



The Seminarium

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HAPPY SPRING

"The mole had been working very hard all the morning, spring-cleaning his little home. First with brooms, then with dusters; then on ladders and steps and chairs, with a brush and a pail of whitewash; till he had dust in his throat and eyes, and splashes of whitewash all over his black fur, and an aching back and weary arms. Spring was moving in the air above and in the earth below and around him, penetrating even his dark and lowly house with its spirit of divine discontent and longing. It was small wonder, then, that he suddenly flung down his brush on the floor, said, 'Bother!' and 'Oh blow!' and also 'Hang spring cleaning!' and bolted out of the house without even waiting to put on his coat. Something up above was calling him imperviously, and he made for the steep little tunnel which answered in his case to the graveled carriage drive owned by animals whose residences are nearer to the sun and air. So he scraped and scratched and scabbled and scrooged, and then he scrooged again and scabbled and scratched and scraped working busily with his little paws and muttering to himself, 'Up we go! Up we go!' till at last, POP! his snout came out in the sunlight, and he found himself rolling in the warm grass of a great meadow."

'This is fine!' he said to himself. 'This is better than whitewashing!' The sunshine struck hot on his fur, soft breezes caressed his heated brow, and after the seclusion of the cellarage he had lived in so long the carol of happy birds fell on his dulled hearing almost like a shout. Jumping off all his four legs at once, in the joy of living and the delight of spring without its cleaning, he pursued his way across the meadow till he reached the hedge on the farther side."

from The Wind in the Willows
by Kenneth Grahame

For spring it is my hope that we all take the time, not for spring cleaning, but for spring celebrating... to delight in the beauty of God's creation, a bright sapphire sky, tangerine rays of sunshine, lilted languid breezes; in His grace and love - through gifts of the Spirit, the joy of friends who care and knowing each one of us is a child of God. Spring is always within us, but sometimes it's sleeping lost in cold winter dreams. Now it is time to awake and arise to the new birth of life once again, and to celebrate "Spring leaping up day!!!"

Beth Johnson

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Dear Editors:

In response to NEWS OF THE LCA - 'Roots': Laudable Ethic/Deplorable Religion by John Hazel, in March 8ths issue of The Seminarian:

In his condemnation of Roots, I believe Dr. William Lazareth has merely presented an issue in black-and-white terms (both literally and figuratively), while, ironically, meeting to plan "ways to make the LCA more racially inclusive." Why must one choose between the roots of Kinte and the fruits of Christ? Is this what is taught in Lutheran mission churches in Africa? Of course not! Lazareth's apparent fears of an estrangement between Blacks and Christianity stem from a complete misunderstanding of what Black pride is all about. As a member of the Seminary community, I found this article insulting and embarrassing; I hope that readers will not interpret Dr. Lazareth's remarks as representative of either The Seminarian or LTSP.

Respectfully yours,
Liz Hardy

Dear Liz:

Thank you very much for this letter - it's good to see members of this community use the paper to express their discontentment (or contentment) with articles that appear in it.. Hopefully, Dr. Lazareth's remarks will not be seen as representative of this paper or community, but it was interesting enough to share with the community. Please note that John Hazel was not the author of that article - he simply edited the copy I gave him of the NEWS OF THE LCA. Again, I thank John for writing the article and you for taking the time to write a response.

Your editors,
Pete and Ruth

CHAPLAINS CORNER

March 26-30 will be Black Expression Week and several chapel services will reflect this important event in the life of our community.

On Monday March 26th there will be a Black Expression Hymn Sing during 5 PM worship. Monday is the celebration of the Annunciation of Our Lord.

The Reverend John Zoppi will be the celebrant at the 9:40 AM service of Holy Communion on Tuesday the 27th. Bruce Davis will be the preacher.

There will be no morning service on Wednesday the 28th. At 7:30 PM we will join with Ascension for our regular Wednesday evening Lenten service.

A special service for Black Expression will be held at 7:00 PM on Thursday March 29th (the day we remember Hans Nielsen Hauge, renewer of the church). The preacher will be Ms Gwendolyn King, intern at University-Incarnation Lutheran Church. Members of the Black Expression Week Committee will serve as liturgists.

Margaret Krych

UNION 7301

Presents Dr. Foster McCurley in a series of lectures on Lutheranism. Tonight in the Tappert Room at 7:30 PM
COME AND ENJOY THE FELLOWSHIP AND REFRESHMENTS!!!

Christianity and Marxism

Marxism and Christianity share one common goal -- the liberation of humanity. Apart from this, and even here the nature of this liberation is differently conceived, the two are so antithetical as to be mutually exclusive. It is impossible to be both a Marxist and a Christian without watering down either the one or the other to the point of rendering it meaningless.

Arguments about the young Marx and the old Marx notwithstanding, the basic features of Marx's conception of human nature are straightforward. According to Marx's theory of historical materialism human nature and human history are determined by the dialectical interplay of the internal conflicts which inhabit a society's mode of production. Essentially, the conflicts arise between the technological forces which undergird a society's economic system and the relationships between the different strata of persons who work within that system. When the conflicts become sufficiently acute the result is an upheaval which leads to a new set of economic relationships. According to Marx, there have been four major historical eras, of which capitalism is the most recent. But capitalism is doomed, by the contradictions embedded in its own set of economic structures, to collapse and give way to communism. Communism is the teleological end, the utopia toward which all of history has been moving and in which it culminates and thus in a sense it represents the end of history.

For Marx, everything about a society and the people in it is determined by the configuration of its economic substructure. Everything in society from religion to legal structures is determined by economic forces. Marx's analysis of society is not without its descriptive merits but as an ideological stance it is incompatible with Christian truth. First, it denies original sin. Because everything in society is determined by material conditions human intentionality is a meaningless concept. Evil is something which results from mechanisms outside human control rather than being intrinsic to human reality. Marx's naivete about human evil is reflected in his utopianism; with the advent of communism evil will give way to unadulterated communal bliss. Second, for reasons which have been elaborated and need no further explanation, Marxism denies human freedom. Third, Marxism quite obviously repudiates the notion of a divine sovereign ruling human affairs. In Marx's scheme of things economic structures are omnipotent and neither personal nor historical human existence possesses any meaning apart from these structures. There is no room for a transcendent deity.

The incompatibility of Marxism and Christianity is perhaps most starkly evidenced by their divergent conceptions of salvation. For Marxism, salvation is the product of processes which are immanent within history but salvation itself is not historically immanent. The salvific event, the collapse of capitalism and emergence of communism, represents the obliteration of history and the annulment of historical existence. The salvation process is impersonal and mechanical and is in no way connected with the historical destiny of the individual. For Christianity, salvation consists of a personal relationship between God and the individual. Salvation is initiated and unfolds in history and thus it embraces and transforms the personal and historical destinies of those whom God calls into fellowship with Himself.

The yearning to escape history usually reflects the desire to escape finitude and the relational mode of existence which accompanies finite existence. Marxism envisions a liberation from finitude while

Christianity looks toward the liberation of the self for genuine self-hood under God within the realm of the finite and tangible. God's saving act in Jesus Christ does not remove us from history; rather it directs us back toward history, back toward our fellow humans with whom we live out our historical existence. Despite all of the humanistic constructions which have been put on Marxism, as an ideology it is in the final analysis anti-relational. In neither side of the kingdom of communism do we find an appreciation for the kind of historical existence in which people come to an understanding of their own destiny in dialogue with God and their fellow human beings. It is precisely this historical existence which forms, for Christianity, the arena for our becoming "a new creation."

Galen Tinder

BRAKING FOR ELVES

by Alison Lurie

Media surveys of contemporary fads and cults always leave one out-- although it is widespread today here and in Europe, attracts many more followers than Synanon or Krishna Consciousness, and has been around longer than Sun Myung Moon. I refer, naturally, to the obsession with fairies, elves, gnomes, hobbits, and the like which is now so common and sells so many books, posters, calendars, and T-shirts. Like other cults it attracts mainly young people, often the most privileged and best educated among them: in a recent survey of 350 undergraduates at Brown University, for instance, nearly a hundred declared that they believed in hobbits, while only forty claimed to believe in angels.

It will be objected, of course that the Brown students were kidding, making a fashionable joke; that none of them is anywhere near as deeply involved as the Moonies or Hari Krishnas, or the unfortunate followers of Mr. Jim Jones. Though they may spraypaint FRODO LIVES on public buildings, or paste bumper stickers reading I BRAKE FOR ELVES on their VW's, you will say, they do not "really believe" in such beings.

In a sense this is quite true. For most of its adherents outside of a small lunatic fringe present-day pixolatry is not a separatist cult but a conventional, even an establishment, religion in which the members only go through the forms, experiencing in the process a shallow warm glow of good feeling rather than the deep hot tremors of true faith. The college student who owns the complete Authorized Version of Tolkien together with the relevant study guides and concordances, and attends regular meetings of the Fantasy and Sci Fi Club may be no more (and no less) committed than his or her politely agnostic parents, who keep their Bible next to The New York Times Cookbook and attend church or temple only on holidays or for weddings and funerals. In both cases, what matters is not inner conviction but outward observance, which identifies the follower of Frodo or God socially and culturally. (This is not of course to claim that the content of a belief system is unimportant. As John Updike says in his latest novel, The Coup, "What matters in a myth, a belief, is... Does it enable us to live, to keep going?... the crucial question isn't Can you prove it? but Does it give us a handle on the reality that otherwise would overwhelm us?")

Submitted by Dave Wartluft

Credits: Editors-Peter Breitsch, Ruth Hankins, Production Manager-Asha George, Typists-Galen Tinder, Tom Irwin, Ruth Hankins, Peter Breitsch, Collators- Asha George, Galen Tinder, Tom Walters, John Hazel, and Ray Miller. Thanx.

THE JOHANNINE LITERATURE

Rummaging through an attic in Patmos, we came across this document, simply entitled "Undated Letter to the Middle Class."

"Well known to every American is the extent to which our Chief Executive is culpable for ~~sham~~ shamush of our everyday malaise. The President is responsible for the greed in the corporate board room, not to mention the collectivist greed known as the labor movement. He is guilty of ~~for~~ fostering upon our consumer preferences tastes which run toward the biggest, fastest, and most expensive, and our penchant for labor-saving devices to save us the aggravation of opening our cans, brushing our teeth, drying our hair, and opening our garage doors is directly predicated by 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. We can accuse the president of setting our thermostats above 70 degrees, and running our air conditioners when it is 60 degrees outside. And we all know that he is responsible for the American love affair with the car, that macho extension of our libidinous, impetuous neo-childhoods. Blame the White House for all of these things; since it is to the Chief Executive that we look for solutions, therein must lie the ultimate cause of our sad economy and domestic affairs.

"For we do not live in a democracy; ours is a republic, and we elect those who will legislate and take the responsibility for how things are run and get done. We are free to pursue the good life and leave the responsibility to Washington. We didn't become the strongest country on this beautiful earth just to make sacrifices! Weekend trips to the beach are an inalienable right. We deserve all of the oil and gas we can get our hands on to insure that the standard of living does not decline. If that fool in the White House doesn't start doing something about those bas...

It was at this point that a coffee stain or something obscured the remainder. How old the letter was, I can not say. But the idea of responsibility is often missed in our participatory system. It does not simply mean that we show up at the polls periodically, but we make careful choices about all that we do in our lives as if they affect someone else - because they do! Americans could use an education in political responsibility as well as the concept of "blessings" to realize that we have been given to us, lest we boast. To hear any President defiled because he can't control inflation or energy is appalling in its insensitivity and myopia. Have a good week!

Auf Wiederschreiben
Johann

This anonymous letter appeared in a church newsletter in the summer of 1976. It was submitted to us by Ann Larson. Dedicated to LBW.

In unison we rise and stand
and wish that we were sitting.
We listen to the music start
and wish that it were quitting.
We pass our hymnal to a guest
or fake a smoker's cough.
We drop our pencils, lose our gloves,
or take our glasses off.
We move our lips to keep in style.
emitting awkward bleats.
And when the last "Amen is sung,
sink gladly in our seats.
Oh Lord, who hears our every prayer
and saves us from our foes.
Deliver now thy little flock
from hymns nobody knows.

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FATHER JOHN'S CONFESSIONS
(and traveling road show)

WHY IS IT?

- Why is it; Kids can put toys into the tub but can't get them ba&k out again?
- ; little boys jump downstairs?
 - ; kids only learn 2/3 of any song?
 - ; if there's an exception to any rule kids will find it?
 - ; a young child learning to feed himself will always use a spoon upside down?
 - ; when he has to wash it, a child's face only extends from nose to chin. Likewise his hands have only one side?
 - ; kids never take the top cookie?(obviously they figured out that we put the broccoli flavored ones on top).
 - ; coats are too big when you buy them, but too small when you get them out the following year?(all growth in children occurs in the off season.)
 - ; the only time kids pay any attention to you is when you're doing or saying something you don't want them to know?
 - ; the only toy a child wants is the one he can't have?
 - ; kids never do anything clever when you have an article to write?

"Father". John

BROTHERS BOB

Six Bobs recently went on choir tour and took along a few other singers for back-up. The choir was marvellously directed by Bob Bornemann and musical instruments were well played by Bob Ashburn and Bob Shuster, in addition to the back-up group, who also played. Fine tenor voices came from Bob Shuster and Bob Stott and the sopranos were led by a Bob, while the other two sections held their own. The finest piece of the concert was entitled "I'll Never Turn Back No More" which was written by Bob N. Dett. Members of the choir tour, which will be a trip to the midwest, beginning in Ohio, then on to Michigan, at the Chicago Seminary, and finally ending up in northern Minn. The Michigan concert, which will take place in Muskegan, will be directed by Bob Ashburn, while Bob Bornemann figures out how to get out of the locked basement.

MATCHING

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Bob Ashburn | 8. Don Myrom |
| 2. Bob Bornemann | 9. Dave and Mary Rowe |
| 3. Mike Cobler | 10. Gerry Sanders |
| 4. Linda Featherholder | 11. Chris Sass |
| 5. Asha George | 12. Kent Smith |
| 6. John Hazel | 13. Bob Stott |
| 7. Deb Economy | 14. Glenn Zorb |
- a. made singing debut with choir
b. Prodigal Sonc. sleeps with cats
d. had a rub-down at Burger King
e. always lets the woman open the car door
f. Motherg. received a call
h. sleeps with dogs
i. hot lips
j. take sulfur showers
k. chews gum
l. gives talks about the Chicago Seminary
m. had an encounter with exploding candy
n. does creative things with newspapers.

Hagan Prison, Cell 203
18 March 1979
The Eve of St. Joseph

Timothy (Lull), called in the mystery of these times to be chairman of the Worship and Community Life Committee

To the Saints of God in Philadelphia

Grace and peace to you ... (etc.)

I thank God when I think of the fellowship you have with one another and how you seek out every opportunity to engage in mutual conversation and consultation, even as you refrain from castigation and denigration for the sake of peace and in recognition of these times. And I have rejoiced, and rejoiced again, and yet rejoiced a third time at the enthusiasm with which you have been coming together each Thursday at the Fourth hour (10 AM - more or less) to share coffee and donuts one with another.

But now, since we are nearer to the end of the semester than we were when we first began such eating and drinking (not to be confused with other eating and drinking of an altogether different sort which usually takes place among you on Tuesday before the fourth hour - rather than, or in addition to, the common Thanksgiving on the Lord's Day), our sister Faith, for whom the churches in Macedonia and everywhere give thanks and under whose authority you and I both labor, bids me seek from you any clarification, any common opinion, any spirit of wisdom concerning your desire to continue this practice which the Gentiles call "Coffee Hour!" but which we know as a foretaste of the feast to come.

And yet there are those among you who will earnestly desire to give your "feedback" - or should I say, more properly, your prophecy and your interpretation regarding this matter and yet will find it hard your way to my cell, where I am perplexed but not driven to despair. So I am imploring you to make your requests and your preferences known, if not to me, then to those others who labor with me to determine the destiny of this "coffee hour." So when you greet your sisters Faith (Burgess), Margaret (Krych), Elizabeth (Johnson, not the mother of the Baptist), Cheryl (Meinshein), and your brothers Robert (Bornemann), Robert (Hughes), David (Wartluft), James (Bowers, servant of the servants, etc.), Paul (Myers, not in chains, nor outside the walls), Kevin (Ogilvie), or Mark (Oldenburg, who did not desert us when the going got tough), let your requests be made known to them, and they will bring your greetings and your opinions when they come together in not many days. We know from the writings of the Aposle that there is not much wisdom among us, but we hope, with your encouragement and assistance to be able to settle this little matter.

I write, not with my own hand, but by machine, that you may know that this letter is authentic. Peace be with you.

Discussion Questions:

- 1- To what does the writer compare coffee hour?
- 2- Is Thursday the day for this gathering? Can you give practical and/or theological reasons for this?
- 3- Do you like donuts? Does the writer? Who should send ahead to purchase them? Who should prepare the room?
- 4- Is Hagan Prision a better place for coffee hour than the refectory?

PROPOSED STATE HEALTH PLAN PUBLIC MEETINGS

A draft of Pennsylvania's first State Health Plan will be discussed at nine separate public meetings. The draft Plan provides a basis for determining and addressing some of the state's key health needs.

It is important that meetings be well attended by as many concerned people as possible, so their concerns and suggestions can be considered in the development of a State Health Plan. The meeting will be held between March 27, 1979 and April 17, 1979. In Philadelphia, the meeting is on March 30, 1979 at the Holiday Inn Ball Room, 18th and Market Sts. It begins at 3:30 and runs through 6:30. If you plan to attend please contact Plan Development Committee, Pennsylvania Department of Health, Health and Welfare Committee Building - Room 1030, P.O. Box 90, Harrisburg, PA 17120 or call 1-800-692-7254. Further information will be posted on the bulliten board in Hagan Center.

A CHRISTIAN ART SHOW

will be held
Saturday and Sunday, June 2&3, 1979
at

GLEN FOERD
Lutheran Center for Education & Arts
5001 Grant Ave. and State Road
Philadelphia, PA

Paintings, graphics, and sculptures on biblical and liturgical themes will be exhibited from noon to 6 PM. on the broad porches and the lawn of Glen Foerd, a Victorian-style mansion on the banks of the Delaware River. The former home of the Foerderer family now serves as a conference center for church and community groups. All are invited to submit work! For further details contact Richard Bergman, Director of Christian Art Show, Glen Foerd, 5001 Grant Street, Philadelphia, PA 19114.

SPECIAL NOTICE

The United Methodist Group is proud to announce that its membership has tripled since the beginning of the semester. They are now looking for a faculty advisor. All you closet papists better watch out - the grape juice may be coming your way!!!

THE SEMINARIAN
7301 Germantown Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19119

FIRST CLASS