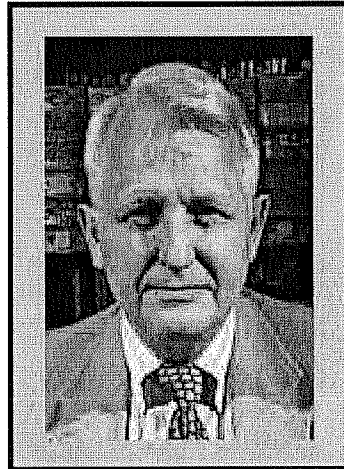
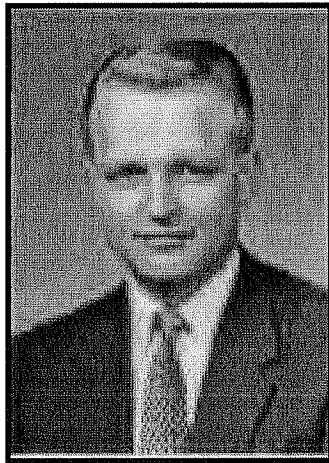


Professor Richard Balge



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April 16, 2003*

Part I: Manitowoc, WI (1932-1954)

Hello, I'm here with Professor Richard Balge. We're going to be talking about his pastoral career this morning – the joys, the challenges, as well as the effects of some of the historical events in our synod and the world on his ministry. Good morning, Professor.

Good morning, Steve.

Thank you for doing this interview with me. I appreciate it.

Good to be here.

I guess we'll start at the beginning. You were born in Manitowoc in 1932. What are some of your memories of growing up in Manitowoc?

I think I might answer this differently if you were to ask me again tomorrow, but things that have come to mind and that I've jotted down...I was an only child for ten years but had a really good, connected extended family on both sides – my mother's side and my dad's. One of the things that I remember is going to German service with my maternal grandparents from time to time. At some point in the communion service, they would sing, "Hoseanna." And I thought that was really great. My grandma's name was Johanna. I thought that they were somehow including her in that liturgical anthem. My mother's name is Hannah, too. That's a very early recollection.

We had a very good public transportation system in Manitowoc – there were five bus routes. You could really get around and one learned the city that way. Later on, when my folks moved to Milwaukee, I learned Milwaukee that same way – streetcars and buses. My dad worked for, what was at that time, the Aluminum Goods Manufacturing Company and later on it became Mirro, which is now leaving Manitowoc. My grandfather had worked there – my father's father and both of my dad's surviving brothers worked there, too.

I left home one day when I was about three years old, waiting for my mother who was going to stop at Mirro and go on to the business part of town. Part of it was, of course, that I was ticked off at the neighbor kids that were supposed to be watching me. I was discontented and took off – went across some of the busiest streets in the city and probably walked about a mile. If anyone looked at me, I would just say, "My daddy works at the Aluminum Goods..." They finally found me down at Schuete's, which was the big general store in Manitowoc at that time. Two of my uncles were there. Someone saw me and told one of my uncles, "I think your sister's boy is out on the sidewalk." And then I remember somehow, I don't remember a great deal, but



I do remember getting a ride on the freight elevator, which was really a great thing. They sent me up with some boxes and there we went – me and my Uncle Fredrich.

There were six Catholic schools in Manitowoc and I never thought that was unusual. It was only in recent years that I realized how outnumbered we were. We were a big Lutheran school at First German and there was Immanuel Lutheran on the north side – a small, Lutheran school. We played softball with all those Catholic schools in Manitowoc, in a league that the city organized. We always at least held our own. We did very well against them – 5th and 6th grade teams, 7th and 8th grade teams. It was a good boy's life, it really was.

It was Depression time, of course, and we did know some people who were working for WPA, which was one of the New Deal remedies. My Uncle Fredrich, my mother's younger brother was in the CCC – the Civilian Conservation Corps, which helped prepare him and a lot of other men for army service later on, when the war started. It was a good life. I suppose I usually thought so then and, looking back, I really realize what advantages I had.

I went to Lutheran school for eight years. I started picking beans when I was nine. That is what kids did to make some money. And *some money* it was. It was a penny a pound when I started. By the time I stopped picking beans it was 2 ½ cents a pound. You know, you could work all day, pick a hundred pounds of beans and make 2 ½ dollars, get in a crowded car or on the back of somebody's truck and they'd take you back into town – a lot of interesting experiences just doing that. And when I was old enough, I had a paper route. It was the Manitowoc Herald Times. Since then, it's become the Manitowoc Herald Times Reporter.

I'm moving on to the next question, Steve: *What kind of impact did the word war have on your grade school years?* I mentioned that my Uncle Fred was in the army. He was not involved on D-Day, but got to France soon after that – across France and into Germany. My grandfather scolded him for not stopping in to see the relatives. So it was kind of amusing. Fred spoke German fluently of course, so one of his jobs as they moved across was procurement. Basically, I think they took the farmers' produce and probably left some kind of a receipt. Presumably, the farmer would later on be reimbursed for that. That was his job. I don't know if he ever told Grandpa he was doing that – stealing the farmers' eggs. That's one memory I have of World War II.

I remember the day it started. One of my cousins was being baptized by Dr. Henry Koch, who was starting what is now Grace congregation on the north side. We must have been at dinner at my aunt and uncle's when the news started coming in. It was a very memorable thing. Because I grew up surrounded by Germans, I knew that you didn't really have to be afraid of them. All my fears were directed toward Japan because we didn't have any of those in Manitowoc. And so they scared me. I should have been afraid of the Nazis, too, but I wasn't.

I bought defense stamps, of course. One defense stamp – I think they were 15 cents. They told me, "That would pay for a machine gun bullet. The government would borrow it for now and cash it in later on. Meanwhile, you were helping out with the war." I remember rationing. My mother would send me to the butcher shop with red points. We had blue points for canned goods and red points – they were tokens actually – for meat and butter. Years later, I would read how people...there was a black market. It never occurred to me while that was going on. I just read about it later. The impression you had was that every last person was cooperating.

On my paper route, there was a lad, who was the second son in his family to be killed in battle. I remember the day I looked at this in the paper and I knew it was in the paper. His mother came out. It was a bad scene. She was out there to get the paper and tell me and anyone else who would listen about her son. A twelve-year old didn't really have too much to say, but that was a lasting impression.

I remember we had a service at Bethany. My parents were charter members at Bethany on the west side of Manitowoc. We had a service on D-Day – when the allies invaded France and Normandy. We had a special service that night. And there were young men in our congregation...of course there were.

Another thing that made an impression on me at the time was that President Valleskey's aunt was probably the only woman in Manitowoc that was lost in the war. She was a Navy nurse and went down with the ship like virtually everybody on the ship, I guess. And that was the war...

Then you went to preparatory school. Did you always have in mind going into the pastoral ministry or how did that decision come about?

The first glimmer of that probably was when I was about nine years old. It wasn't particularly my idea. It was my mother's eldest sister, my aunt, she had a little influence on me and my baptismal sponsor – that would be my mother's cousin – and my mother. I was still an only child at age nine. I had an adopted sister later. I always thought maybe the fact that my mother's name was Hannah something to do with it. Samuel's mother...only child...But if I tell her that – she's still living, she's ninety years old – she'd probably deny it. And she'd probably be right.

When I was in eighth grade, our school principal, Mr. Carl Wacker, asked one of my classmates and me to come down and help him move something in his garage. And we came down and after supper we did that. But what he really got us there for was to talk to us about going down to Watertown. He had his team jacket on from Doctor Martin Luther College. I think I knew already by that time that I would be going to Watertown. I had a friend of the family who had sons down there. You know Paul Wilke. He served a vacancy at your church [Our Savior, Grafton]. He's five years older than I am – five classes ahead of me. He and others had an influence. I would not be going to Watertown where everybody was a stranger. There were a lot of other Manitowoc boys there, too, that weren't as close to my family as some of them were. Somebody else who was in Watertown was the elder brother of Jerome Kieselhorst (whom I think you know). So those people influenced me.

I have to say that my concept of what the ministry was going to be and what my assignment was going to be was very defective. I guess I just thought my job was to tell people what to do and they would do it. Right there you have at least two defects in my understanding of the ministry and of teachers. Then our pastor, our pastor at Bethany, was the one who gave my dad and me a catalogue – got the process of going. Then I wrote a letter asking for an application. Of course, the pastor had to send a recommendation with it.

I never regretted it, by the way. I've often regretted my ignorance on some important things, including what the ministry is about. But I'm thankful for the people that steered me in that direction. I would say nobody ever pressed me: "This is what you're gonna do" or "This is what you must do" or "This is God's will for your life." It was just gentle persuasion. And my dad made it his business to maybe once a year say something discouraging just to make sure I knew what I was doing – make sure I wanted to continue.

Part II: Seminary Years (1955-1958)

You obviously went on to attend the Seminary here.

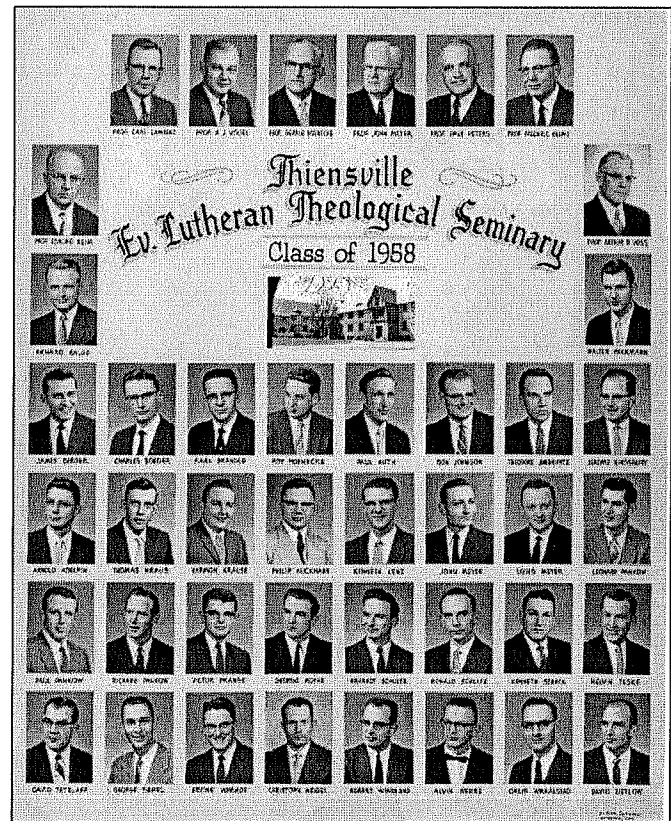
You have the wrong dates there. It was '55-'58. What happened in '54 was I graduated from Northwestern and probably about this time of the year, Professor Kowalke asked us Seniors whether any would be willing to spend a year teaching elementary school. And I think there were a half dozen volunteers and four or five of us did it. On two days notice, I went up to Red Wing, Minnesota and taught 7th and 8th grade there during that year. So I came to Sem a year late.

There was no vicar program really in place at that time. It was certainly not a requirement. But that year of teaching was reckoned to me as vicarship. President Reim and then President Lawrenz and I kind of agreed that that was like vicaring. And it was more vicaring than a lot of people had. By the way, I've always been sorry that I did not have a vicarship. I think there are some things about the pastoral ministry (many things I learned by experience) but I think there are some things I never did learn that I might have learned from a mentor or bishop.

So in your years at Seminary (of course you have a pretty good idea of Seminary life now as well), what are some of the differences you see between then and now?

I think students come to the sem better prepared. One of the ways I notice is how much Greek grammar the average student seems to know compared to what we knew in those days.

On the other hand... This has to do with the diversity of the student body and the schools that the fellas are coming from: There were two area high schools when I came to Sem as a student— one was Winnebago, the other was Luther High. Nobody ever came to school from Racine Lutheran, which was a joint school with the Missouri Synod. A few came from Winnebago. But almost everybody had gone to synod prep schools so our educational experiences were very similar. And, in general, I think our educational experiences, pre-seminary, were very much like that of our profs, because they had all gone the same route. There are certain literary references, cultural references, learning experiences that someone my age just can't connect anymore with students. So there is that difference: the educational background. I think that diversity is a great advantage. I'm just talking about my disadvantage of not having all the points of contact. I just



think it's great that we are not all out of the same two or three molds as far as prep school is concerned.

Second career...there were some military veterans (when I went to Watertown there were a lot of veterans) that were returning from the war. They fought all over the place and then they had to live with us ninth graders. For us, it was great. For them, I don't know what that was like. They did it and many of them came to serve in the ministry. Not all of them did. Some of them just had an awfully hard time settling down on the campus at Watertown after they were out in the world as much as they had been and seen what they had seen.

Students today...I know that the financial pressure is something that we just did not experience. We didn't have much. But you didn't have to have much to go to school. That's changed since I started teaching here. When I started teaching here, students could make it in the summer – with a summer job. And if you worked during the rest of the school year, that was gravy. When I came to the Seminary, room/board and tuition (well, there really was no tuition, it was room and board) my first year at Sem probably was something like \$250. And my second year at Sem, probably was \$250. My third year at Sem I was married and I don't think I really paid the school anything that year. There was no tuition. I don't have to tell you the pressure students are under now.

On the other hand, there was no financial aid either, at least not much of a program. The AAL of all things – can you imagine the AAL providing some scholarship money? It must have been my middler year – there was enough money for two scholarships if you needed that or if you knew someone who needed it. Two scholarships were finally awarded. In the one case, it was to help pay the transportation of a German Shepherd from the Old Country to here. And the other case was that one of our peers was on his way to St. Louis, Missouri to visit his girlfriend (or maybe she was his fiancée already) and wasn't entirely alert and ran up the back of a manure spreader with his car. So we helped him get that repaired. The scholarship money went for that. So there were some special needs back then. It was quite a different situation than our students are working with today.

I get the impression that students are more at ease with faculty members than we were. For a lot of us, I think that was just a carry over from our Watertown experience, where we definitely were not at ease with instructors, professors. And they were not at ease with us. We probably made them more ill at ease than the other way around.

During those years, one of the major synodical historical events was the fact that we were having deteriorating relations with Missouri. What kind of effect did that have on the student body here?

Well, we were all very much aware of what was happening. I don't know how much a source of tension between students it ever was, but there must have been a lot of inner tensions. My year at Red Wing was with a pastor who became a charter member of the CLC. He married us. Then he had a wedding of some acquaintances scheduled but he never did that because he left the synod that summer when we were married – '57. He had a great deal of influence on me so I personally had some internal struggles. I probably had some arguments, too.

That first summer when we were married...It must have been a bit of a slow news day, because the Milwaukee Journal, one summer afternoon in August – "Seminary Head Resigns." It was

the feature story and the biggest headline of the front page was Professor Reim's resignation for reasons of conscience from the presidency and from his professorship. He did not leave the synod just then, but it developed into that. He, of course, became a key person (I would assume a key person) in the CLC.

Graduates those days...When I look at the pictures from four classes ahead of me, my class, two or three after, graduates went in so many directions. Not at the time of graduation, but within a relatively short time. Some of the men who studied at Springfield and then came here for their last year became members of CLC. Some went to Missouri. One became a member of the American Lutheran Church, which today, of course, is part of ELCA.

It was a time of tension and confusion. And some fellas seemed not to think about it at all. But I don't know what was going on inside. Some just didn't think they should concern themselves with that. A good number of them became good workers in the Lord's vineyard, too.

As you studied here, who was the most memorable professor or professors that you studied under and why?

The faculty was much smaller then than it is now, but I would say the person that had the deepest influence on me (I may be wrong about this) was Professor Carl Lawrenz — in his teaching, and then in the years I was privileged to be his junior colleague (and that was about ten years that he was still on the faculty while I was here).

Professor John Meyer, of course. I guess he would have impressed me more if he hadn't made it seem so easy. He was in his eighties and never took his coat off in class (I don't know if anyone ever took his coat off in class). And he just...just had it. He stood erect at the lectern. And he always finished his courses a few days early — isagogics and dogmatics. He was the only teacher we ever had for dogmatics. He was New Testament isagogics, too. He was the only one we ever had for that.

One man, who I...First of all, Professor Blume was sick for much of the time while I was a student, so I didn't really have him very much. You never thought much was going on in his class. Later on in the pastoral ministry, I would have a situation or be confronted with something or there be a challenge and I would know what needed to be done and maybe even know how to do it. And then I would wonder: where did I ever learn that? It was in that class where I thought nothing much was ever happening.

Every one of them, of course, had influence on us.

Describe the day when you received your assignment.

We met in room 24. It was room 24 then and it's room 24 now. At that time, it was *the* Senior classroom. Basically there were three classrooms and the chapel. And we met in room 24. The men who had been tutoring and were back for reassignment were there with us. Professor Lawrenz (Reim, of course, had resigned and Lawrenz was acting president that year) made sure we were all there and he called us all out. It must have been in alphabetical order, which means I was first. When I heard where I was going, I don't think I actually said anything, but I do

remember making stammering noises when I walked from my desk to his place at the front and he handed me that call.

One of the things that caused me immediate concern was that (I don't think anybody else knew this) my parents were living about a mile from Divine Peace at that time (a little more than a mile). And I didn't want to stay home or go home. They weren't members at Divine Peace, but that's where they lived. Actually, our first parsonage was farther from the church than my parents were from the church.

But you asked about assignment day – what happened then. We all expected to go to South Dakota. That was just an assumption we had. Very likely, even in the years before that, not many guys really went to South Dakota. But that is what we truly expected to be doing. And almost nobody did. I'm not sure anybody from that class that year went to South Dakota. We were all over the place but not there.

Our wives, of course, were not there, let alone a vast congregation like we have now. By the way, the call service started after I started teaching. I didn't start it but it was that recent. It was Professor Gerlach, in particular, I think, who said he had been at the service in New Ulm. He had been there for his daughter's graduation and that they had this service and it was kind of impressive and couldn't we do something like that. So it began and started in the chapel. I don't know whether we had it there a second time or not. We had a big student body then. Wives and children, a few other people – it was too small for them. After that, we went down in the old gym for quite a few years until the auditorium was built. I suppose none of us ever imagined that it was going to grow to be what it is now, so that graduation is kind of an anticlimax.

Actually, graduation was an anticlimax for us, too, and for our families back then. It was a greater length of time than it is now. When I said family, I really meant wife. Our eldest son wasn't born just then yet. I'm sure for other relatives...all my baptismal sponsors were here the day I was installed at Sem, which is a wonderful thing. Graduation was anticlimax and I think it probably still is.

Our wives weren't there but then we hauled into Grafton – to Warren Henrich's place. I think he was not a Senior. But I think we used his house. I don't know how that happened. I don't know if you know him, but he's Pastor Scheuerlein's father-in-law – one of the leaders of the Minnesota district until his retirement rather recently. We had guys who worked at Paulus meat market, which is not there anymore in Cedarburg, but your parents I think will remember. They got some excellent steaks. We had this steak broil. That's really when our wives found out where we were going – hours after. I always thought that the reason I was assigned in the Southeastern Wisconsin District is that I had been a summer mission vicar (which is what it was called) under Pastor Ray Wiechmann, who at that time was at Salem on 107th and Fon du Lac. He was the district mission board chairman. I always thought that he wanted me for that. Divine Peace was a mission. Do you know who the first pastor was?

Schuetze

Yeah, so we used to joke about that – that we traded places. He came here and I went there. Well, it all worked out.

Part III: Divine Peace (1958-1964)

What was the congregation like when you arrived there?

Remarkably well organized. I didn't realize that, of course. I didn't appreciate what he had done there in a brief time. I think he was pastor about a year and a half. Remarkably well organized and well ordered. It was a growing congregation. The lay leaders... There was good lay leadership there. I didn't realize what a job had been done to get that place up and going. And I didn't realize what those men were and what they were doing. I thought I knew what my work was and I thought I was doing it. But there was a lot going on that I just didn't realize, appreciate, have a clue. Part of that is being young, of course.

It was in good shape. The men I'm talking about were all about ten years older than I.

Almost without exception they were veterans of World War II. They must have been about ten years older than I am. They still are all about ten years older – those that are still living.



One of the things you did face early in the congregation is when the WELS formally split with Missouri in '61. What kind of effect did that have on you and your congregation?

I've got to say it did not have tremendous impact on us. I think for one thing there was some degree of preparation for what was going to happen. I can remember one family leaving in anger over the split. I think that was it. They had a down-syndrome son, who was close to my age. They were concerned about Bethesda – that Bethesda would be there. They left us. I don't remember another family leaving on that issue. And I was there for three years after the split occurred in '61. I was there until '64. Sometimes, maybe, we just bury bad memories but I don't think...

In some ways it must have effected... I think my wife and I were not that exceptional in that both of us had a lot of relatives in the Missouri Synod. The relationship with the relatives has never been quite the same again. That must have been happening to a lot of our people. But the congregation as such was not greatly disturbed by it, as I recall.

It was a mission congregation when you arrived, correct?

Yeah.

What kind of growth did you experience there?

Well, we kept growing. I think we had 237 communicants when I left. By that time, of course, there were some delinquents—strays. Probably two or three unaccounted for, we just didn't know where they were. But it grew. We had dry spurts, of course. But we had pretty good confirmation classes too. I was at Divine Peace when I was named to the Synod's first evangelism commission. It must have had something to do with our growth as a mission—number of confirmations. By today's standards, of course, when I think of what some of the "red-hots" get done in our synod nowadays, it wasn't all that tremendous. But it was good for our synod at that time. I'll put it that way.

Then I was also the chairman for the evangelism committee of the Milwaukee federation. There I never got anything done. I was one of those guys who knew how to chair a meeting, but not much more. I don't think I'd know how to do that even today.

I don't know whether this is going to come out, but at some time in my life I was confronted (twice I was confronted) with the possibility of being an administrator. Once was to be president of Prairie du Chien and once was to succeed Robert Voss in the job that Peter Kruschel has now. And, by the grace of God, there were people who helped me understand (and experience had also taught me) that I really wasn't an administrator. That's why we didn't get much done in the federation by way of evangelism. It's really good for the kingdom that I declined those two calls that I got while I was here. They were the only calls I ever got since I came in '71. And it's good for kingdom that I didn't take on those jobs.

Good for the Seminary as well.

I hope so. You asked about experience. They had that good grounding with Professor Schuetze.

Overall, what were some of the challenges and the joys of that first assignment that you had?

One thing I mentioned (although I didn't put it in those terms), we kept growing because our people kept bring them in. I would have probably three instruction classes in the course of a year. We use to call them Adult Instruction Class. It's called Bible Information Class now. Oftentimes, I really didn't know who was going to show up for those. Most often, I had no prospect of seeing as many people turn up as did. How did they get there? Our people brought them in. Our people just plain brought them in. That was a great experience. They're still doing that—some of those same people. Bill Bernhardt tells me what goes on and they're still doing it. The problem nowadays, of course, is that they're all senior citizens so those are their contacts. So he has many, many more funerals than I ever had while I was there.

Challenges and joys... We tried to start a school and we couldn't get it done. Divine Peace still does not have a school. And I suppose that's one reason that it's very much an aging congregation today. We did use Jordan and Woodlawn and quite a few of our people... And I know this continued and it probably grew after I left: they definitely used Wisconsin Lutheran High School. That, of course, is always a blessing.

One of the joys was one of the things we learned from Professor Lawrenz in education (I think it was called Catechetics in those days): don't just recruit high school girls for Sunday School

teachers. Get some parents in there and get some men in there. We did that. That's where we had a continuing supply of good church council men and elders and so on—the men that were teaching Sunday School and coming to teachers' meetings and growing spiritually by their study of God's Word and their teaching of God's Word in Sunday School. That's a very positive thing I remember.

On this matter of the people bringing others...I know I never harped on evangelism. They just did it. They just brought them in.

Part IV: Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel and Student Center (1964-1971)

In 1964 then, you accepted a call from the Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel and Student Center (actually to start that). What were some of the reasons that lead you to accept this call?

Well, the challenge. I always used to say I accepted the calls that scared the wits out of me. There was something to that. I think the challenge, the interest, the synodical

seriousness. It was evident to me that the synod meant business with the things they had set in motion – that they really intended to do this and do it right and follow through on it. And they did. Of course, by that time I was there. I had accepted the call. The challenge. The fact...In fact, leaving Divine Peace and leaving the Chapel when I did (neither of those things was easy to do) but in each instance I finally asked myself, "What is it you are still planning to do here? Or what do you think you are still going to accomplish here that you haven't done?" Both times I realized a certain stagnation on my part – a certain not knowing exactly what to do next to make things happen. Things had kind of plateaued and it was time to go on. I think mostly it was just the challenge of it.

When you arrived there how many university students did you have involved at the chapel? What kind of services did you have there?

We had, in a typical year, we would serve about 300 people of our synod. But not nearly that many on a regular basis. They would be there and I would have record of the fact that they had been there but many of them I didn't really get to know. But, around 300. That probably represented about a third of the total that might have been there. Many of those were weekend commuters. Many of them were going to church somewhere else. Many of them weren't going to church. But that was about how it was. I had responsibility for maybe three times as many as I got to work with at all.

We had Sunday services, two of them, I think, from the very beginning. My idea, of course, was that we'd have 8 and 10:30. Eight o'clock on Sunday morning you could shoot a canon down State Street and you wouldn't hit anybody. So we didn't have eight o'clock. I think finally it was 9:30 and 11 or something like that. Probably still is.

I should mention that there were people at Calvary. (Calvary was the joint campus ministry with Missouri, which went on for about 40 years I think). There were youngsters from there,



some from our synod and some with Missouri Synod roots and backgrounds, who come over to our place and really helped get things going. There I knew that people were doing things. I knew how valuable they were. At Divine Peace, I just kind of took them for granted. These kids were something else.

Well, we had Sunday services. We had weekday services, except during the summer. At the beginning we were in the Woman's Club of Madison. The building is still there. It's next to the chapel. We could not have Wednesday services. We had Ash Wednesday on Thursday. We had Thursday services until we got into our own place and then it was Wednesdays. And it was a different service and a different sermon. I put out about 80 sermons a year during the years I was there. The more I preached, the more important it became for me to write those sermons. So most of them I actually wrote out.

We had a tradition that carried over from Calvary. I suppose this was done at a lot of campus ministries. We had a Sunday night "cost supper." Which really meant free will offering (I think it did). Maybe they did agree on what they should put in the kettle. A student prepared it. There were quite a few times when my wife, on very short notice, got some food for me to take along down there. We would have speakers, almost always a guest speaker on Sunday night. Interesting thing...and I noticed it almost right away (never said anything about it to our students): If I could write *Dr. Becker*, *Dr. Kiesling*, *Dr. Peters* (if I could put *Dr.* in front of it), we'd have a better turn out. And that's not just snobbery. I think they knew from experience that those men would maybe have a little more... We had a *Dr. Gausewitz* on the Mission Board. He was retired from the German department at Wisconsin. He had been the chairman for a number of years and he was the son of *Carl Gausewitz*, who was... Well, the catechism before the Kuske catechism was the *Gausewitz* catechism. His son was *Dr.* He came and talked on the Reformation one time and it was really, really good.

We did not always have Bible classes going. There were practical reasons for that. And I think turning out two sermons a week had something to do with it too. But then, there were always at least two adult instruction classes going (Bible information courses). It was quite different from Divine Peace. Again, the students brought in the students. But I would instruct a dozen and two or three would become members. And it was creation. And it was fellowship. And it was the general climate, I suppose. They would finish the course. Maybe even keep coming to our services. I would say at Divine Peace it would be 8 out of 10. At the chapel, 3 out of 12. I have no idea what it is like nowadays there.

You spoke about the climate of the students there. Something I was kind of interested in was that this was the height of the Vietnam era. With the protests that were going on across the universities, did that affect your ministry there as well?

A couple of events affected me personally. I'm sure that some of the students that might have been involved at our chapel and our ministry there were not there because of the war situation and other things. Basically, our Lutheran way of not addressing, certainly not pronouncing on political issues. I'm sure there were some people who never did walk with us. And there were a few who walked with us no more because we did not involve ourselves in war issues.

After I had accepted the call here, I realized that I had been under more tension than I ever knew while it was going on. The whole atmosphere of protest must have had something to do

with it. Again, along with the natural, the normal, the expected strains of ministry, I think that that whole situation probably bothered me. And it must have been bothering me because it was bothering people. I don't know how much any of us really verbalized on those issues. And a couple of my Missouri Synod people who had come over to us at the beginning were still around during much of that time. Some of them adopted an ultra-conservative stance. They even had some weird notions every once in a while about other people's political views. They would ascribe communism to people. That was weird.

The Student Center and Chapel, as it is today now, is a local congregation there. Is that something they always had in mind?

Yes, when I had the call I was told that. It was probably even in the accompanying letter. Calvary never really was that. But there were people went there all their lives — all their university life (faculty people and such). But it was never an organized congregation. Our home mission board for, I suppose, legitimate reasons wanted to remedy that. On the one hand, provide a home for some people who feel more at home there than at other congregations in Madison. Then also involve them, in a responsible way, in the support of that. And thus provide more continuity. In a way you had a new congregation every fall. The congregation almost disappeared in June and then you'd have a new one in September. It's not quite like that; but the idea of some continuity... There are people (I get over there every five years for anniversaries) who were members then and are members now. It was the home mission board's intention and it's been carried out. I have no idea how large the congregation is now. I'm not sure I could tell you what it was when I left, in terms of permanent members — people who actually belonged to the congregation.

I don't know it's done today, but we had a student council that pretty much took responsibility for the program — for the ministry there. We had a church council (probably only six men) that did the legal things — took care of the financial, the legal, the official aspect of things. And I always thought that was working out ok.

When you look at your career there at the Chapel and Student Center, what were some of the challenges and joys that you remember from your experience?

I mentioned the annual turnover. That certainly is always challenging in that kind of ministry. Actually, it's a challenge in any congregation, because we are still a very mobile people — Americans are. Then the fellowship issues. I would say that that was a more of an issue and more of a struggle at Madison than it was in Milwaukee at Divine Peace — our fellowship principles and fellowship practice.

A great joy, along with all the joys of the ministry (and there are always more of those than sorrows), was to be there long enough (I was there seven years) to have some people that once upon a time I probably bumped heads with or was disappointed in for their not participating or I though had strayed, then come back and tell me about this new WELS mission that they were very much involved with. That happened fairly often and that was always a great joy.

Of course, that continued after I left. For many years, I could not go somewhere and preach in the state of Wisconsin where I would not meet Madison alumni and oftentimes their parents. Sometimes I even remembered the parents because they would be down there for a weekend.

That doesn't happen anymore because I don't move around in the state of Wisconsin very much anymore and I just don't see that many people. I've been gone a long time from Madison.

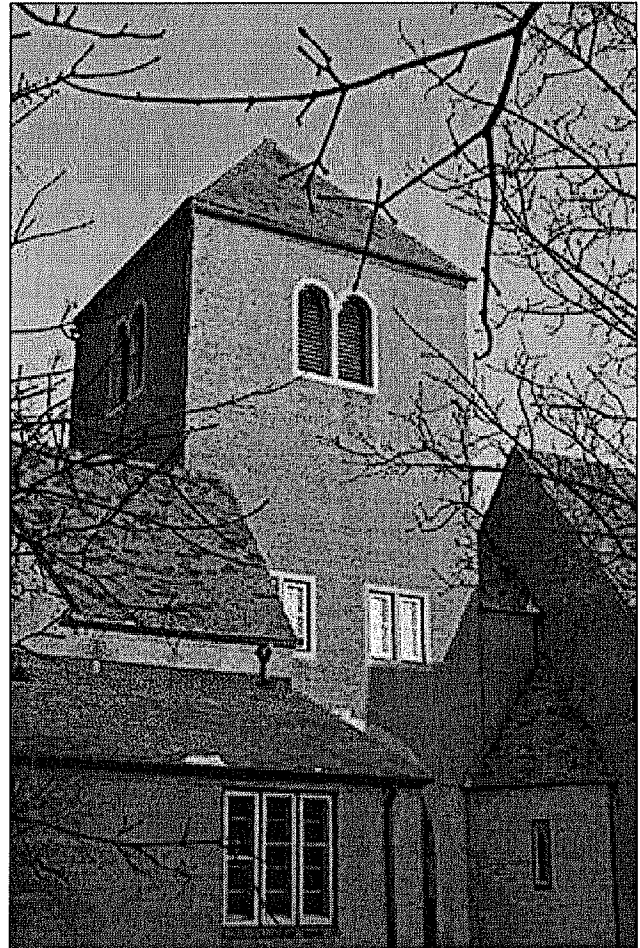
My son, Carl (my second son) spent two years at Northwestern and then decided he wasn't going to continue. And one day, in the spring of the year, I took him over to Madison for a couple of interviews with people he thought he wanted to talk to. We got there and started walking on the campus and I said, "Man, Carl, this is an exciting place!" And it just is — the University of Wisconsin. Schools are exciting place, but there of course, it's on a bigger scale. And, man, it's an exciting place.

Part V: Seminary Professor (1971-2002)

In 1971, you accepted the call to come here as a professor. Again, what were some of the reasons that led you to accept that call?

Terror, again. I mentioned the fact that it was time to accept a call. I was holding a call to First in La Crosse at the same time. If I hadn't come here I think I would have gone there – to First Lutheran in La Crosse. I would have been...I'm not sure whether it was called assistant or associate in those days. But it was time to go.

Again, challenge. Family considerations. The situation in Madison was not really bad for our family. But they did not typically go down with me to the Chapel for much of anything. We were members at East Side. I was really a member of two congregations, both in the same synod. There were definite advantages for our family to move on – to La Crosse or here. I almost think I had a third call at that time, but I don't know what it was. It must have been close to that time.



I never imagined teaching in one of our synod schools, let alone this one. I always thought that if I was a good and faithful pastor that maybe someday I could be on the Board of Control at Northwestern College. That was my academic...Not a goal, but just that would be great. If I could be on that board and help choose the professors for our synod's pre-seminary college. Of course, it didn't happen that way. Now nobody's on the board of Northwestern College.

When you first arrived here, what are some of the challenges that you faced as you started teaching?

Feelings of inadequacy. Being so...I just learned recently that at seminary shows, the GA show or whatever, my student nickname was "Babyface." And I certainly can understand why. But there were times I really was sick of being the youngest. I was aware...I mean I was here. I was under a call. I was plugging away. And I don't think I was ever even very much bothered by it. But I do know that there were – and then even today I'll here things like that – there were people in high places that wondered whether I ought to be here. I didn't have time, really, to wonder, because I was just grinding it out.

One thing that gave me tremendous encouragement (and it may not sound encouraging, but at the time it gave me encouragement)...Professor Blume, who was then my colleague and lived in

my backyard. I don't remember what prompted him, but he said, "You know, Dick, we didn't call you here for your brains." Ok, so I'm not here under false pretenses. I felt good about that. And I didn't ask him, "Well, then, what was it?" because I didn't want to know. Then I might realize that I don't really have that either. But he did me a great favor, even though he didn't know he was doing me a great favor that day.

In your years teaching here, what classes have you most enjoyed teaching?

There's a little irony in it. I was called...My primary assignment was Church History, secondary was Homiletics. After one year, somehow they discovered: He doesn't have enough hours. That's when I started teaching, first of all, Galatians and then, somewhere down the line, Romans and I finally even got to teach Ephesians. It's a bit ironic because certainly I put a great deal of time into history courses, but really I've enjoyed the exegesis courses most of all. Why is that? Obvious reason is teaching God's Word and being able to review it again and again. Especially those three books. The other thing is, it's a lot more manageable than history. History keeps expanding, whereas the text is there and you focus on the text and work with the text. So I've most enjoyed the exegetical courses.

What are some of the best classroom experiences you've had since you've began teaching?

Really gospel moments, where together we wrestle with something and clarify some gospel statement, some gospel significance and implications of the gospel. Also, especially in my younger years, there were a few times where there would be a student who really wasn't feeling at home in his class, or in my class, or in the seminary and something would occur that you, probably he, but also some members of the class would realize that there was some kind of a breakthrough here. All at once, he has become one of us and suddenly knows it. You could see it after that. I would have an awful time trying to give you a concrete instance, but I've experienced that a number of times and that was great.

I also asked whether you'd like to share any embarrassing moments you've had?

I'm sure there are more than a few. It's not fun. Finally, you do learn to say, "I don't know" or "I was mistaken," but it's still not fun to have to do that. Something I wish I hadn't done. It was nobody's fault but mine. In the early years, I often had Junior Church History down in the multi-purpose room. And to work off tension or to buy time or sometimes to actually express anger, I would very carefully throw either an eraser or a piece of chalk at the wall. I mean carefully at the wall, so it wasn't going to hit anybody. Some of the seasoned pastors, who are now about 50 years old, remember that. I think some of them weren't even there. I wish I hadn't done that. Because I'm sure my son sat in class wondering when I was going to do it. There must have been other embarrassing...It's amazing what a person can put out of his mind, without even trying, just forget all that bad stuff.

A couple of final questions I had, in summary. First, regarding being a faculty member here, what advice would you give to an incoming faculty member to best prepare him?

Don't be paranoid. New profs sometimes will voice their disappointment about this or that. I think I know what they are experiencing and I tell them, "Don't think they are singling you out. Or in other words, the students are picking on you. They just don't do that." Don't be paranoid.

By all means, consider graduate work. I suppose, my single greatest regret, is that I didn't. I have a tendency to do what I have to do, what is required. And nobody was required then. But my students certainly would have benefited by it. I was accepted, actually, for graduate work at Marquette. I then got appointed Dean of Students at just about the same time and let it go. Now the man who is Dean of Students and whatever else has been doing serious doctoral work for almost as long as he's been here — Professor Brenner.

By all means that, and remember that you are called and that that involves responsibility, but that also gives you confidence that you are where God wants you to be. And if he wants you somewhere else, he'll let you know. He has ways and means to let you know. And he'll let you know where.

And be always praying for evangelical understanding, evangelical spirit. And that's about enough advice for any young man.

The last one...What advice would you like to leave for new pastors or for the synod as a whole as we move further into the 21st century?

Avoid fads. On the one hand, don't be a stick in the mud. On the other hand, don't be running after every fad or new invention. "Be not the first by whom the new is tried, nor be the last to lay the old aside." I did not write that, but it's good advice.

Basically, I think we have to value our heritage, grow in it, and with God's help, preserve it. On the one hand, President Mischke used to say, "It's really hard to wreck a Lutheran congregation. They will still be a Lutheran congregation after somebody's done his worst to them." But on the other hand, if we got too experimental, too careless, too complacent, too proud, we can lose the gospel. Be sober, be vigilant.

Interview with Professor Richard Balge

[April 5, 2003]

I. Early Years

You were born in Manitowoc, WI in 1932. What are some of your memories of growing up in Manitowoc?

What kind of impact did the world war have on your grade school years?

How early in your life did you decide to pursue the pastoral ministry and what were some of the reasons that led you to that decision?

II. Seminary Career

You attended the Seminary from 1954-1958. As you look at the student body now, what are some of the differences and similarities you see between then and now?

How did the deteriorating relations between the WELS and the LCMS effect the student body at the Seminary?

Who was the most memorable professor (or professors) that you studied under...why?

Describe the day when you received your first assignment.

III. Pastorate at Divine Peace

How would you characterize the congregation at Divine Peace when you arrived there in 1958?

In 1961, the WELS voted to terminate fellowship with the Missouri Synod. What effect did this have on you as a pastor...on your fellow WELS pastors...on your congregation?

What kind of growth did the congregation experience at Divine Peace that led them to decide to become a self-supporting congregation?

What were some of the challenges and joys of serving at Divine Peace from 1958-1964?

IV. Pastorate at Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel and Student Center

In 1964, you accepted a call to be the first pastor of the Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel and Student Center in Madison, WI. What were some of the reasons that led you to accept this call?

How many university students did you have involved at the Chapel? What services were offered?

Did the Vietnam War protests happening at universities across the country affect the ministry at the student center?

What led to the decision of making the student center a local congregation as well?

What were some of the challenges and joys that you experienced while serving in Madison?

V. Professorship at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

In 1971, you accepted the call to be a professor at the seminary. What are some of the reasons that led you to accept this call?

What were some of the challenges you faced when your first began teaching at the seminary?

What classes have you most enjoyed teaching over the years?

What are some of the best classroom experiences you've had since you began teaching...any embarrassing moments you would like to forget?

What advice would you give to an incoming faculty member to best prepare him for his seminary teaching experience?

What advice would you like to leave for new pastors or for the synod as a whole as move further into the 21st century?



PROF. CARL LORENZ



PROF. H. J. VOGEL



PROF. GERALD HOENECKE



PROF. JOHN MEYER



PROF. PAUL PETERS



PROF. FREDERIC BLUME



PROF. EDMUND REIM

Thiensville Ev. Lutheran Theological Seminary Class of 1958



PROF. ARTHUR P. VOSS



RICHARD BALGE



WALTER BECKMANN



JAMES BERGER



CHARLES BOEDER



KARL BRANDT



ROY HOENECKE



PAUL HUTH



DON JOHNSON



THEODORE JUNGKUNTZ



JEROME KINGSBURY



ARNOLD KOELPIN



THOMAS KRAUS



HARMON KRAUSE



PHILIP KUCKHAHN



KENNETH LENZ



JOHN MEYER



LOUIS MEYER



LEONARD PANKOW



PAUL PANKOW



RICHARD PANKOW



VICTOR PRANGE



GEORGE ROTHE



ERHARDT SCHULTZ



RONALD SCHULTZ



KENNETH STRACK



MELVIN TESKE



DAVID TETZLAFF



GEORGE TIEFEL



ERVINE VOMHOF



CHRISTOPH WEIGEL



ROBERT WENDLAND



ALVIN WERRE



ORLIN WRAALSTAD



DAVID ZIETLOW

ALUMNI OF THE SEMINARY

PASTOR ARMIN W. SCHUETZE

- September, 1956 The District Mission Board of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod began construction of a chapel. Pastor Schuetze was called to begin work in the area of 76th and Euclid. The Mission Board gave the congregation the temporary name: Euclid Avenue Mission.
- December 9, 1956 The first service was conducted in the newly erected, and nearly completed, chapel. Attendance was in the 60's. Sunday School began the following Sunday.
- February, 1957 The first meeting was held to consider the organization of a congregation. The second meeting was held, at which a certificate of organization was signed. The name, St. Mark's, was chosen.
- March, 1957 The members and pastor a new name should be considered since there were several congregations named St. Mark's. A new certificate of organization was signed, and the name DIVINE PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH was chosen. The constitution was adopted and the first Church Council was elected. The members are: Norman Laabs, Marhsall Yohann, Rudolph Cook, Walter Waller, Robert Konkell and LeRoy Schoenborn. Mr. Cook was chosen as the first president. At the time of organization, there were 31 communicants and 11 voting members.
- May 5, 1957 The chapel was dedicated to the glory of God and the service of His Church. Pastor Raymond Wiechmann, the chairman of the District Mission Board preached. The choir of Jordan Ev. Lutheran Church sang.
- May 26, 1957 The first confirmation class, John Waller and Beth Schuetze, were received into communicant membership.
- June 30, 1957 The first class of adult catechumens were received into membership. Two members of the class of seven were baptized.
- July 22, 1957 The first day of two weeks of Vacation Bible School. Besides the pastor, Mrs. Schoenborn and Mrs. Warner served as teachers.
- August, 1957 Our congregation was received into membership in the Wisconsin Synod at the convention at New Ulm, Minnesota.
- Sept. 29, 1957 The first Mission Festival, Pastor P. Gieschen is our guest speaker.
- December 29, 1957 A class of four adults received into membership.
- May 4, 1958 Pastor Armin Schuetze was released to accept a call as Professor at our theological seminary in Mequon, Wisconsin.

PASTOR RICHARD D. BALGE

- July 6, 1958 Pastor Balge was installed as the second pastor of Divine Peace.
- September 18, 1958 The choir changes its rehearsal time to 7:30 p.m. on Thursdays. (Formerly it had been at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesdays.)
- September 25, 1958 The ladies of the congregation meet to organize a study, service, charity and mission organization (The Ladies' Guild).
- October 16, 1958 The newly organized Ladies' Guild elected its first group of officers: President - Mrs. Otto Bauer, Vice President - Mrs. Gordon Wenzel, Secretary - Miss Marie Albrecht, Treasurer - Mrs. Rudolph Cook

PASTOR RICHARD D. BALGE

- October, 1958 At the congregational meetings an amendment to the constitution was proposed whereby we would hold bi-monthly rather than quarterly business meetings. Three additional members were added to the Church Council - from 6 to 9 members. A request for a teacher to open a school next fall was sent to the General Board for Home Missions. The request was to have a lady teacher open a one room school in September of 1959. We also made application for membership in the Wisconsin Lutheran High School conference.
- November, 1958 Divine Peace begins a two service schedule at 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., with Sunday School at 9:15 a.m. Our schedule had been 10:00 a.m. worship with Sunday School at 9:00 a.m. A new sign was erected for our church and the east wall behind the altar was painted.
- December 14, 1958 A new (used) organ, reed type with two manuals and full bass, was received as a gift from Mt. Lebanon Lutheran Church.
- December 21, 1958 The mixed choir leads our congregation in the first annual Christmas song service.
- December 24, 1958 Mr. Gordon Wenzel loses a grey "Homburg" hat.
- January 25, 1959 New paraments for the altar, lectern and pulpit were first used.
- October 12, 1959 Eight young people met to discuss the formation of a Youth Club.
- November 9, 1959 Divine Peace voters decide to become self-supporting.
- October 10, 1960 Several men of the congregation met to help in organizing a boys' club.
- March, 1961 Divine Peace junior choir holds its first rehearsal. A girls' club is organized.
- November 26, 1961 First showing of "The Peace of God", a slide-picture presentation of the story and the work and the hopes of our congregation as we began our fifth anniversary year.
- January 30, 1962 First local circuit meeting held at Divine Peace.
- March 4, 1962 Members of our choir participate for the first time in the sixth annual hymn festival at St. Peter's Lutheran Church.
- April 8, 1962 The week the church basement was painted.
- May 6, 1962 Prof. Armin Schuetze preached at the service commemorating the Fifth Anniversary of our congregation. We used a new lectern and a new pulpit constructed to match the altar.
- May 13, 1962 Groundbreaking ceremony for the parsonage is held following the second service. The former parsonage is at 3455 S. Crandon Pl.
- September 16, 1962 Dedication of the new parsonage. Open house at 2:00 p.m.
- September 17, 1962 A meeting was held to organize a men's group within the church.
- October 15, 1962 The first meeting of the Divine Peace Men's Club
- January 20, 1963 The idea of starting a school was dropped for the time being.
- October, 1963 Boys' Club organized
- May 24, 1964 Pastor Balge requests a release to serve as Pastor at the 23 Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel and student center at Madison, Wis.

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 3. Pautz, Daniel D. | Two Rivers, Wisconsin | Assigned to Home Board for Missions |
| 4. Winterstein, Herbert C. | Saginaw, Michigan | |

Undergraduate Tutors — 1963-64 Juniors

- | | |
|--|---|
| Zehms, Roger (Middler) | NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE, Watertown, Wisconsin |
| Westendorf, James | |
| Gabb, William | |
| Meier, William | MICHIGAN LUTHERAN SEMINARY, Saginaw, Michigan |
| Graf, John | |
| Dallmann, Roger | NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN ACADEMY, Mobridge, South Dakota |
| Ehlert, Joel (Senior Student)
(Sept. to Jan.) | |
| Pautz, Daniel | DR. MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE, New Ulm, Minnesota |
| Habben, Kermit | |

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN CHAPEL AND STUDENT CENTER

Pastor Balge to be installed at Madison

The installation of Pastor Richard D. Balge as campus pastor on June 21, 1964, marks the beginning of a service conducted independently by our Wisconsin Lutheran Synod for our many students attending the University of Wisconsin. The installation service will be held at 240 W. Gilman Street, at 7:30 P.M. Pastor Balge will be introduced into his office by the Rev. Henry Paustian, Watertown, Wisconsin, chairman of the Western Wisconsin District Mission Board.

The Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel and Student Center is temporarily located in the Woman's Club, 240 West Gilman Street. Pastor and Mrs. Balge will reside at 4126 Dwight Drive, Madison, Wisconsin.

Both Pastor Balge and Pastor Paustian request that pastors register their students directly with the campus pastor. This should be done without delay, since Pastor Balge will begin his work shortly before the opening of the summer sessions at the University.

PASTOR RICHARD BALGE, has left Divine Peace, Milwaukee, to become our campus pastor at the University of Wisconsin. He will be installed in his new pastorate on June 21. (See article above.)



Briefs

(Continued from page 178)

book (available from Northwestern Publishing House at \$2.95), we give you the following quotation:

"There are not many religions and philosophies among men. There is really only one, and that is the rebellious and blasphemous belief that autonomous man is capable of controlling his own destiny independently of the will of his Creator. Every religion (other than Christianity) is

'salvation' or to improve his standing in the world, either temporally or eternally. Every non-Christian philosophy is an attempt to deduce ultimate truth concerning the universe without submission to the revealed Word of God. All of man's religions and philosophies, apart from the grace of God revealed in His Word, are man-centered — or perhaps, more generally, *creature-centered* — rather than *Creator-centered*.

"They all involve some system of

ment, of human betterment, of *evolution!* — rather than simple submission in helpless faith to the sovereign grace of God manifest in the sacrifice of the Lamb of God for the sins of the world."

Should you want to go more deeply into the matter, there is "The Genesis Flood," coauthored by Dr. Morris with Dr. John C. Whitcomb²⁴ (This volume is also available from Northwestern Publishing House. The

June 20, 1964 Milwaukee Sentinel

Synod to Install Campus Pastor

The Rev. Richard D. Balge will be installed Sunday as the first pastor of the Wisconsin Lutheran chapel and student center of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran synod in Madison.

Officiating will be the Rev. Henry Paustian of Watertown, chairman of the synod's western Wisconsin district mission board. The Rev. Irwin J. Habeck of Bethesda church, first vice-president of the synod, will preach.

About 700 Wisconsin synod Lutheran students attend the University of Wisconsin. The chapel and student center will serve primarily as a worship, fellowship and counseling center for them.

The Wisconsin synod had carried on a campus ministry with the Lutheran Church—Missouri

synod at Calvary Lutheran chapel and student center since 1920.

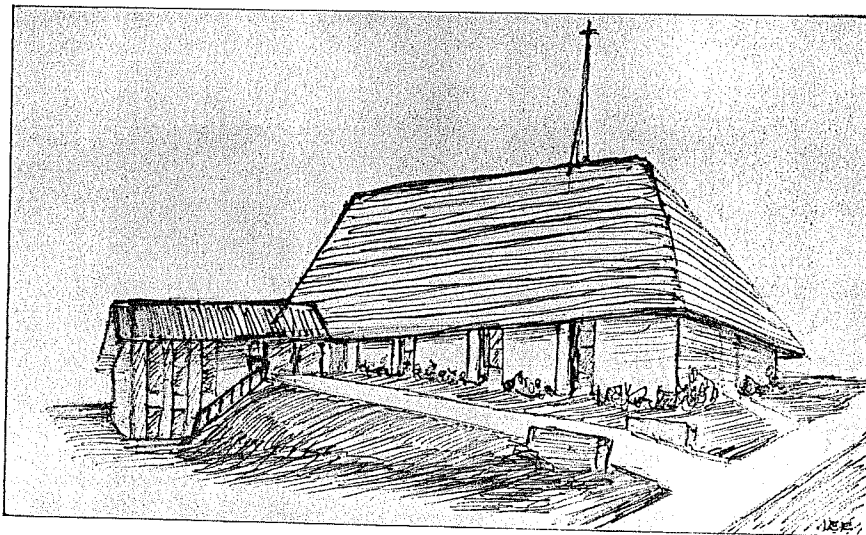
The dissolution of this joint



Rev. Richard
D.
Balge

work followed suspension of fellowship between the Wisconsin and Missouri synods in 1961.

Pastor Balge has served Divine Peace Lutheran church, 3203 S. 76th st., since graduation in 1958 from the Wisconsin Lutheran seminary in Mequon.



A BRIEF HISTORICAL SKETCH

Our synod has participated in a campus ministry at the University of Wisconsin in Madison since the early 1920's. At that time the churches of the Synodical Conference began a cooperative ministry which was carried on for forty years at the Calvary Lutheran Chapel and Student Center. When differences in doctrine and practice made it necessary for our synod to suspend fellowship relations with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, it became obvious at once that a division of this work would be necessary. In spring of 1964, there was a division of assets and the mission board of the Western Wisconsin District called Pastor Richard D. Balge of Milwaukee to begin a campus ministry in Madison.

During the first three years, services were conducted and meetings were held in the building of The Woman's Club of Madison. In the summer of 1964, three apartment buildings were purchased with the object of razing them to clear land for the future construction of a chapel and student center. An architect was chosen in early 1965 and construction was begun in 1966.

The program of the center offers a wide variety of opportunities for study, worship, social activity, and service projects for students and other interested persons. This ministry is not limited to university students, but seeks to gather and serve people from every walk of life and every age group. For that reason, a local congregation was organized in 1966.

The major emphasis of the campus ministry here remains the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments, with the offer of counsel from God's Word. Miss Pat Feick, a medical technologist, has been organist since spring of 1966. Mr. Jerry Huhn, student in pharmacy, is the housefellow for the year 1967-68.

Richard D. Balge

Richard D. Balge was born on September 19, 1932, to Norman and Hannah nee' Struck in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. He became a child of God through Holy Baptism on October 16, 1932, at First German Lutheran Church of Manitowoc. He was confirmed in the Christian faith on April 14, 1946, at Bethany Congregation of Manitowoc. He has one sister, Mrs. Barbara Kieson.

Prof. Balge attended the First German parish school and then began his studies at the preparatory department of Northwestern College in 1946. After being graduated from that school in 1950, he continued his education at Northwestern College and was graduated in 1954. He spent the 1954-55 school year as an interim teacher at St. John Lutheran School in Red Wing, Minnesota, and then began his studies for the pastoral ministry at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

In 1958 Prof. Balge was assigned as pastor of Divine Peace Lutheran Church in Milwaukee. During the 1960-61 school year he assisted the religion department of Wisconsin Lutheran High School as a part-time instructor. In 1964 he accepted a call to serve as campus pastor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and during that ministry was involved in the building of the Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel and Student Center. Prof. Balge was called to the Seminary in 1971 and has taught church history, homiletics and New Testament exegesis from that time to the present. He also served as Dean of Students from 1983 to 1995.

He has been privileged to serve the Wisconsin Synod on various commissions, boards, and ad hoc committees. He is currently serving on the WELS Communications Services Commission.

With Joel C. Gerlach, Prof. Balge co-authored *Preach the Gospel*, a textbook on homiletics used at the Seminary since 1982. In 1988 he completed the commentary on *Acts* for the *People's Bible* series and has edited three volumes of the sermon commentary series entitled *Sermon Studies*. He continues to serve as contributing editor of the *Northwestern Lutheran*, an assignment he began in 1986, and is a member of the editorial committee of the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*.

Richard Balge and Lois E. Prueter of Toledo, Ohio, were united in marriage on June 22, 1957. God has blessed them with four children: Daniel (Bethel Zabell), professor at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota; Carl (Lisa Hahlbeck), a computer programmer residing in Brown Deer, Wisconsin; Jonathan (Julie Bergemann), pastor at Salem Lutheran Church, Owosso, Michigan; and Ellen, who is a special education teacher in the Hartford, Wisconsin, public school system. The Balges have nine grandchildren.