

Concordia Theological Monthly

Volume 28

Article 52

9-1-1957

Theological Observer

John Theodore 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, John Theodore (1957) "Theological Observer," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 28, Article 52.
Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol28/iss1/52>

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.

THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

DO WE NEED A SPACE CHRISTOLOGY?

A writer puts this question in the *Anglican Theological Review* (April 1957) in connection with Dr. W. N. Pittenger's article "Christianity and the Man on Mars," which appeared in the *Christian Century* (June 20, 1956). He believes that the problem cannot be dismissed as unreal, though it is quite hypothetical, since earth-men, because of their limitation in life span alone, will never invade the universe very far. But the conception of life on other planets raises the question: "Can Jesus Christ have more than an earthly significance?" Again: "What has God done to redeem the sentient beings of his other planets or do they need redemption like the human race?" Pittenger, the writer thinks, offers a solution to the problem by saying that the Jesus of history is undoubtedly the incarnation of the Eternal Son, or Word, for the planet earth. He quotes Mrs. Hamilton King's well-known lines: "God may have other Words for other worlds, but for *this* world the Word of God is Christ." The article contains the following noteworthy paragraph: "The Jesus of history is a *given*. The nineteenth-century skepticism concerning his historicity is no longer taken seriously. The 'Christ-myth' has become itself a myth. Jesus will not lose his existence either in history or in immortality, no matter how much his place in this cosmic plan may puzzle theologians. His very spiritual excellence alone guarantees him attention. Moreover, as the Neo-Orthodox have been emphasizing, some kind of Christology seems necessary to a sure knowledge of God and his purposes. One may reasonably wonder if the assurances of Christianity could be maintained with a unitarian theology. Christians have always felt that that which they encountered in Christ was absolute."

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

St. Louis, Mo.—Two Missouri Roman Catholic dioceses less than a year old are taking the first steps toward setting up seminaries to prepare native sons for the priesthood. The dioceses of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, in South Missouri, and Jefferson City, in the central part of the state, plan to open pretraining programs on the high school level for prospective seminarians next September.

Washington, D. C.—Establishment of a school for diplomatic service by a church-related university represents a recognition that international relations must be based on the Moral Law, President Eisenhower said here. He joined in ground-breaking ceremonies for the

new Protestant-oriented school of international service at American University.

The President also accepted an honorary doctor of laws degree from American University, a Methodist school.

Mr. Eisenhower said he found it "most significant" that American University was joining "her sister institution" in the nation's capital, Jesuit-sponsored Georgetown University, in carrying on training for the diplomatic service, "because in the great foreign service of the United States we do not recognize race, color, or creed—only merit."

"Waging peace demands the best young men and women we can find to put in this effort," the President remarked.

"Just as our political organizations are really a political expression of a deeply felt religious faith," he said, "so must success in international relationships represent truth, integrity, and honesty, or it cannot long endure, even if there is a temporary benefit in expediency."

Mr. Eisenhower added he hoped that all of the students who enter the school will eventually go into Government service "to do the noblest work our country can possibly pursue, the seeking of peace based on justice and the right."

Before the President spoke, he heard Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam of Washington urge more training for Government service in Protestant educational institutions.

At present, Protestant and Roman Catholics alike who desire graduate training in foreign service in Washington can obtain it only at the Georgetown School of Foreign Service, Bishop Oxnam said.

"Since Protestants outnumber Roman Catholics two to one in the nation's population, it is proper that a school under Protestant auspices shall be established in an atmosphere of freedom that characterizes the Protestant campus," he said.

"There are some who mistakenly have sought to interpret the opening of such a school as an anti-Catholic move. This is not only false but unfortunate. Protestants pay tribute to the foresight of Father Edmund J. Walsh and those who at Georgetown University saw this need many years ago."

The bishop said Catholics and Protestants "recognize fundamental differences held in conscience."

"Protestants have never regarded the establishment of the Georgetown School of Foreign Service as anti-Protestant," he asserted. "Roman Catholics must not regard the establishment of the school of international service at American University as anti-Catholic."

Appleton, Wis.—The Northwest Synod of the United Lutheran

Church in America has reinstated the Rev. Victor K. Wrigley, who 18 months ago was tried for heresy and on five counts was convicted of doctrinal deviation. Mr. Wrigley's reinstatement was recommended by the Northwest Synod's pastoral examining committee, which had questioned the 37-year-old pastor early this year and found his statement of Christian faith without error. Delegates to the synod's annual meeting here, May 21—23, voted unanimously to accept the committee's recommendation. There was no discussion before the action was taken.

Mr. Wrigley is pastor of Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Brookfield, Wis., a suburb of Milwaukee. The 400-member congregation had refused to discharge him despite his ouster by the synod. After a trial panel of pastors had found that he had denied "the objective authority of the Holy Scriptures," he was convicted of heresy in November of 1955. Specifically, he was accused of denying the virgin birth of Jesus Christ and His physical resurrection. Dismissed by action of the synod in January 1956, he continued to serve his congregation.

Moundsville, W. Va.—Twenty-two Roman Catholic members of the Moundsville High School graduating class were barred from taking part in commencement exercises. Their principal barred them because they had refused to attend baccalaureate services in a Protestant church. They sat at the exercises as spectators. After the public ceremony, diplomas were given privately to the students by Principal L. D. Wiant in his office.

The 22, including the class valedictorian, had been forbidden by their pastor, the Very Rev. Benjamin F. Farrell of St. Francis Xavier's Church, to attend the class baccalaureate service in Simpson Methodist Church. Louis R. Potts, Marshall County school superintendent, upon hearing of the situation, declared that all students were required to attend both "the baccalaureate and the commencement services in order to receive high school diplomas and complete their educational requirements."

Father Farrell called such a requirement "a violation of the right of the free exercise of religion." A spokesman for the Wheeling Diocese said later that Catholics are forbidden to participate in non-Catholic services. "If these exercises were held in neutral ground, such as the school field house, we would voice no objection," he added.

BRIEF ITEMS FROM THE NEWS BUREAU OF THE NATIONAL LUTHERAN COUNCIL

Onamia, Minn.—Lutheran youth from America and abroad will hold a week-long conference at Onamia Lutheran Camp on Lake

Shakopee, August 4—11, to discuss common concerns in their lives as Christians. Sponsored by the Lutheran World Federation's Commission on Stewardship and Congregational Life, in co-operation with the All-Lutheran Youth Leaders' Council and in preparation for the LWF's Third Assembly at Minneapolis, August 15—25, the conference will introduce the 150 participants to the work of the federation. The non-American guests, nearly 70 in number, are coming to the United States for a special Pre-Assembly Youth Visitation from June 19 to September 4, also sponsored by the LWF Commission and the Youth Leaders' Council.

During this period they will visit Bible camps, attend leadership-training schools, live with American youth in their homes, and participate in the conference here. The overseas visitors have been selected by LWF member churches in Asia, Africa, and East and West Europe.

Main speakers at the Onamia conference will be youth directors of American and foreign Lutheran churches. Dr. Carrol Hunderlie of Minneapolis, youth director of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, will serve as dean of the camp and will also be an evening speaker.

Other speakers will include Dr. Marcus Rieke of Columbus, Ohio, youth director of the American Lutheran Church and director of Arrangements for the Pre-Assembly Youth Visitation program; Dr. Wilton Bergstrand of Minneapolis, youth director of the Augustana Lutheran Church; the Rev. William Hulme, student pastor at Wartburg College at Waverly, Iowa; and the Rev. Hans-Helmut Peters, youth leader in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hannover, Germany.

Each morning of the conference a series of youth speakers will report on youth work done in their churches in different countries. They will use the general theme "Lutheran Youth Around the World."

In the afternoon, speakers will present topics under the general theme "Our Unity in Christ's Purpose for Youth." Evening programs will center in the subject "Christ Confronts Our Time Through Our Lutheran Heritage in a World in Revolt." Discussion periods will follow each presentation.

St. Paul, Minn.—Theologians who are active in the teaching ministry of the Lutheran Church hold their first international conference on the campus of Luther Theological Seminary here, August 12—14.

The three-day session will precede the Third Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation at Minneapolis, August 15—25, and will be devoted chiefly to discussion of the assembly theme, "Christ Frees and Unites." Sponsored jointly by the LWF's Commission on Theology

and the American Lutheran Theological Professors' Conference, the international gathering will be held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the professors' conference.

One of the two main lecturers will be Dr. Walter Künneth, professor of systematic theology at the University of Erlangen in Germany, who will speak on "Theology—Its Foundation and Freedom."

Speakers who will present brief addresses include Dr. Kristen Skyds-gaard, professor at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark; Dr. Ragnar Bring, professor at Lund University, Sweden; and Dr. Paul Bretscher, professor at Concordia Theological Seminary at St. Louis, Mo. Discussion group leaders will include Dr. Ernst Kinder, professor at the University of Munich, Germany, on the subject "Theology and Holy Scriptures"; Dr. Jaroslav Pelikan, professor at the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago, on "Theology and the Confessions"; and Dr. Julius Bodensieck, professor at Wartburg Theological Seminary at Dubuque, Iowa, on "Theology and Church Order."

Named as chairmen of the conference sessions are Dr. Alvin Rogness, president of Luther Seminary at St. Paul; Dr. John Milton, professor at Luther; Dr. A. O. Fuerbringer, president of Concordia Seminary at St. Louis; and Dr. Regin Prenter, professor at the University of Aarhus, Denmark, who is chairman of the LWF's Commission on Theology.

Reports on the federation's Commissions on Theology and Liturgy will be given by Dr. Prenter, Dr. Vilmos Vajta, director of the Department of Theology, and Dr. Conrad Bergendoff, president of Augustana College at Rock Island, Ill., and a member of the Liturgy Commission.

Arrangements for the conference are being made by Dr. Taito Kantonen of Hamma Divinity School at Springfield, Ohio, and Dr. Rex Schneider, principal of Luther College at Regina, Sask., Can.

NEWS BUREAU OF THE NLC

Lutheranism in Figures

With 70,770,355 members in 150 bodies, missions, and groups in 69 countries, the Lutheran Church represents 3 per cent of the world's population of 2,400,000,000, 9.6 per cent of Christendom's 771,000,000, 20.5 per cent of the 346,000,000 non-Roman Catholic Christians, and 32.5 per cent of the world's 218,000,000 Protestants.

According to figures compiled by the Lutheran World Federation, its 57 member churches in 29 countries represent 69 per cent of the 70.8 million Lutherans throughout the world.

The total is made up as follows:

Members of the Lutheran World Federation	48,977,258
Lutheran churches and congregations outside the LWF..	5,628,097
United churches in Germany (after deduction of non-Lutheran)	16,165,000
	<u>70,770,355</u>

Following is the membership breakdown of the member churches of the LWF, other Lutheran churches, missions, and groups, German union churches with Lutheran members, and other evangelical churches in Germany:

The Member Churches of the LWF

ARGENTINA	
United Evangelical Lutheran Church	3,759
AUSTRALIA	
United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia	47,968
AUSTRIA	
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Austria	391,829
BRAZIL	
Synodical Federation, Evangelical Church of Lutheran Confession in Brazil	504,811
BRITISH GUIANA	
Evangelical Lutheran Church in British Guiana	7,000
CHILE	
German Evangelical Church in Chile	25,000
CZECHOSLOVAKIA	
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Slovakia	430,507
Silesian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession	50,000
DENMARK	
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark	4,304,000
ESTONIA (exile)	
Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church	66,000
FINLAND	
Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church	4,225,749
FRANCE	
Church of the Augsburg Confession of Alsace and Lorraine	241,000
Evangelical Lutheran Church of France	42,000
GERMANY	
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria	2,397,375
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brunswick	700,000
Evangelical Lutheran Church in the State of Hamburg	779,000
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hannover	3,770,000
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lübeck	194,085
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Mecklenburg	1,144,651
Evangelical Church of Pomerania	700,000
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saxony	4,413,699
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Schaumburg-Lippe	75,461
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Schleswig-Holstein	2,477,819
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Thuringia	1,800,000
Evangelical Church in Württemberg	2,300,000
HOLLAND	
Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Kingdom of the Netherlands	60,000

THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

697

HUNGARY	
Hungarian Evangelical Church	432,961
ICELAND	
National Church of Iceland	140,000
INDIA	
Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church	249,307
Ebenezer Evangelical Lutheran Church	32,697
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Madhya Pradesh	4,420
Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chotanagpur and Assam	200,074
Jeypore Evangelical Lutheran Church	34,410
South Andhra Lutheran Church	13,854
Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church	51,459
INDONESIA	
Batak Protestant Christian Church	667,355
ITALY	
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Italy	4,251
JAPAN	
Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church	8,388
LATVIA (exile)	
Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church	12,000
LITHUANIA (exile)	
Lithuanian Evangelical Lutheran Church	unknown
MADAGASCAR	
Malagasy Lutheran Church	205,494
NORWAY	
Church of Norway	3,155,323
POLAND	
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in Poland	220,000
SWEDEN	
Church of Sweden	7,290,112
TANGANYIKA	
Lutheran Church of Northern Tanganyika	105,647
USA and CANADA	
American Evangelical Lutheran Church	22,340
American Lutheran Church	899,078
Augustana Lutheran Church	536,886
Evangelical Lutheran Church	1,004,239
Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church (Suomi Synod)	34,193
Lutheran Free Church	72,252
United Evangelical Lutheran Church	59,832
United Lutheran Church in America	2,270,702
YUGOSLAVIA	
Evangelical Church in the People's Republics of Croatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina	11,150
Evangelical Christian Church of the Augsburg Confession in the People's Republic of Slovenia	23,242
Evangelical Church in the People's Republic of Serbia	8,540
Slovak Evangelical Christian Church of the Augsburg Confession in Yugoslavia	57,339
<i>Other Lutheran Churches, Missions, and Groups</i>	
(Churches and other groups which are in permanent relation with the LWF without holding formal membership are marked with an asterisk, thus *)	
ARGENTINA	
District of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod	17,575
German Evangelical La Plata Synod	100,000

AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, NEW GUINEA	
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia	43,919
BOLIVIA	
*The World Mission Prayer League in Bolivia	unknown
BRAZIL	
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Brazil	84,024
CARIBBEAN AREA	
ULCA (USA) Synod	6,038
CHILE	
Mission of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod	70
CHINA	
Lutheran Church of China	unknown
COLOMBIA	
*Evangelical Lutheran Church in Colombia	2,000
*Mission of the ELC and UELC, USA	1,000
COSTA RICA	
*Evangelical Lutheran congregations	100
CUBA	
Mission of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod	378
ECUADOR	
*Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ecuador	250
*World Mission Prayer League	21
EL SALVADOR	
*Evangelical Lutheran congregations	50
ETHIOPIA AND ERITREA	
*Lutheran Missions Committee of Ethiopia	20,000
FRANCE AND BELGIUM	
Lutheran Free Churches of France and Belgium	860
FRENCH EQUATORIAL AFRICA AND CAMEROUN	
Lutheran Brethren Mission	2,742
*Sudan Mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church	5,000
*Norwegian Missions	1,863
GERMANY	
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Eutin	91,000
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Oldenburg	543,000
Evangelical Lutheran (Old Lutheran) Church	40,000
Evangelical Lutheran Free Church [15,184]	unknown
Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church	21,000
Evangelical Lutheran Confessional Church in the Diaspora	5,000
GUATEMALA	
Mission of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod	263
HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF THE JORDAN	
*Evangelical Lutheran congregations	1,289
HONDURAS	
*Evangelical Lutheran congregations	50
HONG KONG	
*Hong Kong Lutheran Church	3,700
Cantonese (formerly Rhenish) Lutheran Church	2,400
Evangelical Hakka Church Mission	3,200
*Hong Kong Lutheran Missions Conference	unknown
INDIA	
*Arcot Lutheran Church	11,191
*East Jeypore Evangelical Lutheran Church	1,100
Mission of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod	26,702

THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER	609
ISRAEL	
* Lutheran congregations in Haifa and Tel Aviv	94
JAPAN	
* Evangelical Lutheran Church (USA)	480
* Japan Mission of the Lutheran Free Church of Norway	133
* Norwegian Lutheran Mission	380
* Norwegian Mission Society	191
* Suomi Synod Mission	52
Lutheran Brethren Mission	272
Mission of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod	1,131
LIBERIA	
* Evangelical Lutheran Church in Liberia	3,874
LUXEMBURG	
Protestant Church in the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg	4,400
MALAYA	
* Lutheran congregations related to Huria Kristen Batak Protestant and the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church	unknown
* ULCA Mission	unknown
MEXICO	
* German Evangelical Congregation Mexico	1,200
* Scandinavian Congregation	300
* Mission of the American Lutheran Church	858
Concordia Conference of Mexico Missouri Synod	1,000
NEW GUINEA	
* Evangelical Lutheran Church of New Guinea	150,037
Mission of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod	See <i>Australia</i>
NICARAGUA	
* Evangelical Lutheran congregations	50
NIGERIA	
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Nigeria	28,000
* Lutheran Church of Christ in the Sudan	6,000
PAKISTAN	
Pakistani Lutheran Church	1,064
PARAGUAY	
Mission of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod	394
PERU	
* Evangelical Lutheran Church of Peru	1,200
PHILIPPINES	
Lutheran Philippine Mission	1,738
RUMANIA	
Evangelical Synodal Presbyteral Church of the Augsburg Confession	35,000
Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession in the People's Republic of Rumania	180,000
SOUTH AFRICA — * Council of Churches on Lutheran Foundation in South Africa	
* 1. American Lutheran Mission	16,572
* 2. Berlin Mission Church	108,647
* 3. Evangelical Lutheran Zulu Church	21,681
* 4. Ovambokavango Evangelical Lutheran Church	90,013
* 5. Hermannsburg Mission — Natal Synod	30,395
Transvaal Synod	93,988
6. Moravian Church	20,929
* 7. Lutheran Zulu Synod	26,878
* 8. Rhenish Mission Society in South-West Africa	95,000
Hannoverian Lutheran Free Church Mission	14,506

Hermannsburg German Lutheran Synod	5,112
Church Federation for South- and South-West Africa	20,000
SOUTHERN RHODESIA	
African Evangelical Church	8,834
SWITZERLAND	
*Lutheran congregations	2,500
TAIWAN	
*Taiwan Lutheran Church	3,000
Mission of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod	846
TANGANYIKA	
*Lutheran Church of Central Tanganyika	19,072
*Evangelical Church of Buhaya	39,135
*Usambara — Tanga Lutheran Church	19,124
*Uzaramo Lutheran Church	1,800
*Evangelical Lutheran Church Ubena-Konde	57,628
*Norwegian Lutheran Mission	950
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND	
Evangelical Lutheran Church of England	550
*Lutheran Council of Great Britain	30,000
URUGUAY	
*Mission of Augustana and United Lutheran Church in America	75
Mission of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod	185
USA AND CANADA	
The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod	2,076,379
Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States	335,085
Negro Missions of the Lutheran Synodical Conference	19,000
Norwegian Synod of the American Evangelical Lutheran Church	12,823
Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church	21,253
Church of the Lutheran Brethren	4,065
Evangelical Lutheran Church, Eielsen Synod	1,575
National Evangelical Lutheran Church (Finnish)	9,110
Finnish Apostolic Lutheran Church of America	16,465
USSR	
Estonian Lutheran Church	350,000
Latvian Lutheran Church	600,000
Lithuanian Lutheran Church	unknown
VENEZUELA	
*Evangelical Lutheran Church in Venezuela	2,000
Mission of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod	unknown
<i>German Union Churches with Lutheran Membership</i>	
EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF THE UNION	
Evangelical Church in Berlin Brandenburg	4,789,000
Evangelical Church of the Province of Saxony	3,460,000
Evangelical Church in the Rhineland	3,600,000
Evangelical Church in Silesia	230,000
Evangelical Church of Westphalia	3,300,000
EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN HESSEN AND NASSAU	2,040,000
EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF KURHESSEN-WALDECK	1,085,000
EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF ANHALT	420,000
<i>Other Evangelical Churches in Germany</i>	
UNITED EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT CHURCH OF BADEN	1,140,000
UNITED PROTESTANT CHURCH OF THE PALATINATE	680,000
EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF BREMEN	430,000
CHURCH OF LIPPE	unknown