

7-1-1963

To Theodore Hoyer: A Tribute

Gilbert A. Thiele

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

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



Part of the [History of Christianity Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Thiele, Gilbert A. (1963) "To Theodore Hoyer: A Tribute," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 34, Article 40.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol34/iss1/40>

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.

To Theodore Hoyer

A Tribute

DEAR COLLEAGUE AND BROTHER:

The faculty of your school, and particularly the contributors to this *Festschrift*, extend to you warm greetings and thanks for your years of work and companionship as church historian at Concordia Seminary. Thirty-two years have passed since you were inducted into this office. During those three decades and more you have been a highly respected and universally liked professor at the school. In the church you have been sought after as a stimulating and perceptive narrator and interpreter of the history of the church. You have responded with valuable publications and interesting synodical and District essays, all of which were always permeated by a warm loyalty to our common Christian and Lutheran heritage and with a more than ordinary appreciation of the reason for and the course of the Reformation. In examining the long list of the courses which students were privileged to enjoy in your years as their professor and counselor it becomes apparent that you have indeed specialized in the 16th century. But you have not done so at the expense of the broad view and the appreciation of forces at work during those stirring times other than the religious and ecclesiastical. In other words, as every good historian must, you have always tried to tell the whole story and to tell it *in conspectu aeternitatis*, as though God Himself were looking over your shoulder as you worked and taught untiringly. If, then, in good will and humility we honor you upon your 80th birthday, which will occur on Aug. 22, 1963, we do so with profound

thankfulness for your having been here at Concordia. To have studied under or with you is to respect you. To belong to the church with you we look upon as a singular favor to all of us from the Lord of the church. In His service you stood and still stand. In His presence you will someday eternally witness the fullness of His glorious Lordship over all things, including the church. In depth and in breadth you have rendered great service, for which we thank you. May yours also be the experience of the height and the length of heaven and eternal life.

In Christ, for the seminary
and the church at large,

Affectionately

GILBERT A. THIELE

* * *

VITA

MY first opportunity to meet Prof. Theo. Hoyer was in his office at Concordia Seminary during the early summer of 1955, shortly after I joined the faculty. What he was doing at that time and how he was doing it made a lasting impression. Concordia Publishing House had assigned him the editorial work on *What Luther Says*. He was checking every single word, reference, Bible passage, in both the original and the translation of Prof. Ewald Plass. Here, at a time when he was already on modified service, Professor Hoyer was engaged in a task which characterized his career as teacher, scholar, and Lutheran theologian: a dedicated attention to the

Sacred Scriptures, to the history of the church, and to the life of one of its greatest sons.

The life of our octogenarian began in MacPherson County, Kansas, on Aug. 22, 1883. Here, the first of the eight children of Pastor and Mrs. John (Wilkening) Hoyer, he was born. The Hoyers were from Hanover — Uelzen — but trace their ancestry to Saxony. Thus even in his background an indication might be seen of the eventual career of Professor Hoyer.

After studying under his father's direction he attended St. Paul's College, Concordia, Mo., and Concordia College, Fort Wayne, Ind. He graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., in 1905. His first pastorate was in Natoma, Kans., for seven years. His next charge was Emmaus Lutheran Church in Denver, Colo., where he served for 15 years. In the early years of this century he preached in English — a pioneer. He served the Colorado Mission District as Missionary Director and as Vice-President. His parish ministry came to an end in 1927, when he joined the faculty of St. John's College, Winfield, Kans., at that time the only coeducational institution in the Missouri Synod.

In 1930 he was called to Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Since then, Professor Hoyer has been a most competent, respected, and beloved professor of church history at his own alma mater. Elsewhere in this issue contributors pay tribute to his ability. Let it be noted here that this ability was put to work also in the earning of a master of arts degree at Washington University, and that it was recognized in the granting of a D. D. degree, *honoris causa*, by the Theological Seminary of the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia in 1943.

For years classes of 100 or more students were the normal teaching load of our colleague. During these years he was responsible for almost all the history offerings.

Thus he was entrusted with the strategic task of leading all seminary students into and through the history of the people of God. He says categorically that he "always enjoyed teaching." The seminary alumni testify to this day that they always "enjoyed his teaching."

His service to the church at large, in addition to his outstanding performance as a member of the faculty in St. Louis, is indicated by the bibliography of his writings on page 394. It should also be mentioned that essays with the following titles were delivered at various District conventions:

Die Lehre von der Heiligen Dreieinigkeit

Die Seligmachende Gnade Gottes

Die Dritte Bitte

The Means of Grace and Their Practical Application

The Means of Grace (written in preparation for the Centennial of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod)

Mrs. Theodore Hoyer was, before her marriage, Pauline Aufdemberge. Professor and Mrs. Hoyer are the parents of nine living children. The oldest son died in the year 1960, but the spiritual sons of this revered and beloved teacher are innumerable. They are pastors all over the world in the service of that Lord to whom our colleague has dedicated his life. These "sons," and all others whose lives Professor Hoyer as pastor, preacher, or teacher has influenced for good, will be glad to know

that before long his *Church History* for college and seminary use and for general reading will be published. Thus monuments on library shelves and living products—students—of this man will continue to serve the church. Surely, a man could ask for no better memorial. In his own quiet and modest way, Dr. Hoyer sought to obey his Lord's injunction to serve rather than be served.

BIBLIOGRAPHIA HOYERIANA

Missionary Forward Endeavor in the Light of the Book of Acts, St. Louis: Concordia, n. d.

1934

Denisse Redivivus, CTM, V (Feb.), 87—93.

Indulgences, CTM, V (March), 242—248.

The Church Reform of Henry VIII a Product of the Renaissance, CTM, V (Nov., Dec.), 847—854, 907—922.

1935

The Beginning of the Year in the Middle Ages, CTM, VI (March), 214—216.

An Anniversary We Forgot, CTM, VI (May), 349—356.

Two New Saints, CTM, VI (May), 376 to 378.

Der Pietismus, CTM, VI (July, Nov.), 496 to 501, 816—822.

1936

Der Pietismus, CTM, VII (Jan., April, May), 6—13, 252—261, 321—328.

The Blast That Wrecked the Pope's Power, CTM, VII (Oct.), 710—713.

1939

Roma Aeterna—Semper Eadem, CTM, X (March), 209—215.

1942

Through Justification unto Sanctification, CTM, XIII (Feb.), 81—111.

The Story of the Church. St. Louis: Concordia, 1942.

1946

How Dr. Martin Luther Died, CTM, XVII (Feb.), 81—88.

1947

"The Grace of God," "Church and State," "The Papacy," in *The Abiding Word*, Vol. II. St. Louis: Concordia.

The Historical Background of the Westminster Assembly, CTM, XVIII (Aug.), 572—591.

1948

The Devotional Bible, Vol. II, with H. W. Gockel. St. Louis: Concordia.

1952

The Rise and Fall of the Schmalkaldic League: The Treaty of Passau, CTM, XXIII (June), 401—417.

1953

Ground Breaking at Concordia Historical Institute, C.H.I. *Quarterly*, XXV, 86 to 89.

Why I Am Not a Roman Catholic. St. Louis: Concordia, 1953.

1955

The Religious Peace of Augsburg, CTM, XXVI (Nov.) 820—830.

1958

Career of the Reformer: A Review, CTM, XXIX (May), 344—355.

1959

What Luther Says: A Review, CTM, XXX (March), 168—175.

See his Vita above for various unpublished essays which exist in manuscript form in his library.

G. A. T.