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The Georg Sverdrup Society

NEWSLETTER

Announcing 2015 Topic for Study: “Sverdrup: The Devotional Writer”

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Sverdrup emphasized the life of piety for believers through his sermons and writings. His endeavor was to see that congregations become “free and living.” What does it mean for a congregation and an individual Christian to be “living”? Sverdrup insisted that the pure, quickening preaching of God’s Word produced spiritual life in a believer and a congregation. For those living in Sverdrup’s day, how did that manifest itself? To answer these questions, the Sverdrup Society will devote the 2015 *Sverdrup Journal* to the idea of Christian devotional life. This topic often intersected with the topic of missions in Sverdrup’s thought. The

final twelve mission meditations from Volume 6 of *Samlede Skrifter* will be translated and included in the journal. Other translations touching on the topic of devotional life will be included. In addition to missions, the topic of prayer also played a key part in the devotional life of Sverdrup and those whom he served. Articles focusing on Sverdrup’s views of what it means to be a Christian with a living faith will also be included in the 2015 *Journal*. Additionally, the Sverdrup Society will consider how the writings of Sverdrup himself can be used in a person’s devotional life.

—Brett Boe



The Sverdrup family coat of arms (above) was first used in Norway during the seventeenth century by Lauritz Pedersen Sverdrup.

Georg Sverdrup

- Born to Pastor Harold Ulrich Sverdrup and his wife Caroline Metella, nee Suur, at Balestrand, Sogn, Norway, on December 16, 1848.
- Died on May 3, 1907, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA, and buried in the Lakewood Cemetery.



About fifty people attended the January 30, 2015, Seminary Discussion at the Free Lutheran Seminary.

2014 GSS Annual Meeting Held in Glyndon, Minnesota

The eleventh Georg Sverdrup Society Annual Meeting was held at Maranatha Free Lutheran Church of Glyndon, Minnesota, on Saturday, October 11.

Following the noon meal, the program began at 1:00 with Rev. Terry Olson of Grand Forks, North Dakota, bringing the Invocation, followed by the traditional Sverdrup Songfest. This year's song leader was Rev. Lloyd Quanbeck, pastor of the host church. The idea of the Sverdrup Songfest is to sing the hymns that would have been sung during Sverdrup and Oftedal's day. To provide context for the hymns, Pastor Quanbeck provided a booklet with the English version and a stanza in Norwegian as well as a brief background of the hymn writer and composer. This year's songs were "In Heaven Above," "Now Thank We All Our God," and "Through the

Night of Doubt and Sorrow." Mrs. Marian Christopherson was the accompanist.

Coinciding with this year's focus, "Sverdrup and the Gospel," Rev. Martin Horn of Kenyon, Minnesota, spoke on "The Congregation and the Gospel of Freedom and Life."

Special music was provided by Miss Keziah Quanbeck, and Mr. Larry Walker, editor of *The Sverdrup Journal*, read an excerpt from his translation of "Justification by Faith and the Justification of the World." The program concluded with the benediction by Mr. Jarrod Hylden, Seminary Intern at Maranatha.

After a brief coffee break, Loiell Dyrud, President of the GSS, called the annual meeting to order. Treasurer Kris Nyman reported that we have 108 individual members and six institutional members. Dyrud pointed out that our translators will have

translated over 70 pages for the 2014 journal; and by the end of 2015, we may very well have finished translating all 85 Meditations from Volume 6 of Sverdrup's *Samlede Skrifter i Udvalg*.

Board members re-elected were Brett Boe, Loiell Dyrud, Steve Mundfrom, and Kris Nyman. Following the annual meeting, the GSS Board re-organized with Steve Mundfrom, President; Loiell Dyrud, Vice President; Tim Larson, Secretary; and Kris Nyman, Membership Secretary and Treasurer. The 2015 GSS Annual Meeting will be held in Minneapolis, Saturday, October 10. The board later chose "Sverdrup: The Devotional Writer" as the 2015 topic for study.

—Loiell Dyrud



Host pastor and leader of the "Sverdrup Songfest," Rev. Lloyd Quanbeck, introducing "*I Himmelen, I Himmelen*" (In Heaven Above, in Heaven Above).



Rev. Martin Horn, the main speaker on the program, spoke on the topic "The Congregation and the Gospel of Freedom and Life."



Larry Walker, translator and editor of *The Sverdrup Journal*, reads an excerpt from his translation of "Justification by Faith and the Justification of the World."



Treasurer and Membership Secretary Rev. Kris Nyman gives his update during the annual meeting.

"And insofar as we understand the issue, the question is this: whether a relationship with God is a living, personal relationship between a poor sinner and a merciful Father, or whether it is a matter of dead bookkeeping, a conclusion of logical reasoning which can be settled by the same mechanical means as, by examining a deed of conveyance, I can learn that I have received a piece of property or a sum of money." (From Sverdrup's "Justification by Faith and the Justification of the World," translated by Larry Walker.)

Discussion Forum at AFLTS

On January 30 the Georg Sverdrup Society held its ninth yearly discussion forum at the Free Lutheran Theological Seminary in Plymouth, Minnesota. The Society was glad to welcome the students of the seminary as well as area pastors and interested laymen. On the program was the delivery of three papers which will appear in the forthcoming volume of *The Sverdrup Journal*, “Sverdrup and the Gospel,” to be released later this spring. Society president, Pastor Steve Mundfrom, Valley City, North Dakota, presided over the day’s events. He commented that “Sverdrup has much more to offer our current generation than a highly biblical view of church polity. Sverdrup was a truly evangelical Lutheran—exactly the kind of Christian and leader we want today. His writings overflow with Gospel warmth and vigor.”

The program began with devotions led by outgoing Interim Dean of the Seminary, Pastor Robert Lee. Pastor Lee

was honored during the coffee break for his longstanding support of the Sverdrup Society and for his service to the school during the months since Dr. Francis Monseth’s sudden death in March of 2013. Following devotions, Larry Walker, editor of *The Sverdrup Journal*, offered a reading from one of his newest translations, “Justification by Faith and the Justification of the World”—which sparked a lively discussion among the attendees.

The first paper was given by Pastor Craig Johnson, Astoria, Oregon, who is also a member of the Society’s Board of Directors. Pastor Johnson’s heartfelt presentation focused on the Law and Gospel in Sverdrup’s work. Pastor Martin Horn, Kenyon Minnesota, presented the second paper, in which he asserted Sverdrup’s commitment to the Gospel as the means by which a free and living congregation comes into being and is established. He warned against the common practice of organizing a

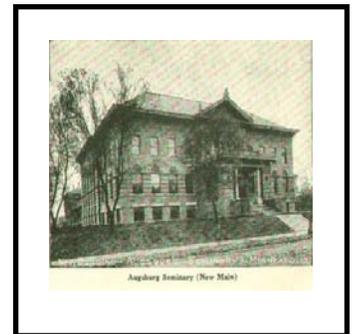
congregation around purely practical matters. The final presentation was delivered by Pastor Mundfrom on the theme “Sverdrup and the Lutheran Confessions.” His work traced the opinions (especially among Norwegian Lutherans) about the Lutheran Confessions up to the time of Sverdrup, and provided a sampling of Sverdrup’s own expressions relating to them.

After each paper was presented, a time of questions and answers enabled the group to grapple with the material presented. A light lunch was served to finish the morning’s activities, and a good time was had by all. The general reaction to these new offerings by the Sverdrup Society was a realization that Georg Sverdrup has much to offer the current generation of evangelical Lutherans, and a rededication to listen carefully to our spiritual ancestors.

—Steve Mundfrom



At the Discussion Forum: youngest Society member Seth Skogerboe wears Sven Oftedal’s top hat, which was presented earlier to the GSS by Dr. Carl Vaagenes, standing to the right.



Sverdrup Journals Available in Digital Format

The Sverdrup Society is happy to announce that all of the Sverdrup Journals are now available online for purchase in a digital format. One can go to the Sverdrup Society website (www.georgsverdrupsociety.org) and click on the link “Online Journal” to be directed to the website, where one can purchase a journal or journals.

The journals are in a PDF format and are searchable. Want to learn what Sverdrup taught about “prayer”? Search the journal(s) and find each reference to “prayer” in the PDF(s).

The ability to have Sverdrup accessible at your fingertips on your laptop, tablet, or smartphone is highly appealing. Each

journal costs \$5. To purchase the first 10 journals together in one large PDF, the cost is \$40. Please contact Pastor Brett Boe (btboe06@gmail.com) with any questions regarding this exciting development.

**THE GEORG SVERDRUP
SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**

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georgsverdrupsociety.org

Ordet Blev Kjødt

(The Word Became Flesh)

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Timothy Larson, Secretary
Kris Nyman, Treasurer and
Membership Secretary
Larry Walker, Editor
Craig Johnson
Brett Boe

*Prospective members are invited to
contact the membership secretary at
the above address.*

From “The Apology of the Augsburg Confession Concerning Justification”

by Georg Sverdrup

What then does it mean to say that this faith justifies? We are not saying that it is such an exceedingly good work that God overlooks all unrighteousness and sin for its sake. Nor do we say that because this faith is the beginning of a new life, God reckons the beginning as if the goal, perfected holiness, had already been achieved. What it means is this—that we have been reconciled with God; that we obtain the forgiveness of sin; that though unrighteous we are being declared righteous for Christ’s sake. The Apology especially cherishes the statement that faith reconciles us with God. While the Law works wrath, likewise it is precisely faith that receives God’s promise that He will be gracious to us for Christ’s sake. Therefore, we have access to the Father by way of Christ, through faith. The judgment of wrath which the Law has taught us to see and to know is nullified by this faith which restores life and peace to the heart. Justification, therefore, is not a process, a life-long development, but an instantaneous work of God in which He forgives sin for the sake of Christ, frees the conscience from the fear and terror of death, comforts, lifts up, and quickens the heart that is bereaved, stricken, broken, and trembling in the fear of death.

Thus, in this presentation of the justification of faith, both the righteousness of God and His grace receive their due. Both the merit of Christ and the humility of faith remain inviolate. . . .

(Translation by Larry Walker)

More Photographs from the Seminary Discussion Forum



Pastor Robert Lee gave an opening devotional. After the event, Pastor Lee was honored with a cake to commemorate his last day as Interim Dean of the Free Lutheran Seminary.



Newly elected GSS president and speaker at the Discussion Forum, Pastor Stephen Mundfrom, presents his paper “Georg Sverdrup and the Lutheran Confessions.”



Pastor Craig Johnson of Astoria, Oregon, presents his paper, “Sverdrup on Law and Gospel.”

