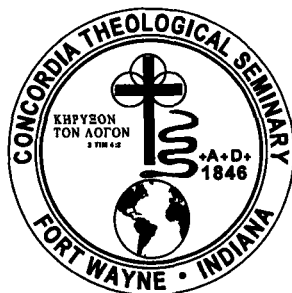


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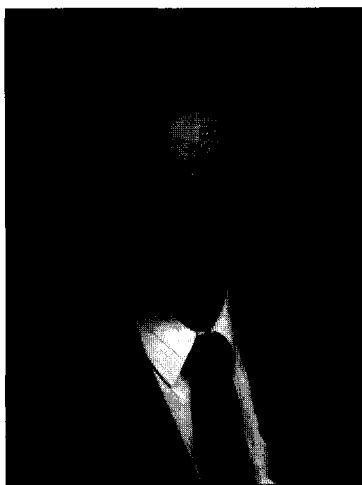
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† G. Waldemar Degner † (1925-1998)



Dr. Gerhard Waldemar Degner was born on August 9, 1925, in Hampton, Nebraska. He became a child of the Triune God through Holy Baptism on August 19th of the same year at Zion Lutheran Church in Hampton. His baptismal faith was confirmed before Zion congregation on May 7, 1939.

Dr. Degner was ordained into the Office of the Holy Ministry in August, 1951. He then served St. John Lutheran Church, Tyndall, South Dakota (1951-53), Grace Lutheran Church, Breckenridge, Minnesota (1953-57), and Trinity Lutheran Church, Ithaca, New York (1967-75) as pastor. His teaching service to the church included Milwaukee Lutheran High School, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (1957-59), and Concordia College in the same city (1959-67). He joined the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary in 1975.

His educational career was rich and diverse: Zion Lutheran School (1931-39); Hampton High School (1939-41); St. John's Academy, Winfield, Kansas (1941-43); Concordia College, St. Paul, Minnesota (1943-45); and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri (1945-50), from which he received the Bachelor of Divinity and Master of Divinity degrees. His scholarly achievements in classical Greek and Latin led to graduate degrees at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, where he received the Master of Arts, and at the University of Chicago, from which he received the Doctor of Philosophy in 1982.

Dr. Degner's special gifts for the good of the church were recognized by his peers and across the continents. Dr. Degner made some of his most significant contributions in his later years, accepting assignments from the Board of Mission Services to further theological education in Taiwan and Latvia. He was instrumental in helping found the Master of Divinity degree program at China Lutheran Seminary in Taiwan, establishing it

on a solid, confessional Lutheran foundation. Additionally, he knew the importance of the printed word for theological education and the spread of the Gospel. To that end he helped arrange for the translation and publication of Martin Chemnitz's *The Two Natures in Christ* (from Dr. J.A.O. Preus Jr.'s translation), as well as his own *Hermeneutics* text. Later he spent a semester teaching in the theological department at the University of Latvia in Riga. Through these and his other efforts he made a profound and lasting impact on the Lutheran Church in America and abroad. Writing on behalf of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Dr. A. L. Barry, President of the Synod, noted: "The church has lost a giant. Former students of Dr. Degner have told me of how much they loved learning from him. He always brought a gentle human kindness and love to his work, with a quick wit and great erudition. His passion for the biblical text inspired and encouraged many, and no doubt will continue to do so. His ministry, literally around the world, strengthened the church and the faith of so many. For all this we thank and praise God. Our Synod will remain forever grateful for his service." Dr. Jeffery Oswald of China Lutheran Seminary also observed: "Through his students he has already influenced a new generation of Christian leaders here and throughout the world; through his writings and the writings of others that he worked to see translated, he will teach generations of leaders to come. How the history of Lutheran theological education in Taiwan has been changed by the deeds of Waldemar Degner! How he will be missed, and remembered, and celebrated!"

The entire seminary will miss his kindly and pastoral attentiveness to the needs of students and colleagues, as well as his clear confession of the Lutheran faith.

May he dine at the high feast of the Paschal Lamb where all is light and life in Christ.