



THE SPRINGFIELDER

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"Great Things for His Kingdom"

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THE INVITATION to write for the special issue of *The Springfielder* published in connection with the 125th Anniversary of the founding of the Seminary brings great joy to my heart. I am sure that whether I say it now or at the end of the years which the Lord gives me in this world, I will have to say that my years at Springfield were the happiest and most joyful of my entire life. Here my children grew to maturity. Here I spent eleven years among good friends, honorable colleagues, interesting students, doing a work for which I had always prepared myself.

On an occasion like this, of course, it gives one a chance to look back and reminisce. I always enjoyed reading the accounts of the early history of the Seminary. I don't know of any institution in our church that has had a more interesting and varied history. The humor and the pathos, the love and the controversies, the people and the principles all play in together to make a fabric of varied colors and quality, which is beautiful, tender and strong.

I think with great affection of Doctor Baepler, who was instrumental in bringing me to the faculty; Doctor Beto, under whom I served with such joy and personal affection; Doctor Kramer; Doctor Spiegel; the many men of the old guard with whom I always felt such kinship, as well as the men who joined the faculty during my seven years as president. I regard all of them with affection and gratitude.

And then there were the students. They were always interesting, always different, but the basic ingredient that seemed to unite them all was their integrity, their devotion to their Lord and to His Church, their genuine affection for one another, and the open and frank way in which students and faculty dealt with one another. We sometimes had our differences, and occasionally the differences were quite pronounced; yet underlying it all was the sense of devotion to the common cause, namely, the preaching of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

My family and I enjoyed our associations in the City of Springfield more than perhaps any place we have ever lived. We felt accepted and loved. The relations between the Seminary and the community were a joy to all concerned.

As I look back over the years, I think of several things that were particularly significant. First, of course, there was the constant development of the faculty. There was also the steady growth of the student body. The achievement of accreditation was a matter of tremendous labor but also of tremendous joy. My own part in the establishment of Lincoln Land Community College and Sangamon

State University gave me great personal satisfaction, and I believe made a contribution both to the community and to the Seminary. The development of the library and the other facilities of the school, culminating in the completion of a long awaited administration building were all causes of great satisfaction and rejoicing. The fine and cordial relationship which existed between the Seminary and the pastors and congregations of the Central Illinois District were something that gave pleasure to all concerned. The openness and frankness with which the faculty and students worked with one another, the mutual affection and trust which characterized our association were something that I will always treasure. I believe that we had at Springfield a devotion to one another and a trust in one another which I only wish existed to a greater degree throughout our beloved Synod.

I suppose no one can ever talk about Springfield without mentioning Lincoln. We always remembered his early associations with the campus, and I believe that Lincoln did leave his mark on the community and the school. We were given a historical perspective, a respect for the great traditions of our country, a closeness to what it meant to fight a war for the freeing of the slaves, an understanding of government and its role in the lives of people—things that are almost unique in the life of our synodical schools.

But, above all, the most important aspect of the years at Springfield was the respect for the Word of God and the devotion to the Gospel which characterized the classes, the faculty meetings, the discussions with students, the curriculum, the chapel services, and every other phase of the life of the school. Those were years for me in which my faith grew and my love for the church and my fellow Missouri Synod Lutherans increased day by day. Springfield has had a great heritage, and I pray God that with faithfulness to His Word and to the cause for which our Lord Jesus Christ died the Seminary will move forward, continuing to send forth eager and dedicated young ministers into the church. I believe that Concordia Seminary at Springfield, under the strong and decisive leadership of President Schultz, will move forward into new areas of service to the Lord and to His Church. I have nothing but affection and happy memories from my years there, and I am confident that under God's continued blessing and benediction the school has a bright future and will continue to accomplish great things for His Kingdom.