

Continuing In His Word – A History Of The Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*

By John M. Brenner

In early 1904 Professors Adolf Hoenecke (1834-1908), J.P. Koehler (1859-1951), and August Pieper (1857-1946) inaugurated a theological journal which has appeared four times a year ever since. This issue marks the beginning of the 100th year of publication. That is a milestone worth noting. The pages of the Quarterly are a record of the challenges that our synod, its pastors, and congregations have faced during that time. The *Quarterly* stands as a public testimony of what we have believed and taught.

Some things, of course, have changed during these hundred years and many things have remained the same. The Quarterly remains a professional journal for pastors, dedicated to providing continuing education through the publication of exegetical, doctrinal, historical, and practical articles. It strives to keep its readers abreast of developments in the religious world in general and the Lutheran church in particular and to comment on noteworthy books and publications.

To commemorate this publishing milestone we present this little overview of the history of the *Quarterly*. We hope that this overview might stimulate an interest in the wealth of theological and historical material that has appeared in this unpretentious professional journal over the first century of its existence and encourage a closer look.

Background

According to Koehler the idea of publishing a theological journal was nearly as old as the seminary itself.¹ The early backers of the seminary in Germany urged the publication of such a journal. When the seminary reopened in Milwaukee in 1878 after an eight-year sojourn at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, some broached the idea again. However, the *Gemeinde-Blatt*, the synod's church paper begun in 1865, took precedence. Adolf Hoenecke and the rest of the seminary faculty served as the editorial staff of that periodical. The *Gemeinde-Blatt*, though aimed at the laity of the synod, contained a wealth of theological writing and served as a much-needed theological and ecclesiastical voice for the Wisconsin Synod in those early crucial decades of the synod's existence.² The members of the seminary faculty seemed to be too busy with it and other responsibilities to begin another time-consuming project.

A new impetus to publishing a theological journal came as the result of the 1892 Federation of the Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan Synods. The three synods hoped to reduce costs and expand their work by eliminating duplication of efforts in areas like ministerial education and pooling their resources to expand their efforts in things like the mission work and publishing. Article VI, paragraph 2, of the Federation constitution adopted in 1892 states, "The Joint Synod is to publish a common parish paper, a theological journal, a school gazette, a children's paper, and a yearbook, also church and school books."³

However, the first issue of the *Theologische Quartalschrift* did not appear until 1904. One can only speculate about the reasons for the delay. The seminary faculty continued to be responsible for editing the *Gemeinde-Blatt*. By 1904, however, Koehler and Pieper, two young and energetic professors, had arrived on the scene. A new attempt to resolve the election controversy was also under way in the form of Lutheran free conferences. Perhaps this gave impetus to publishing a journal to address the key issues. According to Pieper,

* This article appeared in the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, vol. 100, no. 1 (Winter 2003).

¹ J. P. Koehler. *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, The Protestant Conference, 1970, p 211-212.

² One might hope that some seminarians or pastors in the field who have ability in German would undertake a project of translating some of the more noteworthy articles published in the *Gemeinde-Blatt*. There are some historical and theological treasures to be discovered there.

³ *Verhandlung der Allgemeine Ev. Luth. Synode*, 1892, p 9.

however, the *Quartalschrift* "came into life without particular design, called into existence by synodical resolution purely at the desire of our pastors."⁴

Carl Gauswitz (1861-1928), the president of the Federation, hailed the appearance of the first volume in his president's report of 1905. He wrote, "It was greeted with great joy in synodical circles when the faculty of our preachers' seminary began publication of a theological journal. May God above bless this undertaking for advancement in true confession and for strengthening in the saving truth of God's Word."⁵

1904-1928

The cost of a year's subscription for the first several years of the *Quarterly's* existence was \$1.00, a real bargain. (Considering inflation, a subscription remains a bargain at \$18.00 today.) The price was increased to \$1.50 in 1920. The price of a subscription was not raised again until the third issue of volume 50 (1953) and then only to \$2.00. The journal seemed to gain rapid acceptance by the pastors of the synod. By 1911 the *Quarterly* had 413 subscribers and 447 in 1912.⁶

In 1912 there were 453 pastors and professors on the roster of the Federation.⁷

The motto which was printed on the title page of the first issue was John 8:31,32, "So ihr bleiben werdet an meiner Rede, so seid ihr meine Junger, and werdet die Wahrheit erkennen, and die Wahrheit wird euch Frei machen." Those verses of Scripture in one translation or another appeared for years on the cover or title page. It remains the motto of the *Quarterly* to this day.

The *Quarterly* began as a German language publication. In the first issues English appeared only in quotations from outside sources. When John Schaller (1859-1920) accepted the call to be Hoenecke's replacement at the Wauwatosa Seminary, he began contributing some book reviews in English. Herman Meyer (1881-1920) also wrote in English. The first longer pieces in English were addresses given on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Wauwatosa Seminary in 1917 by John Schaller, John W.O. Brenner (1874-1962), and E. E. Kowalke (1887-1973). The transition from German to English became more of an issue during World War I because of the anti-German spirit that quickly developed in war-time America. Pieper addressed the language question in an article entitled, "Unsere Übergang ins English" ("Our Transition to English," 15:233, 16:43,121,179,257).⁸ Nevertheless, German remained the dominant language of the *Quarterly* during the first quarter century of its existence.

In the foreword to the first volume Hoenecke declared that the confessional stand of the new journal was the stand of the Synodical Conference. The purpose of the journal was to benefit the synod in a "proper and lasting manner" and to give voice to the strong movement toward unity in doctrine that "God was allowing to be felt in our synods. The *Quarterly* was to serve this movement "in uprightness, honesty, and Christian love" without making the slightest concession in matters determined by the clear testimony of God's Word. According to Hoenecke the journal would offer articles on points of doctrine, homiletics, and questions of pastoral practice. Attention would be given to articles of special interest to the Lutheran Church in America in general and the Wisconsin Synod in particular.

The first several issues were rich in sermon outlines and homiletical studies. Hoenecke had a special talent for sermon outlining and was recognized as a master preacher even outside of synodical circles. The number of sermon studies contained in the *Quarterly* tailed off after his death, but such studies have been included periodically in the long history of the journal. In Volume Eight Frederick Soll's (1869-1941) "New Pericopes" appeared. Soll's pericopes contain texts not included in many other systems. His selections are rich

⁴ Foreword to volume 10 of the *Quartalschrift*. An English translation by Philemon Hensel and revised by James Langebartels can be found in the first volume of *The Wauwatosa Theology*, edited by Curtis Jahn (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1997), p 109-118. This citation: p 109. Cf. also Foreword to Volume 1.

⁵ *Synodal-Bericht*, Allgemeine Synode von Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan und anderen Staaten, 1905, p 9.

⁶ Today the number varies between 1700 and 1800.

⁷ *Synodal-Bericht*, 1913, p 89, 92.

⁸ Translations of portions of this will appear in the next issue of the *Quarterly*. [*WLQ*, vol. 100, no. 2. The essay in question may also be viewed online at <http://www.wls.wels.net/library/Essays/Authors/PQ/PieperEnglish/PieperEnglish.htm>. – WLS Library Staff]

in content and offer the experienced preacher variety and a homiletical challenge well worth taking up. The first quarter century also saw Koehler's masterful articles on Lutheran hymnody, music, and worship.

In his foreword to the second volume Hoenecke mentioned that the faculty intended from the beginning to include book reviews and comments on church news. It seems time constraints did not allow the publication of any in the first volume, but eventually a *Büchertisch* section for book reviews and a *Kirchengeschichtliche Notizen* section containing religious news and comments became a part of every issue.

The first quarter of a century of the *Quarterly* contains a wealth of theological material. The production of the seminary faculty was prodigious and characterized by an approach which later became known as the "Wauwatosa Theology." The Wauwatosa Theology is merely a re-emphasis of the *sola scriptura* principle of the Reformation. These men rejected the historical-critical approaches to Scripture in favor of the historical-grammatical approach. They allowed the Bible to speak for itself rather than permitting human reason to be raised above it. In doctrinal study and doctrinal controversy they went back to the Bible for a fresh study of the pertinent passages and sections of Scripture. They rejected an approach which merely quoted orthodox Lutheran fathers without examining Scripture. In his forward to the 10th volume August Pieper explained, "We submit to no man, be his name Luther or Walther, Chemnitz or Hoenecke Gerhard or Stoeckhardt, so long as we have clear Scripture on our side. Anyone who wants to convict us of an error need only bring forward a single word of Scripture and we will declare ourselves vanquished. But he will strike against deaf ears if he attacks us with human authority."⁹ The Wauwatosa men held all of the orthodox Lutheran fathers in high esteem, but they would not make those teachers equal in authority to Scripture. That approach to theology has guided the *Quarterly* to this day. As Luther once asserted, "The Word of God shall establish articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel."¹⁰

The Wauwatosa theologians believed in the clarity of Scripture. Pieper declared that no clearer book has ever been written than the Bible. It is to be read and studied again and again with prayer for the Holy Spirit. It is to be studied like any other book from which one wants to learn. The basic approach to understanding the Bible is simple and clear.

We must not think that we can discover the meaning of a given doctrinal passage if we consider it out of context. We must study Scripture literally, historically and with regard to the contents. We must be able to some extent to put ourselves into the historical setting in which the individual books were written. We must seek to learn the specific goal each book has in mind, the problems that called it forth, the opposition it wants to conquer. We must try to recognize, especially in Paul, the logical connection of the exposition and the argumentation, to grasp exactly the meaning of the individual words and sentences.¹¹

Three doctrinal issues were of particular concern in the first twenty-five volumes. The first centered in the second phase of the Election Controversy. As the *Quarterly* came into being a series of free conferences was being held in an attempt to resolve the debate which had raged in the previous century. Already in the first issue J. P. Koehler contributed a lengthy article on "The Analogy of Faith" (1:18,75,131). This expression had come to the fore at the Free Conference in Watertown in 1903. Ohio and Iowa theologians used the expression "the analogy of faith" to indicate that there was a harmony of biblical truth in which all doctrine fit logically and neatly. In the light of passages like John 3:16 they claimed that election had to be in view of faith. Koehler insisted that the analogy of faith meant only the totality of the passages in the Bible that spoke about election. Doctrine is to be derived from those passages that specifically treat that doctrine. If teachings based on clear passages of Scripture seem to our human reason to be in conflict with each other, that conflict or tension must stand. It is not to be resolved by the use of human logic or reason. For instance, Scripture teaches that if a person is saved it is completely to God's credit, and if a person is lost it is completely that person's fault. These two teachings appear to be contradictory to human reason and yet both must stand because they are clearly taught by Scripture.

⁹ "Foreword to Volume 10" in *The Wauwatosa Theology I*, p 117.

¹⁰ Smalcald Articles, Part II, Article II, 15. Triglot, p 467.

¹¹ "Foreword to Volume 10" in *The Wauwatosa Theology I*, p 116.

The early issues of the *Quarterly* contain accounts of the free conferences with detail which minutes and records of today seldom reproduce. Several articles examined the doctrine of election and the related doctrines at issue: free will, conversion, objective justification, etc. After the Madison Settlement (*Opgjoer* in Norwegian) in 1912, articles expressed concern about this attempt to allow two contradictory teachings on election to stand side by side. The *Quarterly* expressed concern because the Norwegian Synod, although no longer a member of the Synodical Conference, was still in fellowship with the synods of that conference. This "settlement" led to the merger of the Hauge Synod, the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, and the Norwegian Synod in 1917 and to a break in fellowship with the synods of the Synodical Conference. Thirteen Norwegian Synod pastors protested this merger based on doctrinal compromise and formed the Norwegian Synod of the American Ev. Lutheran Church, known today as the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS).

In 1915 a group of pastors in Minnesota made a final attempt to resolve the Election Controversy among Midwestern Lutherans. Their efforts eventually resulted in the "Chicago Theses" (also known as the Inter-synodical Theses). The German version of these theses was printed in the last issue of Volume 25. An English translation appeared in the last issue of Volume 26. The Missouri Synod's rejection of the Chicago Theses in 1929 and the formation of the American Lutheran Conference in 1930 put an end to this last effort to resolve the controversy.

The second theological issue that dominated the first several volumes of the *Quarterly* was the doctrine of church and ministry.¹² Although Koehler had been in the forefront in challenging the way this doctrine was being taught and applied in Synodical Conference circles, Pieper supplied the bulk of the articles. The Wauwatosa men noted a similarity of approach in the way the doctrine of church and ministry was being taught and the way election *intuitu fidei* was taught. Those who were teaching election *intuitu fidei* were looking to the 17th century Lutheran dogmatists rather than the Scriptures. Those who held what became known as the old Missouri Synod doctrine of church and ministry were also basing the teaching on the fathers rather than the Bible. The Wauwatosa professors made a fresh, exegetical study of Scripture and demonstrated that there are no ceremonial laws or prescribed forms in the New Testament. God has instituted the public ministry for the benefit of his people, but he has not prescribed specific forms of the ministry. God's people are free to establish those forms which suit their circumstances. It is God's will that believers gather together for mutual edification and to carry out the work God has given the church to do. Nevertheless God has not prescribed what forms the church must take. Wherever two or three gather together in Christ's name the church is present.

The third theological problem that received a good deal of attention in the first quarter century can be described as the intertwining relationship between the issues of church and state, Christian freedom, and the importance of Christian education. Nativism with strong anti-German sentiment had developed during World War I. There were perceived and real threats to German Lutherans and parochial education. A news article entitled "Death of the Oregon School Law" applauded a court decision which struck down a law requiring attendance at a public school under penalty of up to a \$100 fine and thirty days in jail (22:214). Many *Quarterly* articles also noted the danger to young Christians from the humanistic spirit of the public schools, modern philosophy, and the teaching of evolution. Time and again authors stressed the importance of establishing and maintaining Lutheran elementary schools and preserving a strong synodical education system.

The *Quarterly* took note of the battle raging between theological conservatives and liberals in this country. Special interest was shown in the Presbyterian conflict which eventually culminated in the secession of conservatives from Princeton Seminary and the founding of Westminster Seminary under the leadership of J. Gresham Machen (1881-1937). The *Quarterly* even reprinted an article written by Clarence Macartney (1879-1957), conservative Presbyterian and leading opponent of liberal spokesman Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878-1969). The article was entitled "The Authority of Holy Scriptures" (23:21).

Lutheran mergers and prospective mergers called for articles and comments on church fellowship and doctrinal compromise. Articles on the lodge question addressed a practical congregational problem of the day as

¹² This topic will be explored in more detail in an article in a subsequent issue of this volume of the *Quarterly*. [W^LQ vol. 100, no. 4. This essay may also be found online at <http://www.wls.wels.net/library/Essays/Authors/b/BrugCMWLQ/BrugCMWLQ.htm> - WLS Library Staff]

pastors and congregational leaders struggled to carry out evangelical discipline. John Meyer's (1873-1964) "Brief Review" (25:135) of the Beitz paper publicly addressed the sweeping condemnations and accusations against the synod and the seminary contained in that paper. Meyer noted that the "Brief Review" was being written because the Beitz paper had now been printed and circulated in pamphlet form and there was a need for a response in English. Prof. Meyer was asked by the synod president to write a review to be printed in the *Quarterly* and in pamphlet form. The review was not merely a translation of the seminary's *Gutachten* or an excerpt of it, but a clear presentation in English of the "merits and demerits" of Beitz' controversial document.

At least 39 pastors and professors from other schools made contributions to the journal during the first 25 years of its existence. John Meyer and John Schaller both contributed before they were called to the seminary. Pastor Enno Duemling (1875-1946), pioneer pastor in institutional missions in our synod, produced two articles (one in German - 14:273 and one in English - 24:83) on the pastoral care of the insane. Duemling was the first full-time Lutheran institutional missionary at the Milwaukee County Institutions. Milwaukee pastor and Apache missionary Gustav Harders (1863-1917) authored five articles, and future Apache missionary Francis Uplegger (1867-1964) authored three. The most frequent non-faculty contributor, however, was former Leipzig Mission Society missionary to India and Synodical Conference pastor and author Carl Manthey Zorn (1846-1928). Zorn's death was noted in a lengthy obituary.

From the perspective of a historian the first quarter century of the *Quarterly* is a rich source of information on some of the most prominent pastors and theologians of the Synodical Conference. Lengthy (by today's standards) obituaries detailed the lives and contributions of these men, who otherwise might be lost to history. Articles like Pieper's "Anniversary Reflections" (vol. 20-21) and "Stoeckhardt's Significance in the Lutheran church in America" (11:179) provide firsthand historical information from a venerable second-generation father of our synod.

1929-1853

The second 25 years of the *Quarterly* saw the completion of the transition from German to English. The journal's name was changed in 1947 (Volume 44) to *Quartalschrift: Theological Quarterly*, perhaps to reflect the language change.

The early volumes of this period show an interest in the 400th anniversary of Luther's Catechisms and the Augsburg Confession. Attention was given to the social gospel and the doctrine of sin and grace in the light of the social sciences. The *Quarterly* took critical note of the early meetings of the Lutheran World Convention, the forerunner of today's Lutheran World Federation. The *Quarterly* staff commented on the continuing struggle between liberals and conservatives in the Presbyterian Church and the founding of Westminster Seminary. Verbal inspiration, the authority of Scripture, and the use of the historical-critical method were key issues in the controversy and could not be ignored in our synod. Prof. Meyer contributed an article on the Boy Scouts (28:25) long before scouting became a divisive issue in the Synodical Conference. The *Quarterly* also addressed the questions raised by the Protestants concerning repentance and the role of the law and gospel in producing it.

As World War II approached and arrived, there were numerous comments on developments in Europe and around the world from the Concordat of 1929 between Mussolini and the pope to the German and European Lutheran overseas missions orphaned by the war. The *Quarterly* staff showed deep concern for Lutherans and other Christians in Germany and Russia throughout this time period. The state of the church in other European countries and around the world also received attention. The *Quarterly* staff was aware of problems on the mission fields and the challenge of reaching out across cultures. For instance, Prof. Meyer in a news item favorably quoted an article on mission work in India published in *Moody Monthly*. The article warned, "The trouble with a certain class of missionaries is that they suppose Christianity to be in some way identified with what we call civilization, especially Western civilization, and they are preaching that instead of the Christianity of Christ. They are seeking to organize Indian society after our model, instead of dealing with individual souls to turn them from death to life."¹³

¹³ John Meyer, "Christ, But Not Christianity," Vol. 27, #1, p 74-75.

The Intersynodical Controversy with the Missouri Synod began in 1938 when Missouri announced that the "Brief Statement" together with the "Declaration of Representatives of the ALC" would serve as the basis of future church fellowship. The Quarterly staff immediately took note of these developments and began 23 years of news reports, comments, and feature articles in an attempt to clarify the issues and inform the pastors of our synod.¹⁴

Convention resolutions of the various synods and the Synodical Conference were often published without comment. Classic studies on unionism, fellowship, and other doctrines in question quite naturally appeared in every volume if not every issue. Prof. John Meyer pointedly asked, "Do the Recent Declarations of the A.L.C. Warrant the Establishment of Fraternal Relations?" (36:249). He later added the articles "Unionism" (42:209, 43:9) and "Prayer Fellowship" (46:184, 47:33, 124, 196, 288). The first of Pastor Edmund Reim's (1892-1969) many articles appeared in Volume 37 and was entitled "The Strength of Christian Unity." Reim was called to the seminary in 1940 and was a key member of the synod's Standing Committee on Church Union (forerunner of today's Commission on Inter-Church Relations). He wrote and commented extensively on developments in the controversy. Part of the effort to clarify issues troubling Lutheranism was the translation and publication of ten letters over twelve issues of the *Quarterly* by German Lutheran theologian Herman Sasse (1895-1976). The letters were written to Lutheran theologians throughout the world under the general title "Letters Addressed to Lutheran Pastors." Sasse addressed issues like the status of the Lutheran Churches in the world, the nature of confession in the church, the problem of the relation between the Lutheran and Reformed Church, the results of the Lutheran awakening of the 19th century, the problem of the union of Lutheran churches, etc. In the January 1952 issue (vol. 49) Prof. Reim called attention to the fact that the *Quarterly* had not seen fit to publish some of Sasse's letters, particularly his letter on inspiration. Reim pointed out that in this letter Sasse had left room for "factual errors in such things as do not pertain to the faith." Reim also expressed concern because Sasse implied that one of the problems in the Missouri Synod was an un-Lutheran fundamentalism. Reim remarked, "We know well that the defense of a conservative position against the inroads of liberalism involves the constant danger of falling into legalism and traditionalism. But we are not ready to concede that a personal acceptance and confession and defense of the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture is, *per se*, an 'un-Lutheran fundamentalism.'" No more of Sasse's letters appeared in the *Quarterly* thereafter.

Anticipation of the appearance of *The Lutheran Hymnal* in 1941 occasioned some reflections on liturgics and worship in our synod. One article asked, "What Can Our Synod Do in Order That There May Be More Uniformity in the External of our Public Service?" (34:200) An article entitled "What Benefits May Be Derived from More Emphasis on the Study of Liturgics?" (35:109, 36:97) encouraged a greater interest in worship.

In the late 1940s Prof John Meyer was asked to publish his "material on dogmatics" in the form of a textbook. The *Quarterly* published a sample in January 1948 (45:1). Meyer introduced the sample with an explanation of his reluctance to put his dogmatics into textbook form. He stated that the value of dogmatics for the training of pastors can hardly be overestimated. Nevertheless he was concerned about the wrong kind of dogmatics that engages only the intellect and can lead to "dead orthodoxy." Meyer wrote, "If dogmatics is used to lead directly into a study of the Scripture, it will be of benefit." Meyer's theology was the Wauwatosa Theology. No doubt, he did not want people quoting him, but rather searching and quoting Scripture as the only source and rule of faith and life. Subsequent selections, seven in all, were not published for another seventeen years, the first appearing about a year after Meyer's death (62:168,234; 63:1,81,184,245; 64:40).

Christian education continued to be a concern during this quarter century. In an article on religious instruction in the Free Churches of Germany Prof. Paul Peters (1888-1979) noted that although these churches lacked parochial schools and faced many other challenges, they were able to offer thorough instruction to their children and adults at regular midweek services and *Christenlehre* (catechetical review) for young people up to the age of eighteen and regular lectures on a variety of biblical topics for adults. Peters drew some applications for our synod:

¹⁴ This issue will be discussed in more detail in an article in a subsequent issue of this volume. [WLQ vol. 100, no. 3. The essay can also be viewed at <http://www.wls.wels.net/library/Essays/Authors/PO/PagelsTrumpet/PagelsTrumpet.htm> - WLS Library Staff]

The fact that we can still give our youth a good Christian education with the help of the parochial school should not induce us to overlook the other phase of our church work, the indoctrination of the adult...The test to which all Christian Churches will be put in the trying years ahead of us will make it evident how deeply and lastingly the Christian doctrine has been inculcated on young and old in our congregations and how the spirit of our synodical fathers, who were willing to sacrifice much for the sake of pure doctrine, is moving and guiding us in these "perilous times."¹⁵

Writers were concerned not only about the quality of education in our congregations and schools, but also the challenges posed to our young people by public education and the pressures from society and the government to homogenize religion. The *Quarterly* noted with some apprehension two bills being proposed in Congress in 1944:

House Resolution 2328 proposes to make mailing of "defamatory and false statements" about members of any race or religion a criminal offense. A similar bill has been introduced by Representative Samuel Dickstein...seeking to legislate against anything "designed or adopted or intended to cause racial or religious hatred or bigotry or intolerance." Both proposals call for penitentiary sentences up to five years or fines up to five thousand dollars, or both, upon conviction.¹⁶

Although deploring racial or religious hatred or bigotry, the article noted that such bills posed a serious threat to freedom of speech and freedom of religion.

1954-1978

In 1960 the name of the *Quarterly* was officially changed to *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*. A News and Comments article by the managing editor¹⁷, Prof Paul Peters, explained, "Since our synod at its Saginaw convention has changed its name to Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and has renamed our seminary Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, the seminary faculty as editorial staff of our theological quarterly has in conformity with the above name changes chosen the name *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*."¹⁸ Peters also explained that the old name was leading some to the conclusion that ours was a foreign language periodical. The name *Theologische Quartalschrift* continued to be retained as a subtitle. In his foreword to Volume 65 (1968) Prof. Armin Schuetze announced that the German subtitle had now been dropped. Prof. Schuetze wrote, "For sixteen years our *Quarterly* has published only English articles. A bilingual title if the periodical is not bilingual can be confusing. Hence the change."

The years 1954-1978 saw a number of church mergers and the growth of the Ecumenical Movement. Reports on these developments were frequent. Articles on fellowship, what constitutes doctrine and heresy, polemics in an ecumenical age, the Ecumenical Movement and its affect on American Lutheranism, and a variety of related topics addressed the pressing issues of the day. The *Quarterly* gave special attention to developments in the LCMS both before and after the break in fellowship was declared. The journal reported with sadness Missouri's struggles over the inerrancy of Scripture, the critical approaches to the Bible, and the Preus/Concordia Seminary-St. Louis conflict which culminated in the Seminex walkout.

Although many articles addressed the doctrinal and practical issues involved in the Intersynodical Controversy with Missouri and the negative developments in much of Christianity in America, these developments were not the *Quarterly's* sole concern. The *Quarterly* also published some thirteen feature articles on missions and mission work besides brief articles in the "News and Comments" section. George Lillegard's (1888-1965) "Lectures on Missions" presented at the 1955 Pastors Institute at the seminary was the first of these

¹⁵ Paul Peters, "Religious Instruction in the Free Churches of Germany," Vol. 38, #3, p 207.

¹⁶ Edmund Reim, "Shall We Have Laws on Religion?" Vol. 41, #3, p 203.

¹⁷ It is assumed that the seminary president served in the capacity of managing editor until the office became a faculty appointment. There seems to be no official mention of this office until the seminary catalog printed in 1937 lists John Meyer as managing editor. Prof Paul Peters is listed as editor in the 1944 catalog and his name is the first to appear on the cover or title page of the *Quarterly* as editor in 1947. Peters served as managing editor from 1944-1966. Prof Armin Schuetze served 1967-1980, followed by Edward Fredrich 1981-1985, Wilbert Gawrisch 1986-1993, and John Brug 1994 to the present.

¹⁸ Paul Peters, "Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly," Vol. 57, #1, p 72.

feature articles to appear (53:31,120,180,255; 54:38). Pastor Edgar Hoenecke (1903-2002) contributed "Extension of the Mission Endeavor" (58:232; 59:1) and "St. Paul's Missionary Approach to the Unchurched" (61:130). Prof. Peters offered "World-Wide Mission: The Work of the Triune God" (65:234) and three articles on Luther's mission-mindedness and the fruits of that mission-mindedness. Prof. Carl Lawrenz (1908-1989) offered "Extent and Limitations of the Great Commission in Inner City Church Work" (70:83) and "A Definitive Study of Proselytizing" (73:23). Missionary E. H. Wendland wrote, "Missiology - and the Two Billion" (71:8). Prof. Armin Schuetze addressed the place of charitable work in the church at home and abroad in "Scriptural Principles with Respect to the Church's Mission and Christian Welfare Work" (70:194) and "The Church's Social Concerns-Scriptural Imperatives and Limitations" (72:146). Home Mission Executive Secretary Norman Berg produced "Home Mission Moods and Modes-125 Years in WELS" (73:250).

Because of the struggles for the Bible that came to the fore during this period, the *Quarterly* published several articles on inspiration, interpretation, the authority of Scripture, the place of reason in Lutheran theology, and the challenges of Neo-Orthodoxy and the historical-critical method. Dr. Siegbert Becker (1914-1984) contributed seven articles on these key issues. The journal also addressed the rising tide of Pentecostalism and the Charismatic Movement in both feature articles and "News and Comments" offerings.

During the third quarter century the *Quarterly* staff began to make efforts to translate some of the classic articles written by the Wauwatosa theologians and to publish them for a new generation of pastors who were not as capable in the German language as their forebears. Among the articles that appeared in translation were August Pieper's "The Book of Job in its Significance for Preaching and the Cure of Souls" (57:50,118,197), "Luther's Doctrine of Church and Ministry" (60:13,81,247), "Concerning the Doctrine of the Church and of Its Ministry, with Special Reference to the Synod and Its Discipline" (59:81), "The Glory of the Lord" (52:104, 168,247; 53:1,139;54:27; 55:1), "The Law Is Not Made for a Righteous Man" (57:238;58:27), and others. The list of J. P. Koehler's articles translated and published in the *Quarterly* during this period includes, "The Importance of the Historical Disciplines for the American Lutheran Church of the Present" (72:129) and "The Real Theme of the Epistle to the Ephesians" (65:116). Two of John Schaller's articles also appeared: "Redemption and Universal Justification according to Second Corinthians" (72:309) and "The Hidden God" (71:185).

As it became apparent that the venerable King James Version would need to be replaced and the Revised Standard Version of the Bible appeared, the seminary faculty began considering finding a suitable replacement for the KJV. An attempt was even made to produce a suitable translation of our own. The *Quarterly* published a trial translation of Galatians in volumes 52-54 (1955-1957). Other articles compared and evaluated the various new translations available.

One of the most noteworthy contributions of the quarterly during this period was the publishing of Prof. John Meyer's commentary on St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians. Meyer produced this commentary as a series of exegetical studies for the Milwaukee City Pastoral Conference. The commentary was printed in serial form in the *Quarterly* in some 29 issues of volumes 50-58. Northwestern Publishing House published it in book form under the title, *Ministers of Christ*, as part of the seminary's centennial celebration in 1963.

The *Quarterly* also produced some important historical articles during this period. The seminary's 100th anniversary was commemorated in an article entitled, "Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, 1863-1963," (60:170) by Pastor Immanuel P. Frey (1889-1964). In honor of the 125th anniversary of the Wisconsin Synod the *Quarterly* published biographical articles on John Muehlhaeuser (1804-1868), John Bading (1824-1913), Philip von Rohr (1843-1908), Gustav Bergemann (1862-1954), Gottlieb Reim (1828-1882), and William Streissguth (1827-1915). The article on the last two mentioned appeared under the title, "Two Forgotten Wisconsin Synod Presidents - Reim and Streissguth" (vol 75, #3). Indeed without such articles most of our presidents and history would be forgotten.

1979-2003

During its fourth quarter century the *Quarterly* took note of a number of anniversaries by means of historical studies. The 400th anniversary of the Formula of Concord and the 450th anniversary of the

publication of Luther's catechisms were honored with several articles. The 100th anniversary of the death of Lutheran giant C. F. W. Walther (1811-1887) was marked by the translation of Pieper's "Anniversary Reflections" (84:12,96,186,270) which describes Walther's influence on confessional Lutheranism in America and contrasts the development of the Missouri and Wisconsin Synods. The 125th anniversary of the founding of the seminary occasioned the translation of Adolf Hoenecke's "The History of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary from 1863 to 1903" (85:7) and three essays on the Reformation watchwords engraved on the seminary cornerstone, *solo gratia, sola scriptura, sola fide*. The essays appeared under the general title, "The Seminary's Unchanging Foundation in a Changing World" (86:9,83,169). There was also a series of articles describing the content, objectives, and methodology of the seminary's curriculum. One article commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Common Service, the well-known page 5 and 15 of *The Lutheran Hymnal* and page 15 of *Christian Worship* (85:140). Prof Richard Balge detailed the events surrounding the 1892 Federation of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan on the occasion of the Federation's 100th anniversary (89:168). The 150th anniversary of the founding of the Wisconsin Synod was observed with four articles describing twelve key events in synodical history (97:13,84,164,249). Four articles reviewed sixteen key events in the history of Christianity as we entered the third millennium (98:21,98,171,255).

During the past 25 years the Quarterly has offered a number of articles on evangelism, mission work, mission challenges, and missiology. Prof. Ernst H. Wendland, former missionary in Zambia, took the lead in addressing many of these issues. The phenomenon of Postmodernism and the challenges it presents to a confessional church were considered in a feature article and several shorter comments. Other articles looked at the cross-cultural challenges facing mission boards and congregations in changing neighborhoods.

Studies on worship in the 1980s prepared the way for *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal* and were followed by another set of articles on worship in the 1990s. Worship experimentation in an attempt to reach younger generations and to meet the challenge of cross-cultural work called for a consideration of what constitutes Lutheran worship. One such examination was Prof. David Valleskey's, "What Does It Mean to Be Evangelical Lutheran in Worship? Applying the Principles to Multicultural Outreach" (96:267).

Exegetical and isagogical articles have been featured throughout the history of the *Quarterly*. In recent years short "Exegetical Briefs" have become popular with readers. A few "Doctrinal Briefs" have also appeared. Sermon studies and homiletical helps have also been offered periodically.

The 1970s and 1980s saw a proliferation of premillennial views in our country. The Quarterly addressed this challenge in both feature articles and news comments. Prof. Wilbert Gawrisch's (1924-2002) 1974 Pastors Institute lectures entitled, "Eschatological Prophecies and Current Misinterpretations," appeared in 1987 and 1988 (84:125,201, 278; 85:109,197).

One of the most pressing problems for Lutherans in America in the second half of the twentieth century was the role of men and women in the church. In his foreword to Volume 78 entitled, "Our Continuing Commitment: From Controversy to Consensus, Prof. Edward Fredrich (1917-1995) noted that there was some disagreement in synodical ranks concerning this doctrine. He explained that just as the seminary faculty and the *Quarterly* had been involved in the controversy over church and ministry in the early part of the century and the Intersynodical Controversy in the mid part of the century, the seminary and the Quarterly were committed to providing exegetical helps in the current controversy. Fredrich wrote,

That consensus is our common goal is a nondebatable premise for those in a truly confessional church body. Such a church body presupposes unity in doctrine and practice that reflects such unity.

The consensus dare not, however, be an agreement to disagree about Scripture teaching. It dare not be reached by resort to the weak-kneed conclusion that difficulties in practical application of a doctrine warrant an adjustment in the doctrine. It dare not be a stalemate situation that continues indefinitely while "further study" goes on and on and on. The consensus must be *sola scriptura*. It will be achieved *sola gratia*. It should be accepted *sola fide*.

In a manner consciously reminiscent of the approach of the Wauwatosa theologians the seminary faculty provided fresh exegetical studies of those sections of Scripture that speak about the God-pleasing role of men

and women. Two were written by Prof. David Kuske, two by Prof. Armin Panning, one by Dr. Siegbert Becker, one by Prof. Richard Balge. Selections from Prof. Lawrenz' Genesis Commentary on Genesis 2:18-24 and 3:9-20 were also offered. These studies were published in volume 78 and did much to bring about understanding of the scriptural principles in our circles.

In the 1980s budget difficulties on both the congregational and synodical level loomed large. As special offering efforts and fund-raising drives proliferated, questions were raised about scriptural stewardship principles. The *Quarterly* staff responded with three articles on stewardship in volume 90, two in volume 91, and one in volume 92.

A major doctrinal issue in the last decade of the *Quarterly* is one that was also addressed in the first decade of publication, the doctrine of the ministry. Society's denigration of the pastoral office, the development of new forms of public ministry within our synod, and controversies over this doctrine in other church bodies prompted several articles.

The doctrine of church fellowship has been a subject of interest from the very founding of the *Quarterly*. The ecclesiastical spirit of the twentieth century has been an ecumenism that ignores doctrinal differences for the sake of union. Doctrine and the concept of absolute truth have become more and more meaningless in most denominations. Those who cling to the biblical concept of truth and treasure Christian doctrine and fellowship based on full agreement in doctrine and practice are swimming against a strong current. It is not surprising that the scriptural doctrine of church fellowship and its practice needed to be addressed several times again during the past decade.

Looking to the Future

What can we expect during the next hundred years of publication if God grants this little journal another century of life? Our synod's pastors and congregations will most certainly face a number of practical problems. There will be challenges posed by our changing world and society in education, preaching, counseling, evangelism, and missions. Remaining confessional with an emphasis on scriptural doctrine may prove to be particularly difficult. In a recent article on the challenges of the 21st century Prof. John Brug suggests, "Without a doubt, the most serious challenge facing Lutheranism as a whole is whether doctrine will even be important enough that there will be any serious doctrinal controversies."¹⁹ He lists the following as doctrinal issues that will probably be with us for the foreseeable future: the gospel of Christ, the law of God, the inerrancy of Scripture, church fellowship, the role of women in the church, church and ministry, manufacturing man (problems posed by genetic engineering, cloning, etc.), and the validity of the sacraments. Many of those issues are not new, but will have to be faced again in different guises and settings by new generations of Wisconsin Synod Lutherans. One can only pray that the *Quarterly* will continue to address these challenges with the same approach that has characterized the journal from its inception. While not ignoring the wisdom of our fathers, we will have to mine the Scriptures ourselves for the guidance and certainty that only God's Word can give.

It is only by God's grace that we can look back over ninety-nine years of consistency in purpose, theological approach, and doctrine. We pray that the Lord of the church will continue to bless the *Quarterly* in its efforts to proclaim the gospel, teach and defend scriptural truth, promote confessional Lutheranism, and provide practical assistance for parish pastors. To God alone be glory!

[Most of the articles noted in this essay can be found in the Seminary Library's online essay file at <http://www.wls.wels.net/library/Essays/essayindex.htm> - WLS Library Staff]

¹⁹ John Brug, "Doctrinal Challenges Facing Lutheranism in the 21st Century," Vol. 98, #1, p.6.