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Editor Arnold O. Lehmann

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The picture on the cover is Professor Adam Martin.

**Proceedings of the Sixteenth Convention of the
German Evangel. Luther. Synod of Wisconsin
and other States held in the German
Evangelical-Lutheran Congregation in
Fond du Lac, Wis. from June 7 to 13, 1866**

Milwaukee, Wis. Printing-firm for the "Herold" 1866

(Part II of the Proceedings.

Part I was published in the *Journal* Vol. 18, No. 2)

Fifth Session, Saturday, June 9, 8:30 a.m.

Opened with a hymn, Scripture reading and prayer by Pastor G. Fachtmann. The minutes of the previous session were read and adopted.

Prof. A. Martin from Watertown was accepted as an honorary and advisory member, and Delegate Baum was accepted as an advisory member.

Pastor Gensike was permitted to go home under the condition that he return on Monday. Delegate A. Hacker presented a request to the synod to be more brief with its deliberations, and the wish that the delegates meet for deliberations during the sessions of the Ministerium under the leadership of an impartial pastor, who would inform the delegates in advance of the matters to be considered, and that he be given a copy of the agenda for this purpose.

Committee 3 - acceptance of new pastors - presents the resolution to the Hon. synod that in the case of acceptance of Pastor Lukas into synod membership, it be postponed for one year as instructed by the ministerial conference.

The report was first received, then accepted.

The first half of the report of Committee 2 came up for discussion. It reads: The committee which is to make a report on the president's report takes the liberty with an incomplete report to present most dutifully its deliberations to the Hon. synod.

1. It recommends that an Hon. synod express its thanks for the ongoing work of the president.
2. It requests the Hon. synod to adopt appropriate resolutions, so that the president is more informed about the activities of the individual congregations, thus making his work lighter and more blessed.
3. The committee feels itself obligated to remind the Hon. assembly of the resolution brought in by Pastor Bading at the last year's meeting, that the apparent endeavors to split up larger working areas into smaller parishes be discontinued.
4. Since the reasons for Pastor Meyer's move to another state are unknown, the committee asks this Hon. body if he can continue membership in our synod according to his wishes.
5. The committee joins those complaining about the occasional inadequately justified position changes of pastors, and recommends to the Hon. assembly an investigation

of the significant damages to our synod's organization, which should do away with these distressful situations.

6. We express our regret that the synod has lost the congregation in Naperville, Ill., since it was not in the position to grant it a pastor.

7. The committee recommends to the synod that a delegate be sent to Wausau in order to acquire information about the conditions there, since, according to the latest reports, Pastor Leupp has again assumed a pastorate there.

8. In regard to the *Gemeindeblatt* we recommend to the synod:
a. that the editorial staff be warmly thanked for its competent work;
b. that the synod express itself in regard to the position the periodical has to the synod.

No. 1 was adopted by resolution.

After the committee gave further clarification about No. 2, the Hon. president was called upon to speak out his opinions. This he did:

In regard to his request not to be reelected, he had in mind to present further proposals to the synod in regard to this point; but since he is still the president, he must indeed clearly restrict himself in order that he not appear in a false light. The president is indeed now only nominally the head of the synod. In the first place it is necessary to emphasize how the president has in reality, for the most part, nothing to do with the pastoral changes, unless after he is required irrevocably to press his seal thereon, but in most cases his counsel is not sought. In the past year four cases came to the fore, when he chastised pastors by letter concerning their changes of position and also informed the congregation about this. He may have, being bound by conscience, overstepped the bounds of his power, but in reality more should have been done earlier. Secondly, to emphasize, churches were built and dedicated and new fields were opened up without the president's direction. If he would not establish a closer contact with pastors and congregations during the course of the year, then, with the further expansion of the synod, the bond would constantly become more loose. The perception is not there in our synodical members that they are one body in which one is responsible for all and all are responsible for one. Especially is this perception lacking in the congregations, thus their interest is also lacking. Because of these conditions great dangers threaten. A greater centralization of the administrative and executive powers could easily become dangerous, if specific established restrictions are not drawn up and the respective presidents make an excessive use of their power; but a slight misuse would be better here and there than the present situation.

Resolved that the synod appoint committee 12 to recommend the necessary resolutions in regard to these matters. Elected were Pastors Ph. Koehler, G. Bachmann, A. Lange and Delegates Reichmann and Ekel.

With this motion No. 2 of the report was declared as being resolved.

No. 3 was also referred to the same committee for a further report.

No. 4. The Hon. president was authorized to handle the matter according to §32 of the synodical constitution.

No. 5. By resolution referred to committee 12. No. 6. Adopted by resolution.

No. 7. Resolved that Pastor A. Hoenecke undertake an inspection and mission journey to Wausau and vicinity.

No. 8a was adopted.

No. 8b. After lengthy discussion it was resolved: that the editorial staff be requested to indicate in an article (perhaps in the introductory pages of year No. 2) that

the periodical on the whole represents the confessional position of the synod, but that it does not always represent the synod in each and every individual published statement.

No. 8c was added: that the contents be increased. The discussion on this was not concluded.

Delegate J. Hinn was granted permission to return home after the afternoon service on Sunday.

Pastor Goldammer was authorized to serve the delegates in their meetings.

Resolved that the session be adjourned to 2:00 p.m.

Closing prayer by Pastor H. Quehl.

Sixth Session, Saturday, June 9, 2:00 p.m.

Opened with prayer by Pastor C. G. Reim.

Committee 1 presented an addendum to its report, reading as follows:

Since the congregations, namely:

1. The Evangelical Lutheran St. John Congregation in Two Rivers,
2. The Evangelical Lutheran Zion Congregation in Morrison,
3. The Evangelical Lutheran St. John Congregation in Sheboygan, request joining the synod, and since their congregational constitutions are proper, the committee recommends their acceptance into the synod.

Delegates C. Kieckhefer, G. Reul, Pastors J. Kilian, H. Bartelt

The three congregations were accepted by a resolution into synod membership.

The report of Committee 11 was read and accepted.

A letter from former seminary student Denke was referred to Committee 4 and another from A. Schmidt to Committee 3.

The report of Committee 4 was read. It reads:

The committee on seminary matters takes the liberty to present its report to the Hon. synod.

The committee reports that the report and book of minutes of the Board of Trustees shows how the officials of the institution have made every effort to effect the internal and external growth of the institution, and that the committee is in full agreement with the dismissal of the students named in the report. The committee proposes the following items with explanation:

1. The committee anxiously awaits the report of the Board of Visitors concerning acquisitions and furnishings for the seminary - however, it notes that from examination of the minutes it received the impression that the Board of Trustees had limited the acquisitions and furnishings to the most necessary and to those without which the seminary could not operate.

2. After a thorough examination of the house rules as set up by the Board of Trustees, the committee finds the same not to be incongruous with the present conditions, however it wishes that for the future an inspector be engaged, and that more authority be given him over the students in specific cases, e.g.: in their relationship with the female employees stricter rules be established, because in the present house rules that is not very clear and not strict enough; also, in regard to the details of the extent of the power of discipline nothing is stated; likewise in the case of 3.19 of the house rules concerning the suspension of students.

3. The committee approves of the resolution of the Board of Trustees, that it for the time being still requests payment for room and board from the college students who are

in the pastor program, but it also suggests that the Board of Trustees may make exceptions in isolated cases.

4. The passage concerning the students in the teacher program is in full agreement with the committee.

5. The committee requests the Board of Trustees to justify by means of a more exact explanation the reasons it gave the theological professor permission to take his missionary journey, and it proposes that the explanation be incorporated in the synodical report. Since the members of the committee personally approved of the missionary journey by the professor, the committee requests the synod express its warmest thanks to Prof. Moldehnke for his zeal and his efforts at the seminary.

6. The committee expresses its joy over the quick establishment and growth of the college and it requests the synod to express its thanks to Prof. Martin for his successful accomplishment.

7. The committee recommends the calling of an inspector, who at the same time could be an instructor, and it thoroughly agrees with the resolution of the Board of Trustees to propose to the synod Pastor Hoenecke for this position.

8. The committee looks forward to the proposal of Prof. Martin concerning scholarships, and it requests the synod to express its warmest thanks to him for his successful endeavors in funding the teaching positions, and it recommends to the synod that it support him fully in his efforts.

9. The committee recommends to the synod that it consider the engagement of an agent and it agrees with the resolution of the Board of Trustees that Pastor Sieker be named to this post. Finally the committee requests the synod make it the obligation of its members and congregations to advance to the fullest the welfare of the institution through gifts and sincere prayers.

Respectfully,

Delegates E. Gustavus, G. Brumder Pastors E. Mayerhoff, E. Giese, C. Gausewitz, W. Staerkel

The report was accepted and immediately there followed a discussion. The introduction was adopted by resolution.

No. 1. The synod demands a subsequent report from the Visitors.

No. 2. Adopted.

No. 3. Postponed until the report of Committee 11 is brought up for discussion.

No. 4. Adopted.

No. 5. caused a heated debate about the parties concerned, and the matter was tabled.

No. 7. Postponed until the report of Committee 11 is brought up for discussion.

No. 8. Adopted.

Then Prof. Martin presented his report and proposals to the synod in English, which reads as follows in German [in the minutes]:

[The following English version is taken from "The History of the Wisconsin Synod" by John Philipp Koehler, edited by Leigh D. Jordahl page 122. Faith-Life The Protestant Conference 1970]

A college in the American sense of the word is an institution for a so called higher education. It is neither a European university nor a German *Gymnasium*, but a pecu-

liarily American scholastic institution that partakes somewhat of both of them but concerns itself more with the needs of practical life, in that it aims at a higher education that is closely fitted to the local conditions in our land, including all that which this requires, and excluding all that which is foreign to it. If our Evangelical Lutheran Church is to have a future in America and not die out when immigration ceases, we must hurry to found such first-class colleges. Nothing that is in human power to do holds greater promise for the future of our church, for the college graduates furnish the influential men in state and church. The church has always had the say in education matters, and in this country, too, that denomination of the church will become best known, and put its peculiar stamp on the life of the people, that does most in the way of educating the prominent men of the land.

However, the highest and holiest interest of our church in the possession of a college is the need of servants of the Gospel. How many of our best, ablest, and most highly trained minds have to suffer under the obvious impression that they are strangers in a strange land! This vexatious condition may easily be removed and at the same time proper scope for the exercise of the gifts and knowledge within the ranks of our clergy be obtained by the unquestionable influence that a college under our own management would vouchsafe. Now, such an undertaking requires two things mainly, to wit: money and men. A plan that keeps these two requirements duly in mind no doubt has the best chances of success; such is the proposition, we think, to sell scholarships. Hence this plan herewith is recommended to synod for the endowment of a college. Inasmuch as we thereby offer parents without means the possibility to secure a higher education for one or more of their sons, we hope to enlist the support of many a man for the foundation who would otherwise not be interested in helping us nor have the means to offer his sons an education.

[End of copy] [Martin continued as follows]

The proposed plan is broken up into the following resolutions to be presented to the synod for approval.

1. Resolved, that it is an undeniable necessity for the success of the great mission of our Zion in this country to have a college of the first rank, which belongs to it and serves it, but which naturally must be adequate for the special demands for education in this country,

2. Resolved, that, in the name of the great Head of the church and in the reliance on His help, we as a synod make the earnest attempt to found such a college and to convince our fellow believers and friends of the necessity of such an undertaking.

3. Resolved, that if possible we raise the sum of \$100,000.00.

4. Resolved, that this amount is raised in the following manner: 1) To him who gives \$500 to this fund, we grant an hereditary and saleable scholarship, that is the hereditary and saleable right of perpetual instruction of a student with all of the rights and obligations of students who pay the full school costs. 2) To him who gives \$100 to this fund we grant a single scholarship, that is, the right of free instruction in our institution, likewise with all rights and obligations of students who pay the full school costs.

5. Resolved, that without exception all monies raised through the purchase of scholarships must be used for funding the professors' salaries of the college.

6. Resolved, that the synod commission qualified men for a speedy execution of this plan in order to sell said scholarships within the ranks of our synod and to collect pledges for such a foundation fund.

Respectfully submitted by your humble brother in Christ. A. Martin

The six individual resolutions were discussed in their order and then the entire proposal was adopted by resolution.

The election of several agents for selling the scholarships was postponed to Monday after several attempts at an election proved fruitless.

Delegates E. Gerhard and F. Werner were granted permission to go home upon their urgent pleas.

The report of the Visitors was presented and it reads as follows:

The Board of Visitors, asked to give a report to the Hon. synod, declares herewith that it was in full agreement with the measures taken, and the management carried out by the Board of Trustees the past synodical year, and still is.

Since the Hon. assembly has already heard the report of the trustees, and since the Visitors find that the report is an accurate one, they consider it to be superfluous to present the report again.

Respectfully, A. Hoenecke, G. Vorberg

The report was accepted.

The assembly adjourned to Monday, 7:30 a.m. Closing prayer by Pastor A. Denninger.

Seventh Session, Monday, June 11, 8:30 a.m.

Opened with a hymn, Scripture reading and prayer by Pastor M. Ewert.

The minutes of the two Saturday sessions were read and adopted.

Delegate Baum is given the right to vote since he represents a congregation accepted into synod membership.

Pastor A. Zerneck was called home by a telegram, informing him that his wife had died. The Hon. Senior spoke a warm prayer in behalf of the grief stricken brother. A committee should draw up a statement for the synod in which an expression of sympathy by the synod is expressed.

Prof. Pastor A. Martin was proposed by the president to become a member of the synod. Resolved, that Prof. A. Martin be considered as accepted as soon as he receives his release from the Hartwick Synod, of which he still is a member.

The report of the treasurer of the institution in Watertown was read, as follows.

Receipts

For the construction	\$16,702.54
For seminary housekeeping	692.23
For professor's salary	404.35
School costs from college students	<u>1,148.25</u>
Total	\$18,947.37

Expenditures

Construction	\$16,906.07
Miscellaneous	372.92
Wood for stoves	218.00
Professor's salary	400.00
Salary for the professor and instructors of the college	838.34
Housekeeping	<u>655.12</u>
Total	\$19,390.45

Additional expenses 443.08

Construction costs in arrears 994.78

Interest free notes 365.00

Complete costs owed \$1802.86

The undersigned asks the Hon. synod for a release from his office.

D. Kusel, treasurer

Committee 1 presents the following addendum to its report:

Since the congregational constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Congregation *Zum Kripplein Christi* in Herman, Dodge Co., Wis., which requests membership in the synod, is deemed to be good, we recommend that the named congregation be accepted as a member of the Hon. Synod.

Delegate C. Kieckhefer, Pastors Kilian, Bartelt

After the report was accepted, the named congregation was accepted into membership by resolution.

Mr. Chr. Cedier was accepted as an advisory delegate.

The report of Committee 10 was read and accepted.

Likewise that of Committee 9.

Committee 4 presents the following addendum to its report:

The committee on seminary matters has the honor to propose to the Hon. synod that the letter of the former seminary student Denke be tabled.

Respectfully,

Delegates H. E. Gustavus, G. Brumder Pastors E. Mayerhoff, E. Giese, C. Gausewitz, W. Staerkel

The proposal was accepted by resolution.

In regard to point 5 of the report of Committee 4 the following substitute statement was proposed and adopted by resolution:

The committee proposes that the measures taken by the board in regard to the missionary journey of the theological professor be approved as justified under the conditions of that period and that an appreciation of thanks be granted the professor for his work for the synod and the church.

Concerning point 9 of the same report it was resolved that it be given to the Board of Trustees to engage an agent who is to sell the scholarships for the proposed college. Then also the conclusion of the report was adopted.

The delegates were asked not to conclude that the congregations are doing too much for the educational purposes of the synod; they themselves should consider and earnestly make the congregations whom they represent aware that the entire educational process is not a project for preachers, but exactly for the congregations. In spite of this the pastors have up till now done much more than the congregations. - The treasurer for the seminary, Delegate Kusel, asked the delegates to give an interest free loan of \$50 or \$25 to the seminary, and that they also get others to do the same.

Committee 3 presented the following addendum to its report:

The committee for the acceptance of new pastors is honored to propose respectfully to the Hon. synod - the synod may call upon Prof. Moldehnke and the Board of Trustees for their report - whether the seminary student A. Schmidt is advanced to the point that he be examined successfully and thus be able to be ordained.

Respectfully, E. Mayerhoff, Th. Jaekel, C. Gausewitz

The report was accepted and then referred to the ministerial session.

Resolved that the matter of the charter be given to a committee for a definite conclusive action and that this committee consist of the trustees and professors of the institution and the synodical president.

The postponed point 3 of the report of Committee 4 was adopted by resolution.

Point 7 of the same report should first be discussed by the Ministerium.

The report of Committee 6 was read. It reads:

[The following report is this author's translation as previously published in an article in the WELS Historical Institute Journal, Vol. 16, No. 2, p. 10.]

The [floor] committee appointed to report on the hymnal question takes the liberty to present the following proposals to the Hon. synod for acceptance:

1. that it would be better to publish a new hymnal with the proposed General Synod (*Generalsynode*), but also to proceed under the present arrangement for the revision of the old Pennsylvania hymnal, and to retain the old committees;
2. that the stipulations under which both committees were appointed at last year's convention, namely, to retain the original texts as much as possible, and to revise as thoroughly, yet as sparingly as possible, be approved;
3. that in regard to the replacement of unapproved hymns in the old hymnal, the following is recommended:
 - a) that some of Gellert's hymns which have become beloved by the people be retained;
 - b) that indeed special consideration be given to the old basic hymns of our church, but that the best of the hymns of more recent times not be ignored;
 - c) that the category pertaining to the "individual attributes" (*einzelnen Eigenschaften*) of God be discontinued, and in its place the general category "Hymns about God's Nature and Attributes" (*Lieder von Gottes Wesen und Eigenschaften*) be included, and that several hymns referring to this rubric be included; that this designation also be employed in a similar manner with the hymns about individual virtues (*Tugenden*);
 - d) that the number of mission and marriage hymns be increased, and that a rain and storm hymn be added;
 - e) that without even giving it a thought, 135 hymns should be removed from the old hymnal, and other hymns be substituted for them; also 40 basic hymns which are not in our hymnal should be added, and that the committee recognize, naturally, that these hymns be placed in an appendix;
 - f) that the best hymns of those suggested by an earlier committee be culled out and included;
 - g) that a short appendix, consisting of about two dozen prayers be added.
4. that, as soon as possible, a satisfactory examination copy of the revised hymnal be made, and that this copy be presented at the coming convention of delegates of the various synods [i.e. the future General Synod] as well as to the individual conferences of our synod for judgment (*Urtheil*).

Respectfully,

Delegates J. Haberkorn, D. Kusel. Pastors E. Moldehnke, J. Muehlhaeuser, R. Meumann, C. Stark

The report was received and placed before the convention for discussion.

The president explained the situation to the delegates. The present hymnal would be altered into a new edition only to the extent that it could be used alongside the old edition, until the new edition's acceptance had been sufficiently widespread. Indeed no congregation is forced to introduce the new book, but has the complete freedom to act according to its own discretion. He then suggested that not only 135 hymns be removed from the present hymnal, but 270, that is, exactly 38% of the number of hymns. Among the 270 to be eliminated there could very well be several good and not undesirable hymns, but these would be weak when compared with the others which can be incorporated from our rich treasury of German hymns. If this occurs our new hymnal could be accepted also by such congregations which up till now have used other good hymnals, for example, hymnals imported from Germany. However it is still to be strongly advised that the new book be issued hand in hand with the future General Synod, and that an offer to this body of an already complete basic publication be made. If it comes to an appendix of hymns, he would have to declare himself decidedly in favor of that.

Several suggestions were offered in reply:

If it be a principle that the old hymnal be retained, this principle should then be followed in all sincerity and only so many hymns be removed as is absolutely necessary, and that it would be better to place additional hymns in an appendix. Some congregations would not want to introduce a heavily altered hymnal. The publication should not be delayed, since under the pending conditions new or additional copies of the hymnal used at present would not be purchased, resulting in inconveniences. Many congregations cannot postpone the selection of their own hymnal much longer, for example, one congregation reported that it wishes to import the new Bavarian hymnal if a good one is not published in this country. On the other hand it was asserted that in regard to this matter it would be better to work seriously on it for ten years rather than to produce something inferior. The following motion was presented:

The original hymnal committee had followed the correct principles, and it should continue to do so. Since we are only a poor synod, we should not carry out this work alone, but in conjunction with other synods. Therefore the synod ought to resolve:

- 1) the synod join with other synods which are at present occupied with the same type of project;
- 2) the proposals of our committee should be sent to those synods.

The resolution did not come up for a vote.

The assembly adjourned to 2:00 p.m. Closing prayer by Pastor J. Ritter.

Eighth Session, Monday, June 11, 2:00 p.m.

Opening prayer by Pastor J. Brockmann.

The minutes of the morning session were read and adopted.

Pastor Gensike returned to the meeting from his home.

Resolved that the Charter Committee present the proposed charter to the legislature in good time.

The report of Committee 6 - hymnal - is brought up for further discussion. Point 2 is adopted by resolution.

In point 3, a was turned down, b, c, d were adopted, e was stricken and the committee was given a free hand here, likewise f was entrusted to the committee. In regard to g, it was established that the appendix should contain: morning and evening prayers, prayers for the sick and dying, The Passion Story, the pericope listings, a melody index

with parallel melodies indicated. It was voted down that the pericopes, catechism and *Augsburg Confession* be included.

After the question was raised by Mr. Siefert of Milwaukee, it was resolved that the synod desires the chorales to be set "*rhythmisch*" [ed. note. that is, the chorales be set in their original musical rhythm.]

Point 4 was adopted.

The first half of point 1 was adopted. In regard to the second half it was resolved: that the two old committees be combined into one committee, and that it be given the power and authority, if it becomes necessary, to have the hymnal printed yet in this year. The entire report of the committee with the alterations was adopted by resolution. The St. John Congregation of Milwaukee invites the Hon. synod to hold its next year's convention in its midst and the invitation was accepted.

As new trustees for the institutions in Watertown Pastors A. Hoenecke and C. Gausewitz were elected for a three year term and to the visitors for one year terms.

Pastors G. Thiele, G. Vorberg and Delegate C. Kieckhefer

The session was adjourned to Tuesday, 8:30 a. m. Closing prayer by Pastor H. Sieker.

Ninth Session, Tuesday, June 12, 8:30 a.m.

Opened with a hymn, Scripture reading and prayer by Pastor E. Giese.

Pastors H. Sieker and E. Giese were granted permission to go home because of urgent reasons.

An excuse letter from Pastor D. Huber was read and accepted.

The report of Committee 8 was read, as follows:

The committee which is to report on excuses of absent pastors and about congregations that sent no delegates takes the liberty to report to the Hon. synod that it has examined the transmitted papers and on the basis of this it recommends to the Hon. synod that Pastors E. Sauer, J. Hoffmann, W. Dammann, C. Braun, E. Strube and F. Hass be duly excused, and to express its regrets that the named pastors were hindered from appearing. Since also at this year's convention of the Hon. synod a comparatively small number of congregations did not send delegates, the committee recommends to the Hon. synod to call upon these synodical congregations in a proper manner and by means of a special letter ask them to take a more active part in regard to the sending of delegates to the synodical conventions.

Respectfully,

Delegates G. Bigalk, H. Ohie, Pastors H. Quehl, Ph. Brenner

The report was accepted and immediately brought up for discussion, and was adopted with the amendment: "Congregations should send such delegates who can remain to the end of the convention."

The question of whether the next synodical convention could be held a week earlier than this year's convention, as established in the constitution, was left unanswered. Resolved, that the time of the synodical convention, and if possible also the main points of the agenda be published each year in the *Gemeindeblatt*.

The reports of Committees 10, 12 and 7 were presented in that order.

The synod's representative to last year's convention of the Hon. Minnesota Synod presents his report, as follows:

It should be a joy to the delegates to be able to give a favorable report concerning the Evangelical Lutheran Minnesota Synod. The young synod has grown significantly both internally and externally in the past two years. There are young and capable strengths in the body. They are working hard and are doing mission work in a wide spread area. The work is well organized and all the brothers are of one mind. It is to their credit that the synod is consciously striving to introduce the German language into the [public] schools of the districts where German prevails, even the reading of the Bible and prayer; besides this the synod is seeking the acquisition of land to establish parishes. The synod is definitely and favorably inclined to our seminary and *Gemeindeblatt* and will in the future support our seminary with material support. The area for church work in Minnesota is large; yet about eight preachers strategically placed could be in a position with the Lord's help to effect a spread of the Lutheran church in an advantageous manner in the state and to put the church matters in good order. New settlers are arriving, congregations are increasing, all is progressing in a very fast fashion. It is desirable to support the Minnesota Synod by sending to them a few educated theologians, and this could also bring about a closer relationship with them. This delegate, as much as he was able, attempted on this missionary journey to arouse an overall interest in our institutions. He also gathered 130 subscribers for the *Gemeindeblatt*. In the sessions of the Minnesota Synod this delegate besides urging the brothers in Minnesota to take seriously an interest in our institutions, participated in the discussion:

1. on the matter of the Freemasons.

The only discord in the synod was occasioned by Pastor Bleeken of Redwing. He [Moldehnke] protested against an approved verse which is found in Bleeken's church in gold, shining letters behind the pulpit as being Masonic and that in the name of his synod he could not be in fellowship with a synod that allowed this verse to stand. The verse:

Come Jew, Indian, Christian, Mohammedan,
Come Catholic and Protestant,
We extend to you a welcome hand;
Away with persecution, misunderstanding and scoff
We all believe in the one same God.

The Minnesota Synod decidedly rejected this verse which was completely new to them and considered §28 of our constitution to be correct, and the synod was satisfied with the departure of Pastor Bleeken.

Secondly, this delegate was successful in doing away with the practice of licensing [making use of unprepared preachers] which also in Minnesota proved to be detrimental for the church.

Respectfully, *Prof. E. Moldehnke*

A written proposal from the Minnesota Synod was introduced by their representative.

Point 7 of the committee report on seminary matters was brought up for discussion:

Resolved, that the board establish the position of an inspector who would at the same time be a theological professor.

Resolved, on the part of the synod that Pastor A. Hoenecke be elected to this position. As a result of the resolution Prof. E. Moldehnke announced that he was resigning his office (professor and editor of the *Gemeindeblatt*).

The reason by Prof. Moldehnke was not recognized on the part of many as being valid, and it was urgently desirable that he remain as theological professor.

The resolution that Pastor E. Giese retract his statement until the matter is discussed in the ministerial session was by request brought up again until, after a lengthy learned discussion, especially about the doctrine of redemption as taught by Prof. von Hoffmann at Erlangen, it was clearly the wish on the part of many delegates that he withdraw his position. While Pastor E. Giese did not want to hear anything about the doctrine of unionism and declared his acceptance of our confessional papers, Pastor E. Otto declared at the end of the session that he defends the doctrine of unionism and that he wishes to give more information at the ministerial session.

The meeting was adjourned to 2 p. m. Closing prayer by Pastor A. Opitz.

Tenth Session, Tuesday, June 12, 2:00 p.m.

Opened with prayer by Pastor E. Mayerhoff.

The minutes of the morning session were read and adopted.

Resolved, to enter immediately into taking up the large amount of business still on hand. A written resolution from Grace Congregation in Milwaukee was brought up, which reads: The Hon. Wisconsin Synod is being requested to give its opinion on whether it is not desirable and necessary that the teachers of synodical congregations take part in the proceedings of the synod. Grace Congregation is willing to allow its four teachers to participate. This is a resolution of Grace Congregation of Milwaukee. Jul. Andrea, Sec.

Resolved, that this was taken care of with a last year's synodical resolution found on page 20 of last year's Synodical Proceedings ("that they recommend to the teachers to form a teachers' conference, that they desire to have the teachers take part in the synodical conventions and that they request congregations to give the teachers time to attend synodical conventions") and that this information be shared with Grace Congregation. The report of Committee 4 with the amendments was adopted in its entirety. The report of Committee 7 - vacant congregations and the traveling preacher program [*Reisepredigt*] - was brought for discussion. It reads:

The unfortunate circumstance that at present a number of synodical congregations are without a shepherd, is caused by the lack of preachers. Since the synod at present is not in a position to resolve this lack in an appropriate manner, it still is its duty to help out as much as possible. The committee thus offers the following resolutions for adoption:

1. The dividing of a parish into two parishes should be avoided as much as possible;
2. [not printed out]
3. Before sending a preacher to a congregation, its potential should be established, and the assurance given by the congregation that it will join the synod.
4. Congregations which release their pastors without permission of the president should not be given another pastor from the synod.
5. The synod bespeaks its disapproval about the change of positions of those pastors who have not observed §30 of the Synodical Constitution.
6. The synod is willing to engage a traveling preacher [*Reiseprediger*] at an appropriate time, and to grant him the necessary materials for subsistence.
7. It should be the obligation of the *Reiseprediger* to serve first of all as many of the vacant synodical congregations as possible, but then also to consider other fellow believers, if possible.

Respectfully, *Delegate H. Grupe, Pastors C. G. Reim, C. Wagner, G. Bachmann*

The introduction and point 1 were adopted without discussion.

Points 2, 3, and 4, after discussion, were stricken by resolution because these proposals were found to be in part impractical, in part superfluous.

Point 5 was adopted by resolution.

Upon deliberation of point 6, it was recognized that the traveling preacher program was of utmost importance and it was resolved that a *Reiseprediger* be engaged as soon as a suitable [for the position] person could be found.

On the presentation of a proposal the entire assembly arose and indicated its desire that Prof. Moldehnke be requested to take on the traveling preacher program. It was further resolved, that the pastors (as they had done in the previous year to secure the salary of the theological professor) underwrite contributions this year for the traveling preacher program. The disclosed subscriptions amounted to \$440.00, an amount that would certainly be increased by the absent pastors.

Point 7 and the entire report with its alterations were adopted.

The report of Committee 10 was brought up for discussion. It reads:

The committee to give a report on our relationship with other synods as well as with the proposed new General Synod respectfully proposes to the Hon. synod the following for acceptance:

1. Since we consider it highly desirable, because of the splits and dismemberment of our church relationships, to have a union of confessionally true Lutheran synods, and that a union of such synods is now being planned by the Hon. Pennsylvania Synod, therefore two delegates should be sent to the soon to be held convention of individual Lutheran synods who should represent our synod, and on the basis of the *Unaltered Augsburg Confession* and *Luther's Small Catechism* as well as under the condition of equality of the German and English languages help prepare the way for such a union, and that these representatives give a report at our next synodical convention.
2. The committee recommends to the synod that it enter into a closer official relationship with the Lutheran Minnesota Synod, and for this purpose to discuss the paragraphs presented by Pastor Fachtmann.
3. The synod should invite the German Conference of the English Iowa Synod to join us, if it can do so without violating its present synodical obligations.
4. The proposed friendly relationship with the German Iowa Synod be pursued and a delegate be sent to the next convention of the Iowa Synod.

Respectfully,

Delegates C. Kieckhefer, M. Krause, Pastors J. Muehlhaeuser, Ph. Koehler, E. Moldehnke, J. Bading

Introductory information was presented about purpose and blessings of the proposed new General Synod. Especially emphasized were the following points:

The alliance of a number of synods of the same persuasion would strengthen faith [*Glauben*], internally and externally, and strengthen the ability for a more sound and successful work also to the outside. The East would have more confidence in the mission of our church in the west and would have a greater interest in it; a substantial support for our educational institutions is to be awaited as a result of such a project. If a sameness of Agendas and hymnals could be achieved, then many present difficulties would also disappear. The president, the Senior and Prof. Martin were proposed as delegates to this awaited convention, but since the Senior begged off for this time, still the election of the other two named stands.

The question was asked if the *Augsburg Confession* sufficed as the basic confes-

sional stance of the proposed synod; it was indicated that all of the Swedish, Norwegian and Danish Lutheran church bodies stood only on this confession; however, they are not in opposition to our other confessions, but are in agreement with them; since one of the Norwegian synods would like to participate in this alliance, one could be satisfied with this single basic stance, and one could do so with a clear conscience.

Point 1 is accepted by resolution with this amendment "and if possible *Luther's Small Catechism*."

To point 2 the already presented proposal of the Minnesota Synod was considered. It reads:

1. In the deliberation of the upcoming difficulty of how the incoming gifts of charity designated for the seminary in Watertown in common interest of both Lutheran Synods of Wisconsin and Minnesota should be justly distributed in accordance with the wishes of the donors, the Synod of Minnesota declares itself to be satisfied, if it is guaranteed the use of the Lutheran preacher seminary in Watertown and given the right to have a student supported and educated without cost, to the extent that the gifts from Germany would make it possible.

2. To this end the Lutheran Synod of Minnesota will make it its duty to recommend that its members give particular attention and support to the preacher seminary in Watertown.

Resolved, that one half of the money from the church treasury in Mecklenburg be given to the support of a seminary student who is sent by the Minnesota Synod. Resolved, that the Wisconsin and Minnesota Synods send delegates to each other's convention, thereby giving emphasis for a closer relationship. The president at his convenience should select the delegate. This year's delegate of our synod should be granted an appreciable amount for his travel expenses.

Point 2 is herewith taken care of.

Pastor Goldammer is called home via telegram and is given permission to leave.

The meeting is adjourned to Wednesday, early, at 7:00 a.m. Closing prayer by Pastor T. Gensike.

Eleventh Session, Wednesday, June 13, 7:00 a.m

Opened with a hymn, Scripture reading and prayer by Pastor E. Otto.

The minutes of the previous session were read and adopted.

Pastor E. Otto declared that he indeed on his part would like to remain in the synod, however, since his confessional position is not in agreement with the synod's, and that his explanation would not be sustained, he therefore requests the synod to grant him a peaceful release. This matter should be handled with his congregation in a quiet manner, and therefore a letter or message be sent with him which indicates that the synod and he have peacefully separated, and that the congregation should receive another capable pastor as soon as possible. The synod accepted the open and honorable request of Pastor Otto.

Pastor J. Conrad was asked by resolution to be the representative of the synod and to support Pastor Otto in this matter.

Point 3 of the report of Committee 10 came up for discussion. It was adopted in the following amended form.

The Hon. synod would like to invite the German Conference of the English Iowa Synod to enter into a closer relationship with us if it can do so without destroying its present synodical obligations. This offered is to be conveyed through Pastor J. Ritter.

Point 4 and the entire report are adopted by resolution.

The report by Prof. Moldehnke about the Minnesota Synod was accepted by resolution. Pastor W. Ewert was given permission to go home.

The question about the changes in regard to the *Gemeindeblatt* was brought up. Resolved, that the periodical appear in its present format bimonthly or every two weeks. Because it is urgently recommended that a periodical for the youth, especially for Sunday Schools, be produced, it was resolved that a youth periodical be published beginning next New Year at a cost of \$.25 if the individual pastors and congregations indicate a satisfactory number of subscribers.

The discussion of the report of Committee 2 was taken up. It reads:

9. We indicate our joy over the continuing relationship with the German Societies and we recommend to the synod that it express its sincerest thanks to them, to the Mecklenburger and Pommeranian "Church Treasuries", also to the Christian friends in Alsace and other places, and finally to the Hon. synod of Pennsylvania for their help during the past year.

10. The committee recommends to the Hon. synod to formulate resolutions, urging that attempts for closer relationships with other Lutheran bodies of this land move forward.

11. We recommend together with the president that the synod reconsider the renewal of the resolution on page 11 of the Proceedings of 1864: "in case (with the present troubles within the General Synod) an attempt is begun to form a new larger alliance of Lutheran synods on a more solid confessional basis, that a delegation from our synod be sent to such a preliminary convention."

12. The committee expresses its astonishment over how Prof. Moldehnke could exchange [better "swap"] his long standing teaching position at the seminary with that of being a *Reiseprediger*.

13. Also we express our regrets over the unsuccessful results of attempts by our Hon. president to have scholarly papers presented [at conventions].

14. We recommend together with the Hon. president the revival of the institution of the *Reiseprediger* for the area, which is in the interest of our own synod.

15. The committee recommends that the synod, as it offers support to various charitable institutions, to want especially to support the *Samariterherberge* [Good Samaritan inn or shelter] in New York;

16. and finally we propose the drafting of an expression of thanks for the devoted and blessed administration of the praesidium during the past synodical year.

Delegates C. G. Reichmann, J. Eckel Pastors A. Hoenecke, chairman, G. Thiele, C. Starck

Point 9 was adopted without discussion.

Points 10, 11 and 12 were considered accepted because of an earlier resolution. Point 13 adopted.

Point 14 already accepted earlier.

In regard to point 15, resolved, in addition to the present support of foreign and inner missions, that the pastors and congregations seriously consider the Castle Garden Mission. Point 16 adopted.

Point 17 was added to the resolution: The actions of our president during the past synodical year are totally satisfactory to the synod.

Then the entire report was accepted by resolution.

The report of Committee 12 - authority of the president - is brought up for discussion. It reads:

Although the committee wishes that a greater degree of authority be given the president, so that the necessary bounds be set on troublesome Subjectivism which asserts itself so disturbingly in congregations and that a restraint be placed on the detrimental church Republicanism of the pastors, yet the committee does not underrate the danger which lies therein, that the matter be pursued in the sense referred to above. The matter is so crucial, namely the personal rights of the members of the synod to near disturbing results, that it without lengthier or more exact consideration on the part of individuals cannot be brought to a final decision.

The committee recommends to the synod:

1. that the president formulate his respective wishes;
2. that these be presented to the individual conferences for discussion;
3. that above all, the respective provisions of the synodical constitution be strictly followed and executed.

In regards to the investigation of the unjustified changing of positions of several pastors the committee has come to the conclusion to propose:

The synod expresses its disapproval to those pastors who do not observe §30 of the Synodical Constitution when changing positions.

In regard to point 3 the committee proposes the Hon. synod to resolve:

1. Pastors of the synod should be obligated to cease from forming all too small congregations, and should strive for the centralization of scattered believers into one congregation as much as possible.
2. A so called opposition congregation shall be served by pastors of our synod only after a thorough examination of the situation by synod officials and with the approval of the president.

Respectively,

Delegates C. G. Reichmann, J. Eckel Pastors Ph. Koehler, G. Bachmann, A. Lange

The introduction is adopted with alteration of the terms "Republicanism" and "Subjectivism." Point 1 is adopted with the amendment: "The president is asked to present his definite, formulated wishes to the next synodical convention."

Points 2 and 3 adopted.

The items that followed were already adopted in an earlier resolution.

The closing sentence was adopted after a brief discussion and the entire report with the changes was adopted.

The report of Committee 9 was brought up for discussion. It reads:

The committee on the financial situation of the seminary and on the synodical treasury reports respectively to the Hon. synod:

That it, as much as time and means allowed, read the records on hand, examined them and found them to be correct. The treasurer of the synod regrets that disparities were shown between the amount of monies received and reality of what was in the treasury because of monies taken from the treasury compared with that listed in the parochial reports. He therefore proposes to the Hon. synod:

1. that the treasurer of the synod be the general treasurer of all incoming monies who then would dispense to the various treasurers the specific monies according to their requests;
2. that the closing date for receiving monies for the treasury be four weeks before the

opening of the synodical convention, and monies received after that date be included in the next year's account;

3. that, in order to cover gradually the rather large deficit, the committee considers the arousing and maintaining of the zeal for the expansion of the kingdom of God to be the most wholesome and most successful way for soliciting contributions.

Respectfully,

Delegates G. Brumder, G. Moehrl Pastors H. Brockmann, A. Zerneck

Point 1 was taken care of with a resolution.

Point 2 was adopted with the amendment that the books be closed one week before the opening of the synod.

Point 3 was stricken by resolution.

The entire report was adopted with these changes.

Since Pastor A. Hoenecke as inspector could not serve as trustee, Pastor E. Mayerhoff was elected to take his place as trustee.

The synod declared to Prof. Moldehnke, upon a query, that his resignation would not be accepted.

The individual pastors should tell the secretary how many copies of the printed Proceedings each would wish to have, and after this information is received, the secretary should make a calculation and have the necessary amount printed.

The definite acceptance of §37 of the Synodical Constitution was postponed another year. Thanks to the congregation in Fond du Lac, expressed the previous evening by the president, should be recorded in the minutes.

The convention is adjourned according to the regulation in the Synodical Constitution to the Thursday after Trinity Sunday 1867 at 9:00a.m., meeting in the Evangelical Lutheran St. John Church in Milwaukee.

The minutes were read and approved.

Closing prayer by Senior Muehlhaeuser.

[A brief summary from the parochial reports:]

44 pastors, with one congregation without a pastor

97 congregations

29 preaching stations

52 parish schools

44 Sunday Schools

That the above was thus conducted and resolved in the sixteenth meeting of the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and Other States is attested to by the signature of the undersigned

The secretary of the synod

Milwaukee, July 13, 1866

G. Vorberg, Pastor

Martin's Scholarship Program

Arnold O. Lehmann

When Prof. Adam Martin came to Watertown as principal of the newly founded college, he brought with him a vision of creating a great American university, although the members of the Wisconsin Synod had visualized a college for preparing students for the seminary. Not so with Prof. Martin. After sending out publicity Martin opened the college in September 1865, which had by the second year approximately 60 students and four instructors. Operating funds became a problem. Although students who were not as yet considered students in the seminary paid tuition and room and board, the synod had a difficult time in gathering the additional funds needed for the operation of the seminary and the building program. To ask it to aid in supporting the instruction of college students and a faculty was surely out of the question. Besides that, only eight of the enrolled students in the college indicated their desire to prepare for the pastoral ministry. It should be noted here also that many of the "college" students were actually in college preparatory or high school classes. It took some time for the college to function actually as a college with a preparatory department.

In order to pay the salaries of instructors Martin conceived the idea of selling scholarships to synod members or even others. Realize that the meaning of scholarship to Martin was not the same as the meaning of the word today.

The designated student of a scholarship was guaranteed free tuition to the college whenever he was old enough to attend, and was qualified. Although girls were admitted to the college, there is no record of a girl being designated as the recipient of a scholarship. Two classifications of scholarships were setup, one for \$500 and one for \$100. The wording on the \$500 scholarship certificate reads as follows:

It is hereby CERTIFIED, that _____ inconsideration of his note for FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS to be paid in five equal and annual installments into the Endowment-Fund of North Western University, which is held for payment by the College Treasurer, is entitled to one perpetual Scholarship in this Institution, if said installments are paid at maturity.

This Scholarship secures the right of free tuition in the Preparatory or Collegiate Department of the Institution, for any one person who may be designated from time to time by _____ or legal representative, heirs or assigns, subject to the following conditions, viz:

First. The occupant of this Scholarship shall be suitably prepared for admission to College, or to the Preparatory Department, according to the requirements of the Institution.

Second. For any serious violation of the laws, or failure to meet the prescribed duties of the College, the occupant may be deprived of the benefit of this Scholarship.

Third. This Certificate shall not be applied in payment of debts due previous to presentation.

Fourth. The right to free tuition under this Certificate of Scholarship shall cease, while any installment of said note shall remain unpaid after it shall become due, and said University may declare this Certificate forfeited for such non-payment.

The \$100 scholarship has similar wording, these being the exceptions:

Paragraph 2 reads: This Scholarship secures the right of free tuition for the College Course of four years, for any one person etc.

The third condition reads as follows: This certificate shall not be applied in payment of debts due previous to presentation, but shall be received for tuition in the Preparatory Department either entire or in part to cover the same time with the College Course.

The scholarship program ended eventually in failure, even though payments and pledges amounted to more than \$65,000. Pastor H. Sieker, the appointed agent, apparently was an excellent salesman. One man, who asked in a letter to have his commitment dropped because he could not afford it, made that complaint. Problems arose when purchasers refused or constantly delayed their due payments or installments. Letters were written to the president by pastors, whose obligation it was to collect from those behind in payments, asking the president how to proceed. Letters were also written in which the writer stated his refusal to pay, or in which he asked that his commitment be dropped.

The unrest caused by the sale of scholarships, disagreement with the board's educational policy, and other differences brought about Martin's dismissal in the spring of 1869. It wasn't long after that that settlements were made, sometimes at losses, with persons holding scholarships and the program was discarded. Martin's idea of an American university was also discarded in favor of a college and preparatory school based on the German *Gymnasium*. This was firmly established with the arrival of the president with the longest tenure at the college, Prof. Augustus Fred. Ernst.

To understand the financial problem of the college, it must be realized that the college was originally run by and under the control of a board of trustees, and was not a part of the synod's budget. It was not until about 1870 when Pres. Ernst made the announcement that all of the institutions were now under the control of the synod, meaning it was the synod's obligation to control and fund the institutions. By this time all outstanding scholarships were either purchased back or were settled as payments for tuition, thus ending one of the adverse factors in the history of an institution begun as "Wisconsin University", then changed to "North Western University" and finally to "Northwestern College."

Being good Americans and better Lutherans: Synodical Conference Lutherans and the Military Chaplaincy

Dr. Mark Braun

According to historian John Keegan, the United States had not wanted to enter World War I. President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed America "to proud too fight." Once committed to hostilities, however, "America's extraordinary capacity for industrial production and human organization took possession of the nation's energies." More than 24 million American men were registered in 1917-18, of which 2,810,000 were drafted, combining with those already enlisted in the regular army, the National Guard and the Marines to form a United States ground force of nearly four million.¹

Less than two and half decades later, Americans who comprised what Tom Brokaw has called America's "greatest generation" entered another worldwide conflict.

These men and women came of age in the Great Depression, when economic despair hovered over the land like a plague. They had watched their parents lose their businesses, their farms, their jobs, their hopes. They had learned to accept a future that played out one day at a time. Then, just as there was a glimmer of economic recovery, war exploded across Europe and Asia. When Pearl Harbor made it irrefutably clear that America was not a fortress, this generation was summoned to the parade ground and told to train for war. They left their ranches in Sully County, South Dakota, their jobs on the streets of Americus, Georgia, they gave up their places on the assembly lines in Detroit and in the ranks of Wall Street, they quit school or went from cap and gown directly into uniform.

They answered the call to help save the world from the two most powerful and ruthless military machines ever assembled. . . .

Without their efforts and sacrifices our world would be a far different place today.²

Thousands of those men who served in both world wars were Synodical Conference Lutherans. Yet churches of the Synodical Conference distinguished themselves during World War I by resisting the involvement of their pastors in this extremely American cause by refusing to participate in the military chaplaincy program. A portion of member synods of the Synodical Conference continued to oppose such participation during World War II. Their actions, seemingly contrary to both American life and the Bible, were actually presented by these groups as the most American and the most Lutheran thing to do. This history affords us not only a clearer understanding of the relation of Synodical Conference Lutherans to American life; in their changing response it offers a paradigm for the eventual separation of the two synods and the demise of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America.



"No one can attack our Americanism!"

William Warren Sweet has remarked that "at least for the period of World War I, the separation of church and state was suspended."³ Although other denominations were also compelled to abandon ethnic and cultural distinctives and demonstrate their commitment to the American war cause, the crisis was particularly acute for Synodical Conference Lutherans because of their strongly German background. As late as 1911, while 95 percent of communicants in the United Lutheran Synod of the South and 80 percent of General Synod churches used the English language exclusively, only 13 percent in the Ohio Synod and only 3 percent in the Synodical Conference used English.⁴ In 1914 Adolf Pfothhauer, brother of Missouri Synod President Frederick Pfothhauer, wrote, "The German language is here still the everyday language."⁵

The Missouri Synod's official literature before the war consistently pleaded for American neutrality.⁶ While the synod's comments were rooted in religious belief, they often ran parallel to what the German-American press and German-American societies said—a fact Missouri would later regret.⁷ Whatever their political leanings, many Germans clung fiercely to their ethnic identities. Late in 1914, Missouri's magazine the *Abendschule* featured stories on the German Emperor and Empress⁸ and in early 1915 reprinted German ambassador Bernstorff's letter expressing appreciation for the "German Kaiser issue."⁹ Kaiser Wilhelm's face was a familiar one in the *Abendschule*, appearing once between portraits of Washington and Lincoln,¹⁰ again flanked by the caption "Mit Gott fuer Kaiser und Reich,"¹¹ and yet again when the *Abendschule* reprinted his message to the German people at the beginning of the war.¹² According to the congregational records of one German Lutheran church in Nebraska, six of the thirty-two children born in 1917 and 1918 were named "Wilhelm" or "Wilhelmina."¹³

A Missouri author in *The Lutheran Witness*, endorsing a 6 May 1915 article in the Massachusetts newspaper *The Springfield Republican* that defended the German sinking of the British ship *Lusitania*, insisted that the "Germany embassy at Washington took pains to warn them" and was not deserving of blame.¹⁴ Concordia Seminary professors Friedrich Bente and W. H. T. Dau played prominent roles in the American Neutrality Leagues, which Alan Graebner has characterized as "rather shadowy organizations" founded to further mobilize public sentiment against American involvement in the war.¹⁵ In January 1915 Bente spoke at a mass meeting of the League in St. Louis and was delegated to carry to Washington resolutions condemning munitions sales to Britain. Bente appeared in Washington D. C. before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 3 February and met the next day with President Wilson.¹⁶ While Bente felt reasonably assured he had presented his cause well, Henry Cabot Lodge offered a different assessment of Bente's appearance in a personal letter to Theodore Roosevelt:

The German-American propaganda has become pretty bad. We had them before the Foreign Relations Committee the other day on the question of prohibiting the export of war munitions, when a man from the Lutheran Seminary in St. Louis, named Bente, addressed us. He had been born and brought up in Germany . . . [and] had an accent so strong that you could tumble over it, and he proceeded to lecture us on Americanism, patriotism, what true Americanism was, and what the opinions of George Washington were. . . . They are now engaged in telling us how loyal they are to the United States.¹⁷

Although Bente did not speak as an official representative of his church body, his presence and the depth of his involvement suggests that the Missouri Synod and its leaders were not shrinking from taking public positions regarding the war.

Both the Missouri and Wisconsin synods wished to demonstrate that German Lutherans were loyal Americans. An August 1914 *Lutheran Witness* article described the Lutheran school system as "an American institution."¹⁸ In 1915 congregations were urged to use English, promising it would not act as a barrier to their success.¹⁹ Lutherans were portrayed as pro-German, the *Witness* contended, not out of religious or political conviction but because of ancestry. By voicing opposition to American foreign policy, they were simply exercising their cherished rights as American citizens.²⁰ "When you say 'German-Americans,' please put all the stress upon the last part of the compound!" pleaded a *Northwestern Lutheran* editorialist. German-Americans "are Americans, first, last and all the time!"²¹

On Good Friday, 1917, the cozy isolation of German-speaking Americans almost immediately disappeared. No longer would they be regarded as curious but benign outsiders.²² Their observance of German customs was now considered dangerous, their concern for ancestral homelands traitorous, their attachment to the native tongue subversive. "That Lutherans should be suspect in wartime was a strange irony," Martin Marty has remarked, "for they were always an intensely loyal group. They took literally Saint Paul's warning that anyone who did not follow governmental authority would be damned."²³

But suspect they were. Newell Dwight Hillis, described as "the man who hated everything German," accused German people of having "no more relation to the civilization of 1918 than an orangutan, a gorilla, a Judas, a hyena, a thumbscrew, or a scalping knife in the hands of a savage." Billy Sunday shouted, "If you turn hell upside down, you will find 'Made in Germany' stamped on the bottom."²⁴ Invited to lead the United States House of Representatives in prayer in January 1918, Sunday invoked:

Thou knowest, O Lord, that no nation so infamous, vile, greedy, sensuous, blood-thirsty, ever disgraced the pages of history. Make bare thy mighty arm, O Lord, and smite the hungry, wolfish Hun, whose fangs drip with blood, and we will forever raise our voice to thy praise.

Applause followed his prayer.

After America entered the war, and as persecution of German Lutheran pastors and churches followed, Missouri's official pronouncements changed clearly and swiftly. Only two years after publicly chastising the American government for its lack of neutrality, Theodore Graebner now urged synod members to demonstrate their loyalty to the United States. He applauded synod elementary schools in Chicago and South St. Louis for displaying the American flag, selling war stamps to their students, and hearing speakers promote the work of the Red Cross. "No one can attack our Americanism!" Graebner insisted. "In times of war there is no sense appealing to logic or to stand on principles which are theoretically very true." Protestations of Lutheran loyalty to the government will appear hypocritical unless backed up by actions.²⁶ Graebner quickly became "the most vocal lobbyist for energetic participation in the war effort."²⁷

The Wisconsin Synod, too, urged American neutrality prior to 1917 and even became involved to a limited extent in that effort. Seminary professors August Pieper and John Schaller participated in mass meetings and anti-war protests. J. P. Koehler wrote to President Wilson and Wisconsin's Governor Robert La Follette "remonstrating with the

president and former historian by calling attention to the history of the Prussian monarchy in contrast to the history of all democracies."²⁸

Probably the deepest synodical involvement in anti-war movements occurred in Minnesota, when Adolf Ackermann, president of Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm, spoke against the military draft. In April 1917, New Ulm voters rejected American participation in the war by a margin of 20-1. On 25 July, 10,000 citizens gathered in a public park to protest the draft. When Ackermann took his message to neighboring towns, the Minnesota Commission on Public Safety urged synodical authorities to silence their called worker, which they did by requesting his resignation, which he submitted on 29 January 1918—though he protested, "*Recht muss Recht bleiben!*"²⁹

In general, however, Wisconsin's protests were less public than Missouri's, and early on Wisconsin writers emphasized the importance of godly loyalty to America while maintaining their own neutrality. Already in 1914, Hans Moussa insisted that patriotism came from God, and so Lutheran schools could teach patriotism better within their religious schools than others in schools that did not teach religion. Lutheran schools were "the true home of sound and trustworthy patriotism."³⁰

John Brenner warned in 1916 that "the Church cannot find a quicker method of self-destruction than political activity, nor can anything else cause as much harm to the State." With apparent reference to efforts such as those of Friedrich Bente, Brenner wrote:

We believe that many of our Lutheran brethren have in these last years acted unwisely when they, moved by their love for the land of their birth, or, we will admit, by their sense of justice, signed and sent to Washington petitions and letters that had bearing on the political situation in which our country found itself in consequence of the war. . . . These instruments were generally, if not always, prefaced with the words, "as American citizens," but the fact remains that the name of our church was brought into connection with them and that the appearance was thus created that the Lutheran church was now beginning to enter the field of politics. The impression the public gained may have been wrong, but Scripture admonishes us: "Abstain from all appearance of evil." . . .

We cannot ally ourselves with the German element in America, nor with the English, or Slavic, or Italian, or any other. We owe it to those who are one with us in Christ to avoid everything that might give them offense and thus tend to separate the hearts that are united in our common faith.³¹

Even while defending oneself against the attacks of others, Moussa suggested that a direct approach is better than resorting to publicity or propaganda:

It is not necessary to burst into print and to make frantic and violent assertions of loyalty. That is merely pathetic. Some Lutherans tried that. They passed more loyalty resolutions than there are stars in the flag—and accomplished nothing. There is but one way to combat the foulmouthed slanderer: begin at home. Do not attempt to effect a sweeping change by publishing your sentiments abroad, but go to the man next door and find out where he heard that last bit of slander. . . . If possible, show your earnestness by assuming those duties who are everywhere awaiting the volunteer.³²

Two weeks after America's entry into the war, a *Northwestern Lutheran* editorialist assured that the magazine's position would not change:

The NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN has not in the past been preaching pacifism, it will not now preach bloodshed and hatred and extermination of our national foes. Now as before it conceives its duty to its readers to be in guiding them in those affairs that are not decided by machine guns or submarines but by the everlasting Gospel.

Rather than assigning blame to any particular nation or leader, *Northwestern Lutheran* writers spoke of the war as the result of human wickedness. The "Great War" was a "manifestation of sin and its effects."³³ Because of the sin manifest in the war, the world needed churches now more than ever, not because of politics but "for the purpose of saving the souls of men whose end is not determined by the shot and shell that lays them low in death in the bloody battlefield."³⁴

As war's end approached in 1918, Wisconsin writers refrained from offering political advice: "Our government may rest assured that we trust it to do the right thing at the right time. Politics is not our sphere." After peace was assured, Moussa suggested that each parish make a record of its sons who went to war, to serve as "a constant reminder to coming generations that the Lutheran church did not fail in its civic duties in the trying times of 1917-1918."³⁶

"We must limit ourselves to externals only"

Both the Missouri and Wisconsin Synods provided chaplains for the armed forces in times of war prior to World War I.³⁷ During the Civil War, C. F. W. Walther reported that "our dear brother, F. W. Richmann of Schaumburg, Cook County, Illinois, has accepted a call to serve an Ohio regiment." His service clearly extended beyond Missouri Lutherans. Although the 58th Ohio Volunteer Regiment was composed mostly of German-speaking soldiers, Richmann reported that already on his second day he had to bury a soldier who died suddenly, "and I had to speak English, since the deceased was an American." He added that he would soon have to conduct services regularly in both languages "since between three and four hundred men (out of a thousand) are unfamiliar with the German language."³⁸

During the Spanish-American war, the Wisconsin Synod's 1898 convention resolved "with great enthusiasm" to send Pastor F. Eppling of Algoma, Wisconsin, to serve the Lutheran young men with Word and Sacrament. Neither Eppling nor the synod seem to have been opposed to accepting at least some financial support from the government. Wisconsin's resolution called for synodical financing "in case [Eppling] would not receive any support from the state."³⁹ After arriving in Madison, Wisconsin, Eppling was granted "free transportation from Gov. Scofield to the South." He conducted his first worship service on 3 April 1898 in Jacksonville, Florida, "in the tent of the Y. M. C. A." Were it not for a change in circumstances regarding several regiments returning from Puerto Rico, Eppling "would have been appointed [the third regiment's] chaplain by the government" and would have continued his service to the soldiers "without any cost to the Synod."⁴⁰

Despite these instances of past chaplaincy service, the Missouri and Wisconsin Synods both officially opposed involvement in the government's military chaplaincy

program during World War I. When the Norwegian Synod's J. A. Stub urged his synod to be "one and dissoluble behind our boys," suggesting that Lutherans "can return to our doctrinal, racial, or synodical differences after the war if we must," *Lutheran Witness* editor Theodore Graebner called Stub's comments "cheap talk." Graebner insisted there was "no emergency imaginable that could move Missouri to deviate from its principles." If Scripture required separation from churches that teach false doctrine during peacetime, "then these same words of Scripture certainly forbid our cooperation in the distinctly religious sphere with these same bodies in time of war." Graebner added, "We were glad to read in the *Northwestern Lutheran* a strong reply to Rev. Stub's *malapropos* remarks."⁴²

More troublesome were remarks in *The Lutheran* of the General Council, announcing that

For the first time in American history, Lutherans from all synods were marshaled together for the fulfillment of a common task. It was a cheering sight. Nationalistic walls and doctrinal fences were down for once, and it does not seem that anyone was specially injured by rubbing his elbow against another who happened to differ with him on some points not exactly defined in the Confessions.⁴³

Graebner called that assessment "simply not true." The Synodical Conference had "not given up, either in confession or practice, one jot or tittle of [its] confessional convictions for the sake of aligning [its] work for army and navy with that of others."⁴⁴

President Pfothauer "drew a line through" a proposed arrangement for external cooperation between the Missouri Synod and non-Synodical Conference Lutherans in the National Lutheran Commission, announcing "a stand of absolute isolationism as the only Christian one for the Missouri Synod to take."⁴⁵ Pfothauer appointed the Lutheran Church Board for Army and Navy to oversee the spiritual care of Synodical Conference Lutherans in the Armed Forces.⁴⁶ The United States government had adopted a policy of dealing with all Protestants through the Federal Council of Churches and the YMCA.⁴⁷ In late 1917 Pfothauer reminded the board that in any connections with the YMCA or other ecclesiastical agencies "we must limit ourselves to externals only." If mixed service were demanded of Missouri pastors, "we may in no case join, even if we could then serve our boys very economically." Pfothauer did not want Missouri's soldiers coming back from the camps "spiritually infected."⁴⁸

The Chicago-based Army and Navy Board resolved early in 1918 to sever all relations with the National Lutheran Commission, but Missouri's New York Pastoral Conference adopted a contrary statement, urging cooperation with the NLC. "This war has shot more things to pieces than the Cathedral at Reims," wrote one New York pastor. While the Chicago board protested, "We here in the East are working hand in hand with the National Lutheran Commission through our Eastern War Board."

After several months the Chicago board reversed its position, and in spring 1918 the Synodical Conference agreed to cooperate with the NLC's newly formed Commission for Soldiers' and Sailors' Welfare, created by the Inner Mission Board of the General Synod, in the following five ways:

1. The Synodical Conference will cooperate with the National Commission in every way possible.

2. Pay their share of all general expenses.

3. Cooperate completely with this Commission or its representatives in dealing with the Government, camp and cantonment commandants, the Federal Council of Churches, the Y. M. C. A., etc.

4. Have their appointees as camp pastors sanctioned by the Commission.

5. But the Synodical Conference reserves the right to minister to the spiritual needs of men from their congregations through their own representatives wherever it is possible for them to do so.⁵⁰

In its report to Missouri's 1920 convention, the Army and Navy Board acknowledged that the "greatest difficulty" in their work was caused by non-Synodical Conference Lutherans who sought to cooperate with the Army and Navy Board and deemed it unnecessary to duplicate the work of other denominations. The board "could not believe that the principles as laid down by the Word of God for times of peace could be any other for times of war." The board offered to cooperate "along external lines, whenever and wherever this was expedient" to serve their own soldiers of the Synodical Conference.⁵¹

Officially, Missouri's Army and Navy Board took the same view the Wisconsin Synod's Michigan District had taken two years earlier:

The "Lutheran Brotherhood" . . . and the "Lutheran Federation" . . . told us that if we Lutherans wanted to achieve these two things [erect barracks for worship and certify chaplains with the government], then we would have to stand before the government as a united Lutheran church, not as Missouri or Ohio, or Wisconsin or General Council. . . . Thus it appeared at the outset that we would be compelled to work outwardly with others, while at the same time also faithfully adhering to our doctrinal position. Very soon, however, it became apparent that it was not possible to maintain this separation of externals and doctrinal matters in joint practical work. For those people have a definite purpose in mind in this joint work. They want to erase the previously maintained boundaries and differences in doctrinal matters; they want to employ the prevailing circumstances to force a general union.⁵²

Despite earnest attempts to maintain these doctrinal boundaries, however, the minutes of the Army and Navy Board "document the Board's struggles with [the] problem of relations with other Lutherans under the pressure of war" and give evidence of "an incipient break with Synodical tradition."⁵³ O. H. Pannkoke later observed that as members of opposition synods become acquainted, they see that "neither has horns or cloven hoofs; they become more friendly and respect each other, and so separatism becomes untenable." During time of war "it was difficult for a Missouri Synod camp pastor to consider a camp pastor from another Lutheran Synod as a traitor to God. A few extremists did. Most did not."⁵⁴ Although Pfothauer sought to limit Missouri's involvement to external matters, Pannkoke said that "experience has shown that in actual practice it is impossible to define the point where external cooperation ends and spiritual fellowship begins." Such a distinction "may be made in logic," but "it disappears in life."⁵⁵

Parting of the ways

War's end postponed resolution of questions regarding the chaplaincy and inter-Lutheran cooperation, but by the mid-1930s threats from overseas dictators forced the issue to resurface. Delegates to Missouri's 1935 convention instructed newly elected President John Behnken to appoint a committee to investigate whether calling men as chaplains into the army and navy could be done without violating scriptural principles, and if so, to appoint an Army and Navy Commission for Chaplains.⁵⁶

Three years later, the five-man committee appointed by Behnken reported that in "reliable testimony" from pastors who had served as chaplains and from the army's Chief of Chaplains it was emphasized "again and again" that "the chaplains are to function according to their respective creeds or conscientious practice in each case." Though under authority of their commanding officers, chaplains received no "dictation as to their spiritual ministry," and so "the conscientious Lutheran chaplain can avoid all unionistic practices." The committee was also convinced that offering their pastors to become chaplains did not violate the Missouri Synod's "accepted Scriptural position" on the separation of church and state. Although the government contributed "a stipulated allowance" toward maintaining the chaplaincy, individual chaplains remained free to perform their duties "in conformity with the teachings of denominational beliefs." Men were appointed as chaplains by the government but called by their respective church bodies. "They represent us only as long as they conform to the principles and practices of our Synod as members in good standing."⁵⁷

Thus the arrangement concerning external cooperation with the National Lutheran Council, which President Pfothenauer in 1918 "drew a line through," became by 1941 the approved *modus operandi* for conducting chaplaincy work.⁵⁸

"It can only be viewed as the Lord's guidance," Behnken later reflected, that the 1935 synodical convention passed this "seemingly minor resolution." Working closely with government and military authorities, the Army and Navy Commission processed and called qualified pastors who filled the chaplaincy quota allowed to the synod, distributed them among the branches of the military, and built up a chaplains' reserved corps. "Our church's slogan, 'They Shall Not March Alone,' was more than a pretty slogan." The service of more than 236 Missouri chaplains, cooperating with the NLC's motto, "You serve your men, we serve ours," moved Behnken to conclude, "I am convinced that our church body did as much, if not more, than any other church body to hold the war's spiritual casualties to a minimum."⁵⁹

Wisconsin President John Brenner reported to his synod's 1937 convention that he and the synod's district presidents had been asked for names of Wisconsin pastors to serve in the chaplaincy program. "My stand has been that we have no authority to do this," Brenner replied, "as long as our Synod has not included such work in its program." Faithfulness to the divine call would prevent a minister from looking for a new field of labor on his own initiative. Brenner referred the matter to a committee, charging it to answer three questions: 1. Was there need for this work? 2. Would such service employed by the government be compatible with scriptural principles? 3. Should not the church body take on the obligation of paying its own missionaries?⁶⁰

Wisconsin's 1937 *Proceedings* also included a brief report of the Committee on Chaplaincies. Acknowledging their inability to make a specific recommendation on the chaplaincy due to insufficient information, committee members nonetheless held that "any pastor entering into such service is doing so without the sanction of the Synod un-

til the Synod has definitely decided in this matter."⁶¹

An expanded Committee on Chaplaincies reported more definitively to Wisconsin's 1939 convention. After thoroughly studying armed forces literature, it was "of the unanimous opinion that we do not commission pastors to function in this capacity according to governmental regulations." Answering Brenner's three questions, the committee noted: 1. There was no need to call Wisconsin pastors specifically to that work, because "any ordained minister is at liberty to minister unto the men in service." 2. To submit to government regulations and to accept government remuneration would violate the separation of church and state. Despite official assurances that commissioned chaplains would be permitted to practice sound doctrine and confessional Lutheranism, the committee feared that "it will become a practical impossibility for them once in the service." 3. Feeling ill-equipped to offer definite cost proposals, the committee recommended that respective mission boards survey stateside army camps and navy zones to determine whether such action was needed.⁶²

In 1941 the committee repeated its stand that "the commissioning of Army and Navy chaplains by our Synod would conflict with Scriptural principles and Lutheran practice." To participate in the government's chaplaincy program would "conflict with Wisconsin's understanding of the divinity of the pastoral call," create "a violation of the principle of the separation of Church and State," and expose pastors to "the spirit of doctrinal indifference" pervading the War Department's regulations.⁶³ Wisconsin's 1943 convention authorized publication and distribution of New Ulm Professor Carl Schweppe's paper on the chaplaincy to all pastors and teachers of the synod, as well as to all convention lay delegates, with the encouragement that the paper be studied "under the leadership of a member or a representative of the [synod's recently formed] Spiritual Welfare Commission."⁶⁴ Missouri's Martin Graebner, in a paper entitled "Army Chaplains," (St. Paul, Minn.: n. p., n. d.), responded, 14, that while army chaplains "will have to wrestle with many problems and difficulties in order to comply with both the army regulations and the demands of God's Word," those difficulties and problems seemed no greater than those "which many of our ministers must face in their own parishes." While admitting that "the office of an army chaplain is connected with many temptations to sin," Graebner insisted that the chaplaincy "has not been shown that it is in itself a sinful work" that no Christian may undertake. "Therefore the general rule of the Bible must prevail: Preach the Gospel to every creature."

After the outbreak of World War II, President Brenner reported, "We do not find that the present emergency demands a change in the character of true leadership in the Church or in the nature of its work." The work of the church remained "purely spiritual in nature," and its leadership had "*but one objective*, that of 'bringing every thought to the obedience of Christ.'"⁶⁵ But Wisconsin's decision not to participate in the military chaplaincy program had now grown less theoretical and more unpopular. "The stand our Synod took on this question in 1939," Brenner remarked, "is not shared by other Lutherans, and, it seems, by some of our own members."⁶⁶

Chaplains' ministries were highly regarded by members of other church bodies. Men were recruited energetically, and the chaplains' work was widely publicized in print and film. Between 1939 and 1945, nearly 10,000 men served as chaplains in the army, army air corps, navy, and air force.⁶⁷

A widely circulated story "The Silver Cord," told the heroic account of four chaplains—Reformed and Methodist pastors, a Roman Catholic priest, and a Jewish rabbi—who died aboard the USS *Dorchester* after their ship suffered repeated torpedo fire from

a German submarine. As panic swept the vessel, the chaplains remained on deck quieting the doomed men. Suddenly four young sailors appeared, all without life belts. After giving up their own belts, the chaplains knelt together in prayer and linked arms as the ship went down. Though they were "as far apart theologically as the poles are apart," wrote the author of the account that appeared in the *Christian Herald*, among them "ran that silver cord of the Spirit which binds true men of God together in that spiritual camaraderie which only they and God can ever understand.

They serve one Church, and one alone, the Church Christ wants upon this earth. In that wild moment on the deck they swept away those senseless barriers between "the churches," that make us purely, pitifully "denominational." They knew no creed here but the universal creed of faith unrationed, the common property of all men who believe, the mystic union which exists between Christ and the children of God whether they worship in Protestant meeting houses, Catholic cathedrals, or Jewish synagogues.⁶⁷

The story illustrates the correctness of Wisconsin's contention that a spirit of unionism and doctrinal indifferentism pervaded the chaplaincy. Yet the cooperation of these four chaplains of differing beliefs only heightened the story's appeal for many readers. Church leaders understood how influential the chaplaincy ministry was. By recruiting and dispatching chaplains, churches demonstrated their patriotism, kept their own servicemen attached to the church, and expanded their denomination's influence beyond its boundaries.

Wisconsin was not the only church body, however, that opposed the chaplaincy program for doctrinal reasons. Congregational, Presbyterian, and Disciples of Christ leaders were reluctant to subordinate their churches' spiritual ministries to government control. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA urged chaplains to "strive to make their ministry distinctively spiritual so that it be kept from becoming an appendage to the military establishment."⁶⁹ Other church leaders feared their spiritual integrity was being compromised to wartime exigencies. The Christian Reformed Church petitioned President Franklin Roosevelt to address the flagrant violations of the Sabbath that military and industrial defense work forced on soldiers as well as civilians. One editorialist warned that America could win the war militarily but still lose it spiritually if the Lord's Day was not protected.⁷⁰

Other religious leaders challenged the chaplaincy's policy on open communion. When an anonymous writer in the Reformed *Banner* insisted that bringing the gospel to the men defending our country was "more important than maintaining the rule on closed communion," *Banner* editor H. J. Kuiper countered that the sacrament would be profaned if it were distributed to unbelievers.⁷¹ Because chaplains were unable to conduct church discipline in the military, Christian Reformed pastors could not in good conscience serve as chaplains unless they were allowed to administer closed communion according to the policy of their denomination.⁷²

The Baptist *Watchman-Examiner* remarked in 1943 that "the meeting of all sorts of churches in war efforts is to be commended," but churches "should not forget nor abandon the principles for which they have long stood and the doctrines which they have long advocated." Wisconsin's Joh. P. Meyer called it "gratifying" that the *Watchman* writer clearly discerned "the dangers of indiscriminate coordination of war efforts," yet Meyer wondered what kind of war efforts the writer would commend. "If he is referring to strictly spiritual work, is any cooperation with other church bodies possible at all

without denying the truth?"⁷³

With more restrained approval Meyer cited another *Watchman-Examiner* report, involving a Baptist chaplain's dismissal for "his extremely zealous evangelistic inclinations." The *Watchman* concluded, "Baptist chaplains under such restraints are not free to fulfill what they believe to be the functions of a chaplain, and we are informed that many of them who have entered the chaplaincy have resigned."⁷⁴

Meyer cited disapprovingly an item in the *News Bulletin* of the National Lutheran Council. Its editor praised the "regiment's finest" Lutheran chaplain for accompanying a group of Jewish soldiers 150 miles to enable them to celebrate Passover in their own synagogue. "Brotherhood," remarked the editor, "the companionship of all men, has and always will be the backbone of our Army." The Lutheran chaplain, said the *News Bulletin*, "is minister, father, and rabbi to all the men in this area." Is such an attitude of confessional indifference inherent in the army chaplain? Meyer asked.⁷⁵ According to *The Lutheran* of 14 July 1943, the chaplain "is a clergyman, priest, minister, or rabbi who, having been given the ecclesiastical endorsement of his own religious group," conducts worship, offers spiritual leadership, and facilitates educational conferences to provide "religious ministrations to men of faiths other than his own." This is not proselyting, Meyer concluded, but the demand that a chaplain practice "personal accommodation [in military life] to a religious confession which in civilian life he rejects."⁷⁶

Even the *Christian Century* warned that "the proverbial camel was poking his nose under the tent."⁷⁷ C. Stanley Lowell wrote in 1944 that "denominational exclusiveness was out" because the chaplaincy program "cut across denominational lines." While Roman Catholicism was allowed to maintain its distinctive practices and services, "the rest must work together as a unit." A practice such as closed communion was "impossible," according to Lowell. "Chaplains who feel they cannot administer communion to all Christians are properly dropped from the chaplaincy during the training period."⁷⁸

A paragraph from the *Presbyterian Guardian* warranted careful attention, Meyer advised, by anyone considering the chaplaincy:

The strange sight of a Roman Catholic chaplain conducting Protestant services, a Protestant chaplain conducting Jewish services, and a Jewish chaplain conducting both Romish and Protestant services, is not only provided for in the rules, but is frequently seen. . . . A chaplain must be willing to conduct such a "general service," reading from a book to fill the air with neutral though perhaps Biblical words. It cannot be called worship.⁷⁹

Missouri's chaplains

The effect of participating in the chaplaincy program on Missouri's 236 chaplains was profound, as it was on the Missouri Synod as a whole. Milwaukee Pastor William Kohn recalled how his army chaplaincy experience, beginning in 1943, fostered an ecumenical vision:

My growth in attitude and outlook started. No longer were there just professors and pastors around. My experiences broadened. I became acquainted with chaplains of other denominations. I met young men in combat who were injured, and there was no place for asking them about denominational distinctions.

Kohn said he discovered that "not every Baptist is a jerk who doesn't really know about baptism," that not every Catholic is "a full-blown heretic," and that "there are a lot of good Christians about, and they weren't all Lutherans." The Missouri Synod needed to get more fully involved with other Christians "with whom they were hardly acquainted."⁸⁰

Missouri took seriously the warning that participation in the chaplaincy would lead to diminished confessionalism and disloyalty to Lutheranism. In 1941, Missouri chaplain Arthur Carl Piepkorn charged that "the prophets of doom who have been forecasting the collapse of confessionalism in our circles would have been disappointed" if they had attended a chaplains' training conference. As numerous experiences were recounted, "it was plain that it is not only possible for a chaplain to be uncompromisingly Lutheran but that our chaplains *have been* and *are* unwaveringly loyal to our Church's confessional doctrines and Scriptural practices."⁸¹

Articles in *The Lutheran Witness* throughout World War II headlined the virtues of Missouri's chaplaincy involvement. Pastors became more concerned about evangelism, and church literature contained more articles discussing the pastor's service as evangelist. Rather than provoking doctrinal compromise, the chaplain's duties provided opportunities to witness to non-Lutherans who appreciated solid doctrinal instruction.⁸² A Baptist major told a Missouri Synod chaplain at Camp Robinson, Arkansas, "You Lutherans definitely have something on the ball!"⁸³ Others reported swelling church attendance at camp worship services⁸⁴ and exemplary work among German prisoners of war.⁸⁵ The chaplains' heroic deeds and promotions to positions of responsibility bolstered Missouri's public image.⁸⁶

At war's end, Martin Sommer wrote that the Lutheran Church in the United States had never received as much publicity as it had in the previous ten years. Along with Dr. Walter Maier's preaching on the *Lutheran Hour* and many more English publications from Concordia Publishing House, "the activity of our chaplains has been very effective in directing the eyes of many toward the Lutheran Church." Missouri chaplains were "now in key positions" and had "come in contact with important men. . . .

Those who have come in contact with these our clergymen, who have listened to their sermons, profited by their advice, submitted to their guidance, their influence will prove of immense value to the Church. As sure as God's Word does not return void, so sure we may be of the fruits of the chaplains' work.⁸⁷

A survey of 198 Missouri clergymen who served as World War II chaplains, conducted by Dale Griffin in June 1963, confirmed the wide-ranging effects this service had on the men involved.⁸⁸ Almost half of the 118 respondents reported that their contacts with pastors of other denominations helped them gain greater understanding of those clergy, and 24 of 54 respondents reported having gained a greater appreciation of Lutheranism. "I had a narrow theological environment through youth," one respondent wrote. "[The chaplaincy] had [a] tremendous broadening effect without [causing me to lose] appreciation of doctrine." Said another, "I certainly received a broader outlook of the Christian Church as a whole and that in other churches there are just as devout and dedicated individuals—both lay and clergy—as our own."⁸⁹

Regarding relations with other Christians, one respondent feared that "too often our people get the idea that the Presbyterians or Roman Catholics are to be shunned more than unbelievers." When these men returned to stateside ministries, the chaplaincy experience "has certainly helped to move the Missouri Synod into the mainstream of

American church life." Missouri had much to give, but much also to learn. "I do not believe that obedience to Scripture demands that we act as though other Christian churches do not exist." Said another:

Our chaplains saw what was on the other side of the woods and [it] convinced them that one has to go over there and talk with the "other guys" to do any witnessing. It could have been the chaplaincy that changed our church's position on relations with other churches, maybe not. But Wisconsin had no chaplains.⁹⁰

"Our Synod will take care of the spiritual needs of all our boys"

While continuing to oppose participation in the military chaplaincy program on doctrinal grounds, the Wisconsin Synod was especially eager to demonstrate that it could minister to its servicemen with its own resources and without compromising its convictions.⁹¹ *Northwestern Lutheran* editor William Schaefer stated flatly, "Our Synod will take care of the spiritual needs of all our boys in the training camps of the land wherever they may be located." Arrangements would be made for this to be done "with the least possible disturbance and consistent with the gravity of the situation."⁹²

By April 1941, Wisconsin's Spiritual Welfare Commission, directed by Pastor Edward Blakewell of Milwaukee, was making regular reports to synod members via *The Northwestern Lutheran*.⁹³ "Your Church has appointed a Commission to provide for the spiritual care of those we are serving in the various units of our country's defense forces," Blakewell wrote in a letter addressed to 713 men in the armed forces. "The Commission is extremely conscious of its responsibilities." With soldiers already scattered throughout more than one hundred camps and bases, "it is not an easy matter to find a church and pastor of our confession at or near each camp and base." Wherever possible, men were being directed to Wisconsin Synod pastors and congregations.⁹⁴ President Brenner urged readers to "send the names and addresses of all of your members in training to the Commission."⁹⁵

Throughout the war the Spiritual Welfare Commission reported on its work and encouraged Wisconsin members to support its effort.⁹⁶ "Our Father wants us to recognize the present time of insecurity as one of great opportunity to direct the thoughts of men to spiritual activity," wrote one author.⁹⁷ By 1944, more than 17,000 men and women were listed on SWC files, 9,000 of whom were stationed at over a thousand locations in the United States, the rest overseas.⁹⁸ Most were members of Wisconsin Synod congregations, but "there are also quite a few young men and women on our list who are not communicant members of any of our congregations." In addition, "many of our servicemen have put forth much effort in sharing their spiritual literature with their comrades, by placing it in their rooms, and by sharing God's Word with others. In this manner we have received many requests from the unchurched to be placed on our mailing list." Pastors and laymen from other denominations, as well as war workers, wives, and other relatives, received Wisconsin's mailings.⁹⁹

One serviceman wrote, "I have been receiving the 'Daily Devotional' booklets for some time now and I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart. They are really the only attachment to the church that I have."¹⁰⁰ Wrote another in 1945, "Your last literature reached me in a hospital in England after following me all over France. You would be surprised how many of the fellows wanted me to give them the gospel literature after I was through with it."¹⁰¹ By war's end the list contained more than

22,000 names, including hospitalized servicemen, soldiers honorably discharged, men listed as missing in action, even German and Japanese prisoners of war.¹⁰²

No cease fire

The end of this war did not signal a cease fire in the chaplaincy dispute, but instead prompted calls for a resolution of the disagreements. An overture to the 1946 Synodical Conference convention urged that since the chaplaincy "appears to be a permanent institution in our nation," the problem "be studied thoroughly in an attempt to bring about mutual agreement" among the synods.¹⁰³ The eight-man Interim Committee appointed to study the chaplaincy question reported in 1948 that it found disagreement on nine questions, including the nature and divine institution of the local congregation, the doctrines of the call and the office of the public ministry, principles regarding separation of church and state, and unionistic practices allegedly unavoidable in the chaplaincy. Most of the 1948 report was then taken up with church and ministry issues.¹⁰⁴

In 1950 the Interim Committee could report only that it was "convinced that definite progress has been made," that it was "not deadlocked on any issue," and that it was "nearer the goal than two years ago."¹⁰⁵ In 1952 the Committee determined that the chaplaincy question belonged to "problems arising from the application" of church and ministry principles, and the question was referred to the faculties of the synods' seminaries. Thus, the stage was set for the most detailed and determinative studies of the chaplaincy, to be presented to the Synodical Conference convention in 1954.

In the meantime, Wisconsin Synod literature continued explaining and defending its chaplaincy position. The Committee on Chaplaincies presented a lengthy report to the 1951 synodical convention, offering numerous citations from the *War Department Technical Manual* and *Army Regulations* and warning that Wisconsin's doctrinal stance would be compromised:

Experience and knowledge of the interpretation nationally placed upon the concepts of common sense in religious matters and charitable regard for others warn us that a strictly Biblical exercise of either virtue does not commend itself to the latitudinarian religious ideals popular today and practiced in government as well as in many areas of American life dominated by the spirit of unionism and lodgery. . . .

The government's expressed attitude toward cooperation in religious practice hardly conforms to the standard of confessionalism required by Romans 16:17-18 and other Scripture. To work conscientiously and without deviation from divine directives in such an environment might well be regarded by one who is under obedience to Christ as an ambition beyond the reasonable hope of attainment.¹⁰⁸

Wisconsin seminary professor Edmund Reim reported on an agreement between representatives of the NLC and the Missouri Synod, also in 1951, "according to which their respective members in the military service are to be received for communion regardless of their synodical membership." Considering it "a step of far-reaching importance," Reim cited one of the agreement's provisions: "While the pastor may deny communion to an applicant, e.g., for manifest impenitence, he may not bring up the question of the doctrinal issues which still separate Missouri" from other Lutheran synods.

"What was introduced as an 'exception' is now covered by a rule, a rule which even dares to speak with the mandatory 'shall.'" Noting that this agreement was "officially sanctioned by the Praesidium of Missouri" without "even a semblance of consultation with its sister synods," Reim asked, "Who is disrupting the Synodical Conference?"¹⁰⁹

At the 1954 Synodical Conference in East Detroit, Michigan, Edward Fredrich of the Wisconsin Synod, a Detroit pastor, and Martin Scharlemann, Missouri professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, represented their respective synods' positions.¹¹⁰ Insisting this was not "a minor difficulty" arising from misunderstanding or lack of consultation but "a serious difference regarding either the application of Bible doctrines or the doctrines themselves," Fredrich urged that differences over the chaplaincy "be given full and prompt attention and dealt with in all seriousness."¹¹¹ He then offered a sober presentation around Wisconsin's traditional three objections to the chaplaincy: disregard for the divinity of the call, violation of the separation of church and state, and involvement in religious unionism.

"Though the government is willing to say that the chaplain's spiritual authority is imparted in ordination," Fredrich wrote, "yet it jealously reserves for itself the right to say when and where, by whom and for whom this authority is exercised." The church surrenders its rights to the government, as the government can set standards for chaplains, controls their recruitment by quota, transfer, promotion, or discharge, and enforces numerous specific regulations on them. The principle of the separation of church and state is violated when the state establishes by law the post of chaplain and maintains it by public funds. "No matter what good motive or under what extenuating circumstances or with what attempts at indiscrimination, the fact remains that in the chaplaincy system the State invades the realm of the Church."¹¹²

Unionism was "the most serious charge" Wisconsin made against the chaplaincy. Chaplains were appointed spiritual leaders over certain groups with no regard for denominational boundaries. While Roman Catholic and Jewish churches were granted separate classifications, Lutherans were "lumped together" with all others under the heading "Protestant." Fredrich cited particular incidents where, in Wisconsin's view, participation in the chaplaincy program not only tolerated unionism but expanded it. "Many a chaplain may be able to report heart-warming experiences he has had," and listeners could be "swayed by any listing of results or by any proofs that the chaplaincy system is more effective than a mailing program."¹¹³

Fredrich seems to have anticipated Scharlemann's presentation. "Much has been written and said on this subject, and it is not our purpose to repeat all the arguments pro and con." With that, Scharlemann signaled that he had little intention of granting serious consideration to any of Wisconsin's reasons for opposing the chaplaincy. Instead, he offered exactly what Fredrich had chosen to avoid. "My approach is a personal one, and has its source in more than a dozen years of service as a chaplain," Scharlemann wrote. "This is a matter on which I speak from personal experience and, I might add, with very deep feeling."¹¹⁴

The chaplaincy "presents the church with an unparalleled opportunity to carry out its primary mission" of preaching the gospel to all. He repeated and applied to the chaplaincy—though Wisconsin challenged its relevancy—¹¹⁵ Peter's declaration after his visit to Cornelius, "What was I, that I could withstand God?"¹¹⁶ Each year more than 2,500 men were brought into the Missouri Synod through the ministry of its chaplains. Scharlemann's assignments at Sampson Air Force Base in Geneva, New York, and at the Air Force Weather School in Chanute Field, Illinois, were but two examples of this

extraordinary opportunity. To the question, "How about the general Protestant service that is to be held on every base each Sunday?" Scharlemann answered, "When a Lutheran has that service, he makes it a Lutheran service."¹¹⁷

At least approaching the church-state issue, Scharlemann reminded that "the primary concern of the First Amendment and the court decisions made on its basis is to keep any single or any group of church organizations from receiving state sanction and support." The chaplaincy reflects the same interest in religion that undergirds American life as does reciting "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance, displaying the flag on Flag Day, and inscribing "In God We Trust" on our coins.¹¹⁸

As promised, Scharlemann concluded with a deeply emotional recounting of communion services held in North Africa the night before a bombing raid on Romania. The many men numbered among the flight crews of the 70 planes that did not return, "now part of that 'cloud of witnesses' referred to in Hebrews chapter 12," Scharlemann intoned,

must find it very strange indeed that someone should ever have raised the question of my right to be in Benghazi, Libya, as a military chaplain on the evening of July 31, 1943, with the means of grace to comfort men who knew that they would shortly leave this vale of tears to be with the saints of all ages in the presence of their Redeemer.¹¹⁹

Wisconsin delegates brushed aside Scharlemann's presentation as unbiblical and an argument from sentiment. Some Missourians charged that Wisconsin's view of the separation of church and state went beyond Scripture. Missouri chaplains pointed out that current government regulations honored church bodies that rejected unionism, to which Wisconsin responded that for a chaplain to summon a priest or rabbi to serve Jewish or Catholic servicemen would already constitute an act of unionism.¹²⁰

Reflecting on the 1954 Synodical Conference convention almost a year later, Edmund Reim commended Fredrich's presentation, and those of other Wisconsin men, for displaying "the evidence of careful and thorough preparation," "sober and factual argumentation," "constant reference to Scripture for guidance and light," "quiet and restrained wording of necessary criticism," and "the warm note of earnest appeal." Wisconsin's case was "never more ably and adequately presented than at these most recent meetings."

Why then did they not persuade the Missouri delegates? One important answer—"quite obvious even to 'neutral' observers"—was "the strong organizational loyalty of Missourians to their synod," combined with "a reluctance to believe that a position could possibly be wrong, and a willingness to defend such a position right down the line." Reim also recalled a remark Missouri's Vice President Arnold Grumm made earlier that year at a Lutheran Laymen's League rally in Milwaukee: "As a Lutheran Church we are in the stream of life—why must we always say no-no-no?" Reim believed Grumm's remark shed much light on the intersynodical debate. Reim considered it a dangerous thing "for a Church to find itself 'in the stream' and take pride and find satisfaction in that unaccustomed role."¹²¹

The chaplaincy question "is loaded with emotional factors," when "patriotism runs high" and men are sent on distant, dangerous missions and their families feel deep concern for their spiritual welfare. "It is even more of a problem," wrote Reim, "when one finds brethren in which one could once look for moral support now leading the chorus of disapproval." Wisconsin's stand was "admittedly unpopular," readily misunderstood,

frequently misinterpreted—and, for the previous two decades, painfully solitary.¹²²

A harbinger of things to come

A half century later, little appears to have changed in the attitudes of the two largest bodies of the former Lutheran Synodical Conference. Missouri's continued acceptance of the chaplaincy ministry is illustrated in articles in the November 1999 issue of *The Lutheran Witness*¹²³ and in the Fall 1999 issue of *Focus on Concordia Seminary*. Chaplain John Wohlrabe's ministry to the crew of the U. S. S. Blue Ridge

includes regular worship services, daily devotions, Bible studies, evening prayers, and pastoral counseling. Worship services that I conduct include a Saturday Vespers service, a Sunday Lutheran service of Holy Communion and a Sunday general Protestant service of the Word. . . . I also coordinate coverage of other faiths. This includes arranging for a Roman Catholic chaplain to accompany lay leaders for their faith groups.

Wohlrabe described his work as "never ministering to a local congregation in the strict sense of the term" but "reaching out to the lost with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and providing Word and Sacrament ministry to those who are removed from their home congregations."¹²⁴

Wisconsin's unchanged opposition to the chaplaincy is illustrated in a January 2000 article in *Christian News* by Reuel Schulz, a retired WELS pastor. Though assured by a retired Missouri Synod Navy chaplain that he was "never faced with any situation that might have compelled him to compromise his conscientious Christian convictions," Schulz remained unconvinced. Schulz pointed to the WELS example of supporting and sending its own chaplains during the war in Vietnam, and asked,

Why wouldn't all churches want to pay their own priests, pastors, rabbis, etc., to be chaplains? Are officer perks and prestige, along with tax-supplied salaries really worth sacrificing the churches' integrity and independence? Under the present arrangement, the government, especially when push comes to shove, has the chaplains under its thumb. After all, who's paying the chaplains' salaries?¹²⁵

One unnamed source has remarked that in his view the Wisconsin Synod was correct that participation in the military chaplaincy constituted a breach of the separation of church and state. Yet "we Lutherans believe in original sin and we live in a fallen world," and "sometimes we must choose between the lesser of two evils." Missouri agreed with Wisconsin in principle regarding the church and state principle, yet felt other premises also had to be considered. The church had an obligation to serve its people in the military and found it necessary to utilize the military chaplaincy program in order to fulfill that obligation. Further, the Great Commission called on Missouri to proclaim the gospel to all people, and to do so it needed to make use of itself of every opportunity available. The chaplaincy provided one such opportunity. "Experience indicates," the source added, "that the Lord did bless the work of our chaplains in many ways."

His argument seems a variation on the response Dwight Moody gave to those who criticized his methods of urban evangelism in Chicago: "I like my way of doing things

better than your way of *not* doing things." This unnamed source added, "One problem is that some of us in Missouri tended to patronize Wisconsin which naturally was resented by some pastors in Wisconsin."

Beyond the issue of the chaplaincy itself, this final comment may explain some of the resentment and frustration felt by the Wisconsin Synod as its relationship with the Missouri Synod deteriorated in the 1940s and 1950s. What Wisconsin saw as "old" Missouri's greatest strength was its unwillingness to sacrifice its theological position for pragmatic concerns. Indeed, R. C. H. Lenski of the Ohio Synod—admittedly not the Missouri Synod's best friend—nonetheless remarked in wonder on how Missouri's "strict conservatism" was coupled with remarkable growth: "Here is a historical fact that refutes all talk trying to persuade us that we must be liberal, accommodate ourselves to the spirit of the times, etc., in order to win men and grow externally. The very opposite is seen in the Missouri Synod. Missouri has at all times been unyielding; it is so still." Yet Missouri's "enormous achievements" stood for all to see. "What so many regard as Missouri's weakness has in reality been its strength."¹²⁶

It was this strength that drew the Wisconsin Synod and others to Missouri. "For three-quarters of a century we have been virtually identified with what is now known as 'The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod,'" wrote Frederic Blume in 1952. "To those on the outside we of the Synodical Conference have all been 'Missourians,' since we shared Missouri's convictions." The "towering strength of Missouri was a comforting back-log for us, whenever we thought of the encroachments of modernism in the Lutheran Church." Wisconsin admired and echoed Missouri's opposition to "wrong-thinking and wrong-headed trends and movements that have troubled the Lutheran Church." Beyond doctrinal agreement, Wisconsin's link with Missouri was forged "in many of the details of our own lives: many of us have been trained in her schools, have preached in her pulpits, taught in her schools, communed at her altars."¹²⁷

This shift regarding the military chaplaincy that Wisconsin protested in Missouri offered one proof—more would follow—that the long cherished relationship between these sister synods was changing and would never be the same again.

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ENDNOTES

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3. William Warren Sweet, *The Story of Religion in America* (New York: Harper Bros., 1950), 402.
4. "Church News and Comment," *The Lutheran Witness* 30 (28 September 1911): 157.
5. *Fuenfzehn Ansprachen an neuaufgenommene Glieder* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1914), 7; cited by Alan Niehaus Graebner, "The Acculturation of an Immigrant Lutheran Church: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1917–1929" (Ph. D. diss., Columbia University, New York, 1965), 108.

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15. Alan Graebner, "Acculturation," 39–41.
16. The complete text of Bente's address is contained in Josephine Bente, *Biography of Dr. Friedrich Bente* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1936), 29–44.
17. 22 February 1915, in *Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884–1914* (New York, 1925), II, 457; cited by Alan Graebner, "Acculturation," 40–1.
18. Rev. Haertel in Christ Church Notes, "Two Kinds of Schools," *The Lutheran Witness* 33 (11 August 1914): 133.
19. [Theodore] G[raebner], "English Lutheranism," *The Lutheran Witness* 34 (15 June 1915): 181–2.
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21. Fr. Meyer, "The German-Americans," *The Northwestern Lutheran* 3 (7 September 1916): 136.
22. Fred W. Meuser, "Business as Usual—Almost, 1900–1917," in Nelson, ed., *The Lutherans in North America*, 390–1: "The picture of Lutheranism before World War I as a quiet, almost totally foreign-language church, content to confine its activities to corporate worship, religious education, and private piety is only partly accurate. . . . [But] Lutherans of the foreign-language synods . . . were only slightly incorporated into the life of their communities. . . . Lutherans could hardly be called a ghetto community but most were hardly an integral part of American society. . . . In complicated patterns the dynamic factors of age, language, length of time in America, theology, European experience, location in the United States, level of education, and character of the locality where they lived determined their rate of incorporation into society and their sense of belonging to this land. All of them seem to have anticipated acculturation someday, far into the future, after many more generations of slow adjustment."
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62. *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1939*, 67-8.
63. *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1941*, 43-4.
64. *Wisconsin Proceedings, 1943*, 71. Schewpe concluded that by the government's chaplaincy regulations "we are bound and limited in our preaching over and beyond the bounds set for us by Scripture, and that is something that we can, under no condition, submit to." Regarding the call, Schewpe maintained that the government makes a chaplain "overseer over a definite flock," which was not as God intended it, and so "the Lutheran ministry and the chaplaincy are incompatible, not identical, and for us impossible." Carl Schewpe, *The Government Chaplaincy: An Appraisal* (published by resolution of the Ev. Lutheran Joint Synod of

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from the editor ...

by Arnold O. Lehmann

Special thanks to Prof. Dr. Mark Braun for his well researched article on the position of the Wisconsin Synod in regard to the military chaplaincy. Comments may be sent to Dr. Braun at Wisconsin Lutheran College or to the editor.

We would like to iterate the request that members and friends of the Historical Institute consider donating memorabilia relative to the history of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod, its clergy, teachers, and members to the museum. Such items could be displayed for the interest of visitors. Also financial donations, in any amount, for the restoration of Salem Lutheran Landmark Church, in the basement of which the museum is located, would be greatly appreciated.

Accounts, fairly well researched, and of general interest, of events, congregations, and persons connected with the 150 years of history of the Wisconsin Synod would be greatly appreciated by the editor for publication.

May you have a blessed summertime.

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