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Western Theological Seminary

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FACULTY "DIALOGS" WITH REUEL L. HOWE

Five Day Conference Sets Mood for New Year

The faculty held a five day seminar at the Institute for Advanced Pastoral Studies in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan early in September. The leader of the conference was the director of the Institute, Dr. Reuel L. Howe. Meeting from September 1 to 5, the entire faculty of the school spent five days in discussion, Bible study, living together, and worship.

Growing out of a sense of need for help in the area of teaching as well as that of relationship, the conference was designed to meet these basic needs.

The Institute is located on the lovely grounds of the Cranbrook Estate and the faculty enjoyed both the grounds and the ample accommodations provided there.

The mentor of the five day session was Dr. Reuel L. Howe, who is one of the leading interpreters of Martin Buber’s philosophy of dialogue and a former theological professor. Having served some years ago in the Episcopal Seminary in Virginia, Dr. Howe is now one of the leading figures in the emphasis on continuing education of ministers in America. Annually, hundreds of ministers attend the Institute for varying lengths of time in order that they may learn the current concerns relative to the ministry and the witness of the church. In addition, ten day seminars are held for theological professors from various schools under the auspices of the American Association of Theological Schools. Thus far, some thirty professors have undergone this special training. Among them last year were President Riddler and Dean Elton M. Eenigenburg. However, Western’s visit marks the first time that an entire faculty has visited the Institute and met with Howe over an extended period of time.

Each morning the faculty gathered for worship followed by Bible study led by Dr. Howe. Although each of the members of the faculty is informed in the area of his special interest and biblical knowledge, seldom has the faculty had a comparable opportunity for sharing insights into the understanding of the scriptures.

During the course of the seminar sessions, emphasis was placed on the understanding of lay people who had been nurtured under the tutelage of Western alumni. On Thursday evening, a number of Reformed Church laymen met with the faculty. These were lay people from the Detroit-Ann Arbor area and they discussed with the faculty some of their understandings of the nature and purpose of the ministry today. This was followed on the next day with an interview of some of the men who were the pastors of these people and who were also graduates of Western Seminary. Out of these extensive discussions, some further sessions were held in which the faculty dealt with the general problem of teaching in a theological seminary today and the preparation of young men for the Christian ministry as well as the specific matter of the curriculum and its direction for such purposes.

The seminar was made possible through the generosity of the Midland Reformed Church which has set up the Midland Faculty Scholarship Fund in order that some experiences of this nature might be available annually to the faculty for further development of men already on the staff. The experience was richly rewarding to the faculty, and efforts are being made to set up a similar experience for next year. The faculty begins the new year with a number of ideas developed at the meetings, encouraged in the sharing of their problems, and better trained through the help of new insights gained at the seminar.

Faculty Members Author Three New Titles

Dr. Elton M. Eenigenburg, Academic Dean and Professor of Christian Ethics and Philosophy of Religion, is the author of Book II, "The Life and Work of the Reformed Church in America," which together with Book I, "A History of the Christian Church" by Dr. Ernest Trice Thompson, emeritus Professor of Church History at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia, is published as a composite volume with the title "Through the Ages.”

This CLC adult study book is the volume recommended for the second year of a three-year study cycle which began with Dr. Rhodes’ book “The Mighty Acts of God.”

Dr. John H. Piet, Professor of English Bible and Missions at the seminary, has published “His Witnesses,” an objective study of the Acts of the Apostles, and Paul’s Letters to the Galatians, I Thessalonians, Philippians, Ephesians, and Romans chapters 1 through 8.

Prepared for use as a non-denominational series of Bible studies, the book is intended to be used in public schools as a text in assigned classroom work. Published by THE BOOK WORLD, the volume is admirably adapted for use as a basic study guide in public school systems.

His Witnesses contains twenty-three Bible study outlines. The first edition, just off the press, was run at 10,000 copies, priced at $1.25 each.

“Christ and Architecture,” the volume co-authored by Dr. Donald J. Bruggink, Assistant Professor of Historical Theology and Church History, together with Dr. Carl H. Droppers, continues to receive favorable critical acclaim. Called by the Christian Century “a monumental work,” Dr. Edward S. Frey, director, commission on church architecture, Lutheran Church in America, says, "Christ and Architecture is the first book that says clearly and simply, without compromise, what church architecture really is and what it is about today. I am not exaggerating when I say it is the most useful book to date in my business." Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, president, Lutheran Church in America, says, “It is a superb specimen of the bookmaking art.”
"Tis the season for budgets! More and more churches are beginning to adopt the procedure of a carefully designed budget according to which the monies collected as offerings will be disbursed to various needs and causes. This is as it should be. Even as a family needs a budget to provide for careful expenditure of funds so the church needs to be careful that there is a balanced response to the various appeals it receives.

Let me set before you the need of the seminary. Western continues to live by its relationship to the church—the Reformed Church in America. We would have it no other way. Our thought is that the seminary functions best when it knows itself to be an integral part of the church. In our tradition, this relationship is unique. We speak of the seminaries as “children of the church” as we do of no other institution or agency of the church. Our professors are members of the General Synod in a way comparable to no other group.

It might be of interest to you that in the year ending May 31, 1965, the seminary received $197,908.04 from direct and indirect contributions from the churches for a percentage of 69.9% of its total revenue. Other sources (including endowment fund income) provided $84,974.70 or 30.1%. In the fiscal year of 1948-49, the church gave $68,798.14 for a percentage of 70.5% of the total income.

These figures reveal two facts. First of all, the level of church giving has kept pace with the accelerated growth of the school. The percentage of total receipts is approximately what it was before the spiralling costs began. The other striking fact is the rise in costs since 1948. There has been more than a 100% increase in costs in a decade and a half. Our experience simply reflects that of the national economy.

Has your church recognized this, not only in the cost of its local program, but also in its giving to Western? I suspect there are a number of churches who are still giving the same amount they gave in 1948. When was the last time you revised the figure on the budget for Western Seminary?

Since coming to Western three years ago, I’ve been grateful that we have been able to stop the drift toward “deficit spending.” In fact, we have been able to wipe out some of the old deficits and are making progress against the most stubborn ones, particularly the old debt on Zwemer Hall which was reduced substantially last year. This has been done through careful management, unexpected shifts in program and change of personnel so that our costs have frequently been less than we have anticipated, and through the continued loyal support of the church.

But this is the year of preparation for the Centennial involving several new programs. We expect that we will need every available dollar to meet our obligations. Our budget for the current year is $291,287.

We believe the church will continue to support Western in such a way that it can prepare men in the best possible tradition for the “most rich, regal, free... calling” on earth. Help us in this noble ministry!

Herman E. Stidder

Full Program of Study For Student Wives

A new look is being given to the arrangement of study courses for students’ wives or girl friends. One hour classes are planned for Saturday mornings from 8 to 9 a.m., when regular seminary classes do not meet and the women are free from office or teaching responsibilities.

Courses are organized on a three-year cycle to coincide with the students’ three-year period in the seminary, thus avoiding repetition of material but providing coverage of important concerns. The three areas of study treated are the Ecclesiastical, or church-related concerns; the Academic, covering the three fields of study in the seminary—Biblical, Theological, and Practical, and the Cultural, in which attention is given to current social problems and areas of modern living.

Most courses will be taught by seminary professors, but others from Hope College and the city will give leadership in specialized areas.

Three courses are being offered in the first quarter, from which each woman may select one. President Bidder will offer the course entitled “The Nature of Christian Witness.” Dr. Cook will teach “Understanding the Old Testament,” and Dean TenClay will give the course on “Vocation in the Parsonage.”

Lecture Schedule For Academic Year

Dr. Samuel Sandmel, Provost, Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, and Professor of Bible and Hellenistic Literature.

Wednesday, September 29, 11:15 a.m. “Jews in the Greek Dispersion: Some Possible Clues to Paul’s Thought.” Noon luncheon.

2:10 p.m. “Scripture as Literature.”

Thursday, September 30, 11:15 a.m. “The Quality of Jewish Piety.”

Dr. James Hastings Nichols, Professor of Church History at Princeton Theological Seminary, and editor of the Journal of Presbyterian History, will lecture on THE REFORMATION AND LITURGY.

Thursday, October 7, 11:15 a.m. “What the Reformers had to work with.” Noon luncheon.

2:10 p.m. “Two patterns of Reformed Liturgy.”

Friday, October 8, 8:40 a.m. “The Antiliturgical Movement.”

Dr. Kalman Ujjaszy, Curator of the Library and Archives of the Hungarian Reformed Church at Sarospatak, Hungary, will lecture on HUNGARIAN PROTESTANTISM, PAST AND PRESENT.

Thursday, October 28, 11:15 a.m. Noon luncheon.

2:10 p.m.

Friday, October 29, 11:15 a.m.

Dr. William Brownson, Jr., Assistant Professor of Preaching, Western Theological Seminary.

Thursday, November 11, 11:15 a.m. “The Call to Preach.”

Noon luncheon.

Dr. Carl F. H. Henry, Editor of Christianity Today.


Monday, November 29, 11:30 a.m. Luncheon for ministers and faculty in seminary commons thru Holland Ministerial Association.

We have been able to have the noted scholar Dr. Samuel Sandmel with us through the courtesy of Mr. Seymour Fadnos of Holland, Michigan, who has made all arrangements, both invitational and financial. He will act as Dr. Sandmel’s host during his visit to Holland.
Nykamp Sets Field Education

These are busy and exciting days in the department of Field Education. The first year students are involved in an extensive observation program which includes area churches, community agencies, and pastoral activities. The middler and senior students are discussing the meaning of their ministries this past summer both in groups and individually with the Director of Field Education. About one-half of the upper class students are engaged in a specific ministry in churches and in the community during this academic year.

Seven congregations have agreed to participate in the observation program for the junior and first year M.C.E. students. The congregations include Lutheran, Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Christian Reformed, as well as three from our own denomination. In addition to observing the congregations in worship and study, the student has opportunities to attend Board, Ladies’ Guild, Fellowship, and administrative meetings.

In the community aspect of the program, the student spends at least four hours in an emergency room in a city hospital and an equal amount of time in a police squad car. The opportunity is also provided to make visits with a probation officer and a social worker, and to attend a juvenile court session. Plans are being made for the students to accompany laymen in their ministry in local jails, and pastors in their calls in hospitals, rest homes, and funeral homes.

In order to make these observations most meaningful, each student submits a written report and participates in three discussion seminars each quarter. On these occasions the student is encouraged to verbalize the meaning of ministry and the effect of these observations on his concepts and plans for ministry.

Included in the observation program are two dinner-discussion meetings each quarter. Outstanding guest speakers are invited to lecture to the students, laymen and ministers from the participating churches from 5:30 to 6:15 p.m. Guided discussion is carried on during the meal from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. around the tables in the Commons. A general discussion is conducted with the guest speaker and the entire group from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. Speakers and topics are scheduled as follows for the first half of the year:

October 13. The Reverend Helen Archibald, Minister of Christian Education, Chicago City Missionary Society will speak about Christian Education in the inner-city.

November 2. Dr. Lewis A. Briner, Dean of the Chapel and Professor of Pastoral Theology and Liturgics, McCormick Theological Seminary, will speak on the general subject of the educational aspect of worship under the topic of “Liturgy and Life.”

November 30. Dr. John D. Whitehouse, M.D., Director of Kent County Mental Health Center, will speak on the “Church’s Ministry to Families.”

The observation program has been established to give the first year students an opportunity to identify through personal encounter the various aspects of the ministry of the contemporary church in the world. Personal observation is the first step for the developing minister in learning to use himself effectively as a servant of Jesus Christ in the church and in the community.

The next step is to be actually involved in ministry and to reflect on that ministry. About forty upper classmen spent the summer in a variety of serving and learning experiences. They have been divided into five groups so that each type of ministry is represented in each group. Each group will meet one or one-half hours a week for a four week period. This will enable each student to present an experience that took place during his summer or intern ministry and discuss the meaning and implications of this experience within the group. A different faculty member will be involved in each group, in addition to the Director of Field Education, so that the entire group may benefit from his particular insight and field of study in the discussion of the ministry experience.

Through this type of group experience, the student minister may become more fully aware of the needs of the people with whom he comes in contact. He begins to recognize some of the dynamics involved in relationships in ministry and how he can be more effective as a channel of God’s love and grace.

Upper classmen are also involved in a program designated as Concurrent Field Education. The student participates in a prescribed ministry during the academic year from September through May. This program makes it possible for the churches in the general locality of the seminary to benefit from the services of the students as well as to contribute in a specific way to their individual development as servants in the Church of Christ. The local congregation and the pastor who decides to invite a seminarian to become involved in their ministry for Christ are co-laborers with the seminary in the training of the developing minister. At least thirty students will be involved in this type of ministry during this school year.

The work of the student is closely supervised. Supervision makes it possible to maintain the church’s standard of a dedicated and effective ministry and to assist the student in the integration of his newly-acquired knowledge into the use of himself as a professional person. Through a meaningful relationship with other individuals committed to Christ, the developing minister becomes more aware of how he may contribute as one of God’s gifts to the church for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. (Ephesians 2:12).

Ten Part-Time Faculty Enlisted for Year

The teaching program at Western this year will engage the services of twelve men on a part-time basis. Two of the twelve are members of the seminary staff. President Bidder will offer a guided reading elective on “Basic Issues in Christian Education” in the third quarter. Dean of Students Dr. Henry Ten Clay will offer an elective in “Church Government” the same quarter. These offerings in the department of Christian Education are a part of the program to present substantial educational opportunities in this area in a year when the department is without a permanent professor.

Several qualified persons from the “outside” have accepted Western’s invitation to lend assistance this year in the Christian Education department. The Rev. Hugh Koops, last year’s sabbatical replacement in the Department of Christian Ethics and Philosophy of Religion, will teach the required course in “History and Theology of Christian Education.” Mr. Koops is a minister of the Christian Reformed Church and a candidate for the doctorate at the University of Chicago. In the first quarter the Rev. John Staats, minister of the Second Reformed Church at Grand Haven, is presenting an elective on “Children in the Church.” The Rev. John Tien, minister of the Community Reformed Church at Dolton, Illinois, is offering an elective “Seminar on Youth Work,” also the first quarter. Both Mr. Staats and Mr. Tien have completed extensive graduate work in these areas, particularly with the accent on the understanding of the personality dynamics of children and youth.

One other person will be engaged in the Christian Education field to offer an elective in the second quarter on “The Work of the Director of Christian Education.” Negotiations for this instructor were not completed at the time the Theolog went to press.

Three of the part-time staff have assisted previously. This is especially true concerning Dr. William Hemstra, Chaplain at the Pine Rest Christian Hospital in Grand Rapids, who has taught the course in “Pastoral Counseling” for a number of years and has assisted in the course on “Clinical, Pastoral Training,” conducted directly at Pine Rest Hospital the third quarter. Two Hope College instructors, Mr. James Malcolm
and Mr. Robert Wegter, are conducting the required work in "Speech," as well as assisting in the critical evaluation of student preaching.

Two new offerings in the Practical Field are in the area of church music. They are "A History of Music in Worship," and "Music and Worship Today," and are presented by Mr. James Tallis, Assistant Professor of Music at Hope College. They are offered in the first and third quarters respectively. Also assisting this year from Hope College is Dr. Henry Voogd, Professor of Religion and Bible. In the first quarter he teaches the required course to middlers on "Old Testament Introduction." In the third quarter he will aid in the introduction of Hebrew Grammar.

Dr. James Mullenburg of San Francisco Seminary (Presbyterian) will be a visiting lecturer in the third quarter, teaching the required course for middlers in "Exegesis of the Prophets," and one for seniors in "Old Testament Theology."

**Professor Lubbers Accepts Position in Church**

Early this summer Mrs. Elaine Lubbers, Professor of Christian Education at the seminary, resigned her position. She has accepted a position at the Eastminster Presbyterian Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where she serves as a member of the staff with particular responsibilities in the area of Christian education.

Mrs. Lubbers joined the faculty in the fall of 1962. During her stay on the faculty, a number of new programs were introduced. Particularly, the observation program was begun with a strong emphasis on field education becoming a significant part of the seminary curriculum. In addition, the Master in Christian Education program was begun and was beginning to make a significant mark in the life of the church. Last spring the first M.C.E. was graduated and placed in one of our churches.

A sensitive and able teacher, Mrs. Lubbers made a significant contribution to the life at Western Theological Seminary and her presence will be missed in the years to come.

**Development Fund Progress Reported**

At the May, 1961 meeting of the Board of Trustees a Development Fund was established, to which unrestricted legacies or bequests or unrestricted gifts from living donors might be assigned. Its purpose was to accumulate monies which would be available for the purchase of property and for expanding the physical facilities of the seminary.

After four years of operation, the Development Fund has grown to the point where it has been used to purchase six rental houses on building lots adjacent to the present seminary campus. These Development Fund houses are considered rental dwellings with the rent income helping to amortize the purchase price of the properties. The development of the parking lot has also been underwritten by this Fund.

**Seminary Merger Called Off**

The study of the merger of Western Theological Seminary with New Brunswick Theological Seminary has been halted for the present. Although the study had only recently gotten under way it was decided by the Permanent Committee on Theological Education at its June 1 and 2, 1965 meeting to discontinue the study for the present. The Committee, in its report to General Synod, said "There are a number of factors which indicate that a single seminary would be advantageous for theological education within the denomination. It was the judgment of the committee, however, based upon the individual knowledge of its members, that the continuation of the two seminaries is in the best interest of the Reformed Church under present conditions. Nonetheless, it is our judgment that there are opportunities for effective unification and coordination of theological education in the Reformed Church and that this should be a continuing concern of the seminaries, their boards and administrators, and of this committee. We request therefore, that General Synod instruct this Committee to report specifically on progress toward the goal of more effective unification and coordination of theological education not later than the Synod of 1967."

The General Synod adopted the report of the Permanent Committee and thus made it the official action of that body. For that reason, specific formal discussion of the subject is discontinued for the present.

**Assistance Urged As Aid To Students**

Churches are encouraged to consider an urgent need for benevolence giving to the Student Assistance Fund at the Seminary. Western is grateful for the generous gifts made by men's brotherhoods, Sunday School classes, women's guilds, and congregations throughout the church designated for student assistance fund needs. Steady increases in the cost of living and rising costs of education put severe pressures for financial aid on increasing numbers of students at Western. A benevolent gift from congregations or organizations in the church designated for the Student Assistance Fund can be made in any amount and can be designated for the needs of the student body at large or for any one particular student who may have a congregational relationship with the church.

"To make money enduring, invest it in men."

**Overseas Student Enters Th.M. Program**

Thomas J. C. Shih arrived on Western's campus this fall from Taichung, Taiwan, China to enroll as a candidate for the degree of Master of Theology at Western.

Through associations with the Rev. Carl J. Schroeder and the Rev. William J. Burke, both alumni of Western Seminary, Dr. Shih was encouraged to apply to Western for his graduate theological work. He holds the Th.B. degree from Taiwan Theological College in Taichung.

Mr. Shih is a member of the Taitung Presbyterian Church of Taiwan. He transferred to Western following studies at Tunghai University in Formosa. His address is Western Theological Seminary, Zwemer Hall.

**President Ridder Speaks at Alumni Meetings**

Recently President Ridder met with two alumni groups on the East Coast. The first meeting was held at Albany, New York, on October 4. The occasion was the monthly meeting of the Reformed Church Ministerial Association of Albany and Vicinity. The meeting was held in the First Reformed Church of Albany. The Reverend Bruce Hoffman, class of '63, is the Secretary-Treasurer of the group. A number of Western graduates are serving in that part of the church.

On October 6, following attendance at the Board of Education meeting in New York City, Dr. Ridder travelled to Ridgewood, New Jersey for a luncheon meeting of the alumni of Western serving in that area. The meeting was held at the First Reformed Church of Ridgewood and arrangements for the meeting were made by the Reverend Richard A. Rhem, class of '60.

On both occasions, President Ridder gave a report on activities at Western as they are reflected in its current life as well as its plans for the future. Western Seminary has over ninety alumni serving churches in the three Eastern Synods of the church.

At the alumni meeting held in Holland at the time of graduation last spring, it was voted by the alumni to contribute toward an outdoor advertising board on Route 196, leading into Holland. It was felt that not enough effort had been made to publicize the presence of the school in Holland. Also, it is regularly confused with the college. As a result of the alumni vote, a lovely signboard 10 ft. by 25 ft. in size has been erected in blue and gold announcing Holland, Michigan as the home of Western Theological Seminary, "founded in 1866, serving the Reformed Church in America." Scotch-lute reflective lettering makes the essential message of the sign visible at night.
Physical Facilities Expanded

Two new seminar classrooms are in regular use in the new academic year. The elective offerings in the expanded curriculum result in a number of classes which require smaller meeting rooms with facilities designed to encourage a discussion type of teaching and learning experience. Old classroom No. 102 has been remodelled into two such seminar rooms adjoining the main hallway, while the space along the south window walls has been converted into two new faculty offices, one of which is now occupied by Dr. Brownson, Professor of Preaching.

The development of the old “Meangs Mission House” property is now complete, giving parking space for sixteen cars. This welcome addition to the physical plant is a convenience for the large number of commuting students at Western.

Continuing a program begun last year, the entire north wing of Zwemer Dormitory has again been leased to Hope College for men’s residence. Occupied by honor students and upperclassmen, it provides dormitory room for 62 Hope students, to help accommodate the college in its enlarged enrollment for their new academic year. Fourteen single seminar men students occupy the south wing of Zwemer Hall and use the dormitory kitchen for some of their meal preparation.

Through these improved facilities, Western continues to pursue its purpose of training men for the gospel ministry.

Mission Week Slated
For Nov. 29 - Dec. 1

Following the highly successful pattern introduced last year, the R.C.A. Mission to Western Seminary is scheduled for November 29 through December 1, 1965 on the campus. Beginning with a communal meal in the seminary commons on Monday evening, November 29, the mission will present to seminarians the life, work, and ministry of the important boards and agencies of the denomination. Executive secretaries and denominational leaders will participate in a variety of presentations, so that the seminary students may be fully informed about the work and ministry of the administrative agencies of the R.C.A.

A valuable part of this entire experience is the opportunity it gives to seminarians to hold individual conferences with board secretaries, particularly those interested in future service through the world ministry of the church.

Wolfert Conference
Scheduled for October 30

Through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Edward R. Wolfert of Benton Harbor, Michigan a conference on church vocations will be held on Saturday, October 30, at Western Seminary.

Beginning with a welcoming coffee, the conference will feature panels, discussion groups, addresses and informal conversation so that the concept and role of Christian leadership will be considered in the challenge of the church vocations presented. The entire conference is designed to present to qualified young people the possibilities for service in the Christian ministry. A variety of leaders will participate in the activities of the conference.

Conference brochures, together with an enrollment form and a descriptive covering letter, have been sent to all ministers within driving distance of the Western campus.
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THE WOLFERT CONFERENCE ON CHURCH VOCATION
OCTOBER 30, 1965

WESTERN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
HOLLAND, MICHIGAN