

The **LUTHERAN** **CLARION**



Lutheran Concerns Association
1320 Hartford Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55116

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The Rise and Fall of the Walther League

Historically, the Christian training of children and the youth has been an important mission sphere of the Missouri Synod ever since its founding in 1847,¹ in accordance with Scripture² and Luther's teachings.³ In the congregations of Synod, next to the training received in the family, the chief means of Christian training of children was in the congregation's Christian day school.⁴ Following *Christenlehre* and Confirmation, the congregations were able to keep track of their youth through young people's organizations known as *Jugendverein* (youth group), in some cases the congregations would sponsor *Junglingsverein* (young men's group) and *Jungfrauenverein* (young women's group).⁵ These youth groups would associate for activities and entertainment in a Christian atmosphere.⁶

In 1893, a call was issued for congregations of the Synodical Conference to send representatives to meet at Trinity Lutheran Church, Buffalo, NY, for the purpose of forming an international organization of Lutheran young people.⁷ The organization adopted the name *Walther Liga* (Walther League) in 1894 after a leading founder and first president of the Missouri Synod, C. F. W. Walther. Its constitution stated: "The purpose of this organization shall be to help young people grow as Christians through WORSHIP - building a stronger faith in the Triune God; EDUCATION- discovering the will of God for their daily life; SERVICE- responding to the needs of all men; RECREATION - keeping the joy of Christ in all activities; FELLOWSHIP - finding the power of belonging to others in Christ."⁸ The purpose of the Walther League was also expressed in its motto: *Pro Arts et Focis* (For Altars and for Hearths, or For Church and for Home).⁹

Two of the major endeavors sponsored by the Walther League were the Wheat Ridge Foundation, which established sanatoria and hospitals in Wheat Ridge, Colorado, and several foreign countries; and the Arcadia Association, which established Camp Arcadia, a summer camp at Arcadia, Michigan.¹⁰ In 1921, the International Walther League moved its headquarters from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to a house at 6438 S. Eggleston Ave., Chicago, Illinois, where it remained until 1942. During the latter year the League constructed new headquarters in a beautiful two-story building, named the "Lutheran Youth Building," at 875 N. Dearborn, Chicago.¹¹ The Chicago building was sold to the Salvation Army in 1971,¹² as part of the dismantling of the League's organization (discussed *infra*).

By 1920, the League had grown to the extent that it needed a national executive secretary. To fill that position, it called Walter A. Maier, who later became internationally famous as the founder and speaker of "Bringing Christ to the Nations"—*The International Lutheran Hour*.¹³ After he was called to Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in 1922, Maier resigned his office as executive secretary of the Walther League, but continued as editor of the *Walther League Messenger*.¹⁴

As editor of the *Messenger* and speaker of the *Lutheran Hour*, Walter A. Maier not only was a staunch advocate of inerrant Scripture, but he also strongly opposed atheistic communism. During the World War II era of pro-Russian sentiment, the president of the League "objected to what he thought an overcritical attitude toward communism in certain Maier editorials."¹⁵ In a letter Maier wrote to Henry W. Buck, 25 May 1945, he said "I was strongly urged to eliminate" an

"...after the departure of Walter A. Maier, there was 'a gradual change in the theological, social and political views expressed in [Walther League] publications.'"

article "written for the *Messenger* entitled 'Communism Pressure Increases' ...and was told that the 'Walther League cannot afford such efforts.'"¹⁶ Then after serving as editor of the *Messenger* for 25 years, Maier resigned in 1945, and the "circulation dropped substantially."¹⁷ The focus of new leadership in the *Messenger* and in the League itself eventually brought about a "drastic change" in the decade of the Sixties whereby the League "dismantled its entire organization."¹⁸

As is well known and reported by many astute observers, the decade of the Sixties was a period of "Modern Liberalism and American Decline," which was evident in "all human behavior and institutions, including popular

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entertainment, art, religion, education, scholarship, economic activity, science, technology, law and morality."¹⁹ One of the many-faceted causes of the decline was the moral collapse of the American family, including the youth.²⁰ And in comprehensive case studies of seventeen major church-related colleges, including three Lutheran colleges, it was found that over many years, there was a "slow but apparently irrevocable cleavage of colleges from churches" in which the "study of their faith became academically marginalized."²¹ In the publications of the Walther League after the departure of Walter A. Maier, there was "a gradual change in the theological, social and political views expressed in its publications."²² The League was caught up in the social revolution.

The culmination of fatal events occurred at the 1965 Delegate Convention of the LCMS in Detroit, Michigan, in which it was debated whether the Walther League should be permitted to have Pete Seeger, an admitted Communist, entertain LCMS youth at its national convention.²³ Through resolutions adopted at that convention and at a Walther League gathering at Purdue in 1968, the League "underwent a drastic change...it was officially replaced by an entirely new concept in youth activity and ministry... [and] in 1977 the LCMS ceased to recognize the Walther League as an auxiliary organization of the Synod."²⁴ The demise of the League was complete.

Scott J. Meyer

The above article by Scott J. Meyer is background information for Rev. Jonathan Fisk's presentation at the January 17, 2011, LCA Conference in Fort Wayne, IN. See registration form on page 5.

- 1 See, e.g., Art. II. 6 on Christian education of children; Art. V. 9 on support of institutions for the training of pastors and teachers; and Art. II. 4 on exclusive use of doctrinally pure schoolbooks, per English translation of "Our Synod's First Constitution," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* (hereinafter abbr. *CHIQ*) XVI, No. 1 (April 1943), pp.1-18.
- 2 See, e.g., Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4; and John 21:5.
- 3 See, e.g., *Luther's Works*, Amer. Ed. 46 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967), pp.207-58.
- 4 For roots of the Missouri Synod's Christian day school system, see *CHIQ* 80, No. 1 (Spring 2007), pp. 40-68.
- 5 See, e.g., the founding of such youth groups in 1888 by Rev. W. C. Kohn, *Festschrift... St. Andreas-Gemeinde.....* Chicago, Illinois (St. Louis: CPH, 1913), p.31.
- 6 A typical purpose of the entertainment was to raise funds for a Christian need, e.g., to provide aid for needy students at Missouri Synod institutions. See article on the St. Andrew's Young Men's Group in *Concordia*, July 1894.
- 7 *The Concordia Cyclopaedia* (St. Louis: CPH, 1927), p.806; *CHIQ* 62, No. 3 (Fall 1989), p. 106-08.
- 8 *Lutheran Cyclopaedia*, Rev'd Ed (St. Louis: CPH 1975), p.836.
- 9 *The Concordia Cyclopaedia*, supra note 7.
- 10 Supra note 8.
- 11 See photos of the Chicago headquarters, *CHIQ* 69, No. 3 (Fall 1996), p.151; *CHIQ* 73, No.3 (Fall 2000), p.137-8.
- 12 *CHIQ* 69, No. 3 (Fall 1996), p.151.
- 13 Paul L. Maier, "A Man Spoke, A World Listened," (New York McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc, 1963), p.37.
- 14 *Ibid*, at 56.
- 15 *Ibid*, at 245.
- 16 Richard Shuta, Ph.D. Thesis, 1990, Drew University, "Militant Evangelist of Missouri: Walter Arthur Maier and His Theological Orienta-

- tion," p.322 and note 91.
- 17 Supra note 13, at p. 245.
- 18 See "Youth Work, LCMS" in *Christian Cyclopaedia*, (St. Louis: CPH, 2000).
- 19 Robert H. Bork, *Slouching Towards Gomorrah* (New York: Regan Books, Harper Collins, 1996), subtitle and p.2.
- 20 William J. Bennett, *The Broken Hearth* (New York: Doubleday, 2001).
- 21 James Turnstead Burtchael, *The Dying of the Light*, (Grand Rapids: William B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 1998), p. 837.
- 22 "What is Troubling Lutherans," Part III, in *News & Views* 24, no.7 (June 1961), Wheaton, Illinois, p.21 -24 and note 113, p, 51; *Ibid.*, Part IV (May 1962), p.41-42 and 69.
- 23 See, e.g., *Convention Proceedings 1965. 46th Regular Convention, LCMS, Detroit, Michigan.*
- 24 Supra note 18.

Missouri: Does Political Expediency Trump Theological Integrity?

Throughout the long decades of modern Missouri Synod's excruciating struggles to define herself, a pernicious pattern of placing political expedience over theological integrity has prevailed. This pattern applies equally to all of Synod's various factions and their internal sub-divisions across the theological/political spectrum, whatever their current designation of choice may be. By now, after generations of experience, it ought to be painfully evident to all of us that the dynamic of institutional power politics is inherently inimical to "speaking the truth in love." What we are willing to say or do has all too often been determined by how many votes it will gain (or lose).

Ambition, the desire to achieve or maintain power, has all too often taken precedence over genuine conviction. Doctrinal differences have all too often been denied, minimized, or exaggerated as we have campaigned for our various causes or candidates.

"Our self-destructive cycle of internal warfare must change."

Expedience and worldly realism have all too often trumped faithfulness to God and His Holy Word in our deliberations. The consequence of this pattern is a church obsessed with its own internal struggles, most often oblivious to the opportunities presented and the challenges posed by our endlessly inventive Adversary, the devil: a church in which the Bylaws have become more important than the Bible and theology has degenerated into slogans to be hurled at our political opponents as well as a church in which institutional control seesaws back and forth among our various factions. This is a formula for eternal upheaval, as whoever was most recently victorious, cautiously seeks to consolidate their power and whoever was most recently defeated has already begun to plot their return to power.

*In Memoriam***Edwin Hinnefeld**

September 04, 1924 , Brownstown, IN • September 21, 2010, Atlanta, GA

*“And as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives,
and at the last He will take His stand on the earth.
Even after my skin is destroyed, yet from my flesh
I shall see God; who I myself shall behold, and
whom my eyes shall see and not another.”
(Job 19:25-27)*

The predominant thing many people remember about Ed Hinnefeld is his firm faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior and that his salvation was by the grace of God and his faith in Jesus Christ as his Savior. Eph. 2: 8-9. Coupled with his open-book Christian faith was his subscription to the Lutheran Confessions and support of Article II of the Synod's Constitution (Confession). Ed was generous with the time, talent and treasure with which God blessed him. He had been a very active member of the President's Advisory Council of Concordia Theological Seminary and together with Attorney William Frerking and E.G. "Mannie" Manteufel were the incorporators of Lutheran Concerns Association on September 20, 1994. Ed was active in his beloved Synod until his death. He was an example of what is written in John 3:30, namely, Christ must increase and he must decrease.



*For all the saints who from their labors rest,
Who thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy Name, O Jesus, be forever blest,
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

*Oh, may thy soldiers, faithful, true and bold,
Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old
And win with them the victor's crown of gold.
Alleluia! Alleluia!*

In the meantime, our church is dying. I'm not talking about dollars and members, the statistics that are typically used to measure ecclesiastical vitality. Such superficials are not the standard by which the Bible measures the health of a church. The devil always has the numbers. He needs them because he has nothing else. Satan, as we say in Texas, is *"all hat and no cattle."* God is to be found in the still small voice, among the faithful remnant. I fear that it is in terms of faithfulness that our church is slowly dying - faithfulness that is more than sterile traditionalism or trite innovation. Both the church of *"this is the way we've always done it"* - where nothing can ever change, and the church of *"what's happening now"* - which heedlessly jumps aboard the latest band wagon of every popular fad and fashion, are about man, not God. Both thereby eventually deprive themselves of the power and vitality which

the Word alone can provide. Missouri was once a church whose hallmark was steadfast commitment to Bible truth and indivisible unity based upon the unanimous confession of that truth. It is the will of God that we regain that squandered heritage.

Our self-destructive cycle of internal warfare must change. But if it is ever to change, each of us—liberal (moderate, etc.) and conservative (confessional, etc.)—must rediscover our courage and our honesty. We must be willing to declare plainly what we believe, teach and confess before God and our brethren. We must be willing to define the differences among us fairly and accurately. Finally, we must be willing to set aside the personal, political, institutional implications of such honesty. We are not being asked to risk our lives or shed our blood, as were our forefathers. We are simply being asked to entrust our future and that of our synod to the Lord as we obey His command to speak the truth. Who knows what the outcome will be - God does. Faith is the willingness to trust in Him, obey His Word, and leave the outcome to Him. Until we are willing to take that risk, Missouri will remain a house divided, endlessly at war with itself.

Perhaps this is too much to expect of flawed human beings like ourselves. But, of course, there is precedent for such honesty in our heritage. *"My conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot do otherwise. Here I stand. God help me. Amen."*

Rev. Dr. Laurence White, Senior Pastor
Our Savior Lutheran Church, Houston, TX

Ed: Dr. White has written books on Romans and The Book of Revelation among other writings. He is a well-known speaker on the right to life.

Lutheran Seminaries Around the World

When the Missouri Synod was organized there were two privately owned seminaries. The log cabin seminary established by the Saxons in Perry County (Altenburg) Missouri, established in 1839, and the Fort Wayne seminary which began in 1844. Friedrich C.D. Wyneken began instructing missionaries in the parsonage at Fort Wayne. With the assistance of Wilhelm Loehe, the seminary was formally established in 1846, under the direction of Wilhelm Sihler with eleven students. This was designated a "practical" seminary, meaning that its education was focused on the practical formation of pastors.

The fuller, more traditional seminary training was left to the "theoretical" seminary of Perry County. These were both given to the Synod with specific stipulations. In 1847, Loehe was willing to give the Fort Wayne seminary to the

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Mark Your Calendar!
January 17, 2011 - LCA Annual
Conference and Annual Meeting

With the end of the Houston Convention, the REAL work begins.

Plans are finalized as to the content of the LCA annual conference. Presentations will be given on some adopted Convention resolutions and the impact they may have on Synod's members, entities and congregations.

The presentations that will be given appear on the next page under "LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE" although the sequence of these presentations will not necessarily be in the sequence shown.

Seminary Students, Faculty and Staff will have registration fees waived but to receive lunch at a cost of \$5.00, registration MUST be received no later than January 10, 2011.

The Board of Directors of LCA has set the LCA Annual Meeting for January 17, 2011, at 5:45 p.m., at Don Hall's Guest House, Ft. Wayne, IN. Members who have paid their 2011 membership by that date will be entitled to vote. A formal notice of the Annual Meeting will be mailed.

Synod provided that it serve only the Lutheran Church, that it use German as the only language, and that it remain an institution to train pastors rapidly.

"You can see the need for two seminaries, because they had different approaches to training pastors."

In 1849-1850, the Perry County seminary was divided with the college department staying in Altenburg, but the seminary was established in St. Louis. The stipulations for giving this seminary to the Synod were very similar in the first two cases – used only for the

Lutheran Church and using only the German language. But the third stipulation was that it be a seminary for theoretical training in theology.

The Fort Wayne seminary remained there until 1861, when it was moved to St. Louis. Because they were training pastors for different work, it was not easy to have them on the same campus. Thus in 1875, it was moved to Springfield, IL, although they preferred Milwaukee. The reason for moving to Springfield was that a campus was already available, the former Illinois State University, which had been purchased by Lutherans in Springfield. After one hundred years in Springfield, it returned to Fort Wayne.

That is the basic history of the two seminaries. You can see the need for two seminaries, because they had different approaches to training pastors. However, in about 1968, the two seminaries became very similar, both requiring degrees prior to admission, and both offering a Master's Degree in Divinity. Thus when people talk about the need for two seminaries, we might consider it a viable option. When you consider what happened in the 70's (with the walkout) where would we be today if we did not have two seminaries? Faculty from Springfield assisted the five faculty members left at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis.

Some feel that we have lost something by no longer having a "practical seminary." Thus the LCMS has come up with other ways, such as Distance Education Leading Towards Ordination (DELTO) and Specific Ministry Program (SMP). Do we need two seminaries? Perhaps not, but they do provide good checks and balances for each other. They both have good enrollment figures, since both are also teaching foreign students. If one of the seminaries would decide to depart from Scriptures, we would hopefully still have a faithful seminary. It is probably wise to maintain two seminaries at the current time.

Regarding seminaries in other countries, that provides us with an interesting concept. In Europe, the universities have a theological department. Not all studying theology have a desire to become a pastor. To become a pastor, one needs to pursue advanced studies at a seminary. There are seminaries in many countries, but each may have only five to ten students. They may have a few professors and then recruit LCMS professors to assist.

I was wondering if it would be possible to set up regional seminaries around the world. It seems the seminary in South Africa has students attending from several different countries. I was especially thinking of our "Latin School" in Wittenberg as a center for Europe. Why not have the place where Lutheranism began become a theological study center? In the summer there could be workshops and seminars conducted for Lutheran pastors around the world.

Rev. David J. Bueltmann
 President of the Central Illinois District, LCMS

Balance-Concord, Inc., Remembers...

Balance-Concord, Inc., has been a most faithful contributor to The Lutheran Clarion in honor of the sainted Rev. Raymond Mueller and the sainted Rev. Edgar Rehwaldt, both of whom faithfully served the Synod and Balance-Concord, Inc., for many years. The Clarion is most appreciative of such continued support from Balance-Concord, Inc., as well as the wonderful support of our readers. These contributions make it possible to bring you substantive articles by respected and qualified authors on issues affecting YOUR Synod. Please continue your support. It is both appreciated and needed.

LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Monday, January 17, 2011

The Lutheran Concerns Association extends a cordial invitation to all LCMS Congregants to attend the LCA Annual Conference. We look forward to meeting you and working together to make the LCMS a faithful and strong voice for Evangelical Lutherans.

The conference will be held at Don Hall's Guest House. They have a special rate of **\$79.00** + taxes for a single; **\$89** + taxes for 2-4 per room. When making your reservation, mention that you are attending **THE LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE, CODE: GROUP #6161**. There is free airport shuttle service from the airport to Don Hall's. At the time of check-in, coupons will be given for a free breakfast to each guest. The maximum of dinner coupons given to guests of 2 or more per room is a total of 2 dinner coupons per room. A free lunch will be served in the meeting room. **Registration for the free lunch MUST BE RECEIVED by January 10, 2011.** You must make your own Guest House reservation; **to get the special room rate, reservations must be made by January 10, 2011.**

LCA CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

"ROOTED, BUILT UP and ESTABLISHED" (Col 2:6)

January 17, 2011, will be the day to get an early insight on some resolutions adopted at the Houston Convention as well as an update on Seminary matters and the need for catechesis in the Synod. Registration opens at 6:45 a.m., Bible Study led by Rev. Peter Bender at 7:00 a.m. Rev. Dr. Robert Kuhn will lead Devotions at 8:30 a.m., followed promptly by the program.

Bible Study	Rev. Peter Bender
Devotions	Rev. Dr. Robert Kuhn, Synod President, Emeritus
Catechesis: What, Why & How	Rev. Peter Bender
Synod Wide Study on Worship Practices, Res 2-05A	Rev. Paul Strawn
Seminary Matters, Youth Gathering	Rev. Dr. William Weinrich (Ft. Wayne), Rev. Dr. David Adams (St. Louis)
Synod Wide Study on Conditions of Membership, Res 8-30B	Rev. Dr. Martin Noland
Lunch Served in the Meeting Room	
Synod Wide Study on Relation of Synod to Its Members, Res 8-32B	Rev. Dr. Martin Noland
Assuming Ourselves to Death: the Leavening Threat of Moralistic Therapeutic Deism and the LCMS [Ed. Note: <i>National Youth Gathering</i> .]	Rev. Jonathan Fisk
The New Structure of Synod	Rev. Michael L. Kumm



REGISTRATION FORM

Lutheran Concerns Association Annual Conference - **January 17, 2011**
 Don Hall's Guest House • 1313 West Washington Center Road • Fort Wayne, IN 46825
 260-489-2524 • 800-348-1999 • www.donhallsguesthouse.com

Annual LCA Membership: \$35

I will attend the meeting:

Name

Address (Street)

Address (City, State, ZIP)

Phone Number

Email Address

LCMS District

Annual membership fee (\$35) enclosed: _____.

2011 conference registration fee [for paid-up LCA members] (\$35) enclosed: _____.

Non-member conference registration fee (\$50): _____.

I will pay at the door: _____.

*A free lunch will again be served **early registrants** who pay the applicable registration fee whether in advance or at the door.*

SEMINARY STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF will have their registration fee waived, but to receive lunch at a cost of \$5.00, their registration MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER than

Make check payable to: **LUTHERAN CONCERNS ASSOCIATION**

Please detach this registration form and send to: **Lutheran Concerns Association • 1320 Hartford Avenue • Saint Paul, MN 55116-1623**

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Published regularly to support issues and causes within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod which build faithfulness to true Confessional Lutheranism and to be a clear voice of Christian concern against actions and causes which conflict with faithfulness to the One True Faith.

The principal place of business for all matters pertaining to the LCA is:

1320 Hartford Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55116

Other faithful Lutheran individuals who are members of LCMS congregations are invited to submit articles of approximately 500 words for consideration to:

Mr. Walter Dissen
509 Las Gaviotas Blvd, Chesapeake, VA 23322
(757-436-2049; wdissen@aol.com)

Articles should be approximately 500 words in length. Inquiries are welcome. Manuscripts will be edited.

The Board of Directors for the LCA:

Mr. Walter Dissen (President)
Rev. Joseph Fisher Rev. Thomas Queck
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Mr. Scott Meyer Mr. Donald Zehnder
Dcs. Betty Mulholland

<http://www.lutheranclarion.org>

Lutheran Concerns Association
November 2010



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