

A SHORT HISTORY  
OF  
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
IN OHIO  
by  
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St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
Columbus, Ohio  
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WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY

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THE EV. LUTHERAN JOINT SYNOD OF OHIOBEGINNINGS

Those of us who remember our American History will recall the Ordinance of 1787 which provided for the future of the Northwest Territory out of which eventually five states were made, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin. Naturally, Ohio which was the farthest east was the first to be settled, and in 1803, it was admitted to the Union. Sturdy pioneers crossed the Allegheny Mountains and sought a home in this new state, and among them were many German people from Pennsylvania and other eastern states as well as some directly from the fatherland, and many of these Germans were Lutherans, though by no means all of them. As the pioneers came, the missionaries also came, and we have such pioneer pastors as John Stauch, William Foerster, John Reinhard, Henry Weygandt, Jacob Leist and the Henkel brothers, Simon and Paul, all of whom were connected with the Ministerium of Pennsylvania.

Since these pastors in the Ohio valley were quite isolated from their brethren in the east, the Ministerium of Pennsylvania gave them permission to meet as a conference west of the Alleghenies to deliberate and consult on matters common to them all. Accordingly, in 1812, the first Lutheran conference west of the Alleghenies was held at Washington County, Pennsylvania at which 8 pastors were present, and four not able to make it. The next year, a conference was held in Fairfield County, Ohio at which 8 pastors and 3 laymen were present. Between 1812 and 1818 one or two such conferences were held each year, most of which were in Ohio, but a few in western Pennsylvania. This Ohio Conference had the power to license but not to ordain ministers. Since the journey to the "Mother Synod" was too long and too costly, the Ohio Conference petitioned for permission to form a ministerium of its own, which the Ministerium of Pennsylvania rather reluctantly granted, and on September 14, 1818 at Somerset, Ohio, "The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio and Adjacent States" was organized with 14 pastors. In 1831, the Synod divided into two Districts, the Eastern District and the Western District, and every third year there was to be a meeting of the "Joint Synod" hence the name for many years, "The Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and Other States," and the popular name, "Joint Synod." In 1836, an English District was organized which had no geographical boundaries but which consisted of those congregations which had at least half their services in English. Later a Northern District was organized, and so there were four districts with most of the member congregations in Ohio, but some also in western Pennsylvania and southern Michigan and eastern Indiana. The Joint Synod eventually began to meet every two years instead of every three. Since this Joint Synod of Ohio was first in the field and the largest single group to operate in the State of Ohio, any history of Lutheranism in Ohio must be concerned with it and dwell in some length upon it. As you no doubt all know, this Joint Synod of Ohio merged with the Iowa and Buffalo Synods in 1930 to form the American Lutheran Church (ALC) and the American Lutheran Church merged in 1960 with the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELC) of Norwegian background, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church (UELC) of Danish background and several years later with the Lutheran Free Church, also of Norwegian background, to form THE American Lutheran Church (TALC). Most of the older TALC congregations in the State of Ohio were former members of the Joint Synod of Ohio. In 1930, there were only a few Iowa Synod congregations in Ohio, and these few were around the Toledo and Cleveland area, and in 1960, there was but one ELC congregation in Ohio, the one in Rocky River in Greater Cleveland.

THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

In the early days, there was no seminary, and those who desired to enter the ministry studied privately under various pastors, were examined at the meetings of Synod, and if they successfully passed the examination, were given a license to

preach, and then after several years as licensed preachers, were eventually ordained. At the Zanesville meeting of the Ohio Synod in 1830, a letter was read from Rev. E.T. Hazilius, D.D. of the Hartwig Seminary of New York, inviting the Ohio Synod to send young men there to study for the ministry. New York seemed so far away, but this letter seemed to start the men thinking of a Seminary of their own west of the Alleghenies, where, as they expressed it, "as from a fountainhead, the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession might be promulgated literally, purely and unadulteratedly." The only hindering factor was funds! It was pointed out that Pastor Francke in Germany started an orphanage at Halle with only \$4.40 on hand, but the only difference between Pastor Francke and the Ohio Synod was that the Ohio Synod did not have \$4.40. Another brother came forward with the announcement that perhaps they could get a Seminary started by a man who had recently come from Germany and who was a scholar, having studied at several German universities, and that this man might teach for nothing. The man turned out to be Rev. William Schmidt, pastor at Canton, Ohio. That same year, in 1830, he opened the seminary in his home in Canton, Ohio with one professor and two students. The name "Evangelical Lutheran Seminary" was adopted, but about a year later, Rev. Schmidt accepted a call to St. Paul's Church of Columbus, Ohio, and of course when he moved, the seminary moved, though evidently the Synod saw to it that Rev. Schmidt got this Columbus call, since they wanted the seminary in Columbus. It was housed in a building on S. High St., and by 1832, there were eight students. The seminary has been in Columbus ever since. While it was to be a school where "the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession were to be promulgated literally, purely and unadulteratedly," it is significant that when the building was dedicated on S. High St., a Reformed minister preached the English sermon.

An interesting sidelight on the history of the seminary was that in 1848, the Rev. Conrad Mees, who since 1843 had been pastor of St. Paul's Church in Columbus, and who had been called on the carpet at the Synod meeting for distributing a pamphlet critical of the Ohio Synod, announced that he was leaving the Synod and was taking his congregation with him. Thus St. Paul's left the Synod in 1848, and remained an independent congregation for 67 years until 1915 when it rejoined the Joint Synod of Ohio. With St. Paul's the only Lutheran congregation in Columbus, and with St. Paul's out of the Ohio Synod, that Synod was left with a training school for ministers in a town where there was no church of its own group. The day was saved for the seminary when a little group of synodically minded persons opposed Rev. Mees and sought by a lawsuit to obtain the property of St. Paul's. When this failed, this little group organized Trinity Lutheran Church which became a synodical congregation of the Ohio Synod. After a number of years, the seminary property on S. High St., not far from the canal and built on swamp land, was deemed unhealthy for the students, and the seminary moved to East Town St.

### CAPITAL UNIVERSITY.

The little school on East Town St. consisted of a grammar preparatory school and a theological seminary, and had some 30 students by the middle of the nineteenth century. It was at that time that the Ohio Synod dreamed a wonderful dream and decided to make this little school into a full-fledged university after the pattern of the great universities of Germany, with a college of arts, a college of theology, a college of law and a college of medicine. The little grammar school was to grow up into a full-fledged arts college, and the theological seminary was there. Now for the other two colleges. A group in Columbus at that time was preparing to start a law school, and it was hoped that this could be linked up with the Lutheran school and be the College of Law. A medical school, known as Starling Medical College, had recently been started in Columbus, and plans were being made for the Starling Medical College to be the College of Medicine at this university. A rather exclusive girls' boarding school called Esther Institute had recently also been organized in Columbus, and it was hoped that this too would link up with the Lutheran school. The

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only difficulties in the dream becoming a reality seemed to be financial. But a way was found also here. Since this new university was to be such a welcome addition to the cultural life of the town of Columbus, it was suggested that the citizens of Columbus be given the opportunity to help pay for it, and that a number of citizens of Columbus should be on its Board of Directors. These citizens were carefully chosen with an eye to their bank accounts, among them being a certain Dr. Goodale. A president was imported from the east by the name of Rev. W.M. Reynolds of Pennsylvania College, and the school applied for and received a charter from the State of Ohio as a university with four faculties, arts, law, medicine and theology. Since there were other universities in Ohio but none in the capital city (Ohio State was not founded until 1873), this one was to be called "Capital University." It began to operate in 1850 with over a hundred students and five or six professors.

But then trouble set in. The Starling Medical School refused to join. The law school was never started. Esther Institute broke up. The Lutheran pastors on the Board did not see eye to eye with the citizens of Columbus, most of whom were not Lutheran. Dr. Goodale did donate a tract of land on the corner of Goodale and High Sts., just opposite Goodale Park, and a new building was built, but things were not going well for the school or rather the "university". President Reynolds resigned and went back to the east; the student body dwindled, and by 1854, the school was back to a little school of some 30 boys who were preparing to study for the ministry, but it did have a charter and a name- Capital University. The school remained at Goodale and High Sts. until 1876, when the Board decided that it was too near the railroad station and that the boys should be removed from the evil influence of the traveling men, and the school was removed to the corn fields on the east bank of the Alum Creek, where it still stands today, though the corn fields have disappeared and the school is in the Columbus suburb of Bexley.

Today Capital University has several thousand students, has become coeducational since 1919, has a College of Arts and Sciences, has expanded facilities for training public school teachers, and has a music school. It houses the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Seminary, and recently added a law school. It has come a long way from being "the preacher factory" which it was during its early years. It is still owned and operated by The American Lutheran Church, the twice removed successor to the old Joint Synod of Ohio, though according to news reports of several months ago the next president need not be a churchman and may not even be a Lutheran. Actually a Missouri Synod layman was elected. The latest on Capital University is that two non-Lutherans were elected to the Board of Regents, Mr. Robert Lazarus, Jr., a Reformed (but not converted) Jew, of the famous Lazarus family which owns and operates Columbus's largest department store and Mr. Richard M. Wolfe, a Presbyterian, of the famous Wolfe family which controls the Columbus Dispatch newspaper and associated with WBNS radio and TV and after whom Columbus has been nicknamed "Wolfeville". Both are fabulously wealthy.

#### GROWING CONFSSIONALISM.

The Ohio Synod in its early days was a rather doctrinally weak unionistic body. It did not join the General Synod when that body was organized in 1820, but not because of the weak doctrinal position of the General Synod. It considered the General Synod too far away, beyond the Allegheny Mountains, and furthermore it was looking forward to a union with the Reformed Church. The original name of St. Paul's Church of Columbus was "Die Erste Hochdeutsche Evangelische Lutherische und Reformierte St. Paulus Kirche." But there were within that congregation not only Lutherans and Reformed, but also German Methodists and German "Freigeister" or Free Thinkers. It was not until the four way split of 1843 when the Reformed founded their own congregation, and the German Methodists and the German Free Thinkers did the same, that St. Paul's really became St. Paul's Lutheran Church. Quite often the Lutherans and

the Reformed shared a common church building and alternated between Lutheran and Reformed services. That explains why, for instance, in Canal Winchester, there is a David's Lutheran Church and a David's Reformed Church now called David's United Church of Christ. Evidently originally there was simply a David's Church shared by the Lutherans and the Reformed.

This laxness of doctrine and practice of those early years, however, began to wane and a more conservative confessional form of Lutheranism began to arise within the Synod. When the English District was formed in 1836, special attention was called to the constitution of Synod that no one was to be recognized as a member of a district who denied the doctrinal articles of the Augsburg Confession. Evidently the English District resented this stipulation, and four years after its organization, it voted to withdraw from the Joint Synod of Ohio and become a synod by itself and joined the General Synod. The Ohio Synod was not frustrated by this action, but soon thereafter formed another English District to take its place. When about a decade later, this old English District wanted to rejoin the Joint Synod of Ohio, it was refused. Through the self study of the Lutheran Confessions on the part of the theological professors and the pastors and through the influence of the Missouri Synod leaders, the Joint Synod of Ohio became more and more conservative and definitely Lutheran. The culmination was that in 1855, the Joint Synod of Ohio officially accepted the entire Book of Concord and bound its members and clergy to the doctrines found therein.

When meetings were held in 1866 and 1867 with the view of organizing a General Council of Lutheran bodies who accepted the Lutheran Confessions and were opposed to the "new measurism" and revivalism and S.S. Schmucker's "Definite Platform" which marked the General Synod of that day, the Ohio Synod as did the Missouri Synod and others, sent representatives, but in the end, the Ohio Synod never joined the General Council, and for the same reasons that Missouri did not join the famous "Four Points." The General Council did not, and perhaps could not, take a definite stand on pulpit and altar fellowship, the lodges and chiliasm or millennialism. The very fact that the Ohio Synod held out on these points very definitely stamps that Synod as a sound confessional Lutheran body. It must be stated, however, that though the Ohio Synod did not join the General Council, its English District did and for a second time Ohio lost an English District and had to form a new one.

Ohio and Missouri could not go along with the General Council, but a few years later in 1872, when under the leadership of Dr. C.F.W. Walther, the Synodical Conference was held, the Joint Synod of Ohio gladly went along, and for ten years there was full fellowship between the Ohio Synod, the Missouri Synod and the other synods within the Synodical Conference. Pastor C.F.W. Walther, who had refused an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree offered him by several German universities because of their unorthodox stand, did accept such an honorary degree from Capital University of Columbus, Ohio. A number of Missouri Synod pastors accepted pastorates in the Ohio Synod, including Pastor Herbst who came to Trinity Lutheran Church of Columbus, and Pastor Frank who became pastor of Christ Lutheran Church across from Capital University.

But trouble developed within the Synodical Conference. Walther's idea of State Synods did not go down very well with the Ohio men. Prof. M. Loy received a call to the St. Louis Seminary, and it was feared that the attempt was under way to close the Columbus Seminary and amalgamate all at St. Louis. Loy did not accept the call. Then of course as you know, there developed the controversy over predestination. Ohio accused Walther and other Missourians of being Calvinists, and the Missourians accused Ohio of being synergists. Such unfortunate and perhaps unguarded statements as "die almachtige Gnade Gottes" (the almighty grace of God, which would seem to indicate that it could not be resisted) on the part of Missouri and "rechtes Verhalten" (right conduct toward the grace of God) on the part of Ohio, lead to a most heated

controversy, and many words were spoken and much ink was spilled. There was a book published almost two inches thick entitled The Error of Missouri. As a result, the Ohio Synod withdrew from the Synodical Conference in 1882. Pastor Frank resigned his pastorate at Christ Church, Columbus, and Pastor Herbst tried to take Trinity of Columbus into the Missouri Synod, and when this effort failed, he took a little group with him, got a lease on an abandoned Episcopal Church on the next corner, and started Zion Lutheran Church, and thus Columbus had its first Missouri congregation.

Ohio and Missouri split over predestination, but the Joint Synod of Ohio continued to be a conservative confessional Lutheran synod in spite of the epithets hurled at it by Missouri and in spite of the epithets hurled back by it at Missouri. It still taught that we "cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ our Lord nor come to Him, but that the Holy Ghost has called us by the Gospel." It still taught that if we are saved, it is by the grace of God alone, but that if we are lost, it is our own fault. Dr. M. Loy in his Story of My Life writes in 1905: "The prospect seems less bright since the Ohio Synod has been deserted by its powerful ally of Missouri," but this was followed by a determination to continue in confessional Lutheranism. Dr. Neve could write of the Joint Synod of Ohio in his Brief History of the Lutheran Church in America, published in 1916: "In its practice pertaining to doctrinal discipline, unionism, secret societies, worldly methods in the church, and parochial schools, it shares the attitude of Missouri, although it may be somewhat less rigid in individual cases." Would to God that the Joint Synod of Ohio had remained what it was at the close of the nineteenth century and had gotten the predestination question settled with Missouri!

#### CHRISTIAN DAY SCHOOLS

Dr. C.V. Sheatsley in his History of the Joint Synod of Ohio writes as follows. "With us of the Joint Synod of Ohio, the parish school is as old as the Synod itself. In 1818, the fathers reported 54 such schools, there being nearly as many schools as congregations. At that time the parish school was the only Christian training agency outside the home, and in some cases was the only means of education at hand. In many instances the Christian congregational school was the common school, the parish school, the catechetical class and sometimes a theological seminary all combined." This was before the days of the public school in Ohio, and with the advent of a free public school system, many of these parish schools ceased to exist.

However, the Joint Synod of Ohio like other conservative Lutheran synods, did, during the latter part of the nineteenth century, develop a system of parochial or Christian day schools. Such schools existed for instance in the larger cities and towns such as Dayton, Springfield, Columbus and Youngstown as well as in a number of rural and semi-rural congregations. The difficulty, however, was the procurement of suitable and capable teachers and about 1880, Rev. G. Cronenwett and his teacher, Mr. J.L. Fehr of Woodville, Ohio, together with a few neighboring congregations determined to provide for teacher training. A member of Rev. Cronenwett's congregation furnished a frame building to house students, and in this modest manner a school for training teachers was begun. In a few years, the school was offered to the Joint Synod of Ohio and gladly accepted. The school continued to grow, until it became evident that the frame building was inadequate, and Synod resolved to replace it by a much larger brick building. The school became known as Woodville Normal, and during the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century furnished most of the teachers for the Christian Day Schools in the Joint Synod of Ohio.

Unfortunately many if not most of these Christian Day Schools stressed the German language, and became in the minds of many, institutions for the perpetuation of the speaking of German. When World War I came with its fanatical anti-German

sentiment, many of these schools folded up and the Christian Day School became the rare exception in the Joint Synod of Ohio. In 1924, Woodville Normal was closed, or technically amalgamated with Capital University, but little is said or done about Christian Day Schools at Capital University. There is, or used to be not too long ago, an outlined course of study for Christian Day School teachers, but it actually boils down to taking the course for elementary public school teaching plus a few extra hours of Religion. At the present time, there are only two Christian Day Schools of The American Lutheran Church in Ohio, Marysville and Woodville, though there are several Christian kindergartens.

#### THE LODGE QUESTION.

In the early days of the Joint Synod of Ohio, the lodge was no problem, since lodgery had not penetrated into the Ohio valley to any extent and the German language of the early Ohio Synod people kept them more or less isolated from the rest of the community. However, about 1850, lodgery did become a problem, and was greatly aggravated by the fact that a certain prominent pastor of the Ohio Synod, a son of one of the pioneers and a member of a prominent family of churchmen, became a Mason. This was Rev. Paul Henkel. His Masonry caused him to greatly dilute his Christian faith and at times he even preached universalism. In 1852, one of the pastors of the Joint Synod of Ohio asked the Synod to express itself on Secret Societies. The Synod declined to make a definite expression, but did resolve to admonish its members not to join a society which was opposed to the spirit of the Lutheran Church.

With the growing conservatism and confessionalism in the Joint Synod of Ohio, the lodge was bound to be a matter of further action, and in 1854 the Synod took a definite stand against secret societies "since they aim to accomplish that for which God instituted the Church, namely the salvation of souls." It further resolved not to admit into membership in Synod anyone (evidently referring to pastors) who were members of such societies. Naturally Rev. Paul Henkel voted against the resolution, but it was adopted. In 1860, the Synod resolved to advise the various Districts to admonish all members to withdraw from secret societies and that congregations do the same for their individual members. We recall that in 1866-1867, the lodge question was one of the four points on which the General Council would not make a definite pronouncement, and this lack of a lodge pronouncement helped cause the Ohio Synod not to join the General Council. In 1888, the Detroit Convention was asked to make a pronouncement with regard to lodges and the result was the following resolution. "The rule among us must be and ever remain that members of secret societies cannot be received as members of our congregations, nor may they continue their membership or be admitted to the Holy Supper for an indefinite length of time." In 1894, the following resolution was passed. "We thank God that many of our congregations according to the rule adopted have taken a decided stand against all secret orders, and we will all earnestly pray and hope that all, sooner or later, may take the same decided stand." As might be expected, it was the English District congregations who were slow in taking action against the lodges, and it was the lodge question which figured prominently in the withdrawal of the English District to join the General Council. A new English District was formed, but it too had its difficulties on the lodge.

When the Joint Synod of Ohio joined with Iowa and Buffalo in 1930 to form the American Lutheran Church, a fine statement against lodgery was written into its constitution declaring all societies, secret or open, which do not confess faith in the Triune God or salvation through Jesus Christ, are nevertheless avowedly religious or practice the forms of religion, teaching salvation by works, anti-Christian and rejected any fellowship with them. The Minneapolis Theses repeated much of this same statement of the ALC constitution and further declared that the Synods would not tolerate a pastor who was a member of such a society and charged all pastors publicly and privately to testify against the sin of lodgery with the view of getting members

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to sever their connection with such lodges. The Minneapolis Theses have been printed in the Handbook of the new American Lutheran Church of 1960, but this lodge statement, though it seems to have impressed some of the Missouri Synod officials, has, like so many other statements in the Minneapolis Theses, become a dead letter. Nevertheless, about the turn of the century, with the possible exception of some English District congregations, the lodge practice in the Joint Synod of Ohio was about as strict as that of Missouri. Many persons who valued their lodge above their church left the Ohio Synod and joined congregations of the General Council or General Synod or sometimes congregations of the Evangelical Synod of North America, later known as the Evangelical and Reformed Church after the merger of 1934, and now merged in the United Church of Christ. In St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Columbus, the Rev. Conrad Mees began to crack down on the lodges, and in 1872 the lodge members of St. Paul's withdrew and organized St. John's Evangelical Protestant Church of Columbus. This St. John's Church had a "lodge clause" but "in reverse" in its constitution. It read: "no one shall be denied membership in this congregation because of membership in a lodge, neither shall such lodge members be prohibited from entering the church in full regalia and performing there their rites."

#### THE TWO GIANTS OF THE "GIANT" SYNOD OF OHIO.

Two names seem to stand out above all the rest in the history of the Joint Synod of Ohio, the two "L's"- Loy and Lenski. Dr. Mathias Loy was the great champion of conservatism in the Ohio Synod and its recognized leader. His labors in the cause of the truth of God are preserved for us in a book which he wrote not too long before his death, entitled, The Story of My Life. Loy held the office of president of Capital University, dean of the seminary, professor in the college, professor in the seminary, president of the Joint Synod of Ohio, president of the Western District, editor of the Lutheran Standard (which position included mailing the paper to all its subscribers) and acting pastor of Grace Lutheran Church of Columbus, nearly all at the same time, and when he had nothing to do and time hung heavy over him, he wrote books and composed hymns and translated hymns from the German. We still sing, "Jesus, Thou art mine forever" or "The Law of God is good and wise" or "The Gospel shows the Father's grace" or "An awe-full mystery is here" from the pen of Dr. M. Loy. And they perpetuated his name at Capital University! They named the old gymnasium the Loy Auditorium! He was no athlete. I do not think that he ever even played a game of marbles.

The second giant in the "Giant" Synod of Ohio was Dr. Richard Charles Henry Lenski, who did not come from a long line of preachers, but was the son of a tailor. After serving in the active ministry for 24 years, he was called to be professor of theology at the Columbus Seminary. While Dr. Lenski defended the "intuitu" formula, he was not consciously a synergist, and always insisted that the shortened expression, "in view of faith" should really read, "In view of the all-sufficient merits of Jesus Christ perseveringly apprehended by faith." He never spoke of faith without the object of that faith, Jesus Christ, and he used to tell his students that faith was merely the cup, but that the cup was never empty; its contents were the merits of Jesus Christ. He always stressed faith as "die nehmende Hand", the hand that receives and what was received was Christ's merit. Lenski was a staunch defender of verbal inspiration, a foe of liberalism, evolution, unionism and the lodge. The Columbus Seminary for about 25 years revolved around "Ski" as he was fondly called by his students. Lenski was not only an able professor; he was also a prolific writer. He wrote six books on pericope texts in which he gave an exegesis of the text, some suggested outlines and some illustrative material, but did not write the sermon for you except in one series. The six pericope series are The Eisenach Gospels, the Eisenach Epistles, the Eisenach Old Testament series, the New Gospel Selections, the Ancient Gospels and the Ancient Epistles. These are all now out of print, sad to say, and the young man of today does not have this rich sermon material and can no



longer ask the question as did the seminarians of my day, "What are you going to preach on after the first six years?" Lenski also wrote a Homiletics textbook, The Sermon, which though discarded by the Augsburg Press, has just recently been re-printed by the Baker Book House. Lenski wrote an entire Commentary on the New Testament which is still listed by the Augsburg Publishing House, and which is still widely sold among the conservatives. When Lenski closed his eyes in death in 1936, the second "giant" of the "Giant" Synod of Ohio fell, and he has never been replaced.

#### DOWN HILL

If you ever rode on a roller coaster, you know that the trip up that first hill is a long, slow steady process, but once you reach the top of that first hill and start coasting downward, you go down ever so much faster than you went up, and though there are a few more ups and downs, you never reach that high point again where you found yourself at the top of that first hill. So it was with the old Joint Synod of Ohio. Its development from 1818 until about 1918 was like that first hill on the roller coaster, a steady climb up the hill of confessional Lutheranism, but then began the dip downward. Sometimes the first dip on the roller coaster is just a little one, just enough to get around a corner, and then comes the real one. The little dip came in 1917-1918 when the Joint Synod of Ohio joined the National Lutheran Council. Dr. Lenski, who was at that time editor of the German paper, Lutherische Kirchenzeitung, warned that this would mean more than cooperation in externals and lead to fellowship with the U.L.C.A. in certain areas. The practice with reference to the lodge began to weaken about this same time, the English District congregations taking the lead in letting down the bars, and the Eastern, Western and Northern Districts gradually followed suit. Fellowship with the Iowa Synod on the basis of the Toledo Theses rather weakened the position of the Joint Synod on millennialism, but the proposed merger of Ohio, Iowa and Buffalo precipitated a controversy on the Scriptures. The original draft of the constitution put the proposed merged body on record as accepting the canonical Scriptures as the "inspired and inerrant Word of God and the only source, norm and guide for all matters of faith and life," but the Iowa Synod leaders insisted that the word "inerrant" be moved from its place before the "Word of God" and be inserted ahead of "source, norm and guide." There was a big explosion on the part of the Ohio men. They said that deleting the word "inerrant" from "inspired Word of God" and merely speaking of an "inerrant source, norm and guide for all matters of faith and life" would imply that the Bible was not inerrant in its entirety but only in matters of faith and life and that human judgement would then be required to say which were matters of faith and life and which were not. Many words were spoken and the matter was further confused by bringing in the original manuscripts in contrast to the manuscripts which we have today, and the upshot of the matter was that the Iowa Synod won out on the wording but an appendix was added saying that the Bible in its original manuscripts was entirely inerrant and that we have today substantially what was in the original. The A.L.C. Constitution, however, did denounce unionism and syncretism in all its forms, accepted the principle, "Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran pastors only and Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only" and accepted the entire Book of Concord and contained a fine statement on the evils of lodgery, though it did not spell out the treatment of the individual lodge member. This was the first little dip, and it was not such a steep one, just enough to get around the corner for the big one.

Now comes the big dip at the close of the fifties or beginning of the sixties. It seemed to coincide with the merger with the E.L.C. and the U.E.L.C., though the merger may have had nothing to do with it because the same dip started in Missouri about that time and there was no merger in prospect. Liberalism, the new theology, neo-orthodoxy, ecumenism and the social gospel struck and struck hard. It hit the Columbus seminary; it hit the students; it hit the clergy. The inerrancy of the Bible was questioned; it was asserted that the first eleven chapters of Genesis

could well have been poetic myth, and that the story of Jonah was a parable. Devil possession was just another name for mental illness which people in that day did not understand as we understand it today. Man could well have been the product of evolution. The rules of unionism were thrown to the winds and ecumenism became the order of the day. What a dip after turning the corner of the sixties; it takes our breath!

It is hard to believe that the old Joint Synod of Ohio which slowly but steadily arose from the depths of liberalism and unionism to sound confessional Lutheranism, that Synod which stood out against the General Council in 1867 because the General Council refused to take a definite stand on pulpit and altar fellowship, the lodge and millennialism, which still in the thirties held out against the U.L.C.A. because of verbal inspiration, pulpit and altar fellowship and the lodge, that Synod which produced a Loy and a Lenski, has dipped so low. To be sure, there are still some faithful pastors, many of them older men, but a few of them younger men who came from strong conservative congregations and whose heads the seminary professors did not succeed in turning, who preach the Gospel and who have not sold out to liberalism and the new theology and ecumenism and the social gospel, but their number is getting smaller as the years go by. They lament what is happening in their church body, but they conclude their laments with the remark, "But what can you do about it?" In the meantime, Dr. Edward C. Fendt, the president of the Columbus Seminary writes an article for the Lutheran Standard defending and praising the Presbyterian Confession of 1967 which both liberals and conservatives alike say teaches a more liberal attitude toward the Scriptures, and one of the professors at the Columbus Seminary writes that chapter in the book, The Bible, Book of Faith which rejects the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Lutheranism in Ohio was to a great extent the Joint Synod of Ohio, but O to what depths it has fallen! The early history of the Joint Synod of Ohio so closely resembled the early history of the Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michigan Synod now merged into the Wisconsin Evangelical Synod. It all should serve as a warning to Wisconsin not to go and do likewise, but rather pray God that in His mercy he would keep Wisconsin steadfast in His Word during these turbulent days of Lutheranism in America.

#### THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH IN OHIO

##### THE GENERAL SYNOD IN OHIO.

As we have already stated, the Ohio Synod never joined the General Synod, in the early years because of distance and because it was looking for a union with the Reformed, and then later as it developed into a confessional group, because of the lack of definite confession on the part of the General Synod. However, General Synod congregations did get started in Ohio before the middle of the 19th century. The English District of the Ohio Synod, organized in 1836, was made up for the most part not of pastors and members who came from Germany, but rather of pastors trained at Gettysburg Seminary and of course ministering to their people along the lines laid down at Gettysburg. It was already stated that the English District did not like the insistence of the Ohio Synod that its pastors and congregations must adhere to the teachings of the Augsburg Confession, and we recall that this English District withdrew from the Joint Synod of Ohio in 1840. This English District then became a ministerium of its own known as the English Synod of Ohio and later known as the East Ohio Synod. This Synod associated with the General Synod since most of its pastors had been thus affiliated before they migrated across the Alleghenies.

However, the Ohio Synod's English District was not the only group to operate in Ohio and be associated with the General Synod. Other Synods made up of easterners operated in the Ohio Valley. There was the Synod of the West (1835), the Allegheny Synod (1842), the Synod of Miami (1844), the Pittsburg Synod (1845), the Wittenberg Synod (1847) and the Olive Branch Synod (1848). All of these were associated with the General Synod, and all were more or less reflections of the "Lutheranism" of

Gettysburg Seminary and under the influence of such men as S.S. Schmucher and Benjamin Kurtz. These men were responsible for what was known as "American Lutheranism", that is a Lutheranism modified by Puritan elements and supposedly more palatable to American people.

Among the followers of this "American Lutheranism" or "New Measurism" as it was also called, were those who discounted baptismal grace and substituted the "mourners' bench" and revivalism. They discounted catechetical instruction and put the emphasis on "protracted meetings." The differences between the Lutherans and the Reformed even on the doctrine of the Lord's Supper were considered of no great consequence. Joint services with the Reformed and the Methodists and the Presbyterians were the order of the day. In September of 1855, there appeared a document entitled "The Definite Platform" which turned out to be the work of S.S. Schmucher and which was everything else but definite. It was a sort of revision of the Augsburg Confession, purging that famous Creed of its "errors", dropping some articles altogether and revising others. General Synod "Lutheranism" in Ohio was thus pietistic, revivalistic, Methodistic and non-confessional. From all this, the Joint Synod of Ohio remained quite aloof.

#### WITTENBERG COLLEGE AND HAMMA DIVINITY SCHOOL.

The Seminary at Columbus did not satisfy the needs of these liberal Lutherans of Ohio, and in 1842, the Eastern Synod of Ohio (formerly the Joint Synod of Ohio's English District) contacted another General Synod body, the Synod of the West, expressing its willingness to cooperate in establishing a theological institution. The Synod of the West was willing and it was resolved to establish "a literary and theological institution", and a certain Rev. Ezra Keller was called from Hagerstown, Md. to head up this venture. Rev. Keller came to Ohio and began instructing four students in theology at Wooster, Ohio. It was decided, however, that Wooster was not the place, and in 1845 the school was moved to Springfield and the name Wittenberg College was adopted. Rev. Keller, who in the meantime had obtained a D.D. degree from Jefferson College, began the work of pre-theological and theological training of students as well as serving as pastor of First Lutheran Church of Springfield. Rev. Keller, being trained in the east had absorbed "new measurism" and "American Lutheranism" but it was less extreme than that of many others. He seemed to avoid the extravagances so common to the camp meeting revivals, and in his protracted meetings, there prevailed "most perfect order and deepest solemnity." He spoke with "great calmness and deliberation." He closed his catechetical instruction course with protracted meetings and sought to lead his catechumens to a commitment of their lives to Christ. When adults "experienced conversion," he did seek to instruct them in the Christian faith and life.

A generous patron of the school by the name of Dr. M.W. Hamma was quite an asset to Wittenberg College and in the early twentieth century the new seminary building was dedicated, and called Hamma Divinity Hall, and the theological seminary of Wittenberg was known as Hamma Divinity School. Dr. R.C.H. Lenski was, for a short time, pastor of the Joint Synod of Ohio's only church in Springfield, and at that time the professors and pastors of the Joint Synod of Ohio would have joint discussions with the Wittenberg men. The Ohio Synod men were pretty well agreed and spoke with a single voice on most matters, but the Wittenberg people showed all shades of beliefs. I recall Dr. Lenski mentioning such names as Gottwald, Bauslin, Tressler, Larimer and Keyser. One time the Lord's Supper was up for discussion and the Ohio men stated the real presence and upheld close Communion, and one of the Wittenberg men agreed on the real presence but was not willing to take the logical step of close Communion. Another spoke up and said, "You accept the doctrine of these Ohio Synod men, but you refuse to accept their logical conclusion. I repudiate the doctrine."

Prof. Keyser, who at that time admitted that he had never even read the Lutheran Confessions, gave his views on Holy Communion, and after they were given, another man said, "Before I came here, I always believed that there were three doctrines of the Lord's Supper, the Roman Catholic, the Reformed and the Lutheran, but now I have come to believe there are four, the Roman Catholic, the Reformed, the Lutheran and the Keyserian doctrine." Those must have been glorious meetings!

Hamma Divinity School did become a little more conservative during the early part of the twentieth century. Dr. Leander S. Keyser did read the Lutheran Confessions, and greatly profited by the reading of them. He became quite conservative and wrote several books in defense of the orthodox faith. Dr. J.L. Neve joined the faculty in 1909, and this is the man who wrote A Brief History of the Lutheran Church in America which shows a keen comprehension of conservative Lutheranism. Dr. Willard D. Allbeck, Neve's son-in-law, wrote a book on the Lutheran Confessions which still leaves something to be desired, but which represents a long stride forward from those early days.

But Hamma Divinity School was never too conservative. During the early thirties, I visited the school and talked with Dr. Elmer E. Flack, professor of Old Testament. He informed me that when he taught Old Testament, he threw out all the critical theories together with the traditional view, but was always careful never to draw any conclusions; he wanted each student to do that for himself. When I asked him how he could live with his own conscience under such a procedure, and how if he really believed that the traditional view was the truth of God and the critical theories aimed at undermining that truth, he could refrain from warning his students, he gave no reply. Dr. Taito A. Kantonen was always a liberal and a unionist, and the Seminary today goes all the way for ecumenism, the new theology and all that is associated with these two. At various times, there have been proposals to unite Hamma Divinity School with the Evangelical Lutheran Seminary at Columbus, but so far no great progress. With the declaration of fellowship between the L.C.A. and T.A.L.C., this proposal may be revived.

#### THE GENERAL COUNCIL IN OHIO.

The beginnings of the General Council in Ohio goes back to the days when the Joint Synod of Ohio did not join the newly formed General Council because of the so-called Four Points which it raised against it, the refusal of the General Council to make definite pronouncements on pulpit and altar fellowship, the lodge and millennialism. The Joint Synod of Ohio did not join the General Council but its English District did, became an independent body, and joined the Council. It was at this time that First English Lutheran Church of Columbus, organized in 1848 and a member of the English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio, went over to the General Council, but when some who did not see fit to go along, organized Grace Lutheran Church of Columbus, which was then taken into the Joint Synod's new English District.

#### THE UNITED LUTHERAN CHURCH IN OHIO

As those who are familiar with church history know, in 1918, the General Synod, The General Council and the United Synod of the South united to form the United Lutheran Church in America, and these various synods of the General Synod together with this Ohio Synod in the General Council were all put together in the U.L.C.A.'s Synod of Ohio with headquarters in Columbus, Ohio. A slogan of the U.L.C.A. at the time of the merger was "Merge the best; submerge the rest," but in Ohio as well as in other parts of the country, the "rest" did not stay "submerged." The Ohio Synod of the U.L.C.A. was a liberal body during the twenties and thirties and forties, but in the fifties became even more liberal. Some of its pastors were 32nd degree Masons;

it often joined in union services; many of its congregations practiced open Communion and many congregations took in adults with no instruction by letter of transfer from other denominations. When the merger with Augustana and several smaller synods resulted in the Lutheran Church in America, the Ohio Synod of the U.L.C.A. was really not changed, and there was but one Augustana church to merge with it in Ohio, namely a congregation in Cleveland. While when the L.C.A. was formed it was agreed that no Mason could be ordained after that date, nothing was done about those already in. Attorney Andrew White of First English Church of Columbus holds quite an influential position in the Ohio Synod L.C.A., and he is also very active in Masonic circles and boasts about it and has sought to get the rule forbidding the ordination of Masons rescinded. If you are looking for sound conservative Lutheranism in Ohio, you will seek in vain in the Ohio Synod of the L.C.A.

### THE LUTHERAN CHURCH, MISSOURI SYNOD

#### BEGINNINGS IN OHIO

Some may recall that the older name of the Missouri Synod was The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States, and this would indicate that Ohio must have been prominent in the history of Missouri. It did play a part in the history of Missouri, but this synod was never as strong in Ohio as it was in the neighboring states of Indiana, Illinois and Michigan. Cleveland developed into the Missouri stronghold in Ohio, this being the only major city where it might be said that Missouri churches were in the majority among the Lutherans.

Interestingly enough, the oldest Missouri Synod congregation in Ohio was established in 1838, a year before the Saxon Germans came to Perry County, Missouri, and nine years before the Missouri Synod was founded. It was St. John's of Marysville, sometimes known as the "Settlement" church. Its founding pastor was a Pastor Ernst, sent by Loehe of Neuendettlesau, Germany to America as a missionary. This is the same Pastor Ernst who later ministered to the Franconian Germans of the Saginaw Bay region of Michigan. Loehe's missionaries cooperated with the Joint Synod of Ohio at first, but finding the Ohio Synod too liberal at that time (It did not accept the Book of Concord until 1855), nearly all joined the Missouri Synod after its founding in 1847.

It must be remembered also that two names other than Walther and the Saxons which appear prominent in the founding of the Missouri Synod also appeared in Ohio. These two names were F.D.C. Wyneken and Dr. W. Sihler. Wyneken was a member of the Pennsylvania Ministerium and therefore also of the General Synod and was sent as a missionary to Indiana, but in getting there, naturally passed through Ohio, baptizing and confirming children. He served a deserted congregation in Adams County for a while. This was the man, who seeing a copy of Walther's Lutheraner, exclaimed, "Thank God, there are still Lutherans in America." In 1864, Wyneken was called to Cleveland, Ohio, where he remained until 1875. Dr. W. Sihler, who was sent over by Loehe and who conferred with the Columbus Seminary of the Ohio Synod, became pastor of a congregation in Pomeroy, Ohio in 1843. Two years later he withdrew from the Ohio Synod and went to Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

In the year 1843, Zion Church of Cleveland was founded, originally served by the Joint Synod of Ohio. In 1852, under the pastorate of H.C. Schwann, it joined the Missouri Synod. Pastor Schwann was the man who was Wyneken's nephew and who supervised the Missouri Synod's catechism, and Missourians speak of the "Schwann Catechism." Zion Church of Cleveland boasts of being the first church in America to have a Christmas tree. Other early Missouri churches in Ohio include Trinity, Sugar Grove (1839), Trinity, Zanesville (1844), Emmanuel of Lancaster (1847), St. James, New Rome (1847) founded by the pastor from Marysville, and St. John's, Wapakoneta.

Concordia Church of Cincinnati was founded in 1849, Zion of Akron in 1854, and Trinity of Toledo in 1874. Missouri did not have a church in Columbus until 1882, when as was explained, Rev. Herbst of Trinity Lutheran Church took a little group out of Trinity and went on the next corner and in an abandoned Episcopal church, organized Zion Church. The Ohio congregations of the Missouri Synod belonged to the Central District which included also Indiana and a congregation or two in West Virginia and Kentucky. Only in very recent years, in the fifties, the Ohio District of the Missouri Synod was organized.

#### GROWTH IN OHIO

As was stated before, Cleveland became the concentrated area of the Missouri Synod in Ohio. Here many Christian Day Schools were organized, and finally a Cleveland High School which in the fifties divided into Lutheran Hi West in Rocky River, and Lutheran Hi East in East Cleveland. There were Christian Day Schools in Cincinnati and one in Akron, and some in the smaller towns and rural areas, but Missouri's Christian Day School system was never as strongly established in Ohio as in Indiana and farther west. One of the early pastors of Zion Church, Columbus, told his congregation one day, "Ich habe bescholssen Schule zu halten, und Schule wird gehalten." He did establish a one room school in a little room under the balcony of the church, taught by himself, but it was short lived. Missouri never had any school of higher learning in Ohio, its highest venture in Christian education being the two fine Lutheran high schools in Cleveland.

Missouri in Ohio was orthodox in doctrine and strict in practice, though even as early as the thirties, some congregations in and around Cleveland had lodge members. Missouri had an English District, and like the English District of the Joint Synod of Ohio, this English District tended to be more liberal than the geographical districts. Missouri's English District, like that of the Joint Synod of Ohio, had no geographical boundaries and some of its congregations were found in Ohio.

#### RECENT HISTORY

Since Ohio is many miles removed from the Missouri center at St. Louis, it does not seem to have developed any of the prominent liberals of the Missouri Synod in recent years. Some younger men, most of them St. Louis graduates, have come into Ohio and are sympathetic to the new theology and the social gospel, but so far none of them seems to have made a name for himself as did Scharlemann, Piepkorn, Thiele, Fuehrbringer, Repp, Von Rohr Sauer, O.P. Kretzmann, Martin Marty, Jeraslav Pelekin, Neuhaus and others. Some of the young student pastors in charge of university work are showing a liberal tendency. Most Springfield graduates, young and old, and most of the older St. Louis graduates in Ohio are at heart conservative, but too many of them live in a sort of dream world, making themselves believe that all is well in Missouri and that the officials/<sup>have</sup> everything in hand, while others seem to know what the score is, but are just not going to get into a fight. Several of the leaders of the State of the Church are in Ohio, but some of these have left Missouri or are in the process of leaving. It would be tragic for all this good sound conservative Lutheranism of Ohio to die, but that is what will surely happen unless Missouri takes some drastic steps to rid itself of these liberals or unless there is a split in the Synod. What fellowship with TALC will do to Missouri in Ohio remains to be seen. It most certainly could not strengthen conservatism.

#### THE WISCONSIN EV. LUTHERAN SYNOD.

The oldest congregation of the present Wisconsin Synod in the State of Ohio is Trinity of Jenera. A number of Germans had settled there about 1835, most of whom were Lutherans, and in 1843 organized a Lutheran congregation with the name Zion.

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This congregation eventually got a pastor from the Joint Synod of Ohio in 1845, but he stayed only a short time. A Reformed pastor and a pastor from the Albright Brethren sought to take over, but were rejected. In 1854, there was a split in the congregation, the one group forming what is now St. Paul's Church (rural) of Jenera which went to the Ohio Synod, and the majority group remaining as Zion Church. It had a number of pastors who had no synodical connection. The congregation was about to close its doors, when a Pastor Andrew Beyer of Buffalo, N.Y. came to serve the congregation and really put new life into it. Pastor Beyer was a member of the New York Ministerium, and in 1883 reorganized the congregation as Trinity Lutheran Church, doing away with all "Reformed" elements which had persisted in the congregation up to that time. In 1894, a Rev. E.K. Schmidt came to be pastor, and though he remained only a little over two years, he directed the congregation to the Michigan Synod. In 1897, the congregation called Pastor John Gauss of Lapeer, Michigan, who was a member of the Michigan Synod and he served the congregation for over forty years. In 1911, the congregation by unanimous vote decided to join the Michigan District, and thus for years there was that lone congregation in Hancock County belonging to the Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michigan.

The only other spot in Ohio where the Wisconsin Synod got a foothold was the area in and around Toledo, just south of the Michigan line. When your neighbor has a number of hardy flowers growing near his fence, there is a tendency for some of these to take root over in your yard, and so it was with the Wisconsin Synod in Michigan. A few of its plants took root in the Toledo area, just across the fence between Michigan and Ohio.

The oldest WELS congregation in Toledo seems to be Zion. It seems that St. Petri Church of Toledo (now a TALC congregation but the writer does not know whether it was an Iowa Synod or an Ohio Synod congregation before 1930) dismissed its pastor, Rev. L.W. Graepp. About half of the congregation stood with the pastor and withdrew and organized Zion Church with Rev. Graepp as pastor. This was in 1890. When Pastor Graepp resigned in 1896, Pastor W. Bodammer of the Michigan Synod was called and the congregation eventually joined the Wisconsin Synod. The German book, Geschichte der Michigan Synode published in Saginaw about 1910, mentions a St. Luke's Church of Toledo founded in 1886 which was first served by the Ohio Synod and then by the General Council, but whose pastor in 1896 joined the Michigan Synod. The TALC Yearbook of 1969 mentions a St. Luke's Church of Toledo, but whether or not this is the same congregation, the writer does not know. The WELS Yearbook of 1969 mentions sixteen congregations or preaching stations in Ohio including St. Paul's of Columbus which is non-synodical but whose pastor after rigid examination was received into the clergy of WELS in 1965. Congregations now dot the Cleveland-Akron area in northeastern Ohio, the Toledo area in northwestern Ohio with single dots in Findlay, Jenera, Kenton, and as far south as Grove City with another dot in the Dayton area. Cincinnati seems to be the only major city not yet reached.

THE FUTURE OF LUTHERANISM IN OHIO

With the L.C.A. quite liberal, and with TALC, almost as liberal, having now declared full fellowship with the LCA and with the inroads of liberalism into the Lutheran Church, <sup>with</sup> Missouri Synod having declared fellowship with TALC, and with only a faint scattering of WELS congregations in Ohio, the future may not look very bright. However, the future is always as bright as the promises of God and God has promised that His Word will endure. Ohio should be a fertile field for mission work by WELS if in a positive manner it offers people what so many are hungry for, the Bible-based, Christ-centered preaching for which the Lutheran Church was noted in years gone by. There are many conservative Lutheran pastors of the Missouri Synod in Ohio who need encouragement. We may not be in fellowship with them, but there can be a friendly mutually helpful relationship even outside the sphere of actual fellowship.

There are thousands of conservative Missouri lay people who are very unhappy about what is going on in their Synod, and if they come to us and tell us that they are seeking a church where they hear the Gospel as they were accustomed to hear it, we are not "sheep stealing" if we invite them to our services and if interested, invite them to join us. There may be entire congregations which may feel constrained to leave the Missouri Synod. We should not shy away from them if they come to us, but seek to make them welcome. There may be a split in the Missouri Synod, and if such be the case, we should seek, if at all possible, to establish fellowship with the conservative group and seek as WELS has done with the ELS, an association of conservative Lutheran groups to take the place of the old Synodical Conference. Fellowship and mutual recognition are more important than mergers. There may be a few TALC pastors in Ohio who are conservative, though this number is dwindling. We owe them our friendship and encouragement, though we do not fellowship with them in joint worship. There are thousands of TALC lay people in Ohio who are hungry to hear the Gospel as they used to hear it but are not hearing it now. Let's be sympathetic to these people and not approach them with antagonism and suspicion because they are TALC and assume that they are tainted with heresy. If some of these do look to us, let's remember that according to our Augsburg Confession it should be sufficient to agree on the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments (and by the doctrine of the Gospel we mean the whole body of Lutheran doctrine) but that it is not necessary that rites and ceremonies be everywhere uniform. If these people come to us, let's not forget that they have traditions and customs which are dear to them and respect these traditions and customs and not seek immediately to make them over on the Wisconsin Synod last. Ohio was not Wisconsin territory, but it had a strong tradition of conservative Lutheranism. Let's build on this and not create the impression that we have a new or different Gospel, but rather assure them that essentially what they believe, we have and what they are hungry for, we have to offer. I do not think it is wise to begin by bringing up the predestination controversy, since the average layman has extreme difficulty in understanding this today, and would probably not understand what you are talking about. I do not think it wise to begin with the doctrine of the Church and the Ministry since again the average layman knows little about this, and actually Missouri and TALC have been practicing for years what WELS asserts. The doctrine of the Church and the Ministry would not be the determining factor on whether or not most lay people would leave Missouri or TALC and join WELS. They are fed up on this social gospel, this new theology which questions the verbal inspiration of the Bible and reduces much of it to legend and myth. They are fed up on ecumenism which is resulting in unionism even with Roman Catholics and rank modernists. I do not think it is even wise to begin with a defamation of the Boy Scouts. These things usually become no great problem when the really big problems are solved and these other things will in due time and after due patience solve themselves. We need not be in such a hurry to organize- rather just preach the Gospel for some time. WELS should have the opportunity of a lifetime in Ohio if they only make use of it wisely. So many thousands want what Wisconsin has. We must let them know that we have it and not antagonize them by shying away from them and regarding them with undue suspicion. Ohio likewise has millions of unchurched people, and all too many religious groups are offering them only the social gospel which can never save. We need to reach out into the masses of the unsaved, and though we shall not begin to win them all, we shall win some since the Gospel is never preached in vain. Lutheranism in Ohio does have a future, and much of that future could rest, to a great extent, with the Wisconsin Synod.



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