

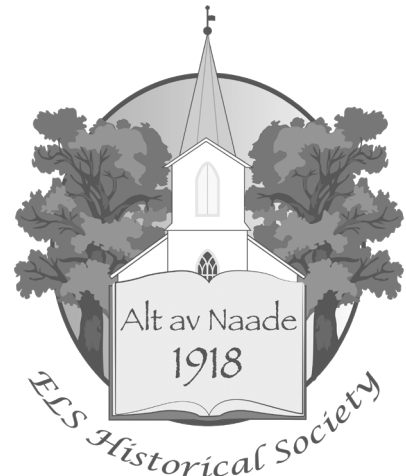
Oak Leaves

Newsletter of the ELS Historical Society

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Issue 2



FAIRVIEW-EMMAUS, PART 3

Hugo Handberg

The Lutheran Sentinel, April 10, 1975

Possibly no group at Fairview, Minneapolis, was more concerned about reaching other people with the gospel of Jesus Christ than the Penn Avenue Ladies Aid Society. Ladies like Mrs. Kroon, Mrs. Jorgenson and Mrs. Heller kept bringing up the subject of "starting a mission." The Penn Avenue Ladies Aid was organized back at Zion Church in January 1914. It was made up of women who lived in what were then some of the western reaches of the city, women who found it difficult to journey down to Zion by themselves in midweek for regular Ladies Aid meetings. Penn Avenue was a main artery running through their area, and streetcar lines made it possible for them to meet in one another's homes. At the breakup with Zion, the women of this group went along to Fairview and continued to meet.

The group's concern was for people living out toward the city limits. And the ladies, working with Pastor Anderson, pledged their support if only the mission board of the ELS would call a missionary and assign him to the area. The first man called was Missionary Joseph Runholt. In December 1926, a house was purchased in the middle of the block near 42nd on Thomas Avenue. The downstairs, without partitions, would serve as a chapel. And the Penn Avenue Ladies Aid promised to augment the synod's help and back that chapel with its treasure!



Emmaus

The proposed area, far to the northwest of Fairview, had advantages and disadvantages. It was on the residential fringes in a growing section of the city, just out beyond huge Crystal Lake Cemetery where, eventually, so many of Fairview's people would lie. A short distance to the west was the village of Robbinsdale, which, in 1920, had just topped 1,300 in population. Into the mid-thirties Robbinsdale was still called "a farming trade center and residential suburb," even though it had grown to 4,427 people by 1930.

But the work was not firmly under way in the little house-chapel until Missionary Sophus Lee was ordained at Fairview in 1927, replacing Runholt who had accepted a call to northern Minnesota. Missionary Lee was installed in the mission on August 14, three weeks after his marriage.

Five months later, January 13, 1928, Emmaus Lutheran congregation was organized. Seven men signed the constitution, and, following the synod's approval of the congregation's application for membership, the ELS had its second congregation in Minneapolis.

But no sooner had the work begun at Emmaus, or so it seemed, than the great financial upheavals of 1929 jolted lives, cities, the nation, and churches. The opulence of the twenties gave way to the grimness of the depression thirties. And Emmaus congregation was destined to stay in its little chapel until Christmas, 1938.

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FROM THE EDITOR

In this issue, you will find pictures of two Pastor Lees. As reported in the article on the Minneapolis churches, Pastor Sophus Lee was the second pastor to serve the Emmaus congregation. From there he went on to serve the Hawley-Audbon parish in Minnesota and the Portage-Newport parish in Wisconsin. He died in 1973.

The other Pastor Lee, Oscar Torgerson Lee was Sophus Lee's father. O. T. Lee would have to be considered one of the founders of the church body that had its beginnings at the Lime Creek meeting in 1918. However, he was not present, except in spirit, because he died two months before the Lime Creek convention. After a couple of very strenuous years—turmoil and division in his own parish (Northwood, Iowa) and other congregations of the Norwegian Synod, the 1916 convention which set on course the merger of the three Norwegian church bodies, the meetings of the minority, the bitter disappointment when the merger took place, Oscar Torgerson Lee was taken from this life's labors on Easter evening, March 31, 1918, at the age of 60.

No doubt, O. T. Lee would have figured prominently in the first years of the Reorganized Norwegian Synod, as he shows in his short *Tidende* articles.

When we planned to reprint Hugo Handberg's articles on the Minneapolis congregations of the ELS, it did not occur to us that the article on Emmaus Lutheran congregation and Sophus Lee would coincide with publication of O. T.

Lee's *Tidende* articles. The elder Lee did not live to see his son Sophus enter the ministry of the "little Synod," but he did leave a heritage for that son and many others who became the second generation of ELS pastors.

§ § §

We plan to keep reminding our readers and society members to do some mission work in expanding *Oak Leaves*' readership and membership. Here is a new tool: you can pass *Oak Leaves* on by sharing the link below. This free access will last only for the first two issues this year. We need *Oak Leaves* subscribers and Historical Society members to support our efforts to preserve and discuss the history of our church.


Follow this link to the *Oak Leaves* site:

<http://www.els-history.org/oak-leaves>

(You can also reach it by going to ELS.org; click on "Our Work Together"; click on "ELS Historical Society"; a link to *Oak Leaves* is in the second paragraph).

§ § §

Another thing we want to keep reminding our readers of: There will be a number of anniversaries of churches that were founded after 1917 as a result of the merger and the reorganization of the Norwegian Synod (ELS). Please let us know about them and send us pictures and anniversary booklets, or other documents of the congregational history.

Note the Annual meeting schedule and the subscription form on the back pages. 

CHANGES COMING TO THE OTTESEN MUSEUM

Parts of the Ottesen Museum are getting a new look! After an assessment of the use of space in the building housing the Ottesen Museum, it was decided to move things around a little. The current board room is being converted to house a display on "Congregational Life". The main function of the display will stay the same as the current "Church Basement Room" to highlight congregational life outside of the worship service.

The reception area will also be getting an up-date. The office furniture will be moved out and replaced with a smaller desk which will serve as a reception desk. A bookcase will also be moved in which will better serve the purpose of displaying the books and DVDs sold by the ELS Historical Society. We look forward to having a more open and welcoming space to greet visitors to the

Museum. One more bonus to the new arrangement is that the Museum will gain some much needed storage space for those artifacts that are not on display.

It is hoped that these changes will be ready for Synod Convention visitors.

Also in time for Synod Convention, will be a new display focusing on the discussions, people, and documents which led to the Norwegian Synod, United Church, and Hauge's Synod merger in 1917 to form the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America.

The present Evangelical Lutheran Synod was formed when pastors and congregations who, for the sake of doctrine, could not join the merged church body. They met one year later at Lime Creek, Iowa.

Rebecca DeGarmeaux 

Preserving Your Heritage

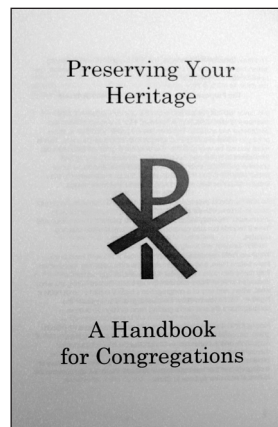
The ELS Ottesen Museum and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod's Committee for Archives and History have put together a new booklet to help the congregations of the Synod preserve their historical documents and artifacts.

Preserving Your Heritage: A Handbook for Congregations was created to address the questions of Why?, What?, Where?, and How? in regard to taking care of the papers, records, pictures, paraments, vestments, and other items important to the history of our Synod's churches.


Ottesen Museum director Rebecca DeGarmeaux has already given presentations at three congregations based on the booklet. Some of these congregations have upcoming anniversaries and hope to use the booklet as a guide to preparing for their celebrations. Other congregations merely want to do a better job of taking care of congregational records and artifacts.

For more information on hosting a presentation or simply to receive either a digital or hard copy of the booklet, please contact Rebecca DeGarmeaux at museum@blc.edu or 507-344-7421.

Rebecca DeGarmeaux 



In honor of the two major anniversaries, the ELS Historical Society will produce a commemorative medallion. The 2" medallion will bear the synod's anniversary logo which symbolizes the dual anniversaries.

The synod also will publish a centennial history entitled *Proclaim His Wonders: A Pictorial History of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.* 

FROM THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESIDENT

We look forward to seeing you at the program and annual meeting on June 18.

Following the Historical Society program, there will be a short business meeting for members of the Society. We will hear reports about the activities and actions of the Historical Society Board over the past year. Two board members will complete their first term, and they will be recommended for reelection. Other nominees may also be considered at that time.

The board will also bring a suggestion to amend Article III of the Historical Society by-laws, which sets specific amounts for dues. In place of that article, the board suggests that this wording be adopted:

ARTICLE III: DUES (Cf. Const. Art. VI)

The Board of Directors shall establish dues for voting membership and non-voting membership to be ratified at an annual meeting.

This will allow the Board to suggest changes to dues when printing and postage costs rise (as they have over the last 20 years), and to expand what materials can be offered to Society members.

If this by-law is approved, the board would then suggest a small increase in dues for Voting and Associate Membership, effective following the June meeting.

Pastor Peter Faugstad, Board President

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Editor: Erling T. Teigen, eteigen@charter.net

Design and layout: Kate Sehloff

Board of Directors: Bergetta Abrahamson, Peter Faugstad (Chairman), Craig Ferkenstad, Ted Gullixson, Lois Jaeger (Secretary), Marge Lillo (Treasurer), John Moldstad, Andrew Soule, Erling Teigen

Oak Leaves welcomes articles of both Synodical and local significance for publication. Articles may be edited for style, clarity, or length to allow for publication. Each issue will be deposited in the archives of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.



Joseph Runholt

Meanwhile the American Lutheran Church saw fit to locate its Victory Lutheran church a half block away from Emmaus' chapel. By 1971 Victory would have a baptized membership of 1,300 souls. And, in the mid-thirties, a little more than a mile from Emmaus, over on 28th and Washburn, a new Catholic congregation began building a church.

That congregation, St. Austin's, would play a part, too, in the future of Emmaus. In a letter of March 1973, the year of his death, Pastor Lee said, "From the very beginning it seems that the work at Emmaus was a real struggle because we were surrounded by a couple of other Lutheran churches and we got very few transfers from the ELS, Missouri or Wisconsin Synods. But that is mission work. I spent quite a bit of time ringing door-bells."

Just as this work was beginning at Emmaus, significant changes took place at Fairview. Pastor Anderson, now 54 years old, accepted a call to Belview, Minnesota, and preached his farewell sermon at Fairview on July 15, 1928. His wife, whom he had married in 1900, mother of his two sons and two daughters, had died in 1922. Five years later he remarried. Anderson served at Belview until 1949, completing fifty years in the ministry. He and his wife retired in that year and moved to Mankato, where Pastor Anderson died on January 10, 1959, at the age of 84. Funeral services were held at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, Mankato, and at Fairview. Today Anderson, a faithful, kindly shepherd dearly loved by his Fairview flock, sleeps among many of his parishioners of both Zion and Fairview congregations in Crystal Lake Cemetery in Minneapolis.

The Sunday after Anderson's farewell at Fairview, Christian Moldstad was installed as the congregation's pastor. He had come from Boston and would serve Fairview for nine years. Economically they were most difficult years. A former treasurer says, "Many months the collections were so slim that we could pay Pastor Moldstad only 15% of his salary." But he quickly adds that, in due time, that back salary was fully paid.

Unemployment was widespread in the thirties – yet another Fairview man recalls that "church attendance was stable." We get a glimpse into the attitude of Fairview's people of those trying days when the same man says, "People did not waver in their strength and belief in God and the church." One man, whose finances apparently were not too affected by the depression, "came to church with funds in his pocket" to insure that his pastor was paid.

Pastor Moldstad guided Fairview through years of more changes, but surely different changes from the transformations of the twenties. A new generation, sons and daughters of the founders, began to take its rightful place as responsible members and leaders of the congregation. But, due to automobiles and oiled streets, an increasing number of those sons and daughters no longer lived within walking distance of the church.

The rather simple social life of the war years and postwar years was gone for good. Gone were the days when a car was only a noisy curiosity that frightened horses. Television, of course, existed only in experimental labs. A radio was in every living-room. Crystal sets were out and Ted Husing, Harry Von Zell and network programs were in. Fading fast were family picnics, Sunday night band concerts and midweek community sings on summer evenings in Fairview Park across from Zion Church. Gone, too, were the Sunday School picnics "way out" in Lilly

"People did not waver in their strength and belief in God and the church."

Hills, an open field area just west of the Lowry-Broadway intersection, an area dominated today by North Memorial Hospital. Houses were eating up those fields and spreading westward into Golden Valley. Who could know in the thirties that one day both Fairview and Emmaus congregations would merge and relocate not too far from that Lilly Hills spot where Fairview children used to picnic?

When Pastor Moldstad came to Fairview, suburban and semi-rural Golden Valley had no industries. It was nothing



Sophus Lee

but truck gardens and small farms. Its population in 1920 was 830. By 1930 it had climbed to 1,326. Yet this area to the west would one day play a vital role in the story of both Fairview and Emmaus. Today its population is 25,000.

There had been much talk of a Christian day school at Fairview over the years. Located in the city's Tenth Ward, the church sat in the midst of a declining number of small children in the neighborhood. Fourteen percent of the ward's population had been under 5 years of age in 1890. Interestingly, by 1930 only 9.4% were under five. There were no doubt other reasons, however, why the congregation did not start its own school.

Proximity to nearby Immanuel Lutheran School would have been one reason; cost may have been another. Yet a Christian Day School Society had been formed as early as 1922. In addition, three Fairview men were invited to be members of the board that governed Immanuel School of the Missouri Synod. Fairview children were urged to attend that school, and Fairview's day school society paid the full salary of one of Immanuel's teachers. But shortly after Pastor Moldstad's arrival, the congregation itself paid that salary. The society disbanded in 1932, but in ten years it had contributed \$4,311 to the operation of Immanuel Lutheran School. In a few more years payment of a teacher's salary was dropped, and the congregation resolved instead to pay the full tuition of any Fairview children who should attend Immanuel School.

The population of Minneapolis continued to increase in spite of the depression. Where it had been 464,000 in 1930, it would be up to 492,000 by 1940. Bloody local labor wars, WPA projects and the end of prohibition marked those early Thirties. And, in the last half of the decade, Minneapolis joined the rest of the world in watching with growing apprehension the European stage – setting for World War II.

Foreign-born whites made up 18% of the population in the immediate neighborhood of Fairview in 1930. Back in the old Zion neighborhood, especially on three sides of Fairview Park, foreign-born whites were almost a fourth of the citizenry. But in the vicinity of Fairview Church, a declining number of neighbors, now less than 4% in 1930,

had been born in Norway.

Transitions were going on outstate in the thirties, too, and they affected all of Minneapolis. Small towns were withering as more rural people moved to urban areas. While city populations grew, the number of towns in Minnesota decreased by 145 in the quarter-century after 1930. Some of this, of course, was due to annexation of suburban villages and townships as cities expanded.

Lutheran churches of all synods claimed just over 37% of Minnesota church members in 1936. Twenty years later the Lutheran share, statewide, had increased to 41%. A count in 1938 showed 290 Protestant churches in Minneapolis, 27 Catholic churches and 10 Jewish synagogues.



Christian Moldstad

In late 1936, while the city was still in the throes of the depression, Pastor Moldstad was called to teach languages and religion at Bethany College. His final service at Fairview was conducted August 1, 1937. Four Sundays later his successor, Hans A. Theiste, was installed. At the end of 1937 Fairview listed 365 souls and 265 communicants. During the year fifty services had been conducted in Norwegian, seventy-five in English. The congregation's total contributions were just under \$6,000, and the church-parsonage property was valued at \$35,000.

Christian Moldstad was installed in his new call by ELS President Henry Ingebritson at the college's opening service in Mankato in September. A

quiet, unassuming man who had been baptized in infancy by the esteemed Rev. H. A. Preus, Moldstad had been a minister in Boston for twenty years prior to his service at Fairview. Father of three daughters and a son, he served on the Bethany faculty until his retirement at age sixty-four in 1946. He spent the remainder of his life at Brewster, Mass., where he ministered to a small group that met regularly for services in his home. His work led to the formation and acceptance into ELS membership (1973) of Trinity Lutheran Congregation, Brewster. Christian Moldstad died at Plymouth, Mass., February 24, 1972, at the age of 89.

Just two weeks after Theiste's installation at Fairview, Emmaus Congregation made a move of great consequence. In September the congregation, for \$700, bought two lots at 40th and Thomas, about 2 ½ blocks from the little

chapel-parsonage. Fifteen months later, December 11, 1938, a new church building, “designed in Gothic style architecture with stucco exterior,” was dedicated with three special services. With appropriate maternal concern, Fairview Congregation donated the new altar and pulpit. The Penn Avenue Ladies Aid Society was no longer active, but one can guess at the satisfaction of its former members still living on Emmaus’ dedication day.

Twelve years had gone by since Emmaus’ little house-chapel had been purchased. Now it would be remodeled into a full parsonage for Pastor Lee and his family. At the end of those years of struggle, when the new church was dedicated, the voting membership of Emmaus was sixteen. Five teachers taught Sunday School classes, the choir had twelve singers, and sixteen women made up the Ladies Aid Society. The congregation listed 116 baptized and 91 communicant members at the end of 1938.

Pastor Hans Theiste, meanwhile, born in Africa but educated in Norway and the United States, had come to Fairview from St. Luke’s congregation, Chicago, then of the ELS. He would serve Fairview through the years of World War II and until 1957. He, as Moldstad before him, could preach in the Norwegian language. In 1952, when Fairview had a baptized membership of 545, Pastor Theiste still conducted sixteen Norwegian services. Average attendance at each of those services was only twelve. Those sixteen services were half of the thirty-three Norwegian services conducted in the entire ELS that year. Total synod-wide attendance at the thirty-three services was less than 500. The ascendancy of the English language in the churches founded by the immigrants was virtually complete! Today the use of Norwegian in the ELS survives in a single festival service held at the synod’s annual convention. Attendance at that one service varies from fifty to seventy-five.

When the government published its 1940 census figures, it reported that 193,000 Minnesotans were still using the Norwegian language rather than English in their homes. A third of them lived in cities! And 32,000, or one-sixth of the total, were, as the census put it, “native-born of native-born,” or third generation people. Just one more decade, however, reduced this segment of people to almost nothing.

If the twenties were the prosperity year and the thirties the poverty years, then the forties were the war years. War industries and wartime paychecks drew people to large cities. In an interview in *The Redwood Gazette* (Redwood Falls, Minnesota, March 3, 1949), reporting his pending retirement, Rev. Christian Anderson commented on the large number of people from his rural Belview-Rock Dell parish that had migrated to larger cities during and after the war. The reporter stated that Anderson “estimates there are enough former members of his (Belview) pastorates living in Minneapolis today to form a small parish.” The city-dwelling population of Minnesota, set at 1,100,000 in 1940, went up another 125,000 before 1950. And when America was plunged into the war in 1941, the people of Emmaus and Fairview joined their fellow-citizens in that war effort-both at workbenches and in uniform. 🍁



Hans Theiste

CONTRIBUTIONS OF OLE TORGERSON LEE

1858-1918

Luthersk Tidende

In the spring of 1918, the remnant of the old Norwegian Synod, which had disappeared in the merger of June 1917, was planning to reorganize the synod at Lime Creek congregation near Lake Mills, Iowa, in June. While they were looking forward to that, two of their clergymen, one retired and the other active, were abruptly called to their eternal rest. On March 22, J. A. Møller (born in 1845 in Norway) died at the age of 73. He had served a widely scattered parish in Buffalo, County, Wisconsin, along the Mississippi River. He had identified with the minority, but had been too ill to be active.

The other was younger at age 60, and still active in the ministry. He was Ole Torgerson Lee, born in Koshkonong, Wisconsin, where he had been baptized by A.C. Preus, one of the organizers of the Norwegian pastors. Beginning in 1889, he had served another scattered parish around Northwood, Iowa. O. T. Lee was father of Pastor Sophus Lee, who is appears in another article in this issue of Oak Leaves.

Lee was a regular contributor during the first year *Luthersk Tidende* was published with Bjug Harstad as editor, and C. N. Petersen managing the publication. During that first year, Lee was serving also as treasurer of the synod, even before its formal organization. Lee's contributions, which began in the inaugural issue in July 1917, were short pieces, but very direct and to the point. Some of these short articles capture the mind-set of this remnant of the old synod, just coming out of their bitter disappointment in the merger and the way it was managed. In this issue, we offer several of Lee's short articles which certainly show the mindset of those who would meet in 1918 to reorganize the synod. No one will be surprised to find that most of the articles have to do with *Opgjør* and "The Merger." The articles have been translated by the editor.

ETT

We will begin with his last contribution:

April 1, 1918

Is it right to tempt people to sin?

Everyone would answer "no" to that, as emphatically as possible. But what would it mean that one works on pastors in order to get them to join the new synod where they in § 1 [*Opgjør* or *The Madison Agreement*] should accept a doctrine that is not taught in the Holy Scripture? A conscientious pastor will accept only that doctrine which God has revealed in the word. Any other doctrine cannot be accepted. He will sin if he accepts a man-made doctrine alongside of a doctrine of God's word. But now that is exactly what has come to pass – that presidents and congregations work to get pastors to accept a doctrine they know is not taught in God's word, and which it would be sin for them to accept.

O. T. Lee

[Note from the editor of *Luthersk Tidende*]

The above was written a few days before Pastor Lee died, and it is, so far as we know, the last he wrote with his own hand. It is thus his last word to us and it is in full agreement with what he had long written and worked for. It is a short, but clear and

earnest admonition to recognize and hold fast to the truth revealed in God's word. And it is an earnest warning against distortion or compromise to lead people away from the teaching of God's word. Let us all take this dear brother's last admonition to heart. — Editor

July 16, 1917

What is the minority's position now?

Several pastors, professors, and laymen in the Norwegian Synod have had concerns with *Opgjør* ever since it saw the light of day. Because of some confusion, which was



1913

Ole Torgerson Lee

resolved by a number of questions and answers in 1912, there were only a few who voted against *Opgjør*. But a year later, several came to see that it was untenable in this question and answer and 106 voted against *Opgjør*. A year later this number climbed to 160. Two years later, at the meeting in Minneapolis, 206 pastors, professors, and laymen declared that they could not go along with the merger on the present basis. These men demanded that three points in *Opgjør* had to be changed before they could go into the new church. This was for many a matter of conscience.

Meantime a meeting was arranged with Dr. J. N. Kildahl and L. W. Boe on the one side and pastor I. B. Torrison and Prof. C. K. Preus on the other with the result that a proposal was sent to the union committee. This proposal was to correct the three points in *Opgjør* to which there had been objections from the minority side.

The Joint Committee answered "that it considers itself, for certain reasons unable to accept the procedure proposed aforementioned document," namely to make the corrections mentioned. *Opgjør* must remain unchanged, especially for legal reasons. But the committee recommended to the annual meetings that the minority be invited to join the new church with the understanding that the minority would be permitted to stand on its abridged and corrected *Opgjør*. And in order to remove every impression were corrections made in *Opgjør* as the basis for the union, the following comment was added: "It goes without saying that the above-mentioned decision must not be interpreted as meaning that *Opgjør*, as the basis for union between the three conferring bodies is being abridged or changed." But then, despite these clear statements that there could still be those who held to the corrected and abridged *Opgjør*, they had printed in the *Union Documents and Proposals for the Annual Meetings* which was distributed to all the members of the annual meeting these words: "For comparison *Opgjør* is appended here as it reads in its entirety and in the form

in which it is the basis for the union between the three conferring bodies."

These are clear and distinct words. Everyone can understand them.

But what became of those of them who last year demanded that three things had to be corrected in *Opgjør* before they could go with the merger? They received the invitation to be included in the new body with the understanding that they were not bound to the three points which they demanded should be corrected, but they could go in with this corrected and abridged *Opgjør*. Many were satisfied with this and went into the new church body.

Several of us could not participate on this sort of basis. We had to stand outside. It is not advisable for one to act against his convictions. It is our intention to testify to the truth that the Lord has revealed to us. And our prayer to God is that he will guide and direct us, and that everything may be for the honor of his honor and the church's true benefit.

O.T.Lee

July 16, 1917

Ought we hold fast to the Confessions' doctrine of election as the only right teaching of God's revelation?

The remnant who now stand on the Synod's old principles answer with an unconditional "yes." This is what now separates us from the newly formed Norwegian Lutheran Church in American, which has *Opgjør* as its basis for union. In paragraph 1 of *Opgjør* namely a second doctrine of election is set beside the [Lutheran] confessions' doctrine. The confessions' doctrine is the right one. It is the doctrine of God's word. It is this precious truth that it is now our intention to contend and fight for.

This doctrine of the Confessions is exceedingly comforting. No other doctrine than the doctrine of God's word can bring comfort to the heart hungering for grace.

Let us just follow the train of thought in the third article



First Shell Rock - New After the Merger

of the creed – how the Holy Spirit leads me through the whole order of salvation, and remember that everything the Holy Spirit does in time he has willed in eternity. Here we have the comforting doctrine as God has revealed it in the word and which our fathers in a masterly way have set forth in the eleventh article of the Formula of Concord. We need no human doctrines to supplement the eleventh article. It is complete and sufficient.

Let us fight mightily for the glorious doctrine that our fathers have handed down to us. Let us hand it to our children so that it can be preserved for future generations.

O. T. Lee

September 1, 1917

Sad Phenomenon

How have our church people been confirmed in the truth since the birth of *Opgjør*? The Norwegian Synod's position on the second form (election *intuitu fidei* [in view of faith]) has always been this: it is not the doctrine of Scripture and the Confessions. The Synod has never recognized that form of the doctrine, but only tolerated it in weak brethren in the faith.

What is the position now? Do they insist on the Synod's position that the second form is neither scriptural nor confessional? No. It has been my sad experience that many who were before perceived as synod people now openly accept the second form and defend it as the doctrine of God's word and the Lutheran Confessions. When I have cited the words of Koren's *Accounting [Redegjorels]* about the second form of the doctrine it has been regarded as an attack on the new Norwegian Lutheran Church. They have thus not gone forward in the knowledge of the truth since *Opgjør* first saw the light of day, but astray. To uphold and defend a doctrine not revealed in the Holy Scriptures is dangerous. Experience has taught us that the false doctrine of "in view of" in election leads to the teaching that there is something one can and should do for his conversion. For it is this, what man does or does not do, God will take into account and justify him. The pharisees recounted in the Gospel lesson for the 11th Sunday after Trinity [Luke 18:9-14], stands as a negative example.

O. T. Lee

Oct 15. 1917

Is this to be the result of the merger?

When I came to this congregation twenty-eight years ago,

the question of secret societies was under discussion. Pastor H. J. Strand had cleaned it up in this place, and they thought that I should continue what my predecessor had begun. I did. And there were many cases in the Northwood congregation at the time where church discipline in the third degree [excommunication] was carried out against a member who in spite of the admonition would not abandon the lodge.

Down through the years I have witnessed against secret societies. I have especially emphasized that they deny Christ, and that it would not do for a Christian to be equally yoked together with unbelievers.

The Northwood congregation has recently united with Trinity congregation belonging to the United Church. This congregation has many lodge members in its midst. It became a question about which of these two congregations should prevail. The congregation which in its life-time has heard the truth proclaimed surrendered. There was no paragraph against admitting lodge members in the new congregation's constitution. The door stands wide open for members of secret societies.

Now it can happen that the member who has been taught that the Mason denies Christ in his lodge-religion may kneel beside a Mason at the Lord's table.

Does this confess Christ? No. No one can confess Christ in this way.

Those who go to the Lord's Supper knowing that they go with Christ-deniers deny Christ. If the merger will have such consequences, the world wins; where churches merge, it seems, it isn't long before they look foolish.

O. T. Lee

December 15, 1917

To our friends, who will stand fast on the Synod's old doctrine and practice:

There are a number of people who could not go along with the merger last summer. It is their desire to stand fast on the old order of things. Some met [at the Aberdeen Hotel] during the annual meeting in St. Paul, Minnesota and were agreed to contend for the truth which they confessed to be right. In order to hold together, it was decided to publish *Luthersk Tidende*.

The undersigned was elected to handle the financial side of the cause. Many individuals have responded to a notice I sent out some time ago with contributions from \$1 to \$50. But it seems to me that there are congregations,

majority or minority, who ought to make contributions to the Synod treasury so that all those who sympathize with the cause can participate by contributing their share.

To those who have sent in their contributions, I would like to say: consider yourself elected to collect for the synod treasury. We need contributions, if possible, from all who sympathize with what we are working for – to keep the paper going. If I knew that all contributors wanted to have their names published, I could acknowledge the contribution in *Lutherske Tidende*. But without being given that authority, I dare not do it. We feel sure that the friends of this cause will make sure to keep the paper going. The paper should be enlarged, but we dare not do so yet.

O. T. Lee

January 15, 1918

Who is at Fault when God's Church is Split?

At the time of Christ, there was a split in the church. But it was not Christ's fault that the church was divided. Christ was the truth and he could not preach anything other than the truth. It was impossible that he would be at fault in the sundering of the church. No one will say that the apostles were at fault in dividing the church. The apostles were held firm by the revealed word. Those who departed from the word caused the split in the church.

When Luther appeared, there was a split in the church, but no Lutheran would lay the fault on Luther for dividing the church. Luther came with the eternal gospel. The many who rejected this gospel caused the division.

There is a split in God's church today. Who is to blame for this wretchedness? We let the Book of Concord answer this question. In the first paragraph of the article on election, we read: "Nevertheless this article has become the occasion of very serious controversies at other places and has involved our people also. Nor have our theologians always used the same terms. Therefore in order by God's grace to prevent, as far as we can, disunity and schism in this article among our posterity, we have determined to set forth our explanation of this article in this document so that all men may know what we teach, believe, and confess in this article" [Tappert, p.16]. The 11th article in the Formula of Concord is written precisely in order to prevent disunity and division. Those who firmly hold to this article and do not waver from it, work for peace and unity. Those who waver from this article become guilty of disunity and division in God's church.

It is certainly well known that the little flock that did not go along with the merger contended for standing fast on the Confessions' doctrine of election and not wavering from it. This is not causing division in the church, but is preserving it on God's word and the basis of the Confessions.

O. T. Lee

February 1, 1918

Who is a Lutheran?

The answer to this question is simple and straight-forward. Whoever holds to the Lutheran church's confessional writings is a Lutheran. This applies to all the doctrines of the Christian faith. If one wants to know if someone is a Lutheran in the doctrine of justification, ask him if he holds and confesses himself to the doctrine as it is set forth in the Confessions. If he confesses the Confessions' teaching, then he is a Lutheran. If he differs from the Confessions' doctrine or holds another doctrine than that of the Confessions he is not a Lutheran in that article.

This applies also to the doctrine of election. Whoever holds to the doctrine set forth in the Lutheran church's confessional writings is a Lutheran. Whoever does not accept the doctrine of the Confessions, but chooses another doctrine than that of the Confessions, he is not in this article a Lutheran.

In paragraph 1 in *Opgjør* it is clear that it is not satisfied with the Lutheran church's teaching on election as it is presented in the 11th article of the Formula of Concord, but they set the confession's doctrine beside one which is alien to Scripture, a mere human speculations. There is still a group among the Norwegians who earnestly desire to remain Lutheran also in this doctrine. They have demanded that paragraph 1 in *Opgjør* be stricken. At one point, they signed a petition to the Synod that three things in *Opgjør* had to be changed before they could go along with the union, and they meant what they said. And they believe it still. No one has the right to place human teach side by side with the teaching of God's word. We are satisfied with the teaching of God's as it is presented in the Confessions. We honor God by believing his words. We will confess this faith to our fellow men. We will be Lutherans who believe the Bible in all of its parts.

O T. Lee

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

ELS Historical Society

Name: _____

Address: _____

Send completed form and check (see right for type of membership and correct amount) to:

ELS Historical Society
6 Browns Court
Mankato, MN 56001

MEMBERSHIP

All membership renewals are due June 1st

Voting Membership:

\$10/year: individual

\$15/year: husband & wife

Associate Membership:

\$15/year: individual

\$25/year: institutional

\$5/year: student

Lifetime Membership: \$200

March 15, 1918

A Proposal

To the pastors and congregations who intend to stand fast on the Norwegian Synod's old doctrine and practice:

We expect pastors from both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts to attend the synod meeting that is to be held this summer – they will also include some whose lack the funds to afford such a trip.

We ought to have a fund that could help them. I will call it the Home Mission fund.

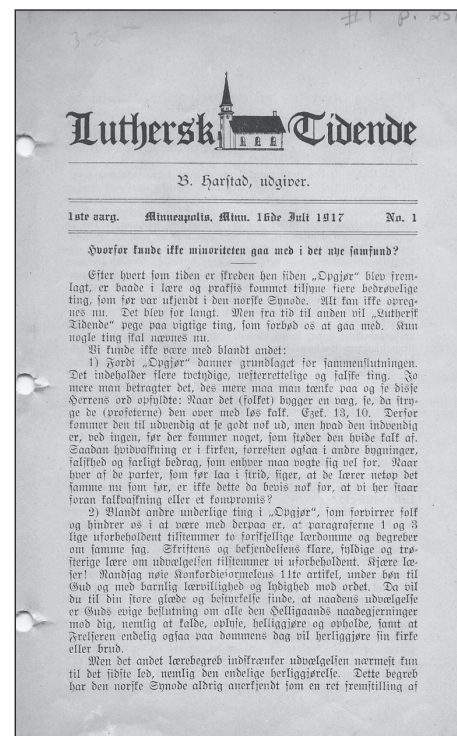
My recommendation would be this: that they designate the confirmations offerings to the Norwegian Synod's Home Mission fund as most congregations have been accustomed to doing. There is no treasurer for such a fund, but I shall take it upon myself to function as such until one is appointed.

At the synod meeting, a committee can be appointed to make the necessary distribution. It should be remembered that this is a separate fund from the Synod fund, which supports *Luthersk Tidende*. This fund must not be forgotten.

From the 1918 Synod Report:

The following resolution was adopted by rising: The synod holds Pastor O. T. Lee in thankful memory for

his steadfast and faithful work as treasurer and also for holding fast and promoting the truth among us. 🍁



Annual Meeting

Evangelical Lutheran Synod Historical Society

“From Austin to Aberdeen”

Sunday, June 18
Ylvisaker Fine Arts Center
Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato

- 3:00 Synod Sunday service
- 4:15 Synod Sunday dinner).
- 5:00 Registration
- 6:00 Program in the Lee Theater
From Austin to Aberdeen
A readers theater
- 7:30 Society Business meeting
Followed by refreshments and social time