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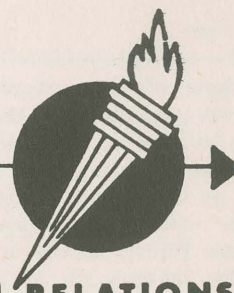
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THE VANGUARD



... THE CHURCH IN HUMAN RELATIONS

Volume 6, No. 3

April, 1959

That the Church May Lead

"MORE NOBLE"

In my meanderings about the country, I have occasion to attend church services in many places. And because I am interested in communicant integration, I make it a point, whenever possible, to attend churches known to be carrying on a program of communicant integration. The congregations referred to are such as are in changing communities in large metropolitan centers. They are trying to make a go of integration—the pastors are, and some of the members are, too; and other members are trying hard to go along with the program.

Fear

As one stands on the sidelines, before or after the service, one can, if he has a fair degree of understanding of what is going on, very often sense an uncomfortable feeling on the part of many white members of the church. They have assented to the change that has taken place. They have heard and accepted the applications of the Word of God made by the pastor to invite and welcome non-white people to the fellowship of the church and to the Holy Communion. They have begun to see it carried out in actual practice; it's happening. But they are uncomfortable because something is bothering them. Their faces seem to reflect a reluctance, and fear. The fear of what? Those non-white people are, they see, respectable folks, neat, clean, well-mannered, and many of them pious and devout, exactly what their pastor had been telling them all along.

Why this fear? They may still be living in the community of the church. If so, despite what the pastor might have told them, or they might have read in some sociology textbook or in *The VANGUARD*, they may be afraid that their hard-earned cash, now invested in the house which they have bought, will be lost; they fear it worse than the inroads on our fi-

nancial stability made by the ever-increasing inflation. They may remember the many admonitions of the Word of God concerning worrisome fears, and the lust of money, but in spite of it all they are afraid; and their fear is reflected in their faces.

But some of them have already moved out of the community to the suburbs, not because Negroes, Mexicans, or Puerto Ricans have begun to move into the community of the church, but because their economic status has improved. They, unlike their parents or grandparents, can speak as good an English as those who came over on the Mayflower, and they can meet their English-speaking neighbors on a basis of equality. And above all they have moved to the new suburbs because there is more good air and sunshine there, and room for a lawn and some flowers. But they are still members of the old church in the inner city founded by their grandparents and sustained by many a sacrifice made by their parents. They were baptized, confirmed, and married in that church. Ties of senti-

(Continued on page four)

A LOOK AROUND

By Martin H. Scharlemann

I. "A Higher Court"

Old Trinity is something of a landmark for our church in Milwaukee. It is now in a transitional area. The pastor, the Rev. E. G. Tieman, faced up to the new task confronting this congregation by pointing out that a "higher court than the Supreme Court" had decided this matter for the church.

In this connection note ought also to be taken of the courage and vision shown by Pastor Ray Witt of St. Stephen's in Chicago. He, too, was put under pressure to have the congregation move into a less difficult area. But a survey had revealed that no less than 175 children lived right in the shadow of the church, children who were not attending Sunday school or services of any kind. The church has been led to see its responsibility — not out among the lawns of suburbia but with the thousands of people living right next door to the church property. The kind of heroism needed to provide this sort of leadership

A BIBLIOGRAPHY ON RACE RELATIONS for Pastors and Laymen

Published by

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A thirty-five page mimeographed booklet (8½ x 11) with stiff paper cover. Intended to assist church people in finding materials that point up the nature and gravity of the world-wide race issue and its implications for the Christian faith and life. A good handbook for those writing theses, term papers, or essays; also for all concerned Christian people who desire better to acquaint themselves with the whole field of race relations. Fifty cents per copy.

puts those of us to shame who are at places untroubled by this problem.

Just to witness the change in attitude and approach that has taken place in this whole matter of integration among the pastors of the Northern Illinois District is to see the awesome mystery of the Holy Spirit at work in the church. There may yet be time to save a few of the pieces of our church life in the inner city of Chicago in the light of this new awareness. It is very late in the day, but maybe not entirely too late.

II. The Putnam Letter

Some time ago there appeared a public letter, paid for as advertisement and printed in the major newspapers of America. It was addressed to President Eisenhower by Mr. Carleton Putnam, whom the ad describes as a "distinguished New Englander." This letter takes exception to the decision of the Supreme Court on public schools. It is a long epistle. One paragraph is of special interest at this point because it reveals the incredible ignorance of Biblical truth that prevails even in the case of a man who is listed as a graduate of both Princeton and Columbia. Here is the paragraph:

"Pin down the man who uses the word 'equality,' and at once the evasions and qualifications begin. As I recall, you, yourself, in a recent statement used some phrases to the effect that 'men were equal in the sight of God.' I would be interested to know where in the Bible you get your authority for this conception . . . The whole idea contradicts the basic tenet of the Christian and Jewish religions that status is earned through righteousness and is not an automatic matter. What is true of religion and righteousness is just as true of achievement in other fields. And what is true among individuals is just as true of averages among races."

Rarely has Pharisaism been expressed in a clearer lily-white Princetonian accent. But that is less tragic than the raw misconception of what the Scriptures say on the subject of grace, and of God being no respecter of persons. Possibly it needs to be said here for the benefit of all concerned that the Bible never says that men are equal — except in their sinfulness. What it does say is that God is no respecter of persons.

This theological truth from Scripture was taken over into the political philosophy of the men who created

our early national traditions, by Deists in particular, and applied in such a way as to insist on equal rights for all, and equal opportunity. It should be noted, however, that this application is not a Biblical concern. Our Scriptures never make the point that men have rights; we have only responsibilities. The clamor for rights is often in point of fact nothing less than sinful self-assertion. The individual's interest should be in the rights, not of himself, but in those of the other person — that his fellowman may have the opportunity for a full life, even though it may mean that he himself perishes in the process of establishing these rights for someone else. This is part of taking up one's cross to follow the Lord.

III. In Reverse

This is why, from a Biblical point of view, the attitude and position of the Reformed Church in South Africa is precisely the opposite of what it ought to be. This particular Church gets brought in here because the other day the stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church in Ghana, a native Negro, Pastor Chr. Baeta, was given the opportunity to speak to the students and faculty of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis on some of the major issues in Africa. One of the things ~~an~~ of Africa fears, he pointed out, is an extension of the apartheid legislation of the Union of South Africa. To indicate what this meant in human terms, Pastor Baet mentioned in passing that it often takes a Negro father, whose family has been carted off to a reservation, eleven years of hard work and careful saving to accumulate sufficient funds for **one** visit with his family.

It is an item such as this that underscores the degree of human suffering connected with such legislation as is designed to protect the prerogatives and rights of one race against another. It is good to hear and read an occasional hint that the Reformed Church in South Africa may itself soon take its courage in both hands and be done with a system that can survive only by trafficking with the lives of men.

A display booth is being prepared by LHRAA for the convention of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod scheduled to convene in San Francisco June 17th. If you are there, drop around to see us.

Integration at Historic First St. Paul's

By James G. Manz

(This is the conclusion of an article begun in the February-March issue of **The VANGUARD**.)

The integration of any parish should proceed whenever the community is of mixed population. It should be done, not because it is now being advocated in our nation and Church, but because it is in accord with the Word of God. Our own experience leads us to believe that integration should take place quietly and with due consideration to historic patterns and area situations. We cannot expect the story and experience to be the same in any two congregations. Blueprints cannot be given. Circumstances indeed do alter cases. Thought, growth, and obedience vary in the case of congregations as well as with individual Christians. Our scrapbook contains a picture which appeared in the Chicago Sun-Times of March 19, 1951, showing Yoshio Fujimura and Judy Harding kneeling at the altar during confirmation ceremonies. The picture is deeply expressive of the course of integration in this parish. Newer elements in the community have gradually joined with those from our older families. This has been brought about by an aggressive mission policy in the neighborhood, beginning with the youngsters.

Integration with us was not an easy or painless process, however. There were critical and anxious days. We took one step at a time. Unkind things were said by some. One family left us when it became apparent that the congregation was becoming inclusive. Yet, the solid group of our older people remained and were a tremendous factor for good whenever the going became a little rough.

Some might think that our congregation merely followed the development of changing patterns of thought and life in America. No one, however, who knows the history of inner-city churches will say that integration is merely a case of being carried along with the tide. The near north side of Chicago has often been called a "graveyard of churches." Several of the leading Protestant denominations no longer have any representation here. Dozens of congregations have collapsed, merged, or re-located in

Survey of Techniques

For about a year the office of LHRAA has, as time permitted, worked on a survey of techniques used by congregations in changing communities of our big cities, techniques of communicant integration. Though the survey was limited in its study to a comparatively small number of congregations, it is nevertheless offered to the church in the hope that it will fill a long-felt need and that it will serve effectively until a more thorough study of the same nature can be made.

The survey report is now available in mimeographed form. It sells for twenty cents (postage stamps will be accepted) and may be secured from the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana.

more favorable situations. Two Lutheran congregations, left as early as 1912 and 1922. The city critically tries and tests the faith and life of an organized church. Protestantism's weakness and failure in the inner city has been documented in recent years. Survival of a church in such an area is indication of a signal divine blessing. One of the reasons that churchmen take a rather dim view of the current "religious revival" is that there are so few signs of it in the inner-city and rural areas! One is suspicious of growth that takes place only under favorable social situations. Will Herberg's study, **Protestant, Catholic, and Jew**, is worthy of consideration by all churchmen of our time.

As I recall the history of our parish, I am moved to fervent thankfulness to God for the faithful and able leaders whom He has given to us. It is my firm opinion that we have survived tremendous changes in community and church because of the staunch belief and consistent life and thinking of our people. Godly pastoral guidance and leadership has always been expected and followed. **Integration should be easier of accomplishment in a parish of the Missouri Synod** because we have people who are, on the average, superior in Christian indoctrination when compared with many others. Person-to-person talks among our people, when they spoke freely and from the heart, have undoubtedly been of great significance. The Lord has heard and

answered many a prayer offered by pastor and people.

One of our leading laywomen has accomplished much good by reminding people that "the soul has no color." Two young students, visiting from Nigeria, have in their own artless way done much to demonstrate the ecumenical character of Christian faith and fellowship. A young Negro teenager is such a likeable and faithful usher that even visiting Southern church-people have been moved to re-examine their own thoughts on the question. The husband and wife in our one interracial marriage are such faithful and winsome Christians that no one questions the fact that, at least in this case, "miscegenation" is working out well.

Most positions of top leadership in the parish will probably be occupied by our old-line people, or their successors, for some time to come. Mobility is so high here that most of the newer people will find it difficult to do justice to the demands of such offices. A church in our situation is absolutely dependent upon "old-line" or mission board support. Most other churches which have survived in the area have large endowments or substantial support from people of wealth.

Our congregation was founded in 1846 by German immigrants. Confessional Lutheranism has been preached and practiced in this church from its beginning. Ours is the oldest Lutheran parish in the city, the "cradle of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod." A sociologist would probably look for, and emphasize, some other factors in the history of integration at First St. Paul's. These are the ones that seem important to me. Since we

have had brethren of another color in our membership I have noticed in others, and in myself, a deeper respect and appreciation of the congregation and the pastoral office. I count it as one of my greatest blessings that I am now the shepherd of an interracial Lutheran parish. I came here in 1949, after six years of pastoral work in a small town and in a large suburban parish. It is a wonderful privilege to serve a church which is able to attract people of all types and races merely by its faith and life.

It has been good to recount and write these things. All important, however, has been the Providence of God, the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed means of grace, and the sheer power of His holy Word, written and preached. Other congregations in our area disappeared from the scene long ago. Some of them had far more wealth and prestige than we possessed. The fact that First St. Paul's Church still exists and works in a most difficult area on an inclusive basis is due really and finally to the grace of the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Real strength, perseverance, and insight have come from Him. Therefore we confess with the Psalmist: "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side . . . Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul . . . Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." (Ps. 124) *Soli Deo Gloria!*

"There are no very significant mental differences between races; and color is only the wrapping paper of your personality." -- Dr. George Crane, quoted in *Miami Herald*.

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That the Church May Lead

(Continued from page one)

ment, family tradition, and a spirit of loyalty to the old church have not been lost by them altogether. They know, too, that sentiment alone should not hold them there; they have heard and heeded the words of their pastor: "God has put us here. We have a responsibility toward Him and toward this community, to keep the light of the Gospel burning brightly in this place and to make the fellowship of Christ warm and appealing for those that want or need it where we are."

But many of these good old members, who travel miles to worship and to work in the church that still holds their loyalty, are afraid. One can see it in their faces. What is going on in their minds? Is the fear that haunts them spelled f-e-a-r or p-r-i-d-e? For they have a tough row to hoe. Many of their neighbors in the suburbs moved there because they wanted to get away from those moving into the old community; it would have hurt their pride to stay there and to live next to members of another race. Besides the influence which suburban neighbors may have on the thinking of these still loyal old members, their personal friends and their relatives too have moved out. To remain with the old church and to enter into a whole-hearted fellowship with the newcomers in the old community might cause them to lose status; it might hurt their prestige, and who knows what. Can their fear be the fear of sinful pride? Are they being tempted to be unlike their Lord who gladly accepted the company of the despised?

What is the Solution?

Yet, despite the fear and a possible lurking pride, these good Christian people are "more noble" than others. They are exposing themselves to the

change and they are doing so where the Spirit of God can work on their hearts — in the house of God. We shall do well to remember them before the throne of God when we pray "Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

A great sociological problem is involved, one that is at this time shaking the very foundations of our nation. It is impossible in this article to give a complete answer as to what can be done to help people overcome their fears so that integration in the church may become stable and permanent. We shall nevertheless point to one technique which we believe should help people to overcome their fears and to accept integration with greater ease and a degree of happiness.

Develop Social Contact

A Survey of Integration Techniques referred to elsewhere in this issue of **The VANGUARD** emphasizes the importance of social contact. Let us explain and elaborate on what we mean, in this instance, by "social contact."

Life in a big city is very impersonal and add to that fact that many white people have never experienced friendly and acceptable social relations with members of other racial groups. They fear the unknown. If those who are willing to subject themselves to a possible change in attitude — and the church people in question have already expressed their willingness to change — can be brought into friendly social contact with one or more non-white persons, such experience could help them in overcoming their fears. It has happened many times. It has been our experience that many people have pointed to such favorable social contact experiences as the turning point for them when prejudice and its resultant fears were overcome and

JULY 20 - 24

JULY 24 - 26

Two events of importance to our readers are to take place on the campus of Valparaiso University. The one is the Workshop on Human Relations intended for pastors and other professional church workers. (A limited number of scholarships are available.) The other event is the Tenth Annual Valparaiso University Institute on Human Relations. The respective dates are given above. Further details about these two events will be given in the next issue of **The VANGUARD**.

confidence and acceptance took their place.

It's hard to get people of different backgrounds together in such truly friendship-making contacts, especially in the impersonal life of the big city. But the results will prove worthy of every well-planned and concerted effort. All fearful people of the congregation do not have to be involved in such a plan. But when a number of persons in the congregation have developed some real personal friendships across racial lines in the congregation and when such friendships are known and seen in the church, such interracial friendships can become contagious and others too will begin to desire and then to seek and find the freedom from fear that is the concomitant of interracial friendship.

The outspoken American criticism of caste in India often reaps the scorn of the Indians, who often read the highly publicized accounts of the KKK, Little Rock, labor troubles, etc. — L. Engelbrecht, in **The Minaret**, March 1959.

LUTHERAN HUMAN RELATIONS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana

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