost Him His life blood. He gave them over to you that you should feed these His lambs. If you neglect this duty, they may die of starvation, die the spiritual death. That means they

will lose the wonderful gift of salvation. Christ will have died for them in vain. Their soul will be required of your hand.

But if you conscientiously, diligently, regularly give your children that spiritual food, if you partake of it yourself, if you, by the grace of God, remain steadfast unto the end, you can on that last great day, surrounded by your children, say with joy: "Here I am, and the children which God hath given me." O, may God give us grace to feed His Lambs. Amen.

O. M. Gullerud.

Forretningsfager

Arbeidskomiteer ved mødet.

Indbuds-komite: P. A. Widdbey, J. E. Quill og Ole Kittelsland.

Komite for formandens indberetning: L. S. Guttebø, B. Garstad og Ole P. Tveden.

Nominations-komite: H. Ingebritson, John Hendricks, J. E. Thoen, G. Riland og J. G. Sime.

Komite til at forestaa mødernes aabning: N. L. Guttebø. Denne og de følgende komiteer nomineredes af formanden og valgtes af synoden.

Korrespondance komite for bladene: N. A. Madsen, Chr. Anderson, og J. A. Moldstad.

Program-komite: A. J. Torgerson, M. J. Mommensen og O. M. Gullerud.

Komite for pengefager: J. A. Moldstad, E. Hansen og John Johnson.

Komite for indremission: L. S. Guttebø, N. A. Madsen og Frer Natvig.

Komite for hedningemission: H. M. Tjernagel, H. A. Preus og Knut Opheim.

Komite for høiere læreanstalter: A. J. Torgerson, J. E. Thoen, E. A. Moldstad, og Martin Stene.

Komite for negermission: E. Sande, G. E. Møller og L. M. Thoresen.

Komite for barmhjertighedsarbeide: E. R. Peterson, Chr. Anderson og Nils Løberg.

Komite for menigheds-skolen: B. Garstad, E. J. Quill og Thomas Heller.

Komite for Church Extension: John Hendricks, O. M. Gullerud og Elling George.

Komite for publikationer: A. J. Strand, J. Mækkan og G. B. Stephens.

Komite for prestekonf. protokoller: P. A. Widdbey, O. Olman-son og Theo. Ellingsen.

Komite for resolutioner: L. P. Jensen og G. A. Gullixson.

Komite til ligelig fordeling af presters reisendgifter: Adolf Garstad.

Staaende komiteer for næste aar.

Indremissions-komite: H. M. Tjernagel, G. A. Gullixson, J. B. Unseth, hr. Hans Sande og J. G. Sime.

Hedningemisjonskomite: S. E. Mvisaker, L. S. Guttebø, J. Strand, hr. E. J. Onstad og Mvin Drotning. Den første tjener som Synodens repræsentant i 3 aar paa Foreign Mission Board af Missouri Synoden.

Komite for høiere skoler: N. A. Madson, M. F. Rommsen, S. Angebrifson, advokat Knut Dahlen og hr. Martin Stene.

Komite for negermission: J. E. Thoen, som medlem af Board of Colored Mission i Synodalkonferensen.

Komite for Church Extension: E. Hansen, E. N. Peterson og hr. Knut Opheim.

Forslagskomite: John Hendricks, S. A. Preus og land. J. A. Runholt.

Komite for barmhjertighedsarbejde: J. A. Moldstad, hr. O. E. Hobland og S. Bergengren.

Komite for finanser: O. M. Gullerud, E. J. Quill og hr. Oscar Svenson.

Generalsekretær: For Minneapolis, Chr. Anderson; for Chicago, G. A. Gullixson.

Redaktører, for Tidende: J. A. Moldstad; for Sentinel: N. A. Madson og som manager for jidsnævnte, G. A. Gullixson.

Forretningsfører for disse blade: S. A. Preus.

* * *

Valg af trustees for tre aar: Edward M. Edwards og G. A. Gullixson.

Komite til at forberede til næste møde sagen angaaende visitatorer: S. M. Tjernagel, Chr. Anderson, L. S. Guttebø, hr. John Førde og Nels Spangelo.

Repræsentant til Synodalkonferensen dette aar: E. A. Moldstad; suppleant, J. E. Thoen.

Indberetninger fra staaende komiteer.

Indremission:

Komiteen for indremission har i aarets løb holdt flere møder. Den forrige komite havde gjort alle bevilgninger for det afsluttede fjfalaar (1925—1926). Komiteen maatte dog gøre flere bevilgninger til. Vi takker Gud, at han har aabnet hjerterne saa, at vi ogsaa iaar kunde afflutte regnskaberne uden gjæld.

Komiteen udstedte kald til to nye arbejdere; kandidat Erling Mvisaker til East Madison og kandidat Joseph R. Runholt til Minneapolis.

S. A. M o l d s t a d, sek.

Report of the Foreign Mission Committee:

On all hands our missionaries report wide doors and golden opportunities, if sufficient funds and workers could be supplied.

But it has been a discouraging thing to see the deficit in the Foreign Mission treasury steadily increase, so that it at present amounts to approximately \$100,000.00. At the recent Delegate Convention of the Missouri Synod, held this month in St. Louis, Mo., it was, however, resolved to include this debt in the general budget of the Synod; and it was furthermore resolved to appropriate the huge sum of \$343,000.00 in addition to the regular budget allowance for current expenses, to be used for the purchase of land and the erection of buildings on the mission field. One-third of this money was set aside for India, two-thirds for China. We would urge our members to contribute generously toward this fund.

It will be a cause for gratification to the members of our Synod to know that another worker has gone out from our circle, this time to India. Miss Anena Christensen, a graduate of Lutheran Normal School, Sioux Falls, 1915, after four years in the Madagascar Mission, severed her connections with the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America for reasons of conscience. She has spent the past two years in the United States, during which time she has completed the work for the B. A. degree at the University of Minnesota. After a colloquy with Director Brand, she was recommended to the Board for work in India, and was commissioned in Fairview Lutheran Church the second Sunday after Easter. She sails from New York on the 26th of June, arriving in Bombay on the 30th of July, and will at once go to the field assigned for her at Ambur. Let us remember her in our prayers, and let her work in India be a new bond connecting us the more intimately with this mission.

The committee of five, elected by the Synod last year, has held two joint meetings. Other conferences have been held. This committee can hardly do more than to acquaint itself with the work which is being done in the various missions, toward the support of which our members are contributing, and to try to spread this information to the members of the Synod. We hope that this may be done more systematically than has been the case hitherto. Important questions are being discussed at this time affecting particularly the China Mission, and the representative of the Norwegian Synod attended a plenary session of the Foreign Mission Board of the Missouri Synod, June 16—17 to take part in the discussion. Director Brand is now on his way to China where he will meet with the conference of missionaries and deliberate further.

May God guide and keep our Foreign Missions and make us fervent in faith and ready to do the Lord's bidding for the millions who do not have the comfort of the gospel.

On behalf of the Committee on Foreign Missions,

S. C. Ylvisaker, Chairman.

Barmhertighedsanstalter:

Komiteen for barmhertighedsanstalter har undersøgt de tilbud om gaver i form af landeieendomme, som blev frembragt under sidste aars synodemøde og fandt, at den ikke kunde overtage eiendommene.

Albert Hanson, E. E. S. Sujo,
G. Ingebritson.

Menighedsskolen:

Komiteen holdt i aarets løb 10 møder. Noget arbejde blev udført ved korrespondanse. Der drives 7 frivillige barneskoler inden bort samfund. Fem af disse var menighedsskoler, medens 2 var private foretagender. En af disse er nu overtaget af menigheden, hvor den holdtes. Bethann menighed ved Storm City, Iowa, vil til høsten oprette en skole. Flere bør følge dette eksempel.

Indtægterne i det forløbne aar har dækket alle udgifter. Dog opfordrer komiteen til rigelig hjælp til denne sag. To skoler har i sidste aar erholdt støtte fra skolekassen: Vor Frelsers menighed, Princeton og Vor Frelsers menighed, Albert Lea. Komiteen har efter grundig overvejelse lobet Bethania menighed finansiell hjælp til opførelse af et skolehus.

D. M. Gullerud,
E. M. Peterson, Oscar Levorson.

Report of the Board of Education:

The Board of Education has held two meetings in the course of the year. The first of these was held at Lime Creek parsonage on Sept. 21, 1925. All members of the Board were present with the exception of Mr. Johnson of Nicollet congregation.

At this meeting applications for student aid were considered and granted. Aid was promised student Runholt at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., Monrad Gullerud at Concordia College, St. Paul, and Miss Inez Skogen at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm.

Possible candidates for the professorship at Concordia College were considered.

The secretary of the Board was instructed to assemble the minutes of all former board meetings and to record them in a suitable book of records, which he was authorized to purchase.

The second meeting of the Board was held at Concordia College, St. Paul, on Jan. 13, 1926. At this meeting all members of the Board were again present with the exception of Mr. Johnson. Rev. Chr. Anderson was present as an advisory member of this meeting.

At this meeting student aid for Albert Strand at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, was considered and granted. A call was extended to Prof. Holden M. Olsen as professor at Concordia College, St. Paul.

Sufficient funds have been forthcoming in the course of the year to meet all demands for student aid.

Individual members of the Board have visited the classes and observed the work carried on both at Concordia College and Dr. Martin Luther College, and were satisfied that the work done was most satisfactory. They were furthermore pleased to find that our students as a whole at these institutions were doing creditable work.

The past year 11 students from our Synod have attended Dr. Martin Luther College, 14 have been in attendance at Concordia College, and 4 students have been studying theology at Concordia Seminary. Two of these were graduated from the Seminary.

N. A. Madson, Chairman,
M. F. Mommsen, secretary.

Concordia College, St. Paul:

During the school year 1925—1926, 286 boys have been enrolled at Concordia College. Fourteen of these are Norwegian. None of our boys finished the course this year. The boys from our Synod were members of the following classes: Sophomore College 1; Freshman College 3; Senior (Highschool) 3; Junior 1; Sophomore 4; Freshman 2.

One boy has been aided by the Synod to the extent of \$100.00. Several congregations have sent food and money to the Boarding Club.

The date of opening this fall has not been set. A new Service Building is to be constructed this summer at the cost of approximately \$145,000.00. The building will contain a dining hall, quarters for the steward and a well equipped hospital. An appropriation of \$3,000.00 has also been received for laboratory equipment.

Oliver Harstad.

Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm:

The past school year began Sept. 2nd, 1925, and closed on June 15th, 1926.

During the past year 261 students were enrolled. Of these 152 boys and 109 girls. The Normal Department had an enrollment of 41, and the High School Department had 220.

Eleven students were enrolled in the Norwegian classes this past year. Ten of these stayed with us to the end of the school year. One was forced to discontinue on account of illness. These students were divided among the following classes: First year Normal 2; Twelfth Grade 4; Eleventh Grade 4; and Tenth Grade 1; Nine of them intend to become teachers, while 2 seek a general education.

Early in February Prof. S. Duin, our assistant teacher in music for the past two years, was forced to undergo an operation for gall stones. He recovered quite rapidly and after Easter

was able to resume his work. Soon, however, a second operation became necessary. This he survived by only a few hours.

Temporary arrangements were made for carrying on Prof. Duin's work.

An addition to our Boys' Dormitory is nearly completed. On next Sunday, June 27th, it will be dedicated. This addition, built at the cost of about \$40,000.00, will furnish study and sleeping quarters for 60 boys.

Respectfully,

Oscar Levorson.

Church Extension:

Komiteen holdt 3 møder i aarets løb og bevilget følgende laan: 1) Til East Madison Mission, Madison, Wis., \$2,000.00, bestemt til kirkebygning. 2) Til First Lutheran Congregation, Mayville, N. Dak., \$2,000.00, til kjøb af kirke. 3) Til Scarville menighed, Scarville, Ia., \$600.00, formåelse af laan. 4) Til Barochial School Association, Bethany Congregation, Storm City, Iowa, \$500.00, til skolehus. Der trænges mere penge i denne kasse, dersom alle menigheder, som trænger hjælp, skal faa den.

J. E. Thoen, E. M. Edwards,
M. Stephens.

Finanserne:

I det forløbne aar har finanskomiteen haft et møde. Den udarbejdet da et overslag over hvad der vilde trænges for de forskjellige kasser i det kommende aar og samme blev sendt til presterne. En skrivelse blev forfattet og trykt i vort kirkeblad. I den blev blandt andet Davids ord til Israels hørn, den gang da midler skulde samles til templets bygning, rettet til vort kirkefolk: „Hvo er nu villig til at fylde sin haand idag for Herren?“ Vort folk har svaret ved at yde rigelig til vor kirkes gjøremaal, saa vi ogsaa dette aar har undgaaet at stifte gjæld. Herover bør vi glæde os og takke Gud.

Komiteen vil henlede opmærksomheden paa Synodens beslutning saalydende: „Naar nye bevilgninger skal gjøres, bør finanskomiteen saavidt muligt raadspørges.“ Dette er en gavnlig beslutning og bør iagttages. Dersom finanskomiteen finder, at den ikke kan godkjende en bevilgning, som er gjort, bør tilbørlige hensyn tages til dens indvendinger.

E. Hansen, paa komiteens vegne.

Regnskaberne:

Synodekassen.

I kassen 1ste mai 1925	\$ 913.61
Bidrag	1,877.45
Tidende	1,628.10
Trykning og udgifter	\$2,664.25
Trykning (Luth. Synod Book Co.)	42.50
Rev. G. A. Gullifson, udgifter	82.75
Rev. Chr. Anderson, R. R. sekretær	25.00

Rehemias Tjernagel, udgifter.....	15.00
C. R. Edwards, udgifter.....	17.46
Telephone messages	2.00
Check returned	3.00
Tilskud til lærerlønskassen.....	38.08
Stationery, stamps, postal cards, etc.....	11.28
3 kassen 1ste mai 1926.....	1,517.84

	\$4,419.16	\$4,419.16
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Lærerlønskassen.

Bidrag	\$1,661.92	
Tilskud fra Synodalkassen.....	38.08	
Rev. Fr. Mandt, St. Paul, Minn.....		1 000.00
Prof. C. R. Niefernicht, New Wm. Minn.		700.00
	\$1,700.00	\$1,700.00

Menighedsaffolkets kassen.

3 kassen 1ste mai 1925.....	\$.22	
Bidrag	473.95	
Rev. M. A. Madison, Princeton, Minn....		200.00
Rev. C. S. Quill, Albert Lea, Minn.....		200.00
M. J. Leborson, kasserer Sombra mgh.....		19.50
E. R. Thissen, kasserer Lime Creek mgh.		2.50
3 kassen 1ste mai 1926.....		42.17
	\$ 474.17	\$ 474.17

Indremission.

3 kassen 1ste mai 1925.....	\$ 315.67	
Bidrag	7,665.27	
Past. C. E. Møller		1,380.65
Past. E. Hansen		441.00
Bor Frelzers mgh., Albert Lea, Minn....		900.00
Menigheden i Suttons Bay, Mich.....		360.00
1ste Evanger mgh., Fertile, Minn.....		675.00
Bor Frelzers mgh., New Hope, Wis.....		700.00
Menigheden i Holton, Mich.....		275.00
Past. John Hendricks		131.73
St. Lukas mgh., Chicago, Ill.....		825.00
Past. C. E. Mølsæter, til mission i Madison, Wis.		846.68
Menigheden i Milnor, N. Dak.....		275.00
Menigheden i Simcoe, N. Dak.....		275.00
Menigheden i Scarville, Ia.....		150.00
Past. J. M. Moldstad		31.65
Past. Chr. Anderson.....		5.00
Past. J. B. Unseth.....		125.00

Cheek returned	81.48
Past. L. E. Guttebø	14.94
§ kassen 1ste mai 1926.....	587.81
§ kassen 1ste mai 1926 for Detroit Misf.....	40.00

\$7,980.94	\$7,980.94
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Studenterkassen.

§ kassen 1ste mai 125.....	\$ 87.27	
Bidrag	428.39	
Monrad Gullerud		100.00
Jnez Skogen		118.00
Student J. N. Runholt		141.00
Student Strand		141.00
§ kassen 1ste mai 1926.....		15.66

\$ 515.66	\$ 515.66
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Church Extension Fund.

Bidrag	\$ 583.28	
Laan tilbagebetalt	2,770.00	
Laan til Shell Rock mgh.....		240.00
Laan til mgh. i Mayville, N. Dak.....		1,000.00
§ kassen 1ste mai 1926.....		2,113.28

\$3,353.28	\$3,353.28
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Hedningemissionen.

§ kassen 1ste mai 1925.....	\$ 589.42	
Bidrag til hedningemissionskassen.....	440.94	
Bidrag til Kinamission	750.47	
Bidrag til Negermission	842.07	
Bidrag til missionen i Indien	5.00	
Bidrag til Indianermission	102.32	
Cheek returned		15.00
E. Seuel, kasserer		1,370.90
Theo. W. Eckhart, kasserer		870.80
§ kassen 1ste mai 1926.....		473.52

\$2,730.22	\$2,730.22
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Barmhertighedsarbejde.

§ kassen 1ste mai 1925.....	\$ 79.79	
Bidrag til barnehjem	15.19	
Bidrag til Home Finding Society.....	30.99	
Bidrag til Near East Relief	25.20	
Bidrag til nødlidende	27.58	
Bidrag til Hans Vlefen	91.81	
W. Rahlz, kasserer		100.00

Home Finding Societh, Rt. Dodge, Ia...	30.99
Rev. J. M. Moldstad.....	27.58
I kassen 1ste mai 1926.....	111.99

\$ 270.56	\$ 270.56
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Land solgt til Sam Ellefson.

I kassen 1ste mai 1925.....	\$ 30.31
I kassen 1ste mai 1926.....	30.31

Synodens revisorer har gennemgaaet regnskaberne for aaret fra 1ste mai 1925 til 1ste mai 1926 og fundet dem i orden.

Northwood, Iowa, 18de mai 1926.

E. R. Tysjén.

Judstillinger behandlede og antagne.

Fra komiteen for formandens indberetning:

Synoden følger formandens anthyndning at mindes aarsdagen for den Augsburgske Konfessions overrættelse den 25de juni 1530, og at en halv time fredag eftermiddag anvendes dertil. Pastorerna Harstad og Gullifson vælges til at indlede forhandlingerne.

Synoden paaminder presterne om deres pligt ifølge Synodens konstitution, kap. 4, 3, lit. g.

Det henstilles til de staaende komiteer i god betids før synodemødet at indsende til formanden rapport om sin virksomhed gennem aarets løb.

(Sidste punkt angaaende valg af visitatorer henvises til komiteen for indremission.)

Lauritz S. Gutesø, sekretær.

Fra komiteen for menigheds-skolen:

1) Synoden glæder sig over og takker Gud for det arbejde, som har været udført i dens 7 barne-skoler det forløbne aar og for den vel-signelse, som har hvilet over det.

2) Synoden glæder sig over interessen udbist i denne gren af arbeidet; bidragene kom saa rigelig, at al understøttelse begjæret kunde imødekommes, og den haaber at interessen vil vedblive og til-tage.

3) Paa samme tid som Synoden er opmærksom paa, at ingen ny skole blev oprettet sidste aar, glæder den sig over, hvad der er gjort i en menighed i Hammliton Co., Ia., og godkjenner den staaende komitees handling i forbindelse hermed.

E. J. Duill, sekretær.

Fra indremissionskomiteen:

1) Synoden udtaler sin glæde over den fremgang indremissions-arbeidet har havt i det sidste aar.

2) Den paalægger indremissionskomiteen at øve den største forsigtighed i sine bevilgninger, saa arbeidet paa bedste maade kan fremmes.

3) Da indremissionsarbeidet stadig udvides, vil samfundet tilskynde sine medlemmer til fremdeles at støtte dette vort arbejde med sine gaver og bønner.

4) Synoden vælger en visitator for 2 aar i hver freds inden Synoden til at bistaa formanden i hans arbejde. (Dette punkt overgives til en komite paa 5 indtil næste aarssmøde).

L. S. G u t e b ø, formand.

N. N. M a d s o n, sekretær.

Church Extension:

Fra "Foreign Mission Committee":

Synod notes with gratitude to God the progress on the mission fields of China and India in which we are directly interested.

Synod calls special attention to the increased budget of \$343,000.00 appropriated by Missouri Synod for buildings and building sites for these missions, and urge all to increase their contributions accordingly.

Synod also expresses its joy over the appointment of Miss Anina Christensen to the India mission field.

H. M. Tjernagel, president,

H. A. Preus, secretary,

K. Opheim.

Fra komiteen for negermission:

1) Da negermissionen drives af Synodalkonferensen, er denne mission ogsaa vor mission. Vi bør derfor gjøre, hvad vi kan for at fremme den.

2) Saaene 1922 til 1925 ydet vort samfund \$1,832.03 til denne mission. Men den trænger stadig større bidrag til lønninger, flere bygninger, skoler og kirkelokaler. Synoden henstiller derfor til alle at bidrage rigelig til denne mission samt komme den ihu i sine bønner. Anledningerne til at bringe evangeliet til dyrefjæbte sjæle er ved denne mission store baade i syd- og nordstaterne.

3) Vore medlemmer bør læse „The Lutheran Pioneer“, som giver et godt overblik over negermissionen.

S. S a n d e, formand,

G. E. M ø l l e r, sekretær,

L. M. T h o r e s o n.

Fra komiteen for barmhjertighedsarbejde:

Synoden tilfremmer den slaaende komitees indstilling, da den finder at oprettelsen af barmhjertighedsarbejde paa de tilbudte steder for nærværende kræver større udlæg end samfundet kan paatage sig.

C h r. A n d e r s o n,

N. S. L ø b e r g,

C. N. P e t e r s o n.

Fra Komiteen for pengefager:

1) Synoden takker Gud, fordi han har givet vort folk baade vilighed og evne til at yde saa rigelig til vort samfunds gjøremaal, at vi ogsaa iaar har kunnet drive arbeidet uden at stifte gjæld.

2) Samfundet opmuntrer sine medlemmer til fortsat flid i at yde af de gaver, Gud har givet dem til at fremme hans sag. Det vil minde dem om apostelens ord: „Men naar vi gjør det gode, da lader os ikke blive trætte; thi vi skal høste i sin tid, saafremt vi ikke trættes.“

3) For at indsamlingen baade til de løbende udgifter saavel som til samfundets øvrige gjøremaal, kan ske paa en mere systematisk maade og mere letvindt, end ofte er tilfældet, vil Synoden raade menighederne til at indføre det saakaldte „Duplex Envelope System,“ for saa vidt, de ikke allerede har indført det. Derved vilde ogsaa børnene og ungdommen vænnes til at yde regelmæssig til Guds rige.

4) Synoden opmuntrer sine medlemmer til at ihukomme samfundets gjøremaal med større testamentariske gaver, naar de skulle uddele de jordiske eiendomme, som Herren har betroet dem.

5) Desforuden vil Synoden opmuntre bemidlede mænd og kvinder i samfundet til itide at betænke sin kirke med større pengegaver til dens gjøremaal. Lad enhver „købe den beleilige tid“ ogsaa derved, at han benytter sig af de anledninger, Gud giver ham til at fremme Kirkens store og vigtige sag.

J. M. Moldstad,
E. Hansen,
John A. Johnson.

Fra Komiteen for Church Extension:

1) Synoden takker Gud for den gerning, som er udført for Guds kirke gennem Church Extension.

2) Da denne kasse kommer i underbalance, saasnart de lovede beløb er udbetalte, og da der er andre begjær om støtte, opfordrer Synoden menighederne paa det indstændigste til at komme denne kasse ihu med sine rige gaver.

3) Synoden vil minde præster og menigheder om den beslutning, som blev fattet paa synodemødet i Madison, Wis., 1922 saalydende: „Synoden beder menighederne betænke vigtigheden af denne kasse og bedes om at optage et aarligt offer til den; og at dette offer optages paa den niende søndag efter trefoldighed eller en anden søndag.“ (Se Synodalberet. 1922, side 89).

J. Hendricks,
Elling George,
O. M. Gullerud.

Fra "the Committee of Publications":

1) Synod recommends that a special effort be made to increase the circulation of "Tidende and Sentinel" and that each

congregation of the Synod elect a committee to take care of that work.

2) Synod notes with satisfaction that all reports for last year were sold with a profit of \$100.00.

3) It is found that the accounts of the Synod Book Concern are in order.

4) The Synod recommends that all outstanding bills be paid within a reasonable period.

5) On account of ill health Mrs. Ella M. Lee has asked to be relieved, as soon as somebody can be found to take her place.

6) In the matter of a manager for the Synod's Book Company, the size of the edition of Synodalberetning and Kalender, and the collection of outstanding accounts be left to the discretion of the Board of Publications.

I. Blækkan, secretary.

Fra komiteen for høiere skoler:

1) Synoden takker Gud for den broderaaend, som brøderne i Missouri og Wisconsin synoderne har vist ved, at tilstede vor ungdom adgang til sine skoler.

2) Synoden opmuntre alle vore folk til at gjøre mest mulig brug af vore høiere skoler ved at sende gutter til Concordia College, som vil uddanne sig til prestegjeringen, og piger til dr. Martin Luther College, som vil uddanne sig for arbeidet i vore menigheds-skoler.

3) Synoden paalægger den staaende komite at holde sig saa vel underrettet, som mulig, om alle vore studenter's behov, og at sørge for dem efter evne.

4) Synoden udtaler det haab, at det snart vil lykkes for komiteen for høiere skoler at ansætte en fast professor ved Concordia College, og hvis dette ikke lykkes da at sørge for midlertidig betjening.

5) Til trods for at en del menigheder ydede nofsaa store bidrag til støtte for trængende studenter, saa var der egentlig ikke nok. Derfor bedes alle menighederne ikke at glemme denne gren af arbeidet.

6) I anledning af Bethany Lutheran College Association er Synoden opmærksom paa, at dette er en forening, som bestaar kun af medlemmer af Synoden, og endvidere, at foreningens hensigt er at byde en kristelig uddannelse særlig for unge kvinder i Synoden og Synodalkonferensen. For nærværende kan den Norske Synode ikke paatage sig noget ansvar i denne sag, men vil dog udtale, at den har fuld tillid til at Bethany Lutheran College Association vil drive skolen i ret lutherisk, kristelig aand.

(English): In regard to Bethany Lutheran College Association, the Synod takes cognizance of the fact, that this is an organization, whose membership is confined to members in good standing of the Norwegian Synod; and furthermore, that the purpose of the organization is to provide a Christian environment

particularly for the daughters of our synod and of the sister synods of the Synodical Conference. Without assuming any responsibility itself at this time, the Norwegian Synod nevertheless expresses full confidence in the Bethany Lutheran College Association, that it will conduct the school in a true Lutheran, Christian spirit.

A. J. Torgerson, Martin Stene, C. A. Moldstad.

Fra komiteen til at gennemgaa protokoller fra prestekonferenser:

1) Komiteen finder, at den almindelige prestekonferens holdtes ved Elbow Lake, Minn., i august 1925, og specialkonferensen for nordvestlige freds i Minneapolis, Minn., i marts, 1926.

2) Komiteen gjør Synoden opmærksom paa den enstemmige beslutning af den almindelige prestekonferens, at forhandle med Synodalkonferensen om en fælles engelsk salmebog. Fra Albert Lea og Chicago og Madison special konferenser mangler protokollerne.

B. N. Widbey,
Theo. Ellingson,
Ole N. Olmanson.

Tilføjelse til Synodens Konstitution:

Behandlet og tilstent som antaget sidste aar. Se Synodalberet. 1925, side 112.

Publicity work and preparation for next Convention:

The Synod authorizes its president to make proper arrangements for publicity work in connection with the Synod's annual convention in 1927, prior to the meeting of the convention. Adopted.

Alle indberetninger fra staaende komiteer indsendes til formanden og trykkes før synodemødet.

Alle, som har skriftlige sager at forelægge mødet leverer disse i mindst to eksemplarer, helst „typewritten“. Antaget.

Genvendelse til Synoden.

To the Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church, assembled in convention at Belview, Minn., June 23—29, 1926.

Dear Brethren: The Bethany Lutheran College Association respectfully asks permission to present its cause to the Synod.

A year ago, at the Convention at St. Peter, Minn., representatives of the Bethany College, Inc., approached the Synod with an offer to sell this institution at what was then considered a reasonable figure. A committee of the Synod reported adversely, however, and recommended that the Synod table the matter for the reason, that it was not possible in a limited time to look into it from all angles and as carefully as a project of this magnitude demanded. Our brethren of the Wisconsin Synod were then ap-

proached with a similar offer by the Bethany College, Inc., and this Synod voted to purchase at a price not to exceed a certain sum. The committee appointed by this body to effect the purchase soon discovered difficulties, and, after deliberating over a period of many months, referred the final decision in the matter to the Synodical Committee at this meeting, May 4th. Since the Bethany College, Inc., found it impossible to await the action of this committee, it again approached members of our Synod. The matter was discussed in several circuit conferences, and the opinion of many members of the laity was sought. It was the general opinion that our Synod soon would need an institution of its own in order to solve the problems of an educational character which was before it, and that no more favorable opportunity could be expected to present itself then the present. The sentiment was also expressed that the Synod should do what it could to save this institution for the Synodical Conference. The opinion prevailed that, as soon as fifty men, pastors or laymen, throughout the Synod had expressed their willingness to be along in forming a temporary organization to assume the obligations of ownership, the deal should be considered closed. In response to the call sent out at once, over seventy names were secured, and within a short time others were added so that the corporation now numbers about one hundred representative men from almost all parts of the Synod.

The Bethany Lutheran College Association has earnestly desired to serve the best interests of the Norwegian Synod and the Lutheran Church in general. As a result of the merger of Norwegian Lutherans in 1917 and the deplorable breach which followed, our Synod was left with no institutions of its own, whether educational or otherwise. Repeatedly we have been advised by prominent men of those very bodies which have hitherto supplied our needs and opened the doors of their schools for the young men and women of our Synod, to the effect that this could at best only be a temporary arrangement, and that if we would succeed in performing the task that God has set before us, we must soon have an educational institution of our own. This conviction has gradually been gaining ground within our ranks. We saw a God-given opportunity in the offer which came to us from the Bethany College, Inc., for here buildings and equipment would be provided which would serve our purpose for long years to come, and at a price which was within our reach. Bethany College is a girls' school, it is true, but we have thought that an arrangement might in time be made, with this as a beginning, whereby our young men might be cared for as well. As for the Lutheran Church in general, we considered that Bethany College, as a Junior College for girls, should be preserved for the true Lutheran Church, since this is the only institution of its kind within the Synodical Con-

ference. An ever increasing number of our Lutheran girls are receiving their education at institutions which are not Lutheran, and in part, at least, for the reason that we can offer them no school of their own. We share the responsibility of the loss which the Church undoubtedly hereby has sustained, and ours is the duty of providing the facilities which we are able to provide for the right spiritual care of the daughters of our Church.

In coming before the Synod at this time, we would ask not to be misunderstood. It is not our intention to ask the Synod to shoulder a burden which to some, at least, may seem out of proportion to its ability. If the Synod at this time is willing and able to take over the whole institution, with the obligations involved, financial and otherwise, The Bethany Lutheran College Association, would gladly see this done. Since the Synod will hardly be ready to do this, our Association proposes to continue its work until the institution has been paid for or such a time as the Synod sees fit to assume the ownership. The Association also proposes to assume the responsibility for the management and the affairs of Bethany generally, as long as it is in our hands. However, since the membership of this Association is composed solely of members in good standing of the Norwegian Synod, and since the matter is of sufficient magnitude to effect the work of the Synod as a whole, if it is not carried out properly, we would deem it advisable that the Synod in some way hold the Association, and, in particular, its officers, responsible for the manner in which the institution is conducted.

May we commend this to the prayerful consideration of this Convention and the whole Synod.

On behalf of the Bethany Lutheran College Association,
S. C. Ylvisaker, president.

Diverse fager.

Gudstjenester: Foruden aabningsgudstesten holdtes der paa søndag formiddag gudstjeneste baade i kirken og i det rummelige telt lige ved kirken. I kirken prædikede past. Emil Hansen paa norsk, og i teltet prædikede pastor Chr. Anderson paa engelsk. Paa begge steder optoges offer til den indre mission. Om eftermiddagen gaves en kirkekoncert, som levedes af past. Anderson, flere solder blev givne under koncerten. Prof. Holden Olsen holdt en tale om Bethany College. Efter foranstaltning af menighedernes ungdom gaves en udflugt til Redwood Falls State Park for alle, som ønskede det.

Mandag aften holdtes pastoralprædiken med altergang. Past. Thoen prædikede, past. P. Garstad holdt skrifttalen, og past. L. E. Guttebø forrettede for alteret.

Alle sessioner aabnedes med skriftlæsning, salmesang og bøn. Past. R. L. Guttebø ordnede dermed, og følgende præster holdt an-

dagterne: Gullixson, Strand, E. N. Moldstad, E. N. Peterson, Blakkan, Unjeth, S. N. Moldstad, Guldborg, Sande og Hendricks. Hver session sluttedes med et salmevers, fadervor bedt i kor, den apostoliske troesbekjendelse eller Herrens velsignelse.

En kort mindstet holdtes fredag eftermiddag, den 25de juni, paa 396 aarsdagen for den Augsburgske Konfessions overrækkelse til kejser Carl V paa rigsdagen i Augsburg. Past. Gullixson talte paa engelsk over tilblivelsen og overrækkelsen af Konfessionen, og past B. Garstad talte over bekjendelsens høie betydning og indhold.

Hilsener: En telegrafisk hilsen blev sendt Synoden fra Minneapolis distrikt af Wisconsin Synoden samlet til møde i Gibbon, Minn. Til at besvare denne hilsen mundtlig valgtes past. Anderson. En skriftlig hilsen blev sendt synoden af past. Johansen; ligeledes hilste pastorerne Wiese, Manestad og Sauer synoden ved tilstedeværende prester. Formanden og sekretæren blev paalagt at besvare disse hilsener, som de ogsaa blev paalagte at sende en kondolenseskriivelse i anledning af prof. Aug. Schlueters død.

Da det var nødvendigt, forat Synoden paa lovlig maade kan sælge eiendom i staten Washington, at Synodens „Articles of Incorporation“ kan indføres i bøgerne i nævnte stat, besluttede Synoden følgende:

Resolved that a certified copy of the Articles of Incorporation be filed in the State of Washington, and that the proper officers of the Synod be authorized to execute the necessary documents for such sale.

Paszereren ophøjte, at nogle større gaver var indkomne til Synoden siden 1ste mai; disse gaver var ifra: Mrs. Søren Nelson, testamentarisk gave paa \$600.00; Arnt Norstad til broderen Olaf Thorbjørnsons minde \$100.00; E. N. Dahl fra Bessie Aulan, testamentarisk gave, \$500.00 til indremissionen og \$500.00 til menighedsskolen. Mrs. B. E. Unjeth \$100.00. Formanden og sekretæren blev paalagt at takke for disse gaver; de blev ogsaa paalagte at sende Mrs. Ella M. Lee Synodens hilsen og sympati med hende i hendes sygdom og tak for hendes arbejde med boghandelen.

Følgende prester af Missouri og Wisconsin Synoden blev hilset velkomne og givet sæde i forsamlingen: J. Brauer, John G. Ginef, Geo. W. Scheitel og Ad. E. Jreh. Den sidstnævnte gaves anledning til at omtale sin vedsjomsbed i Twillingberne som bymissionær.

Næste aarsmøde. Vime Creek menighed, past. G. Ingebritsøns kald, indbød Synoden til at holde sit næste aarsmøde i dens midte. Indbydelsen blev modtaget med tak.

Mødets slutning: Paa Synodens vegne takkede formand Gullixson menigheden og alle, som paa en eller anden maade havde bidraget til at gjøre mødet saa hyggeligt i alle maader; han ønskede alle Guds rige velsignelse.

Stedets prest, past. Mommensen, udtalte derpaa, at i alle de aar han havde virket paa dette sted, havde han og hans menighedsfolk

gjennemgaaet mange trængsler; men nu var de naaet høidepunktet; alligevel var de ikke mismodige, men de takkede Herren for, at de fik naade til at staa faste paa sandheden; og han var forvisset om, at dette møde havde styrket mange i troen og haabet; og det var deres alles ønske, at mødet kunde have været en uge til.

Den aftrædende formand, past. Gullixson, takkede for al hjælp og bistand ydet ham i hans tjenestetid, og han betoneede, at eet maal havde han arbeidet henimod og bedt Herren om kraft til at naa, og det var, at vort samfund kunde bevares i sandheden. Han takkede ogsaa for godt samarbejde med viceformanden og overgav nu med glæde arbeidet til ham med bøn om, at Herren vilde give ham visdom og kraft til arbejdets rette udførelse.

Pastor Anderson takkede paa sine egne og samfundets vegne past. Gullixson for den iver og trofast, han havde lagt for dagen som formand i disse fire aar. Dernæst bad han den aftrædende formand, om han vilde takke sin menighed for dens opofrelse i at lade sin prest benytte saa meget af sin tid og sin kraft i samfundets tjeneste. Endelig beklagede han, at man havde valgt ham til formand, da han bedre end nogen anden kjendte sine svagheder; dog takkede han for den tillid, som var vist ham og bad om, at man vilde være overbærende og taalmodig med ham. Han havde ogsaa den glæde at kunne meddele, at hans menighed ikke havde lagt ham hindringer i veien for at tjene som formand.

Mødet sluttedes med at man sang no. 365, derpaa læste formand Gullixson Kap. 3, 7—14, hvorpaa han nedbad Guds naade over Synoden og hver enkelt i Synoden og endte med at lyse Herrens velsignelse over mødet.

L. P. Jensen, sekretær.

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Synødens præster og professører

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 Tjernagel, G. W.R. 2, Lawler, Iowa.
 Torgerion, A. S.R. 3, Northwood, Iowa.
 Unseth, N. B.Waterville, Iowa.
 Widvey, P. M. (Em.).....Prairie Farm, Wis.
 Wiese, M. Jr. (Em.).....Cambridge, Wis.
 Wivisaker, Erling.....Madison, Wis.
 Wivisaker, S. C., 13 South Hancock St.....Madison, Wis.

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