

8-1-1947

## Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches

J. T. Mueller

*Concordia Seminary, St. Louis*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Mueller, J. T. (1947) "Theological Observer. - Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 18, Article 53.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol18/iss1/53>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact [seitzw@csl.edu](mailto:seitzw@csl.edu).

---

## Theological Observer

---

**The Christian Message and the Radio.**—In the *Sunday School Times* (April 19, 1947) Ernest Gordon writes: "To all who are interested in preaching the Gospel over the air, the poll of Mutual Broadcasting to determine the most popular personalities in New York City will come as a surprise. That Archbishop Spellman should have premier place is not strange when one considers the immense size of the Catholic constituency. Neither is it remarkable that Mrs. Roosevelt should be second when one considers that she has been in the public eye during three national administrations. But that the pastor of Calvary Baptist Church should be designated as number three is indeed unprecedented. Dr. William Ward Ayer is known to New York masses only as a modest and faithful preacher of Christ and the Gospel of Christ over the air. He has no outside reputation. This great Catholic and Jewish city, in acclaiming him as New York's third personality, is apparently paying a tribute to the Gospel and to nothing else. That ought to encourage every evangelical speaker over the air with the greatness of his opportunity. It is noticeable that Dr. Fosdick, who has had a thousandfold more advertisement, came in as number ten. In between were Mayors La Guardia and O'Dwyer and Mr. John D. Rockefeller." This means that those who preach the Gospel of Christ still have an interested and devoted audience, as no doubt scores of our pastors will attest who use the radio to spread the message of salvation. J. T. M.

**Preaching and the "New Life Movement."**—The *Presbyterian* (April 26, 1947) reports a "New Life Movement" in Presbyterian churches which "implies not only an increase in communicants, but a deepening of the spiritual lives of our present members." A "blue-print" for the "new life" is suggested by a lay writer who, among other things, proposes the "use of the spiritual resources at our command." This idea is expanded in an article which emphasizes the place of preaching in the New Life Movement, and here the writer has much to say that might be heeded by all preachers. He says (quoted in very small part): "During the first quarter of the century doctrinal preaching fell into disrepute. The preaching of doctrine carried with it the thought of dryness and a strict allegiance to fundamentals, and this in turn was interpreted as being the necessary offspring of a hidebound fundamentalism. There must come a new conception of doctrinal preaching. In every crisis a great need of the human soul presents itself. In the event of national or global catastrophes the need may be for comfort or for authority or for something strong to which one can hold. In more localized conditions the need may be for assurance of God's providential care or for a knowledge of the life hereafter. It may even be for a knowledge of how another would meet triumphantly the same problems we face. Any minister can sit down



and quickly list ten great and pressing needs of the hour which perplex his congregation. And for each need the Christian Church has the answer. Some doctrine of the Church presents the key to the situation. For each need which we list there is some great doctrine of the Christian Church that has relevancy. Such great themes place unusual demands upon the preacher. His theology must be clear without being technical. Any great truth which 'God imparts to human hearts' can be expressed in words that a child in the fifth grade of school can comprehend. It can also be expressed in such a manner as to appear of utmost concern to every hearer because of its pertinence to the problems of the hour. There is nothing worn-out or old-fashioned about doctrinal preaching. Nothing can be more in keeping with the established aims of the New Life Movement than sermons designed to lead people into decisions for Christian living, coupled always with the additional design of Christian nurture. The doctrinal emphasis in preaching is the foundational support of Protestantism's full-scale program of evangelism." The undersigned does not find himself in full agreement with the projected Presbyterian New Life Movement, for it has features which are at once artificial and visionary. But there is a new life movement that appears wherever the Word of God is being preached with proper application to the needs of those who come to hear the divine Word. This new life movement may not be revolutionary or sensational, but it is present nevertheless, just because Christ's words are spirit and life. Toward the realization of this divine new life movement every Christian church should work, and this, first and last, through the preaching of doctrinal sermons. The emphasis which the writer places on doctrinal preaching is indeed timely and important.

J. T. M.

**The Trend Towards Paganism in America.**— Under this heading, *America* (April 26, 1947) reports some startling facts that give food for thought. The article is written by a priest who is well acquainted with religious conditions in Maine, and what he says amounts briefly to this, that Protestantism in Maine is dying out, while Romanism there is increasing. In 1850 Maine was only a frontier mission of the Roman Church, a part of the diocese of Boston, with only seven priests. But after the Civil War the growth of Catholicism in Maine was remarkable. In 1926 the Roman Church numbered 173,893 and in 1945, 201,979 members. Today the State is nearly twenty-five per cent Roman Catholic. But the story of Protestantism is the reverse. Formerly Maine was a bulwark of Protestant evangelism, but now the decline in Protestant church membership is quite obvious. In 1926 the Baptists counted 32,031 members, in 1936 only 30,637. During the same time the Methodists decreased from 22,938 to 19,724 and the Congregationalists (to mention only a few) from 23,612 to 22,458. These statistics are official and therefore all the more significant. In 1935 the Maine State Planning Board reported that 482 of the 1,042



church buildings in rural Maine had been abandoned and, besides, that in the rural sections, where the majority of the Protestants lived, only one out of every seven was affiliated with a church. In the entire State, rural and urban, there were 95,652 families without any church connection, a relatively large number for this comparatively sparsely settled State. While religious conditions in rural Maine may be somewhat worse than elsewhere, reports from other States indicate that the problem of the Church in rural communities is acute throughout our country. There certainly is no need for letting the rural communities in the United States become churchless and pagan. The Church must seek to find new ways to win these thousands of erring souls for Christ and salvation.

J. T. M.

**The Calling of Pastors.** — "Should we, and can we, change our method of calling pastors, probably after the episcopal system?" So the *Lutheran Herald* asks in a series of articles on this important subject. The writer points out that our present system is connected with many and serious disadvantages which require close study, such as long vacancies, visiting committees snooping for efficient pastors, trial sermons, lobbying, too-long pastorates, middle-aged pastors who are no longer wanted in their parishes yet cannot be transferred, too many calls to secure a new pastor, powerless officials, and the like. The case is well presented, and no doubt everyone will agree that these disadvantages exist. So the essayist suggests for study a possible change in the method of calling. Of course, democracy must be retained, as also the divinity of the call must be respected. But he believes that a change of system might remedy the numerous evils connected with our present system of calling and placing pastors. He suggests a modified episcopal system, with proper limitation of the bishop's term of office so that he is subject to re-election. Or the authority of placing pastors might be given to the general president and the district presidents jointly, with responsibility for the entire Church. Or again, the calling of pastors might be delegated to a special synodical commission created for that very purpose, either by election or by the president's appointment, each district being represented. The writer adds: "Whichever of the suggested plans might be used, those responsible should act in consultation and co-operation with a committee from the local church concerned. These plans are based on the New Testament practice of appointing and sending pastors. All of the plans permit an overall view of all fields and all men, enabling the choosing and assigning of the best adapted men for particular fields." The matter broached in the article is certainly worth considering. But we wonder whether the suggested changes really mean remedies. We still believe that our present system is in complete agreement with Scripture and the high prerogatives of the congregations and that whatever disadvantages exist are due, not to the system itself, but to the imperfections and faults which inhere in individual



Christians and in entire congregations. Does not the remedy of the accidental ills lie simply in the proper application of the principle of Christian love? As said before, the whole question is worthy of close study by both pastors and congregations.

J. T. M.

**A Review of "The Abiding Word."**—The *Kirchenblatt* of the American Lutheran Church (May 3, 1947) contains a review of *The Abiding Word* which in many respects is very fair and favorable. The reviewer recommends it as an important work deserving careful study and serious examination. But the review contains also the following critical paragraph: "Klar und scharf stellt das Buch aber auch die alten Missourischen Sonderlehren wieder ans Licht. Sie haben ein Jahrhundert lang in der rigoroesten Weise kirchentrennend gewirkt. Doch ist es hier nicht der Ort, auf diese Differenzlehren naeher einzugehen. Sie wurden ja schon genugsam von den Tagen unserer Vaeter an bis in die unmittelbare Gegenwart in Streitschriften, Thesen und Gegenthesen, auf intersynodalen Konferenzen und in gemeinsamen Komiteesitzungen in dem 'Statement,' der 'Declaration,' der 'Doctrinal Affirmation' und in synodalen 'Resolutionen' behandelt. 'The Abiding Word' will keine neue Streitschrift, noch weniger eine zuenftige Dogmatik sein, sondern der erste Band eines Jubilaeuums-werkes. In diesem Band wird die Lehre dargestellt, die in der Missourisynode Geltung hatte und weiterhin haben soll." The paragraph thus sets forth a number of incriminations: 1. The book contains the old specifically Missourian doctrines; 2. These specifically Missourian doctrines in a very rigorous way effected factions in the Church, they being divisive of church fellowship ("kirchentrennend"); 3. They have been refuted in controversial writings, theses, and antitheses at intersynodical conferences and sessions of special committees; 4. More especially, they were treated in "A Brief Statement," the "Declaration," the "Doctrinal Affirmation" and synodical resolutions; 5. The book does not mean to be a polemic, nor a partisan dogmatic, but it does mean to set forth the doctrines which were taught in the Missouri Synod in the past and which the Missouri Synod purposes to teach also in the future. Point 5 is not really an accusation, but rather a true statement for which the book itself is responsible. But what we cannot understand is why the reviewer should speak of "Missourische Sonderlehren," when the very doctrines taught in the book have been adopted by the American Lutheran Church both in its Declaration and its Doctrinal Affirmation. The doctrines inculcated in *The Abiding Word* have not been repudiated in "A Brief Statement." Moreover, we believe that the doctrines expounded in the work are fully Scriptural and therefore not divisive of church fellowship. Or do men in the American Lutheran Church really believe this? To us the review seems exceedingly misleading and unfair and not at all conducive toward effecting a better understanding between the two Churches.

J. T. M.



**The Unifying Element in the World Council.** — Representatives of the ecumenical, world-wide, movement, as an expression of co-operation among all non-Catholic denominations, met at Buck Hill Falls, Pa., during the latter part of April. The International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches, meeting separately and jointly, agreed on problems of common interest in preparation for the meeting of the World Council in Amsterdam during August of 1948. The Eastern Orthodox Churches will also be represented, and hope was expressed that even the Russian Church would send representatives and participate in the work of the World Council. It is hoped that 115 to 125 denominations will constitute the World Council next year. During the past forty years steps toward such a World Alliance of Churches have been in the making. The two wars accentuated the desire of many church leaders both in the Anglican Church and in the Federal Council to organize an association in which an external unity can be achieved. At present the unifying element seems to be the principle of co-operative service to mankind and to establish an organ whereby they may jointly profess and witness their common faith. While some church leaders fear that the World Council may ultimately become a superchurch, the Provisional Committee in its recent meeting insists that "the Christian unity for which the Council stands is of a different order. It strives after a unity in which Christians and Christian churches, joyously aware of their oneness in Jesus Christ, their Lord, and pursuing an ever strong realization and expression of that oneness, shall in times of need give help and comfort to one another, and at all times inspire and exhort one another to live worthily of their common membership in the body of Christ."

Unfortunately, however, many of the leaders interpret the Lordship of Jesus Christ in terms of modern religious liberalism. Both in the Anglican Church and in the Federal Council there is no unanimity concerning the meaning of the preamble of the World Council, according to which those churches are invited to membership who accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. The ecumenical movement is at present sweeping untold Christians into the broad stream which will ultimately lead to complete doctrinal indifference. The axiom that there is strength in unity ignores completely the fact that the strength and power to convert the hearts of men lies in the Word of God, and there alone.

Among the 55 recommendations dealing with arrangements for the Amsterdam meeting the following are of interest:

1. That the presidents and the general secretary be given authority to invite a few individual Roman Catholics to attend the assembly as observers.

2. That the United Nations, the International Labor Organization, the International Refugee Organization, and UNESCO be invited to send one observer each to the assembly.



3. That the Youth Department committee be asked to arrange for a youth delegation of from 50 to 100 persons who may attend as auditors.

4. That provisions be made for about 600 accredited visitors, to be admitted by ticket, and that the churches of each area be authorized to accredit a number of visitors equal to the number of delegates plus one third.

5. That a service of worship for all delegates be arranged each day from 9—9:30 A. M., the several services being planned according to the various practices of different communions; and that a brief and simple period of prayer be provided at 6 o'clock each evening.

6. That a number of world-wide bodies be invited to send one fraternal delegate each to the assembly "in a consultative capacity."

7. That English, French, and German be the official languages of the assembly; that the presiding officers have discretion to allow the use of other languages if any speakers so desire; that the staff be instructed to provide for interpreters; and that the main addresses be submitted in manuscript and written translations be prepared in advance.

F. E. M.

**Blasphemy in Music.**—Under this heading Professor Richard T. Gore of the College of Wooster offers some sound advice on the propriety of certain forms of so-called church music. We quote in part: "Churchgoers would think it strange if the minister read, instead of his sermon, a sprightly article from *Esquire* or Thomas Carew's 'A Rapture.' Yet they tolerate Sunday after Sunday, music just as ill suited to the service. Go where you will, to the village church or the great metropolitan cathedral, you cannot escape the fact that most of the music used in our worship services is little better than blasphemy. The organists play pieces either transcribed literally from secular sources or written in imitation of them. The congregational hymns in widest use recall the rhythms of the beer garden and the dance pavilion. Some of them are, in fact, lifted bodily from concert pieces and operas—for example, 'My Jesus, as thou wilt' from Weber's *Der Freischuetz*."

"The implications in the assumption that church music should not recall the music of the secular world are farther flung than most people imagine, and rather tangled. While it is fairly easy to demonstrate the just condemnation of a hymn tune that resembles a piece from a comic opera (Sullivan's 'St. Theresa') or a waltz (Marsh's 'Martyr'), it is not so easy when we come to works like Gounod's *The Redemption* and Dubois' *The Seven Last Words*. To understand why these works are, in the strict sense, blasphemous, we must know the world of romantic French opera that gave them birth.

"What is the sense, then, of the sounds in Gounod's *Faust*? The operagoer can hum the melodies, tell you the story; but the



composer's most important message has eluded him, couched as it was in the foreign language of music. It has eluded him unless he senses the wealth of voluptuousness in the melodic lines, in the rhythms, and in the orchestration, which eloquently discourses on all the phenomena of earthly love. Voluptuousness—that is the sum of *Faust*. It was in *Faust's* nature. It was in Gounod's nature, too; he could not escape it. In opera it is fine; in the church it has no place. Listen to *The Redemption*, however! Or to *The Seven Last Words* of Gounod's spiritual disciple, Dubois! The suave melodies are the same, the suggestive rhythms are the same, the osculatory orchestration is the same. Only the words are different. You can't make sacred music out of operatic by using sacred words any more than you can transform cabbage into broccoli by pouring hollandaise sauce on it.

"We need not go so far afield, however, to find the quintessence of blasphemy. It is nowhere clearer than in the gorgeous melody Gounod fitted as, of all things, an 'Ave Maria' to Bach's chaste 'Prelude in C!' James Huneker spoke anathema on this for all time when he called it 'the Bach-Gounod "Ave Maria," with its slimy echoes of the brothel.'

"What then is good church music? It is first of all that music whose text is set simply in a musical style that does not recall anything in secular music. Of this sort the unaccompanied Gregorian chants and the pure vocal polyphony of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are the finest examples. Second, it is music in which the secular elements have been assimilated and purged of their worldly connotations. The cantatas, Passions, and organ works of Bach are the finest examples in this category. With such noble works to serve as criteria it is relatively easy to judge the suitability of all music, new and old, for use in the worship service.

"But people will have to learn to think in musical terms; they will have to learn to distinguish the sense as well as the sound. When they do, pieces like the popular setting of 'The Lord's Prayer,' a ballad as voluptuous as anything in *Faust*, will cease to be best-sellers, organists will cease to play as voluntaries pieces that would do very well as background for Hollywood erotica, church musicians will devote their time and talent to the performing of true sacred music, and our worship services will be transformed from meaningless mockeries to exalting religious experiences as we translate into action the ancient invitation, 'O sing unto the Lord a new song!'" (*Christian Century*, June 11, 1947.) F. E. M.

"Preview of a Divided America."—Under this heading Harold E. Fey reports in detail on the clash between Protestants and Romanists in the public school affair at North College Hill, a suburb of Cincinnati. The school board of North College Hill has at present three Catholic and two Protestant laymen. The board took into the public school system a Catholic parochial school and entered into a contract for the payment of rental fees to the Catholic



Church and the salaries to nuns as teachers. The superintendent of the school refused to permit the majority members of the board to look into his files concerning the qualifications of applicants for teaching positions, and as a result his contract was not to be renewed after its expiration on July 31 of this year on the grounds of insubordination. High school students and pupils of an elementary school went on a strike, and 29 of the 33 teachers resigned because the board would not re-engage the superintendent. The National Education Association threatened to blacklist the schools, and the board countered by threatening to ask the court to compel the students to attend. In a public meeting of the board and the citizens a member of the majority group was attacked physically, and the meeting came near to ending in violence. In spite of the pleas of parents and teachers the majority members of the board refused to yield on their decision concerning the superintendent. The *Presbyterian* reports in detail the controversy by publishing the statement issued by the Presbytery of Cincinnati. It seems that Rome is using North College Hill as a spearhead to a plan to gain control of, and to rule for their own advantage, the free public schools of America. According to reports the Roman Catholic Church has undertaken a colonization program, since a large number of Protestants have felt constrained to leave this Cincinnati suburb. Real estate prices have suffered a severe loss, as high as 25 per cent, and Roman Catholics are being enabled to come into the community at a relatively large rate. The Catholic school population is said to have increased 10 per cent, while the Protestant majority has been seriously whittled down. We are indeed alarmed over the flagrant way in which Rome is attempting to force its interpretation of the First Amendment of our Constitution in its own interests. Eternal vigilance must remain the price of liberty.

F. E. M.

**The World Council of Churches.** — In two very simple, but helpful editorials the *Lutheran Herald* of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Norwegian) places before its readers the important matter of the organization and work of the World Council of Churches, which in 1948 will hold its first official and general meeting in Amsterdam, Holland. Since the matter deserves study also by our Church, a few of the items given in the *Lutheran Herald* are herewith brought to the attention of our readers. For more detailed information the *Lutheran Herald* refers its readers to a valuable source book, *Toward a United Church*, by William Adams Brown. (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 264 pages. \$2.50.) The World Council of Churches is the outgrowth of a number of movements to bring about a greater degree of understanding among the various Christian groups (exclusive of the Roman Catholics, who refused to join) on a world-wide basis. Four such movements are discussed by Dr. W. A. Brown. One is the ecumenical missionary movement, which culminated in the formation of the International Missionary Council in 1921. The



oldest of the movements is that which deals with *youth work*, including the World's Y. M. C. A., organized in 1878; the World's Y. W. C. A., organized in 1894; and the World's Student Christian Federation, organized in 1895. The immediate antecedents of the World Council of Churches are the *Faith and Order Movement*, dealing with doctrinal agreements and differences, and the *Life and Work Movement*, dealing with the sphere of Christian activity, both movements being ecumenical in scope. The recognition of the fact that there are among these movements many common interests and various areas of duplication and overlapping led to the decision, in 1937, to attempt to amalgamate them in a general ecumenical body to be called the World Council of Churches. A so-called Provisional Committee was set up, which met in Utrecht in 1938, with a mandate to lay the groundwork for the Council. Because the Second World War made the completion of the organization impossible, the Council has been operating on a temporary and provisional basis since then. Final steps to organize on a permanent basis will be taken at the general meeting to be held in Holland in the late summer of 1948 (August 22 to September 5). The first article of the proposed constitution states that the "World Council of Churches is a fellowship of Churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior." This constitutes the "doctrinal basis" of the Council, and is similar to the doctrinal basis of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, which acknowledges the "essential oneness of the Christian Churches of America in Jesus Christ as their divine Lord and Savior." The second article, on *Membership*, states that such Churches as express agreement with the doctrinal basis are eligible to membership. Membership, of course, is by *Churches* only. The third article lists six functions of the Council, namely (1) To carry on the work of the two world movements, for Faith and Order, and for Life and Work; (2) to facilitate common action by the Churches; (3) to promote co-operation in study; (4) to promote the growth of ecumenical consciousness in the members of all the Churches; (5) to establish relations with denominational federations of world-wide scope and with other ecumenical movements; (6) to call world conferences. The fourth article, on *Authority*, says: "The World Council shall not legislate for the Churches, nor shall it act for them in any matter except as indicated above or as may hereafter be specified by the constituent Churches." The fifth and sixth articles, on *Organization*, provide that the Council shall discharge its functions through (1) an assembly, (2) a central committee, and (3) commissions. The assembly, with a membership of not more than 450, meeting every five years, is the principal authority. Its membership consists of members appointed by the Churches belonging to the Council, and of these not less than one third shall be lay representatives. The following is the provisional allocation of assembly seats: 85, representing the Orthodox Churches; 110, representing the Churches of the Continent of Europe; 60, representing the Churches of



Great Britain and Eire; 90, representing the Churches of the United States and Canada; 50, representing the Churches of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific Islands; 25, representing the Churches of South Africa, Australia, and areas not otherwise represented; not more than 30, representing minority churches, not granted adequate representation by the provisions just mentioned. Of the Lutheran bodies making up the National Lutheran Council four either are members or have indicated their desire to become members. These are the United Lutheran Church, the Augustana Synod, the American Lutheran Church, and the Danish Ev. Luth. Church. The Lutheran Free Church, the United Ev. Luth. Church, and the Evangelical Church have deferred action. The first two of these three meet in the immediate future and will no doubt take action. The Evangelical Lutheran Church will take action in 1948. The writer had no information as to the action of the Suomi Synod, the remaining National Lutheran Council body. The writer remarks, to complete the picture: "The Synodical Conference, comprising one third of the American Lutheran strength, has made no move toward seeking membership. It may be taken for granted that all the Lutherans of Germany, except the so-called 'Free Churches,' are, or will be, in the Council." The task of the meeting of the Council at Amsterdam is analyzed by the *Christian Century*, under the heading "Preview of Amsterdam" as follows: "First, the assembly must decide what kind of council the new creation is to be. The assembly is the sovereign body. It has, and claims, no authority other than the constituent churches repose in it. Since this is the first meeting, it will have to pass some judgments on the past and define purpose for the future. The assembly must, second, devise and adopt a constitution, by-laws, standing orders, and so on, which make its decisions effective. The third task of the assembly will be to receive the fruits of the studies undertaken for it." As a result of preliminary discussions, there was adopted last summer the overall theme, 'Man's Disorder and God's Design,' covering four outstanding issues before the Churches, namely (1) the question as to what is the place of the Church in God's design; (2) the problem of evangelization; (3) the responsibility of the Church for the life of society; (4) the Church's responsibility in international affairs; (5) the task to provide an opportunity for the constituent churches themselves to raise issues which are not on the agenda. We shall not at this time analyze the nature, objective, and program of the World Council of Churches. Suffice it to state that, like the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, it is (1) Reformed in its background, outlook, and purpose; (2) unionistic and unionizing in its ecumenical endeavor; (3) liberal in its doctrinal position; (4) unwieldy and ineffective in its organization of heterogeneous elements; and (5) detrimental to Christian confessionalism, since in its welter of doctrinal and ecclesiastical incongruity there can be no distinctive doctrinal confession beyond the rather pale and meaningless phrase that the Council



accepts our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior, which, of course, any member of the federation may construe as it cares to. How confessing Lutherans can influence this new body for good, or whether they will be tolerated in it or not, or whether or not they may co-operate with it in some externals, are questions that cannot as yet be answered. Dr. Brown's book *Toward a United Church* well characterizes the tendency of the Council as one looking for more than mere externals. J. T. M.

**Brief Items from Religious News Service.**—Catholic editors, in their annual meeting at St. Paul, discussed the Federal aid to Catholic schools and the appointment of Myron Taylor to the Vatican. The Catholic editors were told to make clear the meaning of the separation of Church and State and that they must keep repeating the simple truth that separation of Church and State does not appear in the First Amendment. The purpose of the First Amendment was to establish the equality of all religions before American law. The editors were urged to present the following "four simple truths" regarding the confusion of issues involved in Federal aid to Catholic schools: (1) "That every Catholic child is an American citizen and as such is entitled to the benefits of American welfare legislation. (2) That every parent in the country—Catholic or non-Catholic—has a right to choose the school where his child is to be educated. (3) That the original and authentic American school was and is the school where morality and belief in God are inculcated along with the principles of science and art. (4) That the so-called 'secularist' school must end, by sheer logic, in the positive profession of atheism."

The American Lutheran Church has joined the World Council of Churches. Membership in the World Council now totals 106 church bodies in 37 countries, including the United Lutheran Church, the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Augustana Synod.

Luther leagues of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the South Dakota District are sponsoring the purchase of an airplane, costing about \$3,000, for use in a recently established "air parish" on the northwestern part of the State. The Rev. Norvel Hegland of Miles City, Mont., has accepted the call to be the "flying parson" of the west country. He will be, in fact, an old-fashioned circuit rider with a thoroughly modern type of transportation.

Dr. Ralph H. Long, executive director of the National Lutheran Council in New York, predicted a new era of fellowship and co-operation among Lutheran Churches will be launched through the Lutheran World Federation when the international church agency is reorganized at Lund, Sweden, June 30 to July 6. Dr. Long will be a keynote speaker at the assembly, at which delegates from twenty-eight countries will be present. His address will be on "The Place of the Lutheran World Federation in the World Today."



It is difficult to follow the editors' arguments for retaining Myron Taylor as the American representative at the Vatican. The argument is as follows: "This Papal sovereignty is, in fact, the very best guarantee for the genuine separation of Church and State, since the spiritual and religious competence of the Holy See is by its very nature different from the political and economic competence of the modern state. Only a totalitarian state will want either to liquidate the religious competence of the Church or absorb it as a part of its political competence. A democratic state, by its nature, limits its competence to political and economic efforts to achieve the temporal common good of its people. It does not claim jurisdiction over consciences. It leaves the responsibility for the salvation of souls to the Church."

Italian Catholics were warned against joining the Young Men's Christian Association in a statement by Ildefonso Cardinal Schuster, archbishop of Milan. "Although professing ecumenism," Cardinal Schuster declared, "the Y. M. C. A. has a Protestant character. Therefore, in Italy, where the majority is Catholic, it creates an atmosphere of serious danger for the population's faith."

Declaring the only requirement for Christian fellowship should be faith in Jesus Christ, the National Council of Northern Baptist Men, in its annual report to the Northern Baptist Convention in Atlantic City, N. J., urged that on all other matters complete freedom of Biblical interpretation should be recognized and should never be permitted to cause division. As a result the convention reaffirmed the stand taken at last year's meeting in Grand Rapids and again refused to make any creedal statement "as a test of fellowship and service."

Plans for a new modern translation of the Bible were approved in a resolution adopted in London by the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland at its annual meeting in Belfast ruled that Irish Presbyterian clergymen on active duty must not in the future accept any paid public appointment without the consent of their presbytery and of the General Assembly's business committee. Thomas Wilson, a prominent layman, told the Assembly that "the minister's job is in the church, not in the legislature."

Both divorces and marriages in Reno showed a steady decline up to May 1, but both increased during May. The total number of divorces granted in Las Vegas up to June 1 is over 900 fewer than for the corresponding figure last year. The trend in Nevada generally forecasts the trend of the country.

John Jeter Hurt, Jr., member of the staff of the Associated Press in the Atlanta bureau, was elected editor of the *Christian Index*, oldest Baptist newspaper in the South, at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Georgia Baptist convention held in Macon, Ga.



The General Synod of the Reformed Church in America voted unanimously at its annual meeting held in Holland, Mich., to remain a member of the Federal Council of Churches for another year. It was stipulated, however, that the affiliation be maintained with the purpose of "getting the Council to take positions doctrinally more consonant with Biblical Christianity."

Channing H. Tobias, former senior Y. M. C. A. secretary and now director of the Phelps-Stokes Fund, and the Most Rev. Bernard J. Sheil, Roman Catholic Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago, were honored at the ordination and commencement exercises of the Jewish Institute of Religion in New York. Both received the degree of Doctor of Hebrew Letters.

Dr. John W. Beardslee, Jr., professor of Greek at New Brunswick, N. J., Theological Seminary, was elected president of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America at the annual meeting in Holland, Mich.

All business at three sessions of the annual meeting of the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, held in Holland, Mich., was suspended to devote the sessions to a program of evangelism under the direction of Dr. Jacob Prins of Grand Rapids, minister of evangelism. The 250 delegates attended five different, simultaneous conferences on various phases of evangelism. They were under the leadership of Dr. Ernest R. Palen of New York for preaching evangelism; Dr. G. T. Van der Lugt of Pella, Iowa, education; the Rev. Edward Tamis, Kalamazoo, Mich., home; the Rev. Jacob Blaauw, South Holland, Ill., lay; and the Rev. Arnold Dykhuisen, Marion, N. Y., rural-village evangelism.

Dr. J. Hutchison Cockburn, director of the Department of Reconstruction and Inter-Church Aid of the World Council of Churches, announced in Geneva that he will shortly draw up a "five year plan" for religious reconstruction in Europe.

Forty Negro boys and girls of crowded Roxbury district in Boston will have vacations in the homes of white families in a church-sponsored effort to promote interracial understanding. Massachusetts is one of ten States which this summer will put into practice the idea, an outgrowth of the "Vermont Plan," inaugurated three years ago by the Rev. A. Ritchie Low, minister of the United Church, of Johnson, Vt.

The education subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare has approved by a 6 to 1 vote a measure providing Federal aid to education. The measure, granting \$300,000,000 in aid, provides for a minimum Federal allotment to each State of \$5.00 per child between the ages of five and 17. Expenditure of the funds is left entirely to decision of the States except that those States which maintain separate educational facilities for a minority racial group are required to apportion the Federal funds in a direct population ratio.