



Oak Leaves

Newsletter of the ELS Historical Society

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Issue 2

ELS Historical Society Meeting Focuses on Immigrant Pastor U.V. Koren By Herman Harstad

The fourteenth annual meeting of the ELS Historical Society was held at the Ylvisaker Fine Arts Center at Bethany Lutheran College on June 19, 2010 under the theme, "The Many Facets of Dr. Ulrik Vilhelm Koren."

Former ELS President the Rev. George Orvick opened the meeting with a devotion based on 1 Corinthians 15:58: "... be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord..." The Norwegian pioneer pastors were men who were willing to work. We recall their labors with gratitude. The writer to the Hebrews tells us: "Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, consider the outcome of their conduct." (Hebrews 13:7)



Dr. John Christianson, Professor of History at Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, gave a presentation entitled, "Dr. Koren the Immigrant Pastor and Theologian."

Dr. Koren was born in Bergen, Norway in 1826. He was an intelligent and charming boy who loved intellectual pursuits. He attended the University of Christiania (the city was renamed Oslo in 1925). He pursued a "bread and butter" major in theology thought to guarantee him a job as a pastor in the state church. But when he passed all his exams, no call was forthcoming. He had fallen in love with Elisabeth and wanted to marry her but marriage was out of the question without a job. So they decided to marry and move to America and serve the Norwegian settlers there. They sailed for America in 1853. He was age 27 and she was 21.

Koren traveled hundreds of miles on horseback serving the spiritual needs of the scattered farmers in northern Iowa and southern Minnesota. He was influential in establishing Luther College in 1862 in Decorah, Iowa. The Korens celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1903. He died seven years later in 1910 and Elisabeth died in 1918. One hundred years after his death Koren's theological legacy continues to have a significant influence on confessional Lutheranism in America.

Seminarian Tim Grundmeier spoke on the “Domestic Life of Immigrant Pastors.” Both U.V. and Elisabeth were born into the Norwegian upper class and had enjoyed nice homes, the arts, good educations and fellowship with their peers. In contrast, the settlers they served came from uneducated and unsophisticated backgrounds. Consequently the Korens and other pioneer pastors and their wives experienced some culture shock in the new world. But they were able to adjust and eventually appreciate the genuineness and character of the people they served. Cabin life was especially hard on women because they were often socially isolated. In spite of the hardships, referring to their home in Iowa, Elisabeth said in her diary, “I have not found a place where I would rather live.”

Dr. Ryan MacPherson, Professor of History at Bethany Lutheran College, talked about the hot social topics of the day that Americans were dealing with during Dr. Koren’s ministry. The Civil War raged over the issue of slavery. Like C.F.W. Walther, Koren could find no Biblical support for asserting that slavery under all circumstances was sinful, but nevertheless he saw the institution as practiced in America as a great social evil. The short letter to Philemon from the Apostle Paul points out that a slave owner and a slave who shared the Christian faith should view one another as brothers in Christ under the law of love.

Prof. Mark DeGarmeaux from Bethany Lutheran College’s Religious Studies Division talked about Dr. Koren’s interest in hymns and hymnbooks. He showed the attendees various hymnbooks used in Norway and America. Some of them

were used for over 200 years. Now hymnbooks tend to be changed every 25 to 30 years. The meeting concluded with a shortened all-Norwegian service conducted by Prof. DeGarmeaux with some assistance from Andrew Soule. Those in attendance left with a greater appreciation of the work of our founding fathers and mothers and our synod’s Norwegian roots.■

Herman Harstad is co-editor of Oak Leaves.



U. V. Koren and Hymnody by Mark DeGarmeaux

On Christmas Eve the young pastor sat down in a pioneer cabin in Iowa to write his first sermon for his new parish. With no lamp, and only a makeshift wick in a bowl of fat on an overturned coffee cup, he began his endeavor with his New Testament, Altar Book, liturgy book, and hymnbook at his side. He had traveled the Atlantic and half a continent to his new home. It was 1853. He continued to write sermons here for more than 50 years.

Pastor U. V. Koren often quoted hymns in his sermons. But which hymnbook did he bring with him from Norway? Koren was not a pietist or a rationalist, but held to confessional, orthodox Lutheran views and treasured Lutheran hymnody.

Hymnbooks in the dual kingdom of Denmark and Norway were mostly under government control because of the state church. There were prescribed or authorized hymnbooks commissioned by the king himself. Thomissøn's hymnbook from 1569 with 259 hymns was used for more than 130 years. Kingo's hymnbook, published in 1699, arranged according to the church year and selecting all the hymns for each Sunday, was used in some places into the 1950s, 250 years later. Pontoppidan's 1740 hymnbook was commissioned by pietistic King Christian VI and emphasized categories of repentance and fruits of faith rather than justification and the church year. Guldberg's 1778 hymnbook was commissioned by rationalist King Fredrik V. Balle's *Evangelical Christian Hymnbook* (1798) took the Rationalistic influence even further: all the hymns were shortened; "content was changed until it was unrecognizable"; there was a move away from the tradi-

tional faith of common people to intellectualism and emphasis on "society." Rationalism put human reason above Scripture and rejected things like miracles.

Koren certainly knew of all these hymnbooks. But his hometown was more orthodox and conservative, as he wrote: "Bergen was not as influenced by Rationalism and they were able to keep Kingo's hymnbook, or in some places Guldberg's." It seems likely that he preferred and used Kingo's hymnbook.

Koren used hymns to teach, to comfort, and to confirm doctrinal points in his writings and his ministering. He wrote: "*The most important means of promoting Lutheran Christian instruction was undoubtedly the books, the splendid hymnbooks surely more than any others.*" At the dedication of Luther Seminary in Hamline, 1899, he spoke about opponents in this way: "*They have wanted to rob us of what has always been Christians' most precious fruit of the Gospel, what our Fathers prayed for and confessed in their most beautiful hymns, faith's certainty in our salvation.*"

Koren quotes many hymns to defend doctrinal positions in "Can and Ought A Christian Be Certain of Salvation."

"Such people are true old-Lutheran Christians. Even if they must again begin their hymn in a heavy frame of mind while they sing at the top of their voice: "I walk in danger all the way... I pass through trials all the way... Death doth pursue me all the way..." yet, the song will soon sound completely different, and precisely through just these memories will it ring so much more powerfully: "All fear and sorrow, hence!" "I walk with angels all the way ..."



The 1869 publication of Landstad's hymnbook had a huge influence in Norway and on Norwegian immigrants in America. Perhaps Koren did not find it completely satisfactory because he took a leading role in preparing the Norwegian Synod's own hymnbook in 1874 and its revised edition in 1903. The Synod's hymnbook was sometimes regarded as old-fashioned, retaining many older Lutheran chorales and holding more precise Biblical and doctrinal phrases as more important than beautiful poetry.

Koren wanted to promote the use of orthodox Lutheran hymnody. He tried to restore the rhythmic version of the hymns, but the people were not ready for that at the time. He also believed that good hymns continue to be written. He himself wrote the hymn we know as *Ye Lands, to the Lord* (ELH 56), a beautiful paraphrase of Psalm 100.

John Dahle in *Library of Christian Hymns* (a commentary on the 1913 *Lutheran Hymnary*) wrote:

“Rev. U. V. Koren was intensely interested in church music. He became the leader in the work of compiling the hymn book for the Norwegian Synod. ... His revisions of a number of hymns, show his unusual ability to strike the true spirit of the church hymn. They bear witness of his aesthetic taste and marked sense of rhythm and euphony. ... For the revised edition of the hymn book for the Norwegian Synod, Dr. Koren rewrote several hymns, making them better suited for church use. He was also very musical and keenly interested in the older rhythmic form of church music. At his suggestion was published the *Rythmisk Koralbog*, which had some influence upon the composition of *The Lutheran Hymnary*.”

At Koren's funeral they sang strong hymns of the Lutheran tradition: Gerhardt's *Thy Way and All Thy Sorrows* and *O Sacred Head Now Wounded*; Brorson's *Life's Day is Ended*; and Kingo's *Jeg beder dig min Herre og Gud* (*I pray You, O my Lord and God*). The Luther College choir also sang Koren's Norwegian translation of an English hymn

which had comforted him in his last days. The hymn touches such themes as justification, living under the cross, and trusting in God's power alone for faith and salvation.

I could not do without Thee
O Savior of the lost,
Whose precious blood redeemed me
At such tremendous cost.
Thy righteousness, Thy pardon,
Thy precious blood must be
My only hope and comfort,
My glory and my plea.

I could not do without Thee,
I cannot stand alone,
I have no strength or goodness,
No wisdom of my own;
But Thou, beloved Savior,
Art all in all to me,
And weakness will be power
If leaning hard on Thee.

I could not do without Thee,
For, oh, the way is long,
And I am often weary,
And sigh replaces song:
How could I do without Thee?
I do not know the way;
Thou knowest, and Thou leadest,
And wilt not let me stray.

I could not do without Thee,
O Jesus, Savior dear;
E'en when my eyes are holden,
I know that Thou art near.
How dreary and how lonely
This changeful life would be,
Without the sweet communion,
The secret rest with Thee!

I could not do without Thee,
For years are fleeting fast,
And soon in solemn oneness
The river must be passed;
But Thou wilt never leave me,
And though the waves roll high,
I know Thou wilt be near me,
And whisper, "It is I."

Koren's legacy of hymnody stands when we treasure and sing strong Lutheran hymns, when we borrow the best orthodox hymns from other traditions, and when we continue to write hymns and music that glorify God by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.■

Our Baptismal Grace

Synod Report 1946

Essay by S[ophus]. E. Lee

When World War II was over, we had hoped that very soon we would be able to return to normal conditions of living. But we find our nation today, almost a year after the cessation of hostilities, in a state of confusion. There are many who believe it is the business of the Church to find a solution for all the economic, political, and social problems that confront us. But this is definitely not the work of the Church; for the Lord has made it clear that He wants His Church to deal with spiritual matters only, those things which pertain to the welfare of immortal souls.

In spiritual matters there is also much confusion. The reason for this confusion is found in the warning that the Apostle Paul sounded to Timothy: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Tim. 4:3-4. When a minister in an Advent sermon goes so far as to give the names of two political figures who favor a strong international organization, then to tell his congregation that they may be divine voices crying in the wilderness, and also to state that "we cannot be sure that we know what the Lord's way is", we have an explanation for much of the confusion. When we behold the many and varied enemies who are trying to undermine the foundations of Christian faith, it is necessary for us to repeat again and again the simple truths of the infallible Word of God which give us in a world of confusion that calm certainty which the portals of hell cannot shake.

When Luther wrote: "The true treasure of the Church is the holy Gospel of the glory and



grace of God", he shows that he had reached a clear and definite conviction as to the most important treasure that God has given to His Church on earth. There is nothing that will take the place of a simple acceptance of the truth of the Scriptures as the first step in the proper relationship to God. Our Lord Jesus Christ began His public ministry with the words: "Repent and believe the Gospel." And the same call goes forth throughout the Scriptures. Unless a person accepts the Word of God as the absolute truth and the one guide to salvation, he is bound to plunge into spiritual disaster.

The work of redemption was completed when Christ died on the cross for the sins of the world. But this work of Christ would be

of no benefit to us unless there were definite means by which we could apprehend and appropriate to ourselves the forgiveness which Christ merited for us. In order to offer and convey to men the merits which Christ secured for the world by his death on the cross, God employs certain external, visible means through which the Holy Spirit works and preserves faith and thus accomplishes the sinner's salvation. The Gospel, the message of salvation, the word of reconciliation, is a means of grace. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel, which I preached unto you, which ye also received, and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved." 1 Cor. 15:1-2. To Timothy he writes: "That from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim. 3:15. To the Thessalonians: "When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." 1 Thess. 2:13. Perhaps the clearest passage of all stating that the Gospel is a means of grace, conveying to the human heart the power of the Spirit unto salvation, is found in Paul's letter to the Romans: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. 1:16.

If men were not so subject to doubt and unbelief, it would, perhaps, have been sufficient to have only the Word as the one means of grace, which contains the full measure of the wonderful assurance of love and grace through the merits of the Savior. In the Gospel we have the message of salvation which most definitely and adequately assures us that God would have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. But

God knows the weakness of men and has anticipated their doubts. He not only gives us His Word with its assurance of grace and mercy, but he has added to this Word as it was given to men by proclamation and writing certain other means connected with His Word, by which He transmits the treasures of His love in such a direct manner that He makes it a very personal and individual matter.

A very simple illustration may serve to explain what we mean. A very wealthy man promises to present a sum of money to every person living in a certain city. An individual there may not doubt the ability and the willingness of the generous donor to make good his promise, but because the offer is somewhat general he may entertain the thought that he may be overlooked. But if this man were to come to him in person and present him with the money all doubt would at once be removed. Thus the Lord knowing the doubts that would arise in human hearts as the offers of grace are so freely proclaimed in the Gospel has given us the holy Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, as additional means of grace. By these sacred acts He offers, gives, and seals unto us the forgiveness of sins which Christ has merited for us.

In order that we may be led every day to think of the great treasure of grace we have received in our Baptism we shall devote our attention to the subject of

Our Baptismal Grace

Baptism is of great value to us because

- 1) It is a divinely appointed means of grace.
- 2) It is an everlasting covenant.

I.

On the subject of Baptism, Luther writes in the Large Catechism: "It is of the greatest importance that we esteem Baptism excellent, glorious, and exalted, for which we contend and fight, chiefly, because the world is now so full of sects clamoring that Baptism is an

external thing, and that external things are of no benefit. But let it be ever so much an external thing, here stands God's Word and command which institute, establish, and confirm Baptism. But what God institutes and commands cannot be in vain, but must be a most precious thing, though in appearance it were of less value than a straw."

The great importance of Baptism is clearly emphasized by Christ when He gave the command: "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matt. 28:19. This may be literally translated: "Go ye and make disciples of all nations by baptizing them..." On the day of Pentecost when many were brought to a knowledge of their sins by the sermon Peter had preached and came asking what they should do, the answer was given: "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Acts 2:38. When Saul was brought to Damascus after having been changed from a persecutor to a defender of the Church, he was told by Ananias: "Arise, and be baptized." Acts 22:16.

There are those who look upon Baptism as a mere ceremony or church rite. But according to the Scriptures it is a true means of grace by which God offers and conveys to men the merits of Christ. Therefore Luther says: "Baptism works forgiveness of sin, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare." These words and promises are found in the last chapter of Mark where Christ says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:16. The Lord here connects faith and Baptism through which the sinner is saved. This thought is included in the words of Ananias in his appeal to Saul: "Arise, and be baptized

and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts 22:16. In the Epistle to the Ephesians the apostle says: "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water by the word." Eph. 5:25-26. When Nicodemus visited the Savior by night to inquire how he might be saved, Jesus told him: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." John 3:5. Peter states very clearly, "Baptism doth also now save us." 1 Peter 3:21. Thus a person that is born again of the water and the Spirit enters into the kingdom of God. St. Paul writes to Titus: "According to His mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Titus 3:5. The blessings of Christ's redemption are here ascribed to the water of Baptism. We also have the words of Paul to the Galatians: "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Gal. 3:27. These are the principal passages which treat of the subject of Baptism. As we examine them carefully it is difficult to imagine that one who has implicit confidence in the Word and power of God would ever say that Baptism is a mere ceremony or church rite. They clearly teach that Baptism is much more than a mere sign or symbol but truly a means of grace, for the Savior, with the fullness of His redemption, is ours through Baptism.

In the sixteenth century the Anabaptists and the majority of the Reformed sects called into question the power of God in Holy Baptism. They insisted that the Sacrament was a mere external rite, a symbolical act, signifying the reception of a person into membership of the external Church. Let us look again at the expression in these passages. "Be baptized for the remission of your sins." "Be baptized and wash away thy sin." "Baptized into Christ". By Baptism "put on Christ". Christ

designs to sanctify and cleanse the Church with “the washing of water by the Word.” “Washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” The language in these passages is very plain. Any principle of interpretation, by which baptismal grace and regeneration can be eliminated from them, will overthrow every doctrine of our holy Christian faith.

The solid and impregnable Augsburg Confession made clear the position of the Lutherans. In Article II it confesses that the new birth by Baptism and the Holy Ghost delivers from the power and penalty of original sin. In Article IX it states: “Of Baptism they teach that it is necessary to salvation, and that through Baptism is offered the grace of God; and that children are to be baptized, who, being offered to God through Baptism, are received into God’s grace. They condemn the Anabaptists, who reject the Baptism of children, and say that children are saved without Baptism.” All other confessional writings teach the same thing concerning Baptism as a means of grace.

The position of the Reformed sects in the 16th century is practically the same in the Reformed churches today. Baptism is looked upon by many as only a Church ceremony, without any particular blessing in it. Some regard it as merely a sign of an inner washing from sins. Infant Baptism is rejected not only by the Baptists but also by numerous other sects. Hand in hand with the rejection of infant Baptism goes also the rejection of original sin. In an address by Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam of the Methodist Episcopal Church, President of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, before the National Conference of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, the follow statement was made: “When rituals declare that a child is conceived in sin and born in iniquity, I say such declarations are themselves sinful and iniqui-

tous.” But this statement does not agree with the teaching of Scripture. In Psalm 51, verse 5, we have the words of David: “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” Therefore in the ritual for the Baptism of infants we find the following: “Little children, though seemingly innocent, are by birth and nature sinful and without forgiveness would be lost forever. We know that God gave His son into death to atone for the sins of all, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. But as little children are as yet unable to understand the Gospel, faith cannot be worked in them by telling them of Christ. We can never sufficiently thank God, therefore, that He has made Baptism a means whereby He works in little children with His divine grace, turning their hearts to faith, cleansing away their sins, and receiving them into His Kingdom. The simple act of Baptism has such wonderful power because the Almighty God Himself works in it through His Word. ‘Baptism is not simple water only but it is the water comprehended in God’s command and connected with God’s Word.’ The divine Word makes Baptism what Paul calls it, Titus 3, ‘The washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.’ For this reason Christ says in the last chapter of Mark: ‘He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.’”

Several years ago a prominent Methodist minister in Minneapolis was approached by a man who desired to become a member of his church. However, there was one thing that troubled this man: he had never been baptized. This minister actually made a joke of what was a serious matter to this man by saying: “If you will not tell anyone, I will not either.” It is truly tragic to think of the many souls that are being misled by ministers who

reject the clear words of Scripture on the subject of holy Baptism.

Perhaps the most dangerous and most vicious attacks against the Scriptural doctrine of Baptism are made by those who claim you must pass through a certain “experience” before you are born of the Spirit. Some years ago a minister in the American Lutheran Church was put out of that body because of his false teaching on the doctrine of Baptism. In his parish paper of March-April 1946 this minister tells of the “experience of new birth” which he claims took place ten years ago in his own life. He writes: “I know very well that many sincere people wonder about the new birth. Some are told, ‘You were born-again in baptism.’ Others are told ‘You were born-again in confirmation, or by a public confession of Christ, etc.’ Let me bear witness here. I was *baptized*, confirmed, ordained, and publicly confessed Christ, but *I was not born of the Spirit by any one of these.*” (Italics our own). Here is a denial of the Scriptural doctrine of Baptism. It is true that we are not born again by confirmation, ordination, or publicly confessing Christ, but we are born again by Baptism because the Scriptures teach that Baptism is a divinely appointed means of grace. Let us not be misled by those who substitute their own teaching for the clear and unmistakable Word of God.

We have quoted from the Word of God the principal passages bearing on the subject of Baptism. We note that their meaning is uniform, clear, and strong. We learn that they have only one meaning, and that is that through Baptism we become new creatures in Christ Jesus and are in full possession of all the riches of His grace.

II.

Our Baptismal Grace is an everlasting covenant. We are in danger of failing to make proper use of our Baptism. We deprive our-

selves of much comfort and strength by neglecting to think of our Baptism every day. Sad to say, there are ever so many who know they have been baptized but fail to see what that has to do with their every-day life. As well as we are conscious of the temporal possessions we have every day, so we should think of the great spiritual treasure we possess in our Baptism. In our Baptism, God has given to us all the riches of Christ. There is nothing of grace that we receive in the Gospel and in the Lord’s Supper that we have not already received in our Baptism.

“For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.” Is. 54:10. The things that we are apt to consider quite permanent and lasting will all depart and be removed. But not so with the covenant of God’s grace. That is everlasting. It is in holy Baptism that God speaks to the individual and says: “I will make an everlasting covenant with thee.” In infinite love God binds Himself by a solemn promise to be the God and Savior of one who has been baptized in His name. That promise will never be revoked nor ever become invalid, but will remain in force for all eternity. What a consolation to those who in times of grave doubts and severe trials of faith feel like crying, “Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He in anger shut up his tender mercies?” Ps. 77:9. The covenant of God’s grace is of eternal validity because it is based on His own word—“saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.” He that lays hold on this promise will not question nor waver, but rest his soul in this

“Foundation, which unmoved shall stay,
When earth and heaven pass away.”

S[ophus]. E. Lee

“The Real Building”: Yelm Builds a Church **A Devotion by Pastor Hugo Handberg, April 10, 1978**

Editors' Note: Pastor James Braun posted this on the new Facebook page for Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Yelm, Washington. We use it with his and Mrs. Handberg's permission.

Pastor Braun's Note: I received the following in the mail from Mrs. Handberg, widow of Pastor Hugo Handberg who served at Parkland for a number of years. She writes, concerning the devotion she sent:

“I remember the occasion. The new church was just in its first stage. A very bare frame was there. We had a potluck and a service of thanksgiving. My husband obviously used the enclosed for a devotion that day. I hope the congregation will be able to proceed with the new plans.”

Sincerely, Harriet Handberg

At Yelm, WA, Sun., April 10, 1978 — unfinished church

Remarkable 5 years. Use of Scout facilities. Then moved to the Seventh Day Adventist church. Growth in terms of people. Now — this new building. I suspect you can hardly believe it yourselves.

But there is a little verse that I would ask you to consider this day: 1 Corinthians 3:16, *“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”*

The REAL building here is not the one of boards and nails. It is not built by men, by volunteer labor. Neither is it paid for by our dollars.

The real building is one built out of human hearts, out of souls. It is built NOT by men, but by the Holy Ghost. It is paid for NOT with dollars, but by the voluntary donation of Jesus' holy, precious blood.

Every single believer in Jesus is a temple of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit dwells in him — then in all Christians collectively.

The real building being erected here is the invisible, spiritual temple of God, the

Holy Christian Church. It has been under construction here during all of these 5 years.

Progress is made on this project as the Word is carefully taught, faithfully preached, as baptism is administered. And you must continue to build properly, carefully, soundly. You must use the Word in the future!

Just the other day 51 men fell to their deaths at a certain construction project because of what is called “green concrete.” It wasn't properly dry and hard. The invisible building that is built here will be strengthened, it will be firmed-up and made more sturdy and secure as the Word is used here, and as your communicants — more and more of them — make use of the sacrament here.

This building, the one we can see, provides shelter and comfort for your physical needs. Heat. Chairs. But the real edifice about which you should be concerned — for which you should labor and pray and bring your offerings — is the mysterious, the beautiful-but-invisible Holy Christian Church which God will finally put on display at the coming of Jesus Christ! Let the Holy Ghost dwell in many hearts here in your community. Let the Temple of God soar up from this little plot of ground which you will use here in Yelm! Your neighbors won't see it. They will have to look at honest and kind people instead. They will have to hear you as you speak of Christ and as you invite them to your services. But one day both you and your neighbors will see what has really been erected here. Believers and unbelievers alike will look at God's completed Holy Christian Church.

May God the Spirit dwell in YOU, and in the future, in many of your neighbors, that both you and they may praise our Redeemer together for all eternity. Amen.■



At the ELS Historical Society Meeting on June 19, 2010:

Mark DeGarmeaux (middle left, and pictured with Mark Harstad bottom left) spoke about "U. V. Koren and Hymnody."

Ryan MacPherson (upper right) spoke on social topics during Dr. Koren's ministry.

Tim Grundmeier (bottom right) spoke on the "Domestic Life of Immigrant Pastors."

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All membership
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\$10/year: individual
\$15/year: husband & wife
Associate Membership:
\$15/year: individual
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