

Valparaiso University

ValpoScholar

The Vanguard

Lutheran Human Relations Association of
America

1963

The Vanguard (Vol. 10, No. 8), Nov 1963

Lutheran Human Relations Association of America

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.valpo.edu/vanguard>

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America at ValpoScholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Vanguard by an authorized administrator of ValpoScholar. For more information, please contact a ValpoScholar staff member at scholar@valpo.edu.

Voter Drive Moves To Selma, Alabama

A new pattern of voter registration efforts is under way in Selma, Alabama, as civil rights workers from across the country have joined in the effort to add Negroes to the city's voters rolls.

The voter drive has resulted in mass arrests, minor violence, and increasing criticism of the Federal government's role there by civil rights groups.

John Lewis, chairman of the Student Nonviolent Co-ordinating Committee (SNCC) and Lillian Gregory, wife of the comedian, have been arrested and jailed for carrying signs protesting intimidation of Dallas county Negroes.

Author James Baldwin and SNCC Executive Secretary James Forman have appeared in Selma during recent months.

The Selma operation differs from other SNCC registration drives, in that it features pickets and other public demonstrations to dramatize the drive and urge Negroes to register. The current effort has been labeled "a determined assault on racial barriers against voting" by the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

After the convictions of Lewis, Mrs. Gregory, and many others, over 300 Negroes waited in line all day in an attempt to register. Those who left the long lines after hours in the sun were beaten as they attempted to get water or food for themselves and others.

Violence was threatened in May as 500 white men in automobiles surrounded a church in which Forman spoke, keeping the crowd inside until midnight.

At the same time, the Citizens Council appealed for funds in the Selma Times-Journal under the banner headline: "Ask Yourself This Important Question: What have I personally Done to Maintain Segregation?"

Sheriff James Clark has deputized large numbers of local citizens into a "sheriff's posse," which has made most of the arrests thus far.

The Federal government has been condemned for its inaction in the face of brutality, and its alleged opposition to the voter drive.

Justice department investigators at the scene witnessed the beating

of two SNCC workers by police. Federal marshals turned Negroes away from the Selma federal building and tore up picket signs of two demonstrators.

Public protests against these government actions in Selma have occurred in cities as distant as San Francisco.



RICHARD K. FOX, JR., and CONCORDIA SEMINARY PRESIDENT Alfred Fuerbringer converse after addressing St. Louis members and friends of LHRAA at a banquet observing the Association's tenth anniversary.

-- Photo by Ockrassa

Schooling Ruled Inferior if All-Negro

Education received in all-Negro schools was declared inferior education, even if it stems from segregated residential living patterns, in a decision handed down by New Jersey State Commissioner of Education, Frederick M. Raubinger.

Commissioner Raubinger ordered the board of education of Orange, New Jersey, to inaugurate a plan which would produce the integration of elementary schools hitherto attended exclusively by Negro students because they lived in an all-Negro area.

The commissioner acted in response to the suit of Fisher, Frazier, and Smith v. the Board of Education of the City of Orange.

No allegation had been made that the board of education was trying to segregate the Negro students by administrative means. The main point of the petition was that the fact of racial segregation, by design or not, violated the pupils' legal and constitutional rights.

In his decision, Raubinger said that the petitioners "had asserted that the Courts have established that segregated education is unequal education and whether such segregation exists as a result of deliberate efforts, or whether it is caused by socio-economic or adventitious forces is immaterial; the results are one and the same, and disadvantage the Negro child."

Raubinger's decision continued: "It is clear that the ultimate solution lies in the free choice of residence and the elimination of segregated housing, which lie beyond the control of the board of education of the Commissioner.

"Nevertheless, the Commissioner is of the opinion that in the minds of the Negro pupils and parents a stigma is attached to attending a school whose enrollment is completely or almost exclusively Negro, and that this sense of stigma and resulting feeling of inferiority

have an undesirable effect upon attitudes related to successful learning."

Raubinger argued that each board of education must avoid the possibility of creating all-Negro schools, when implementing pupil placement policies, or the construction of new school buildings.

He continued: "The commissioner finds and determines:

"(1) That the concentration of Negro pupils in the Oakwood School does not result from the employment of deliberate and purposeful segregation policies;

"(2) That attendance at the Oakwood School engenders feelings and attitudes which tend to interfere with successful learning;

"(3) That such extreme racial imbalance as obtains in the Oakwood School, at least where means exist to prevent it, constitutes under New Jersey law a deprivation of educational opportunity for the pupils compelled to attend the school; and

"(4) that reasonable means consistent with sound educational and administrative practice do exist to avoid the extreme concentration of Negro pupils in the Oakwood School."

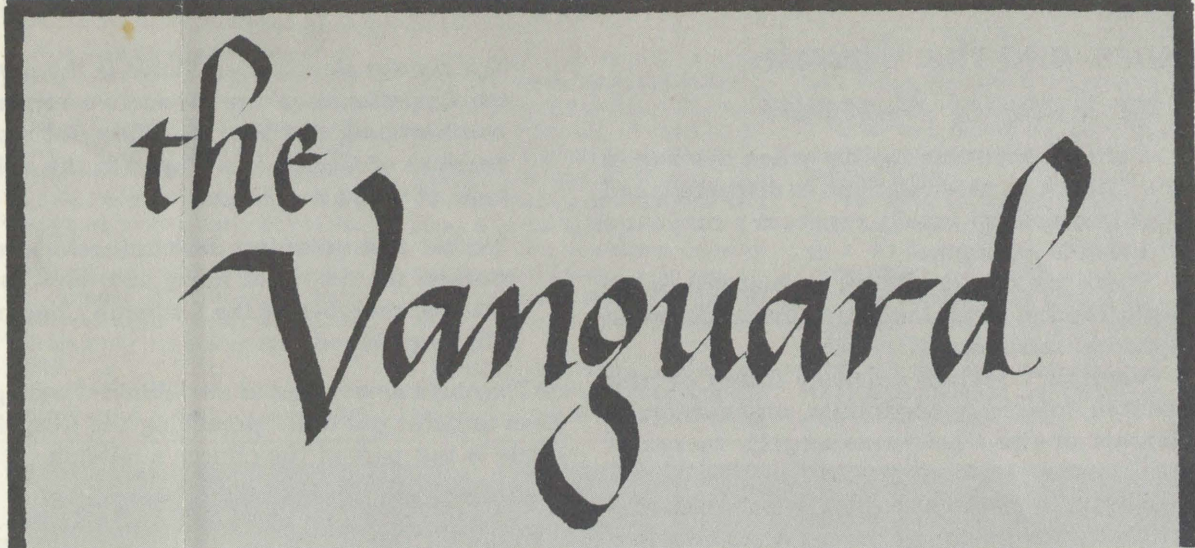
Raubinger directed the Orange Board of Education to formulate a plan which would reduce the racial imbalance in Oakwood, the virtually all-Negro school.

Inside The Vanguard

Vol. 10

Lutheran Human Relations Association of America

No. 8



Association Marks Tenth Anniversary

Leaders of the church are sending greetings to members of the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America on the occasion of the Association's tenth anniversary, in celebrations across the country.

At institutes and banquets in over 20 cities this autumn, LHRAA chapters are playing tapes onto which seven professors, clergymen and laymen have recorded statements of congratulation and encouragement.

In his statement, Lutheran Hour speaker Dr. Oswald C. J. Hoffmann states "The Lutheran Human Relations Association has made a real contribution to the life and witness of our Church in the latter half of this 20th century."

President Alfred Fuerbringer, of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, observed that "many of us who are Lutheran Christians must admit and confess that too long and too often we have not only been indifferent to the injustices that have deprived many of our fellow citizens of their civil rights and opportunities, but we have even permitted the sin of racial discrimination to mar our faith and to contaminate our practice."

The first celebrations were held simultaneously in St. Louis and Chicago on September 22. Since then, local groups in Washington, Detroit, Buffalo, Dallas, Alton, Illinois, Fort Wayne and Kansas City have marked the event.

In the St. Louis celebration, LHRAA vice-president Richard Fox was the featured speaker, and Prof. Robert Bertram, of the St. Louis seminary served as master of ceremonies.

The Chicago observance was led by Prof. John Strietelmeier of Valparaiso University, and two Chicago pastors, Rev. Roy Blumhorst and William Griffen.

In his recorded greeting NBC congressional correspondent Ray Scherer stated that "the most frequent criticism one hears leveled at the church is that it is not relevant to the times — that it is not in-

involved in life. It seems to me that the LHRAA is the best answer to this kind of criticism."

Scherer also expressed gratification that the executive staff of the association, along with other Synodical leaders, were invited by President Kennedy to the White House to discuss the place of the church in the present racial crisis.

Rev. Elmer Witt, youth director of the Missouri Synod, claimed that "our greatest temptation is not hatred, nor bigotry, but silence in the face of injustice and our failure to be what God has made us in Christ Jesus.

"Youth are ready now, I believe, to identify with the Negro in his struggle. They must be ready to minister with, and to him in his freedom," according to Witt.

Dr. W. F. Bulle, of the Synod's Medical Mission Council, said, "With you, I am grateful for the quiet courage and humble wisdom God has granted in such rich measure to the members and officers of the Association in their selfless service, devoted to the recognition of the Christ-given dignity of man."

He noted that our missionaries are humiliated by evidences of racial discrimination in the Western world. Such acts of discrimination in America are "an obstacle to their witness for Christ" in our mission areas abroad.

Among other cities in which local groups will sponsor observances are San Francisco, Seattle, Los Angeles, Charlotte, Minneapolis, Baltimore, Spokane, Denver, Cleveland, Portland and Milwaukee.

Ask Support Of Alabama Clergymen

Clergymen throughout the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod were encouraged to remember the church's pastors and members in the Birmingham area "in your congregational and personal prayers."

A letter to all pastors also urged them to commend, by letter of encouragement, the Alabama ministers "in their difficult and often lonely stand."

The Synod-wide letter was sent by Dr. Clemonce Sabourin of New York, president of the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America, and Rev. Karl Lutze, the Association's Associate Executive Secretary.

The letter quoted, in its entirety, a statement drafted by Birmingham-area pastors and the president of the church's Southern District, Dr. Edgar Homrighausen of Cullman, Alabama. The statement was read from pulpits in the area on September 22, and was prompted by the violence of the previous Sunday in which six young Negroes were killed — four in church as the result of a bomb explosion.

Sabourin and Lutze stated that the action of the Lutheran Alabama clergymen "reflects Christian insight and courage, loving concern, and responsible pastoral leadership at its very best."

BIRMINGHAM: Personal Report Page Four

WASHINGTON: The March Page Three

ST. LOUIS: Fox Address Page Two

Schulze 1-Year Leave Among LHRAA Shifts

Dr. Andrew Schulze, Executive Secretary of the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America, has been granted a one-year leave of absence by the Association's board of directors.

Rev. Karl Lutze will direct the LHRAA activity during this interim period, and has been designated the Associate Executive Secretary of the Association.

The one-year leave was given Dr. Schulze at his request to permit him to continue research and writing on a manuscript which has been receiving his attention during recent years.

Schulze and Lutze will continue to serve Valparaiso University as part-time assistant professors in the Department of Religion. Schulze's course on "The Church and the Race Problem" has attracted a record enrollment during the autumn 1963 semester.

Concurrent with this shift, Galen Gockel was designated editor of the Vanguard, LHRAA's official publication. Gockel, of Chicago, is a member of the Association's board of directors. He is on the staff of the National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago.

In an effort to relieve Lutze of the added responsibilities which will be his as the sole executive during the year, the board of directors will be given more travel, speaking, and administrative assignments.

Schulze has been the LHRAA Executive Secretary since its founding in 1953. Prior to assuming this position, he held pastorates in Chicago, St. Louis, and Springfield.

In Chicago and St. Louis he established Race Relations societies, whose membership and leadership shaped the present LHRAA.

Lutze joined the Association as Field Secretary in 1959, after serving four years on its board of directors. Prior to that time he served parishes in Tulsa and Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Race and the Church: The Case of Missouri

Opinion polarizes rapidly when the role of the Church in race relations is discussed; and polarized opinion usually results in a caricature of the true situation.

There are two dominant evaluations of the performance of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in this respect.

Version 1 recites a dreary litany of past failures, missed opportunities, and consistent denials of the Christmas angel's message, "which shall be to all people."

Version 2 claims that the Synod's record is studded with successes which, when taken together, make it clear that the church has ministered well to the Negro American.

Each version is partially true, but standing alone, each distorts the truth. Like the records of most human organizations in this area, that of the church is an ambiguous one. There are congregations in changing neighborhoods which remain firmly to experience the thrill of an inclusive ministry. Simultaneously, there are those which fear the challenge and head straight for the nearest suburb.

There are congregations which seek to gain the first Negro families in the neighborhood, and there are those which practice the most blatant racism.

There are leaders — local, regional, and national — who are knowledgeable and ready to stride forward. There are others for whom the racial arena is a confusing and uncertain one.

To become involved in a dispute over the past would be a disservice to the future. A study of the past, however, can help the church apply insights gained from past successes—and failures—and help it avoid repeating past instances where it has not been the Church.

Witnessing With A Clear Voice

An eloquent new sound is being heard in Lutheran circles—the voice is that of the **Lutheran Witness**, the Missouri Synod's official journal.

The **Witness**' response to the civil rights revolution is only one of many areas of new excellence. An across-the-board effort to make Christianity directly applicable to the reader's daily life is evident on virtually every page.

It is its handling of the racial struggle, however, which is of particular interest to friends of LHRAA and all those who have been concerned with Missouri's stance toward the Negro.

There are three specific areas in which the **Witness**' break with the past may have gone unnoticed by many.

First, it has clearly pointed out the sinfulness of discrimination. Its lead article on September 3 stated:

Since integration is morally right, it is morally wrong for a Christian to oppose it or refuse to promote it on social or economic grounds.

The same article concludes that "churches have a moral imperative to integrate."

Good Christians—many of them sympathetic to the cause of racial justice—stop short of seeing sin in discrimination.

Illness, hunger, sudden deaths in slum fires and slow psychological deaths in segregated schools—all these stem from the white man's determination to define for the Negro where he should live, and how much he will earn.

Such actions are hardly consistent with the fifth commandment, which Luther explains thus: "We should fear and love God that we may not hurt nor harm our neighbor in his body, but help and befriend him in every bodily need."

Apart from the secular realm, discrimination in our churches sins against God's command to go into all the world, and to "suffer the little children to come unto me."

The second feature of the **Witness**' courage is the admission that the church's record, including that of its own denomination, is not unblemished.

Not always clearly identifiable is the part the Christian message of man's essential brotherhood, not only in Adam but also because of Christ, has played in the attitude of white and Negro . . .

Unfair and unloving discrimination has marked the record of many churches, including churches of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

The third new sound is the **Witness**' willingness to point out that "preaching the Gospel" alone is but part of the church's mission.

A clear and direct editorial on October 1 made this statement:

There are those who protest the entry of churches into the racial question. "Lay off," they say. "This is a social issue. The churches should stick to preaching the Word of God." Also: "Why is segregation a sin today if it was not morally wrong 100 years ago?"

Part of the answer to both objections would be that only belatedly have some churches come to grasp that the Gospel of Christ has social implications . . .

If the Negroes must now lose their hope because churches preaching the love of Christ stand aloof from sharing in the achievement of racial equality and justice for them, America will sink low and the churches will stand isolated in shame. That would be tragic indeed.

These are powerful words from an eloquent witness.

An Unexpected Ally On Channel 5

Watching the World Series on television last month wasn't a complete waste of time for us Yankee rooters.

It was a pleasant surprise to see the increasing number of Negro actors appearing in the advertisements.

That it should be the TV commercial which provides the vehicle for the advancement of racial tolerance may cause some critics of mass culture to quiver. Yet the naturalness of two commuters — a Negro and a white — discussing a common topic on the way to work advertised much more than the merits of a razor blade.

We would hate to argue with someone who claimed that Elston Howard, with his face half full of Foamy Lather, contributed as much to the breakup of white-held myths about the Negro as would have James Baldwin in a 30-minute talk.

The Vanguard: Looking Ahead

This issue of the **Vanguard** represents a newer look than that to which our readers have become accustomed.

As the complex field of race relations changes swiftly, so must those involved continue to be responsible and flexible in their observations and interpretations.

We hope that changes beyond those of format and layout may sustain our friends, support our leaders, and strengthen those whose commitment to justice may still be hobbled by the human chains of prejudice.

The Vanguard

Published by the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America.

EDITORIAL RESOURCE BOARD

Richard Bardolph, Greensboro, North Carolina
Thomas Coates, Tokyo, Japan
L. W. Halvorson, Chicago, Illinois
John Strietelmeier, Valparaiso, Indiana
Howard B. Woods, St. Louis, Missouri
Galen Gockel, Editor

The business address of the **Vanguard**, for purposes of subscriptions and changes of address is: LHRAA, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana.

Editorial correspondence should be addressed to 8414 S. Kimbark Avenue, Chicago 19, Illinois.

Fox Assesses Role Of Synod, LHRAA

. . . Although there are many reasons for this occasion to be a happy and festive one, the events of the times weigh heavily on our minds and our consciences, and make this occasion one that calls for sober reflection and critical self-analysis.

For while August 28 will go down in history as one of the days in the life of this country when the people bared, for all the world to see, the great right of peaceful assembly in protest of injustice, September 15 will be remembered as a day when hatred and racism showed itself in its ugliest exposure yet . . .

How can we, members of the body of Christ, and Christian brothers with almost one hundred million other people in this country, bring the full beauty and power of Christian love out of hiding and into the open, so that men and women, white people and black people, old and young, can live with each other in peace and harmony?

I ask the question knowing full well the answer that will come thundering back—the Church cannot do it! Maybe the schools; the lawmakers, organizations, public and private; the business community or the labor unions—they perhaps can do it, but not the Church.

And while I pray to God this is not so, where is the evidence to the contrary? . . .

It is not enough for concerned people in the North and South merely to voice their sorrow and shame. We must begin to attack the cause of the disease rather than to continue as we have in the past to treat the symptoms sporadically.

The nine Americans in ten who belong to the affluent society should be required to spend one day a week in that other America that you find in the slums of every major city . . .

If they could see these facts at first hand, the impulse to cry out for instantaneous remedies would not be declared as radical thinking.

As Joseph Alsop stated recently, the time has come—indeed, the time came long ago, for a massive national effort to help all the inhabitants of this "other America" to escape into the normal American society.

What have you and I, as members of the Lutheran Human Relations Association, been doing with regard to these problems over the last ten years? What have we done or not done in an effort to enlighten the ignorant, to change the recalcitrant, and to support the concerned?

For ten years this association has been speaking, writing, and talking about the problems of the neglected and the deprived. We have been trying to convince the Lutheran Church and its constituents of the great opportunity that confronts it for saving the bodies of men as well as their souls.

There have been notable achievements resulting in greater awareness of the Church in this area.

But the sad fact is, that while we have been laboring in the vineyard seeking to do that work which we believe so important, the great majority of Lutherans either have not heard or have paid no attention to the things that we have been saying, and that have been taking place all around them.

Too few of our clergymen, and far too few of our national officers have ever bothered to sit down and to concern themselves with "secular problems," with the result that the Church has not the capability of providing leadership at this time, when it stands at the hour of its greatest judgment.

These, my friends, are rather harsh words, and harsh they must be, for no longer can we indulge in the folly of polite conversation about a matter so threatening, so capable of destroying the vitality of this country . . .

These can be harsh words because I speak to you as one who has been a member of this church for almost 25 years.

I have watched our denomination

grow in size, in assets, in memberships, and in stature to where it is one of the great church bodies in the United States.

But I have also watched it dodge, vacillate, hedge, and turn away from seizing many opportunities for soul saving which it has had over the last 25 years. I am forced to confess that as a Negro Lutheran I find myself becoming disillusioned, not with the great teachings of the church, but with its unwillingness, inability, and lack of desire to apply these teachings.

It is hard to understand the rationale of a church which in 1963 would consider investing large sums of money in an inferior academic institution in the most viciously segregated region of the South, while overlooking the chance quickly to establish a truly first-class integrated school in a nearby state.

I find it difficult to understand how some can regard this Association as an irritant—as a group of radical thinkers which would have the church involve itself in the affairs of the secular world—and fail

These are excerpts from a speech by Richard K. Fox, Jr., delivered before the St. Louis chapter of LHRAA. Mr. Fox is the vice-president of the Association, and is on the staff of the Deputy Undersecretary of State for Administration, Washington, D.C.

to recognize that our goals are the same as theirs.

I am amazed and dismayed by the statement . . . that "it should be clear to all that the Missouri Synod has identified itself with the Negroes of America."

But these are temporal concerns. These are concerns brought upon us by the events of the day.

These are, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer labels them, human wish dreams. Too often, we are guilty of forming definite ideas of what we believe Christian life together should be.

He who loves his dream of a community more than the Christian community itself becomes a destroyer of the latter even though his personal intentions may be ever so honest and earnest and sacrificial. God is not a God of the emotions but the God of truth.

Boenhoeffer tells us God has already laid the only foundation of our fellowship. He has bound us together in one body with other Christians in Jesus Christ long before we entered into common life with them. We enter that life not as demanders but as thankful recipients. He has given us brothers who will go on living with us through sin and need under the blessings of his grace. Even when sin and misunderstanding burden the communal life, is not the sinning brother still a brother with whom we, too, stand under the word of Christ?

Thus the very hour of disillusionment with my brother becomes incomparably salutary, because it so thoroughly teaches me that neither of us can ever live by his own words and deeds, but only by that one Word and Deed which really binds us together—the forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ.

We need not ask where does LHRAA go from here. We need only to place ourselves in His hands and to ask that he continue to permit us to do His bidding. It is our human dream that this Association will not have the occasion to celebrate a twentieth anniversary.

Until His decision is made clear to us, we shall continue as we indicated in a resolution passed at our most recent Institute on July 7, to "identify ourselves with the suffering of the oppressed in helping them to realize their full potential as God's new creation by such specific acts as would witness to their right to full participation in the Body of Christ and to full citizenship in our nation."

Washington: "Love in Deed and in Truth"

By Rev. Karl Lutze

Tuesday, August 27, 7:30 p.m.

Other churches in Washington held services too, but we attended Peace Lutheran Church. There was no sermon. Pastor Herbert Schwandt chose Psalms to read and collects to pray for a day of humiliation and prayer. There were short, sobering, readings of particularly meaningful Scriptures.

After each reading, the pastor paused for three or four minutes. The church remained completely silent as the congregation meditated on the words just read.

It was a small group of worshippers, but they were deeply moved. There was a serious expectancy but a warm congeniality. Not too much was said about tomorrow. They would all be there.

The members of Peace church and a handful of visitors gathered promptly in the morning. There was sufficient good humor to "correct" one situation—a car in the caravan had all Caucasian passengers. That had to be rectified before we could go and good naturedly the switch was made to allow for an integrated carload.

There was a seriousness evident. This was no lark. No one talked of danger or anything going wrong. But everyone knew that something could go wrong and do inestimable damage to the cause the demonstrators had embraced.

By the time we got to Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church a good sized crowd was arriving. Pastor William Schiebel's church had a warm welcome, and coffee and doughnuts were offered to help brace the marchers for their long day. As the hour of departure drew closer the 130 marchers stepped into the church for worship. "A Mighty Fortress" took on dimensions altogether new. There were prayers—a simple service. And the closing words of the Scripture reading were words that took on new meaning in this context as the pastor read: "Little children let us not love in word or speech, but in deed and in truth!"

After receiving the blessing we turned singing *Onward Christian Soldiers* and by twos filed from the church, picking up signs in the narthex and heading towards the Washington Monument where the march would begin.

With the group was a young woman whom I had baptized and confirmed, whose marriage I had performed earlier in my ministry. We spoke briefly about the days when she used to play organ—the very hymn *Onward Christian Soldiers*—as the children of that church used to file from Vacation Bible School to walk down the unpaved, sidewalkless streets of their segregated homes and their frustrating pattern of segregated life.

Neither of us ever dreamed then that we would see the day when responsible adult Lutherans would file out of the church together to stand up and be counted among those who demonstrated concern against injustice, suppression, and lovelessness. She was grateful for this moment, and so was I.

There was something about the March. Those who might earlier have had their doubts about the rightness of participating could not possibly have doubted the rightness of it now that they were here. People, people—how unbelievably many people!

It must have been a ludicrous parade by normal standards. There was no order. It had started before schedule. Our group never was quite sure where we actually started. During the march we were passed by some groups and we almost became spectators reading the identifying signs "Brooklyn", "Danville", "Detroit", "Albany", and yet we passed other groups. Two women nudged us and said, "We're from Florida and lost our group, may we march with you?"

There were signs "Lutherans Marching" and two large ones depicting Negro and Caucasian hands reaching to grasp each other, and in the center where they were to meet was a cross superimposed on a bright red heart. Occasionally you'd see scattered fragments of the group rallying back together near the signs.

How many times while traveling hadn't we sung to while away the time! Aimless singing. But the singing by these groups was meaningful and deeply moving. These

were people who were concerned. Many had spent dearly to be on



hand to show what the cause meant to them. They meant business.

But their business was not hate, nor resentment, nor anger, nor revenge. This was not the Negro's bid for identity. This was a band of Americans concerned that America grow up and fill the role her framers and her patriots have always dreamed she would fill, haven of justice and freedom and unity.

Strange paradox: the police and military personnel to be seen everywhere were at once reassuring and superfluous. The *New York Times* described the mood of it all as that of a church picnic. But never was considerateness more evident. Had anyone wanted to push ahead—and none did—he would have been helped. No one would have shouted "down in front" to someone who blocked another's view.

As a matter of fact people were so concerned about the others that they would make every effort to see that they would not be obstructing someone else's line of vision.

As five and six hours wore on—and speech after speech—and the sun was hot and shade was sparse—it might have been expected that people would grow tired and irritable. Tired yes, but not irritable. On the long walk back and on the highway 1500 busses and countless cars, waving, helpfulness, smiles everywhere. These had joined in a common cause.

Oh, the speeches were monumental, the program of highest calibre. But the huge throng of Americans at the foot of Lincoln's image, dedicated to the task of making this the great nation for which men have died—this we shall never forget.

Motives differ—but those who take Christ seriously want to express their love for others as a demonstration of their love for Him Who loved first—and most. This was one way.

And when the day was well spent and many vehicles had already swept from the city, the band of Lutherans now much enlarged, because a huge contingent from the East had found us, gathered at Mt. Olivet. There was much to think on as the congregation sang with full hearts *Now Thank We All Our God*.

Not a finale, this. It was one way to show concern—and there is much yet to be done.

Following are excerpts from the remarks made by Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, chief executive officer of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA. Dr. Blake spoke at the Washington march as one of its ten leaders. . . . Our official pronouncements for years have clearly called for "a nonsegregated Church in a nonsegregated society." But as of August 28, 1963 we have achieved neither a nonsegregated Church nor a nonsegregated society.

And it is partially because the churches of America have failed

to put their own houses in order that 100 years after the Emancipation Proclamation, 175 years after the adoption of the Constitution, 173 years after the adoption of the Bill of Rights, the United States of America still faces a racial crisis.

We do not, therefore, come to this Lincoln Memorial in any arrogant spirit of moral or spiritual superiority to "set the nation straight" . . .

Rather we come—late, late we come—in the reconciling and repentant spirit in which Abra-

ham Lincoln of Illinois once replied to a delegation of morally arrogant churchmen. He said, "Never say God is on our side; rather pray that we may be found on God's side."

We come to present ourselves this day, our souls and bodies, to be a "living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is our reasonable service," in a kind of tangible and visible sacrament which alone in times like these can manifest to a troubled world the grace that is available at the Communion table, or high altar.

Pastor Tells Congregation of Reasons for Joining March

I went for a walk yesterday! It was a beautiful day for a walk.

I walked from Washington's monument to Lincoln's memorial! I couldn't have chosen a more significant moment for such a walk.

I did not walk alone! Yesterday I was among the 200,000 people who marched on Washington for freedom and jobs.

I was not alone because I was accompanied by my fellow-pastors, fellow-Lutherans, fellow Christians, and fellow-Americans. Believe me, it was a tremendous experience. I'm glad I was a part of it.

I marched on Washington yesterday because I am convinced that certain of my fellow-pastors, fellow-Lutherans, fellow-Christians, and fellow-Americans (most of whom are Negro, but by no means all) are the victims of many grave injustices and senseless segregation. If you want to know what I'm talking about, read *Black Like Me*. This is a white man's diary of his experiences as a Negro.



Three LHRAA officials gather with Rev. William Kohn (right), president of the Missouri Synod's Southeastern district, prior to the March for Jobs and Freedom. LHRAA representatives are Rev. Karl Lutze, Dr. Clemon Sabourin, and Dr. Andrew Schulze. Rev. Sabourin, of New York, is on the Board of Directors of the Synod's Atlantic district.

I believe these people are entitled to live wherever they can afford to live, to attend the public schools nearest them, to work at any job they can handle.

I marched on Washington because I believe Congress should not permit federal funds to be used to promote or preserve segregation in any area. They must do all within their power to make this nation a land of the free, and to guarantee liberty and justice for all. This will take a great deal of wisdom and courage, because they must not buy the freedom of some at the expense of others.

I marched on Washington because I believe moral issues are involved, the church must speak. The church must speak, that is, if it is still the chosen vessel of God's Word. Congress can pass laws banning segregation and discrimination, but God alone can grant freedom. We have this freedom in Jesus Christ. We preach it from our pulpits. Now we must share it—or lose it.

This was a tremendous experience for me—to be entombed alive in a mass of humanity. But there was absolutely no fear, because I knew that if I needed help, the people standing next to me were ready to help.

It was an experience which pricked at the conscience because I knew that the church was not leading this movement. Churchmen were called upon to offer prayers, because that is the American tradition. Had they not been there, they would not have been missed. Churchmen were permitted to serve on the main committee, but only after the March had already been organized and its goals crystalized. The real leadership of this movement is outside the church.

There were speeches at the monument. Some were excellent, others were not. Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, Stated Clerk, United Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A., said that the whole affair would not have been necessary if the churches (and clergy) had been doing their job. He's right. Excerpts of the speeches are

This report originally appeared as a pastoral letter. Its author, Rev. Edward Birner, is pastor of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Greenbelt, Maryland. Rev. Birner is District Youth Chairman of the Missouri Synod's Southeastern district.

in the newspapers. They deserve to be read.

Clearly, the Negro is not looking to the church for his salvation. He looks to Congress, the Supreme Court, NAACP, CORE, SCLC, SNCC, NUL, and other organizations. They talk about freedom, but no one looks to Christ as the source of that freedom. They talk about brotherhood, but no one mentions Christ as the One who binds us all together. If these words are going to be said, the church must say them.

But the church has said nothing. What it has said, has been negated by its actions.

The church got on the bandwagon of this March. The clergy was there. At least ten of our area pastors were there. Over sixty Lutheran clergy came from New York City, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Dayton, and other cities were represented, too. Maybe the church can still redeem this situation, but only if it begins to care as Christ would care, only if it begins to love all men as God has loved them in Christ.

We are going to see the day when many segregated communities offer housing for all. You need not fear the coming of that day. It isn't the final Judgment day. (But if Judgment day comes before that day, then you will have something to answer for. Something in addition to all the rest.)

When we begin to offer housing to all, we will be confessing our sins of the past. This is always difficult. We will be repenting of our sins. That is even more difficult. We will begin to live out the Christian principles of love for all men. This is the most difficult task. It would be an impossible task if it were not for the strength we receive from God.

The March on Washington for jobs and freedom is over. But the March on the Church has just begun.

"... consecrated, Lord to Thee."

Birmingham Pastor Recounts Bombing . . .

I was standing before our adult Bible class on that Sunday, September 15, when it happened. It was 10:22 a.m. to be precise.

The loud reverberations of the blast signalled immediately that this must be another dynamiting — and that it must be close.

In the City of Birmingham, where nearly 50 bombings of Negro homes and churches have taken place since 1945, everyone in Bible class had the sinking feeling that this was another. One man leaned over to his neighbor and spoke in tones of muffled humor and impatient despair: "Well, here we go again."

After this wave of consternation swept through the Bible class for a brief moment, the study of God's Word continued. It wasn't until the Sunday school classes had re-assembled for the closing and Mr. J. C. McNair, the superintendent was making an announcement, that one of the men motioned me aside and whispered: "The 16th Street Baptist church has been bombed."

I looked at the man in complete disbelief and could only respond, "No! Was anyone hurt?"

I was being motioned back, to close the Sunday school hour with a prayer and a hymn verse. I prayed that God would help us to be brave when things happen that shake us. And I prayed that God would have mercy on those who are out to hate and to kill and to destroy.

Mr. McNair and I stood before the altar singing out of the same hymnal, "Take my life and let it be, consecrated, Lord, to thee!"

As soon as I had spoken the benediction, I turned to Mr. McNair and gave him the message. "Oh no," he responded with great shock, "my wife and Denise are there."

Sunday school was over. As I walked down the aisle of the church to shake hands with the children, this was the only topic of conversation. "Was anyone hurt?" "Did they catch anybody?" "Are you going to stay for church?"

Shock and fear and dismay and confusion and anger charged the air.

Mr. McNair and two or three

other men immediately started off for 16th Street Baptist Church.

Three men were quickly enlisted to walk guard around our church— St. Paul's Lutheran — during the 11 a.m. service. Telephone calls from worried parents to children and youth kept the phone in the church office busy.

The morning service began. The youth choir gathered at the foot of the steps for the usual prayer before the processional.

Caught up in the tension, one tenth-grade girl in my confirmation class earnestly asked: "What happens if we're bombed, Pastor? I haven't been confirmed yet!"

Another youth responded with a better answer than I might have mustered. "But remember, you have been baptised."

After the reassuring reception of our Lord's body and blood and the final hymn, the choir and I stood in the narthex with heads bowed for the silent prayer. The head usher caught my eye, leaned over and said softly: "Denise McNair, was one of the four."

"One of the four what?"

"One of the four girls who was killed in the blast."

"Killed! Killed?"

The word rushed back through the people in the aisle like water through a flood gate. And there swirled past me a sea of faces that registered dismay, disbelief, despair. Women could not hide their tears. Men, youth, and children found it impossible to smile. I shall never again shake hands with a line of worshipers so crestfallen, so visibly shaken.

Two or three members urged me to stay at nights with them, rather than in the parsonage next to the church by myself.

Trying to think through my own daze, I argued as to whether I should go to the Baptist church — or to the hospital — or to the McNairs. I decided I should try to minister to the living first, so I went to the hospital.

There I met a group of concerned persons, Rev. John Cross, pastor of the bombed church, several other Negro ministers, and two white persons. I asked, "How many were injured?"

Twenty-one injured. Nineteen have been released. Two are still in the operating room, but not in critical condition." The reply was heartening at the time. I was to wince at the news later that Sarah Collins, a sister of one of the four killed, lay blinded in her hospital room — probably never to see again.

Then came the difficult job of seeing the parents of the four girls. The two white persons at the hospital asked whether they could go along with me. Accompanying a man with a clerical collar, recognizable by most Negroes, would greatly reduce their danger.

I spoke to each one of the parents the one assurance that we have at the time of death: "Christ rose from the dead. Your daughter will too. And He lives to comfort and strengthen you now. He lives. Believe it."

And then I waited, half-expecting a flow of questioning, possibly angry, words. But there were none. Mr. McNair replied, "We mourn the loss of our Denise. But we realize that the most important thing for us to do is to work all the harder to make this a better place for the children who are left — so that they do not have to live in fear."

Mr. Wesley: "We cannot always understand what God is doing, but we know He works things out for our good." This in spite of the fact that Cynthia was his only child.

The parents of Addie Collins and Carol Robertson expressed the same ability to trust God and to forgive. And all of the parents accepted us Caucasian comforters warmly and

gratefully — as though they honestly did not see the color of our skin. As tears often moistened my face I could not help but marvel at the hopeful and forgiving spirit of these people whose entire lives have been under the white man's oppression in varying degrees and who had just experienced the ultimate of the system of prejudice.

In sharp contrast to the genuine love of these people who had every human reason to be embittered, were the Confederate-flag-waving, yelling, chanting white youth driving up and down the streets in preparation for a parade. On their cars were signs. "Keep our schools white." "Keep the niggers out." "We don't want to integrate."

As the skies grew dark I was finally heading toward the home of Mrs. Streeter, a member who had dinner ready for me at 1 p.m.

She relayed the news that one Negro boy had been shot and killed by two white youth returning from an impassioned meeting where a white minister had proclaimed repeatedly, "We must fight integration in every way possible."

The two boys had fought it the way they thought best — and Virgil Ware lay dead.

I heard also that the police had shot and killed a Negro boy, Johnny Robinson. Apparently he had been among a group of Negro boys who had been pelting cars with rocks. Johnny followed his instinct and turned to run — and the slug caught him.

After the usual delicious meal, we brought our needs and fears to God in prayer. After the prayer Mrs. Streeter raised her head slowly and sobbed convulsively: "Why Lord? Why these little children?"

One church in a white community met that night to answer the question, "What can we do?" Much to my chagrin, it was a Unitarian church that had given me the special invitation. They were unanimous in their determination to do various things — from telegramming high officials to planning a talk with the mayor the next morning.

Many in the white community truly mourned September 15. But only a few saw their involvement in creating such an atmosphere by their words or by their silence. And almost none of them had any fears that the next bomber might hit them or their church.

It was fairly easy for the white community to forget September 15.

And then in the early hours of Wednesday morning, September 25, another two blasts went off just three blocks from our church. The first blast had been a stick of dynamite to attract a crowd, and then a few minutes later a second explosion sent nails and shrapnel shooting in all directions to mow down the crowd that was supposed to have gathered.

By the grace of God, no one came out to see the first blast hole. Only because of this, no one was killed.

But this fiendish attempt to kill people sent a new wave of fear through the Negro community. Volunteer guards were immediately set up at nearly every other corner in many areas.

Three men still walk guard around our Lutheran church during Sunday school and the church service.

The extreme effect of September 15 upon some Negroes may be seen in the attitude of one of our Sunday school girls — a 12 year old. When I told her mother that we had been missing Mary the past two Sundays, her mother replied:

"I wish I didn't have to say it, but Mary is afraid to go to Sunday school."

"In fact she wakes up in the middle of the night screaming."

Surely it is not difficult to understand why I can never forget September 15 — and why thousands of citizens in Birmingham, and throughout the world, especially citizens of color, will never, never forget it.

. . . Answers Question "What Can I Do?"

Again and again, after I tell people the story of September 15 in Birmingham — the bombing of a church, the killing of four Negro girls and two Negro boys — people ask the question: "But what can I do?"

This is a question many people have never asked before. A question that needs some searching answers.

"What can I do?"

1. You can understand why the blast happened.

Many would say it happened because of the demonstrations in Birmingham last April and May. This was a spite bomb to even the score with Negroes who demonstrated last spring, goes the argument, and so the Negroes should never have demonstrated.

Others would go beyond the demonstrations of last spring to say that the entire movement in the Negro community toward desegregation is at fault. If the schools had not been desegregated this fall, the bomb would likely never have been set off.

Such an argument is like jailing the man whose automobile has been stolen, and indicting him for trying to stop the thief.

The Negro who is striving by every legal method possible — lawsuits, demonstrations, boycotts — to obtain what is already rightfully his, cannot be faulted for this.

And so in the bombing of the church the guilty party is not the Negroes who are protesting injustice, but the whites who permit and perpetuate segregation and discrimination.

Not just the mad men who murdered four innocent girls at Sunday school are at fault. Everyone who has in any way supported prejudice and discrimination and opposed desegregation and integration has contributed toward the bombing. This includes not only the hatemongers of the Ku Klux Klan and White Citizens' Council, but also the "gentle people of silence," who do not viciously hate people, but whose muteness is quiet support of a system which dehumanizes a large segment of our society.

The Birmingham fathers who said they would accept school desegregation now, but would continue to fight it to the bitter end are guilty.

The kind of persons who have always commended people for resisting desegregation, who have maintained that "we have no problem," who insist on letting time work out any changes necessary — are guilty.

Some fight change with words, some with dynamite — most with silence.

But all who oppose desegregation are part of the reason why some mad men thought they could bomb a church and get away with society's silent or open approval.

2. You can commit yourself to the Christian way in race relations with a new sense of urgency.

The Christian way in race relations is not simply to tolerate the other race. It is to pray for, and to openly work toward oneness in the church and justice in society.

Neutrality in this issue aids only one side — the side of injustice, the side that insists on the old way of life where the Negro is less than a person, the side of segregation and inequality, the side of police brutality and dynamitings, the side of open hatred and subtle prejudice.

If we do not commit ourselves openly to the Christian way of love and justice in race relations with a new sense of urgency, the four girls have died in vain.

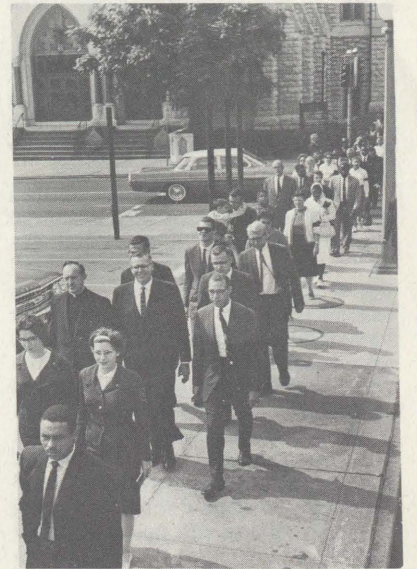
3. You can start with your congregation.

It is a terrifying thought to realize that if any one of the four girls killed on September 15 had attempted to attend a church in a white community — and all four of them lived rather close to such a church — it is almost certain they would have been turned away at some of them.

And this in 1963!

What is more, this might have happened in almost any city in the country.

Ask yourself such questions as: Has the subject of the Christian attitude toward race been thoroughly discussed in my Bible classes? Does my pastor frequently touch on the issue in his sermons? Would the



LHRAA STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS participate in the St. Louis march in memory of the six Birmingham children.

-- Photo by Ockrassa

families of these four girls have been genuinely welcomed into our communion had they moved to my city? How many of the Negroes in my community have been actively invited to our Lutheran churches?

You will find much to do.

4. You can work actively toward racial justice in society.

"We must work all the harder to bring about a more decent world for the children who are left." This was one of the unforgettable statements from Mr. J. C. McNair, father of one of the four bombing victims, on the very day of the tragedy.

To work strenuously for an equal educational and vocational opportunity for the brothers and sisters of the four girls may mean several things. Working on voter registration; contacting companies to negotiate more equal employment opportunity; filing complaints on job discrimination; demonstrating, if necessary, when negotiations break down; toiling with committees and organizations that are trying to bring about racial justice.

To many people, such suggestions sound like sheer activism, almost the opposite of the Gospel as they know it.

Actually to work for justice in society demonstrates that we know the love of which God had for all men in the Redemption. As St. John put; "We know the love of God for us, because God expressed it in laying down His life for us. We must in turn express our love by laying down our lives for those who are our brothers."

It is time for us to realize, therefore, that our Christian theology not only permits us to work toward justice in society, but requires us to do so. If Christian love requires me to help my brother with bread and potatoes when he is out of work, then Christian love also requires me to work toward changing the employment patterns of my community that make it difficult for him to get a job according to his ability.

Because there is so much involved in developing a society that offers equal opportunity to the brothers and sisters of the four girls you may make mistakes. The pastor of the congregation may have to be the first to roll up his sleeves in this area.

But remember that you are doing what Christ would have you do. You are identifying yourself with your brother in his physical need, as well as his spiritual need, even as Christ identified Himself with you.

What can I do? Plenty.

And when you lose your sense of urgency, remember the four girls and the two boys. And all who have gone before them. And your Lord Jesus Christ, Who was both Victim and Victor.

Non-profit Organization
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
VALPARAISO, IND.
PERMIT NO. 166

LUTHERAN HUMAN RELATIONS ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICA
Officers: President, Rev. Clemon Sabourin; Vice-President, Mr. Richard Fox, Jr.; Secretary, Rev. Ronald Goers; Treasurer, Miss Ellen Sweet. Other board members are: Rev. Joseph Ellwanger, Mr. Galen Cocker, Mr. H. Dixon Hanna.
Executive Secretary: Dr. Andrew Schulze
Associate Executive Secretary: Rev. Karl Lutze
VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY, VALPARAISO, INDIANA