

# *Heralds of the Cross*

AN HISTORICAL DRAMA

Setting forth the history of the  
LANCASTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
of the  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Celebrating

One Hundred and Fifty Years of Service

To the church of Jesus Christ

1825 – 1975

Written by the Rev. Mrs. Beatrice Weaver McConnell ('48)

.....to the honor and glory of God.....  
“Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father  
...who calls us into his church...  
to proclaim the gospel to all the world”...

Performed May 14, 1975

At Hensel Hall  
Franklin and Marshall College  
Lancaster, Pennsylvania



## Prologue

Stage Setting: Dark—stage front

Backdrop—curtain—reflecting a pale yellow light above the rear of scenery to create skyline effect. Scenery is actually the trees and one or two log cabins, small log church, log school, painted on simple, moveable, inexpensive sections of rigid material.

Choir: Softly singing—320(E&R) tune—a capella—“Jesus, Meine Zuversicht” (see “1799” for German—page 464 – Johann Cruger—1653) (Choir may continue to conclusion as Narrator begins—depending on “instrumental” situation.) If organ, then we will use this throughout at appropriate spots—especially later.

**Narrator:** The homeland from which our German forefathers sought refuge in America was not the heroic Germany of the Reformation. It was that very different land of the eighteenth century. The magnificent courage and freedom of the Reformers—Zwingli, Luther, Calvin and Melancthon—had paled and fallen into a dry Scholasticism against which Mysticism and, later, Pietism were the only effectual protests of the common people. It was these common folk, among whom were large numbers of Reformed pietists, who peopled the exodus of their day. They had come through a century which had produced the abyss of the Thirty Years War and had culminated in the devastation of the Palatinate by Louis the XIV and his French Catholic Princes, leaving neither home, property, nor means of livelihood. Not only had hundreds of thousands of Rhinelanders suffered but also tens of thousands of French Huguenots who had fled eastward earlier from persecutions in their homeland.

The Reformed Churches suddenly found their buildings taken from them, their pastors and school teachers unpaid and starved into submission, and their people left destitute. Before this agony was to pass, one-fourth of the population had emigrated, many to America. Pietism, with its emphasis on faith, love and hard work and its Bible-study and prayer groups, became a blessing to the enfeebled and harassed Church. When others would weep in despair, they sang the great hymns of Cruger, Neander, and Gerhardt.

It was these “church people” who composed the majority of the German immigrants to America. With them they brought that tools they could salvage, their Bibles and hymnbooks, their prayer books and Heidelberg Catechisms, a few sermon books, and sometimes, their Baptismal certificates. The difficulties of a slow journey up the Rhine, across the turbulent Atlantic, into a strange land were to them incidental when they considered the promise of peace, religious sanctuary, and liberty without license given to them by William Penn and his sons.

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<sup>1</sup> If choir is still singing, UP AT THIS POINT

In Penn's Woodlands others had already settled the lands around Philadelphia, and so they were compelled to move into the wilderness. Soon log houses appeared in small clearings, and the rich soil yielded its first fruits. A new beginning was underway.

That this was a new beginning is not quite accurate, however. More precisely, they envisioned a new planting. They would retain, as closely as possible, their cultural heritage, there in a new homeland, for they sought to raise up their children in the best tradition of their forefathers. And so it was that when they had made ample provision to sustain the body, there came to them, in the silence of the wilderness, the persistent admonition of their earliest patriarchs—to provide nourishment for the soul.

Tableau: Lights spotted on stage left. (No other lights)

A cluster: Zwingli (top tier)

Melancthon-Calvin-(next tier)

Ursinus-Olivianus-(seated below at table)

Zwingli—holds large Bible or book

Calvin—hands up as preaching vigorously

Melancthon—thinking

Ursinus and Olivianus—bending over, writing of Heidelberg Catechism.

**Zwingli:** (reads from his book) or speaks clearly and directly.

“See to it that the Word of God is preached among you with integrity; thereby you will be able to retain your heritage and thwart evil; for where the fear of God is, there also is the help of God.”

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Pale Yellow light remains as spot lights fade and as Narrator continues:

**Narrator continues:** The years of suffering and dispersion had only served to sharpen their longing to hear the preaching of the true Word of God and to educate their children. Up went the log house of worship and in its shadow they built a school. The church they would establish would resemble the church of their fathers as closely as they could remember it to have been, and their children would be educated that their future might be securely based on their past.

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## PART I – THE EARLIEST MINISTRY

**Narrator continues:** Indeed, they would see to it that the true Word of God would be preached among them, but when they looked among themselves, there was a grievous lack of trained clergy who could most authentically perpetuate the faith and “help them escape the errors of those among whom they dwelt”. “Nevertheless”, we are told, “they

were stirred up by a spontaneous desire for fellowship with God and one another”, and they came from miles distant and had “small gatherings with the reading of a sermon, with hymns and prayer, according to the High German Reformed Church Order on all Sundays and holidays, but on account of the lack of a minister—without the administration of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.”

To lead them in the “singing of the Lord’s Song in a strange and distant land” they called upon the most able among them, and they called him their “Vorleser”—their Lay Reader.

In 1720, in the region of Falkner’s Swamp in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, John Philip Boehm, a parochial schoolmaster from Hesse-Cassel, Germany, was called to be the lay reader of three congregations. *Pause now* and hear how, on the Lord’s Day, our earliest German fathers nurtured their faith in the wilderness and gained courage to endure, as they communed with their God, and at once with the Homeland and their beloved Mother Church.

Scene: Lights now come up on stage setting front—pale yellow light off  
Lights reveal setting of cabins, log church, school, trees. Stage center—several benches, J.P. Boehm stands stage right; half turn to audience—the congregation of men, women, young people (choir members should compose this group)—pioneers face Boehm—half turn stage rear. Costumes of the day—they carry among them a few hymnbooks which they share.

They have concluded the confession of sin of the Palatinate order.  
J.P. Boehm is reading to them the *Absolution*. (This maybe cut in half by fading in at a later point.) If time allows we can begin here. He begins with (pages 150-151 Palatinate Liturgy):

“Nun horet an den gewissen Trost.....Leydens und Sterbens unsers Herren Jesu Christi. Amen.”

### The Lord’s Prayer

*(The people and J. P. Boehm now say):* “Unser Vater, der du bist in den Himmeln. Geheiligt werde dein Name. Dein Reich komme. Dein Will geschehe auf Erden wie im Himmel. Unser taglich Brod gib uns heut. Und vergib uns unsere Schulden, als auch wir vergeben unsern Schuldigern. Und fuhre uns nicht in Versuchung, sondern erlose uns von dem Bosen. Dann dein ist das Reich, und die Kraft, und die Herrlichkeit in Ewigkeit, Amen.”

### **Hymn—“Lobe Den Herren”**

(The people on stage now sing “Lobe Den Herren”) 1<sup>st</sup> stanza in German by Tableau worshippers. (2<sup>nd</sup> stanza—if time). 1<sup>st</sup> stanza in English (again)

Inviting Audience to join in stanza one—No. 8 (E&R) “Praise Ye the Lord, The Almighty...” Printed in program.

Scene: J. P. Boehm now gives the Aaronic Benediction as per Palatinate Liturgy.  
(Page 163) "Der Herr segne euch und behute euch. Der Herr erleuchte sein  
Angesicht über euch und sei euch gnädig. Der Herr erhebe sein Angesicht auf  
euch und gebe euch den Frieden. Amen." (shorten as necessary)

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**Narrator:** For five years John Philip Boehm served as lay reader. By 1725 his people "besought him with tears" to become their minister for "they longed for the comforts of the gospel confirmed by the use of the Holy Sacraments". He resisted their bidding, but they insisted that their call was as lawful as any ever made – Seeing their extreme necessity he wrote: "I was convinced by my conscience that I could not do otherwise. I allowed myself to be persuaded to do this work." On October 15, 1725 he administered the Lord's Supper at Falkner's Swamp.

Two years later, a young, aggressive minister came to the same area from the Palatinate. Although he was unauthorized to minister to the German settlers, he at once condemned Boehm's unordained ministry and sought to have him deposed. Upon the advice of the closest fraternal church body, the Reformed Dutch Clergy of New York City, Boehm's elders requested from the Classis of Amsterdam that their minister be ordained.

Authorization was granted and on November 23, 1729, John Philip Boehm was ordained in New York City by three Dutch Reformed Clergy in the presence of three elders from his parish – the first German Reformed minister ordained on American soil.

Tableau only during narration

Tableau only – lights spotted on ordination scene—3 Dutch Domines standing, J. P. Boehm kneeling, 3 elders—(congregation not necessary) in tableau as Narrator reads – (Screen would be nice but it's unnecessary.)

**Narrator continues:** With this act of ordination the German Reformed area became a mission outpost of the Holland Synod. Back through this channel the call for German-speaking ministers would go for the next fifty years.

## **PART II – THE COETUS – MICHAEL SCHLATTER (1746) – The Call to the Pennsylvania Coetus for Ministers**

**Narrator:** In the 1730s and 40s there came a tidal wave of German immigrants. New congregations burgeoned and confusion yielded to chaos. Dominie Boehm, himself, founded nine new congregations and ministered to scores because of the lack of ministers. The call went to Holland for help, and in 1746 they sent the Rev. Michael Schlatter, a native of St. Gallen in Switzerland. His mission was to organize an administrative body

of ministers and elders to be known as the Coetus, and to survey the German Reformed Congregations and report on their condition. With such vigor did he pursue his charge that in one year the Coetus was functioning and in two years he had completed his survey. He wrote the Holland Fathers:

Scene: Lights slowly on Michael Schlatter – spots again – stage center – he sits at the table – dressed as per day. Quill pen – ink pot. Plain scenery. He writes as he reads:

October 1, 1747

“On September 29, being the time appointed by the blessing of God, the first Ecclesiastical Synod was commenced to be held in my house in Philadelphia. The assembly of thirty-one members proceeded to the church where the Rev. J. B. Rieger preached an edifying sermon on Psalm 133—In the afternoon at two o’clock was held the first session which I opened with prayer and closed with thanksgiving.”

May, 1748

“I have visited forty-six congregations in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia. Besides there there are others not included in this list. Among them there are thirty-two which are entirely destitute of the regular ministrations of the Word and Sacraments. Two congregations are supplied the word only by a Proponent and only twelve of the forty-six are served by five regular ministers.”

“My Rev. Fathers, I plead, if anywhere then in Pennsylvania men are needed of tried piety, correct views, and the love of peace. Those who seek their own comfort, or serve principally for bread, will not find their proper place in Pennsylvania. There men are needed who are in the prime of their lives; are inured to toil; and who will show suffering and sympathy toward those who oppose them.”

(Light slowly fades)

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**Narrator:** In answer to the call for ministers six young pastors came to America for “missions in the forsaken vineyard of Pennsylvania” and a large sum of money was given by the Swiss, Palatinate, and Dutch churches for pastoral education and support.

But the new hope kindled by a functioning Coetus and help from the Homeland soon faded. Established ministers were heavily burdened with multiple charges, congregations increased in great numbers, as people moved westward and southward. Call after call to the Coetus went unanswered. It was a heyday for the ministerial impostor and vagrant.

Men of good training who did come found a widening cultural gap. Colonial America was emerging as a nation and the church was becoming Americanized. The minutes of the Coetus recorded such painful experiences... “Pastor Loretz at Tulpehocken returned to his native Switzerland last April because his language was unintelligible”... “Mr.

Troldenier has been too short a time in America to adapt himself to the feelings of the people”.....

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## **PART III – THE PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD (1793) – Independent and Responsible**

### **A. Private Instruction.**

*Narrator:* With the end of the American War of Independence and the severance of ties with the Homeland the Pennsylvania Synod quietly came into being. The call for ministers was stronger than ever. But the need was for a new variety of minister, one who could speak comfortably in both English and German and one who understood the German-American culture. Ministers such as this must come from America, but where would such be trained and by whom?

Private instruction had not been unknown in earlier days and in other countries. Now, in a period of adjustment, where better could adequate training be secured to meet the bilingual parochial needs of the German Reformed Church in the United States?

It was to its strong leadership that the new Synod turned for help. University educated, more recently arrived from Switzerland and Germany, these leaders were well qualified to prepare men for the ministry.

Under this system the student was taken into the pastor’s home, there was no tuition, the cost for room and board was often paid years later, and he was expected to work in the fields and help with the household chores.

Among those who were taught in this manner were the Rev. Dr. Christian Lebrecht Becker at Lancaster and Baltimore, the Rev. Dr. Frederick Herman of Falkner’s Swamp, and the Rev. Dr. Samuel Helfenstein of Philadelphia. Together they trained sixty men for the Reformed parish, instilling in them the disciplines of Dogmatics, History, Theology, Biblical Exegesis in Greek and Hebrew and—always—there was Latin. Practical experience was gained in the churches of the teacher. They produced able preachers and the leaders of the Synod for forty years.

Christian Lebrecht Becker began such instruction in Lancaster when he was the minister of First Reformed Church. When he moved to Baltimore his students went with him.

Come now, let us look in as he is bidding farewell to his student, the Rev. Jacob Geiger, newly ordained, who is leaving for his first charge in the Manchester, Maryland, York county area, a parish composed of eight congregations.



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Scene: Speaking—light up moderately fast

Characters: C. L. Becker, his wife, Pastor Jacob Geiger, two students—Geiger has hat in hand, satchel and hand items are on floor and on table near door left. Mrs. Becker hold basket (of food for lunch).

Dr. Becker is standing stage center, his wife to one side—students nearby. Mr. Geiger stands with back to stage left facing Dr. Becker.

**Dialogue:**

**C.L.B.:** “Now, Mr. Geiger, do you know how to keep a congregation together in peace and prosperity?”

**G:** (modestly) “I do not know that I do.”

**C.L.B.:** “I will tell you how—if you wish to call a flock of chickens together, would you seek to do it by throwing clubs and stones among them, accompanied by angry words, or would you throw grain and bread among them with a soothing voice of invitation?”

**G:** “I would feed them with bread, and grain and call them kindly.”

**C.L.B.:** “That is right, ... and so, if you wish to keep a congregation together do not cast in among them coarse, rough and contentious words, for that will divide them and cause them to fly for fear in all directions; but scatter among them the bread of life, the seed of truth, and they will gather around it to feed, and love to be near him who scatters it. Now, go, Mr. Geiger, and the Lord be with you.”

(CLB puts his arm around Geiger's shoulders as he leads him to stage left—exit.)

**Mrs. C.L.B.:** “Jacob, here is a basket I fixed for you—you mustn’t look hungry when you get there! Take good care of yourself – *and* find a nice young lady soon and get married. You need someone to look after you – you won’t eat right, living alone!”

**Student I:** “He’ll have so many invitations to dinner, he’ll have the colic!”

**Student II:** “Yes, and he’ll get plenty of black walnut cake from Sarah Moyer. You sure eat a lot of it –you must really like walnut cake!”

**Student I:** “Ach, it isn’t the walnut cake he likes, it’s Sarah Moyer!”

**Mrs. C.L.B.:** “Boys, boys! Show a little respect for ‘The Rev. Mr. Geiger’!”

(G and CLB –shake hands at the door, Mrs. Becker embraces him, goodbye, as)

**G to C.L.B:** “I shall write you for help, Sir, if you will permit and I beg your patience; I shall send you payment for the rest of my room and board as soon as I can”...

**C.L.B:** “Go, Geiger, go –all that in good time. The flock is waiting and they are hungry for the Word; and remember what I’ve always told you – If you lose the thread of your sermon, quote the Catechism, quote the Catechism.”

(C.L.B and G: shake hands again –They all see him our –we hear farewells from stage left as lights fade and choir sings “Go Heralds of Salvation Forth” (No. 352 E&R)

Scene ends.

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## PART III

### B. The Time for Critical Decision (1817 – 1824)

**Narrator:** One hundred years after John Philip Boehm the problem of the church was *still* the critical shortage of trained ministers. Now the calls came from the frontiers of America back to the Mother Synod, as the country extended her boundaries. Presently they would come with increasing frequency as the Synod divided into Classes and the Church developed a new self-consciousness. The private schools had been designed for less complicated times and, before long, they would fade into history.

New times called for wise but aggressive leadership. The Church had to become self-reliant. She must support her own mission and train her own ministers. That no one had ever thought of establishing a theological college is not true. As early as 1784 and again in 1786, formal requests had gone to the Holland fathers for funds to build such an institution on American soil. When silence followed, it had become clear that such a project was more than they wished to support.

On September 9, 1817 at the Synod in York, with no prior discussion or pealing of church bells, it was resolved, <sup>2</sup> *“that, on account of the increase and growth of our congregations, Synod should take steps toward the provision of an institution for the education of young preachers.”* This was the first resolution for a Seminary presented to and accepted by a Synod.

Two years passed while Committees researched the feasibility of a joint Seminary with either the Reformed Dutch Church or the German Lutheran Church. But no action was

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<sup>2</sup> Narrative emphasize

imminent. But nothing is so effective as a little leaven added to the lump at just the right time.

The Rev. Dr. John Livingston, Professor of the Reformed Dutch Seminary, New Brunswick, New Jersey, known and respected by the Synod, had printed a little pamphlet entitled *An Address To The Reformed German Churches in the United States*. The address was distributed and read before the Synod in Lancaster in 1819, to which the delegates listened thoughtfully—

Light Up – Secretary reading –Sound is picked up only to hear “below” –Sound fades out at the of “below” –Secretary still reading inaudibly.

Scene: Livingston Address abbreviated. Secretary of Synod reads condensed version. Benches, pulpit -2 pulpit chairs. (Can use same scene for subsequent Synod scenes. ) Secretary stands at table. Place in deeper recess of stage –cut with horizontal curtains if necessary for more shallow stage use.

Light on reader more than Synod.

“I propose to convince the German Reformed Churches of the necessity of establishing a theological institution without delay...for in every age up to the present in every Church...a theological institution has been deemed essential as the first and indispensable step to preserve their existence, their security; and their respectability...the one notable exception...may I respectfully submit, is the great and respectable German Church...I most humbly offer my paternal advice that our German Brethren rise up and provide for themselves a theological institution of their own, that they might prepare heralds of the cross in their own way...”

End of Scene – Lights fade

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**Narrator:** A year later, at the Synod in Hagerstown, Maryland, in 1820, matters were brought to a head. The delegates had obviously done their homework but perhaps not quite well enough as time would tell. A Comprehensive Plan for a Theological Seminary was presented, studied, discussed and adopted. They elected twelve Overseers, named the Rev. Dr. Phillip Milledoler of New York City, Professor-elect, as a salary of \$2,000 per year. They empowered the Overseers to select the site of the Seminary and to proceed with its opening, and ordered that Synod request one annual offering from each congregation in support of the Seminary. Finally, they declared, henceforth, no minister could privately train ministerial candidates other than in preparatory courses—all this action in the course of one afternoon.

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## PART III

### C. The “Slumbering Giant” and The Free Synod

**Narrator:** Finally, the action of a Synod had been decisive. But east of the Susquehanna River, in Pennsylvania, where the conservative German Churches were concentrated, there was consternation when the news of Synod’s action spread. Several days after Delegate Elder Jacob Kistler had returned from Hagerstown, there was a spirited discussion by exercised relatives and friends as they gathered in his home in Kutztown, Pennsylvania.

**Scene:** Place –Kutztown, Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania German home of Jacob Kistler, Elder-delegate to Hagerstown Synod of 1820. Dialect at times.

**Characters:** Elder J. Kistler, his wife, son, daughter-in-law, relative, Grandpa, neighbor.

**Setting:** Kitchen of home-chairs around –rocking chair for Grandpa. Mrs. Kistler passes a tray of cookies. Large coffee pot (no need to serve any) just have on table as suggestion of kitchen.

Lights fade in as they already speak.

**Mrs. Kistler:** (passing cookies) “My goodness! Why, Jacob says the Plan for the Seminary says nothing of any German preachers being trained. He says it could be that they’ll teach everything in *English*! Can you *imagine* that?”

**Son:** “Well –that may be all right for Philadelphia or Baltimore, but most of the churches everywhere else won’t *stand* for that –Why, that will never suit the folks in Oley, or Reading –al they way to Allentown and east, and up to the Blue Mountains, out to Harrisburg and way out –and down to the state line, they’re mostly all *German*!”

**Daughter-in-law:** (thoughtfully) “But you know, they say we’ll soon have English in the school –our three youngsters will learn English there and German at home and then what? We’ll surely all have to talk English sooner or later!”

**Grandpa:** (On rocker dozing and wakes up enough to hear the last phrase of what daughter-in-law has just said. Half to himself and in the dialect – Please write the dialect out). “Next they’ll try to tell me Jesus didn’t talk German. Well, I know better. In the Bible he talks German and don’t tell *me* the Bible isn’t so!” (Goes back to sleep – head on chest, hands droop between bent knees.)

**Relative:** “Uncle Jacob, who’d send their boys all the way to Frederick, Maryland to learn preaching? That’s an English place, and besides, they say that fellow Milledoler is a New Yorker –What does he know about Pennsylvania German ways, anyhow? – Well,

we'll just get our ministers from Dr. Herman's 'Swamp College'. He's done fine by us all this time."

**Jacob Kistler:** "Under the Plan, Herman won't be allowed to teach at Falkner's Swamp anymore, unless just enough to get the young men ready for the Seminary!"

**Son:** "What!! That I hadn't heard! Just let that get around! Then you'll have fireworks!!"

**Neighbor:** "The *idea* –lifting an offering every year to support the School –and getting a State Charter, besides! Whew! That will lead right to an assessment –They'll *make us* pay their bills! Well, they can pass the plate but they won't get my money!"

Mrs. Kistler: "What wonders me the most is the money they want to give the Professor – Such a salary! \$2,000! Where will it come from!"

**Daughter-in-law:** (thoughtfully) "Well, he's a very learned man, they say, and he gets much more where he is. If you want something good you have to pay for it!"

**Neighbor:** "If he gets such a good pay where he is, let him *stay there!* \$2,000 salary!!! Ooi!!!"

**Grandpa:** (Wakes up –sits upright in rocker, hands on arms of chair –shocked –wide awake –in dialect, if possible) "\$2,000! So much money I haven't seen in my whole life! Aye, aye, aye!!" (Head shakes – hands to up into air – frozen in shock!)

**Mrs. Kistler:** "Have a cookie, Papa."

**Granda:** "Ich nimme zwo."

End of Scene – Lights fade

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**Narrator:** So intense was the dissatisfaction that at the Synod of 1821 in Reading much of the time was spent in trying to heal the breach. When it was decided that the Seminary Professor would lecture in both German and English, that both German and English text books would be used, and that all students must know the German language, peace was in prospect. But at the same Synod, the gifted, but wayward minister son of the Rev. Dr. Herman of Swamp College was expelled from the Synod on the grounds of intemperance. This embarrassment, coming on the heels of the controversy, led to the withdrawal of Dr. Frederick Herman and his congregations from the Synod in 1822. One by one his friends and former students and their congregations also left and they formed a rival body called *The Free Synod*.

In our day this movement seems irrelevant. But in 1822 it boded no good for the future of the proposed Seminary. With as many as a hundred congregations and forty ministers on its roster at a time, the Free Synod was a serious schism. Controversy involving both laymen and clergy, friend and foe, swirled in newspaper and pamphlet, bringing to the surface every old grievance. But what really emerged was the fear of the loss of the German language in the current climate of change.

The Synod meetings of 1822 at Harrisburg, and 1823 at Baltimore were troubled by reverses and dissension. In 1822, Dr. Milledoler withdrew as Professor-elect and with his withdrawal, subscribed funds from Maryland were also lost and a new site for the Seminary had to be found. In 1823, at Baltimore, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania was conditionally chosen as the location and the Rev. Samuel Helfenstein of Philadelphia was elected the Professor at a salary of \$1,000.

## **PART III**

### **D. The final Decision**

When in 1824 the Synod was called to order in Bedford, Pennsylvania, it was a greatly sobered convention of delegates who faced the business at hand. As they listened to the Report of the Committee on Missions the list of requests for ministers seemed endless.

1824 Scene: Hendel's Vote

Same set as 1819 – Livingston

Lights come up on Synod of 1824 – Narrator's voice fades as we pick up sound from stage.

Characters: Chairman of Missions Committee

Dr. William Hendel, President of Synod

Rev. John Ebaugh (Carlisle – to read Dickinson proposal)

Synod members (arranged as/age and 1<sup>st</sup> ministers 2<sup>nd</sup> elders)

Secretary – taking minutes at a table

(The chairman of the Missions Committee is into reading of his report <sup>3</sup> )

(Delegates show dismay as report is read)

“Dear Fathers and Brethren:

I now report to you the calls from vacant charges longing for the Comfort of the Word and Sacraments.

In Pennsylvania, there are five; In Ohio, eleven; in Virginia, fourteen; plus scattered preaching points; in North Carolina, fourteen; South Carolina, eight; in Tennessee, twelve; Kentucky, five; in Indiana, five; in Illinois, three; and in Missouri,

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<sup>3</sup> Can be telescoped or cut greatly

All the above –Report of Missions Committee –can be reduced to 1 or 2 sentences or could be added to last of speeches before the Vote on Dickinson proposal.

five. In all there are 83 vacant charges. I most heartily commend to you that if the Missionary Society and the Theological School receive the requisite support, there can be no doubt that we shall enjoy the pleasing satisfaction of seeing our vacant congregations supplied with faithful ministers and that more congregations will be gathered.

Respectfully submitted.”

President Hendel: – Thanks the Chairman – Calls for a motion to accept the report  
Motion –second –calls for vote –adopted. (Wednesday afternoon,  
September 29, 1824)

**President Hendel:** “Brethren, uppermost in the minds of many of us is the business of putting into operation a Theological Seminary. We have spent much time in the past just talking. Brethren, I call you to prayerful consideration of what we shall now hear and what we must act upon. I call upon the Reb. John Ebaugh of Carlisle to read an Overture addressed to this Synod. Brother Ebaugh.”

(Ebaugh comes forward to desk –reads from letter on oversized paper)

**Ebaugh:**

Dated, September 9, 1824

“To the Reverend Synod of the German Reformed Church:

Whereas it has been represented to the Board of Trustees of Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, that the German Reformed Church contemplates the establishment of a Theological Seminary...and whereas the Board of Trustees of Dickinson College are deeply impressed with a sense of the advantages that may result from the establishment of said Seminary...and are also fully convinced that a connection may be formed between said Seminary and the College in this place which would prove highly advantageous to both Institutions, therefore ----

Resolved, 1<sup>st</sup> – That the use of a lecture room in the College edifice be granted for the accommodation of the Professor and students of the Theological Seminary of the German Reformed Church; that the Trustees of the College shall convey to the Seminary a lot of ground, one hundred feet square for the erection of suitable buildings.

2<sup>nd</sup> – That the students of the Seminary shall be allowed the use of the College library, and attend, free of all charges, lectures as the Professor of the Theological Seminary shall direct and that the Board of the College will assure the annual payment of a house for the Professor of the Theological Seminary –provided that the Reverend Synod will allow the said Professor to officiate as a member of the College faculty to instruct such students of the College as may be pursuing the study of History and the German Language.

Attested to by Frederick Watts  
Secretary of the Board,  
Dickinson College”

(Secretary writes madly)

**President Hendel:** “Brethren, you have heard the proposal. What is your pleasure?”

**From Floor of Synod (member pastor):** “I move that Synod accept the proposal and proceed at once.”

**From Floor of Synod (member elder):** “The motion is seconded.”

**President Hendel:** “It has been moved and seconded that we adopt the proposal and proceed at once. Is there discussion?”

(Number of hands raised for recognition)

(As speeches proceed ½ of Synod nods approval and ½ approval for each speaker)

**Number I:** (Jumps up – a minister, middle-aged) “This is not the right time to proceed! We are divided among ourselves – financial support for a Seminary will not be forthcoming. I say wait until we can better see our way!”

**Number II:** (Elder-older man) “If we do not have more faith in the future we will never go forward – let us launch out into the deep. I admonish you, let us launch out into the deep!”

**Number III:** (Younger minister) “If a Seminary is begun and then fails – and failure is all too likely – it would make things all the worse – wait – I say – until success is assured.”

**Number IV:** (Elder – younger with Dutch accent) “An alliance with an English-speaking college is not acceptable. You say German will be taught, but can you guarantee it in a place like Carlisle? I will vote ‘no’ to this!”

**Number V:** (Older minister) “I propose that we vote and settle this once and for all. Consider, can you let the Lord’s people go on without leaders? Do we turn a deaf ear to the report we have just heard from the Missions Committee? Where are the men who can reap the harvest if we will not teach them how to use a scythe?”

(Room is quiet—no one really has anything more to say.)

**President Hendel:** “Is there any more discussion?” (no comments) “There being no further discussion, I call for a vote. You will be voting to accept the proposal from Dickinson College.”

(Secretary and 1 other count votes. Secretary notes each vote in book)

**President Hendel:** “All in favor will raise their right hands.”



(Half raise their hands.)

**President Hendel:** “All opposed shall raise their right hands.”

(Half raise their hands.)

**Secretary:** “The vote is 26 aye and 26 nay. Mr. President, in the case of a tie vote you are charged to cast the deciding vote.”

(Dead silence –some lean forward.)

**President Hendel:** (Slowly, but distinctly) “Ich stimme für das Seminarium. I vote for the Seminary.”

(Half aside, half to group –Aloud) “There is opposition in my charge at home—well –I have broad shoulders and can carry very much.”

End of Scene – Lights fade slowly

**Narrator:** The Theological Seminary finally had a home in Carlisle, but again, it had no professor. The Rev. Samuel Helfenstein withdrew whereupon the Rev. Lewis Mayer of York, Pennsylvania, was elected at a salary of \$700.00.

## PART IV – THE SEMINARY AT CARLISLE (1825 – 1829)

**Narrator:** An advocate from the beginning, Lewis Mayer, privately trained, self-educated native of Lancaster, accepted the professorship of the Seminary with a deep sense of duty. He wrote to Bernard C. Wolff, trusted friend and respected elder of his first parish in Shepherdstown, Virginia.

Mayer Scene A: Mayer seated at table alone. Lighted candle. Mayer is writing.

December 1, 1824

“Dear friend Wolff,

I have this day accepted the call of a Synod to the Professorship in the Seminary...I see much to discourage me, but if ever we establish a Seminary it must be done by bold effort. If no one accepts the Professorship until it is a safe and profitable office, the Seminary can never get into operation; and the principle on which any plea of rejection is founded would have justified the Reformers, the Apostles, and Jesus Himself, in shrinking from the destination to which they were appointed. I am willing to go as far as I know His holy will ... and what things are discouraging I will leave to Him who will never leave or forsake me...”

(Lights fade)

**Narrator:** To the Board of Overseers of the Seminary went the charge of providing a theological library, text books – *and the professor’s salary!* At this point they had no

money, no buildings, and no library, and they could expect to receive only a part of the church's ministerial students. Their frustration deepened as they discovered that funds were not forthcoming, and that many German books they required were unavailable in America.

Then, one of the Overseers, and Rev. James Ross Reily of Hagerstown, Maryland, proposed that he undertake a European journey to enlist aid – aid of any kind, books, funds, fraternal encouragement. His proposal was first received by the Board with pessimism – but he was of German and Scots-Irish ancestry. He had the patience of the German and the fluency of the Irish and the persistence of both. When he offered that only if his mission succeeded would he accept payment for his expenses, they were convinced. While he was arming himself with every credential he could think of, Prof. Mayer was preparing to open the Seminary at Carlisle.

On March 11, 1825, one week after John Quincy Adams was inaugurated President of the United States, in the lecture room at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, Prof. Lewis Mayer met his first class. They were five in number—one from Dauphin County and the others from west of the Susquehanna River. From the outset their dedication was evident. So also, was their lack of preparatory training.

(Lights up)

Mayer Scene B: Same as Mayer Scene A. Same place, table, candle, Mayer is writing.

May 17, 1825

“Dear friend Wolff:

...My students are...with one exception...raw young men. I am obliged to teach them the rudiments of their Greek and even the grammar of their own Mother tongue—and the course pursued in other seminaries will not suit at present... I purchased books to the amount of \$130 with my own funds. Many others are still wanting; but I have no means of securing them...How I shall succeed in my labors here and what the fate of our Seminary will be the Lord only knows. If it be *His* will, it *must* prosper; if it be not his will to give it success, it ought to fail...But the friends of this institution must, however, remember that, without a *miraculous divine interposition* it can only be permanently established by their own active and persuasive exertion...Mr. Reily left Harrisburg on May 9<sup>th</sup> for his European mission. *I hope the Lord will be with him...*”

(Knock on door—or hesitant student from stage right)

(Prof. Mayer looks up and says:)

**Mayer:** “Ah, Mr. Fritschey. You are studying with diligence, I trust!”

**Fritschey:** “Sir, I have so much difficulty with the Greek grammar, and the German is as hard for me as the Greek!”

**Mayer:** “Mr. Fritschey, so much of the world’s wisdom comes from both the Greek and German cultures. Stretch yourself—Study, and it will come! You sincerely wish to become a proficient scholar and a good minister?”

**Fritschey:** “Yes, Sir!”

**Mayer:** (Half to himself) “What you young men need is preparatory training! Mr. Fritschey, you attend to your studies and I shall take it slowly in class...Courage now...and hard work...you will attain...”

**Fritschey:** “Thank you, Sir.” (He leaves sobered)

(Mayer paces front stage, left to right—hands behind back, head down)

**Mayer:** “We cannot expect pearls from sand overnight—These men are dedicated but there is too great a gap in their preparatory training. We should plan now—a high school—a preparatory school—Ah! A classical department! Yes!...Yes!... A classical department.”

End of Scene – Lights fade

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**Narrator:** While the Professor struggled with his problems, so did the Board of Overseers. Almost a year had passed since the Synod at Bedford but only four congregational offerings were received *yielding the great sum of \$58.00!* To yield to despair would have been easy—And then, as if by that “miraculous divine interposition” encouraging news came from Europe. From Holland, to Switzerland to Germany and back again, wherever he preached and explained his mission, James Ross Reily met with astounding success. Publishers, booksellers, clergymen, and professors gave of their books. Kings gave their thalers, merchants their florins, and Synods their guilders. Ladies gave their gold jewelry and children and servant girls their kreutzers. When the final accounting was made he had assembled five thousand books, five hundred German bibles, and after costs and his expenses, there was more than five thousand dollars for the Seminary.

From his missionary odyssey of 18 months, James Ross Reily returned home by way of Carlisle in November of 1826.

When he made his lengthy report to the Synod in 1827 at York, he concluded by saying:

Scene: James Ross Reily (one only ) Synod. Same set up as 1819. Placement slightly altered, if possible.

**Reily:** "...When I arrived back at Amsterdam there was a ship in the harbour bound for Baltimore, owned by C.W. Karthaus and Company. I had my boxes put on board, and Mr. Karthaus of Baltimore very kindly remitted the freight on the books. His Majesty, the King of Holland, also remitted the duty...Having settled my affairs, I went aboard a steamboat for London from which place I sailed the 14<sup>th</sup> of October from Philadelphia. The voyage was very *unpleasant* owing to the lateness of the season and many westerly winds, but I bless the Lord that it was a fortunate one of only thirty-four days. I felt constrained to say with all my heart: 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, Bless his Holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.' It is plainly to be seen from the above short and imperfect report that there exists among our German brethren in Europe love to religion and a desire to promote the Redeemer's Kingdom on earth, and that—if our brethren in America *would perform their duty—our institution would assuredly go to promote the interests of Christ's Kingdom* which may it please the great Head of His church to Grant for His Name's Sake. Amen."

End of scene – Lights fade

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**Narrator:** Such an enthusiastic response from abroad was what the Synod and churches had needed. Their pessimism was chastised and their sense of responsibility awakened. Within a short while, fund raising agents were actively at work taking the message of the Seminary to the people, while criticism slowly began to subside.

## PART V – THE SEMINARY AT WORK

**Narrator:** When James Ross Reily had stopped in Carlisle on his way home from Europe, he heard a general complaint from the Professor and students. It was becoming clear that the advantages to both College and Seminary anticipated originally were not being realized. The College was in financial straits, its students were not interested in studying German and there was general incompatibility. For a short while classes were held in the Carlisle Reformed Church and by 1829 they met in the Professor's home. A relocation of the Seminary seemed wise and a Classical School was imperative. At Lebanon in 1829, York, Pennsylvania was chosen as the new site and a Classical School was approved. The Rev. Mr. Daniel Young was elected Assistant Professor for the Classical School.

It was a school with a future that loaded its library and equipment onto a long caravan of farmer's truck wagons and hauled them from Carlisle to York. In a former school building at the corner of Market and Penn Streets classes proceeded under Professor Mayer and the Reverend Mr. Young. In York they found a congenial fellowship in a more German community and the school began to grow. The opening of a separate Classical School in 1831, however, was accomplished under a cloud of sadness. The

Reverend Mr. Young, beloved by the students, fell victim to tuberculosis and died in March of that year. By 1832 a second full-time professor was needed.

At the Synod in Frederick, Maryland in 1832 the Rev. Dr. Thomas Pomp of Easton introduced his house guest, a 26-year-old Doctor of Philosophy from Kirchbracht, Germany, by the name of Frederick Augustus Rauch. Armed with sparkling credentials he so impressed the Synod that in short order they appointed him to the exclusive conduct of the Classical School and as Professor of Biblical Literature in the Seminary.

With an urge toward academic excellence Frederick Augustus Rauch immediately proposed a curriculum for the Classical School which would have made the ablest scholar turn pale and run. The plan was never fully adopted, but the courses that were instituted could have tested the endurance of any strong mind. Into his Seminary classes he introduced a fresh intellectual excitement.

Scene: Into the Classroom. The new student. F. A. Rauch and 4 or 5 students are Hegelian philosophy.  
Student seated – 4 or 5 – in classroom – simple setting.  
F. A. Rauch is quick, very bright, gentle enough but not very tolerant of slow thinking.

**F.A.R.:** “Mr. Glessner, will you begin with Hegel’s view of the universe.”

**Mr. Glessner:** “Hegel says that the universe is a constant development of the Absolute, that is, God through struggle and effort...(hesitates)...”

**F.A.R.:** “Yes, Mr. Glessner, and...and...what further?” (impatiently)

**Mr. Glessner:** “The Absolute is spirit, and its development is in accordance with the laws by which mind thinks things out logically...”

**F.A.R.:** “Very good!...go on...!”

**Mr. Glessner:** “This always involves three stages of – thesis – movement in one direction – until it encounters its opposition or its limitations – the anti-thesis – But...but...”

**F.A.R.:** “Yes!...go on...”

**Mr. Glessner:** “How...how ...here I ...” (stammers, he is stuck)

**F.A.F.:** “How what, Mr. Glessner? –Mr. Glessner, I see that you have indeed read your assignment but I conclude that you have not thought it through....Gentlemen, I propose that if you learn little else in this class you will learn to *think...think men...Think!*”

End of Scene

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**Narrator:** Increasing numbers of students came to the Classical School and to the Seminary. Soon, however, it became apparent that they had not yet found a permanent home. The perpetual problem of insufficient funds was again making itself felt. By 1834 it was widely agreed that the Seminary and School should go to a community which genuinely wanted them and would, *perchance, provide a stipend for their support*. At the Synod in Chambersburg in 1835, Mercersburg was chosen as the permanent home – the town having promised the sum of \$10,000 and having assured the Synod that their town was “upright, moral, and exemplary”. This time the Board made definite plans for permanent buildings before they moved from York.

## PART VI

### A. The Seminary at Mercersburg – First Period (1837 – 1844)

**Narrator:** The Classical School was moved at once, and in 1836 it was chartered as Marshall College.

In 1837, shortly before the Seminary was to be moved to Mercersburg, Dr. Mayer felt constrained to resign. Now Dr. Rauch had the weight of both schools on his shoulders. In 1838 Dr. Mayer was re-elected, went to Mercersburg, but the next year he resigned permanently. It was during these later years of Dr. Mayer’s professorship that the new breed of students made their presence felt. The scholars whom Dr. Mayer had envisioned were developing, but they in their youth lacked wisdom and compassion. In their new learning they saw fit to condemn his older teaching. With great dedication he had opened new doors for them, now, *they willed* to open still newer doors for others who in time would, indeed, supersede them.

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Scene: Last of Mayer. Mayer at same desk writing to J. R. Reily.

March 16, 1836

“Dear friend Reily,  
...being distressed to hear of your infirmity...I ask God in his mercy to preserve you...  
Let all your trust be placed in Him and remember and believe his promises.

I find I have been brought in time of trial to doubt of everything and to look upon our destination as a thing wrapped up in hopeless gloom...But when I have turned to the character of Jesus and there read his constant and positive assurance...I always find rest for my soul. The promises of the Gospel thus established and immovably firm have been my consolation and my joy. God grant that it may be abundantly the same to you...”

End of Scene – Lights fade out

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**Narrator:** By 1839 there was an imposing academic Seminary building in Mercersburg and homes for the professors. But again Dr. Rauch was left to manage both schools. Before long his health began to suffer. The Board speedily sought an additional professor and they chose the Rev. John Williamson Nevin, Professor of Biblical Studies and Church History at Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh. Immediately, Dr. Rauch and Dr. Nevin developed a strong intellectual bond. In their mutual give and take it was Rauch who was to provide Nevin with the philosophical basis for some of his most important ideas. But Frederick Augustus Rauch never regained his strength. Early in 1841 he died of tuberculosis at the age of thirty-five. His legacy to the Seminary was that intellectual excitement which continued in the Seminary Community for the next twenty years.

John Williamson Nevin, a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary, was trained an orthodox Calvinist. In coming to the German Reformed Church he felt he was simply moving from one branch of Presbyterianism to another. He had learned the German language in order to read a sensational new Church History, the product of Johann Neander, Professor at the University of Berlin, for this was the period of a rising regard for German literature and theological thought.

Professor Nevin came to his new post in the fall of 1840 when both people and pastors were in high, good spirits. There was peace in Zion. The Free Synod had eased its posture—after all, the Seminary was producing German preachers, and Dr. Nevin had complimented them on their determination to retain their mother tongue and thus allow for the reception of new German thought. With good grace they dissolved their Synod and quietly returned to the fold.

Then, too, the good spirit within the Church was not at all impeded by the fact that the Seminary was established and its graduates were strong leaders in the Church. True—many, many more ministers were needed, but one Era had ended and the next was anticipated with hope. It was a time to *celebrate*! Since it was about a hundred years from the beginnings in America the Synod chose the year 1841 and they called it the Centenary Year. What better way to celebrate, said they, than to raise a permanent Endowment for the Theological Seminary. Just fifteen years after James Ross Reily they set a goal of \$100,000!

Professor Nevin entered immediately into the spirit of celebration. In the Weekly Messenger of December, 1840 he began a series of “Essays on the Heidelberg Catechism” in tribute to the doctrinal heritage of the Church, and as a call to renewed use of this great Confession.

Gifts to raise up young ministers flowed forth as never before, and the spirit of the Celebration was expressed throughout the length and breadth of the Church as they sang the Centenary Commemorative Hymn composed by Lydia Jane Pierson.

**1841 Centenary Hymn** – (Interesting hymn—Breaks spot of long narration. Sung by choir.) Stanzas 1 and 7.

*Stanza 1*

Thou who art enthroned in glory  
Crowned with love and robed in grace;  
Lo! We humbly bow before Thee,  
Off'ring up our songs of praise.

Mighty God and gracious Saviour!  
Spirit of enduring grace,  
Come in thine especial favor,  
With thy glory fill this place.

*Stanza 7*

Let our Institutions flourish,  
Sending forth a pious band  
With the words of life to nourish  
All who hunger through the land.

Zion spreads her hands before Thee;  
Come, and in her temples reign,  
While we give all praise and glory  
To the Triune God – Amen.

***Narrator:*** When the sound of the Celebration had subsided, John Williamson Nevin was not about to let its spirit die. With astute observation he saw the needs of the Church, and the most urgent need was for *faithful pastoral ministers* – Ministers who would call the people to true religion by re-establishing their doctrine for faith and life, the Heidelberg Catechism; who would help them rediscover the meaning of the Church and would set before them the importance of the Sacraments.

For more than a hundred years the crucial shortage of ministers had, in many places, left the field open for anything that would come along – and this was the time of revivalism, in some cases highly emotional.

Revivals swept right into the German Reformed Church. The objective was to “get right with God, to be brought through to the other side, from sin to salvation” by a radical conversion experience, after which the living of an exemplary life was considered inevitable. They called this the “new measures”, or new method of stirring up the people to a lively faith.

To Dr. Nevin, the presence of competent ministers in all churches was the only answer to the challenge of revivalism. It was disturbing, therefore, that within the shadow of the



Seminary the Mercersburg congregation, itself, was without a regular minister. The students and Dr. Nevin urged them that they set an example by calling a pastor of their own, instead of relying on the Seminary for supply pastors. By the end of 1842 they heard a trial sermon by the Rev. Mr. William Ramsey, Presbyterian minister of Philadelphia, and a classmate of Dr. Nevin at Princeton Seminary. He preached an edifying sermon to a large congregation in the forenoon. In the evening, a still larger crowd had assembled. Feeling quite confident, he proceeded to conduct a revival service at the end of his sermon.

Scene: “The Anxious Bench” – Church – pulpit centered – 2 chairs (Old Mercersburg Church) – Choir involved – benches – a “mourner’s bench” up to right of pulpit.

Time: 3-4 minutes but, this will be complicated and worked out as we go for best effect.

Dr. Ramsey is leading service and Dr. Nevin seated on pulpit chair.

Congregation: All varieties of people. Some, or all choir members included. The revival is approaching its latter stages. We wish to do this in good taste, avoiding a caricature, if possible, - and so there will be emphasis on the last part of this scene with the words of Dr. Nevin.

Choir: and/or stage congregation: Singing the song – “Come Humble Sinner”

“Ramsey” will be worked with individually to create proper scene and proper sermon material and correct emotional pitch.

Invitation goes out at just the right time, for penitents to come forward if they “desire the prayers of the Church for salvation”.

Several (2) highly emotional ladies (1 older) go forward along with 2 or 3 others – congregation intensely interested in what is transpiring – some show disapproval – others keen excitement.

As the final “word” is said “over” the penitents – Rev. Ramsey calls on Dr. Nevin – Expects to hear approval.

**Ramsey:** “Brother Nevin, will you say a word and dismiss us with the benediction?”

**Nevin:** (Rises – he is uncritical in appearance – calm – earnest – solemn –shows no malice although he is vigorously opposed. In complete control of his feelings.)

“We all favor a lively religious spirit, a true religious revival within the heart. We all favor an active, living faith. But I urge you to be careful, now, not to imagine that coming out in this public way is the same as repentance and faith in Christ, which alone can give you peace. Faith must be carefully thought out and persistently lived out in a truly revived spirit. *Now, you have had some good exercise tonight, but do not equate*

this with a living, active faith which, by nurture, endures, and thrives and grows to strength. I earnestly ask you to make a clear distinction between high emotional feeling and true faith, that you do not deceive yourselves. – No amount of emotional display or physical excitement will avail to nurture the Christian life and the soul – no, not even if you should creep about this Church from one corner to another until your knees are sore and bleeding. Now go your way in peace, and consider the solemnity of true religion.”

(Motions them to rise)

(*Pauline Benediction* by Nevin)

(While he speaks their demeanor changes – they leave, somewhat separately, in groups, as lights fade – sobered)

(Ramsey stands back – thinking of their “injudicious behaviour”. )

End of Scene

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**Narrator:** Dr. Ramsey was extended a call from the Mercersburg congregation and Dr. Nevin was eager for him to accept. But he felt it a duty to write Mr. Ramsey that if he came to Mercersburg he would have to adopt the catechetical system or he, John Nevin, might have to stand in his way. Mr. Ramsey, in a letter to the consistory declining the call, blamed Dr. Nevin, belaboring his old classmate with great bitterness. Hereby a crisis ensued which went through the Church into the Seminary where not a few students were inclined toward the “new measures”. Dr. Nevin prepared a series of lectures for his students. These were enlarged and published in a tract entitled *The Anxious Bench*. *The Anxious Bench* created a sensation, and opposition, especially from outside the German Reformed Church, where “new measures” were heavily practiced. Within the denomination, with few exceptions, the congregations responded with approval. The decisive little tract from the man of steel of Mercersburg had called the Church into a sounder direction.

## PART VI

### B. Period 2. The Seminary at Mercersburg (1844 – 1864)

Dr. Nevin, as both Professor of the Seminary and President of the College, had been under increasing pressure. Thus the Synod sought to fill the second professorship. In an interesting turnabout, it was the English-speaking part of the Church which requested that a professor be called from Germany. The proposal met with strong approval and at the Synod of Lebanon in 1843, the Rev. Dr. Philip Schaff, the twenty-five year old lecturer in theology at the University of Berlin, was called to become the Professor of Church History. He came highly recommended by his teacher, Church Historian Johann Neander, of the University of Berlin, the author of the famous Church History. Philip Schaff

arrived in Mercersburg in August of 1844 to a rousing welcome from both students and townsfolk.

Dr. Schaff's formal introduction to the church took place in Allentown at the Synod of 1844, where he was warmly received as a member. But in the opening sermon he heard what must have chilled him to the bone. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Joseph Berg of the Race Street Church in Philadelphia. A gifted speaker, Dr. Berg proceeded, in effect, to call the German Reformed Church to develop a high denominational pride. This could be done, he said, by looking to the doctrinal heritage of the Church. There it could be seen that the Reformed Church had a special Apostolic Succession through the Waldenses of Southern France of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, right back to the Apostles. The Waldenses, he said, were the fathers of the Palatinate Reformed Church, and they had received their doctrine from a tiny remnant of Apostolic protesters in each age who had warned, steadily, against the heresy and iniquity of Rome from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Roman Church – for 1,000 years – was a heresy and never was the true Church of Christ, and never could be, until she would repent and become in effect, Protestant, preferably, German Reformed. "Rise up!" he said, "Respect your heritage. You, and not the Church of Rome are the bearers of the *Torch of Truth and Grace!*"

This point with several others created a strong sermon and it was delivered by one who was strongly anti-Roman Catholic and who had preached from his pulpit of the apostasy of the Romish Church and had called the Pope, Anti-Christ.

His speech struck a responsive chord, however, for in America in the 1840s there was a flood-tide of anti-Catholic sentiment owing in part to massive Irish immigrations then in progress.

*One week later, on October 25 in Reading, Pennsylvania, Dr. Philip Schaff was inaugurated the Professor of Church History. After the formal ceremony he strode to the pulpit to deliver his Inaugural Address.*

Scene: Philip Schaff "The Principle of Protestantism". Reading, Pennsylvania, October 25, 1844. Lights on Church scene. Congregation of some men, women, children. This was a big occasion. Joseph Berg present and plainly visible. Dr. Nevin on chair in front. Academic delegates and ecclesiastical delegates – D. Ref. (M.S. or P. B. outfit)

***Philip Schaff's speech:*** "Brethren, Beloved and Honored in the Lord, Guarded and led by the Almighty Hand which rules the winds and the waves, I find myself standing at length in your midst. Strong, indeed, was the temptation to remain in the world-renowned metropolis of German science, but the voice of nature became silent when your Synod saluted me with a solemn call, 'Come over and help us!'

I am here to serve your Church and thus the Church Universal of Jesus Christ...I proceed, then, to explain the ground on which I expect to stand in your midst.

Allow me, then to speak of the Principle of Protestantism and its relation to the present posture of the Church, particularly in the United States.

The Church after the Reformation was in vital union with the church as it was before the Reformation. The Reformers did not intend to re-found the Church of the New Testament, nor to restore the Church of the first four centuries. Rather, they sought to reform the Roman Catholic Church of its errors, so that it could continue to be true to the Church of the Apostles and be recognized as the Church Universal.

The entire Catholic Church, as such, pressed with inward necessary impulse towards Protestantism. The Reformers were and understood themselves to be Catholics who held faith and continuity with the ancient and medieval Catholic Church.

The Church is an ever-living organism with a continuous flow of life in which every succeeding age is a true development of its own will from the life preceding it. The Protestant Church, therefore, is also a development, and cannot be regarded as the final, perfect form of the Church – as the Body of Christ, or the Bride of the Lamb – It is like all developments, an intermediate stage, intended for something better and more perfect in the future. When the present problems of American Protestantism such as the caricatured religion of revivalism and the splintered, fractured *denominationalism* shall come to an end, then the best of Catholicism and of Protestantism shall be taken up into a higher unity and appear as one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church – the Church of the future shall be according to John, where Jesus prayed ‘that they all might be one.’”

End of Scene

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**Narrator:** Dr. Schaff had barely finished his address when the first volley of fire sounded from the guns of the Anti-Catholics. Led by Dr. Berg and Jacob Helfenstein of Germantown, they accused him of being easy on Rome and obscenely severe on American Protestantism. He was treasonous, this Philip Schaff, plainly treasonous to Protestantism – and yet he was to be a Seminary Professor, who would teach Romanizing tendencies at Mercersburg. He was nothing less than a “pestilential error smuggled in from Germany”!

Within weeks after the publication of both Dr. Berg’s sermon and Dr. Schaff’s *Principle of Protestantism*, a rising crescendo of controversy was joined by Professors of leading Seminaries, clergy from at home and abroad, and laymen of every persuasion.

By the Synod of 1845 at York, Philadelphia Classis presented six counts of heresy against the Mercersburg men. Dr. Berg walked the floor of Synod as chief prosecutor and spoke for two hours on the errors of Mercersburg. In defense, Nevin spoke for two hours and Schaff, in true German style, spoke a total of five hours.

After five days of exhaustive deliberation, a special study committee reported that, indeed, the charges were unfounded. When the vote was taken to accept their report, there were 70 Ayes, 3 Nays and one abstention. The first heresy trial of the Mercersburg men had sputtered and died.

It was during this time that Dr. Nevin was convinced that the Lord's Supper was viewed so lightly that it had become just an occasion to think of Christ hanging on a Cross. But the great Reformed Confessions taught otherwise, especially the Heidelberg Catechism. True Reformed doctrine taught nothing less than the real presence of Jesus Christ after a spiritual manner. Dr. Nevin wrote his position into his greatest theological contribution, his little volume entitled, *The Mystical Presence*.

Now, said the critics, this idea of a real presence, spiritual or otherwise, leads straight back to Rome. This is heresy. But Dr. Nevin's answers to all his critics were so brilliant that they all fell silent. They simply had no response. The Reformed meaning of the Sacrament of the Holy Communion had been clearly and loudly restated.

While Dr. Nevin and Dr. Schaff were thus forming their doctrine of the Church, Dr. Nevin became more and more distressed with the condition of American Protestantism. Convinced that Protestantism was "fast tumbling into ruins" at the hands of sect groups he was prepared to say, "If Protestantism fails, where else can I go but back to Rome."

Rumors spread that the Professor of Theology was about to submit to Rome, to the wagging of heads by Berg and Helfenstein and the dismay of his advocates.

Pressed by his own uncertainty, Dr. Nevin submitted his resignation to the Synod of 1851 and a weary Dr. Schaff followed suit.

Tableau: Synod 1851. Berg and Helfenstein on floor cajoling delegates. Tense Synod. Nevin and Schaff. Nevin weeps. Comforted by Schaff et al. and congratulated.

(As read only)

**Narrator:** The Synod itself was tense. Berg and Helfenstein again covered the floor of Synod urging the delegates to accept the resignations and be rid of both of them forever.

But the vote to reject Dr. Schaff's resignation was 42-5. The vote to ask Dr. Nevin to retain his professorship was 42-4. Deeply moved by the vote of confidence Dr. Nevin, the stolid, dignified scholar broke down and wept. "I love this Synod from the bottom of my heart."

Berg and Helfenstein were infuriated and shortly thereafter they both left the German Reformed Church.

Dr. Nevin was pressured by both colleagues and devoted students to remain, but he concluded his work at the Seminary and remained with the College until it moved to Lancaster in 1853.

Dr. Schaff now had the whole Seminary on his hands, and a disrupted Seminary it was. The students had become deeply involved in the controversy and had emerged into warring camps. Six students resigned and a gray gloom settled over Mercersburg as Marshall College packed up and moved away to Lancaster.

It was a crisis year. There was a critical financial problem. Dr. Schaff was physically exhausted and Dr. Nevin's successor, the Rev. Dr. Bernard C. Wolff of Baltimore, was unavailable until 1854. Dr. Schaff asked for a year's leave to visit his family in Germany and recover his health and the Seminary was suspended from 1853-1854.

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Narrator: The natural outgrowth of the Mercersburg Theology, with its strong concept of the Church, and its high regard for the Sacraments, was a call for a Liturgy whereby the faith of the believer could be thoroughly expressed. The historic liturgy of the Reformed Church was the Palatinate Liturgy of 1563, but it had fallen into disuse with the decline of the use of the German language and under the influence of the prevailing American idea of free worship.

In the 1850s a Synodical Commission set to work on the preparation of a new liturgy and by the time Philip Schaff left for Europe in 1853 he was the chairman of the Commission.

(Visual Aids here – Picture Michael Schlatter, etc.)

Within the Seminary the students entered into lively debate – should a minister wear clerical attire or is it Reformed not to do so? – and then they discovered a portrait of the Rev. Michael Schlatter of 1750 and, lo and behold! He was attired in a pulpit robe replete with white tabs. Should a worship service contain only free prayer as opposed to prescribed or written prayers? – Lo and behold, the Palatinate liturgy left no room for any free prayer. Should the minister do all the speaking in worship or should the people take a part in confessions, responses, and Amens? – Should the Old Reformed Liturgies be revised and used, or should a new Evangelical Catholic liturgy, made up of the best of the ages, be created?

When the Liturgical Commission presented its Provisional Liturgy in 1858, it was a new Evangelical Catholic service which they had created. Thereby, a new and violent controversy burst upon the Church. It was at once highly creative and bitterly destructive, but for thirty years it raged, dividing the churches into Old Reformed loyalists and Mercersburg devotees. To say that this condition had no effect on the Seminary and its general health would be untrue.

With such a division of congregational loyalty, loyalty to the Seminary would, naturally, diminish.

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When the Theological Seminary reopened in 1854, it was under a cloud of this third major controversy and as it wore on, the Professor of Theology was the Rev. B. C. Wolff, one who was well experienced to remain calm in difficult times. This was the same B.C. Wolff to whom Prof. Levis Mayer had so often written of his fears and hopes for the Carlisle beginnings. Together with Dr. Schaff he continued to teach the Mercersburg Theology unchanged.

But there were even darker days ahead for everyone, for the guns of the Civil War were rumbling, and an uneasiness far more unsettling than any ecclesiastical controversy was disrupting the Seminary Community. By 1863 the route of the Southern troops was directly through the town of Mercersburg to Chambersburg and Gettysburg. Now and then an intriguing light flickered on Mt. Parnell as the all – clear signal was given on the underground railroad. And from the back streets of the town, where Negro slaves had found refuge, there came the poignant sound of their spirituals.

Scene: “Civil War and Seminary” – Time fo the Civil War. Will try a slow harmonica here or 3 or 4 men’s voices in “Tenting Tonight” or perhaps *only* throughout the whole scene, the Spiritual “There is a Balm in Gilead” or 1 or 2 other Spirituals.

Stage – dim light – table – candle –Philip Schaff and student.

Stage is divided, horizontally, by drape curtain – on rear half will be heard (unseen) the sounds coming from the town street during this scene. Simple set and simple scene.

Spiritual continues throughout – distantly as though ¼ block away. Very softly.

Philip Schaff is seated at table writing – spot on him – candle lighted. This is from his famous diary.

(dated) Sunday, July 5, 1863

“This morning our church service was interrupted with the news of the Gettysburg victory. We were told that 747 Confederate prisoners, with several dozen wounded, were being brought to Mercersburg. Thus far we wait. We are cut off from all communications with the outside –letters, newspapers, and travel. We have been under the jurisdiction of the Confederacy since June 26, and it was necessary to suspend the exercises of the Seminary. It was impossible to study and we had no right to retain the students when their state calls them to its defense. We invited them all to enlist at the next recruiting station – for what are Seminaries and churches for, if we have no country and home?

Under General Stewart's troops the town has suffered terribly and guerilla bands have staged slave hunts by burning every house suspected of harboring a runaway. This is reminiscent of the worst times of the Dark Ages!

The village sent 115 of its choice young men into battle., I went with them on horseback, ten miles away to the railroad station. I felt a desire to go along as Chaplain and I thought of Zwingli's conduct:" –

(Here sound of shuffling feet begins – softly to louder to rear stage, outside. A few calls, as of Colonel, then shuffling feet. Louder – receding and then stops.)

**Student:** (Comes running in to say – as Schaff half-rises) "Sir: the soldiers are coming – the word is that there are many wounded among them. The able will move on, but it is requested to use the Seminary building as a hospital."

**Dr. Schaff:** "Yes, yes! Go quickly, call Dr. Wolff, he has the keys to the main buildings – and call the others together to help – I shall come, too."  
(adds a last line)  
"They will be in wretched condition and will need much care!"

**Student:** (runs in again) "Sir, there are at least 600 wounded, the Colonel says – Where shall they all go?"

**Dr. Schaff:** "Go quickly, find Rev. Barker at the Methodist Church. They will make room in their basement – and then, run to Dr. King's place; his barn is the closest and most secure."

**Writes:** "How filled with sad interest are these days! I go..." (Blows out candle and hurries out, as lights fade. )

End of Scene

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## PART VI

### C. AT Mercersburg (1864 – 1871)

**Narrator:** Classes were resumed three months later, but now Dr. Schaff was absent. He had been granted a two year's leave to travel in Europe. At the same Synod, Dr. Wolff had requested retirement. To fill the Professorship of Theology, the Synod chose the Rev. Henry Harbaugh, and to teach Church History in Dr. Schaff's absence they chose the Rev. Elisha Elnathan Higbee. But Dr. Schaff, the brilliant "scholar for all seasons" never returned to Mercersburg to teach. He formally resigned in 1865 and, subsequently, became the celebrated Professor of Church History at Union Theological Seminary in



New York City. Dr. Higbee was elected to fill his post and Drs. Harbaugh and Higbee and their tutors continued to propound the *Mercersburg theology*.

The post Civil War period was a time of revival for the Seminary. Enthusiastic support came from students as well as from ministers and churches. The enrollment was rising and the Endowment was growing, as the financial condition of the Seminary improved.

But just when a brighter day was upon them the dark hand of fate reached forward. In less than four years Dr. Harbaugh fell victim to brain disease and died just after his fiftieth birthday. A beloved teacher, he had arisen from among the people and was beloved by the people of the Church. He returned that love by giving back to the people the heart of the Mercersburg theology – The Mystical Union of the believer with Christ – in a form which they could easily understand and which they could use to express their personal faith. Little did Henry Harbaugh think, that when he composed a few lines of verse and set them to a tune by Woodbury, that a Lancaster audience would sing tonight

(Action – Congregation will sing together – lights up in auditorium)

“Jesus, I live to Thee,  
The oveliest and best;  
My life in Thee, Thy life in me,  
In Thy blest love I rest.

Jesus, I die to Thee,  
Whenever death shall come;  
To die in Thee is life to me  
In my eternal home.

Whether to live or die,  
I know not which is best;  
To live in Thee is bliss to me,  
To die is endless rest.

Living or dying, Lord,  
I ask but to be Thine;  
My life in Thee, Thy life in me,  
Makes heaven forever mine.  
Amen.”

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## PART VII –THE SEMINARY IN LANCASTER

### A. The Seminary in Lancaster (1871 – 1900)

***Narrator:*** The new Professor of Theology was Dr. Emmanuel V. Gerhart. As President of the faculty, he wrote some years later, “from the time of the consolidation of Franklin and Marshall College at Lancaster, in 1853, there prevailed a feeling of dissatisfaction with the separation of the two institutions. This sense of mutual dependence resulted in the removal of the Seminary to Lancaster in 1871.”

To leave Mercersburg was not easy. The community there had been gracious and, what’s more, the Seminary had permanent buildings. Lancaster, however, offered a College connection and the advantages of a growing urban community. It was in the membership center of the church and was easily accessible by all nodes of travel, including the railway.

Coming to Lancaster, though, meant the temporary inconvenience of being in confined quarters. There were no dormitories and the man had to find room and board among the townsfolk.

(Visual Aid – “Old Main” –etcetera)

In September of 1871, classes began in two small rooms in Old Main on the College Campus. In addition to Dr. Gerhart, the faculty consisted of Dr. Thomas Apple, Professor of Church History and New Testament, and the Rev. F. A. Gast, who soon afterward became the first full Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament Theology.

They planned to teach on the College campus “temporarily”, and so they had brought only part of the library which they stored in a small room on the third floor – in “disarray”. On the first floor they had the use of a small reading room where they placed a few reference books and periodicals.

Diminished support from the congregations had not been anticipated. But the National Panic of 1873 and the divided loyalties of the congregations caused the gifts to the Seminary to drop for a number of years. The “temporary year or two” turned into twenty-three long years of working in cramped quarters.

Dr. Gerhart and his colleagues, however, were determined to retain undiminished academic offerings. Constantly they requested more professors and lectureships, comparing Lancaster’s academic limitations to the broader offerings of other schools. A response to this challenge brought to the faculty in 1890, the Rev. John C. Bowman, Professor of New Testament Exegesis, and in 1892, the Rev. William Rupp, Professor of Practical Theology.

John C. Bowma had graduated from the Seminary in the 1870s when they had lived with the hope of “*a building*” by “*next summer*”. But next summer was 1872 and now it was 1892.

At forty-one, the youngest member of the faculty, he taught his courses, but he himself had a cause to pursue, and that cause would not be denied. With visionary zeal he set about the monumental task of building buildings.

But to build buildings you need money – and to raise money your cause must earn trust – and to gain both, where do you *go*? You begin *with* the Board of Trustees!

#### J. C. Bowman Scene – Part I

1892 – Bowman and Board of Trustees

Simple stage – front set – loose chairs for Board. J. C. Bowman is in front of them facing them. He and Board are stage center – Board in front with backs to stage right or rear (as is best) so their faces are visible.

**J. C. B:** “Gentlemen, let us take our needs to the Reformed people! Surely they want to provide their Seminary with its critical needs! -- I propose the purchase of five acres across the street on the North East corner for our new location!”

**Board:** (Heads shake, NO! – but not too vigorously)

**J. C. B:** “I propose we consider the building of a main academic building for no more than \$50,000, and a library buiding for \$25,000!”

**Board:** (Heads shake more vigorously – mouth open!)

**J. C. B:** “Gentlemen, I propose a \$25,000 Endowment for the Library!”

**Board:** (Heads shake, mouths open, hands up! Stop!!)

**J. C. B:** “And then, I propose two fellowships at \$10,000 each...”

**Board:** (Heads shake, less vigorously, hands come down, mouths still open)

**J. C. B:** “Gentlemen: I also propose \$10,000 for the Endowment of a Museum of Biblical Antiquities!”

**Board:** (Heads still up, but hands down – no sign of life – *stunned*!)

(Lights down but all persons remain in place)

**Narrator:** The Board was stunned. What Dr. Bowman had suggested was surely needed –but, as men of sober judgment, successful in business, to think in terms of \$50,000 just for *one* building was shocking!

Undaunted like James Ross Reily of the Carlisle beginnings, John C. Bowman propounded his cause before the meeting of Synod, before every meeting of every Classis, before every congregation that would have him, and before every Church Society that would listen. And when he returned to the Board of Trustees he could report with some confidence: --

(Lights Up)

**J. C. B:** “Gentlemen, the Reformed people are responding so well, I believe we will have in excess of \$50,000 subscribed within the year!”

**Board:** (Head up – they are listening)

**J. C. B:** “Gentlemen, I have in my hand pledges for the cost of the land and I propose that we purchase immediately!”

**Board:** (Heads up, mouths open)

**J. C. B:** “I have in my other hand sixteen pledges which total the cost of the Library – our people are responding – they want to build!”

**Board:** (Heads up – mouths open – heads shake in amazement)

**J. C. B:** “Gentlemen, will you not put your names on a pledge and give to build a school for the Prophets of our beloved Reformed Church?”

**Board:** (Heads up – mouths open – hands down – frozen in amazement)

End of Scene – Lights fade more slowly

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**Narrator:** *Within just* two years the buildings were built, and in May of 1894 they were dedicated – *debt free!*

But Dr. Bowman was not quite finished. By 1917 the campus was graced with Walter Richards Dormitory, the Arcade, a Library Annex, and the remarkable Dietz Refectory. The plans for the completion of the interior of Santee Chapel and the installation of the Moller pipe organ were completed in 1925.

While Dr. Bowman was building buildings, Drs. Apple, Gerhart, and Gast taught and ministered to the students, and together they rendered to the Seminary a total of 104 years of service.

## PART VII

### B. The Seminary in Lancaster (1920 – 1945)

Narrator<sup>4</sup>: When the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church marched into the twentieth century, it joined a procession of advancing ideas. There was Darwinism, the Social Gospel, Urbanization, Industrialization, Psychology of Religion, the Religious Education Movement, and a high interest in Home and Foreign Missions.

Although the Christocentric principle of the Theology of Mercersburg was never abandoned, theology now moved to a more liberal stance. Our Seminary had always retained its contact with German thought, but now the Professors of Theology would come by way of study in Europe. When Dr. Christopher Noss succeeded Dr. Gerhart in 1904 he was the first of this new style of teacher, for he came by way of the University of Berlin as a student of Adolph Harnack. His successors in the field of Theology and his colleagues in other fields would also be men of European, academic exposure. These men would expound the views of Harnack, Schleiermacher, and Ritschl as they developed the liberal theological thought which would characterize the position of the Seminary for the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The rising Christian Education Movement demanded practical training for ministers in the work of the Sunday Schools and the growing Youth Movement. In 1929 a new Professorship was established. Its first incumbent was the Rev. Dr. Nevin C. Harner. With a rare gift of clear speech and a pen which spoke just as clearly, he elevated the Sunday School to a department of Christian Education and provided the strong theological basis for the Christian Education Department of the Seminary. Theological Seminaries everywhere used his academic volumes as text books, the Methodists and other denominations and the armed forces gave their members his volumes on personal faith, and thousands of Evangelical and Reformed and United Church of Christ communicant members studied his classic volume, *My Confirmation*.

Tableau or visual aid

Curtain backdrop while this is being read. *In color*-lights, one by one, on poster-type replicas with his book covers. (hopefully these will be put into poster-sized book covers by an enterprising artist for this backdrop.)

Books: 1. "I Believe"

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<sup>4</sup> See the following for the tableau which should be visible while this is being read.

2. "My Confirmation" (center)
  3. "The Educational Work of The Church"
  4. "About Myself"
- Etcetera

**Narrator:** The untimely death of Dr. Harner in 1951 did not halt his plans for a program of studies leading to the degree of Master of Religious Education. In 1952 the plan was instituted and at its conclusion more than twenty-five persons, among them international students, held this degree and now serve in the church-at-large.

By the mid-thirties, a great World War and severe economic depression had sobered the proponents of the Ever-coming Kingdom of God through man's religious, ethical, and moral progress. The voices of the German theologians, Emil Brunner, and Karl Barth were speaking of man's needs for "the forgiving love of God as revealed in Christ". This was the new Orthodoxy. Said Brunner, "*This constitutes the absolutely incomprehensible message of the Gospels, that God comes to man and that man does not go to God*".

In 1928, Emil Brunner, at the invitation of President George Richards, had given the Schwander lectures which he had entitled, "The Theology of Crisis". So profoundly was Dr. Richards moved that ever thereafter he called himself a Chastened Liberal. In 1934 Dr. Richards wrote his volume, *Beyond Fundamentalism and Modernism*, and became one of the first to introduce Neo-Orthodox thought into the American theological scene.

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**Narrator:** (leads to scene) In 1925 the word "ecumenical" was heard only in rarified circles. By 1945 *The Ecumenical Church* was the title of an established Seminary course. By 1965 "ecumenical" had become a household word. So marked a change could only be the result of a sweeping interest in a type of reconciliation within the splintered body of Christ. No one was better prepared for such a direction of thought than the ministers and congregations of the Reformed Church in the United States of America. When Nevin and Schaff had spoken of an Evangelical Catholic Church they were the prophets of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century ecumenical movement. Thus, when the Church Union Movement was developing who was among the first to be represented? – The Reformed Church in the U.S.A., and who was one to go? – Dr. Schaff's 20<sup>th</sup> century successor, the Rev. Dr. George Richards, Professor of Church History and President of the Seminary.

Scene: Lancaster Train Station

Traffic moves – people walking in concourse – back and forth – Stage right leads to the trains – Front of stage, from left to right: Dr. Richards, same suitcase at all times. May change hat for this series, on 2 occasions.

Three short clips: Dr. Richards always comes from stage left to right as he "leaves".

**1<sup>st</sup> clip:** 1908 – George Richards comes from stage left. In mid-stage he meets man coming home from stage right – a friend.  
(Founding Meeting of FCCCA)

**Man No. 1. (Friend):** “George! Nice to see you... you going or coming?”

**G.R.:** “Well, I’m headed that (points) way, I guess I’m *going*! I’m leaving for New York. I’m on my way to a meeting of what they call The Federal Council of Churches. We’re just getting started.”

**Man No. 1:** “Well, George, that’s right down your line – You’ll do a good job! – Have a good trip, George.”

**Trainman:** (off stage right ) “All Aboard”

**G.R.:** “Good-bye, Henry.” (Wave of the hand good-bye and George leaves – bag in hand – stage right.)

(Traffic – moderate – continues)

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**2<sup>nd</sup> clip:** 1927 – George Richards comes again from stage left to right – traffic continues. Comes to center stage: Same suitcase, different hat (and coat this time)

**Man No. 2:** “Dr. Richards, I thought that was you. Where are you off to now, Sir?”

**G.R.:** “*Well, John!* I haven’t seen you since you left the Seminary – Where are you located?”

**Man No. 2:** “I’m in Somerset now. We’re very happy there. Where are you headed, Sir?”

**G.R.:** “Oh, I’m going to New York, and then I sail for Europe. I must be in Lausanne, Switzerland in two weeks for the meeting of the Council on Faith and Order. I guess that will keep me stepping...”

**Trainman:** “All Aboard.”

**Man No. 2:** (Shake hands with George Richards) “It’s so nice to see you again, Dir. Have a safe journey and bon voyage!”

**G.R.:** (wave of hand – goodbye –leaves to stage right – bag in hand)

(Traffic continues)

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**3<sup>rd</sup> clip:** 1934 – Evangelical and Reformed Merger – Cleveland – Night Train – June – straw hats – over the 30 years George Richards will walk slower each time – brisk to moderate – to a bit slower. Light traffic passes them by.

George Richards again from stage left. This time with another man. They come to stage center giving appearance of chatting inaudible. At stage center they meet a third man – Join – all delegates to Cleveland for the Evangelical and Reformed Merger. No coat (June) – straw hats – each has bag.

**Man A with George:** “Well, we’re off to Cleveland. Will it really work, this merger – do you think?” (To himself...”I don’t know.”)

**G. R:** “Well, we leave Reformed, we’ll come back Evangelical and Reformed – then we’ll find out if it works!” (In good humor!) “We are on the threshold of a great occasion, men!”

**Man B:** (On stage already) “You know, I’ve been thinking. If Nevin and Schaff could be in Cleveland what would they think?”

**G. R:** “If Nevin and Schaff had been at any of the meetings, especially the ones on Faith and Order, they might think all the discussion was right from their ideas – The topics read just like the things they worked on. Yes...Well, Nevin and Schaff were prophets, real prophets...!”

**Trainman:** “All Aboard!”

(They pick up bags and walk stage right as light fades. )

End of Scene

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**Narrator:** In the succeeding years he continued to contribute his leadership to the Ecumenical Councils. George Richards, the first formally inaugurated President of the Seminary was to his students and his colleagues at once a thinker of challenging theological thought, the complete Ecumenist, and ever, the scholarly philosopher of Christian History.

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**Narrator:** During World War II the Seminary was no less affected by change than any other campus. Men in blue uniforms appeared in the classroom as part of a Navy V-12 program. The class year was accelerated into a year round program and for four years, no



one want on a vacation. A car was a rarity for there was no fuel. Just as rare on the campus was a married Evangelical and Reformed student. Indeed, marriage for Reformed ministerial candidates had been prohibited until the late 1920s. By 1930, those who did marry were required to have the permission of their Classis or the Seminary President. Until 1950 the Evangelical and Reformed married students were a small minority.

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## PART VII

### C. The Seminary in Lancaster (1945 – 1970)

*Narrator:* At the end of World War II in 1945, an era of radical change set in. Theology moved further into the direction of Neo-orthodoxy. With the retirement of the Rev. Dr. Theodore Herman, President and Professor of Theology, and the coming of Dr. William Kosman in 1947, students pondered the classic volumes of Brunner, Barth, and Reinhold Niebuhr.

A new chair of Rural Church work was established in 1949, but under its first Professor, the Rev. Dr. Alfred Bartholomew, it soon included the urban and world church, as a mobile society and a telescoping world had to be viewed through the eye of the Christian sociologist.

In November of 1945 when a regular school year was once again underway there was a female student<sup>5</sup> in the Junior Class. Both professors and peers took her presence in stride for, indeed, several female students had previously studied for a season at Lancaster Seminary or had taken a course or two. When she returned for her middler year the students were enthusiastic and encouraging. Graduated in May of 1948 she was the first alumna in the 123 year history of the Seminary. Licensed and ordained in June of 1948 and called to St. Paul's Church, Lancaster as Associate Minister, Lancaster Seminary had produced its first female for the pastoral ministry and with no debate or protest.

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(On backdrop curtain, or visual aid – 2 doors marked “Gentlemen”. Dorothy Korn comes forward and changes one sign to “Ladies”. Add sign ASW meeting room – tonight and time – Sign, “Watch children”, add a kiddy car or tricycle, stroller, add a garbage can – Parking Lot signs, etc...!)

By 1948 many of the new students were already married and in order to retain a Seminary Community, the third floor of Richards Hall was transformed into apartments

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<sup>5</sup> Beatrice Martha Weaver, Later the Rev. Beatrice McConnell (*ed.*)

for married students. By 1960, in order to provide suitable community housing for married students and their families and housing for women students, Harner, Bowman, and Nevin Halls were erected and now grace the North Campus along with assorted tricycles, sleds, pets and more cars than will fit!

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**Narrator:** From the founding of the Mozart and Mason Society in 1843, music had been an important part of Seminary life. But no formal course in Church Music was offered until 1921. In time, a student choir was organized. On occasion it sang a concert in a nearby church or appeared at a special Seminary function. By 1947 the choir gave regular weekly Lenten concerts in more distant areas. By the spring of 1949, the first week-long choir tour was undertaken, this time to the Southern region of the Church. Such week-long tours during the course of which 10-12 concerts were sung were to follow in the succeeding years to the different regions of the Church. The students were taking the Seminary to the churches. In 1960, the choir was invited to sing in Cleveland for the meeting of General Synod. They sang the musical setting<sup>6</sup> of The Statement of Faith.

Here the SATB choir will do this – Singing of “**The Statement of Faith**”

**Narrator:** During this same period the Rev. Dr. Alan Meck became the President of the Seminary. Never the academician, and never required to build buildings, he was the Compleat Pastor and Preacher. Endowed with a stentorian voice, boundless energy, and a phenomenal memory for faces, and names and facts, he went wherever he was invited and his invitations were legion. And what did he speak about? First he preached a moving sermon and then he spoke of the Seminary – all was generously peppered with statistics. Through it all, he laid before the people the Servanthood of the Seminary. No Seminary President had ever handled his role in quite the same way. In all that he said and did he showed his love for the Seminary. He was its chief recruiting agent and its one-man Booster club.

## PART VII

### D. A Final Decision (1957 – 1970)

**Narrator:** In 1957 the United Church of Christ was formed, the Rev. Dr. Robert V. Moss became the Seminary President, and the Russian “sputnik” launched us all into the space age. Changing times required breadth and resources and to this end there began a protracted period of evaluation – evaluation of purpose – of curriculum – of academic requirements – of the skills its graduates really needed –

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<sup>6</sup> By Frank A. McConnell, F.A.G.O., music professor at the Seminary, 1948-1984

Under the able leadership of Robert Moss evaluation led to reconstruction. Course offerings were expanded under the aegis of a scholarly faculty of men and women who among themselves published twenty volumes in ten years. The desired result was a professionalism in which leaning was the students' responsibility and scholarship would excel. A graduate studies program leading to a degree of Master of Sacred Theology and a program of continuing education for pastors and church leaders was introduced. The faculty went on retreats to reappraise its own role, and a month-long Senior Seminar Abroad was made a requirement.

(Visual Aid – Schaff Library –shots)

An outgrowth of the academic excitement of this period was the erection of the Philip Schaff Memorial Library. In 1957 the Library claimed 35,000 volumes. By 1970 there were 100,000 volumes and 350 periodicals and, of course, the outstanding collection of material related to the Romanticism of the Mercersburg Period.

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***Narrator:*** In 1965 the American Association of Theological Schools recommended a clustering effort toward Interseminary Study programs. Courses were exchanged with Crozier Seminary and investigation was made of such a program with other seminaries within a reasonable distance.

Ultimately, a large clustering was considered with Penn State University. It was proposed that preparation for ministers and related theological professions could be handled best in the atmosphere of a large university.

In 1970 the Board of Trustees took a long, hard look at the purpose of Lancaster Theological Seminary. It recognized that in a few short years it had become a regional Seminary with a high degree of academic respectability. The Board concluded that the purpose of the Seminary was to provide educated men and women with the means to acquire the specialized skills necessary for the forms of Christian Ministry to which they were called. Those skills, said the Board, could best be provided in the Academic Community atmosphere right here in Lancaster.

When Dr. James Glasses became the new Seminary President, a relationship with the local parish was once again initiated.

It was primarily for the parish ministry that servants of Christ would go forth; servants of Christ who were thoroughly professional, educated, expert, institutional, responsible, and dedicated – Servants of Christ who would be prophets, pastors, and priests.

Final Scene – Dr. James Glasse – stage center – spot on him – He has 2-2 ½ minutes of his thoughts of past, present, - takes us, now, into the future. His hopes for Seminary (brief) – his idea of pastoral parish ministry – related profession,

et al. as he sees fit. Prepared and, preferably, without script – but read, if he wishes.

Then – Dr. Glasse leads audience into closing hymn –

**Hymn – No. 349 (E&R) – “God of the Prophets”**

--All Hymns and related items for audience will be on program.

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*END*

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