A Special Edition of the Cresset

Published by Valparaiso University in Honor of the Walther League Anniversary Reunion May 1993

A Message From the President Alan F. Harre

The Pilgrim O.P. Kretzmann

And articles by John Strietelmeier Al Looman Frederick Niedner, Jr. and others...

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE, THE ARTS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Dear Friends of the Walther League:

It is a great pleasure for Valparaiso University to provide this special edition of the Cresset. As many of you know, the Cresset was originally a publication of the Walther League; after a number of years of cooperation, the University became its sole publisher after September of 1956, when the League was no longer able to continue its support.

As I reflect upon other connections between Valparaiso University and the Walther League, a number of them come to mind. For example, VU was privileged to host the annual training program for youth caravaners when the League was preparing those many gifted individuals to travel around The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in the 1950s and 1960s.

In one of its more far-reaching collaborations, the League helped initiate the Youth Leadership Training Program (YLTP) on campus in 1956. A number of YLTP graduates have made tremendous contributions to congregational youth ministry within American Lutheranism. In addition, some YLTP graduates have now found their way into leadership positions in The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and within the ELCA as well.

Also, there were literally hundreds of individuals whose friendships were formed through Walther League activities and were maintained as they received their undergraduate education at Valparaiso University.
A particularly precious link between the University and the League resided in the person of O.P. Kretzmann. As you may recall, Dr. Kretzmann assumed the presidency of Valparaiso University after having served as Executive Secretary of the International Walther League during the 1930s. I hope that you will enjoy reading some of his thoughtful prose in this commemorative issue.

The Walther League and Valparaiso University had a long and mutually enriching relationship. Therefore, on the 100th anniversary of the Walther League, Valparaiso University is delighted to be able to contribute to the celebration with this commemorative issue of the Cresset. We hope that these pages remind you of the many ways that both the League and Valpo benefitted from well-crafted ideas that were intended to edify as well as to stir those who understood the wisdom in the words, “In Thy Light We See Light.”

May each of you be especially enriched this weekend as you experience the Anniversary goals of Remembering, Renewing, Reclaiming, and Rededicating in the Light of Christ Jesus.

Most warmly,

Alan F. Harre, President
Valparaiso University
The occasion for this Special Edition of THE CRESSET is a joyous one, as generations of Lutherans remember together the sources of so much that has been good in their lives. Professor Jon Pahl’s history tells it formally; this publication, that I have assembled and edited with the assistance of Professor Eric Wignall, just moves very informally through a part of that past.

When the original of this magazine was founded, in November of 1937, the Walther League members enthusiastically read it, wrote volumes to its editors, sent in articles to its offices in what appear at this distance to be measurable in carloads, rather than in column inches. Maybe because there was nothing else quite like it, THE CRESSET flourished as a major resource for young adults within the Lutheran Church. Their letters to the editors are filled with praise, outrage, query, suggestions, comment. They rebuke reviewers with total fearlessness; I was amazed and delighted to come upon a letter from my Aunt Marian, titled “Lament,” taking the movie reviewers to task over their carelessness with the delicate art of film review. What a surprise and delight for me to read her words, from October of 1940, when I, her goddaughter, was a mere five-month-old, mewing and puking in my mother’s arms—as someone might have put it.

But I digress. One of the virtues of the early Cressets, as any reader of today would notice immediately, was brevity. Reading through them to choose selections for this publication was instructive and humbling. One senses on every page the lively presence of readers—often being addressed directly—always evident to the writers, and more especially to the editors. THE CRESSET editors had lots of opinions, and no hesitance in setting them forward. Though it was clear that these writers all were sons and daughters of the Church, they were not party-line people. True to their Lutheran heritage, they tended to sin boldly and believe more boldly still.
We here at Valparaiso University are pleased to be able to participate in this Reunion in a number of ways, and producing this Special WL Cresset helps to remind us all of our rich tradition as Lutheran Christians involved with the world around us. It did not seem strange to the early editors of this magazine to produce a journal that would nourish the minds and spirits of young Christians by providing thoughtful pieces about the world they lived in—its politics, books, movies, trends, foibles, faiths, its false gods and its leading figures—and to shed on them some reflection of the Light that gives us the only light worth having.

Such a task does not seem strange to the present editor either. Though this issue is not meant to be a history of the journal, may its sense of past and continuing blessings be a part of the goodness of remembering for you.

Peace,

Gail McGrew Eifrig

Current Editor, CRESSET

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Cresset Clips-- From a Letter, July, 1940

Sirs:

I have no ear for music. I can’t distinguish the finer shades of color. I don’t understand modern poetry, and I don’t like Bach. All this, combined, makes me a “low-brow” of the lowest rank. But I read the ‘Alembic,’ [Theodore Graebner's column] and I want to learn if possible to appreciate some of the higher things of life. I imagine there are other people like me. To the editors of THE CRESSET I come for help. Your Music Critic [Walter Hansen] is doing something for my music appreciation—whenever I can understand him. Maybe you can help me in other ways. What is there about a poem which makes it worth while?

How does a painting differ from a photograph? What are the principles behind these forms of art? What do they try to express and how do they try to express it? Although there are many magazines and reviews of literature, there is none of which I know which deals with these questions. In the field of aesthetics there is much which THE CRESSET can do for people like me. Will it?

J.P., St. Louis, Missouri.
Comment by the Editors

Propaganda

This is not to be a warning against being influenced by international propaganda. It is a warning against refusing to accept facts on the plea that they are the product of propaganda. This is said with special reference to the news about Nazi regulations of the church and persecution of the Jews.

The very word "persecution" rouses the ire of some well intentioned people. They don't believe the Jews are persecuted. They "discount everything" they read in the press dispatches. They look upon all news unfavorable to Hitler's regime as colored, overdrawn, exaggerated, as lies-Jewish propaganda.

THE CRESSET has at various times referred to the Nazi attitude on religion and the treatment accorded the Jews. The authors of these articles can state that everything which has been said in these columns has been based on better evidence than press dispatches. The writers have sources available which in the nature of the case must remain undisclosed. Their attitude towards Nazism is grounded on documentary evidence and on the word of eye and ear witnesses.

We know—positively—that the story of the dreadful night of November 10 to 11, 1938 as told in the American Press was true. We know that the fire departments were under instructions not to put out the fire in Jewish quarters unless Aryan property were threatened. We know that the police were instructed not to interfere with mobs that were throwing dishes, clothing and furniture out of Jewish dwellings into the streets. We know on most unimpeachable testimony that there have been thousands of suicides among the harassed Jews.

We know that the state church of Germany is not to be separated from the state but to be placed under more direct supervision and control with tyrannical limitation of the congregations in the calling of preachers. Dr.

This editorial was published in February of 1939. Though it is unsigned, Professor Pahl believes it is the work of O.P. Kretzmann
Martin Reu has stated in print that these regulations, if carried through, signify the end of the Christian Church. We know that all churches are under restrictive laws, that do not permit them to have meetings in the open air or in public halls. We know that soundly Lutheran books protesting against the new heathendom which has the official backing of the state have been suppressed and their further printing prohibited. We know that such a thing as universal religious freedom, as we know it in the United States, does not exist in Germany. And we know finally that there are good Christians who are burdened in conscience because they stand by and permit these violations of fundamental Christian principles to continue without a word of protest, because such protest would mean the concentration camp.

The editorial staff is far from asserting that all news about Germany conditions which comes with a Paris or London date-line is true. On the other hand, unquestionably the worst has not yet been told, because it cannot be done without violating confidences which must be regarded by us as sacred. Aside from the word of eye and ear witnesses, however, we have the German papers which are sent to prominent Americans of German descent in the hope of winning them for the Nazi philosophy. The charge of an anti-Christian fanaticism and of a propaganda intended to stir up trouble both in North and South America can be proven from these German newspapers to the satisfaction of everyone who has not closed his mind to the facts.

February, 1939

Cresset Clips—

Of the film, Stagecoach:

"The director of The Informer, John Ford, shows how necessary it is that a movie actually move."

This is the review, in its entirety, of the movie that made John Wayne a star,

February, 1940
"... and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side..."

Little Man, What Now?

And so the cup of hate has at last spilled over..."Germany Invades Poland" - "Great Britain Declares War" - "Warsaw Has Fallen" - "Russia Invades Poland" - "Warsaw Bombed...." Behind these dreamlike headlines the real pageantry of war unfolds.... Now I must say again that these abstractions—Germany, Poland, Great Britain, Russia, Warsaw, France—are without meaning and truth.... I do not know the names of all the men who "declared war," but I do know that Hans Schmidt and Ivan Brovodich marched against Jan Pilsadski, and Pierre Ladoux against Fritz Mueller, and John Brown against—and none of them wanted to march, to kill, to die. ...Some of them, in all nations, are subjects of the Kingdom beyond all Kingdoms, the Holy Nation...They are now condemned to kill one another, driven by a madness not of their making...

For all of us who were chained to the radio in those first gloomy days of September there was, I imagine, the same succession of emotions....After fascinated horror had given way to indignation, the more pitiful because it was so helpless, there came quietly a sudden peace, a deep consent to the patient ways of God.... His whips were whistling through the universe and His anger was now open for all men to see....There was something in the world which was in the way of the Gospel—call it what you will—and a generation driven to its knees will be privileged to see the ultimate application of the law of history: "All things work together for good to them that love God."...

Little man, what now?... A long or a short war?... I do not know.... Even a brief glimpse of the hell of man's hate for man is enough.... A war fought according to the rules of international warfare?... I do not know.... It is

O. P. Kretzmann began his column The Pilgrim soon after the magazine's beginning and wrote it for almost 30 years.
the last bitter irony that men should kill each other according to rules and regulations.... The destruction of our civilization?... I do not know.... I know only that God is, that Christ died, that there is no hope without Him and no peace, that His old wounds are still there, that the angels of death fly more quickly now, that the

Church has greater responsibility in a world that has lost all responsibility, and that, despite hate and hell, the City of God will stand... That, I know, is the answer to the question, written in pity: “Little man, very little man, what now?”

October, 1939

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**Obligato**

I sing not as I would; for, Lord, my song
Is faulty, weak, and cannot half express
My fervent love. The quavering notes are wrong.
My earthbound throat and heart in wild distress
Strive to attain and cannot. Helplessness
Floods o’er my soul. O would that I could fling
My melodies in clear and glorious stress
To where with heavenly choirs I might sing
One tiny obligato, perfect for my King!

**Dorothy Hoyer Scharlemann**

*published June, 1940*
THE PILGRIM

"... and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side. . . "

And Yet

Something important this month. . . At least I hope so. . . . There are two reasons. . . . First: A few nights ago I was brought up short by a striking sentence written by my colleague of the Alembic. . . . Tucked away in a corner of the Lutheran Witness, it rang like a high bell: "We know a man who does not expect to be assigned to a place in the great mansions and who asks no more than a humble arbor where no telephone will trouble and where toil is ended. But when half an eternity or so has been spent listening to the great chant, wafted to him from far away over beds of asphodel, of those more worthy than he and closer to The Presence—he hopes to have some wiser ones come and visit him and explain why in the far-off, unhappy days of earth there had to be, ever and anon, strife and contention among those who loved the Lord Jesus and who all in sincerity called him Master." . . . That needs comment. . . .

Second reason: I have spent most of the last two months with the rising generation. . . . A strangely lovable crowd. . . . We have not given them much, these children of a dying world. . . . Stones for bread, guns for butter, unemployment for work, fear for hope, hate for love. . . . Their candles burn low. . . . It was inevitable that they would build a wall of cynicism against the world we have made for them. . . . I was not especially disturbed by that. . . . In fact, their cynicism was often a measure of their sensitivity to the horror of the twentieth century. . . . The more sensitive they were, the greater was the danger of cynicism. . . . Listening to their skeptical, yet curiously wistful, remarks about life and living, I heard the echo of the thunder over Sinai. . . . The sins of the fathers upon the heads of the children—inevitably and terribly. . . .

One thing, however, disturbed me more than anything else. . . . Their appalling cynicism concerning the Church. . . . They were willing to listen to the voice of Jesus Christ. . . . he seemed to haunt them as He has always haunted men and women who have caught a glimpse of His figure staggering along the Way of Sorrows. . . . For the Church, however, many of them had little use.
... The faults and mistakes over which my colleague of the Alembic vaults into the "fields of asphodel" were too near and too great for them. ... They were unable to close the awful gap between the faith which the Church professes and the faith she lives. ... Too much organization. ... Too many hypocrites. ... Too much hate and not enough love. ... Too many men and women who have reduced the living glory of the Christian faith to a cold acceptance of dead intellectual propositions. ... Too much smallness, pettiness, jealousy, fear. ... Not enough great hearts and great souls. ... Not enough children of the prophets and apostles. ... 

I know what they were talking about. ... It is no accident that the word "ecclesiastic" has taken on a dark and sinister meaning. ... Even the word "preach" has become suspect. ... Again and again these children of our mistakes said, "oh don't preach to us. ..."

And so I am compelled, even as my colleague, to say, "And yet"..."Nevertheless"..."Despite everything." ... Certainly it is one of the mysteries of evil that it is able to corrupt human hearts even when they are engaged in the highest and holiest task on earth. ... How men and women who live in the light of the Gospel, the story of grace and love and freedom and forgiveness, can be mean and small and narrow and hateful is one of the dark puzzles of life and time. ... Perhaps we have forgotten that the man who by word or action breaks the law of love—and almost all the sins of the Church and churchmen lie here—is both heretic and schismatic. ... The first step toward the solution of our problem is the full realization of the gravity of our offense. ... 

And yet... There is something else. ... We must not permit the rising generation to see only the wrong side of the tapestry. ... Beyond the hypocrites and the pharisees stands the great silent host of the hidden saints. ... Young men who consciously enter a profession in which there will be no prospect for earthly reward, in which they will always be at the mercy of sharp tongues. ... Despised by half the world and ridiculed by nearly all the rest. ... In lonely mission stations, in forgetful cities, in depressing slums. ... The nurse who gives her years to healing, the mother who makes her work in the kitchen a Te Deum, the invalid who holds back the tears until there is no one to see, the young woman who makes the pounding of the typewriter an act of worship—these are the real children of God. ... They are the greatest subjects of the King. ... We must not forget them. ... 

And yet. ... Behind and above the visible Church stands
the invisible communion of saints.

... The Body of Christ. ... The
City of God. ... The Bride of
Christ. ... Without spot or stain.
.. Hypocrites are forever without
her walls. ... Only Christians are
inside. ... And Christians are
made by God. ... They stand in
the line that runs red from
Calvary to the lilies of heaven.
They were treading the highways
of the world when Stephen was
stoned. ... And St. Paul wrote
from a prison cell. ... They were
in the world when St. Augustine
died at Hippo and Luther lived at
Worms. ... They are the Gulf
Stream of history...

This is the Church of Christ...
It is time for us to see again the
height and depth of the worn and
wonderful words: "I believe in
the Holy Christian Church, the
Communion of Saints." ... The
living messenger of the living
God. ... The contemporary of all
civilizations. ... The building of
living stones rising under the gen-
tle hammers of the grace of God.
... Dictators and Kings may
change the scaffolding, but not the
structure. ... The noise in Europe
is only an adjustment in one part
of the scaffold. ... Everything
good in our world has come from
the Church. ... She has been the
Mother of freedom, the inspirer of
music and painting and architec-
ture, the guardian of men's
minds, and the hope of men's
hearts. ... She is the communion
which inhabits the world and the
ages, sweeping from the tree of
the knowledge of good and evil to
the "fields of asphodel." ...

And so. ... I suggest that
the rising generation look again at
the words, "I believe in the Holy
Christian Church." ... In our day
the low place of the bruised reed
and the smoking flax, but also the
high place of trumpets and the
soldiers of God. ... And here is
the one structure which will out-
last the stars. ... This is the throne
of Him Who gave His life for her.
... I believe in the Holy Christian
Church because it is the last insti-
tution on earth that holds out for
something great and eternal in an
hour when human life is cheap. ...
I believe in the Holy Christian
Church because it is the only insti-
tution that makes me free. ... Free
from the modern heresy that
license is liberty. ... I believe in
the Holy Christian Church because it is the only institu-
tion that speaks of God and His love.
... I believe in the Holy Christian
Church because I believe in Jesus
Christ. ... And life's highest privi-
lege, I am very sure, is to light a
candle, however small and feeble,
on her altars. ...

September, 1940
The PILGRIM

"... and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side..."

Dear Son:

This is probably the strangest Christmas letter you will ever receive. I have been writing little parts of it now for many months—one sentence in the mountains of North Carolina—another under great pines in a quiet cemetery in Wisconsin where some little children have been waiting for the eternal Christmas many years—still another on a rainy day in November with a touch of snow in the air and the sound of the first winter winds in the air. . . . Each year, I must confess, I find it a little harder to write about Christmas—and I am not sure of the reason. . . . Surely the few thousand words I have devoted to the Baby, the Mother, the angels and the shepherds over the years are small before so great a mystery and so good a story. . . . Perhaps (I have sometimes felt) one grows closer to Christmas as the years move toward the life with the angels who once were here and are now waiting, more clearly than ever, for their final task with the world and me. . . . Perhaps one likes to be more quiet, even silent, more content to watch Christmas come to your eyes. . . . Whatever it may be, the writing of a few words about Christmas, this letter to you, finds me staring into space every few minutes trying hard, ever so hard, to imagine how it really was, trying to remember other Christmas Eves, trying to forget some things that have come between me and Christmas as it ought to be. . . .

On Christmas Eve, soon after it gets dark and the blue shadows are in the sky, I shall ask one of your brothers to read a few words which we call the Christmas Gospel. . . . If you sit quietly and listen carefully you will hear that this story does not begin like the fairy stories and legends which your mother reads to you before you go to sleep. . . . Your brother will read: "And it came to pass in those days. . . ." That's the way Christmas begins. . . . It really happened. . . . When you are older you will know how important—and beautiful—it is to know that the fullness of time really is in time. . . . The first sentence mentions a man whom history knows, although he is important now only because he moved a mother and her baby a few miles across the surface of the earth. . . .

This is the first thing you must know about Christmas—it is true
and it is real. . . the mother was like any other young mother, a little lonely and a little afraid; and the baby was like any other baby when you looked at it. . . . What was different about them is visible only to your faith. . . . In some pictures of Christmas the Virgin Mary kneels, sunk in meditation and prayer. . . . You see, she was the first one to know that her little boy, his body from her body, was her God and Savior, the Creator of the Universe, her Master and her King. . . . This is the last reason for the mysterious joy of Christmas, also for little boys. . . . that the Almighty has laid aside everything, the world has been turned upside down and is now in the hands of a new-born baby in a crib. . . . and so for two thousand years Christmas has been full of the noise and laughter of children who come to the stable and find themselves at home there with the Baby. . . . and they have played themselves warm and happy around the Son of God Who has become a little child for their sake. . . .

Of course, I do not expect you to understand all this when you are only three years old. . . . But you will see the reflections of it—of God coming to our world and our house—in many things we do and say and sing at Christmas. . . . for this is the heart of the matter. . . . A few days ago some of us were talking about poetry—the using of words to express meaning as old and beautiful as life itself. . . . Someone said that the very best poetry is not always understood quickly and easily. . . . Because it is great—the work of a great mind—smaller minds must work hard to understand it. . . . Something like that, I thought, is also true of Christmas. . . . It is the expression spoken by the Maker of makers, the Poet of poets, not only in the words you will hear on Christmas Eve, but in the Word which was made flesh—not in a book, or a rhyme, or parts of speech, but in a baby, born into your world, living and breathing and crying as you do now so that you can always know that God loves you very much indeed. . . . so much that He decided to look like you and live as you do for a little while. . . .

And so—in a way—Christmas is hard to understand. . . . Eternity is in it and we who are older come to it as to a mystery. . . . You, however, know only that God came to us as you came three years ago—as a baby. . . . For us the plan of Christmas is so daring that we must finally believe that only God could have thought it through. . . . For you it is very simple and clear—God was a baby and now, even after two thousand years, there are lights and trees and candles and gifts and songs. . . . all for you. . . . because He came like you and for you. . . .

And all these Christmas things are only a small part of His strange power over the world. . . .
As you grow older you will know that for His sake men have loved and helped one another, raised to heights of joy and depths of despair, fortified, comforted, exalted... The centuries have not exhausted Him and the years have only added to His power.... He is not a bit of sentiment as small and fragile as the tinsel on our tree... He is not a carol to be sung by one lonesome for his childhood or an escape from the world by means of a sprig of holly stuck in a Christmas package... In one way, in an eternal way, the Baby is a terrible and terrifying person... All who are ten and twenty times older than you should remember again this Christmas that He means death, death to sin, death to selfishness, death to meanness, death to always having your own way, death to anger and lust and envy... He wants to live in all men and women, in the poor and the rich, in the weak and the strong—to live, above all, in the hearts of little children—and He can live only if you and I, by his coming, are willing to die... If we are not ready to do that, if we serve Him with our lips and keep Him far, if we have Christmas only once a year, we make His swaddling clothes chains to bind Him to the manger and prevent Him from going about the world, from marching through history and time in the power and glory which the angels saw in the silence of midnight that first Christmas long ago....

And this is the end of my letter to you... I know that you will have a happy Christmas this year and I will try to go with you just as far as I can... in wonder, in joy, in peace, in forgetfulness of the faithless years and the long way from Bethlehem... Many years from now you may remember that in these grey winter days you and I often walked under the great trees at the edge of the campus while the first stars came out of the dark... Perhaps we can walk again this Christmas Eve, before the lights and the carols, and perhaps God will give us a star, a very, very special wandering star to light our way in my darkness... And we shall come back to the house, bright with lights and music, as the shadows lengthen, to see the Child in the manger under the tree—for you, please God, the Place of Beginning... and for me, the Land of Beginning Again... That will be good, very good, for both of us....

December, 1955
An Act of Obedience

Readers seldom write letters to the editor unless they are unhappy about something the editor has said or done. And this is fair enough, for editors also write chiefly under the impulse of anger or disagreement, as witness the editorials in almost any newspaper or magazine.

There are those rare occasions, though, when admiration or gratitude may momentarily neutralize the editorial bile and account for an editorial which, by its very difference in tone, embarrasses the editor and confuses the reader. Such an editorial is this one—embarrassing to its writer because it involves the public commendation of a personal friend, and no doubt confusing to those readers who deplore what they have frequently pointed out to us as our generally negative attitude. To get down to business, then...

Our thanks go out to Dr. Oswald C. J. Hoffmann, speaker on the Lutheran Hour, for his forthright testimony, a few weeks ago, to the Christian truth in the area of race relations. It was, humanly speaking, a risky thing to do for it invited criticism not only from those who have resisted this particular aspect of the Church's witness but from the perhaps ever larger group which would deny to the Church the right to speak on any controversial issue. What Dr. Hoffmann had to say will be familiar to anyone who has read the New Testament, and need not be repeated here. Suffice it to say that he gave no comfort to those who would deny the Negro his full dignity as a man, nor to those who, in the name of moderation, would postpone coming to terms with the issue of racial injustice.

We can imagine the kind of letters Dr. Hoffmann must have gotten. The amount of sheer, bottled-up hate in our country is a dreadful thing to contemplate, and it takes nothing more than a
clear, unequivocal statement of Biblical truth to start the corks popping. Dr. Hoffmann is not a naive man. He knew what he was inviting and he said what he had to say nevertheless. For this he deserves no congratulations, for ‘woe be unto him if he preach not the gospel of Christ.’ But he does deserve to know that he has won the approval of his fellow saints and the thanks of all men of good will who have so often had to carry on the fight for racial justice under the handicap of the tacit opposition of the churches.

Needless to say, Dr. Hoffmann’s sponsor, the Lutheran Layman’s League, deserves its own share of the credit, not only for underwriting this particular testimony but for the consistently clear witness it has given on this matter for years in its publication, The Lutheran Layman.

April, 1960

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Cresset Clips—

"The American Humane Society estimates that there are 300,000 wandering, homeless families in the United States. We believe this is a conservative estimate. . . . Are we to permit them to lead and live a life where employment depends on the whims of the stock market, of nature, or of strike-breaking agencies? America’s homeless families must be given help through the cooperative effort of the government and the communities in which they are temporarily living."

The Editors, of homeless families in America
December, 1939
Dear Editor:

I suppose you will be going to St. Paul for the convention, too, in which case I would like for you to keep an evening free so that I can get together with you on a matter which I would like to talk over with somebody who is an expert on sin.

You probably wonder why I am all of a sudden worried about sin, so I will tell you. We are trying to organize some adult Bible classes in the congregation and since we have never had much luck with Bible classes here we figured that we would have to build up some interest by starting off with some real hot stuff. Rev. Zeitgeist wanted to start off with a series of discussions on the Epistle to the Romans which, if you ask me, would have fallen flatter than a pancake seeing as how even I have never been able to read it through except at family devotions. Some of the other members of the committee wanted to study the lives of some of the great Bible characters like Samson and Ruth and Solomon. Finally I suggested that we might start off by discussing the one thing we all know most about, since we can see it all around us every day, which would be sin, and the committee agreed.

For a couple of weeks now I have been trying to set up a series of topics dealing with the most common sins and I have run into some problems. Our committee agreed that there was no point to discussing the sins which no Christian commits anyway, like idolatry and adultery and stealing and cursing and swearing. We were in agreement also on certain sins which we all know are wrong but which Christians sometimes fall into, like unionism and missing church on Sunday and carry-

During the 50s and 60s, Editor Strietelmeier and cronies engaged in some editorial high spirits by an imagined correspondence with a mythical "G.G." in Xanadu, Nebraska. G.G., a faithful member of the Lutheran Implement Dealers Association, and sometime editor of its publication, The Spreader, consulted regularly with the Editor of the CRESSET on matters of importance to laity and clergy alike.
ing a grudge, but we feel that there was no point to discussing these sins because there is no argument against them.

We finally agreed on four topics which we feel need discussing because different people seem to have different ideas on them. These topics are: smoking, drinking, gambling, and dancing.

Now what I would like for you to be thinking about is whether these four things are wrong in themselves, whether certain forms of them are wrong and others OK, whether certain of them may be wrong for some people and all right for others, and whether certain of them are wrong in themselves, whether certain of them is guilty of any of them could be excommunicated. I would also greatly appreciate it if you would dig out the Bible passages that pertain to the questions I have listed.

The reason I am asking this is that a funny thing has happened just in our committee discussions. Just as an example, take the matter of smoking. We all started out agreeing that it probably didn’t do anybody any good. But pretty soon you could see that we weren’t as down on pipe-smoking as we were on cigarette-smoking, and we didn’t disapprove of men smoking as much as we did of women smoking. The trouble is that none of us can explain exactly why we make these distinctions, even though we all feel in our bones that they are important distinctions. Maybe you could help us out.

We had the same problem with drinking. When we got to discussing it, we discovered that all of us like our glass of beer now and then, but every single one of us felt that there is something not quite right about drinking mixed drinks. We tried to analyze why a bunch of Christian beer-drinkers would turn thumbs down on Martinis and we just couldn’t come up with any reason that sounded logical. We would appreciate whatever guidance you could give us.

On gambling we were pretty well-agreed. One of the farmers on the committee had to get in a dig at us business men by asking what the difference is between gambling and investment but his old man was a Populist and out in these parts you have to learn to tolerate people like that. We did run into a bigger question, though. We went all through the concordance and the catechism and we couldn’t find a single Bible passage that forbids gambling. I would appreciate it if you would jot down a text or two for me.

Our biggest argument came on dancing. Two of the members of the committee are against all kinds of dancing. Me and another member claim that dancing itself is OK but that what makes it wrong is mixing it with drinking and necking. The teacher made a distinction, which I couldn’t quite
follow, between ballroom dancing and square-dancing. So obviously we are going to have to get this straightened out among ourselves before we can go condemning it in Bible class.

Well, these are the problems I would like to talk over with you. I hope you won't mind taking the time to talk them over. We're trying to bring religion down to the practical level of everyday living and we think that our general idea is sound, even though it may be hard to work out.

Regards,
G. G.

July, 1956

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Letter from Xanadu

Dear Editor:

By golly, I gotta tell you about an experience the Missus and me had on our way back from San Diego that really warmed my heart.

We hit this little town in western Texas early on a Sunday morning and there was no Lutheran church there so I said to the Missus, "Let's just drive around town and see whether there is some church here that looks like a church and has a cross hanging out front and we'll try it." So sure enough, we found an old church that had two of these flat towers without steeples, and there was a white cross hanging on the front and the sign said: "Foursquare Bible-Believing Anti-Fellowship Baptist Church, Non-Affiliated, Rev. John Wesley Grundy, Minister." Well, that sounded pretty good, so we went in.

Well, sir, I haven't enjoyed church so much in years. We sang a couple of rousing hymns and there was a choir all decked out in maroon robes that rendered a couple of songs, and then this Rev. Grundy got up and preached his sermon.

And boy! could that guy preach. He started off kind of slow and quiet but then he started building up steam and pretty soon he was going at full speed. His text was from one of the psalms, the one about being happy to take somebody's little ones and dash them against
stones and his point was that the righteous people of this country have been too tolerant of the wickedness. He said it's about time we really bore down on these sinners, and then he proceeded to tick them off. By this time he had his coat off and was loosening up his tie. But he wasn't done yet, not by a long shot. In fact, he kept at it for an hour and a half and by the time he was done we out there in the audience were as worn out as he was.

I couldn't help wondering why we never hear preaching like this in our church. Are we getting soft on sin or are we afraid to name names or what? I hate to say it, but I really don't get much of a kick out of church anymore.

We have to run through all of that singing stuff before the sermon, and then the sermon itself is usually a lot of generalities about how we're sinners but we have been saved and now we ought to behave ourselves and give more to the church. If I've heard that once I've heard it a thousand times. Sometimes I feel like standing up right in the middle of the sermon and saying: "So what else is new?"

And boy! if you asked Brother Grundy that question, he'd sure tell you!

Regards,
G. G.

*February, 1960*

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**Cresset Clips —**

**On Nixon:**

"These questions of the past are freely admitted; the important thing to be stated about them is that Nixon has taken heed and learned, and his record, in general, is one of unquestioned ethical integrity."

**On Kennedy:**

"There is to be and end to the arms lag created because the President considered himself infallible in all military matters...There are to be no more journeys to the brink; no more hesitations and vacillations that bring communist infiltration to our doorstep. There is to be an end to conflicting statements and shifting responsibility in any reverses suffered abroad."

**Two different columnists on the Presidential election:**

*October, 1960*
How do you rate as a human being, as a parent, as a child, as a cooperative worker, or as a responsible person? What type of personality do you have? What are your chances of success or failure? How is your disposition? If your answer to any of the above questions is "Don't know," you have only yourself to blame. You may think that in order to get correct answers to these questions you would be required to take a battery of valid tests given by some person sufficiently qualified as a psychologist to interpret them correctly. This takes time and a little money, and it is no longer necessary.

Now you can find out who and what you are right in your own home without any expense whatsoever. All you have to do is pick up a copy of almost any popular magazine and there you will find an article, written by a Dr. Somebody who is usually known only to the editor, and this article will be complete with a psychological test. This test may have been drawn up to determine whether you have a chance for happiness, or whether you can hope to make a million dollars before you're 30.

The subject makes very little difference. It is bound to be something that interests you and it will be aimed at answering some questions that have been bothering your psyche for years. All of these articles and tests are based on some deep human need, so you can't go wrong.

Furthermore, the test will require only a few minutes of your time. It will contain only ten or fifteen questions, and the chart for grading yourself is right at the end of the article, printed upside down. For those who feel stunned by the quiz and are per-

Al Looman, VU grad, Navy veteran, and long time associate of John Strietelmeier, for many years contributed a column of light-hearted and witty foolery on a variety of topics concerning everyday life. This one was published in May of 1955.
plexed at their inability to read the answers in this position, the editor often adds a helpful note suggesting that you turn the magazine upside down for easier reading.

I've taken a number of these tests, usually when I'm completely out of something else to read and have started to peruse recipes in women's magazines. While I have not done too well on most of the tests, nor have the tests done for me what the articles said they would, I put this down to my own personal failing for I have long been a dupe to the psychologists. I am aware that I don’t always do things the way the psychologists think I should, and I show other signs of not being what they call perfectly adjusted.

I can remember the shock when I came up against my first sharp psychological phenomenon, and I remember how I failed on even that first introduction to the field. At the time, I was a Freshman in college and I had signed up for a course in general psychology. In one of the early lectures, the professor was discussing some of the differences between ape and man. Illustrating a point, he said, “If the cap from a tube of toothpaste slipped from the hand into a washbowl, a man would merely put his hand over the drain, whereas an ape would try to grasp the cap while it was rolling around the bowl.”

Immediately I turned beet red, slumped in my chair, and threw surreptitious glances right and left to see if any of my classmates recognized in me a subhuman specimen. Because for years I had been trying to catch the toothpaste cap when it fell into the bowl, and, frankly, the simple act of covering the drain with my hand had never occurred to me. After slinking from class I was joined by a classmate who told me in confidence that he too had always chased the cap. It made me feel a little better to know that I was not the only maladjusted person around.

Something on this order happens to me when I take these psychological tests in the magazines, particularly when the answers are explained and I know at last what is wrong with me. Part of my trouble with these tests, however, lies in deciding on the proper answer. While the questions are simple enough, I still have difficulty deciding on the answer. If it were possible to answer “sometimes, yes, or sometimes, no” I would have no trouble. but these answers are not permitted.

Not so long ago, I took one of the tests to find if I was a decisive sort of person. The article said it would take me only five minutes to find out. I pondered over the questions and, in all, it took me fifteen minutes, or three times as long, to finish them. I was just a little surprised, after grading
myself on the chart, to discover that I was indeed decisive.

If you are not acquainted with these psychological tests, I can give you an example from last week's This Week magazine, a publication that must be keeping a flock of psychologists off the dole, because very few issues are published without either a psychological article or test, and usually both, by some psychologist. In this particular issue, the title of the article is "How to be an Optimist." Most articles in this field have "How to" in their titles which is a source of comfort to those of us who can't comply with the other articles on "How to," such as building a box or making a ceramic roll warmer, because our hands are not sufficiently skillful.

Half of the first page of this article is taken up by a picture. It shows a girl with a broad, false smile and what I thought were tears in her eyes. I have since concluded those were not tears—for she represents the optimist—but merely an eye irritation caused by a dripping mascara of which she is wearing plenty. The man in the picture—representing the pessimist—has a glum expression. This couple, presumably, is looking at a fish bowl filled to the middle with coins. But as a matter of fact, neither is looking at the fish bowl. The optimist is looking at the camera and the pessimist is looking at her. To me the pessimist appears to be by far the more interesting person.

The first part of the test is right there in that picture. You are supposed to ask someone to describe the state of the fish bowl. If he answers it is half full, he is an optimist; but if he answers it is half empty, he is a pessimist. Easy isn't it?

One thing about this article is different. It is not written by a psychologist. It is written by a young lady who is only identified only by name and it doesn't have a "Dr." in front of it. We can presume she is a working journalist just trying to get along. But she covers herself very well and her writing gives off an aura of professionalism. Of the test, she is quick to say "we have had a batch of questions prepared." In other words, she didn't prepare them and we can assume then that the psychologists did, an assumption strengthened by a later reference to the effect that the questions "are drawn from the basic attitudes, which, psychologists say..."

And now for the questions. I was stumped by the first one which reads, "When raffle tickets are offered, do you usually take one?" Some other questions immediately entered my mind, such as, is this an office raffle, is it for a needy cause, what are the prizes? Although the author says not to try and figure out what the question has to do with optimism, I sneaked a look at the chart in back and found if I could answer
"yes," which I couldn’t and didn’t, I was ten points on my way to being an optimist. My trouble with these questions is that I want to argue the point, and I have a good argument in this case. A good reason for not taking raffle tickets is that it is gambling, so I fail to see how a person who doesn’t gamble for good Christian reasons has less chance of being an optimist.

Then came the question “When you finish a job—whether it’s making a cabinet or a cake—do you see nothing but ways in which you can do the work better next time?” This one took some time to answer since I’ve never made either a cake or a cabinet. If the author is referring to something made with the use of manual skill and will count some rather inexpert repair work, I can truthfully answer “no.” My only hope at such times is that the repair job will hold together at least until I get out of sight. Another quick peek at the grading chart showed that I gave the right answer but for the wrong reason. I am supposed to stand there and admire what I’ve done.

Here is another question that raises many more questions, “If you were offered a $1000 cruise or $500 to put in the bank, would you take the cruise?” What it would be like to put $500 in the bank at one time, I can only imagine, but I have no questions about it. However, I do have some questions on that cruise. What is the destination on that cruise? Is it for one or two people? Do I have to spend the whole $1000 or can I try to get by cheaply and still save the $500? I assumed, finally, I would be required to spend the whole amount. And then I thought over the possibilities of the cruise. Most of the recent contests have offered trips to Hollywood and I supposed that would be the destination of this cruise. Well, I’ve been to Hollywood and I didn’t like it. So I said “goodbye” to that extra $500 and answered “no.”

I was wrong again; I was supposed to take the cruise. The reason is not clear, and is, in fact, contradictory. It also fails to tell me, if I should have chosen the cruise, how I could leave my family for a couple of weeks and who was going to do my work at the office in the meantime.

The next question reveals much more about the authoress than it does about me. “When you start preparing for a vacation, does the chore of stuffing the suitcase and getting the children ready discourage you?” She is not married, or, if she is, she has no children. This question can apply only to persons with children, and no honest parent could answer anything except “yes” which is the wrong answer as it turns out.

Anyone who has gotten the children up at 4:30 a.m., helped dress them while they squirm,
tired and cranky, helped to stuff everything in sight into suitcases, packed a lunch while the children cried, and then crammed seven suitcases into a car trunk built to hold four, meanwhile keeping the children clean and out of trouble is bound to be slightly discouraged. The person who can go through that experience and not feel some discouragement is neither well-adjusted nor an optimist in my estimation; he is merely numb.

In all, there were fourteen questions in this test, but I am not going to give any more of them. The samples above should be sufficient to give you an idea of what the tests are like and what a wealth of information and guidance you may receive from them. I am not going to reveal my score on this test either. Suffice it to say, from the author’s viewpoint, I am not exactly brimming over with enthusiasm for everything in sight. As a matter of fact, my total score didn’t put me into any of the categories given by the author. This often happens to me in psychological quizzes however.

I have a few questions myself which I would like to put to these psychologists. The first one would be “Why are there so many so-called psychological articles and tests in the magazines today?” I don’t suppose I would get an honest answer, for if the word got out the psychologists would not be writing articles for a while. Obviously there is a demand for this sort of thing or they wouldn’t be printed with such frequency.

It may be that we want to conform, that we want to feel we are well-adjusted. Because the results of these tests can be jiggled so easily, anyone can come out feeling like a perfectly normal man, if there is such a thing. Popular psychology, of which these articles and tests are an example, has never accomplished very much and I am not sure it hasn’t done a great deal of harm. The lack of validity in these tests could hardly make them helpful.

But in case you found the “How to be an Optimist” quiz frightfully interesting and informative, you should know that the editors have announced William G. Menninger himself will answer the question “What is the psychological key to success?” in the next issue. His answer will surprise you, the editors say. Permit me to say, I doubt it.

May, 1955
One of the major tragedies of the Church during the first third of the twentieth century has been the insidious departmentalizing of the individual Christian life and personality. In our necessary concern over translating the divine standard “not of the world” into life and living we have too often forgotten the inevitable prelude “in the world.” Artificial and unreal distinctions were made between the Christian as a member of the blessed communion of saints and the Christian as a citizen, as a student, or as an individual for whom the possession of the wisdom of heaven transforms and translates the Wisdom of earth into something uniquely useful and important. The result has been that many Christians who by reason of predilection or vocation have become deeply interested in the ebb and flow of human thought and the troubled tides of human destiny, have been compelled by these distinctions to seek guiding lights and signposts beyond the walls of the Church. It is not unusual for a Christian today to arrange his views in all fields of human endeavor according to a pattern which is woven by every hand but the hand of the Eternal. His economic views come from the newspaper. His social attitudes are determined by his immediate, often narrow, environment. His literary and artistic tastes are formed by voices from the streets of New York and the boulevards of Hollywood.

Our fundamental need, therefore, is a returning consciousness of the total presence of the Christian in the Kingdom of God and in the world. No part of life can be shut away from God. The departmentalizing of life has too long left the world and the Christian mind at the mercy of the worst forces of death and disorder. Only the presence of the total Christian opposing the dark forces of evil with the highest affirmations and negations of a Christian philosophy of the whole of life, can hope to stop the world from falling into abyss by which it is so fascinated. For a Christian, his presence in the world does not imply the division of life into compartments, some of which belong to time and others to eternity. The totality of life is God's. The last and highest freedom of

O.P. Kretzmann wrote this column for the first edition of the new magazine, in November of 1937.
the human soul is the surrender of all areas of life to the will of the Eternal.

To this end The CRESSET plans to make a humble contribution. It hopes to be a small lamp set on the walls of the Church to find things of value in the surrounding darkness, to throw light upon hidden dangers, and to put into constant and immediate use the words of the royal Apostle: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." This is our charter. In all matters of faith and doctrine—truth, not as men see it, but as God has revealed it—the editors assume joint and full responsibility. In matters in which truth is relative and fragmentary the editors will grant each other and all contributors the widest freedom of thought and expression. Since they represent no individual school of literary or economic thought, this latitude of opinion will be jealously guarded.

**Mind and Spirit**

Divine truth is truth in itself. It is independent of the men who serve it. It cannot be permanently twisted by them, for it is their judge. With this principle in mind the CRESSET hopes to point the way toward a new fusion of the intellectual and spiritual life, the unity of which is predicated on the absoluteness of spiritual truth and the relativity of intellectual activity. Truth in every field of human endeavor must constantly be referred to the divine Word. Human nature cannot realize it completely. Absolute truth is written in eternity. To subordinate relative truth to the absolute and to examine it in the light of the spiritual realm is a necessary undertaking in the modern world. Particularly the rising generation is in need of a living demonstration that a childlike surrender to spiritual truth does not imply a childish intellectual life. A fusion of the two is not only possible but is demanded by the pain and terror of our dying civilization.

The general weakening of our moral principles, the conflict of opinions, the decay of spiritual life, the immensity of human needs and the helplessness of human means, point to the immediate need that spiritual truth recover its dominant place in the intellectual and social life.

This attempt to fuse the intellectual and spiritual life of the individual into a surrendered unity will obviously determine the canons of criticism which will be applied to works of art. The modern view that there is no relation between Truth and Beauty is not only pernicious nonsense but also very dubious esthetics. To
say that a work of art, in whatever field it may appear, is to be measured only by its nearness to arbitrary standards of beauty and not by its truth or probable effect is to separate it entirely from life. Art does not exist in a vacuum. Only as it affects the life of men and women does it assume permanent significance.

Censoriousness is not in the Christian tradition, but license is even less so. There are certain esthetic principles, directly or indirectly deducible from moral truths, which have absolute validity. The approach of the editors to the life and art of the twentieth century will be, when moral or religious questions are involved, frankly authoritarian. There are higher laws, immediately evident to the Christian mind, than the laws of esthetics applied in a vacuum. These higher laws alone give final meaning to the principles of literary or economic criticism. The true and the false, the important and the trivial, must be judged by a light which streams from eternal places. In the last analysis a work of art which is ethically bad can be considered esthetically good only by the application of a few arbitrary standards and an ignoring of vast areas of human experience and divine revelation. The gateway to Hell may be beautiful, but it must be viewed in its total setting.

**The Church and Esthetics**

There is, however, another phase of the question. Side by side with our concern over the moral and ethical standards to be applied to art there must be no lessening of emphasis on the requirements of sane esthetics. Within the walls of the Church that has happened all too frequently. If a given product of the mind and imagination was ethically good, we permitted it to be almost incredibly bad by all other canons of criticism. The Sunday School stories for childhood and youth, the moralizing essays

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**Cresset Clips—**

“We possess no special knowledge of the future but we cannot help wondering whether we are not seeing, in these early years of the 1960’s, the shaping of a pattern which may finally restore peace and love and cooperation among the Lutherans of our country.”

John Strietelmeier, On Lutheran Unity, June, 1960
which sugarcoated a lesson in goodness, and much of the religious poetry appearing in church journals, are examples in point. In the joy over their moral clearness their esthetic mudiness was eagerly ignored. That will not do. The highest moral precepts can be conveyed only by works of art which may be measured by a fusion of moral and esthetic standards. The Sermon on the Mount is majestic literature and noble ethics. Acceptable products of the human mind, illumined by religious thought and emotion, will differ in degree but not in kind. The editors will therefore apply to religious literature all the rigorous esthetic criteria of which they have knowledge. The gateway to Heaven is both beautiful and good.

The Cresset

The function and purpose of THE CRESSET are so distinct that it will not trespass on the field of any other journals published within the Church. Its task is definitely humble. Granted that the primary function of the Church is to bring human souls into the shadow of the Cross and keep them there, the place and work of THE CRESSET lies among the secondary functions of the Kingdom. The Church has every right to be the critic of the world. She has a deep interest in the cultural and social life of her people. Wherever and whenever opportunity offers, the Church should remove obstacles, direct thought, and fashion custom and habit. No corner of life is closed to her. Most journals published within the Church have as their primary objective the orientation of the Christian in relation to his God and his Church. THE CRESSET will devote itself to the orientation of the Christian life in relation to the world of human thought and aspiration. It will endeavor to become a place of perspective and coordination where the dim confusion of jostling crowds and bewildering roads take shape and form and reason. It will attempt to reach especially those who have become conscious of the deep pulsations that throb through our time and are disturbed over the relation of the Christian life to the cataclysmic changes of the world.

It is natural, of course, that through the hands and voices of its readers THE CRESSET hopes to reach out also to those who have come to the conclusion that Christianity no longer has a clear-sounding trumpet. The editors will be conscious of only two general qualities in their audience: It is adult and it is Christian. At times it will become necessary to call attention to a dangerous book or a pernicious tendency so that our readers may consider it for themselves—a patently impossible and useless task in a journal intended for mass distribution.
At other times a book may be reviewed favorably for the clarity with which it presents a facet of the world's mad glare, even though its general tone and trend may be definitely anti-Christian or unmoral. The editors beg the indulgence of their readers in these matters in which their judgment must necessarily be experimental and tentative.

The response of the Church to the first announcement of THE CRESSET has been most generous. Through the inevitable period of trial and error our readers can be of direct service to the project by registering their opinions and comments with the editorial office. Contributions which meet the standards of the publication—from whatever source they may come will be welcomed. Under the mercy of God also THE CRESSET will help to bring the old yet ever new unity into life which alone can move every moment of our brief interlude between the shadow of the forgotten and the shadow of the unknown into the brightness of Eternal Light.

November, 1937

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Cresset Clips —

“Christians ought to be known more for kindness than for buildings, for helping the poor than for new liturgical services, for healing than for writing, for feeding than for arguing, for love than for being right, for listening than for preaching, for losing than for repressing, for hoping than for giving up”

Elmer N. Witt, on being a Christian:

June 1971
Music and Music Makers

By Walter Hansen

A Dialogue between A Sacred Cow Named Taste and An Apostate

S. C. I’m sure that you prefer classical music to popular music.

A. You’re touching a sore spot, Mrs. Cow. I wish I could express in words how intensely I loathe some of the pigeonhole methods that so many men and women employ when they speak and write about the fine arts. How utterly nonsensical it is to try to divide music into the two categories you mention! I don’t deny that pigeonholes often serve an important and helpful purpose in the scheme of things. They frequently bring order out of chaos. Sometimes, however, they lead to confusion of the worst kind.

Let’s look at the word “classical” which flows from your tongue with such well-oiled glibness. When you used that term a moment ago, you weren’t, I’m sure, speaking of the “classical” school in composition as opposed to the “romantic,” “modern,” and the “ultra-modern” movements. No, you had something entirely different in mind. When you and your kith and kin divide music into “classical” and “popular” types, you use “classical,” I take it, in the sense of highbrow and “popular” in the sense of lowbrow. Am I right?

S. C. Almost...

A. Well, consider Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony. It’s popular—far more popular, in fact, than all the “popular” song hits that are now enjoying their brief sojourn in the throats of what Plato and his fellow-Greeks called hoi polloi, the rank and file. But do you speak of Beethoven’s Fifth as “popular” music? You do not. It’s a symphony, you see; and far be it from you and your companions in inept pigeonholing to say that a symphony is ever “popular” music. To you it’s “classical.” How asinine! Or, in your case,
how characteristically bovine!

Another thought. From the pen of Mozart we have a little *Sonata in C Major* which for decades on end has triumphantly survived the many kinds of cruel punishment inflicted on it all over the world by piano-pounders young and old. It's a beautiful composition—a composition deliciously tuneful in quality. It's Mozart to the very marrow But bear in mind that it's a sonata. Consequently, Mrs. Cow, you dare not put it into the pigeonhole which you reserve for "popular" music.

Some time ago a tunesmith in quest of melodic material subjected his brain to what, for want of a better term, I shall call an inspiration. What was the result? From his cranium there emerged song

with a title which had something to do with an eighteenth-century drawing-room. No, the tune-twister didn't try to pull the wool over our eyes. He had used a goodly portion of the principal theme of Mozart's Sonata in C Major. Naturally, he had resorted to some marring and distorting; but what's a little marring and distorting among tunetinkers? At any rate, our hit-fabricator had pilfered in a manner entirely legal and aboveboard. What happened? His song rang the bell, as they say in elegant English. It took wings of the morning and flew swiftly and caressingly into millions of homes. Wonder of wonders, a fragment of a "classical" composition had, by the magic of adroit tune-tinkering and by the alchemy of "plug-

Cresset Clips—

"We do not want to add to the commercialization of Christmas by tying in our own promotional plans with the spirit of that holy season. Suffice it to say that most of us will be giving presents to friends and relatives at that time. For three dollars, one can buy an acceptable pipe, a decent necktie, a relatively large amount of cheap whiskey or a very small amount of good whiskey, or a year's subscription for the CRESSET."

The Editors, on the qualities of the CRESSET as a gift

November, 1954
ging" and ballyhoo, won for itself a place in the pigeonhole set apart for those works that have every right to be labeled "popular." Furthermore, this particular tidbit had come, in part from that school of writing which historians are in the habit of calling "classical" in contra-distinction to "romantic" modern," and, save the mark, "ultra-modern." Perhaps the little hit which sang so engagingly and with such titillating charm about an eighteenth-century drawing-room had more blue blood in its veins than the abominations that sailed the seven seas of ephemeral popularity under the banners of Tchaikovsky, Grieg, and other composers who, according to the verdict of many historians and many critics never set foot in the sacred halls of the "classical" school.

S.C. What you say sounds logical enough; but you'll never be able to do away with the popular distinction between "popular" and "classical" music. The pigeonhole method of classifying compositions may, in many instances, be founded on lopsided reasoning; but it's here to stay, and I, for one, have no desire to slap John Q. Public in the face by intimating that he's pigheaded in his thinking.

A. Why take John Q. Public to task? It's the sacred cows and their blood relatives who, in the last analysis, are to blame for foisting upon him so many misconceptions with respect to the arts.

S. C. Thanks! You evidently don't set great store by our contributions to civilization and culture. A. You do a great deal of good; but in some respects you're evils. Maybe you're necessary evils.

S.C. Thanks again! You, I suppose, consider it your bounden duty to reform the world.

A. No, Mrs. Cow, I have no such purpose. I'm not wise enough for that. In fact, I'm glad that there are sacred cows, and more sacred cows on earth. Yes, they're in the habit of muddying the waters of thought; but wouldn't the study of the tonal art be far less fascinating than it actually is if they didn't lock horns at times with the apostates?

I have more to say about your division of music into "classical" and "popular" types. Have you ever heard, or heard of, Morton Gould's Latin American Symphonette?

S. C. No.

A. Would the title symphonette induce you to number this work among the so-called "classical" compositions? Or do you think that the term symphonette is somewhat less imposing than the word symphony and, consequently, more in accord with what you and your fellow-addicts of the pigeonhole would dub "popular"?

S.C. Are you trying to be facetious?
A. No. Maybe you’ve forgotten for the moment that there are two schools of thought among those who talk so volubly about “classical” music as distinguished from that which is called “popular.” Every one of them declares that symphonies must needs be “classical;” but some declare that symphonettes are “classical,” and others shout from the chimney-pots that the term symphonette permits them to let down the bars and use the word “popular.” But what would they say if the composer had called his work a sinfonietta instead of a symphonette?

I suppose the wide-awake and more liberal-minded among the sacred cows know that Mr. Gould’s Latin American Symphonette contains a rousing and riproaring “Guaracho.” And how, in the name of the special kind of pabulum on which sacred cows feed, could a “Guaracho” so stirring in its tunefulness and so gripping in its rollicking rhythms be anything but “popular”? Would your friends make the same statement and ask the same question about the last movement of Beethoven’s Seventh Symphony? I’m sure they wouldn’t. Yet it, too, is full of life and vigor; it bubbles over with bright, ear-tickling melodies. In fact, it’s a veritable torrent of the type of tunefulness that gets into your blood and bones. When you hear it, you want to dance for joy. Some say that Beethoven based the movement on an Irish folk tune; and Olin Downes, of the New York Times, finds “Homer horseplay” in the great composer’s manipula-

Cresset Clips—

“We continue to teach our choirs anthems by Malotte, O’Hara, Gounod, Jean-Baptiste Faure [sic], Theodore Dubois—while the Protestant demoninations have discovered Bach, Buxtehude, Pachelbel, Schein, Scheidt, and others. We have discovered Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Children’s Day, Wheaties Day, Kindness to Animals Week—while they have gone back to All Saints’ Day, the Commemoration of the Faithful Departed, the Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, the Annunciation, etc.”

M. Alfred Bichsel on Lutheran worship

November, 1955
tion of the thematic material. Nevertheless, isn't it an ironclad law among most men and women that any composition from the pen of Beethoven must, in the very nature of things, be branded as "classical"? Besides, wasn't Beethoven one of the outstanding representatives of the "classical" school of writing?

S.C. You must admit, my good friend, that a composition can be popular without being "popular" as opposed to "classical"?

A. Indeed! Again you're resorting to what Sir William Schwenck Gilbert, of Gilbert and Sullivan fame, would have called "a most ingenious paradox"; but, ingenious or not ingenious, you create confusion when you bandy terms about with such unctuous and cocksure glibness.

S. C. You yourself used the same "ingenious paradox" at the beginning of our discussion.

A. You're right, Mrs. Cow. I couldn't resist the temptation. Apostates and sacred cows, you see, have at least one thing in common: they're human. And, lest we forget, it's by no means paradoxical to speak of sacred cows as being human. I take it that you would call Beethoven's Seventh Symphony "highbrow" and that, after much cud-chewing, you might be inclined to brand Mr. Gould's Latin American Symphonette "lowbrow."

S.C. Have it your way. But wouldn't you make a clear-cut distinction between "light" music and "heavy" music?

A. You insist on rubbing salt into sore spots.

February, 1943

Cresset Clips—

"Although Reger was a Roman Catholic, he set great store by the Lutheran chorale. Some American commentators are in the habit of referring to him as little more than a master of dry-as-dust counterpoint. They do not know what they are talking about. They do not know Reger."

The Last Walther League Meeting

by Frederick A. Niedner, Jr.

A minute or two before noon on April 16, 1989, in a small meeting room of a Holiday Inn near the San Francisco airport, the chairman of the Board of Governors of the International Walther League declared adjournment of a two-day meeting at which board members determined to go out of business, as it were, and turn all remaining Walther League assets over to other organizations. One of the seven more-or-less middle-aged board members suggested that we sing the old Walther League song one last time, and so we did.

Walther Leaguers,
Walther Leaguers,
one and all are we,
Serving Jesus Christ our Savior,
who has set us free...

About that far into the song eyes had become teary and throats filled with lumps which made singing difficult. We were at a funeral, and we knew it. The Walther League, once a thriving and vital Lutheran youth organization, had died just short of its 96th birthday. It was time for the League to die. It had gone through an extended and in some ways difficult period of old age, and most folks familiar with the Walther League had already assumed it dead for a decade or more.

No one spoke a formal eulogy at the Walther League funeral. This essay is an attempt to offer one. I invite you to remember the deceased along with me and to think about her significance in your own life. As is the case at any funeral, those present hold many different opinions of the dead. Those who knew them only from a distance and never knew the family secrets do not have the same mix of love and hate which is part of grieving over the death of one's own flesh and blood. Some who read this eulogy, therefore, will not be aided in their grief, for their experience was quite unlike mine. I ask their forgiveness.

Professor Fred Niedner, of the Valparaiso University Department of Theology, and former member of the Walther League in West Point, Nebraska, wrote this piece for the Cresset in 1989. He served on the Board during the time of the League's final transition times.
This eulogy will also disappoint many former Walther Leaguers, if for no other reason because so few of its many, many important leaders are named. Names are very important to old Leaguers, because the League was for them a primary means of what is today called “networking.” Active Walther Leaguers established and nurtured friendships among people from all over the United States, and League leaders had great name recognition amongst those in the vast web of the League structure. But to begin naming names is as dangerous as naming almost none in a piece such as this. To avoid hurting by omission of some one or few, I will name almost no one. Besides, Walther Leaguers remember all the important names anyway. There is little need for them here.

* * *

Like so many people of my generation who grew up in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, I can’t remember a time when I did not know about the Walther League. While still a toddler in a high chair I overheard my mother and my pastor father speak in worried tones about the “Walther Leaguers” who turned off their automobile headlights and played dangerous games of “chicken” on the irrigation ditch-banks which ran between the sugar beet farms surrounding Kinnear, Wyoming. When I was seven or eight, and we had moved to Nebraska, Mom and Dad let me accompany them as they chaperoned a Walther League Halloween hayride. The ride ended at a League member’s family farm, where a hay barn had been converted for the evening into a theater. My parents and the Leaguers had a great time, but the feature film, the fright classic Rodan, scared me and my younger sister half to death. I don’t know that I ever went to sleep that night, for every time I closed my eyes I could see again the awful, winged monster. Despite the fear, however, I had learned something important that night. First in the high chair, and now at the hay barn, I had learned that a Walther Leaguer is what you become when you grow up and become old enough to be away from parents and are free to take risks of many kinds. I could hardly wait.

I had heard adults talk about their confirmation as the occasion when they felt closer to God than at any time before or after. I don’t remember feeling very close to God on the day of my confirmation. To me, confirmation mostly meant I could now become a Walther Leaguer, which I did along with the rest of my confirmation class in May of 1959. I felt very proud and grown up as we sat in one of the rows of folding chairs as the vicar of our congregation read an opening devotion and then the local League officers inducted us as new members. At
last, I was real. I was a member of an organization. For the first time in my life, I was at the church past dark when Mom and Dad were not.

As it turned out, my Walther League days were limited to summer and holiday vacation periods. I left home to attend high school at St. Paul’s College in Concordia, Missouri, one of the Missouri Synod’s all-male, pre-ministerial preparatory schools, and students of the prep school were not allowed to participate in the local congregation’s Walther League. We were never given a rationale for that policy, but it surely had something to do with preserving a gender balance in the local League organization. Nevertheless, I have many fond memories of predawn Walther League Christmas caroling at the homes of shut-ins, having parts in church basement Walther League plays, and serving sloppy joe’s by the hundreds at the Cuming County Fair so our Walther League group could raise funds.

For me, and surely for many others who share such experiences, the Walther League was the church. We took risks and had lots of fun, but we were also learning how to be the church. We studied the scriptures. We learned to serve. We gained a vision of what needed doing in the world beyond our own little town. We learned to worship even without adults present. We were a community. We were church.

That is what the people who had founded the Walther League hoped would happen. The League was officially organized on May 23, 1893, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Buffalo, New York, and in the following year took its name as tribute to C. F. W. Walther... All congregations represented were members of the Synodical Conference, a federation of Lutheran synods including the Missouri, Wisconsin, Norwegian, and Slovak synods. The constitution adopted at the Buffalo assembly states:

The purpose of this association shall be to help young people grow as Christians through WORSHIP — building a stronger faith in the Triune God; EDUCATION — discov-

Cresset Clips —

"Unless we miss our guess, this picture is going to make movie history."

Of The Mortal Storm
July, 1940
ering the will of God for their daily life; SERVICE – responding to the needs of all men; RECREATION – keeping the joy of Christ in all activities; FELLOWSHIP – finding the power of belonging to others in Christ.

An 1894 issue of the League’s newsletter, Der Vereinsbote, elaborated on the purposes of the League as follows:

1. To keep the societies from joining heterodox groups.
2. To keep the young people with the true Lutheran Church.
3. To maintain and encourage existing societies.
4. To found new societies.
5. To publish a youth magazine.

Those who know the rest of the story, and especially those who lived through the paroxysms of the Walther League’s demise, can see in this secondary list that a strong fear of the world’s taint, which played so great a part in the League’s end, was present already at its birth. In large part, the Walther League was an immigrant church’s attempt to help its young become acculturated in the new world, but at the same time keep them partly isolated from that world. For many years the project succeeded...

Much of the League’s early growth was due to the effort of F. A. (Pap) Klein, who from 1910 to 1919 served as “field secretary.” He traveled around the U.S. helping to organize youth societies in congregations and also published Der Vereinsbote, which in 1918 became The Walther League Messenger. During World War I the League raised $25,000 to provide Christian reading materials for people in the armed forces, and beginning in 1919, the League raised $225,000 in order to build a permanent sanatorium for tuberculosis victims in Wheat Ridge, Colorado. The latter project was completed in 1927, and the Walther League assumed ownership and control of the sanatorium.

The first full-time executive secretary of the Walther League was Walter A. Maier, called to that position in 1920. The League office, established in Milwaukee in 1913, was moved to Chicago in 1922. Also in 1922, the League received a grant of land in Arcadia, Michigan, and in 1923 the first summer conference camp was conducted at Camp Arcadia. By 1923 the League numbered nearly 1,200 local societies, organized in districts and zones, each with officers and a variety of local and regional projects...

A major realignment of the Walther League took place at its 1933 convention when delegates voted to concentrate efforts and resources in the twin areas of Christian knowledge and Christian service. O. P.
Kretzmann became executive secretary in 1934, and under his leadership the League’s programs were characterized by an emphasis on Bible study and family devotions on the one hand, and a wide variety of service projects on the other. O. P. Kretzmann founded a new League publication, The CRESSET, in 1937 for the purpose of extending Christian knowledge as “a review of literature, the arts, and public affairs.”

In 1940, the Walther League resolved to build its own headquarters in Chicago, and on September 20, 1942, the Lutheran Youth Building was dedicated, debt-free at a cost of $130,000. During World War II, the League again distributed Christian reading materials among those in military service, and after the war, much of the League’s work was focused on helping young military veterans re-enter their communities. Funds were collected to aid war victims, and the work of the Wheat Ridge Sanatorium was expanded significantly. In 1946, the Wheatridge Foundation was incorporated for the purpose of organizing a network of social workers to aid Lutherans suffering from tuberculosis. A training center for Wheatridge Foundation medical social workers was established at Cook County Hospital in Chicago in 1948.

The 1950s were as routinely calm for the Walther League as for U.S. society in general. Nearly all of the youth societies of the Missouri Synod’s 5,000 congregations were affiliated with the League. Groups in mission fields outside the U.S. also joined. “The International Walther League” was then an apt name for the League. Zone and district rallies and national conventions were characterized by worship, fellowship, and consideration of service projects. Groups of young Leaguers known as “Caravaners” crisscrossed the country, meeting with local societies to help them organize as well as to stir up interest in League programs. Lutheran Service Volunteers were dispatched to serve people in various needs and difficulties.

The turbulence which caught up the United States in the 1960s found its way into the Missouri Synod as well. The taint of the world touched the Walther League. The young people had been acculturated in the new world, and the new world’s young were reacting in vigorous disillusionment against an establishment they perceived as responsible for assassinating their heroes, stubbornly resisting the civil rights movement, and foolishly sending them off to kill and die in Viet Nam.

In 1962, Walther League leadership determined that the Missouri Synod’s Board of Young People’s Work should assume the direction of general youth programs, freeing the League to become an “issue-oriented, youth-
led" ministry focusing specific attention of programs such as the "Chain of Hunger Program" which sought to raise the consciousness of youth concerning the roots and extent of the problem of starvation in the world. Other prominent issues were racism, draft resistance, and the plight of migrant workers.

Many within the Missouri Synod, and particularly the clergy, were troubled when they heard their children sounding like the new world's children, though at first no strong reactions sounded. The famous (in Missouri Synod circles) Pete Seeger incident served as the symbolic event to bring matters to a head. The Walther League invited Seeger, a Lutheran, but an outspoken anti-war activist, to perform at the National Walther League Convention in Squaw Valley, California, in 1965. Because of Seeger's alleged association with "communists," his appearance at Squaw Valley was highly controversial within Missouri circles. The Board of Young People's Work stood by the decision to invite Seeger, however, and the Synod responded by censuring the Board. All former Walther League staff members who had gone to work for the Board between 1962 and 1965 were dismissed from their positions.

The 1968 National Walther League Convention met at Purdue University only a few weeks after the storied Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Once more the church heard its youth sounding like the new world's youth. At Purdue, racial quotas were established for boards and staffs, and much of the rhetoric of the event concerned the war and draft resistance. The convention also passed a resolution favoring altar and pulpit fellowship between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church, thereby taking sides in a highly controversial issue of the day. Also at Purdue, the Wheatridge

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*Cresset Clips—*

"Kennedy does not look like a flash in the pan at the end of March, 1960... If he defeats Humphrey in the Wisconsin primary, the delegates to the Democratic national convention, whether they like it or not, will have to talk to the 'young man on the go.'"

Victor Hoffman on the presidential race,
April 1960.
Foundation was given autonomy. Because of the Walther League's new issue-oriented program and the controversies surrounding it, some in leadership positions of the Missouri Synod began to speak out against the League, and the League came to be viewed by many as having been taken over by radicals.

The official end of the League's relationship with the Missouri Synod came with a bill of divorce served in the form of a resolution passed at the Synod's Dallas convention in 1977:

In 1968 the Walther League embarked on a new direction as a youth-led, issue-oriented movement of youth. During the past nine years the Walther League has attempted to carry out its historical role to initiate new programs within the youth ministry of the Synod. However, the parishes of the Synod did not fully accept new directions and the Walther League declined in membership and support. Since the league is serving only a few members of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the Board of Youth Ministry is recommending the following:

WHEREAS, the Walther League is no longer serving a significant number of the Synod's youth members; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod no longer recognize the Walther League as an auxiliary organization of the Synod; and be it further

Resolved, That all references to the Walther League in the synodical Handbook be deleted.

The same convention failed to pass a resolution titled, “To Reestablish the 'Old Walther League.'”

The Walther League, at the direction of its leaders, had stayed at the church basement after dark and without parents, and they had taken risks. They were trying to be church as best they knew how in an era of turmoil and uncertainty. When they came home from the meeting, the parents did not recognize them as their children. They had become tainted.

Despite the loss of funding from member societies, the Walther League was not without resources. As part of the 1968 agreement with the Wheatridge Foundation, the Foundation supported Walther League programs with modest funding until 1973. Then, facing the loss of its only significant source of new funds, the Walther League was forced to restructure itself dramatically. The Walther League Council transferred governance of the League to a 17-member Board of Governors in January of 1973, and that board first met in March of 1974.

From 1974-1977 the League's energies and resources were spent in organizational evaluation, publishing the newspaper BRIDGE,
supporting work among Hispanic youth of high school age, and conducting weekend retreats designed to sensitize young people to a variety of social issues. In March of 1977, the last executive director of the Walther League, Dan Stolle, resigned and the Chicago office was closed.

By 1979 the size of the Walther League Board of Governors had been trimmed to seven members. Since that time, the self-selecting board whose members served three-year terms had met annually in order to decide on the use of the modest income generated by its remaining endowment. In the current decade, the League supported a variety of programs in areas of its historic concerns. Most programs had to do with helping youth toward a sense of Christian vocation.

The difficulties, most of them logistic, facing a widely scattered board which sought to use wisely a relatively small amount of money finally pushed the most recent Board of Governors toward the decision to let the Walther League die. But those of us on that last board are convinced that we found a death which will, in a way, lead to a birth and new life. One-fourth of the Walther League’s assets were turned over to the Lutheran Volunteer Corps, which operates out of Washington, D.C., offices. Thereby the League hopes to live on as a helpful shaper of Christian vocational consciousness among Lutheran young people. The remaining three-fourths of the Walther League’s assets have gone to the Wheat Ridge Foundation. Thus, the parent will live on through the work of her daughter. Wheat Ridge hopes to increase the funds received from the Walther League and with the interest generated by those monies support programs which will focus primarily on people 18-30 years old, address issues of Christian vocation, and relate Christian faith to issues of justice and society.

The church’s youth are in the new world. They are acculturated. In the end, the immigrant church could not keep her children isolated. But now that the church’s children are in many ways indistinguishable from the world’s children, someone must support in the church’s youth a sense of servanthood for the sake of the creation and God’s people—all five or so billion of them. The Lutheran Volunteer Corps and Wheat Ridge, grown-up daughter of the Walther League, are poised and equipped to play that role. The spirit of the Walther League lives on.

September, 1989
Valparaiso Today

Valparaiso University is a national, independent, Lutheran University distinguished by its Lutheran heritage and dedicated to excellence in education. Founded upon the three-fold principles of Scholarship, Faith and Freedom, Valparaiso continues to prepare tomorrow's leaders for the Church and for society in general.

Daring as those claims may sound, the 67-year history of Valparaiso as an independent Lutheran University supports them.

Furthermore, VU's vision for the future demands that these claims be sustained. Nothing short of continuing to be a distinctive university, whose Lutheran character fosters high academic quality, will satisfy the University Strategic Plan.

The sainted O.P. Kretzmann, VU president from 1940 to 1968, eloquently defined a university as essentially, "a voluntary association of free men and women in a community which is dedicated to a two-fold task: the search for Truth and the transmission of Truth, free and unbroken, to those who are born later in time. Its first and supreme requirement is a company of men and women who will know Truth when they meet it, no matter whence it comes or whither it leads; who will conduct the search for Truth with radical sincerity and intellectual honesty, and a deep reverence for even its faintest gleam." Valparaiso University has continued to define itself in this way.

Kretzmann articulated a vision for Valparaiso University which emphasized a firm grasp of the truths of the Christian faith and the upholding of those truths within the University in a free, open and positive way. "Although we must be ready at all times to admit the partiality of our apprehension of Truth, we must also stand sharply and immovably against the unintelligent and unreasonable pretension of the philosophies in the modern world which identify the Truth with our partial apprehension of it, or confine it to a certain race or nation." The Christian University is not a bastion of Truth set up as a negative defense against the evils of the world nor as a place of refuge from intellectual debate: "I must reaffirm my conviction that the destiny of a Christian university does not lie in a negative approach to its problems and opportunities... A Christian University must be in the van of the progress of knowledge, not behind it."
Dr. Alan F. Harre, current president of VU, champions the vision articulated by Kreztmann and others.

In his address to the Opening Convocation in August of 1992, Harre breathed new life into the vision. "The University is taking evermore seriously the articulation of what it means to be a Lutheran University. One of the motivations that caused the renewed interest in seeking to enhance the Lutheran character of Valparaiso University is the undergirding conviction that VU's claims to uniqueness are firmly rooted in its Lutheran character that boldly proclaims freedom in the gospel and evidences faith in God who rules, redeems and restores the world and all who live in it... I submit that the conviction of faith Lutheranism represents makes it possible for the University both to tolerate and to appreciate diversity in other people's beliefs and values without fear that the Christian faith of the University will be compromised."

Valparaiso University seeks to promote that which is truly Lutheran as defined by the Lutheran Confessions. The University acknowledges the importance of embracing the Christian faith as the basis of the University's entire life. At the same time, in the finest of Reformation traditions, the University remains open to wisdom and insight from all sources. Valpo is not afraid of controversy, nor does it shrink from the open and free exchange of ideas. It was in such an atmosphere of scholarship, faith and freedom that Martin Luther birthed the Reformation. And it is precisely such an atmosphere that Valparaiso University seeks to sustain.

Like the German universities that spawned the Reformation, Valparaiso University is responsible to the whole Church. Valpo is blessed with a special attachment to its Lutheran constituency. VU must be intentional and creative in handing on to its students the substance and values of the Lutheran Christian faith. At the same time it must carefully reject custodial expectations that are sometimes imposed upon church-owned schools.

At its core, Lutheranism is a movement based upon conversation and dialogue. Valparaiso University envisions itself as playing an important role among Lutherans in the U.S. by initiating conversations and stimulating discussion. That would seem to be a fitting role for a national, independent, Lutheran University.
A Living Legacy

The Cresset, a Review of Literature, Arts and Public Affairs, is a Walther League legacy which lives on at Valparaiso University. The spirit of that legacy invokes a passion for the arts. At VU, an intrinsic commitment to the arts finds expression in its deep Lutheran tradition. This largest Lutheran institution of higher education in the United States is proud to point to its heritage and to celebrate those graduates who have distinguished themselves in the arts—people like Richard Wienhorst, Reinhold Marxhausen, Martin Jean, Cresset editor, Gail McGrew Eifrig, and many, many more.

Center for the Visual and Performing Arts

Valparaiso University is poised to begin construction of a Center for the Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA) thus bringing to fruition a comprehensive and ambitious visual and performing arts program for use in all walks of campus life. Through this wonderful facility, the goals of the arts programs at VU, which are expression, scholarship, integration, celebration, and collaboration, will be achieved.
At the Center of Campus Life

Centrally positioned on campus, the Center is surrounded by academic buildings, by Moellering Library, by Neils Science Center and by the Chapel of the Resurrection. It presents the arts in a manner accessible to all—for participation by all. Streaming through the center of the building is the spectacular glass-enclosed lobby and commons area. It is the heart of the building, thriving on diverse and animated activity which will occur there. It is also a meeting, special function, and sculpture exhibit area.

Preserving the Legacy

The construction of the CVPA is a testament to VU's support of artistic excellence. The Center also brings credence to the belief that art is essential to the educated life and serves as a contemporary articulation of Valpo's intent to continue to nourish and sustain the arts for the generations to come.
If you know someone who hasn't been reading The Cresset, you know someone who has a lot of catching up to do.

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