

# THE SPRINGFIELDER

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# Editorial

## *Full Accreditation*

JUNE 11, 1968, is a red letter day in the history of Concordia Theological Seminary.

On this day we received full accreditation with the American Association of Theological Schools. Since 1963 the seminary has been only an associate member of the Association.

This achievement marks the end of nearly a decade of valiant effort on the part of our entire faculty. During this period we have revised our curriculum, upgraded our standards for admission, offered the B.D. Degree, upgraded and increased the faculty, improved our library, our plant, and the overall tone of the Seminary. Springfield is now accredited in the same category as the other 156 seminaries of the organization.

Special thanks go to Dr. Lorman Petersen who worked so valiantly on the self-study in order that we might receive the final accreditation. Dr. Martin Luebke deserves special thanks for his efforts in the curricular revision, and Dr. Fred Kramer, our former academic dean, deserves our gratitude for the tremendous job he did during the early stages of our program toward full accreditation. Dr. Walter Baepler really initiated this effort, and much impetus was given to it during the presidency of Dr. George Beto. We are also grateful to the Board for Higher Education and to Dr. W. F. Wolbrecht who during the post-war years did so much to help us procure the fine plant which we now have at Springfield.

We are grateful to God that this milestone has been reached in the history of our school. We pledge to the Church our continued efforts to prepare the finest and most dedicated young men possible for the highest calling of man. Full accreditation with its many benefits for academic planning, methodology, and scholarships will assist us in this effort. Thank you for your prayers and please continue to help us in every way you can.

J. A. O. Preus

## *The Consultation of Black Pastors*

IT WAS MY privilege some weeks ago to attend the meeting of Black Pastors of the three large Lutheran Synods which met with various officials of their respective churches.

We are including in this issue of THE SPRINGFIELDER a copy of a paper delivered by Dr. Gayraud S. Wilmore, Jr. It was of such current interest that I asked permission of Dr. Wilmore to republish it here in our journal. I think it will be of great interest to all of our readers. It furnishes an excellent insight into the thinking of a leading negro theologian and pastor. I am sure that

our readers will not agree with everything that is said, but we are herewith presenting it in order that you may become better informed as to some of the problems and issues that face our negro brethren and that face all of us who belong to predominately white churches.

The meeting itself was extremely interesting. While I have done considerable reading on the subject of black power and the unrest among negroes, I had never really confronted the issue as completely as I did at this meeting. We have in all predominately white churches which have a minority of negroes, a situation which is not only explosive but potentially extremely troublesome for members of both races. There seems to be no question that the Kerner report was correct in stating that the real problem is a white problem, namely, white racism. This has so completely penetrated all structures and institutions of our society that many negroes feel there is no way in which this problem can be eradicated except by the complete destruction of the institution and the system. Yet no one really wants to see this happen.

Again and again our Lutheran negro clergymen stated their desire and their intention of remaining within their Lutheran Churches. But the white majority in our Lutheran Churches needs to listen very carefully to what is being said. Not so much because we fear a pull-out (which probably some white members would welcome), but because we need to give to the black man in our churches a position of dignity and equality, which he feels (and probably rightly) that he has not heretofore enjoyed.

We need to face honestly the question of how to get negro Lutherans, men who are dedicated to the Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions and to the heritage and program of their churches, to have a vital role in the work of the Church, particularly as it applies to the American Negro. For example, if we are to establish mission churches in Negro area, we ought to have black men as members of our district and synodical mission boards. Again, if we are to educate negroes for full time church work, we ought to have representatives of the negro race serving as members of our Board for Higher Education, the Boards of Control of our schools, and as members of our faculties.

We need to give special attention to the recruitment, financing, and placement of negro candidates. Perhaps we could give some thought to having a special placement committee which devoted its attention to the placement of negro candidates. The curricula of our schools need to be tailored to a degree to meet the needs of American negroes. These are not necessarily demands of our brethren so much as needs, and the Church should be willing and happy and able to take care of these needs of our brethren of the black race.

The article by Dr. Wilmore will do much to inform you, and we commend it to your careful study and attention.

J. A. O. Preus