



# The Georg Sverdrup Society

## NEWSLETTER

### GSS Seminary 2020 Discussion Forum



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The Hauge Chapel on the campus of the AFLC Schools in Plymouth, Minnesota, provided a welcome setting for the fourteenth annual discussion forum of the Georg Sverdrup Society on Friday morning, January 10. This year's focus was on various perspectives of congregational life as demonstrated by two well-known and respected families in the Lutheran Free Church and the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations—the Huglens and the Quanbecks. In addition, Rev. Gary Jorgenson presented a paper on the work of Home Missions (church planting) in

the LFC and AFLC.

Mr. Loiell Dyrud opened the morning with an update on the Georg Sverdrup Society since its organization in 2003. The society's main purpose is to translate and study the work of Georg Sverdrup, who along with Sven Oftedal founded the Lutheran Free Church in 1897. Of the six volumes of Sverdrup's writings collected by Andreas Helland, as well as an additional small volume collected by John Evjen, around 2,500 pages have been printed—all in Norwegian. About 1,100 pages have been translated to

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*Pastor Raynard Huglen read his paper, "Seven Decades of Service in the LFC and AFLC," at the Discussion Forum.*

### 2019 GSS Annual Meeting Held in Minneapolis

**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, MN, and buried in the Lakewood Cemetery.

The sixteenth Annual Meeting of the Georg Sverdrup Society was held on the campus of AFLC Schools in Heritage Hall, Saturday, October 5.

Following a noon meal, Rev. Martin Horn, President of the GSS, welcomed the people gathered in the music room and called on Brian Lunn, AFLTS seminarian, for a devotional. Before praying, Lunn read from Sverdrup's Seminary Report for 1899-1900: "No school for pastors is on the right course if it doesn't recognize as its main



mission in all its work the preservation of God's Spirit and Word as living springs flowing unto eternal life in the hearts of mankind." He point-

ed out the importance of a seminary anchored in the Word of God to train pastors for the congregation.

This year's "Sverdrup Songfest" saw the return of Rev. Robert Lee, who has led us in this event several times in the past. The first song was by Danish composer Hans Adolph Brorson, "I See Thee Standing, Lamb of God." Brorson is also known as the "Poet of Christmas" for having written "Thy Little Ones Dear

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## 2019 GSS Annual Meeting Held in Minneapolis (cont.)

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Lord are We.” Composed by Mary Dana Shindler, “I’m a Pilgrim, and I’m a Stranger,” was Lee’s second song. The tune was written by the famous Swedish hymnist, Oskar Ahnfelt, and the lyrics were translated into Swedish by C. O. Rosenius.

For his final song, Lee introduced us to Danish hymn writer Thomas Kingo’s “Seal My Heart with Thine Impresure.” Never at a loss for a turned phrase or witty comment, Lee quoted a joke that “Danish isn’t a language. It’s a throat disease” (an obvious allusion to its “throaty” quality). Kingo is considered Denmark’s most important hymn writer in spite of enduring a life filled with painful experiences.

The main speaker for the program was Sverdrup translator and editor of *The Sverdrup Journal*, Mr. Larry Walker. Walker presented a unique interpretation of how Christianity actually came to Norway, entitled “Viking to Christian: The Conversion of Norway.”

The standard explanation is that King Olav Haraldsson came to Norway to pacify the raiding Vikings around 1015 and, along with subduing them, brought Christianity to Norway. So prevalent is this understanding that St Olaf College in Northfield is named after this conquering hero. However, Walker has an alternative view. He gave evidence of traders from Norway traveling back and forth to England, who were impressed with the churches there and brought Christianity back to Norway as early as 780. He said that the peaceful evangelism of King Haakon the Good in the tenth century has been underrated. His theory, then, is that “Christianity came peacefully to Norway and not by force. It was what one might call ‘Peaceful Evangelism.’”

Pastor Kevin Borg of Valley City, North Dakota, closed the program with prayer.

After a brief coffee break, the annual meeting began. The membership report from Rev. Kris Nyman was

read. We have 89 members in 2019. We have a current bank balance of \$8,680, of which \$3,680 is our working balance. Dues for 2020 will remain the same: Regular, \$30; Institutions, \$15; and Students \$15.

Members elected to the board were Brian Lunn and Kris Nyman. After the annual meeting, the board met to reorganize and chose Gary Jorgenson, President; Brian Lunn, Vice President; Tim Larson, Secretary; and Kris Nyman, Treasurer.

—Loiell Dyrud

## New London-Spicer Area Congregation to Host GSS Summer Forum

The Sverdrup Society will host a discussion forum at Green Lake Free Lutheran Church of Spicer, Minnesota, on Saturday, July 25, 2020. The theme of this event is “Kandiyohi County: One of the Centers of the Lutheran Free Church.” The discussion forum will begin at 9:00 a.m. and continue with breaks until noon. For the first session, Pr. Carl Fiskness, pastor of the Green Lake congregation, will consider the legacy of the LFC in Kandiyohi County. This will include information on LFC congregations, pastors, lay leaders, and institutions in the county, and also how the movement locally has continued into the AFLC. Pr. Martin Horn will give a presentation on Sverdrup’s view of the congregation as “The Bride of Christ.” Mr. Larry Walker will read one of his recent transla-

tions for the third session. After all three presentations, ample time will be dedicated to questions, comments, and sharing memories. A noon meal will be provided by the congregation following the forum.

Green Lake Free Lutheran Church was organized in 1883 and in 1963 was an original member of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations.

To find your way to Green Lake Lutheran Church—from Highway 23 in Spicer, take Country Road 10 east and then turn south onto County Road 8 for two miles. From Highway 12, turn north onto County Road 8 in the city of Kandiyohi and continue for five miles. The address is 8008 County Road 8, Spicer, Minnesota.

—Pastor Lloyd Quanbeck



*Green Lake Free Lutheran Church*

(This event is scheduled for July 2020, but may be postponed because of the Corona Virus.)

## GSS Seminary 2020 Discussion Forum (cont.)

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date. Of these, about 700 have been translated through the work of the Sverdrup Society.

Rev. Martin Horn's devotional on Colossians 1:21 pointed out the mystery of "Christ in You."

Mr. Larry Walker, Editor of *The Sverdrup Journal*, read an excerpt from one of his recent Sverdrup translations: "The Justification of Our Congregations and the Relationship of God's Children to a Christian Congregation." Sverdrup voices his displeasure with the stand the United Church took in 1898 regarding the requirements for a "living" congregation. According to one of their leading spokesmen, all that is necessary to have a congregation is to have two or three Christians as members. The number of worldly people in the congregation doesn't matter, for after all we see a Judas among the disciples, an Ananias and Sapphira in an early congregation, and outwardly immoral people in Corinth. There was much laughter in the audience as they listened to Walker's translation of Sverdrup skewering the convoluted logic of the United Church's view.

Editor of *The Lutheran Ambassador* for its first twenty-seven years and pastor in both the LFC and AFLC, Rev. Raynard Huglen presented an autobiographical paper—"Seven Decades of Service in the LFC and AFLC: A Retrospective." Huglen told of his life, beginning in the home of an LFC pastor, Rev. Reinert Huglen. After his father's untimely death, the family moved back to his mother's hometown of Newfolden, Minnesota. Huglen told of his days at Augsburg Seminary and experiences pastoring in the Lutheran Free Church before deciding not to go with the merger in the 1960s but to join the AFLC,

continuing the principles and practices of the Lutheran Free Church. Respected for his insights, Huglen was chosen to edit *The Lutheran Ambassador*, where he became a steady, positive influence, guiding the AFLC during its early years. Through all the ensuing years, he has continued serving congregations. Today, in his nineties, he serves a congregation in Canada.

Following a spirited question-and-answer period, Pr. Huglen and his sister, Valborg Huglen, were honored with a cake, noting his "Seven Decades in Ministry." During the coffee break, Rev. Terry Olson paid tribute to Pr. Huglen, expressing his appreciation and respect after working with him through the years.

Rev. Lloyd Quanbeck presented a paper on the Quanbeck family—"Thor and Halvor Quanbeck—Norwegian Lay Preacher and Pioneer LFC Pastor." Beginning with the brothers' arrival in the McVile, North Dakota, area in the 1880s, Pr. Quanbeck traced the lives of these two men and the influence they have had on the Lutheran Free Church and AFLC, both as clergymen and laity through ensuing generations. The Quanbeck family has provided pastors, missionaries, college and seminary professors and deans, and directors of church-wide ministries as well as a strong lay presence in congregations and boards in both church bodies. It is perhaps a fair statement that in the history of the LFC and AFLC, no family has had so large an influence as the Quanbeck family.

For the final presentation of the morning, Rev. Gary Jorgenson read a paper outlining the history of church planting in the LFC and AFLC, entitled "Home Missions in the Context of a Lutheran Free Church."

Jorgenson is well-qualified to discuss church planting after spending most of his career pastoring home mission congregations. Beginning with the Lutheran Free Church in 1897, he pointed out that its provincial efforts were directed almost entirely toward Norwegian immigrant communities. That was to be expected, since at the time many could not speak English. By the 1930s, however, expansion was no longer restricted to Norwegian communities, and by the 1950s the goal was to establish three new congregations a year wherever possible. Since the AFLC began its Home Missions outreach in the 1960s, the goal has been to continue planting free and living congregations regardless of the many challenges faced.

These papers will be published in the 2019 *Sverdrup Journal* later this year. Walker's translation of Sverdrup's "The Justification of Our Congregations and the Relationship of God's Children to a Christian Congregation" in its entirety will also be included, as well as other translations.

## 2020 Sverdrup Society Theme

The Georg Sverdrup Society theme for 2020 will focus on Sverdrup's assertion that the metaphors of the Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, and the Temple apply not only to the Universal Church, but also to the local congregation. This assertion forms the foundation of what may be called Sverdrup's "High View" of the local congregation, where the congregation is the divinely instituted form of the Universal Church. Sverdrup noted that these metaphors should promote a reverence among Christians for their congregation.



Pastor Lloyd Quanbeck read his paper on Thor and Halvor Quanbeck at the Discussion Forum.



Pastor Huglen and his sister Valborg were honored with a cake at the Discussion Forum.

The 2020 *Sverdrup Journal* will include three articles that will examine the scriptural and exegetical basis of the congregation as the body, bride, and temple. The three articles will be "The Congregation as the Body of Christ" by Dr. Nathan Olson, "The Congregation as the Bride of Christ" by Pr. Martin Horn, and "The Congregation as the Temple of God" by Pr. Brent Olson. The journal will also include several translations of Sverdrup's writings, including "Vil I ha' Menighed," or "Do You Want the Congregation?" In this article, Sverdrup explores the necessity of the "living congregation" as the living body of Christ.

—Pastor Martin Horn



## THE GEORG SVERDRUP SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Georgsverdrupsociety.org

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### Ordet Blev Rjød

*(The Word Became Flesh)*

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#### Directors

Gary Jorgenson, President  
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Tim Larson, Secretary  
Kris Nyman, Treasurer  
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Martin Horn  
Lloyd Quanbeck

Larry Walker, Editor  
Loiell Dyrud, Assistant Editor

Prospective members are invited  
to contact the treasurer  
at the above address.

The Georg Sverdrup Society was organized in December 2003 and is open to anyone interested in the life and work of noted Norwegian-American theologian Georg Sverdrup (1848-1907). The society is registered in the State of Minnesota as a 501 (C)(3) nonprofit corporation. Its activities, which are guided by a seven-member board of directors, include:

- Promoting the study and understanding of the New Testament congregation as understood and explained by Georg Sverdrup;
- Endeavoring to advance the ideal of “free and living congregations” as envisioned by Sverdrup;
- Seeking to foster further translation of Sverdrup’s writings into English;
- Encouraging the study and application of the “Fundamental Principles” and “Rules for Work” as used in the Lutheran Free Church and as continuing to be used in the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations;
- Enlarging the interest in Sverdrup’s works by organizing discussion groups and providing speakers on request;
- Operating a **Sverdrup Society** website linked to <[www.aflc.org](http://www.aflc.org)> for members of the Society and others interested in the life and work of Georg Sverdrup;
- Maintaining a current bibliography of Sverdrup’s translated work as well as a current bibliography of materials written about him;
- Publishing a newsletter for members that provides information on the Society’s activities as well as general information about Georg Sverdrup;
- And encouraging research and study of Sverdrup’s life and work by publishing an annual **Sverdrup Journal**.

## “Against the Lie We Use Our Sharpened Sword”

By Georg Sverdrup

Every man on guard, draw your swords from their sheathes, let the lances flash in the sun, strike the shields that the clamor of weapons may be heard throughout the land. The time has come, the air is pregnant with thunder; let the thunder roll in the clouds and the lightning strike with flash upon flash in the darkness of night. The powers of the world are stirred, let the powers of heaven stir themselves in us. God’s church is in danger; let armed men protect it. Against the lie we use our sharpened sword, against the lie we wear our shining helmet, against the lie we take up our white shields. But the lie is not outside of God’s church; it is within its walls. Therefore wake up, you Christian soul, wherever you are

found; therefore wake up, you watchman of Zion, and sound the trumpet, that it may give a clear sound. The lie is this, that Christ is dead; for behold, He lives! The lie is this, that Christianity is pure doctrine and clarity of thought and the understanding of reason; for behold, it is a life of love and a folly of love. The lie is this, that the church is a system to rule over mankind; for behold, it is the home of freedom and the community of the emancipated. The lie is this, that the church must use the world’s falsehood and deception to be as crafty as a serpent; for behold, it is the holy witness of truth and innocence. The lie is this, that the world is the church’s most dangerous foe; for behold, it is the object of God’s love. The lie is this, that the church is pure; for behold, it is full of rotteness and stench. The lie is this, that Christianity is

hatred of the world; for behold, it is love of the world. The lie is this, that the church must fear the world; for behold, the world is defeated. The lie is this, that the church must go outside to find its enemy; for behold, its foe is in its midst. Let Judas be found! He carries on his work among us; let us know him for what he is. Let us meet him as Christ did of old, “I am the one ye seek.”

*Sverdrup quotation used by Wilhelm M. Pettersen in his “Introduction” to Volume 1 of Professor Georg Sverdrups Samlede Skrifter i Udvalg, xiv-xv. Translation by Brian Lunn.*