



The Georg Sverdrup Society

NEWSLETTER

2017 Topic: "Sverdrup and the Reformation"



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October 31, 2017, marks the 500th anniversary of the Reformation begun by Martin Luther. Realizing that Sverdrup wrote many more articles about Luther and the Reformation that have not yet been translated, members at the GSS Annual Meeting decided to continue the same topic as in 2016: "Sverdrup and the Reformation." This will give more time for translators to work on Sverdrup's articles and writers to study further how Luther's work influenced Sverdrup.

The topic for 2018 was also decided at this meeting. Since 2019 marks the 150th anniversary of the founding of Augsburg Seminary, the institution Sverdrup served during his entire life in America, the annual meeting decided the topic for 2018 will be "Sverdrup and Augsburg Seminary."



Society Annual Meeting

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 Thirteenth Annual Meeting of the Georg Sverdrup Society was held at St. Paul's Free Lutheran Church in Fargo, North Dakota, on Saturday, October 8.

Following a noon meal, Rev. Steve Mundfrom, President of the GSS, called on Rev. Micah Hjermsstad, host pastor at St. Paul's, to give the invocation.

This year's leader of the Sverdrup Songfest was Marian Christopherson. The songfest usually focuses on hymns that were sung at the time of

Sverdrup and Oftedal, but because this year's focus has been on Martin Luther as we approach the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, songs written by Martin Luther were chosen. Christopherson, Director of AFLC Publications and Parish Education, chose three songs from the soon-to-be-published booklet *12 Reformation Hymns by Martin Luther*. Beginning with the stalwart hymn of the Reformation, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," she followed with the lesser-

known "From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee," which Luther wrote for the funeral of his supporter Frederick the Wise. It was also sung at his own funeral in 1546. She closed by leading us in the singing of what many believe to be the first "congregational hymn" of the Reformation, "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice." These hymn selections would have been sung during Sverdrup's day and have been included in

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Society Annual Meeting (cont.)

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many Lutheran hymnals.

Rev. Raynard Huglen, who has translated several articles for *The Sverdrup Journal*, was the featured speaker. Calling his presentation “My Personal Journey,” Huglen began by reminiscing about his experiences growing up in the home of Lutheran Free Church pastor Rev. Reinert Huglen. His father was born on an island off the coast of Norway. Though that island and the neighboring island of Stord make up only an area of about four miles by fifteen miles, yet they produced seven pastors for the LFC, his father one of them.

Connections to Georg Sverdrup are a family tradition with the Huglens. After immigrating to the United States, his father sold some volumes of Sverdrup’s *Samlede Skrifter* on the West Coast to help pay for his college education. An accomplished writer, his father published many articles as well as his poetry in *Folkebladet*, the Norwegian language paper of the LFC.

When Raynard Huglen was only ten years old, his father died. But like his father, he too graduated from Augsburg Seminary. For the next ten years following his ordination in 1953, he served LFC congregations in the Dakotas and Montana. Huglen related the intense pressure put on him to go along with merger of the LFC with The American Lutheran Church in 1962. However, he believed strongly in the LFC heritage and decided to cast his lot with the small group that stayed out and formed the AFLC. Ever self-effacing, he recalled how he became editor of *The Lutheran Ambassador*, a position he held for twenty-seven years: “With not much to choose from, I was chosen editor, and that’s true.” At the end of his presentation, he commented, “Though it was a diffi-

cult choice at the time, I have always believed it was the right choice to remain with the AFLC.”

Mr. Larry Walker, editor of the “Sverdrup Newsletter” and *Sverdrup Journal*, read part of his translation, “The Significance of the Reformation for Our Time,” which will be published in its entirety in the 2016 *Sverdrup Journal*, and Rev. Terry Olson, Assistant to the President of the AFLC, closed with prayer.

After a coffee break, Rev. Steve Mundfrom, GSS President, called the annual business meeting to order. Mr. Tim Larson, Secretary, read the minutes from the 2015 Annual Meeting. In the absence of Treasurer/Membership Secretary, Rev. Kris Nyman, Larson reported that there are 95 active members this year.

The 2015 *Sverdrup Journal* was evaluated. Mundfrom pointed out that with the publication of this journal, all eighty-five mission meditations from Sverdrup’s volume 6 have

now been translated. Discussion was held on the possibility of publishing these meditations as part of the AFLC Heritage Series. No action was taken.

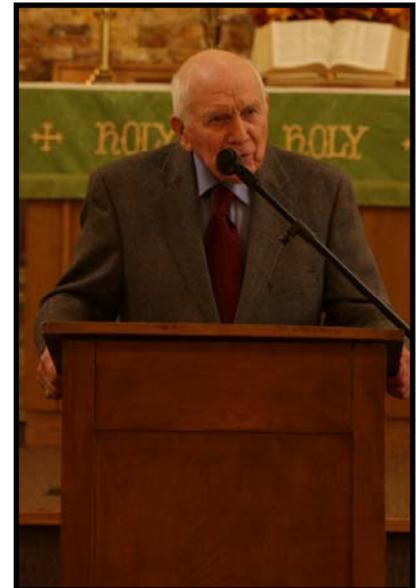
The decision was made to continue the same topic in 2017 as 2016: “Sverdrup and the Reformation,” since 2017 marks the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. The dues for 2017 were kept the same as 2016: Regular, \$30; Institutions, \$15; and Students, \$15.

Board members elected were Mr. Alex Amiot, Mrs. Marian Christopherson, Rev. Martin Horn, and Rev. Lloyd Quanbeck. Following the annual meeting, the board met to reorganize and chose Martin Horn, President; Kevin Borg, Vice President; Tim Larson, Secretary; and Kris Nyman, Treasurer and Membership Chairman.

—Loiell O. Dyrud



Rev. Micah Hjermstad opens the meeting with prayer.



Rev. Raynard Huglen shares his reminiscences.

Seminary Discussion Forum

On January 14, 2017, the annual Sverdrup Seminary Discussion Forum was held on the campus of the Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary in Plymouth, Minnesota.

We were blessed by four presentations which will be published in the upcoming 2016 *Sverdrup Journal*.

We heard from from Pastor Jason Gudim as he shared on the topic: “Luther on the Congregation.” The congregation in Luther’s writings is where the reform took place.

Gudim references Luther’s writings in the Large Catechism, his introduction to the German Mass, and Georg Sverdrup’s understanding of Luther to show that Luther understood the autonomy of the local congregation—a radical idea during the Reformation

We also heard from intern Alex Amiot, vicar at Ruthfred Lutheran Church in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania, on the topic: “Pastoral Ministry in Light of a Justified Congregation.”

Amiot explained how Sverdrup strove to balance seeing the congregation as the Bride and Body of Christ with the understanding that within the congregation there could be people who are not saved.

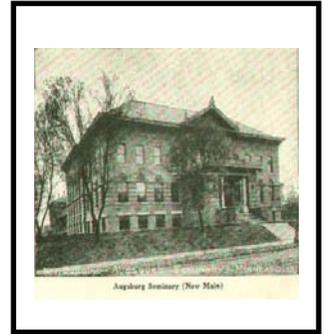
Amiot pointed out how many pastors have held a limited view of the congregation, not seeing the Bride and Body of Christ as what it is, justified by grace through the means of grace—the Word and the Sacraments.

Pastor Brett Boe of Shakopee, Minnesota, shared “*Barnelærdom*: Sverdrup’s Pastoral Approach to Luther’s

Small Catechism.” He defined the concept and discussed Sverdrup’s views on the subject. Sverdrup saw *barnelærdom* as an adequate basis for Lutheran training and congregational life. He related Sverdrup’s views to his “pastoral heart.” If *barnelærdom* is not seen to be sufficient in our day, then the free Lutheran concept falls apart.

Larry Walker, the editor of *The Sverdrup Journal*, read from one of his recent translations: “Sects and the Reformation.”

— Pastor Kris Nyman



Below: Rev. Jason Gudim presenting his paper, “Luther on the Congregation,” at the 2017 GSS Seminary Discussion Forum. Gudim serves a congregation in Minneapolis. **Right:** Mr. Alex Amiot presenting his paper, “Pastoral Ministry in Light of a Justified Congregation.” Mr. Amiot has been serving his seminary internship in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, this past year. All papers presented during the forum will be published in the upcoming Journal.





THE GEORG SVERDRUP SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Ordet Bleo Kjød

(The Word Became Flesh)

Directors

Martin Horn, President
Kevin Borg, Vice President
Tim Larson, Secretary
Larry Walker, Editor
Alex Amiot
Marian Christopherson
Lloyd Quanbeck

Prospective members are invited to contact the Membership Secretary, Kris Nyman, 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**.

2017 Seminary Discussion Forum



Above: Rev. Brett Boe presenting his paper, “Barnelærdom: Sverdrup’s Pastoral approach to Luther’s Small Catechism.” Boe serves a congregation in Shakopee, Minnesota. **Right:** President Martin Horn displaying a copy of Pontoppidan’s Truth Unto Godliness, which constituted part of Sverdrup’s “barnelærdom.”

