



The Georg Sverdrup Society

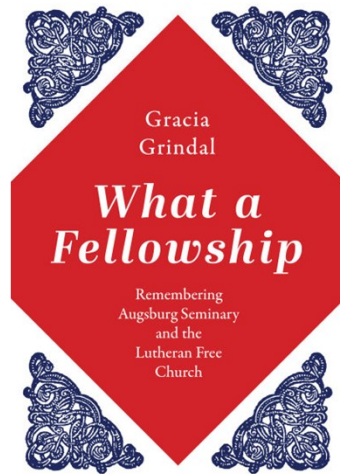
NEWSLETTER

Annual Meeting to Feature Gracia Grindal



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The 2025 Fall Program of the Georg Sverdrup Society is scheduled for Saturday, October 25, at Heritage Hall on the campus of the Free Lutheran Schools in Plymouth, Minnesota. The meeting will begin at 12 noon with catered lunch, and the program at 1:00 p.m. Our speaker this year will be Gracia Grindal, who recently published a book on the history of the Lutheran Free Church and Augsburg Seminary entitled *What a Fellowship: Remembering Augsburg*

Seminary and the Lutheran Free Church.

Copies of the book will be available for sale at the event. Following the program, the GSS will have its annual meeting with election of officers at around 2:30 p.m. You do not need to be a member of the GSS to attend the program, but current dues are required to vote at the annual meeting.

—Brian Lunn

2026 January Forum

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 Free Lutheran Seminary will host the Georg Sverdrup Society Forum on Friday, January 16. Doors will open for coffee beginning at 8:30 a.m., with the program beginning at 9:00 in the Student Life Center. The theme this year is "Spirit and Life—The Sermons of Sverdrup and Oftedal." Three papers will be presented, the first by Pastor Brian Lunn, entitled "The Written Sermon: A Brief History of the Genre in Lutheran Literature." The second paper, presented by Seminary Dean, Dr. James Molstre, is entitled "From Text to Pew: Anchoring Congregational Life Through the Law and Gospel Framework in the Sermons of Sverdrup and Oftedal." The final paper, written

by Mr. Jonathan Anderson, is entitled "The Revival Preaching of Orthodox Pietism."

Wednesday and Thursday of that week, January 15-16, the AFLC Schools will be hosting their Seminary Symposium, this year with the theme of "Whatever Is Lovely." Guest lecturer Dr. Mark Mattes will speak on a Lutheran view of aesthetics. You can visit the website at flbc.edu to sign up for both events, as well as to pay for the lunch served on campus.

—Brian Lunn

Society Outing to Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, MN

On Wednesday, July 9, 2025, members and friends of the Georg Sverdrup Society traveled to the campus of Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota. Over the course of three to four hours, the following presentations were shared: a tour of Bethany College's library and archives with Alyssa Inniger, a tour of the ELS (Evangelical Lutheran Synod) Otteson Museum with Rebecca DeGarmeaux, and a tour of the ELS Archives and Seminary with Rev. Craig Ferkenstad.

Over the course of the afternoon, a better understanding was gained as to how we in the GSS and the AFLC as a whole might better present our history in a way that is engaging and accessible to our modern generation. Various ideas were shared, from digital options, including online, to physical/visual displays in a museum-type setting. The importance of proper storage techniques, handling of historic materials, and displaying them was emphasized.

As friends and members of the GSS, we were very thankful to spend time and fellowship with

like-minded individuals from the ELS, and we found encouragement in what God has done in the past and what He continues to do today.

—Tim Larson

Photos below: Top left, attendees at the informational lectures in the Bethany College library. Top right, Alyssa Inniger, presenter. Bottom left, Society President Brian Lunn examines a book from the archive with Dr. Timothy Schmeling. Among the books in their collection is a 1580 copy of The Book of Concord. Bottom right, Loeffel Dyrud, Wade Mobley, President of AFLC Schools, and AFLC President Micah Hjermstad.



Bethany Lutheran College Outing



Photos above: Top left, Attendees tour the Bethany College archive. Top right, presenter Prof. Emeritus Erling Teigen. Bottom left, Rev. Brian Lunn shakes hands with Rev. Shawn Stafford. Bottom right, the Bethany Seminary Chapel.

From Aand og Liv: “Thus the Children Are Free”

(The Sermon Collection Aand og Liv contains a series of sermons written by Prof. Georg Sverdrup and Prof. Sven Oftedal—but not individually attributed.) Translation by Brian Lunn.

Text: Matt. 17:24-27

Yes, this is the important issue: the children are free. If we really and truly are God’s children, then it is completely certain that freedom is ours. Scholars have argued much about whether “the children” here in this passage means only Jesus, or whether it means Jesus and His disciples. But they have understood what

is written, that the one whom the Son sets free is free indeed [see John 8:36], so they have not argued about this. For however great a difference there is between the Father’s only-begotten Son and God’s children, yet it is true that all who have the Son have the Father [see 1 John 2:23]. He has given that to His believers, as He Himself says, “The glory which You have given to Me I have given to them” [John 17:22 NASB95]. God’s children are God’s heirs and joint-heirs with Christ, so that the same freedom which He has, His brothers and sisters have also.

The children are free. And there are certainly few words that contain so much, and that are so difficult to grasp. From the compulsion of the law and from rules and ordinances the children are free, because the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts through the Holy Spirit He has given them [see Romans 5:5 KJV].

But if we, with sincere shame, feel that we are not free today, we are encumbered with so much sin, we are encumbered with so much guilt, we are plagued with so many rules and forms and restrictions—there is still time to win the freedom

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THE GEORG SVERDRUP SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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(The Word Became Flesh)

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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> 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**.

From *Aand og Liv*: “Thus the Children Are Free” (cont.)

(continued from page 3)

of the children. Come to Jesus’ cross and see what sin and the law and wrath and death have done to the Son. Do *you* really believe that He suffered everything for you? Do you really believe it? Now then, where is your sin and guilt, where is God’s wrath and judgment over you? Are you not free when the Lamb of God has taken it all upon Himself? How long will you torment yourself with a yoke that Jesus has taken completely away, if only you will surrender yourself completely to Him? The children are really free. There is no guilt of sin or judgment of death upon those who have put their case in Jesus’ hand.

Come to Jesus and see how He walks so freely and confidently in the service of love without regarding commandment or prohibition. Only see

Him—how little He considers that He becomes unclean when He touches a leper [see Matthew 8:3], or when He takes the dead girl by the hand and raises her up! [see Matthew 9:25]. See Him—how free He is, when He heals on the Sabbath and bids the one He healed, “Pick up your bed and go!” [see Matthew 9:1-8]. Learn from Him that love is free, and compassion triumphs over judgment, and do not let yourself be bound by the many thousands of considerations and rules of men.

The children are free. And if you still have not learned this, then come to Him who had nothing on which to lay His head [see Matthew 8:20], and learn from Him how free a person is who can say with Paul, “I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and

every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” [Philippians 4:11-13 NASB95]. Yes, truly, in all things the children are free. God is their Father, and He loves them; therefore, all His ways are the delightful ways of freedom for them. Jesus is their Brother, and they trust in Him; therefore, they are always certain of the forgiveness of their sins, and Christ’s atonement for their letter of freedom from the accusations of the law. The Holy Spirit is shed abroad in their hearts, and therefore they are freely impelled along the paths of love. Truly, the children are free.