



The Georg Sverdrup Society

NEWSLETTER

The 2024 Sverdrup Journal

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The theme of the 2024 Sverdrup journal is “Sverdrup and the Fellowship of Congregations.” The journal will explore the formation of the Lutheran Free Church as an association of free congregations.

Martin Horn will contribute an article titled “The Lutheran Free Church As a Spiritual Movement.” When the Lutheran Free Church was established, Sverdrup and the other founders rejected the synodical model where con-

gregations are bound together by the legal obligations of a constitution. Rather, they conceived the Lutheran Free Church as a spiritual movement where the congregations are bound together by the bonds of the Spirit. This fellowship, Sverdrup believed, was gathered by the Spirit and would only find success as the Spirit continued to work among them.

The second article is “Congregations Working Together” by Phillip Hoop-

er. The Lutheran Free Church was a fellowship of free congregations who desired to work together on common tasks such as missions and the training of pastors. In this fellowship, the congregations would participate voluntarily as they were led by the Spirit, not being coerced by man-made regulations and obligations. Sverdrup understood that the Lutheran Free Church would need an organizational structure to facili-

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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.

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GEORG SVERDRUP SOCIETY
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2024
Maranatha Free Lutheran Church
Glyndon, Minnesota**

12:00 Luncheon Buffet
RSVP: pldq@maranathafreelutheran.com

1:00 Program

Speaker: Gary Dahle
“The Legacy of Ole Dahle in the LFC”

2:00 Annual Meeting

Ole Dahle was a pastor to the lumberjacks in central Minnesota, in addition to pastoring Lutheran Free Church congregations in Morris, Duluth, Aitkin, Deerwood, and Starbuck, Minnesota.

Ole Dahle’s children “carried on the family business” leading congregations in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska, and missionary work in Madagascar.

North Heights Lutheran Church of Roseville, Emmaus Lutheran of Bloomington, Nordland Lutheran of New London, Elmwood Lutheran of Northeast Minneapolis, and Hegland Lutheran Church of Hawley are just a few of the congregations having connections to the descendants of Ole Dahle.

Sverdrup Summer Forum Report

The attractive edifice of Calvary Free Lutheran in Fosston, Minnesota, served as the location for the 2024 summer Sverdrup Forum. Pastor Mark Richardson welcomed attendees. The theme for this year's gathering was "Free and Living Congregations." President of the Society, Brian Lunn, convened a good-sized crowd, considering it was a summer Saturday in north-central Minnesota.

Dr. Martin Horn delivered the opening presentation. It was a homecoming for him, as he had served Calvary in decades past. Marty's address drew attention to Sverdrup's notable metaphor of the congregation as the bride of Christ.

Pastor Lloyd Quanbeck of Maranatha Free Lutheran Church of Glyndon, Minnesota, gave the second address. Pastor Quanbeck intentionally relied on Pastor Bob Lee's recent publication of a history of the AFLC. Lloyd drew on informative statistics, comparing the Lutheran Free Church prior to the merger with the present size of the Association, keeping in mind its humble beginnings more than sixty years ago.

Our third speaker for this summer's meeting was Pastor Karl Anderson of Zerkel, Minnesota. He is a long-time resident of the area, having recently retired from ministerial service at Rice and Alida Free Lutheran Churches. Karl formatted his treatment of the congregations of the North Central Minnesota

District by reminding the listeners of the pietistic tradition's attempt to avoid the opposite ditches of scholasticism and individualism. He also mentioned the regrettable condition that a few of the local congregations have drifted away from the district and the Association due to the lack of available Free Lutheran pastors to accept calls.

Of special note among attendees at the summer forum were two new servant leaders to the area: Pastor Jerry Moan, who recently accepted the call to the McIntosh Parish, and recently ordained Pastor Scott Olson, beginning his service at Grace Free Lutheran of Bagley.

Following a delicious lunch prepared by Calvary members, the board met in session in the fellowship hall.

—Carl Fiskness



Left: Pastor Martin Horn lectures on the congregation as the body of Christ

Above top: Pastor Lloyd Quanbeck speaks on the history of the AFLC

Above: Pastor Karl Anderson speaks on the North Central Minnesota District



The 2024 Sverdrup Journal (cont.)

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tate this joint work. However, he believed that this organization could only serve the congregations and could not exercise any authority over them.

This issue will also include a first for the *Sverdrup Journal*. Two years ago, the Sverdrup Society board decided to publish significant student papers on subjects relevant to the journal. Our first student paper is “The First Fundamental Principle: Significance, Responsibility, and Institution” by Rachel Molstre. Molstre,

librarian for the Free Lutheran College and Seminary, wrote the article as part of the requirements for the class, “History and Aims of the AFLC.”

The 2024 *Journal* will also include a section of translations from Sverdrup’s work. This year, the translations will be taken from *Veiledning i Den Lutherske Frikirkens Principer* (A Guide to the Principles of the Lutheran Free Church), edited by John O. Evjen. This volume consists primarily of editorials by both Georg Sverdrup and Sven Of-

tedal following the formation of the Lutheran Free Church. They deal primarily with practical issues related to the LFC’s congregational polity. The majority of the articles in the *Veiledning* were not published in the six-volume *Samlede Skrifter* (Collected Works) of Sverdrup’s writings edited by Andreas Helland.

—Martin Horn

Minority Program

Translated by Larry J. Walker

From Veiledning, pp. 19-21. Adopted by the meeting in Minneapolis, October 1894.

[Translator’s note: This article was written previously to the founding of the Lutheran Free Church, while the Friends of Augsburg were still attempting to work within the United Church.]

Preamble: The Minority organized for work desires only to carry on a powerful work in order that the tasks which the United Church has set for itself in the Articles of Union and its constitution may be carried out in practice, in that it claims that the United Church is a community of congregations *organized in order to give the freedom of the congregations the greatest possible development among us.*

Point 1. The chief goal of this organization is to support

Augsburg Seminary, which we continue to consider entitled under the articles of union to be the seminary of the United Church, and by Augsburg Seminary we mean first and foremost the *principle of pastoral education* which is followed there—which, we believe, works to the benefit of our fellowship and of our congregations.

Point 2. With regard to the inner mission, we consider it only right that it should be carried on impartially, and that the standpoints of pastors and congregations should not, in matters concerning the greater fellowship, influence the distribution of the fellowship’s mission funds. We regard it even further as our obligation to protect by all legal means the right of pastors and congregations to free and independent convictions.

Point 3. We believe that

the heathen mission is one of the Christian congregation’s chief duties, just as urgent as any purpose whatever at home in Christendom, and that it is therefore a holy obligation to take advantage of all means and gifts for the extension of God’s Kingdom among the heathens and not to loan mission funds in arbitrary ways, instead of directing them as determined.

Point 4. We firmly maintain the right of the congregations to extend calls, freely and unhindered by interference from the greater fellowship or its officers. The fellowship is to help the congregation to achieve the greatest possible freedom in the calling of pastors, not attempt to institute a system of [career] advancement for pastors. We regard setting up new condi-

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THE GEORG SVERDRUP SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Ordet Blev Kjødt

(The Word Became Flesh)

Directors

Brian Lunn, President
Martin Horn, Vice-President
Tim Larson, Secretary
Kris Nyman, Treasurer
Brian Davidson
Steve Mundfrom
Carl Fiskness

Larry Walker, Editor
Loiell Dyrud, Assistant Editor

Prospective members are invited
to contact the secretary 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**.

Minority Program (cont.)

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tions for ordination in the interests of a single party as an undue infringement on the congregation’s freedom and right of call. We also lament that congregations turn their right of call over to either the president of the fellowship or to any committee outside their own midst. The recommendation of unworthy persons to congregational calls is an abuse of the most sacred obligations resting upon the fellowship and its officers.

Point 5. We view a powerful and spiritual lay activity and the taking advantage of all spiritual gifts within the congregation as unqualified goods for the awakening of Christian life and its

nourishment, and this activity must be lovingly encouraged among us through the living preaching of revival and through an experience of its heartfelt love for the salvation and blessedness of sinners.

Point 6. We believe that the conflict within the fellowship must be resolved, and we consider it imperative for that purpose that an amicable resolution occur through brotherly discussions.

Point 7. That the fellowship presumes to judge sins and attempts to win over consciences through its laws and resolutions, we regard as a dangerous and concerning mode of procedure, which will easily lead to Catholic errors.

Point 8. In general, we maintain that the fellowship is not a church authority over congregations, able to demand obedience and submission from them, but only an organ or means by which the congregations carry on certain specific activities, which individually they are too weak to carry out in a proper manner, such as maintaining a seminary, carrying on inner and foreign missions, etc. We regard it therefore as unjust to pressure the congregations into agreement or to divide congregations for the sake of church fellowship or church-political issues.