

Concordia Theological Monthly



NOVEMBER

1951

THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING THE "COMMON CONFESSION"

According to the *Northwestern Lutheran* (Sept. 9, 1951), the Joint Synod of Wisconsin at its convention made the *Common Confession* the sole topic of its doctrinal consideration. The first essay at the convention dealt with the *Common Confession's* statement on the *Word*. According to the report, the essayist, Prof. Roland Hoenecke, stated: "If the *Common Confession* is inadequate in its statement of the doctrine of inspiration, we could say that the *Common Confession* is simply unsatisfactory." The report continues: "He pointed out how the expression 'verbal inspiration' has not only been omitted from this confessional document, but also how the expressions used therein leave room for the old error which holds that the Scriptures as a whole and in a general way are inspired, but not word by word."

The Rev. E. H. Wendland examined the *Confession's* statement on *justification*. His conclusions are summarized as follows: "The *Brief Statement* holds that God has already declared the whole world to be righteous in Christ. Since the American Lutheran Church has up to the present day never taught an *objective justification* of God which applies to the whole world and which has been completed already through the death and resurrection of Christ, and since this church has therefore spoken only of a subjective justification which takes place when faith enters the heart, we must insist upon a confession which leaves room for no equivocation on this point."

The essay on *conversion* was presented by the Rev. T. R. Adaschek. The essayist said in part: "This doctrine has always been a point of sharp controversy between the Synodical Conference and the American Lutheran Church. The Synodical Conference has remained with the clear teaching of Scripture even though this leaves an unsolved mystery in the question as to why only some and not all are converted by God and saved. The other Lutheran church bodies in seeking a reasonable answer to this question have invented distinctions in man's innate ability to resist or to accept the grace of God before his conversion. The *Common Confession* is scripturally correct in what it says of man in the act of conversion itself, but says nothing about man's condition before his conversion, where the real controversy has always existed. Therefore the *Common Confession* is unacceptable not in what it says, but in what it omits."

Prof. Armin Schuetze was the essayist on the doctrine of *election*,

and the synopsis of his essay is given as follows: "In view of the seriousness of the division which existed for so many years, we must not merely be concerned with the question as to whether or not the statements of the *Common Confession* on this doctrine are scripturally correct, but we must ask, 'Does this article clearly settle the differences which came to light during the election controversy?' The old Ohio Synod taught that faith is a cause of man's election, not that God's election is the cause of faith, as Scripture teaches. In the *Common Confession*, however, nothing at all is said about the relationship of faith and election, but it merely describes those who have already been elected. Does God elect only those whom He foresaw as such who would not willfully resist the Gospel? This old and still prevalent error in the American Lutheran Church is not conclusively repudiated by the *Common Confession*. Thereby the certainty of our eternal election is placed in doubt."

The silence of the *Common Confession* on the controversies concerning the *Church and the Ministry* was described by Prof. E. E. Kowalke as a most serious deficiency. The report states: "Defining the *visible* side of the church as part of its essence, an old error of the American Lutheran Church is not disavowed by the *Common Confession*. Its ambiguous wording rather encourages this error. Unionism is repudiated by the *Common Confession*, but not clearly, as in the Brief Statement, and a Scripture passage used to encourage church fellowship is misapplied. Regarding the article on the 'Ministry' the same ignoring of past issues is again very much in evidence. While we maintain that the commission to preach the Gospel, to use the Means of Grace, and to exercise the Office of the Keys was given by Christ to all Christians, and that every believer is a priest of God, the old Iowa Synod taught that these gifts were bestowed upon the 'church at large,' and that the Office of the Keys belonged not to the individual, but to the Church 'in its totality.' To simply ignore this error is to leave room for the practice of establishing the clergy as an order with special rights that a congregation and an individual do not possess."

The Rev. Oscar Siegler, speaking on the *Last Things*, stated that the *Common Confession* fails to declare that the prophecies concerning the Antichrist have been fulfilled in the Papacy, and this disappointing lack of "clearness is quite in line with the old position of the American Lutheran Church that this doctrine of the Antichrist is open to various interpretations as far as the future is concerned."

The reporter in the *Northwestern Lutheran* concludes his report on

the Wisconsin Synod's action *re* the *Common Confession* as follows: "Six men on the basis of independent study came to the same conclusion: as a confessional statement which is supposed to constitute a settlement of controversies only existing up to the present day the *Common Confession* cannot stand on its own merits. Neither is it clear in its disavowal of old error. It is simply inadequate. The convention by unanimously adopting these essays showed that its congregations from all sections of the country, and all of its conferences and districts took the same stand."

We are submitting the official report of the Wisconsin Synod's action *re* the *Common Confession*, which reached us September 26, the final date of sending copy for the November issue of our journal to the publishers.

In its report to the convention the Standing Committee on Church Union stated the following: "When the Missouri Synod accepted the *Common Confession* at its 1950 Convention as a statement of the 'agreement that has been achieved in the doctrines treated by the two committees,' an additional resolution provided that its President place this matter before the Synodical Conference in order to secure the consent of the constituent synods. . . .' It is in keeping with this procedure that our Synod must now declare itself on this matter.

"When similar documents of agreement were submitted twelve years ago, our Synod pointed to resolutions of the American Lutheran Church which made it clear that this body held different views on the requirements for church fellowship than those generally accepted in our Synodical Conference. Because of these differences even as to the premises for a God-pleasing union our Synod warned that under such conditions further negotiations would involve a denial of the truth and would cause confusion and disturbance in the Church. It asked that therefore further negotiations be suspended for the time being.

"The subsequent years have witnessed a progressive deterioration of this situation. Particularly in its relation to the National Lutheran Council the American Lutheran Church has been involved in a constant practice of unionism, and is still so involved. For many years this church has been, and still is, carrying on simultaneous negotiations in several directions which are quite opposite to each other. At the same time we have been compelled to note an increasing number of cases of unionism among the members of our sister synod. The 'Statement of the Forty-four' has given formal expression to this disturbing trend.

"Consequently the present document must, if anything, be stronger

than Missouri's union resolutions of 1938, both in its positive statement of doctrine, and also in the specific rejection of error, particularly since it is offered as the settlement of the controversies over which the respective church bodies have been divided in the past.

"We regret that we fail to find these qualities in the Document submitted to us. Our specific criticism is set forth in our committee's 'Review of the *Common Confession*,' which has been presented to our conferences and districts for their study.

"These matters have also been discussed with the Committee on Doctrinal Unity, the authorized representatives of the Missouri Synod. Meetings were held in Chicago January 15—16 and April 9—10, the discussion being based largely on our 'Review.' While the Missouri Committee took careful note of our objections, those discussions have to date brought nothing to light which would cause us to reverse our evaluation of the *Common Confession*.

"After careful consideration and mutual discussion we find ourselves constrained to report that in our judgment this Agreement involves an actual denial of the truth, since it claims to be a settlement of doctrinal differences which are not settled in fact."

The convention's Floor Committee submitted to the convention to ask our sister Synod to weigh carefully the following statements and resolutions:

1. "We have given the *Common Confession* prayerful and thorough study in our congregations, in all our conferences and all our Districts, and in our Convention.

2. "We have assured ourselves through an official and written statement, given by your [Missouri Synod's] Committee on Doctrinal Unity to our Standing Committee on Church Union, that the *Common Confession* is to be regarded, not as defining an area of doctrinal agreement, but as furnishing 'a settlement of those doctrinal controversies that were before the church up to the time of the adoption of the *Common Confession*.' (Minutes of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity, April 10, 1951).

3. "We gladly acknowledge that the *Common Confession* contains many fine statements of Scriptural truth.

4. "We consider it to be no mere repetition, but a necessary emphasis to state here to you our motivation for our action on the *Common Confession*. It is a loving concern for the heart of the Gospel, the *Sola Gratia* (By Grace Alone) as already set forth in the preamble to the Review of the *Common Confession*. We are confident—and we have been so assured—that this is your concern likewise. We,

therefore, entertain the hope that you will see with us that only with the full Scriptural doctrine of Saving Grace Alone does God receive His full glory and the sinner his full security in Christ. We trust that you will also see that our criticism, especially regarding the lack of formal antitheses, is demanded for a full confession of the truth, so that neither God's glory nor the sinner's comfort be abridged."

The convention adopted the following resolutions:

1. "Be it resolved that we concur in the findings of the Standing Committee on Church Union as found in the document 'Review of the *Common Confession*,' and herewith make them our own.

2. "Be it further resolved that we inform The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod that we not only find the *Common Confession* to be inadequate in the points noted (cf. Review of the *Common Confession*), but that we also hold the adoption of the *Common Confession* by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod involves an untruth and creates a basically untruthful situation. This action has been officially interpreted as a settlement of past differences which are in fact not settled.

3. "And be it further resolved that we ask The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to repudiate its stand that the *Common Confession* is a settlement of the doctrines treated by the two committees (Mo.—ALC).

4. "And be it further resolved:

a. "That we direct the attention to our sister Synod of Missouri to the position which the American Lutheran Church has taken in the Friendly Invitation of March 4, 1947, with the remark contending for 'an area where there exists an allowable and wholesome latitude of theological opinion on the basis of the teaching of the Word of God,' and that we indicate to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod that this position of the American Church challenges the clarity and therefore the authority of the Scriptures. (Ps. 119:105.) This can only cause confusion and disturbance in the church. Therefore negotiations should be suspended.

b. "That we further indicate to the sister Synod of Missouri that not until the American Lutheran Church recognizes this as a basic problem which must first be considered and settled, will the obstacle to the renewal of doctrinal discussions have been removed. (Cf. *Convention Proceedings of the Joint Synod*, 1939, page 61, 2b. and 3.)"

* * *

The Thirty-Fourth Convention of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church, August 21, 1951, Detroit, Mich., unanimously adopted the following resolution *re* the *Common Confession*.

"WHEREAS, The *Common Confession* of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and of the American Lutheran Church has been placed before the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for the purpose of securing the consent of our Church to the course of action of our sister Missouri Synod as outlined in its resolutions; and

"WHEREAS, Pursuant to this request, the *Common Confession* under the prayerful guidance of the Holy Spirit and in the fear of God has been diligently studied by our Pastoral Conferences and discussed daily at the sessions of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church in convention assembled; and

"WHEREAS, The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church, on the basis of this thorough study has come to the conviction that the *Common Confession* does not contain anything contrary to the Word of God and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church; and

"WHEREAS, The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church regards the *Common Confession* as sufficient basis for further negotiations with other Lutheran bodies toward the attainment of true unity of doctrine and practice; be it therefore

"Resolved, That the Slovak-Evangelical Lutheran Church express its agreement with the doctrines set forth in the *Common Confession* and grant its consent to the course of action as outlined in the resolutions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Addenda to the resolution *re* the *Common Confession*

"Although the *Common Confession* has been adopted by unanimous vote of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church, we hereby wish to bring to your attention a few pertinent observations which may help you in arriving at any clarification or expansion of the *Common Confession*.

"1. ARTICLE IV. ELECTION. The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church suggests that the words 'unto faith' be included in this Article and read: 'elected unto faith as His own. . . .'

"2. ARTICLE V. MEANS OF GRACE, Baptism. It is the opinion of the Convention that the words 'washing of' (first two words in third line) be eliminated.

"3. ARTICLE V. MEANS OF GRACE, The Lord's Supper. We also suggest that the words 'the most' be omitted and the article 'an' inserted to read: 'He enters into an intimate communion. . . .'

"4. ARTICLE VI. JUSTIFICATION. We furthermore offer the suggestion that the declaration of justification could be so phrased as

to make it more pronounced. And we also suggest the inclusion of the word 'merely' in the phrase 'the sinner *merely* accepts *by faith*.'

"5. ARTICLE VIII. SANCTIFICATION. It pleases us to inform you of the satisfaction expressed by many members who consider this Article to be an improvement on that in the *Brief Statement*.

"6. ARTICLE IX. THE CHURCH. This is the only Article which received a negative vote. Since the negative vote was so emphatic, the privilege was granted especially to all lay delegates voting against this Article to state their objections. It was thereby determined that the objections to this Article were not based on the doctrinal content, but solely and mainly on the use of the word 'catholic.' The objectors agreed to vote in favor of adopting this Article on the condition that this matter be brought to your attention and if at all possible the word 'catholic' be excluded.

"7. ARTICLE XII. THE LAST THINGS. Finally the Convention urges that the word 'still' be omitted. The sentence would then read: 'Among the signs of His approaching return for judgment the distinguishing features of the Antichrist, as portrayed in the Holy Scriptures, are clearly discernable in the Roman papacy....' " F. E. M.

THOUGHTS FOR THANKSGIVING DAY

The pastor's message on Thanksgiving Day will more than likely center around two basic thoughts as he desires to help his parishioners to observe this national holiday in a God-pleasing manner: The wonderful gifts which we possess as American citizens and the obligations which these blessings place upon the American Lutheran Christian. One phase of these obligations is set forth in the following declaration:

A STATEMENT ON HUMAN RELATIONS

Since one of the disruptive forces which hinders the will of God is prejudice and discrimination in human relations, the *United Lutheran Church in America* sets forth the following propositions as the basis for study, discussion, experimentation, and concerted action by its congregations and members.

I. *Christian Principles*

The Word of God, which the Church proclaims, reveals the righteous judgment of God upon sinful man, and sets forth the distinctive power of Christ to redeem him.

1. *God the Father is the Creator of all mankind.* We are made in His likeness. In the light of the common creation of all men, differences in physical characteristics or social background are only of incidental importance.

2. *God condemns all injustice, all hatred, all abuse and persecution of men.* His judgment is revealed in the moral sickness of all men and in the torn fabric of our common life.

3. *God's atoning grace embraces every man.* Through His Son, Jesus Christ, God offers redemption to all. Christ died for all mankind. All men have equal worth in God's sight.

4. *Forgiveness through the Cross restores men to fellowship with God.* Through the remission of sins the way is opened to reconciliation between men. The love of Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Cross, leads men to the deepest kind of human fellowship and mutual service. By the power of the Cross men can overcome prejudice, discrimination, and exploitation which sinfully distort God's order and are the basic cause of social tension.

5. *God calls all men through the Gospel to Christian brotherhood.* Love, which flows from God, seeks to create justice and true community. Love for one's fellowmen is the necessary counterpart of love for God. God calls men to serve Him by serving each other.

6. *In God's providence Christians, different in racial, geographical, economic, and social backgrounds, may use their differences to contribute to the total enrichment of life.* No group is self-sufficient. By the exercise of justice and brotherhood men may co-operate in building true human community.

7. *The abiding love of Christ, our Lord, impels us.* We dare not separate ourselves from that love. Christ is the one Word of God to whom we must listen and whom we must trust and obey in life and death. Thus Christians must face all human relationships in the spirit and power of Christ's love.

II. *Human Rights and Responsibilities*

In the light of these truths of Christian Faith the Church ought to help its people by offering a common witness to guide the individual conscience. Consistent Christian living requires that men shall seek to accord to each other the observance of the following rights and their matching responsibilities:

1. To possess and to respect the life and dignity of the human person as a child of God for whom Christ died.

2. To worship God without human distinctions in the Church, the body of Christ.

3. To develop the God-given talents through education and cultural pursuits in order to use these talents in answer to God's call.

4. To establish a home in living space and housing conducive to a wholesome family life.

5. To occupy the place in economic life for which he is individ-

ually fitted, being free to advance therein on the basis of character and ability.

6. To share the privilege and obligations of community life, having equal access to all public services, including those related to health, education, recreation, social welfare, and transportation, and receiving equal consideration from persons and institutions serving the public.

7. To exercise one's citizenship in elections and all the other processes of government, having freedom for inquiry, discussion, and peaceful assembly, and receiving police protection and equal consideration and justice in the courts.

III. *Propositions for Christian Action*

The foregoing declaration of Christian principles in the field of human relations and the enunciation of human rights and their attendant responsibilities derived therefrom, inevitably point toward Christian action. In working out the implications of our faith we face an awesome and urgent task in overcoming the evil tensions and injustices in human relations that obedience to God requires us to challenge. Christians ought to lay the following propositions to heart:

1. *Acknowledge Our Sin.*—Evil tensions and injustices resulting from racial and cultural practices must be faced before God. The unacknowledged sins of pride, fear, injustice, and hatred have added a great moral peril to our present situation. Men must learn in repentance to seek God's atoning grace and renewing Spirit so that society may attain its true basis in God's order.

2. *Accept Individual Responsibility.*—Each Christian must realize his moral responsibility to God for his actions affecting his neighbor. Each must examine his actions in the light of God's commands. Each must learn to show respect to all men as children of God and render justice to those with whom he deals. This obligation is crucial today in relation to members of minority groups.

3. *Begin in the Home.*—Our families must nurture their members in Christian life and outlook so that people of different backgrounds are respected and treated with equal fairness and good will. Parents must be on guard neither to pass on to their children the sins of prejudice, nor to lead them in discrimination which is unbefitting to Christians. Rather it is the duty of parents to lead their children, by precept and example, in interracial co-operation and understanding.

4. *Continue at Work.*—All of us have special responsibilities in our daily work and economic activities to strive for justice for our neighbor, fair employment opportunities for all, and the removal of those economic handicaps from which minorities suffer. Chris-

tians in labor unions, business organizations, and industrial enterprises should take the lead in working for justice for oppressed groups. Minorities likewise should seek to fulfill in their employment their responsibilities to their employers and fellow-workers, and to the groups affected by their work.

5. *Rally as Citizens.*—Christians have special responsibilities as citizens to make society's laws and practices conform to God's order. Many human rights in which Christians believe, especially rights as to personal safety, citizenship, education, employment, and housing, are not being extended to all men. Christian brotherhood is impeded by practices enforcing segregation. God calls for, and human justice requires, speedy changes at every level and in every area of our society.

Community self-surveys to determine the areas where basic rights are being denied, and what the opportunities for remedial action are, have proved useful. Fair Employment Practices laws have proved generally beneficial in cities and states where they have been enacted. Citizens' groups have secured fair use of educational funds, just action in the courts, and fairer treatment in press and radio for minorities. Christians should work for such constructive changes, and for public support of democratically enacted laws which conform to Christian standards.

6. *Arouse the Church.*—Since the Church is the Body of Christ, it must free itself from those cultural patterns of prejudice and discrimination which persist in our society and must manifest in its own life the principles and attitudes of Jesus.

The Church's agencies and institutions should seek to serve all people fairly without distinction because of racial or cultural background. All its congregations should be centers of action to develop Christian fellowship across human barriers, and to instill the spirit of equality and Christian brotherhood. (Reprinted from the *Lutheran Standard*.)

The Lutheran Church has always condemned the social gospel *in toto*, and it has done so for Scripturally valid reasons. The basic premise of the social gospel is the alleged inherent goodness of man and his supposedly native potentiality to reach moral and social perfection. Its kingdom is not spiritual, but an industrial, political, social, and economic utopia. W. Rauschenbusch, the most radical social gospeller, believed that the only means necessary to bring in this kingdom were a job and a piece of property. But the social gospel completely lacks a dynamic to establish its envisioned kingdom of righteousness and social justice. Lutheran theology knows that the mingling of the spiritual and the secular usually stems from, and always leads to, Calvinistic

legalism, and is therefore anxiously concerned to preserve the Scriptural and Lutheran distinction between the affairs which belong to the realm of the Law and those of the Gospel. Mindful of the Scriptural injunction that the Church's duty is first and last the preaching of the Gospel for the saving of immortal souls, some Lutherans may have gone too far at times and condemned every reference to the social obligations of believers in the Gospel as being the social gospel. The fact remains that the Church must always preach Law and Gospel. It must proclaim the Law, and that includes the Second Table, to bring men to a realization of the accursed character of man's inherent selfishness, which manifests itself not only in its hostile attitude toward God, but in its loveless conduct toward the neighbor. Man's sinful nature remains the same from generation to generation, but the manner in which his selfishness manifests itself varies constantly as the social structure undergoes changes. Thus, for example, Luther's exposition of the Ten Commandments in the Large Catechism is as up to date as in 1529 in so far as he applies the Law to man in general, but the specific applications in several instances have to be changed to meet the changed social conditions. The Church will likewise preach the Gospel, and that includes the truth that as a new creature the Christian is a totally free man for the glorious purpose that he may become the servant of all men (Gal. 6:10). The basic ethical injunctions of the New Testament are absolute invariables, but the specific applications must conform to our present economic and political social structure. It is from these viewpoints that the above Statement on Human Relations seems to us to be particularly timely and relevant.

F. E. M.

EDITION OF LOEHE'S COMPLETE WORKS PLANNED

The *Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung* reports that there is such a demand for Pfarrer Wilhelm Loehe's writings that a committee at Neuendettelsau in Mittelfranken is planning to publish a critical edition in seven volumes, with possible divisions into "Teilbaende." The undertaking does not stem from mere local patriotism, for Loehe's influence has reached far beyond the little *Bauerndorf* with its dusty streets, its two imposing churches, its cemetery. Loehe was truly a versatile churchman. He was an organizer to whom American Lutheranism, the Missouri Synod in particular, owes immeasurably much; he was a champion of Lutheran confessionalism in an era of spiritual indifference; he was a theologian of first rank; an outstanding liturgist; a missionary whose holy zeal inflamed others, above all, the practical

pastor. Volumes I and II will contain his letters and diaries; Vol. III the writings dealing with his views on the Church and the congregation, undoubtedly including his *Drei Buecher von der Kirche*; Vol. IV his letters and publications concerning foreign and inner missions. We assume that the Indian mission in connection with the Franconian settlement and the establishment of the New Guinea mission will receive much space, as well as the diaconate, which as established by Loehe among the peasants of his congregation is absolutely unique. Vol. V will contain his writings in the interest of true Lutheranism and the two concluding volumes his sermonic and liturgical writings. Undoubtedly the works of such Loehe students as Dr. S. Hebart, now of Australia, and Pfarrer Kressel of Nuernberg will be fully utilized.

F. E. M.

BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

At the annual meeting of the Lutheran World Federation's executive committee in Geneva, the executive secretary of the organization, Dr. Sylvester C. Michelfelder, reported that the Federation now has fifty member churches in twenty-four countries. . . . Six church bodies, comprising more than 100,000 adherents, were accepted into membership: the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Argentina (2,500); the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Japan (4,000); the Ebenezer Evangelical Lutheran Church of India (27,000); the Hungarian, Croatian, and Wendish Lutheran Churches of Yugoslavia (75,000). . . . It was reported that during the past decade more than \$47,000,000 in cash and goods have been contributed to overseas relief and reconstruction by Lutherans in America. In recent years other countries have also made substantial contributions to these activities. . . . It was the consensus of the executive committee that the time has come for the Federation as a whole, with all its member churches and national committees, to take responsibility for the continuing program, and plans to co-ordinate the relief activities of the Federation's member churches were approved by the meeting. They call for setting up a department of "Lutheran World Service" at LWF headquarters in Geneva which will be active in the fields of church reconstruction, interchurch aid, help for minority churches, and service to refugees. . . . In another action the committee approved a proposal for a permanent theological department headed by a director, this department also to be located at LWF headquarters, which occupies one of the buildings of the World Council of Churches. . . . One of the main objects of the department will be to organize an international exchange of theological professors and students and to help assure theological training for students of those churches which do not possess Lutheran faculties

of their own. . . . The department will also be charged with operating a publications center to promote the translation, publication, and distribution of theological literature among member churches of the Federation. . . . It was announced that one of the principal speakers at the second assembly of LWF, to be held at Hannover, Germany, July 25—August 3, 1952, will be Dr. Eivind Berggrav, former Bishop of Oslo and primate of the Church of Norway. He will speak at a plenary session on the subject "Church and State—the Lutheran Viewpoint." It was indicated that this topic will be brought up for discussion by the delegates. . . . Dr. S. C. Michelfelder succumbed to a heart attack on September 30 at Chicago. After attending a meeting in Curitiba, Brazil, S. A., he had come to Chicago to participate in the meetings of the Executive Committee of the National Lutheran Council. At the conclusion of these meetings the 62-year-old churchman was scheduled to speak in various American cities in the interest of Lutheran World Action. Since 1945 he had headquarters at Geneva, where he directed the NLC agency for bringing physical relief to the destitute of Europe as well as the Material Aids Division of the WCC. In the fall of the same year he was appointed executive secretary of the LWF and in recent months devoted much time to the planning of the Hannover meeting scheduled for next summer.

* * *

A new stained-glass window in the chancel of Wollaston Lutheran Church in Quincy, Mass., shows a figure of Jesus preaching into a microphone, with a radio broadcasting tower in the background. The Rev. E. A. Kettner, pastor of the church, said: "The truth we are trying to portray is that He is still the living Christ and still teaches through His Church today."

* * *

The California and Pacific Synod of the ULCA has purchased property for a new theological seminary, the first for that church body west of the Rocky Mountains. Until now, the farthest west United Lutheran theological school has been Central Seminary, Fremont, Nebr. . . . Dr. J. L. Sawyer, president of the board of trustees of the new institution, announced the purchase of two adjoining estates, with a total of about five acres, in the Berkeley hills, overlooking San Francisco Bay, near the campus of the University of California, for the sum of \$144,500. . . . Much of the money to be invested in the new school was secured in the Christian Higher Education Year fund drive of the United Lutheran Church, now in its final months. . . . The new institution will be known as Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary and will open in September, 1952.

Stewardship offices of the United Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church will hold a joint conference for the first time in 1952. The joint meeting was approved by the annual stewardship conference of the United Lutheran Church in Springfield, Ohio. The Rev. George Schultz, stewardship secretary of the American Lutheran Church, said: "Our programs of stewardship promotion have been so similar that it seems appropriate that we should meet together to share ideas and problems." Henry Endress, ULCA stewardship secretary and executive director of the Lutheran Laymen's Movement, said the joint conference marks the culmination of a trend in which the two groups have been using virtually the same methods in workshop planning, printed materials and films, and the training of pastors and laymen in stewardship. It was announced at the conference that the Lutheran Laymen's Movement for Stewardship will pay for the total stewardship program of the United Lutheran Church in America next year, as it did last year. The cost will be about \$150,000, said Harold U. Landis, Lebanon, Pa., businessman who is president of the laymen's Movement. He said the group is made up of men who each contribute from \$100 to \$1,000 annually to pay for the Church's stewardship promotion.

* * *

The Lutheran Church of Slovakia has been placed under Communist leadership with the appointment of Prof. Jan Chudoba as new senior Bishop of the Church. He replaces Bishop Vladimír Cibrda, who was dismissed recently and whose present whereabouts are unknown. Church sources in Vienna said that Bishop Cibrda had for a long time opposed the misuse of the Lutheran Church for political purposes. The announcement of Prof. Chudoba's appointment was made by *Lidové Noviny*, Czech Communist paper, which stated that he "was elected at a recent general convention of the Lutheran Church in Bratislava." Prof. Chudoba teaches at the new State-controlled Evangelical theological faculty in Bratislava. He is known as a leftist of long standing and a Communist Party member.

A second Lutheran bishop also has been eliminated from church leadership, it was learned. He is Bishop Fedor Ruppeldt of Bratislava, head of the Church's Western Diocese. There are only two bishops in the Slovak Lutheran Church. The General Inspector of the Church, Peter Zátka, has been replaced by a Communist. Church circles here expressed fear that a purge of prominent Slovak Lutheran clergy and laymen would follow the leadership changes.

The largest regional Catholic high school in the United States is being planned on Detroit's East Side. Architects are drawing plans for the school, which will be built on a 25-acre site and serve seven fast-growing parishes. Its cost unofficially is estimated at about \$2,500,000.

* * *

American Protestant churches will spend more than half a million dollars this year in their world-wide fight against leprosy, it was announced by Raymond P. Currier, executive secretary of American Leprosy Missions. Mr. Currier reported that the mission body voted a total of \$535,917 to be distributed among 148 leprosy colonies in 31 countries on five continents. American Leprosy Missions co-operates with 60 Protestant denominational and interdenominational mission boards in a program of medical, physical, and spiritual care of leprosy victims. More than \$300,000 of the total budget will be used to feed, clothe, and supply the necessary daily needs of resident patients and for salaries of missionary doctors and superintendents, Mr. Currier said. About 50,000 leprosy sufferers live in, or receive treatment from, the leprosy stations. Almost \$170,000 will be spent for new hospitals, churches, schools, dormitories, homes for healthy children, repairs, and farming equipment.

* * *

Hymns are "wonderful for calming crowds," a university psychology professor told 400 civil defense wardens in the congested downtown area of Manhattan. Prof. George B. Vetter of New York University urged the wardens to begin a familiar hymn to prevent panic among a crowd if an atomic attack starts. "It might be a good idea to practice a hymn these days so that you'll be prepared when the time comes," he said.

* * *

The Vatican radio reported that all Catholic priests between the ages of 22 and 55 are being called up for military service in Communist Hungary. The Vatican station also reported that "according to irrefutable proof" there are now 14,000,000 slave workers in Russia, among them 12-year-old children.

* * *

A leading Presbyterian layman, H. Roe Bartle of Kansas City, Mo., regional director of the Economic Stabilization Agency, speaking to the Wisconsin Synod of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., criticized Presbyterian men who do not give 10 per cent of their time and 10 per cent of their money to the Church. . . . Many laymen, he

said, give more time to their Rotary club than to God. . . . He was especially critical of church members who do not support their pastors adequately. He said that the Presbyterian Church has a "lot of tightwad saints" among its elders and that pastors must earn enough to "hold their heads erect." Laymen and women should be nicer to pastors, their wives and children, he added, recalling that he lived through "hell on earth" because he was a Presbyterian preacher's child. —Need this be limited to Presbyterians?

* * *

Vienna reports that the Czech Parliament has passed a new law ordering the immediate dissolution of all religious, scientific, and cultural societies on the grounds that "they are non-progressive." . . . Interior Minister Vaclav Nosek told Parliament that "such pseudo-religious societies as Jehovah's Witnesses, the Salvation Army, and the International Bible Society have no place in our State." . . . Property belonging to these groups will be taken over by the State. Foreign representatives still remaining in Czechoslovakia are expected to receive orders to leave the country. . . . Mr. Nosek suggested that "members of the dissolved societies enlist as members of the Soviet-Czechoslovak Friendship Society or similar progressive organizations." . . . He said that the dissolved organizations "showed a negative attitude toward the people's democratic order."

* * *

The only member of the Roman College of Cardinals at liberty behind the Iron Curtain, Adam Stefan Cardinal Sapieha, Archbishop of Cracow, Poland, died after a long illness at the age of 84 years. (Joseph Cardinal Mindzenty, Primate of Hungary, is a prisoner behind the Iron Curtain, while Thomas Cardinal Tien, Archbishop of Peiping, has been exiled by the Chinese Communist government and now lives in the United States.) . . . The death of Cardinal Sapieha reduces the College of Cardinals to 49, or 21 below the full quota of 70 members. . . . At present there are 18 Italian cardinals, 5 French, 3 American, 2 German, 2 Spanish, 2 Argentine, 2 Brazilian, and one each of the following countries: England, Belgium, Portugal, Austria, Hungary, Syria, Armenia, Canada, Holland, Chile, Africa, Cuba, Peru, Australia, China.

* * *

Christian Science opposition has developed to proposed fluorination of Minneapolis city water, the contention being that the introduction of fluorine could mean medication of the water. . . . A communication handed to the City Council water works committee by Charles G.

Sharp of the Christian Science Committee on Publication for the State of Minnesota said: "As the representative of the Christian Science Church, I wish to point out to your committee, which is considering the placing of fluorine in the city water supply, that this is probably medication. If it is, Christian Scientists, of course, object to it because no exemption is possible for those who because of religious convictions do not use medicine. Furthermore, if this program is one of medication, it brings the State to the position of adopting State medicine." . . . For the first, the water works committee laid the matter of fluorination over for consideration by the newly elected City Council.—Of course, the principle of religious liberty will be invoked—which, it seems to us, is carrying that principle *usque ad absurdum*. And, after all, they need not use the city water, or they could move, perhaps, to a place where they do not even purify the water.

* * *

An illustration of the type of propaganda which is used by Communists against Catholic institutions comes from Wuhu in Anhwei, China, where Communist authorities had begun to lay plans to vilify the nuns in charge of an orphanage and turn the people against them. . . . The Communists built eighty small coffins and dug up the whole orphanage garden, looking for the bones of children "killed" in the institution; but all they found were the skeletons of five children who died during the war and which the nuns had to bury in their own garden. . . . Since the accusations had been made and the coffins bought, the Communists had to "save face"; accordingly, they filled the remaining seventy-five coffins with dirt and stuck a piece of bone in each. . . . However, when the people were forced to view the evidences of the nuns' "atrocities," they looked at each other blankly and asked: "But where are the skulls?"—Such incidents, by no means rare, give evidence of Communist fear and hatred of Christianity, but also, it seems to me, of a rather small-caliber mentality; the reader feels himself transported back to late medieval and Reformation times, viewing the activity of the Inquisition.

* * *

American Protestant mission boards have been served notice by the Chinese Communist government that they may no longer finance religious, educational, or charitable work in China. . . . A decree ordering the American bodies to cease their work immediately was signed in Peking by Premier Chou En-lai. The decree was embodied in a set of regulations obviously aimed at wiping out American influence and making the Chinese Church entirely independent. . . . Signaling the

official promulgation of a policy already in actual force for a long time, the decree made no mention of any missions but those conducted by Americans. . . . In addition to stipulating that the Chinese churches sever relations with mission boards in the United States, the decree provided for the early departure of the dwindling number of American missionaries who remain in China. It read in part: "Those who have spoken or acted against the people's government should be immediately dismissed, and those who have committed crimes should be reported to the government for punishment according to the law. Those who wish to leave should be given permission to return to their country. Those who have not spoken or acted against the people's government and are considered necessary to be left behind at the expense of Chinese institutions and organizations may remain. However, they may not take up executive or administrative offices in said institutions and organizations." . . . The decree said that foreign missions which wish to contribute their properties, not including land, to Chinese churches and organizations may do so, but only unconditionally. . . . In what seemed to be a desire to compensate for the loss of United States support, the decree provided for tax exemption on buildings owned by Chinese churches and church organizations.

* * *

According to an announcement over the Budapest Radio, a Roman Catholic Church in Communist Hungary is to be torn down to make room for a monument to Stalin. . . . The station said that Budapest municipal authorities had decided to erect the monument to Stalin on the site of the Church of Mary, Queen of Heaven, which was damaged during the last war, but not to such an extent that it could not be reconstructed, Hungarian refugees declare.

* * *

On September 15, Dr. Duke K. McCall, executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, took over the presidency of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Ky., succeeding Dr. Ellis A. Fuller, who died last October.

* * *

Lay leaders of the Southeastern Methodist Jurisdiction, meeting in conference at Lake Junaluska, N.C., dealt with the Christian layman's position regarding the family, the community, and the world. Their views, expressed in three forum groups, were summarized in a statement prepared by J. C. Holler of Columbia, S.C. . . . "Modern advertising," so the statement read, "of liquor, beer, and such is trying

to break the home. . . . The apparent determination to break the influence of the home through advertising must be met by an equally strong determination on the part of laymen, not only to fight back, but also to uphold and strengthen the Christian home." Again, they declared, the home is being harmed by increasing breaking of the Sabbath; and Methodists are too prone to send their children to Sunday school instead of taking them. . . . They called for adequately disciplined, church-centered Christian homes and for strengthening of church colleges as bulwarks of youth training. . . . They declared that "we have probably overdone the attitude of tolerance — tolerance to evil in the community. We must become more concerned about righteousness rather than respectability." . . . "Too many laymen suffer from religious laryngitis when they should be speaking out on moral issues. The time has come for Christian men to stand up and be counted on moral, political, and other issues affecting the life of the community." . . . Concerning their relations with the world as a whole, the laymen voiced a need "to know more about missions and be more concerned about changing men everywhere Godward." . . . They praised the work of church women in this regard and called on the men "to do as effective a job as women."

* * *

Japan's first privately owned radio station will begin broadcasting this fall under the sponsorship of a Roman Catholic religious order, the Pious Society of St. Paul. The managing director of the station, the Italian-born priest John Chiesa, said the main purpose of the radio station will be "to fight the Communistic program which is attempting to infiltrate Japan." . . . The station will use the call letters BHK, which stand for Cultural Radio Station in the Japanese language. He added that in the "not too distant future" he looked forward also to setting up a television station.

* * *

Protestants, "Stop, Look, Listen"! — From Chautauqua, N. Y., comes the report that James G. McDonald, former American ambassador to Israel, advocated establishment of full diplomatic relations between the United States and the Vatican. He was speaking on another topic, but departed from the theme of his lecture on the Middle East to insert the remark that while Myron Taylor "did a fine job as personal representative of the President" at the Vatican, he "would have done a better job if he had been an ambassador." . . . The former diplomat declared: "The Vatican is one of the best listening posts in the West, and we should be officially represented there as are most of the rest

of the countries of the world." . . . Myron Taylor, in the first week in August, reported to the President on his recent tour which included an audience with Pope Pius XII.—At this distance this report looks to us like another trial balloon: Are Protestants still alert, or have they forgotten?

* * *

The president of the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Mrs. D. Leigh Calvin, at a convention in Boston, stated that Americans now spend a million dollars an hour for beer, wine, and liquor. The 1950 expenditure for alcoholic beverages totaled \$8,760,000,000, or \$210,000,000 more than in 1949.—Without sanctioning all the radicalism of the WCTU, we see that these figures give occasion for thought.

* * *

Bishop Daniel J. Gerecke of Tucson, Ariz., in an order effective October 5, revoked the privilege enjoyed by Arizona Roman Catholics of eating meat on Fridays. A similar decree was issued previously by the archdiocese of Santa Fe, N. Mex. . . . Both Arizona and New Mexico are former Spanish-controlled territories where Catholics retained the privilege of eating meat on Fridays originally granted to Spain and all her dominions under papal bulls dating back to the reign of Pope Urban II (1088—99). The dispensation was granted in recognition of Spain's role in preventing the Moors from overrunning Europe. . . . These orders are in line with a decree by Pope Pius XII aimed at making abstinence from meat on Fridays uniform throughout the Catholic world.—Another instance proving that papal rule is autocratic, totalitarian!

* * *

London reports that upwards of 35,000 delegates from 40 countries attended the five-day international convention of Jehovah's Witnesses held in the Wembley Stadium in that city. It was the first time that the Witnesses—the official name of the organization is the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society—met in London. . . . During the sessions, 2,225,000 leaflets and thousands of window placards, posters, and streamers were used in an intensive publicity campaign, which also featured house-to-house visits. 3,000 Witnesses, ranging in age from ten to 86 years, were immersed in a public pool some miles west of London. . . . The president of the society delivered an address on the subject: "Will Religion Meet the World Crisis?" It contained sharp attacks on leaders of Christian groups who "look for political rulers and economic planners, backed by military might, material wealth, and industrial organization, to point out the way. They depend on bullets more than on Bibles, on bombing missions more than on

Gospel-preaching missions. Everybody knows they are fearfully concerned for the life of political nations with which their own fate is bound up and are following the lead of political, economic, and military bosses. . . . Christ abstained from meddling in the politics of imperial Rome; we must brush aside the religious traditions of men and go directly to the Bible." — The teachings of this sect, and particularly their use of the Bible and the Gospel, as we all know, give room for much criticism, since they depart far from the teaching of our Master; but their strictures of Protestant aims and methods may well move us to pause and consider, and lead to an earnest examination whether we in any way are giving the world cause to blaspheme.

* * *

Damage estimated at between \$200,000 and \$300,000 was suffered in a fire at the Lutheran-owned Augusta Victoria Hospital on the Mount of Olives in Jordan Jerusalem, but the 24-hour blaze was largely confined to supplies stored in the basement. . . . The 400-bed institution, one of the largest hospitals in the Middle East, belongs to the Lutheran World Federation and is operated by the church agency for Arab Palestinian refugees under an agreement with the United Nations.

* * *

A Vatican Radio broadcast reported that Hungarian Communist authorities are preparing to distribute a "Communist version of the Bible." The broadcast said "millions of copies" of the Communist "Bible" have been printed in many languages for distribution not only in Hungary, but throughout the world.

* * *

A "leave-the-churches" movement has been launched in Braunschweig, Germany, by the Association of German Freethinkers. The campaign was approved at a general meeting of the Association, which was reformed recently after having lapsed during the war. . . . Declaring that there is a "growing revival" of the freethinkers' movement in Germany, Heinrich Graul, the Association's chairman, said a strong and united freethinkers' organization must be built up "to check the reactionary churches, which use religion to make political business." . . . The conference agreed that the Association's fight in the public field should be directed particularly against "the churches' attempts to dominate the schools." — Communistic practice follows that of Hitler: Take control of the youth—then never mind what the old folks say or do!

THEO. HOYER