



THE SEMINARIAN

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Issue 2

AN OPEN LETTER TO DR. SCHMIECHEN

Dear Dr. Schmiechen,

Before I get into the real body of this letter, I must express my disappointment at the fact that I could not get this letter published in the "Communicator." I am writing this in response to your editorials presented in that publication and I believe it is imperative that such responses be published in the same medium. I was told that the "Communicator" is for announcements only; if that is the case, is it fair that your editorials appear there with no opportunity for response?

Nevertheless, I have been loyally reading your editorial statements in the "Communicator," and knowing that you understand that as individuals we all have our own perspectives on issues, I am sure you also understand that sometimes I agree with you and sometimes I do not.

I know inclusivity is of prime concern at Lancaster Seminary and that it has become a focus of particular attention her in recent weeks; the word is that LTS administration and faculty believe inclusivity is no longer the important issue it should be for us seminarians.

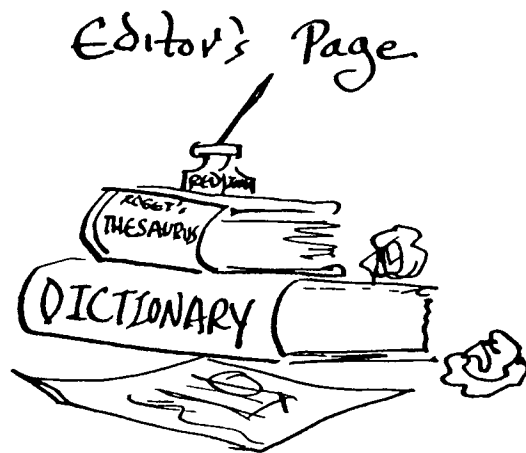
Referring to your letter, "Extending the Covenant -- Part II," I must say I agree that exclusion of women from leadership roles in the Church is a problem that must be resolved, as exclusion solely on the basis of sex is an-absolutely unfair practice.

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As I sat down to attempt to place some organized and pertinent thoughts on paper for this column, I found myself looking at the weeks and days ahead on my now unreadable calendar, anticipating what was to come. With the end of the semester rapidly coming upon us, where would I find the time necessary to do all that needs to be done? Aside from the givens - class time and course work - some other things sometimes need to have time devoted to them. Things like buying bread and milk, "kamikaze" trips to do Christmas shopping, laundry, and that God-forsaken tidbit of necessity - sleep.

In the process of juggling the hours and minutes for the days to come, I realized that I am a true student of Advent. And while I carefully plan what is to come in the days ahead, I found that I had been missing the now.

I think this is true of many of us - we wait in great anticipation of the things to come - the beginning of each semester, of seeing old friends and making new ones, of being challenged, of buying books and writing papers and taking tests, of reaching the end of the semester and receiving grades, of finishing our requirements and graduating, of getting a call to a church, of ordination and installation, of fulfilling all our hopes and dreams, of retiring.

While we are so busy pencilling items into our calendars for 1992, what happens to now?

Robert Fulghum, in his very moving piece (see page 11), tells us to "learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some." (Notice where work comes in the line up!) I think we can all learn a lesson from what Fulghum has to say.

We need to give ourselves time to do all these things; to allow ourselves time to catch up with ourselves; to allow ourselves time to be.

In this season of Advent, as we wait in anticipation of the celebration of Jesus' birth, let each be more spontaneous and react to the now. Let us each marvel in our presence of one another - after all, presence is a being in the now. It is a gift we can give to one another. It is a gift we do not have to fight the crowds for or worry about paying for it later.

May peace fill your hearts...

KATHY CORDARO

THE SEMINARIAN is the student newsletter of Lancaster Theological Seminary. Contributions and articles may be submitted to the SEMINARIAN mailbox in the basement of the Lark Building. All contributions must be signed, but will be printed "Name Withheld" upon the written request of the contributor. Anyone wishing to be a part of the SEMINARIAN staff is encouraged to contact any of the staff members.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO DR. SCHMIECHEN continued...

I further acknowledge there are denominations or groups within denominations that follow such practices; I believe that the members of those groups, individually and collectively, could stand considerable maturing in their spiritual thinking at least in that regard. Still, the point is that it is a matter of growth for more than just them. Although a supporter of equal rights for women, and knowing in my own heart that women deserved inclusion in Church leadership, I had to struggle in study and reflection to reach the limited understanding I now have of the female role in Church life. And I did not realize that language itself was such an important aspect of that issue, although I had encountered feminist arguments about language in my professional life before the seminary. It is my conclusion that while the general issue of inclusivity and the particular problem of language is one of frustration for women here at LTS, we must also realize that people who do not feel a sense of urgency over the issues, especially the language problem, should not be categorized as heartless and/or uninformed dolts. Rather, they may believe other issues take priority or they may still be struggling and growing with the issue. You say the issue itself did not just suddenly appear one day. Accepting that point, I reply that total conformity to the designs of inclusivity will not just suddenly appear one day either. I hope we remember all our own preaching of community and understand that, to whatever individual degree, we are brothers and sisters confronting the problem together.

You have suggested that this community spirit is a "given" in the LTS equation and that supporters of inclusivity intend no division in that community. That may be true, Dr. Schmiechen, but perhaps you should sit in on some discussions around this campus or even in the classrooms. The divisions exist. Sometimes it's only a matter of labeling as "sexist" someone who merely questions the principles behind inclusivity. Sometimes the differences are more serious and the pains run deeper. These only serve to create more animosity toward inclusivity and its proponents.

Now, I am not naive enough to think that an issue of this complexity and magnitude will escape emotional trials, but I do believe that many of the misunderstandings here at LTS could have been and still can be avoided with more open discussion among seminarians, faculty, and administration. I have spoken with some fellow seminarians and have found they believe likewise. For the most part, inclusive language has been thrust upon us with only sporadic references to its need, the thought behind it, and the methodologies of incorporating it into our daily and seminary lives. I commend you on your efforts to explain inclusivity in more depth in the "Communicator," but frankly I still see more of the preaching of how wonderful inclusivity is and why we should adopt its language, but little in the way of discussion on the grass-roots level of concern. These calls to jump on the bandwagon may please existing supporters of inclusive language and may even win a few disciples, but some of us still have questions about the fundamentals of the issue. And if I may continue to be candid, I should let you know that there are some seminarians who believe discussions with administration and faculty would only result in more

OPEN LETTER continued...

fruitless sermons on the subject. I do not fully agree with that opinion, but you should know it exists here, and I hope it is not the truth.

Turning specifically to your most recent letter again, I find points that relate to a major concern regarding inclusivity, that is the reasoning behind it. You say that the tendency is that exclusion of women in Church leadership and in authoritative roles in society "go hand in hand," and "which is cause and which is effect is not of interest at this point." You are wrong in your judgment of the importance of the cause-effect relationship of Church and society, and that judgment should be of major concern to both opponents and backers of inclusivity. What you are effectively saying is that it does not matter if the Church influences society or the other way around, at least on that point. The Church must always lead society if our message is to mean anything, and the question of who leads whom is never a matter that "is not of interest." The Church must never adopt or end a practice simply because it is the thing or not the thing to do in the rest of society. Still, if the Church is practicing an injustice, regardless of its effect on society, the Church must correct herself. The Church of Jesus Christ should always be our standard, and society her charge.

You rightly note that the theological question of inclusivity arises from our understanding of Scripture. You rhetorically ask if we should advocate injustices, such as slavery, because of the silence of Scripture or a literal understanding of Scripture, which you deem unwise. But your own reasoning undermines your arguments and only perpetuates misunderstanding of Scripture and minimizes the support Scripture gives to inclusivity. Part of the problem is your erratic shifting between Old and New Testament teachings and between matters of law and matters of grace. And considering your specific example of the institution of slavery, to believe that Scripture's silence is acquiescence in the sense it takes no stand on the issue is to display a gross ignorance of the heart of Scripture; granted, Scripture writers may not have called for an armed overthrow of slave masters, but following the teachings of Jesus on love and respect for all people, with full purpose of true commitment, would rid this world of the chains of all oppression, including slavery, sexism, and racial prejudice. You rightly teach that Scripture can be taken out of context to defend injustice but you must also understand that sometimes a passage that seems to contradict a fundamental Christian teaching in the eyes of the most pious of believers may do so only through a misunderstanding of that passage in context. Such passages are not to be dismissed too quickly, without further consideration, as we often do.

I can comfortably accept the need to recognize the right of women to participate in Church leadership without ignoring some Scripture passages LTS administration, faculty, and even some seminarians regard as outdated or products of a radically patriarchal society. I understand that the ignorant can refer to Scripture in support of injustice, but that does not taint the reality behind that Scripture for me. I support inclusivity, and my faith in the

OPEN LETTER continued...

soundness of God's Word remains intact.

However, Dr. Schmiechen, I still have many questions that require answers before I can fully adopt inclusive language to the degree that some of the heads of LTS and some of my fellow seminarians would like me to. In some cases, I simply question the United Church of Christ's apparent view of the role that language plays in society. Some of my concerns are more of a theological nature. And I admit that I have been offended by some of the attitudes expressed toward me because of my questioning; and I am tired of what appears to be a one-way debate on the issue, where I must listen to ongoing arguments supporting inclusive language but find myself shut off when I do raise questions or arguments opposing a point of inclusive language.

I know that the "Communicator" and "Seminarian" are not the places to discuss these matters in any depth, but I look forward to the opportunity to do so, hopefully in the setting of a forum, where fully committed supporters of inclusive language are willing to discuss the issue with an open heart and not with the intention of shoving policy down others' throats. By the same token, the questioners and opponents should maintain an open mind that allows for the free exchange of ideas and provides for an atmosphere of learning.

On both sides, any of us could be wrong, if even on a point or two of the entire issue. And we must be willing to accept the will of our sovereign God, even if doing so seems personally distasteful. Then, perhaps, we can turn attention outward to a hurting world where, I believe, exist graver ills and injustices that should have priority in the Church's overall ministry.

So, Dr. Schmiechen, my final question to is: "What would you now have me do?"

Respectfully,
Jeff Frantz
1st year student, MAR
Lancaster Seminary

FROM THE BOOKSTORE...

We now have Christmas cards and notes for sale. Many single cards are under \$1.00! Stop by the book store for your holiday gift-giving purchases. A book is a great gift!!!

NEW BOOKS:

Beginning a New Pastorate
Effective Church Planning
The Small Church is Different
Getting Things Done
My Personal Prayer Diary
Chronological & Background Charts of the O.T./
N.T./Church History

STOP BY SOON!!!

DEACONESS
XAPLOTTE



RUTH-WEILER

The assorted
APOSTOLIC
MOTHERS
&
FATHERS
L. T. S. OF



The Rev. Jerry Freeman and Big Bob

AND FILL YOU WITH HOPE...

SPIRITUAL LIFE REFLECTIONS

Some reflections about morning chapel services conducted the week of November 16-20 by the Spiritual Life Committee... The week began with proclamation, reading the Isaiah text that Jesus read in Nazareth in his early ministry. Isaiah 61 is in the style of the "servant" poems in deutero-Isaiah, but was written at the time of the post-exilic return of the Jews and described the establishment of the "servant community". The preparation of one who would be a servant was recounted in Luke 4—temptation, profession, initial rejection, casting out filthy spirits and receiving people in need, and going out to tell the "good news" again. We heard this in the telling of the story that happened so long ago, provocative and poignant.

The next day was quiet repose by still waters, reflecting on the mission of being in seminary, preparing to be servants. We were engaged by silence, the Word, and flowing music; reminded of our innocent origins and the simple rules of childhood that still make sense for the adult world.

In Word and Sacrament, we came together as a covenantal Christian community. Jesus' teachings about judgement in the Sermon on the Mount warn against unjust condemnation without relieving the responsibility to judge. In song and scripture we heard the story and experienced it anew in bread and wine-together.

Thursday evening "compline" was a sharing of individual gifts, celebrating the Kingdom of God, even the gifts of the natural world acknowledged in St. Francis' Canticle of Brother Sun.

Friday morning was the conclusion of the week's chapel, but hopefully it was the beginning of a shared and sustained attitude of servanthood in the seminary community. The

worship service was a working service of footwashing. We had the opportunity to have our feet washed, to wash those of another, to sing, to observe, to worship, to even not participate...It represented just one example of Christian service.

The week was a journey with each day's chapel being a unique experience unto itself, yet an essential milestone along the way. Proclaiming, reflecting, covenanting, sharing, serving, and going forth-together, suggest a model of servanthood that is diverse and intentional seeking to establish God's beloved "servant" community.

DREW WILLARD

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CRISIS INTERVENTION SERVICES

Where do you call when you are depressed or having suicidal ideations? Or needing information on teenage suicide prevention? Or having ingested a fifth of vodka and several sleeping pills because your husband beat you today? Or when you've been talking with a church person about the legalities of separation and children for 5 hours, to no avail? Or when you feel you've reached the end of your seminary rope because your inundated with more work than there are hours available?

All of these, plus child abuse, domestic violence, housing, or any other crisis situation are handled by Crisis Intervention Services. Most communities or counties have such a program which is staffed by trained counselors. CIS counselors in Lancaster county are on duty 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. CIS also aids with referrals. CIS can be a valuable tool for every pastor - for others and for self. For more information, call CIS, or contact me.

MARY K. RICE

POST NEAR YOUR PHONE.....

394 - 2631

CRISIS INTERVENTION SERVICES

SPIRITUAL LIFE ACTIVITIES CHECKLIST

Here are some suggestions for "spiritual life" activities. Please check any number of these which are of interest to you and add some ideas of your own in the spaces provided...

- ☐ 1. Bible study held weekly in the evening, rotating leadership and meeting locations.
- ☐ 2. Volunteer service of worship at Waterstreet Mission, monthly on Wed. nights.
- ☐ 3. an outdoor service of worship- "a poor people's mass around a fire barrel"
- ☐ 4. an Hispanic-English inclusive service of worship.
- ☐ 5. Field trips to:
the Mennonite "Tabernacle" Museum, Ephrata Cloister, _____.
- ☐ 6. lunch-fellowship with Lancaster Bible College students and faculty.
- ☐ 7. attend service of worship at:
Temple Shaarai Shomayim
El Redentor U.M.C.
Brightside Baptist Church
Annunciation Greek-Orthodox Church
St. Peter's Lutheran Church
St. John Newmann Roman Catholic Church
- ☐ 8. invite local area religious leaders to speak here.
- ☐ 9. invite Christian musical artists to perform here.
- ☐ 10. establish a Chapel Guild to clean and store materials used in services of Word and Sacrament.
- ☐ 11. regular Sunday services in Santee Chapel.
- ☐ 12. a "lock-in" in Santee Chapel on theme of "The Gifts of the Magi."
- ☐ 13. Dr. Martin Luther King, jr. memorial service.
- ☐ 14. _____

SOS! - SPOUSES OF SEMINARIANS

In former years, there have been groups of spouses and children of seminarians which have met regularly in structural groups. Among them were ASW (Association of Seminary Women), a spouse collegium, and PAC (Play Activity Center).

To explore whether there is interest or need to revive any of these groups or to form others, I am hosting a dessert meeting for spouses of seminarians in L202 on Monday evening, December 14 at 7:30 pm. I am aware that some seminarian spouses are men and welcome them to the meeting also.

I hope you are able to come, but if not, let me know of your interest in such groups by completing the form below and putting it in my campus mailbox. Let's work together to make the community a hospitable and joyful place.

Charlotte Whiting, Dean of Students

I would be interested in:

- ☐ A. attending a spouse group the nature of which will be determined by the group.
- ☐ B. attending a couples group with my spouse.
- ☐ C. attending an ASW group for wives of seminarians.
- ☐ D. hosting A (above) to explore possibilities.
- ☐ E. hosting B (above) to explore possibilities.
- ☐ F. hosting C (above) to explore possibilities.
- ☐ G. encouraging my child(ren) to attend a PAC group.
- ☐ H. assisting with a PAC group.
- ☐ I. other: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____



DAISIES

If I had my life to live over again, I would pick more daisies. I'd try to make more mistakes. I would be sillier than I had been this trip. I would relax, I would limber up, I know very few things I would take seriously.

I would take more trips, travel lighter. I would be crazier. I would be less hygienic. I would take more chances. I would climb more mountains, swim more rivers, and watch more sunsets. I would eat more ice cream and less beans. I would have more actual problems and fewer imaginary ones.

You see, I am one of those people who live practically, and sensible and sanely, hour after hour, day after day.

Oh, I have had my moments, my mad moments...And if I had it to do over again, I'd have more of them. In fact, I'd try to have nothing else; just moments. One after another, instead of living so many minutes ahead.

I have been one of those people who never go anywhere without a thermometer, a hot water bottle, a gargle, a raincoat, and a road map.

If I had my life to live over, I would start barefooted earlier in the spring and stay that way later in the fall. I'd play hookey more. I would ride more fun things. I'd turn more summersaults and roll in the grass and go barefoot all over.

If I had my life to live over, I'd spend more time in fun places. I'd try to be in touch with God more, and with those I love. I'd pray aloud more and not care what people think or expect of me.

I would give more of me and take more of you. I'd just be more and more.

Yes, I'd pick more daisies next time...

WRITTEN BY A CATHOLIC NUN
IN C.F. NEWSLETTER

SUBMITTED BY DAVE GALLICK

All I ever really needed to know I learned in kindergarten

(This piece was used as part of a meditation time in chapel last month. Several people have requested copies of it, so it is printed here to meet the requests of the many. The piece was written by Robert Fulghum, Pastor Emeritus of the Edmonds, Washington Unitarian Church. It appeared in the Kansas City Times.)

Most of what I really need to know about how to live, and what to do, and how to be, I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate school mountain, but there in the sandbox at nursery school.

These are the things I learned:
Share everything.

Play fair.

Don't hit people.

Put things back where you found them.

Clean up your own mess.

Don't take things that aren't yours.

Say you're sorry when you hurt someone.

Wash your hands before you eat.
Flush.

Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.

Live a balanced life.

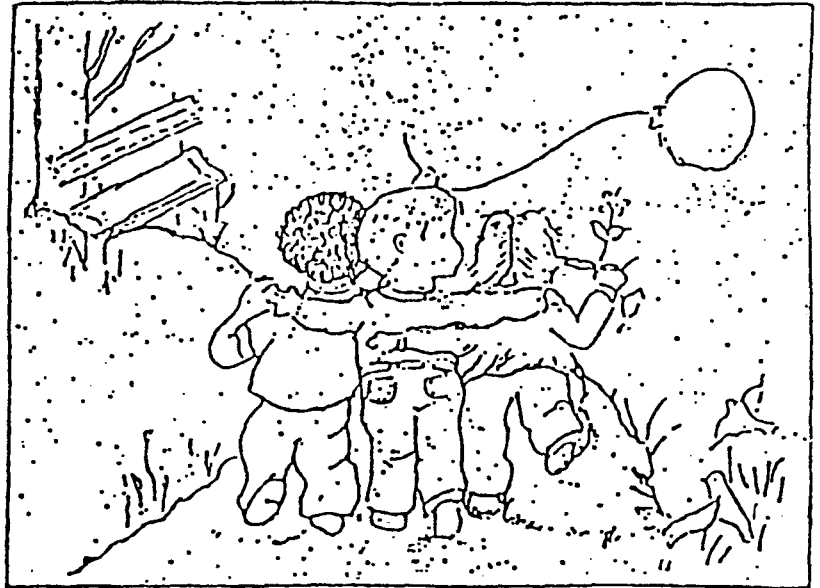
Learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work every day some.

Take a nap every afternoon.

When you go out into the world, watch for traffic, hold hands, and stick together.

Be aware of wonder. Remember the little seed in the plastic cup. The roots go down and the plant goes up and nobody really knows why or how, but we are all like that.

Goldfish and hamsters and white mice and even the little seed in the plastic cup - they all die. So do we.



And remember the book about Dick and Jane and the first word you learned, the biggest word of all: LOOK. Everything you need to know is in there somewhere. The Golden Rule and love and basic sanitation. Ecology and politics and sane living.

Think of what a better world it would be if we all - the whole world - had cookies and milk about 3 o'clock every afternoon and then lay down with our blankets for a nap. Or if we had a basic policy in our nation and other nations to always put things back where we found them and cleaned up our own messes.

And it is still true, no matter how old you are, when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together.

MOVIE REVIEW:

"LENA-MY 100 CHILDREN"

Last month, the review of a movie caught my eye and my heart. NBC was telecasting the movie "Lena - My 100 Children." It is a rare occasion that I watch television, an even rarer one that I even want to. So, after some effort in locating a TV set I could use to watch, I settled down to the movie.

In brief, the movie is based upon the real life effort and achievement of a Jewish woman named Lena Kuchler-Silberman. Lena took one hundred Jewish children - abandoned, poverty-stricken, neglected, oppressed, and prejudiced - and cared for them. The scene is Post World War II. Lena flees Poland with the children, making their way to Palestine. She, herself, had managed to survive the holocaust by posing as a Roman Catholic Gentile - "living a lie" - and feeling a tremendously unspeakable guilt for having done so.

The children that Lena cared for were all at the Jewish Refugee Center in Krakow after the war. Lena managed to restore life to this young group of nearly - destroyed humanity.

The movie was well - done and well-cast. Even in the midst of the most depressing and most dismal and gut-wrenching scenes, there was a vision of hope portrayed and projected. The inner strength and determination portrayed in these people was paramount.

While watching the movie, my insides were ripped apart in anger and disgust and sadness - that one group of people could inflict such injustice and inhumane treatment upon another. And yet, we still, today, in many places and in the very name of justice and humanity, carry out unjust

and inhumane treatment of others.

As I watched the movie, I thought of my many Jewish friends who themselves were survivors of the holocaust. I remember hearing them recount the horror stories of the concentration camps. And I remember the stench that was in the air when I visited one of the camps while on a trip through Germany some twelve years ago. That stench came back to me while watching this movie.

I thought about the lasting effects on these people. And I wondered how it has effected their children and their grandchildren. How much of it gets carried on down through the generations?

Perhaps the most profound revelation came as the credits were rolling at the end of the movie. As scenes were flashed and faded one into the other - almost as if in answer to my silent questioning - a friend of mine, with whom I had watched the movie, stood alongside the television set - those scenes still flashing and fading - and said quietly, "When I think of my family going through this..."

Friends, the answer came home. The answer reached far beyond the generations, beyond the Jews, beyond the concentration camps. I stood face to face with the generations on down the line.

A story told in chapel the week before the movie was on related life's learnings. It spoke of "cleaning up your own messes." That is not to acquire a disciple for tidiness. Rather, that is to not feel guilty about the actions of past generations, and instead to act responsibly, ethically, morally, and justly toward one another. We can clean up our own act. If everybody cleaned up their own mess, think for a moment of the kind of world this could be...