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PROCEEDINGS

OF THE 1953

***Valparaiso University
Institute***

ON

HUMAN RELATIONS

Held At

VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY
Valparaiso, Indiana

JULY 24 TO 26, 1953

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Edited by George Hans Liebenow

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FOREWORD

The essays and addresses contained in this copy of the "Proceedings" were delivered at the fourth annual Institute on Human Relations at Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana, from July 24 to July 26, 1953. In accordance with the theme for the Institute: "TO EVERY CREATURE," over one hundred clerical and lay leaders of the church met to discuss ways and means for our churches to bring the Gospel to every creature, specifically to the American Negroes.

Though the program was termed an "Institute On Human Relations," and though much discussion was given to the American Negro and other minority groups, an outsider entering without knowledge as to the type of program might have taken it to be a conference on missions and evangelism. And so it was—for the primary purpose of the leaders and members of the institute was and is—to lead souls to Jesus Christ through God's Word and sacraments as administered by Christians and Christian congregations.

The addresses by Rev. William A. Drews, Rev. Charles Cline, Rev. A. W. Trinklein, Rev. Philip Johnson and a review by Rev. Theodore Schroeder of the "Guidelines" on the *Integration of Negroes* issued by the Missionary Board of the Synodical Conference preceded the workshop on "All-Inclusive Mission Work."

Rev. Moses Dickinson, Pastor of Resurrection Lutheran Church of Chicago, Illinois, served as chaplain for the Institute. Dr. Henry F. Wind, Executive Secretary of the Board of Social Welfare of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, was the banquet speaker, with Professor Victor Hoffmann of Valparaiso University serving as the master of ceremonies.

As in former years, the Institute was sponsored by the St. Louis Lutheran Society for Better Human Relations and the Chicago Lutheran Society for Better Human Relations in cooperation with Valparaiso University's summer institute program. A momentous decision was reached to form a new society, The International Lutheran Society for Better Human Relations. Its purpose will be to continue the annual institutes at Valparaiso University and to assist the church-at-large and congregations in serving all members of their respective communities.

We hope that the printing of these essays and addresses will help individual Christians and Christian congregations to bring Christ's saving Gospel to all people.

"Mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people."
Isaiah 56:7.

The Editor.

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HUMAN RELATIONS ACCORDING TO "EPHESIANS"

by Dr. Martin H. Scharlemann

About ten years ago a high school girl from the South took first place in a radio contest with her answer to the question, "How should Hitler be punished for his crimes against humanity?" She won a prize for the answer, "He ought to be made to wear a black face and to live in a community where racial discrimination is practiced."¹ This girl had observed, if not experienced, the horrors of prejudice, of man's most cruel inhumanity to man. It is something of a tragic commentary on human affairs that the worst punishment this student could imagine had to be described in terms of an attitude toward a particular race by members of a different biological strain.

The evil of prejudice has been treated from many angles in the past. It has been done statistically, so to speak, in as recent a document as "Civil Rights In the United States, 1952," assembled and published by the American Jewish Congress and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The horrors resulting from segregation have been considered from their social and moral points of view in such treatments of the subject as are found in Henry C. Link's "The Rediscovery of Morals" and in the report of former President Truman's Committee on Civil Rights, entitled, "To Secure These Rights." This matter has been the theme of a number of movies, outstanding among which is probably Louis de Rochemont's "Lost Boundaries."

Today, however, we propose to proceed beyond this point. We want to throw the bright searchlight of a significant New Testament document on this whole question as we discuss "Human Relations According to St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians." From a Christian point of view, dealing with a problem such as this in the white light of God's revealed will, is, of course, the most penetrating probe that can be undertaken.

The Letter to the Ephesians is of particular significance in the area of human relations because the major theme of the book is *unity in Christ*. "Ephesians" presents the basic structure which humanity needs for the expression of any kind of truly communal life acceptable to God. Its theme is the Church; and the Church is here represented as the universal community intended and designed by God to transcend and embrace all differences of race, station and sex. The book addresses itself to the problem of human relations with a phrase which is found in verse fourteen of chapter two, and which represents our present theme; namely,

"The Middle Wall of Partition"

This expression owes its origin to the presence of a wall which divided the inner court of the Temple at Jerusalem from the outer courtyard. The sanctuary was open only to Jews; Gentiles dared go

no farther than the wall that enclosed it. From Josephus we know that bilingual inscriptions, in both Latin and Greek, were placed at regular intervals along this wall, warning Gentiles not to enter the sanctuary itself. One of these inscriptions was found some seventy-five years ago during some excavations made on the site of the Temple. It reads: "No man of another race is to proceed within the partition and enclosing wall about the sanctuary; and any one arrested there will have himself to blame for the penalty of death which will be imposed as a consequence."²

You may recall that as the result of an alleged breach of this regulation a tumult had once arisen in Jerusalem over St. Paul himself, who had taken Trophimus into the inner precincts (Acts 21,28f). Partly perhaps as an echo of this personal experience the apostle uses this expression of the "middle wall of partition," derived as it was from an arrangement and practice of religious exclusiveness, to point up a problem in segregation that had developed very early in the experience of the Christian Church. It was a difficulty, a source of irritation and enmity, so serious that it at times threatened to tear Christian congregations completely apart. It involved nothing less than the question of the relationship of Jew to Gentile, and of Gentile to Jew.

There were those among the Jews who insisted that an approved rapport could be created and developed only on the plane of total conformity to the precepts of Judaism. The consequent disturbance shook Christian congregations to their very foundations; and Paul himself had to exert the full weight of his apostolic authority on a number of occasions to prevent total disaster for the cause of the Christian religion.

In a sense, God Himself had given occasion for that distinction between Jew and Gentile which Dr. Mackay, in his recent treatment of "Ephesians," calls "the sacred rift."³ God had long ago reached into history to make one people His very own, to deal specifically and redemptively with it for the benefit of all mankind. At Mount Sinai, shortly after the Exodus, the Lord had said to this race, "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people" (Ex. 19,5). In this way He had separated Israel from the nations of the world. However, He had done so only for the purpose of making this one people His vehicle for healing a greater breach that still runs through both the supernatural and the natural world, separating Satan and man from God, and man from his fellow man.

In time Israel had forgotten the motivation behind God's action. As the seed of Abraham the Hebrew race developed what the apostle called a carnal pride, an attitude of heart and mind which looked with disdain upon "lesser breeds without the law." Frequently this very air of superiority and exclusiveness, by way of reaction, aroused intense feelings of anti-Semitism on the part of the Gentiles.

Jewish disdain and Gentile animosity constituted a major threat to the apostolic Church. There was a tendency on both sides to construct a "middle wall of partition" in the assembly of believers. In his Letter to the Ephesians the apostle emphasizes the fact that this wall, although still a built-in architectural feature of the Temple, had

been broken down in its spiritual and social sense by none other than Jesus Himself. This meant that the distinction between Jew and Gentile had been removed as a barrier to mutual fellowship. Both were now one in Christ.

This stirring truth St. Paul describes as "the mystery of God's will," which had been hidden from previous generations, but was now revealed to him and through him to the members of Christ's Church (3,3). Jew and Gentile were both to form part of a new commonwealth of heaven and earth. God's grace was working itself out in history in such a way as to gather in of every kind. Since the resurrection of Christ the Church has become the embodiment of God's unifying purpose for mankind.

The Letter to the Ephesians examines the problem of group segregation and individual isolation in the light of this revealed mystery. It does not overlook the enmities existing among men. It reckons with them realistically but points to a power that transcends and reconciles them.

Man's hatred of man, as practiced in many and devious ways, is nothing superficial. It cannot be explained adequately by pointing only to social, economic, or political factors. It is part of a cosmic rift. It reflects a cleavage that runs right through the universe. Behind and at the source of human enmity, prejudice, and segregation are the great powers of darkness described by the apostle as "spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (6,12).

These "heavenlies," as J. Armitage Robinson tells us in his superb treatment of this Letter, are "the sphere of spiritual activities: that immaterial region, the 'unseen universe,' which lies behind the world of sense." "In it," Robinson continues, "great forces are at work: forces which are conceived of as having in part transgressed against that order, and so having become disordered: forces which in part are opposed to us and wrestle against us . . ." ⁴

These hosts are thought of as personal beings led by one who is called "the prince of the power of the air" (2,2). They produce on earth a fierce enmity, separating men both from God and from their fellow human beings. Man's embittered social relationships are interpreted by the apostle as being part of a great rebellion against God, instigated by Satan and joined by man.

Early in their history, men by their spiritual malfeasance destroyed that fellowship and unity for which God had created them. Cain was soon on his way to "the land of Nod, on the east of Eden," a fugitive from society (Gen. 4,16). The great attempt undertaken a little later to erect a tower to the glory of man, which would be a perpetual monument to man's divinity and an abiding center of human unity, actually resulted, as you will recall, in a babel of languages and the dispersion of races.

In short, the apostle traces the vices of hatred, animosity, and prejudice to their source, through man's evil heart back to the principalities and powers that rule in the sons of disobedience. He does not stop there, however. Of this rift, cleaving heaven and earth and

man from man, he says that it has been done away with by the Cross, which is now to serve as a new unifying principle among men.

Christ was crucified, to be sure, by human hatred; but, in His dying, hatred itself was slain.⁵ The effect of Christ's work of redemption is described in the Letter to the Ephesians as the creation of a new community, embracing two apparently irreconcilable segments of humanity, Jew and Gentile. God Himself is here revealed as providing a rallying-center for men of all races and nations and tongues. The exact words read as follows:

"For He is Himself our peace. He has united the two into one and has broken down the middle wall of partition. In his flesh He put an end to the feud between us and abolished the Law with its rules and regulations, in order to create out of the two parties one new man by uniting them with Himself and so effecting peace. He did this to kill the feud between them by the cross and in one body to reconcile them both to God with it" (2,14-16).

This unity to which we have been called by the Cross of Christ is not just an inward unity, content to remain aloof from life's problems. God's mercy toward us cannot be relegated to the world of ideas only. He acted in history and He expects us to do the same. There is very little room in His Kingdom for mere spectators. There are no bleachers from which to observe the battle or the race. Our place is in the middle of events. As Dr. Mackay tells us, "Only when the spectator becomes a wayfarer upon the highway of God's purposes, only when he is willing to identify himself with God's great scheme of things as it is revealed in the Bible, is he capacitated to understand the Bible way of looking at things."⁶

The real point of "Ephesians" is just like that, by our outward performance, we match the inward unity described there in full and glowing terms. Lest there be any mistake along this line, the apostle lists the Christian virtues that preserve and manifest the unity of the Spirit at work in the Church (4,1-3). He calls on us to practice them. This is what he writes:

"Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, exhort you to live lives worthy of the call you have received: with every expression of humility and gentleness, with the practice of patience, bearing with each other in love" (4,1-3).

The first of the virtues here listed by the apostle is humility. This is a word which the Christian religion has salvaged from its pagan associations to express that frame of mind which recognizes God's greatness and man's littleness. Humility looks to all of God's undeserved blessings and falls upon its knees in gratitude. It is a quality of life which we learn in imitation of Christ, of whom we read that "He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2,8).

In the realm of human relations humility is a cohesive, rather than a divisive, force, for it recognizes the lordship of Christ over all of His followers. It joins all the other redeemed children in adoration

of God for His many mercies toward us. It "subordinates itself, instead of lording it over the brethren."⁷

The virtue of meekness, or gentleness, which is mentioned next, is opposed to all forms of self-assertion. In the relations of men with their fellowmen, meekness is of great significance; hence the Beatitudes say, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5,5). This is the gentleness of our Saviour, who reached out to the lost and condemned in order to help them.

We have lived long enough with people of various kinds to realize that self-assertion is one of the sources of misunderstanding, irritation and animosity. The man who asserts himself is usually not very sensitive to the rights and interests of others. He is aggressive in the sense of wanting his own way, regardless. Now, meekness starts at the other end of this relationship. It recognizes the priority of other men's needs.

The apostle goes on to speak of the practice of patience. This has to do with endurance in the face of provocation. However, it is a little more than that. The word might be translated as "long-suffering." It connotes the refusal to give up hope for improvement in any disturbed relationship that might arise. God Himself is spoken of as long-suffering toward us, "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet., 3,9). He puts up with our individual faults and peculiarities, our acts of pride and self-assertion which threaten our relationship with Him, in the hope that in the presence of His unmeasured grace we may become humble and meek. This kind of long-suffering we are to practice in the field of human relations.

All of these suggestions might be summed up in two words, "Copy God!" (5,1). From that point we proceed to what is the climax in the series of suggestions the apostle makes. We are to bear with each other in love, he writes. This statement implies a tacit recognition of the fact that personal differences and strains will and do develop as men live with each other, also in the Christian community. In this situation we are to learn of Christ and practice love. "Love" is a word used of God's actions toward us. We did not deserve His kindness. In fact, St. Paul is very emphatic in his inspired assertions that we were enemies of God, in open rebellion against Him, when He sent us His only Son. The very "middle wall of partition" we have referred to is described in "Ephesians" as having its source in enmity toward God; and yet God in His love broke it down from the other side through the Cross.

Love, then, is an act of the will. It is not aroused or motivated by anything desirable or lovable in its object. It is "spontaneous and uncaused."⁸ That kind of love we are to show in bearing with each other. It is an active outgoing of ourselves towards others, especially toward those who need our concern and our attention, thus creating community.

We are reminded here of a point in Bruce Marshall's *Father Malachy's Miracle*. On the opening pages of the book Father Malachy is introduced as he takes his seat in the compartment of an English

train. Hardly had he settled himself when there entered a fat man with a face "so red and pouchy that it looked like a bladder painted to hit people over the head with at an Italian carnival." Shortly thereafter a middle-aged woman climbed into the same part of the train. Father Malachy noticed she had a "peaky, shiny nose with a funny little dent in the middle." As he gazed upon his fellow passengers, "the little clergyman" decided he had best close his eyes. He must love his neighbors; and it would be easier, he was sure, to love them without looking at them.⁹ Let us say for Bruce Marshall's creation that he understood in large measure the nature and requirements of love as the New Testament uses the word!

The qualities of heart and mind described by the words "humility," "meekness," "patience," and "love" are part of God's new creation. They reflect His desire for unity and fellowship among His children. Precisely for that reason those who begin to practice these virtues come under fierce attack from those principalities, powers and "world-rulers of darkness" whose delight is in friction, chaos, disintegration and destruction. Hence the apostle commands us to reach for the panoply of God consisting of the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the sandals of the gospel of peace, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit (6,14-17).

There is something paradoxical about this picture of a warrior, equipped with the gospel of peace. However, that is our situation. To establish the peace of God we must do battle, not against each other on account of race or color, but against those beings and powers "in the heavenlies" that disturb and destroy God's peace among us, against "the anarchs of night."

Our battle is a way of life, the practice of Christ's virtues in life's many relationships—at home, on the business frontier, in all of our dealings with each other and with those who may not yet be fellow-citizens of God's new commonwealth. We are to show toward the outside that inward unity which God creates in Christ Jesus. If we are humble, gentle, long-suffering, and loving, we "strive to preserve the unity in the spirit by the bond of peace" (4,3). This last quotation is a bridge passage to a few verses in "Ephesians" which once more present the creative and unifying power of God in the Church. We read:

"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you are called in one hope of your calling. There is one Lord, one faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above us all, pervades us all, and is within us all" (4,4-6).

"One . . . one . . . one"—the word is repeated seven times in this short section to stress not only the fact of our oneness in God, but of our responsibility to reflect this being one with Him. Each time this word "one" is attached to a noun: body, spirit, hope, Lord, faith, Baptism, God! Christianity is inescapably communal, centered in Christ under God. In His presence there cannot be separation and segregation, prejudice and discrimination.

And so the Letter to the Ephesians exalts the Church as the means of removing the "middle wall of partition." It speaks of Christ in

His cosmic significance. Of Him we read that all things will be brought together under Him. This gathering process and its result are called "the fulness of Him that fills all things." Here is a great multitude; here is the whole people of God. They are the members of His body, supporting each other, ministering to each other's needs, and, as one, serving the Lord who is their head.

"Ephesians" describes our unity in Christ not only in terms of a body, but also under the figure of a temple—not like the one in Jerusalem with its "middle wall of partition"—but a new kind of dwelling-place for God, built of living stones joined together and founded on apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the cornerstone. This sacred edifice is described as being in the process of creation to serve as a permanent residence for that God whose gracious presence has been withdrawn from the first Holy of Holies.

The apostle resorts moreover to the concept of the family to underline the unity found and to be practiced in the Church. He speaks of those from afar and of those who are near as all belonging to the household of God. This description is of even greater significance than St. Paul's statement on Mars' Hill: "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17,26). The Church is a redeemed community. It is a creation of God's grace and not merely the product of His providence. We were ordained to be His sons by adoption through Jesus Christ (1,5). All of us, black, yellow, red, and white, have access to God's throne of grace and can join in the family prayer, "Our Father" (2,18). There cannot be any longer among us a "middle wall of partition."

This does not imply colorless uniformity. God does not destroy our personalities to make us His sons. He does not eradicate our racial, social and cultural backgrounds. Each of us, for what we are, is given God's grace to come into this household, repenting and in faith. The Church is not a monolithic society, composed of men *en masse*. God does not look upon us in terms of the party leader who delights to have before him the "great grey face" of the masses. He wants each of us for what we can individually become under the influence of His Spirit; and to that end He invites us into His fellowship, the Church, to serve Him in Christ, destroying the "dividing wall of hostility," as the Revised Standard Version translates our theme-phrase, the partition that separates a man from his brother also when he is of another color.

Wyston Hugh Auden has a few lines in his "Christmas Oratorio" which reflect the unifying influence of God's love toward men. He brings the Wise Men from the East and the shepherds from Bethlehem's plains together at the Manger and has them say:

"Released by Love from isolating wrong,
Let us, from Love, unite our various song,
Each with his gift according to his kind,
Bringing this Child his body and his mind."¹⁰

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SOCIAL GROUP WORK AND THE CHURCH

(The Work of the Lutheran Interracial Service of New York City)

by Mr. Cleveland Lassiter, M.A.

Social work is gradually and surely becoming of age in the church. Since 1930 there has existed the Church Conference of Social Work, an associate group of the National Conference of Social Work, planned specially for Protestant and Orthodox social workers in church related agencies.

The trend now reveals a steadily increasing number of church agencies and the addition of case work and group work services to the church's total program.

Lutheran Interracial Service is an agency in New York City that utilizes the church setting in performing its religious and social work. Through six selected parish centers in as many communities (chiefly transitional in character), youth of differing racial backgrounds are served. The agency program purposes to promote the community well-being of individuals—encouraging their closer identification with the church, training them for Christian participation and leadership or helping them meet a social need.

For this unique project we have a director and a group worker, both professional social workers, who in turn supervise college field work students and lay people from congregations who gratuitously serve as group leaders, religious instructors or assistants.

These workers all apply the group work method in leading clubs, athletic teams, special interest groups and religious education classes. In order to individualize more, these people assume personal counseling and home visiting as part of their function.

As already indicated, no racial or religious lines are drawn in this work, as Lutherans, other Protestants, Roman Catholics, Negro and white alike may be among the serving or the served.

To better understand and appreciate our agency's role and function, we define the term "group work." Harleigh Trecker of the University of Connecticut School of Social Work, says: "It is an orderly, systematic, planned way of working with individuals in groups. It is a process and method through which individuals in groups are helped by workers to relate themselves to other people and to experience growth opportunities in accordance with their needs and capacities."

The worker becomes a helper or enabler in charting the individual's personality growth, change or development as a result of this guided interaction. He helps or enables people to discover and utilize individual, group and agency strengths for the well-being of all involved. In the church setting, a type of leadership based on

Christ-like principles is called for. In addition it is basic that the worker understand community life with its social and economic conditions, in order to function satisfactorily with individuals who reflect the pressures and strains of such conditions.

Lutheran Interracial Service is a member of the throng of non-profit organizations, but those children and young people who use the church centers on specified days under agency auspices to enjoy a spiritual and fun program profit immensely.

The staff and others who are sold on a group work program firmly believe that it aids the church promotionally and evangelically. Individuals have an opportunity for healthy release in the spiritual atmosphere and under the influence of its suggestive tone may constructively develop their talents and abilities.

By virtue of its role and function, our agency aims to help churches become more effective in social and racial relations. It proposes to make individuals forget themselves in an activity and to foster teamwork where combined traits of performance count most, rather than pigments of skin. This also helps to bring about genuine socialization of the individual.

Among the agency's concerns is delinquency prevention. It has taken much counsel from a report of the National Conference of Prevention and Control of Juvenile Delinquency which met in Washington, D. C., in November of 1946. The panel on church responsibility of the conference asserted that religious organizations that approach the individual must reckon with the building of the individual's responsibility. They must also reckon with the factors of society which may make it very difficult for the individual to attain his basic objectives of life. The report goes on to say that the basic message of religion keeps constantly reminding us that the individual human being, no matter how low he may have descended in the scale of human values, is indescribably important in the consideration of his fellow man and in the sight of God.

Our project aims to assist ministers to reach people who ordinarily would not be reached. This means in most cases that we have to buck conditions that make wholesome family living very difficult, such as poor and overcrowded housing conditions and immoral influences which vie for and sometimes control the individual. We find it better to post-judge and understand rather than prejudge and dismiss as futile, youthful misbehavior in such a menacing environment.

Picture if you will the atmosphere of these church centers which buzz with busy noises as the youngsters play joyously and vigorously in directed group games, turn out a brilliant craft piece or painting, prepare a dish, construct a miniature Biblical scene, make a gift or favor for a hospital patient or for mother or dad, engage in lusty group singing or compete in friendly competition with children of many races in sports tournaments. Then you may observe worship periods and special programs which commemorate Christmas, Easter or World Day of Prayer. Picture the youngsters' delight in going on specially arranged educational or entertaining trips throughout the city, and the hilarity and excitement which rushes forth when they

see people and places of renown for the first time, a Jackie Robinson, a Coney Island, a famous Christian church or other fascinating attractions.

Of importance is the group centeredness of such a program, which helps the individual to develop self-discipline, good judgment and a sense of justice and ethics.

All is not recreation and all is not religious training, but a favorable balance is struck between the two in this cultivation of young human minds. Religious instruction is given through our release time schools during the public school term and in our churches. Summer means Daily Vacation Bible School time, when we rely on housewives, high school or college students or teachers or other vacationers to teach our courses.

The New York child deserves a country vacation in the summer camp during the off school months and our agency has a part in sending a small number of the needy host.

The story of our work's need and needs is carried forth in messages to women's societies, young peoples' clubs, councils and national church groups, with the hope that our idea will gain credence wherever there are broad-minded Christian people who want to see action instead of words.

PUTTING THE LEAVEN TO WORK

by Rev. William A. Drews

"This church has come a long way in its 106 years. Older delegates remember when a Missouri Synod convention was the most completely isolated meeting in America. Even if they had tried, delegates in those early days could not have felt they were really a part of their new country. Their roots were not here. They sang their Luther hymns in a strange land. Publicity was vulgar heresy; public notice was shunned like a pestilence.

"But the Houston convention was as wide open as a Rotary luncheon. Press and radio were not only invited and provided for, they were encouraged to report every session. What is more, they were dealt with in such a frank and friendly manner as to win friends and influence. Church leaders wisely used their meeting as a mission post." (*Christian Century*, 1953, p. 823.)

Reports from Houston stated that in the past three years we had added 141,600 adults to our membership, and that 395 new churches had been started. The goal for the next four years is 480 new churches. With such statistics men are well pleased!

Yes, 395 new churches were born—but how many DIED during those three years? And how many will sicken and die in the next four? And how many of the 141,600 accessions found their way into our OLDER churches? And of those gained by the older churches—how many came from the neighborhood *in which the church is located*? Are we giving any real evidence of the proud boast that our church IS a part of the American community? Must we not admit that our idea of expansion is horizontal rather than vertical? Isn't it true that we are still spreading ourselves out very thin on the periphery of our cities—instead of witnessing where we are? Our program for tomorrow must call for the intensification of our work AT HOME, in the communities in which we are now planted.

This is one important way of applying the parable of the leaven: Putting the leaven into the meal means INTEGRATION—both ways—the church into the community and the community into the church. Within our cities, we do not need more churches—we need more people in the churches that we already have. On an ordinary Sunday most of our churches in the older parts of the city are half empty. Why? Because their members have moved away and the losing churches have not made any effort to get new ones *from the community*, irrespective of racial, national or economic background. Someone has well said that the church which serves the community will not be allowed to die; the church that does not serve the community does not deserve to live. The community is not there to serve the church, but the church is there to serve the community. This is its very reason for existence.

My main theme is that the problem of the individual church in the city is the problem of the entire community, of the sisterhood of

churches. Since there are no such things as parish lines and we do not demand that the individual congregation confine its missionary efforts to any particular section of the city, we cannot deny that our destinies and our programs overlap and interlock.

We should, therefore, through a central agency (Mission or Church Extension Society, backed up by the District) combine our mental, spiritual and financial resources and develop a program that will be of mutual benefit to the entire church family. This would mean that we not only plan the strategy for the area, making the welfare of the Kingdom the primary consideration, planting suburban churches in strategic locations, but also helping the older churches, which have given much of their life-blood to bring the new ones into existence. We are hoping to do this in Buffalo; in fact, we have been doing the first part of this for a long time. We are now planning to develop a program of action for our older and weakening churches, whereby some of them would be merged and others persuaded to stay where they are and adapt their program in accordance with the principle of the leaven.

The church in the changing area (and we have them in all of our cities) is called upon to demonstrate not only that Christianity is RELEVANT to any human situation, however heterogeneous, but that this spiritual force is the only adequate one in the world for the full amalgamation and brotherhood of mankind. Therefore, whether your church in the changing neighborhood is the traditional, the transitional, the institutional or the mission-type, this center of a God-given culture will have a four-fold task:

1. To provide its motley constituents with a complete religious and church experience.
2. To pioneer new patterns of effective churchmanship in the community where it is located.
3. To work together with its sister-churches for the broad and all-inclusive mission program laid down by our Lord.
4. To swing the general population's attention toward the solid foundations of divine truth.

These, our churches in the changing parts of the city, can serve the Kingdom even in their old age; in fact, they can get a new lease on life by an injection of new blood—various kinds of blood. They can not only carry on an extensive “proxy” ministry through their substantial contributions, but above all an intensive evangelism among the unchurched and the unshepherded who live in the shadow of their venerable spires. They can reach out for those who are not responsive to the invitation of a mission or chapel, but who can be reached by the leverage of a strong church with a solid background. If they are to justify their continued existence, they must be neighborhood churches in the real sense of that word, serving the souls that are famishing within sight of the oasis, carrying on such spiritual, educational and welfare work as will exemplify the spirit of Christ and His apostles, centering in a glowing and vital evangelism which brings men to God, builds them up in the faith and binds them to the tasks of the Kingdom. That would really be putting the leaven to work as our Lord would have us do it.

REPORT ON OUR WORK IN CALIFORNIA

(titled by the editor)

by Rev. Charles Cline

May man determine who is to be saved? Does God's grace come by the goodness of man? If a man stands at a door, led there by the Holy Spirit, even as Philip was led to the Ethiopian's chariot, may he turn away without extending a gracious invitation to hear the Word of God in his church or without sharing His saving faith?

The answers to the above questions may seem obvious, and yet many do not consider them so. One pastor, after talking over the matter of serving Negroes with his church council, learned that they were not willing to serve Negroes. Another pastor following the same procedure was informed that his congregation was willing to serve Negroes.

Regardless of the outcome, the pastors were setting aside the clear commission of the Lord Jesus Christ, which states, "Preach the Gospel to *every creature*," and letting their church councils decide whether they should accept the Lord's words at their face value.

One pastor was troubled by a feeling of guilt because of a similar event in Nebraska. He had confirmed a boy, then asked his council whether he could commune the boy with the others. They decided that the boy should be communed privately. And so the pastor lost the boy and a young couple whom he was instructing. After coming to California he discussed this matter with me several times. Recently he presented the transfer of a Negro couple without indicating their racial background. He has instructed and baptized into church membership a Negro boy who is almost blind. He serves Negro children in his Sunday School, and in Vacation Bible School. In the closing program of the Vacation Bible School he baptized two Negro children. He actively seeks to gain Negroes in his community for his congregation.

To say that all who do not actively seek Negroes for membership are consciously setting aside the great commission is not true. Those who are so blinded by prejudice that they would ignore completely the preaching to all creatures are in a small minority. God must deal with them as He dealt with Jonah. However, the majority who are willing to serve the Negro whenever he comes to them still need information and understanding to cause them to reach out to the Negro in their communities.

In our District when I arrived, totally confused and misinformed, I discovered that those who had been in charge of the work among the Negroes, had based their policy upon that of the supervising organization and thus looked upon the Negro as a child to be patronized and pampered. They believed that the Negro could be served best in a segregated congregation.

I soon learned that there were difficulties inherent in this policy. A young woman who liked our church hesitated to take instruction, for she said, "You accept me. But now suppose I learn to like the Lutheran Church, then I move to another city. The pastor of that church might not accept me. I know others who do not join for the same reason." When asked to speak about my work at the District Convention, I passed this on, trying to impress upon them this fact that this was their work as much as mine and that their attitudes toward the Negro were just as important as mine, if we were to gain the Negro even in a segregated church and hold him.

Some years later later the Mission Director asked me to speak about the underprivileged as a part of his report to the Golden Gate Pastoral Conference, comprising half of the pastors of the District. I hurled an accusation (I suppose it must have been that, even though I did not intend it to be so) that refusal on the part of the "White churches" to serve Negroes was hurting my work among the Negroes. This caused quite a bit of concern among the pastors. After lunch I was informed that there had been so much discussion on this that they desired me to write a paper on the Christian's attitude toward the Negro, presenting it at the next Conference.

After the reading of the paper some of the men said they would deem it a privilege to serve the Negro, if they had the opportunity to do so. One of these men had been on the other side of the issue at a local Conference when I had delivered another paper on the Negro and his relationship to the body of Christ. A few months ago he told me, "In a sermon I told my people that I would be ashamed of them if they would turn a Negro away from the church door. If a person just sits down and thinks it through, there's only one way to look at it."

Another pastor who argued against integration in personal conversations finally remarked, "The only kind of church to have is one with all people." When a Negro family moved into the tract with a restrictive covenant, causing quite a disturbance, he seemed to be back on the fence again. But a few weeks after this incident a Negro visited the church and was welcomed warmly by the whole congregation.

It was in this same church that a layman made a rather interesting statement. In the discussion period following a lecture he said that he had read an editorial in the *Lutheran Witness* which encouraged serving the Negro. As he read he could see Jesus standing there, pointing His finger at him, and saying, "You Pharisee, you." As a member of another Men's Club several years earlier, he confided that all of his experiences with Negroes had been bad, that he had not met a good Negro until he met some of the members from our congregation.

At the meeting of the pastors in the city of San Francisco to determine the policy for working among Negroes in that city, one pastor said that he would welcome all Negroes who would come or could be brought into his church. (He serves about 15 or more. Recently he confirmed a couple.) Another pastor said that he believed a congregation should be established in a district where there were many Negroes, so that it might serve as a gathering place and a distribution center, transferring Negroes to local churches as they would

move into other parts of the city. Another pastor thought that receiving Negroes into his congregation might turn prospects away, but he had arranged for a Negro to sing in his choir. Another of the pastors was already serving several Negroes. And so the policy was generally accepted that a congregation would be established in San Francisco which would make an effort to reach everyone in the community in which it was located, and would strive to reach Negroes throughout the city, urging them to attend the church of their choice.

In lecturing to organizations in congregations I never told people what course of action they should follow, even if they asked. I would tell them what others were doing, and then let the pastor voice the congregational policy. One pastor stated that there was no question as to what they should do if a Negro came to them. They should serve the Negro. That was the Lord's clear command. Another answered the question of a young woman, "What if a Negro would come to our church, what would we do?" He said, "What can we do? The Gospel is for everyone."

Our Mission Director has also become convinced that every congregation in the District should seek to win the Negro for Christ. Several discussions with him as to the effect of segregation upon my work, plus a stint in the service, where he saw the results of segregation (friction) and the results of integration (harmony), convinced him that integration was practical. Evidently the Missions Committee agreed with him, for last year he informed me that the Missions Committee thought I should use my influence to a far greater extent in encouraging our congregations throughout the District to reach out to the Negroes in their communities.

This, of course, had been contrary to my policy of not talking or writing about the matter unless requested to do so. Finally I decided to contact one of the members of the Mission Committee, offering my services to him and the other two pastors in his city for the purpose of arousing a consciousness among the people for bringing Negroes to Christ. In order to plan properly for it, he suggested that we try it in the fall. Then the following idea, which makes this whole effort quite normal, struck me. Briefly it is as follows:

"Each year during 'Mission Month' in our parish planning, we stress missions throughout the world. We learn about work among the Negroes in Africa, the Chinese in China, the Japanese in Japan, the Mexicans in Mexico. And we try to gain greater interest for these people and their needs. But we really have the world at our feet. Here in our own city we have Negroes, Chinese, Japanese, Mexicans. This year let us learn more about these people at home. Let us do whatever we can to reach them for Christ. We have a pastor in the District who has worked among the Negroes for several years. I'm sure that he would be willing to help us to gain a greater understanding and to plan a program for reaching the Negroes. Let us start with this emphasis on the Negroes this year. Then let us take another minority group next year."

We hope to work out a program of instruction and mission activity this fall in this city with the three pastors, who are willing to attempt this approach.

I must confess that my parish is not really integrated, since we have only two Caucasians as communicants and only two Chinese as Sunday School members. But when the "White Congregation," which is only six blocks from us, moves next year we will probably serve some of their members living in the community and thus have a fully integrated congregation. This will be the end of the concept of segregation within the District.

My greatest service has not been in persuading, but in sharing what I have learned from my vantage point, having first learned to subject myself to the will of God in serving Negroes and then having learned particular problems and attitudes.

Of course, I have also sought an opportunity for the Negro to worship in his own neighborhood whenever it has been inconvenient for him to come to our church. And I have sought to encourage Negroes to attend the church in their neighborhoods. One of the young pastors was most helpful in one case. Because two of our communicant members came to church infrequently because of the distance, I spoke of them to the pastor. He called on them several times. With more urging on my part they accepted his invitation, saying that if the pastor wanted them, that was all that mattered. It didn't matter even if the members did not want them. They began to attend rather regularly. I encouraged them to transfer their membership. The husband thought it proper, but would not request it. The wife hesitated. Finally, after several attempts to persuade them to ask for a transfer, I asked them if they would object to my transferring their membership. They said, "No." During the past Lenten season their new pastor urged them to attend the Lord's Table. They did so for the first time. Much credit must go to the young pastor. He could have taken the attitude of others, that they didn't want to worship with his congregation since they did not come. They just had to be sure that they were welcome.

A young woman whose course of instruction started in Omaha, finished with me in San Francisco, but disappeared after completing the course, to be found later in a hospital across from one of my members. She is now attending the church of her community, which I had encouraged her to do while meeting with her.

But I haven't had the same success with some of the other members who live in other cities, even though the nearest pastor would be willing to serve them. It seems that the more I try to encourage them to depart, the more they hold to our congregation.

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Our neighboring "White Church," which has served a dozen children from our congregation in their parochial school last year, has joined with us several years in conducting an Interracial Vacation Bible School, and one year co-operated in Interracial Lenten Services. One of the parochial school teachers helped to bring this about. This co-operative spirit removed some of the stigma of having a congregation for Caucasians and a congregation for Negroes only six blocks apart. The present pastor has received two Negroes into membership, having confirmed two young people who attended the school, has sev-

eral Negroes in the Sunday School, and when a Negro couple asked him if they could become members of his congregation, said, "Come ahead!"

Another member moved into an outlying district. She still attends our church. But her children attend the neighborhood church, one being a communicant member. The pastor is very happy to serve them, but he is troubled because he feels that the teen-age member is trying to run away from the fact that her parents are classified as Negroes. The president of the congregation was happy to hear that some of our people were coming to his church. However, there was one disappointment. Their complexion is extremely light. He was hoping that it would be extremely black, so that it would be of greater educational value to the congregation.

Writing to a pastor in the Valley, I told him that two of our members would be in a town near his church and requested him to serve them. He spoke to his members after the service, telling them that he was going to serve the Negroes and speaking briefly about the matter. At a District Convention a layman from his congregation told me that no one made any fuss whatsoever, except a couple from Texas. They continued attending church; they just wouldn't speak to the Negroes.

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In a letter from a friend I learned that her pastor called the attention of the congregation to the article, "The Negro and I," which appeared in the *Lutheran Witness*, studied it in Bible Class, then said what are we going to do about it? Someone raised the question of intermarriage. The pastor said, "Yes, what about intermarriage? I'll have to study the question a bit more." Lack of adequate information is the stumbling block for some pastors.

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It may also be of interest to note some of the Christian attributes of Caucasians. A young woman, well educated, a recent convert to Lutheranism, attending a Ladies' Aid meeting, heard some disparaging remarks about the Negroes. She asked her husband, "Are all Lutherans like that?" And her husband, hearing the outpourings of a prejudiced person, wondered if anyone with such hatred in his heart could be a Christian. A woman informed me that many of the members of her organization were offended by the remarks of a young man, an insurance agent who worked among Negroes, when he stated, "In every Negro home there is a Bible at the head of the bed and a bottle of whiskey at the foot."

For the most part the people and the pastors to whom I have lectured have been very fine. Many people have thanked me for opening their eyes, giving them a new picture of the Negro. My plea to them has been that they look upon the Negro as an individual, that they help to bring him to the foot of the cross through the Gospel.

Our future in the California and Nevada District is most promising. There are difficulties, to be sure. But the attitudes of many of our pastors and laymen, a few of which have been mentioned here,

and the attitudes of our District officials, assures us of continued efforts and, in accordance with God's grace, greater success in reaching all for Christ. God has been good to me in sending me into the California and Nevada District to work with such fine people.

As for the whole Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, I am optimistic. I believe that our people who do accept Jesus as their Savior will also accept His command to preach the Gospel to every creature, if their pastors give them guidance. I believe that all difficulties would fade into the background if pastors and people would stop worrying about differences and about public opinion, and be concerned only with the spreading of God's Word to every creature. I believe that getting back to the Bible and making timely applications of that Word to problems of the day will solve this problem of lovelessness among races as well as many other problems which plague the church today.

THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR IN AN INTERRACIAL COMMUNITY

(titled by the editor)

by Rev. A. W. Trinklein

New York is a wonderful place. In this city of more than eight million people, God has thrown together men and women of races and people from practically every land in the world. Even better, He makes them live as neighbors with one another. It is one of the few cities in the world, I believe, where the different peoples live together as neighbors and like it.

My ministry of the Gospel in New York City began 18 years ago on December 1, 1935. During these years I observed many things. I also had a wonderful opportunity to study myself and the part which the Church can and must play in a cosmopolitan and interracial neighborhood.

New York is a city of contrasts. There is the filthy, happy-go-lucky lower East Side. Park Avenue provides a winter address for the people with furs and feathers. Harlem has its solid block of Negroes, some 300,000 of them. The Spanish and Puerto Ricans inhabit the fringes of Harlem. Germans have their center in Yorkville, advertising Wurst and Bier, Sauerbraten and Kartoffel Klös "gerade wie in der alten Heimat." Jews claim a certain area where strict customs and traditions are maintained. Chinatown adds an oriental flavor to this mixture.

Superimposed upon this racial pattern is the geographical division of the City of New York. Manhattan Island divides itself into three general areas. Lower Manhattan, bounded by the New York Harbor, contains the famous Wall Street business section. The many lights of Midtown give the appearance that the sun never sets and people never go home. The Great White Way and Times Square are in this area. Upper Manhattan is the great general residential section. It is again redivided into smaller areas. The community at the very northern tip of Manhattan is known as Inwood. It is here that Saint Matthew Church is located. This small section is barely a mile long and no wider than a half mile at any point. It has a population of more than 150,000 people. This is my specific field of labor, my community parish.

Inwood has representatives of almost every race. In the words of Luther, but in a different sense from which he used them, we have "Jude, Türk and Hottentot." Perhaps the two largest groups are the Jews and the Irish.

Saint Matthew has representatives from nearly every European national group. If you studied our congregation, this is the racial and national picture that would confront you:

German
Danish
Scotch
Latvian
Polish
Jugoslav
Czech
Swiss
Greek
Syrian
Negroes

Jews
Norwegian
English
Finnish
Austrian
Rumanian
Russian
Lithuanian
Spanish
Dutch
Persian
Chinese

Swedish
Irish
Estonian
Hungarian
Armenian
Slovak
French
Italian
Belgian
Puerto Rican
Japanese

There is a large German element, many of them first generation Americans. Five Negro families attend our services. Their children are enrolled in our Sunday School and Christian Day School. There are about 85 Jews in the congregation. The president of our congregation is a Jew. For years the president was a Japanese and his brother was superintendent of the Sunday School. A Japanese artist painted the mural which adorns the wall behind our altar.

There are difficulties at times in keeping these individuals and groups thinking and working together. Sub-surface distrust for Jews, dislike for Negroes, intense national pride, these are symptoms to be watched and regulated and removed. As a pastor, I have never permitted public discussion of the various racial and national elements in the congregation. When un-Christian attitudes have come to my attention I try to help my people reach God-pleasing conclusions without overt pressure. I simply take it for granted that the integration of all races and nationalities is perfectly natural and normal, and by this attitude encourage others to feel likewise.

Do all these groups and individuals work together harmoniously? Yes they do. We have no friction. We worship together; we meet together to discuss the Lord's work and to find ways and means to promote Christ's Kingdom. We endeavor to find outlets for cooperative effort. We have regular projects in which the whole parish participates. In the recent Conquest for Christ endeavor we used more than 135 solicitors to visit families in the parish. Some of these solicitors could scarcely make themselves understood. But it worked. Our congregation, by no means the largest in the District, stood very high in the final results.

In the last analysis the key question is, What is the attitude of the Pastor in Human Relations? How far-reaching and inclusive is his vision and faith? How faithful is he to the command of his Lord and Savior in preaching the Gospel to every creature? Success in human relations lies, next to God, in the mind and willingness of the Pastor to do what he knows to be right.

When I accepted the pastorate in this area 18 years ago, I felt like a frog on a log, not knowing which way to jump and if I croaked, who would care. It took several months to make the adjustment. I remember distinctly praying God to take me out of New York. God answered my prayer—and made me stay. I have since learned to temper my prayers. I no longer ask God to take me away or to let

me stay, but to give me health to do His work, visions to see the magnitude of the field, wisdom to know what to do in complex situations, courage to move ahead without fear, faith to trust in God and patience to wait for His blessings.

I was called to serve a small mission congregation of some 150 members, heavily indebted and made up, to a great extent, of German-Americans. Years of intensive work were followed by the complicating factors of the second world war. I realized only too quickly that we were labeled a "German church." I saw that this was harming our church and retarding the progress of the Gospel. I suggested at a meeting of the voting group that we ought to give more emphasis to the English, possibly even drop the German language. There was opposition, of course. But it wasn't long before the name "German church" disappeared from the thinking of our community. We could now invite people to worship with us without reservation or explanation. Today we have become the leading Protestant Church in Inwood with a communicant membership of 650, serving about 1,500 souls.

It should be the natural thing, in my opinion, for the church to serve everyone in the community. I know that white hands and black hands and yellow hands all need soap and water to be cleansed. Each in turn is clean after washing, no matter what the color of the hands. If soap can clean hands, I'm sure the Gospel of Christ, His love and forgiveness, could do an equal job for the human soul. In spirit I see all souls washed clean and white in the blood of Christ. My policy has been determined by this without explanation or reservation ever since God ordained that I should serve Him and His Holy Church in this melting pot of humanity.

I was brought up on a farm. The produce from the field had different color and shape. But when the harvest was gathered in, our father called it good, whether the product was yellow wheat, white turnips or black radishes. All were to be put safely in the garner. The color of the individual human being no longer impresses me. God has a harvest field made up of all people. Pity the man who bypasses good and wholesome food just because he doesn't like the color. He will soon suffer from malnutrition, spiritual anemia. He will die a dwarfed soul. "Do not call unclean what I have called clean."

Certain principles have guided me in my work as I gave thought and attention to Human Relations.

1. I, as Pastor, can determine and control the racial attitude of my congregation. I have discovered this from experience. The congregation is molded by the Pastor's thinking and attitude. If I were to take a contrary view in my congregation it would take opposing groups and factions very little time to destroy the ripening field.

2. Racial or national pride is a part of our root sin of selfishness. We extend ourselves into family and community and race. The Gospel must break down the sin of prejudice even as it attacks all sins in all people. Racial prejudice is a sin. And it will never disappear from the congregation until the Pastor first comes to grips with it himself and allows the Gospel to work its cleansing miracle in his own heart.

3. If I want my church to be a community church I must look upon the whole area in which the church is located as my parish. Once I assume this responsibility honestly it will soon become evident that no one is excluded. How can any preacher say publicly from his pulpit that we are to make disciples of all peoples, tongues and nations and then refuse to share the Gospel with those in his own community? If he practices segregation, he ought not to preach.

4. The Church—through the Pastor—makes an impact upon the community for good or ill. The Pastor must realize that he is an important figure in the community. Almost without exception the public judges the congregation by the Pastor. His words carry weight, his actions are interpreted, his attitude is measured. The Pastor must bear effective witness to the Lord Jesus Christ no matter what he may be doing or where his duties take him. He is always bubbling over with news and information about his Lord who sent him as an ambassador among men. He has a message for all, regardless of color, race, or social standing.

5. To win the confidence of people, the Pastor must understand their problems with sympathy and patience. A large part of my adult membership has been gained through adult classes. That is where sympathy, understanding and patience must play the major role. I have had to exercise the patience of Job in winning many of the 85 Jews in my congregation for Christ. The Jew is naturally suspicious. Family tradition is a tremendous force in his life. As a rule he knows very little about spiritual matters. Since he cannot absorb too much spiritual food at first, my approach to him is casual, and information on spiritual matters comes in small doses. He has at least heard of Moses and the Prophets. He is usually surprised to learn that a Christian too accepts the law and the prophets. Without attempting to prove that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, I make a quick but inoffensive reference to the fact that faith in Jesus gives me joy and peace, supplies the answer to my problems, the assurance of forgiveness, and the certainty of an eternal life of bliss and happiness after death. Unless he sees the radiance of my belief reflecting itself in my face and behavior, I have gained little. This display of joyful faith must have its root in the heart. "We cannot help but speak the things we have seen and heard." I usually follow up this brief personal testimony with a few inquiries about health and business. To conclude every contact I ask the person to join me in prayer. I have never met with a rebuff regarding such a request. I always leave a copy of our Church Bulletin and Supplement (this latter containing the propers for the previous Sunday). These people are placed on my special prayer list and there is daily intercession in their behalf.

6. I feel that great harm can be done by the manner in which the Pastor greets strangers and prospective members at Church. If he makes undue fuss over the prospect, both the prospect and others who observe the profuse greeting are made to feel uncomfortable, possibly even resentful. We say that all should be treated alike; no discrimination, but no favoritism either.

The invitation to attend this conference came as a surprise to me. I have never considered my work unusual or abnormal. Yet, I suppose

I should not have been surprised. Out-of-town visitors have expressed pleasant surprise over the cosmopolitan and inclusive nature of the congregation. Teachers and vicars who have had an opportunity to observe the congregation over a period of time have marveled at the wonderful integration and the harmonious cooperation of the racial and national groups. This is really a miracle of God, but it is the kind of miracle that ought to be normal for every Christian congregation. I am grateful to God and this conference for causing me to reflect upon the power of the Gospel as it breaks down the wall of separation between groups. I pray that this will always be the normal thing at Saint Matthew Lutheran Congregation of New York City.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY

The Churches' Opportunity In Our Day

by Rev. Philip Johnson

(We acknowledge the kindness of Dr. Mattson for permission to republish this revised essay which originally appeared as an article in the *Augustana Seminary Review*.)

Historically, the church of Jesus Christ has always been inclusive. According to Luke, on the day of Pentecost people from no less than sixteen races and nations became "charter members" of the church. Paul and the other apostles were clear on this. After Peter's vision at Joppa, the Council at Jerusalem, and the observation that the Holy Spirit was not withheld from the Gentiles, Jewish exclusiveness was repudiated, and the universality of the Gospel was recognized.

Today, too many assume that racial exclusiveness in the church is natural as well as desirable, forgetting the very nature of the church as well as its glorious history. The church is God's creation, and God's possessions, not man's. Its composition is divinely determined by the work of the Holy Spirit. It is not man's prerogative to decide who can or who cannot become a member. Since racial exclusiveness is not now and never has been written into the constitutions of our congregations, we grievously err in not protesting the facile assumption that any church of our Lord Jesus Christ has the authority to exclude anyone on the basis of race or color.

The door of the church was set open on the first Pentecost, and it has never been closed. To speak of a church "deciding to open its doors" to minority group members is to betray a fundamental misconception of the very nature of the church. Man may, indeed, decide to *close* the doors of a particular congregation, but he does so at the cost of doing what may be irreparable damage to his brother's soul, and the possible loss of his own.

It is the Christian man's business to witness to the Gospel by word and example to all people, to plant the good seed, and then to rejoice when the Spirit of God moves his brother's heart to come into the church, whoever he may be.

The Inclusive Church

The racially inclusive congregation is a living demonstration of the power of the Gospel: power to bring men of all races and classes to faith, and power to overcome the most stubborn and deeply rooted prejudices of our day. Such a church is, in truth, the "communion of saints," visualized and localized, for the unbelieving world to see, and a demonstration of brotherhood so desperately needed in our time. As such a congregation worships, prays, communes, it seems to be a concrete answer not only to Jesus' prayer "that they may all be one," but at the same time an answer to many of the tensions and conflicts, which plague our restless world.

Achieving racial integration in the worship life of Salem Church, Chicago, was the least difficult of the problems faced by this congregation in its adaptation to a changing community situation. There was almost universal agreement that it would be impossible to deny Negroes access to the fellowship of the congregation at this point. There were a few members who could not bring themselves to this conclusion, however, and some who, while admitting theoretically that the church was right in being inclusive, could not bring themselves to participate. The spiritual danger involved in *knowing* what is right but refusing to *do* it is obvious.

Among many of the Protestant groups which formerly worshipped in the area around Salem, and in the local Roman Catholic parish, there has been tolerance so far as worship is concerned. There was strenuous objection in all of these churches, however (except for some church school classes), to any suggestion of Negro participation in the normal organizational and social life of the parishes.

At Salem, there has been multi-racial participation in the Women's Federation, Brotherhood, Junior Luther League, Confirmation Class, Church School, Children's Choir, and Boy Scout groups. Brownie and Girl Scout groups, as of this writing, are still "all-white," due principally to the fact that for some time they have been full troops with waiting lists. There has been interracial participation in the committees organized for entertaining the Centennial Illinois Conference Convention, in Lenten fellowship suppers and discussions, Vacation Church School, trips to various places by church groups, and in the routine work of parish life. In short, Salem is striving to carry on and expand a normal organization pattern for all its members, regardless of race. The Negroes who are members of the congregation have joined the church as individuals needing and appreciating the Gospel and the worship life of the parish. They have not thought primarily in the category adopted by so many Caucasians: "Here are colored persons in a 'white' church," but rather, "Here is a church offering spiritual and intellectual stimulation, where we will be welcome."

Will Negroes Respond to the Lutheran Church?

There is very little difference in the response of Negroes and whites of similar economic and social position. The Lutheran service, properly conducted with reverence and dignity, definitely appeals to Negroes, particularly those of some education and culture. We as a denomination have not been noticeably successful either with Negroes or whites of a lower economic and social bracket *until they have been helped to understand* our worship life and our way of preaching.

A very large number of Negroes is starved spiritually. They are repelled by the typical "store-front" "holy-roller" group of "churches," and in many cases they have equated religion with just such an emotional, non- or anti-intellectual approach. They are often pleasantly surprised to find that the church cares for them, and to find that the church can command their respect spiritually, intellectually, and esthetically.

Salem's Negro members have been former Methodists, Baptists, Roman Catholics, Episcopalians, Christian Scientists, Seventh Day

Adventists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists—and nothing! Most of them have said that they have never found a spiritual home which satisfied them until they came to Salem.

What Are These People Like?

Salem's adaptation has undoubtedly been made easier by the splendid quality of Negro families moving into the neighborhood. Most of these families are well educated, some exceptionally so. Their standards of taste in dress and home furnishing, and their care of their property is in no way inferior to the rest of the community. There are many doctors, lawyers, teachers, social workers and civil service employees in their number. By no stretch of the imagination can the church be thought of as making a typical inner mission or settlement house approach. Rather, it is significant that normal methods of parish evangelism are bringing a normal response as this congregation goes about its business of witnessing. The fact that both Caucasians and Negroes respond within the same congregational framework ought not to be considered unusual or bizarre.

Of course, the Negroes would not respond if they thought that the white members were not sincere in their welcome. Nor would new white members continue to join the church if they did not think of Salem's program as being both right and reasonably assured of success on a permanently inter-racial basis.

What If a Different Class of Negroes Is Involved?

While Salem's adaptation has been facilitated by the fine class of Negroes who have become its neighbors and members, the responsibility of the church would have been *greater* rather than *less* if the situation were reversed, and every person around us were a cut-throat and a thief. The church must proclaim Christ's power to redeem everyone and anyone—not least to those most in need of Him.

Is An All-Negro Church Inevitable?

Salem does not believe it will ever become an all-Negro church. The proportion of Negro members will undoubtedly increase for some time, but not as rapidly as some would expect. The reason is that Caucasians continue to become members of the congregation, and the prospect is that after the first full year of integrated membership there will be approximately an equal number of white and colored new members received.

Is An All-Negro Neighborhood Inevitable?

Will the neighborhood ever become totally Negro? Probably not. Salem, through its leadership and some of its members, is allied with forces working in the area to preserve an integrated pattern of community life. In the past Chicago's famous "Black Belt" has expanded almost inexorably, house by house, block by block. However, since the Supreme Court decision of May, 1948, declaring that restrictive covenants are unenforceable in courts of law, Negro home ownership has become more and more widely distributed geographically. It is true that areas peripheral to the all-Negro community are still most heavily affected, but more and more there is the tendency for Negro home-

buyers to spread out to all parts of the city and suburbs. There are Negro residents in 38 of Chicago's 50 wards, and in some 230 out of 275 suburban census tracts. Other large cities now are experiencing or will inevitably experience this trend.

These facts would indicate that it is impractical as well as immoral for a congregation to move simply in order to escape the responsibility of ministering to Negroes. Occasionally there may be some valid reason for relocating a congregation, but this is certainly not one of them.

What Steps Can Be Taken By a Parish With Minority Group Members Nearby?

1) Be clear on the implications of the Gospel: Christ is for all men, without distinction, and so is every local church.

2) The Pastor must invariably stand firmly for this basic position, no matter how many pillars of the church disagree. He must be kindly and tactful toward his opposition, if there is such, but he must not compromise the Gospel nor the church to suit some people's prejudices.

3) A program of education for the congregation dealing with the matter of race relations before the issue faces the local parish is important. This can be done in sermons, church school classes, organizations. Exchange speakers and group meetings where people of different races can get to know one another as *persons* are helpful.

4) Never use undesirable names or epithets for minority group members. Cultivate respect by using the term "Negro" or "colored person" for this group.

5) Think of an unchurched person of a minority group as an opportunity for you to bear intelligent Christian witness and not as a problem. If there are not large groups of such persons near you, how about the isolated Chinese, Japanese, Negro, Indian family or individual who may be living in your community? Frequently such persons are yearning for friendship and interest, and will respond whole-heartedly once they are sure of a welcome.

6) Stand for something worth while in the community. Let the church, through its members, actively work on programs for improving all phases of community life: government, education, recreation, equal opportunities for all, sanitation, housing, health, welfare. This will help your members as well as serve to interest others in your congregation.

7) Be friendly without being effusive or patronizing, and be sincere. Negroes can detect the slightest overtone of insincerity. They know peoples' attitudes, and they also know when you are trying to do what is right.

8) In urban areas, we desperately need a thorough rethinking of our strategy. Once it was: Round up the loose Lutherans. Today it is largely: Skim the cream of the suburbs. Tomorrow it must be: Bring the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ to all men, and to bear on all of life. Districts in urban areas must seriously consider joint planning boards among the congregations, pooling of resources, both men

and money, maintaining and strengthening our tottering urban outposts (almost always the closest congregations to a city's center), and being willing to adapt or scrap traditional methods of reaching people. We must abandon forever the deadly luxuries of complacency and exclusiveness.

Three Alternatives

The urban church in a changing community faces three alternatives:

1) It may accept eventual decline and death as inevitable, and merely struggle to maintain itself as long as possible. Here, rigor mortis of the mind and of the soul usually far anticipate the death of the congregation as a body. More than one hundred Methodist churches have closed their doors in Chicago in the past century, and while the Lutheran figure may not be quite so great, it is certainly much larger that it ought to be.

2) It may resign itself to moving every few decades, in a more or less frantic attempt to keep up with "its sort" of people. Many members are lost in the inevitable shuffle, and many dollars are invested in church buildings which might better have been used for other aspects of Kingdom work. One Chicago church, the "First" of its denomination, is now in its *ninth* location, 9½ miles out of the city's center. It has left a trail of substantial buildings for other congregations to buy and use.

3) The church may decide to serve the community, in a sincere program of parish evangelism, and in a program of community maintenance and improvement. For many decades the language barrier made it difficult or impossible for many congregations to minister effectively to a changing community. Now this excuse is no longer tenable.

These alternatives, stagnation, perambulation, and transformation are facing many churches in all our major cities; they will face many more. On the response which we make to these alternatives depends the fate of the Protestant church in the city, and eventually in America itself. For it is the city which has more and more come to dominate the American scene. To it come larger and larger segments of our population. In it are made the governmental, business and union decisions which affect the lives of all Americans, and of people throughout the world. It is the city which determines the very quality of American life. Its great newspapers, magazine and book publishers, radio and television stations, set the tone for our entire civilization. If the church loses the city with its mixtures of races, cultures and creeds, it confesses either that the Gospel of Christ is not relevant to modern urban man, or that it is unwilling to make the effort and the sacrifice to preach and to apply that Gospel. The first conclusion is untenable in the light of our faith; the second is repugnant so long as any spark of faith remains.

PICTURE STORY OF INTEGRATION IN ACTION

Illustrated Lecture by the Rev. Andrew Schulze, LL.D.

Reported by Rev. Charles Cline

With arms outstretched the Lord Jesus prays to His Father "that they all may be one," John 17, 21 (Woodcut by Daniel Greiner). The golden thread of unity running throughout Pastor Schulze's "Picture Story of Integration in Action" was love, which gives integration its validity and its motivating power. It is this love for Christ which brings us into oneness with Him and makes us conscious of our oneness with one another.

The accelerated modes of travel and communication of these times in which we live have brought the peoples of the world close together. On a busy street corner we see a Chinese, Turk, Zulu, Englishman, Indian, Scot, Russian, all hurrying about their business. An American answers the quizzical stare of his companion, "Well, you know it's only a few hours now to any place on earth!" (Cartoon in *Better Teaching*.)

Some people have achieved a degree of unity in some secular activities. Workers in factories and shipyards, members of unions, doctors in hospitals, teachers in schools, people in housing projects, in some instances have learned to work together and to live together. (Pictures of packing house workers at Swift plant in Chicago; International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, Kansas City, Mo.; Sydenham Hospital, New York; Sister Cabrini Housing Project, Chicago; Raschig School, Cincinnati.) They have made progress in human relations.

In spite of this progress, however, there is still much to be done. Russell Babcock, director of the State of Illinois Commission on Human Relations, states, "The Commission records show conclusively that the job ahead is still a great one—that racial tensions are not a thing of the past, and that pressures have been only slightly alleviated."

No one is more conscious of this than the young Negro who grows up in those areas where there are all sorts of restrictions. Pastor Schulze posed this question concerning the Negro boy who stands by his bicycle gazing at a sign, "For Colored Only." "He is perhaps beginning to sense that his freedom has certain defined limitations because of his skin color—in parks, schools, busses. *Will he find a sign restricting his freedom when he approaches the Christian Church?*"

What about the official attitude? In an edition of the *Lutheran Witness* soon after the Synodical Convention in Houston, Texas, we find a picture of the president of Synod shaking hands with a Negro pastor. This is not to be regarded with too much optimism. Pastor Schulze remarked, "When the present president of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod shakes hands with a Negro Lutheran pastor,

this is progress, but no assurance of official acceptance of complete ecclesiastical integration."

A picture of delegates to the General Conference convention, New Orleans, 1946, recalled the history of that organization. At one time serious consideration was given to the organizing of a separate synod for congregations serving Negroes. But gradually the policy of integration within Districts was formulated and accepted officially, and was to be put into effect as Districts and congregations deemed it advisable.

Another advance within the Synod is the sharing of common property. Today Negroes work in the office of the Walther League, attend teacher training schools, preparatory schools, and seminaries. But it was not always thus. A young lady wished to attend Concordia Teachers College of River Forest, Illinois, but was denied admission because of her race. (The policy of this institution has changed.) Her pastor was able to enroll her in Dr. Martin Luther College of New Ulm, Minnesota, from which she was called upon graduation to serve a Wisconsin Synod parochial school in a small town where there were only six Negroes, her mother and she being one-third of the Negro population. The tenderness of this Negro teacher for her Caucasian pupils and her fervent love for her Savior are expressed in a letter to a friend. "Since then (the closing of school) my time is more or less my own. I miss my dear little ones so much, and I can hardly wait until school starts again. The only redeeming feature of so much vacation is the fact that I have more time to spend in reading my Bible and in prayer. I will go to the Lord's Supper this Sunday, God willing, and feel my Savior near. This is a priceless privilege to me as a Lutheran."

At times, within those congregations organized to serve Negroes primarily, we find Caucasians worshiping and working for the Lord, the Caucasian sometimes being the wife or child of the Caucasian pastor, the wife of a Negro, or one who has chosen to attend the church of his neighborhood. Though the number is small, the situation is nation-wide, occurring in Washington, D. C.; Chicago, Illinois; Oakland, Calif., and other parts of the nation, as attested by photographic evidence.

Advances have also been made in congregations serving Caucasians primarily. One of the most successful mediums for integration seems to be the Vacation Bible School, since little children pay little or no attention to skin color. In some congregations this has been the first step toward integration. Some congregations have fully integrated programs today. They are still the exception and not the rule within Protestantism.

Warren Avenue Congregational Church, Chicago, having as its motto, "The worship of one God, fellowship with all people, and service to our fellowmen," has a fully integrated program in Sunday school, social activities, and all other phases of church life. Today, after five years of integration, 12 per cent of the congregation (which includes nine races or nationalities) is made up of Negroes. And today there is a larger balance in the congregational treasury than at any time during the five years.

Grace Episcopal Church, Detroit, welcomed a Negro pastor called to assist the Caucasian pastor in ministering to its mixed congregation. The two pastors stand in the reception line as members file past, greeting the new pastor.

Integrated congregations may originate in different ways. Church structures may be an indication of their origin, as in the case of two San Francisco congregations. The Fellowship Church of All People, with its fine new building, grew up around an outstanding minister who is a Negro, Dr. Thurman. The Westminster Presbyterian Church, with its old, large, deteriorating building, was the result of a merger between a congregation of Caucasians and a congregation of Negroes, the Negro pastor being retained to lead the congregation.

An unusual congregation is First Baptist Church of Chicago. About ten years ago Japanese-Americans moved into the community of the church. After a while the Rev. Jitsuo Morikawa was called as assistant pastor. Some time later the pastor of the congregation accepted another charge. Dr. Morikawa was then chosen pastor of the church. In the Vacation Bible School, Sunday School, in Christmas caroling, in worship, and in all other activities there is today complete integration of Japanese and Negro members, while the Caucasian accessions still outnumber those of other racial groups.

Pictures of a Christmas program, Baptism and Confirmation services, reflect the successful serving of everyone in the community by Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Honolulu, Hawaii.

From San Pedro, California, Pastor Maahs writes: "We have two young Negro couples in our congregation, also the three Japanese as per snap enclosed. Dr. H. Aramski and his wife are presently completing instruction for membership. They will be baptized together with their children. This year the congregation elected T. Sugiyama as secretary of the congregation. He and his wife are also Walther Leagueurs. All these folks are well received."

A most heartening and God-pleasing attitude toward a changing community comes to us from Brooklyn, New York, where the Lutheran Church of St. John the Evangelist gladly receives Negroes into its membership and communes them at its altar.

Salem Lutheran Church, Chicago, also looks upon a changing community as a challenge. Today there are 25 Negro members who take part in many activities of the congregation. Salem Church is affiliated with Augustana Lutheran Church.

Race discrimination in the United States is not only a denial of Christian love, but it is also a denial of democracy and a weapon in the hands of totalitarian powers. A cartoon entitled "Passing the Ammunition" shows Uncle Sam passing a shell labeled "American Race Discrimination" to Joseph Stalin, who in turn places it into his artillery piece to bombard Democracy (*Daily News*, 1951). Our national foreign policy among the nations of the world, especially those of the colored people, is undermined by racial discrimination at home.

Our primary purpose here at the Institute for Human Relations is not to bring about national or international unity, but to bring about a oneness within the Church, "That all may be one," even as the Lord Jesus prayed. This God-pleasing goal was the goal of the Fourth Institute on Human Relations.

A NEGRO'S VIEW ON RACIAL INTEGRATION IN THE CHURCH

by Mr. Cleveland Lassiter, M.A.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Institute: Please be reminded that my thinking on this subject is by no means unique. It is not a representative voice of a group of people. By chance, you may hear some differences to popular opinion expressed, but in most cases, similarities. At any rate, I'll call it some personal "thinking out loud." There's a passage of scripture which says in effect, "Behold old things have passed away and all things have become new." Maybe my remarks will be a new twist on an old subject.

It amazes me no end to see and to hear how wrought up and excited we get today over what we humans have coined, "the race issue." Fortunately, I don't have to tackle the problem in general, but specifically as it relates to the church.

It has been a long time since we embarked and we find ourselves sailing in deep waters of fears and uncertainties still, having yet to reach the port of understanding on the word "race" and all its connotes. Suppose at this point though I stare right down the barrel and ask what racial integration in the church means to me, a Negro? First, I will answer in the negative. It does not mean the exchange of pulpits by white and Negro ministers on Race Relations Sunday or some such brotherhood event. It does not mean a pronouncement of good will issued periodically by denominational groups in which segregation is deplored or condemned. It does not mean closing all the Negro churches and herding their members into the white churches. It does not even mean white and colored sitting side by side in worship, which amounts to only an audience. I heard one New York minister term this, "brotherhood at arm's length." Integration does not mean intermarriage, as a handful of narrow-minded thinkers whose emotions are out of step with their logic, would mislead us to believe.

Now what are the tests I would put a church through to determine if it is racially integrated? To help shatter any foreboding doubts in my mind as to whether I'm welcome, I would want to see some sort of slogan or by-word on the Church's bulletin board or road marker or in its service bulletin reflecting its receptiveness. I wouldn't expect to see the caption, "this is an interracial church." I like the slogan I saw on a Philadelphia church recently which read, "This is everybody's Church, serving everybody's God." I would not hesitate to enter such a church. On entering I would not expect any "lavish approbation or hearty praise handshake." Just a normal greeting will do. I would want to observe free intermixing starting from the nursery school group on up through the church boards and ministers. Before I could accept the church as integrated, I would have to see

the people assimilated into the main stream of its life, the council as well as the choir or women's society.

This is easily said. Doing it is what counts. Why isn't it done? We all know that the number of racially mixed churches in the United States is pitifully small and these have few Negro members, less than one per cent. Dr. Charles Johnson, president of Fisk University, put it tersely at the meeting of the International Congregational Council recently when he said, "Eleven o'clock Sunday morning is the most segregated hour in America." One traceable cause attached to the resisting of the Negro is tradition. The slavery background of the Negro has not as yet faded from America's conscience. Added to this there are exaggerated and even false sayings in the wind that Negroes are culturally different. It is popularly circulated that their needs and interests are best served while they are kept to themselves. Yet they seem to take on the same cultural patterns as the white group, whether it's baseball, music, comic books or politics, and yes—forms of worship. Culture is a matter of differences in status, of which the lower scale is relegated to the Negro on the job, in housing and in school in many instances. Our ghettos are also testimony to this fact. There is solace in the findings of anthropologists who have refuted the watery concept of race superiority and have designated it as something that is real only in the person's imagination. But there seem to be enough bigots around who spend sleepless nights and miserable waking moments constantly drumming up new ways to hold up arguments of race superiority and justification for segregation. I needn't mention the word, "prejudice," but I will anyhow. It merely means being down on what we are not up on.

A college class was asked to give its reaction to a group of words. They were to tell if each name suggested something pleasant, unpleasant or indifferent? Also if it aroused a feeling of fear, hatred or distrust. The list submitted was: Scotchman, Negro, Swede, Pole, Methodist, Walloonian, New Dealer, Jew, Italian, Presbyterian, Ku Klux Klan, Catholic, Pirenian, Protestant and a few others. Many names were checked on the unfavorable side. Overwhelmingly prominent on the list of unfavorable were, Walloonian and Pirenian. Strangely enough there are no people called Walloonions or Pirenians. They were the inventions of the professor.

There is also the apparent fear that Negroes will overrun the white churches. Since this would hardly happen, I don't know what to call it except artificial superstition. As far as my personal feelings go, first and foremost in my mind in going to a church, preferably in my own neighborhood, would be to worship God and seek truth, not for any coveted privileges. I couldn't conceive of merely talking about the concept of the brotherhood of man if my religion would be the stumbling block, separating me from another human because he didn't qualify in color. I find that we know so little about each other across racial lines and we don't love our fellow men for what they are and can be, and fail to recognize first, last and always that a person is a human being or more simply, a child of God.

It is my staunch opinion that if our churches were really churches of God in whose sight "there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond or free,"

there would be no place in our thinking which would consider them as churches of men, their customs and traditions. What is it but Christian desertion when we tolerate anything within our religious fellowship which would estrange us from any human being when he steps across the ecclesiastical threshold? Christ's teachings must surely be left on the outside if I enter a church and am told that I would probably like to go to the colored church down the street.

I am naturally disheartened when I pick up a book written by Frank Loescher in 1948, entitled "The Protestant Church and the Negro." In it was stated that in changing neighborhoods where Negroes and whites live in the vicinity of a white church, Negro attendance and membership is almost invariably resisted. Going on, it says that after the transition has occurred, it is the customary practice to sell property to a Negro group. Its author mentioned a survey of 18,000 churches in 10 denominations which did not reveal a single white church with an open, mixed membership in an area of transition. Some of you here may be able to cite a consoling exception to this finding out of your experiences. As a church social worker, I have worked in at least four of such areas and I'm proud to testify that one church, St. John's Lutheran in the Bronx borough, is an encouraging exception to Loescher's statement. However, I must say that the three other churches have Negro members, but disappointingly there is still some resistance from some of the members. Negroes have been coming to St. John's since around 1931, when there were a mere sprinkling of them in the entire borough. It just came naturally. There surely wasn't anything unnatural or ulterior in a colored mother's mind that day about 20 years ago when she sent her three children to seek a Sunday school which would receive them in a friendly spirit. The children found this warm, friendly reception at St. John's. The incident paved the way for inclusiveness in the St. John's congregation. I am told, no bottoms fell in and the church's firm foundation is as firm as ever. The white membership has not dwindled, as would be thought. Last year as many whites as Negroes were received into the church membership. This year, whites outnumbered Negroes five to one. Two years ago, one white and six Negro children were confirmed. It seems that this church is doing its duty to God and the community.

There always comes a time in a talk like this, and this is that time I suppose, when we should want to hear what can be done to bring about the integrated church. Our work is cut out for us. Maybe we should call it "Operation—People." People not only have to be taught, although teaching is the keystone of our education, but they have to be sold on what is being taught and experience it first hand. There's an aphorism which goes, "if you keep on telling, telling, telling, you will not be selling, selling, selling."

I can visualize forthcoming results in the first place, through the Christian message. Pastors could preach more on what vital Christianity means. I would not single out the Negro when I talked about brotherhood or love, but impel my parishioners to live and practice their convictions as first-hand and not second-hand Christians; that is, Christians who just did not inherit their religion, but have felt for themselves a vital need for Christian living every day of the week.

Secondly, I would try to enrich the social group type of activity in my parish. The group has therapeutic value according to modern psychologists. Important things happen to people in their relationships with other people. The small group is an ideal medium to let our hair of prejudice down. Whether in a drama, child study, forum, mental hygiene, literary or music group, daily vacation Bible school, camp or retreat for all ages, we have a golden opportunity to learn about each other, express ourselves freely and rid ourselves of foolish fears and misgivings about people when we see them as they actually are in a mutual give-and-take situation. Such meetings should be open to the public, of course. I have confidence in selling people to an idea and tolerance in the small group.

Thirdly, we should urge members to participate in affairs outside the church for the common welfare of all. In politics, economics and social crusades such as civil rights, there is a stake for those who live their religion by supporting programs for human betterment. This means that instead of making compromises and preaching to justify whatever its community, section or nation does that is discriminatory or unjust to individuals, as a group, church people would recognize their responsibility to God alone and fearlessly condemn "wrong" as a violation of Christian principles.

Maybe it would be good if we could humble ourselves as little children again. They are pretty objective and color blind. I always think of the story of four-year-old Tommy, who told his mother he was bringing one of his nursery schoolmates, Sammy, home to play. "Is Sammy a white or colored boy," asked his mother. "Colored?" the child asked, "What's colored?" "Is his skin darker than yours?" Tommy replied, "I never noticed, Mommy, but I'll look tomorrow."

In football, the team goes into a huddle before each play. The quarterback calls the signals and decides which player carries the ball. Let the church do some quarterbacking and ball carrying on the field of human relations instead of taking signals from the forces that boost discrimination and segregation. Integration is working in employment, housing, the armed services, athletics and entertainment. The church, if it is Christian, should begin calling the signals, but the command will not be heard until religion actually begins to influence the daily lives of those who call themselves followers of Christ.

Sermon preached at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Valparaiso, Indiana, Sunday, July 26, 1953, in connection with the Human Relations Institute.

Text: "Owe no man anything, but to love one another." Romans 13:8.

Dear Friends and Fellow Members of the One Holy Christian Church:

More than seventy-five persons from many different states have assembled here at Valparaiso University for what we call a "Human Relations Institute." Most of them are attending the services here this morning, and they appreciate this opportunity to worship with Immanuel congregation, and I as chairman consider it a privilege to have been asked to preach this morning in order to acquaint you with the work we are doing.

Why are we here? you may ask. That is a natural question, and one we like to answer. We are here as members of the Body of Christ, the One Holy Christian and Apostolic Church, which we confess in our creed. We believe that the unity of this church is being violated by various things which are happening, or are not happening in the church, and that these constitute a serious wrong. We believe there is no reason why this wrong should not be corrected, for it is a serious wrong, involving as it does the relationship of people one to another in the Church, and the relationship of members of the Church to people whom the Christians should be drawing into the body of Christ. As members of the Church we recognize our responsibility here, and we feel it our sacred duty to do what we can to remedy matters. This morning's Epistle reminds that "we are *debtors not to the flesh* to live after the flesh,"¹ and we believe that it is the devil, the world, and the flesh who are causing this disunity in the Church. We are conscious of another debt, the one of which our text reminds us, the debt of love. Yes, I can say, and I think most of those present here would agree with me, I am here because

I HAVE A DEBT TO PAY

When Paul says, "Owe no man anything but to love another," he indicates that he doesn't want Christians going around borrowing and not paying back, or failing to pay their just debts. But he adds, there is one debt that you cannot escape, and that is the debt to love one another. Love is such a basic word in the New Testament that you cannot avoid it. It was the chief equipment of the Christians as they went out to draw people into the circle of the Church. It was that which made people have confidence in the Christian and to desire to associate with him and to hear his saving Gospel. This love takes in everyone, even people who don't seem to be lovable at all, for it is a God-given sincere desire to be of service to everyone, regardless of the other person's attitude. When love cools down in the Church, the Church is sick. And we believe that the Church has been sick for many years. It has permitted to grow up in its midst an attitude on the part of the large so-called "Caucasian" or "white" group over

against certain other groups, such as the Jews, and in our country particularly against people of the Negro race, which has in effect denied many of the things which we claim to believe about the human race and about the Christian Church. It has done things which tended to divide rather than unite, and that in the face of clear statements of Holy Scripture to the contrary.

What do I mean? I refer to the attitude of the white Christians throughout the past decades over against the Negro Christian. Although the Negro was in no wise prepared to develop his own Christian Church life, he was left to himself, without the aid of a trained ministry and the organizational setup which is so much a part of our church life. The result was that two churches grew up side by side, neither having much to do with the other. And this was not primarily done because the Negro wished it that way, but because the white Christians made the Negro feel that he didn't belong in thier churches. Even today it is estimated that over 95% of all Negroes worship in segregated churches. All sorts of excuses have been invested for this, but it is still a fact.

I am thinking of a woman who had just been instructed in the Christian faith by a pastor in one of our large cities. She moved to a suburb about twenty miles away, and there she tried to establish contact with a church of her faith just a few blocks from her home. She was advised to continue her membership at her former church and to attend a church of another denomination when she was unable to make the long trip. The reason: her skin was somewhat darker than that of the members of the church which gave her this advice.

I am thinking of children who are accepted when they are small, but are made to feel that if it came to confirmation and subsequent membership in the church and in the Walther League, it would be better for them to establish membership in a church which ministers to people with a darker skin color.

I am thinking of a member of one of our Lutheran Churches who went to another city to teach in a college. Her pastor directed her to the only Lutheran pastor of whom he knew in the city. She presented her letter; but after some time she was told that the church had carefully considered the matter and had decided that they would ask her not to worship and commune with them because of the community's attitude. They added that the pastor would be happy to minister to her privately. If she wished to attend public worship and enjoy the fellowship of the Communion of Saints, she would have to go to the church of another denomination. You have probably guessed the reason for this peculiar action.

Let me tell you of a young pastor, full of the love of Christ and the desire to bring the Gospel to lost sinners. He was asked to begin a mission in a small territory where Negroes had settled in large numbers, but which was surrounded by large Lutheran churches, none of which was as much as a mile from the center of this territory. Now this was not done after these churches had tried to win these people for Christ and had failed, but purely because none of these churches conceived it as their mission to include also people of darker skin color in their soul-gathering program. Yet they felt their obli-

gation to bring the Gospel to every creature, and the little mission was to solve this problem for them. That young man is a discouraged young man today, having almost no congregation after months of work and feeling the sting of having his church referred to as the Jim Crow Church, and always under the embarrassment of having to explain why the other churches, those nice large ones, won't receive Negroes into their fellowship. What makes matters worse, he is being asked to do a similar thing in a neighboring city.

Those churches referred to above are not exceptional in our Lutheran Church, or in other Protestant Churches. There are hundreds of churches in changing communities, many of them almost surrounded by "strange" people, in many cases by members of the Negro race, which make no effort to win these people for Christ, even letting it be known that they are not welcome if they do come.

I have a debt to pay because I feel keenly that I myself failed for years to realize that such things are not in keeping with the Gospel of our all-embracing Savior. As a member of the Church, I have contributed to the growth of such an attitude by my failure to see clearly and speak loudly. Jesus said plainly, "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven."² He didn't say, on the other side of the fence, but *with* them. He said, "That they all may be one,"³ and I believe that we are saying what He never meant to say when we claim that this oneness is not to become apparent until we reach heaven. I have become fully convinced that the procedure which we are following is a loveless procedure because it is a case of the strong, dominant group keeping at a distance a small group without any reason that conforms to the principle of love. It seems clear that we are setting up roadblocks for people who seek the kingdom rather than compelling them to come in.⁴ All this is a violent, unnatural attempt to segmentize a church which is to be united. St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians clearly shows that the forces of the devil are always striving to destroy the Church's unity, but Christians ought to try to bind it together firmly with the bonds of love.

How can I pay my debt? I can pay it first of all by loving people without regard for their national or racial background. That is where everyone should begin. That is Christian living. And if I love them, I will try to change everything in my feeling for them which hurts and disturbs them. But, you may say, is this a one-sided thing? Maybe there is something about them that needs changing, too. No matter how true that may be, Christian love doesn't worry about it. I can't change the other person, but I can strive with the aid of God's spirit, to change everything in my attitude which tends to disrupt the unity of the Church and which offends and hurts other people. So I try to relate to all my fellow-Christians, especially my weak fellow-Christians, in such a way that they may be drawn closer to me and so to Christ. I may still have feelings in me which are akin to not liking certain people, but I still owe them the debt of love.

Then I can pay this debt of love by trying to awaken the conscience of my Church on this matter. We are often accused of being meddlers, of trying to tell others what to do. What would you think

of a pastor who said nothing when members of his congregation were creating disharmony and hampering the church's mission program through lovelessness? Doesn't that pastor have the same obligation to speak when many pastors in his Synod encourage disharmony and make the Church's witness ineffective by a loveless attitude towards certain people? Paul didn't say it wasn't his business when the weak were offended. Rather in his passionate way he said, "Is any weak, and I am not weak; is any offended, and I burn not."⁵ Could I as a pastor say, "Ho-hum, so what?" when a person whom I have tried to lead to Christ is sorely tested in her faith by being rejected by my fellow-pastor and his church? Wouldn't you burn if little children were solely disturbed by being accepted only up to a point, whereas the children next door to them were received without reservations? Wouldn't you think of the words of the Savior, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea?"⁶

But you may say, Are you doing more than just talking about it? Many say we aren't, and it is really all we can do. We have no weapon to force this thing except the persuasive power of God's Word handled in Christian love. But we seek to bring that to the attention of more and more people that they may see the enormity of this thing, that they may examine their own attitudes in the light of Holy Scripture and the demands of Christian love and make corrections where needed. We encourage every congregation to recognize its mission obligation toward every unconverted person in its neighborhood because we believe that is the only effective and economical way of reaching the vast numbers of neglected people of strange color and foreign derivation. We bring encouragement to those who are fearful of this thing because community attitudes are against it, and we try to strengthen the wills of those who recognize the course of all-inclusive mission work as the Christ-willed one. We bring together people who have demonstrated that this matter of ministering to all people in the church is a blessed thing and not something to be feared. We seek also by our institutes to give people who have never had an opportunity to fellowship with people of another race the chance to do so under most pleasant and favorable circumstances, for we feel that it is easier to love people when you get close to them.

Possibly some of you wonder whether we aren't forgetting the principle of love when we apparently condemn other people's actions. To that we say that love cannot condone lovelessness. But we do recognize a danger here, and we pray God that He may help us always to maintain an attitude of love over against people who disagree with us, and to keep us from loveless judging. I have too many faults myself to want to exalt myself over other people. There is a danger that one becomes self-righteous in championing a cause like this. That would not be paying our debt of love, and we pray God that He may preserve us from it.

So far, we have spoken about the Church directly. How about the state, or society in general? We have a debt to pay there, too. We are society and we are the government, if our country is truly the democratic thing that it claims to be. What is our debt here? Our

debt is to endeavor to make of our society one in which every member is just as free to enjoy the privileges which we enjoy, a society in which no person must feel that he has two strikes against himself just because God gave him a dark skin color.

What am I referring to? I am thinking of such things as this that in my own community I can play golf on any of a dozen or more public golf courses, but if members of my congregation want to play, they have the choice of only two. I am thinking of the fact that I can go into downtown stores with one of my members, and he can buy all he wishes, but if he wants to go with me in the tea-room of that same store to buy a meal to satisfy his hunger, I can go in but he can't. I am thinking of a young woman going from business house to business house with good recommendations for a secretarial or clerical job only to be told that there is no opening for Negroes. I am thinking of the thousand and one things that I can do, privileges that I have, which are denied to my brothers and sisters of the human race, brothers and sisters in the family of God, fellow-citizens of these United States of America. And I must ask myself, "Am I not responsible?"

Christians have a debt to pay. They must be concerned. As a citizen of my city, I would be like the priest and the Levite⁷ if I did not become alarmed when an injured person manages to drive his car to the city hospital for colored persons across from my church because he knows the rules of the city, has an accident on the way, and then, at the very corner of the hospital, is picked up by a police ambulance and, because he has a very light skin, is taken four or five miles across town to the city hospital for whites. On the way he dies. And if I don't begin wondering about the irony of such a situation, when this poor man dies for lack of care because his skin was too light to be taken to a Negro hospital, while in many parts of our country people are denied hospital care because their skin color is too dark to be taken to a hospital for white people, it is sad indeed. Surely if we expect the Negro to assume responsibility for the bad things that Negroes do, we ought to feel a debt to assume responsibility for the inhuman things which the people of our race do.

When will we begin to recognize our hypocrisy in this whole thing? When will we begin to see the whole matter of racial discrimination for the vicious, un-democratic, un-Christian thing that it is? We shall do it when in love we learn the truth about these things, and unashamedly pay the debt of love which we have as followers of our Lord. "He died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again."⁸ We shall approach that goal directly if we recognize that we are all sinners, redeemed by one Lord, and that therefore we are much more alike than we are different. Then we shall be ready to "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."⁹

We of the Human Relations Institute are here because we have a debt to pay, a debt of love. We'll never finish paying it off, and we thank God that Jesus Christ paid for all our failures to love as we should. Progress may be slow, but we believe that the truth of God's Word will accomplish results. Men may not always agree with us,

but it is our prayer that we may so live and work that even those who disagree with us will have to say of us, "See how they love one another." Amen.

REFERENCES

- 1 Epistle for the Eighth Sunday after Trinity, Romans 8:12-17.
- 2 Matthew 8:11.
- 3 John 17:21.
- 4 Luke 14:23.
- 5 2 Corinthians 11:29.
- 6 Matthew 18:6.
- 7 Luke 10:30-32.
- 8 2 Corinthians 5:15.
- 9 Galatians 6:2.

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