

CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY

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EDITORIAL NOTE: The 125th anniversary issue would not be complete without a brief description of three other agencies which play key roles in the preparation of students, even though they are not integral parts of the seminary. We refer to The Foundation for Reformation Research, Concordia Historical Institute, and Radio Station KFUO. Brief articles on each of these agencies follow. The articles were prepared by Miss Laura Scott, former secretary to the editor of this journal.

THE FOUNDATION FOR REFORMATION RESEARCH

The Foundation for Reformation Research, established in 1957, vindicates its existence with a quotation from *Protestant Catholicity* by E. Gordon Rupp:

All I want to do here is to affirm two modest propositions. The first is that Reformation studies are an important field of historical and theological research in their own right, that they are alive and moving and opening the way to new assessments. The other is that the Reformation has a bearing on our own contemporary situation, and not least in regard to the recovery of Christian unity.

Herbert Knopp of Valparaiso University initiated the proposal for such a foundation to Alfred O. Fuerbringer, who gathered together an advisory council to formulate a constitution. The meeting produced a nonprofit organization with its membership comprised of the board of control of Concordia Seminary; the board of directors, which determines policy, is interdenominational.

Carl S. Meyer, since 1962 acting executive director of the Foundation, has stated the purposes succinctly. The first of these is to collect original documents for the purpose of providing a primary deposit

for research and study. As an additional aid to research, a fellowship program is being offered during the summer for predoctoral students working with the Reformation era. In 1964 Lewis W. Spitz, Jr., of Stanford University, directed this fellowship program, which is made possible largely through grants from the Aid Association for Lutherans. Another future goal for the Foundation is to promote publications in the area of Reformation research.

Present holdings, which show a distinctly Lutheran partiality, consist of 1,100 rolls of microfilm and around 700 volumes on microcards. The master negatives of the documents are preserved through storage in a salt mine near Hutchinson, Kans. The major works of the Foundation include the political archives of Landgrave Philip of Hesse, filmed with the permission of the *Staatsarchiv* at Marburg, Germany. His archives offer information about the political, military, and religious factors of the Reformation, and some insights into the social and economic framework. A 1530 manuscript copy of the Augsburg Confession is preserved on microfilm in these archives. Other major collections contain the works of Luther's co-worker, John Brenz, and the correspondence of Henry Bullinger, successor to Zwingli at Zurich. The collections are being enlarged constantly. A significant non-Lutheran holding is the microfilm copy of the extensive *Simmlersche Sammlung* from the *Zentralbibliothek* in Zurich.

Several funds assist the Foundation in its growth. In addition to the AAL fellowship, the Knopp Memorial Fund, the Rafaj Fund, and the Ludwig Fuerbringer Memo-

rial Fund provide for documentary expansion or for student research. The Foundation strives for representative coverage but stresses works of major importance. Although the 16th and 17th centuries provide the main area of study, it is often necessary to obtain data from preceding centuries to judge the cause and effects on the Reformation, or from the following years to determine resultant changes.

The benefits of the Foundation for Reformation Research are obvious for future pastors, who are here afforded an unparalleled opportunity in America for study of the times of Luther. The major profit for Lutheranism itself is realized in the improvement of scholarship in Reformation history.

"History, to be above evasion or dispute, must stand on documents, not on opinion," said Lord Acton.

CONCORDIA HISTORICAL INSTITUTE

August R. Suelflow, director of Concordia Historical Institute, expressed the function of the organization through an anecdote: "A person straining to reach that high shelf of insight and new knowledge must borrow the chair of past experience in order to reach his goal of maturity. He must still think and act for himself, but the foundation for decision has been laid by his predecessors. Thus we look for the expansion of gratitude for the Lord's gifts to us through a fuller and deeper appreciation of the ongoing nature of the church illustrated from the past."

The Saxon immigration to Missouri in 1839 was fortunate in having the services of an official archivist, resulting in excellent preservation of records from 1838 or earlier. The Missouri Synod, following

this pattern, assigned the office of archivist to the synodical Secretary. However, as Synod grew and its responsibilities increased, less emphasis was placed on historical preservation. A. L. Graebner, one of the first professional historians in the Missouri Synod, began agitating for the establishment of a historical collection in 1893, and by 1910 Ludwig Fuerbringer founded the *Concordia Historische Gesellschaft*. The year 1927 saw the incorporation of the institute, and in 1959 it was given departmental status as the Department of Archives and History of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

A separate building was constructed on the seminary campus in 1952. The collections contained in this building include nearly 38,000 volumes of books and pamphlets, manuscripts are estimated at 2,000,000, and microfilming has yielded 90,000 feet of film. The Institute also stores and displays several thousand interesting and attractive museum items from its American Lutheran collection.

The contribution of such an agency through the immediate access to original items in a single location is apparent in the field of graduate work at the seminary. This aids the study program immeasurably in time and money. The undergraduates are rendered assistance and counsel in research programs from the selection of the topic to the evaluation of resources available. This assistance is given strictly at the request of the student. Off-campus students may be helped in the preparation of bibliographical aids; many actually travel to the campus for periods of time ranging from one day to a year. Missouri Synod pastors may utilize the services of Concordia Historical Institute

in preparing conference papers, essays, and articles pertaining to the history of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The Institute operates a limited lending library for the purpose of entrusting duplicates of original documents to interested parties.

The museum extension service assists in the construction of a historical or a mission display. In addition to visual aids, many oral presentations, such as the Walter A. Maier Lutheran Hour record collection, are available on a loan basis. Many of the techniques and procedures developed by the Institute have served as models for similar organizations in other church bodies. Inquiries of this nature are received and processed with great frequency.

Historical research, perhaps as few other disciplines, lends a great deal of perspective to the individual. Where personal experience is impossible, he may here learn from the mistakes and contributions of his antecedents.

KFUO

Radio Station KFUO, located on the seminary campus, extends the invitation of Christ over an immediate radius of 200 miles, including more than 2,500,000 persons. The policy statement formulated at the Cleveland convention directs the station to attempt to reach all classes of men and exert a Christian influence on today's culture by conveying the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

How is this accomplished through the medium of mass communication? KFUO insists that "mass communication" is a misnomer; the station attempts to be individual and personal in its projection by stressing relevancy to today's needs and interests. Whereas common denominators must be exercised, a diversity in program-

ing expands the opportunity for confrontation with self, with crisis, with today's world, and with the future. It is recognized that society is "severely compartmentalized, heavily insulated . . . with buffers, barriers, and curtains . . . with minimum of communication."

This presents a unique challenge to the station, for it deals with a situation unlike that of a church—without a highly pre-conditioned captive audience, without lasting listener commitment, without a common listening locale. The audience in this case is able to hear but not to see the speaker. Consequently the program must use unique methods of presentation to "catch and retain" the audience. Feature interviews or documentaries, panel discussions, spot announcements, and the adaptation of drama and music may be as effective as the devotions.

Since, however, at times the minister speaking over radio "forgets the intimacy of the living room or the automobile where his voice is heard and proceeds in the techniques and apparent unrestraint of his church pulpit,"¹ specialized training is often valuable. The presence of a radio station on the seminary campus is conducive to interest among students. A course on mass communications taught by Prof. John Pfitzer originated as a voluntary cultural activity but has become an accredited elective by student request. KFUO assisted by offering its services as a laboratory for staff lectures and technical training. Mr. Pfitzer stressed the fact that one must know the audience and its thinking. "People turn to the radio for various reasons: association because of loneliness, in-

¹ John Gillies, *A Primer for Christian Broadcasters* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1955), p. 9.

formation because they seek knowledge, or perhaps comfort because they are sad." This is indeed an area for witness, to converse and convince.

KFUE's programming follows a slightly different philosophy from that of many religious stations. The management does not try to isolate secular or cultural aspects from religious presentations. Instead, efforts are made to coordinate these into a "fabric image." People are inclined by nature to be selective, so the direction is toward empathy between the listener and the Christian witness of the station. Thus, for example, its programs of classical music may well be one of its most important witness activities.

In addition to preparing its own presentation, KFUE offers an extension program to pastors in the field.

In this, its 40th anniversary year, KFUE is undertaking an extensive program of evaluation and research, known as "Project 40." Formerly no scientific method of self-study was employed, and spasmodic audience reaction alone indicated its progress. The management feels that the station is still using "the obvious methods of witnessing, and has not become specialized." As an example of evaluation, a quantitative survey showed: "Typical 'morning devotional' programs are more attractive to women than to men, to rural

than to urban dwellers, to elderly than to young people, to persons with little formal education than to persons with a high degree of formal education, to churchd than to unchurched."²

Even communication with our own people has become difficult. Part of the problem rests in the use of archaic and endemic language. Again we need to "be relevant"—in issues, in language, and in presentation. This is especially applicable to communicating with youth, where controversy and questions must be honestly confronted.

Emerson Russell, general manager of KFUE, concisely stated the problem: "We are interested in the person who is least interested in us. In our witnessing we must reach him intellectually or emotionally before he will respond religiously." Martin E. Marty in his 40th anniversary address summarizes: "The purpose of Christian communication in the public realm is representation — we are to be represented, and presentational — to make the church, to make Christ present, to plow the soil for the seed, to set the stage."

² Clayton T. Griswold and Charles H. Schmitz, *How You Can Broadcast Religion*, ed. Lois Anderson (New York: National Council of Churches, 1957), p. 17.

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