

Christ for a World Like This

CONVENTION OF THE LUTHERAN STUDENTS' UNION, 1944, LUTHER COLLEGE,
DECORAH, IOWA, MARCH 3-5

Deloris Hanson

This convention should mean a change in your life"—that was the challenge laid before us as four hundred students from our church schools gathered for the fellowship supper and mixer the first evening of the twenty-fifth annual Lutheran Students' Union convention. And it did.

Throughout those three spirit-filled days there had been kindled the desire to reopen closed valves to the power of Christ and to proclaim Christ as the solvent for a sin-weary world through the theme, "Christ for a World Like This." "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" (I John 5:4-5).

At an impressive candle-light service in C. K. Preus Gymnasium, where a statue of Thorvaldson's Christ was etched against a dark background, special tribute was paid to the men and women from our schools who are in the armed forces of our country.

Dr. L. A. Pierson, president of the South Dakota district, developed the first sub-theme, "Christ in the Human Heart," based on I Tim. 1:15, "Faithful is the saying and worthy of all acceptance that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." He warned us not to think of sin in general terms—I am chief. The greatest danger in student life is simple neglect. "Creeping paralysis comes upon us. There is so much deception in the world that it is considered an achievement." To find Jesus adds something to life, he said. It pays to let Jesus Christ into the human heart.

A thorough Bible study at nine o'clock Saturday morning, conducted by the Rev. J. W. Ylvisaker, pastor of Our Saviour's Church, Minneapolis, continued to point to the neces-

sity of personal faith and victory over sin. That Psalm 118:8 ("It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man") is not only the center verse of the Bible, but is also the central truth of the Bible and the central fact of our lives was made clear.

"A Christian life is when you yourself move out from the center and let Christ have the center place. Everything is regulated by that. In the circle of our lives Christ must be the center."

Individuals who attended both this year's conference and the initial meeting at St. Olaf College a quarter of a century ago concluded that one outstanding difference between youth now and then is that students of today have more self-reliance and self-expression. Opportunity for such expression was given in the four interest discussion groups when such pertinent problems as "Our Church in the Post-war World," "The Cry from Foreign Lands," "The Cry from the Home Front," and "Spiritual Power on My Campus," were considered.

Further attention was focused on the general theme Saturday afternoon when the subject, "Christ for America's Youth," was approached. The



Incoming LSU officers, left to right: Stanley Gjervik, Avis Rollog, Glenn Groth, Ardy's Hensing, and Willard Lund



Students register for convention

Rev. E. C. Reinertson, pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Forest City, Iowa, was capable of handling his topic, "The Christian Faces Juvenile Delinquency," since he is very active in the work of the Lutheran Welfare Society. He pointed out that it will take earnest men and women with deep convictions to drive the dragon back into his cave. J. Edgar Hoover admits, "I am not usually shocked and alarmed, but today, like thousands of others, I am both shocked and alarmed."

The areas for action as outlined by Pastor Reinertson covered four fields. First, the individual. The greatest influence that can be brought to bear upon juvenile delinquency is personal Christian living. Secondly, the home. In this period of tragic strain on the home, it is more important than ever that Christ be the head of this institution. Thirdly, the church and the school. The necessity of instruction in Christian principles is greater now than at any other time, according to J. Edgar Hoover. Fourthly, recreation. We were warned not to invite the devil into our recreation so that the step to the tavern is a short and easy one.

Appearing again at the afternoon session, Pastor Ylvisaker portrayed "America's Army of Unchurched Youth," a band of twenty-two million young people. "It is an army where the stars are being placed, one gold one after another, without honor or hope. It is the army of unbelief." We, under the banner of faith, are opposed to those who are under the banner of unbelief. God assures us victory, "This is the victory that overcometh the world."

Since the L.S.U. is primarily a mission organization at heart and supported our foreign mission work with a contribution of \$1,500 last year, it is only natural that considerable emphasis was placed

on that field. The Rev. A. S. Burgess, one of the secretaries of the foreign mission department of our church, addressed the students on "The Christian Faces the Heathen World" and showed colored films on the new South American field at the banquet Saturday evening.

As young people of the church, we were told that our church must wake up to send the gospel to all the world. "Our church has one of the finest forces of men and women who could turn this world upside down for Christ if they want to." Much first-hand information from his recent trip to South America was imparted by Pastor Burgess, and articles brought back from our southern neighbor were displayed.

After the banquet was formally closed, a sound film, "Forgotten Village," was shown. This was the story of a fight of American doctors against Mexican superstition.

It has long been agreed by most LSU'ers that the spiritual climax of the convention comes Sunday morning when hundreds of students partake of the Lord's Supper. Kneeling at the altar, we received forgiveness of sins and power from God in His Holy Sacrament.

Simple but forceful was the festival sermon at 10:45 preached by Pastor Reinertson. His topic was "The Voice of Authority." He began by reminding us that time has proved that Hitler and Mussolini have no voice of authority. However, 2,000 years ago a man spoke to a little group of people at the temple and calmly said, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether it speak of myself." Since then, that authority has been challenged in every possible way.

Three parts of the will of God that Jesus wants
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Outgoing officers, left to right: Lyle Gangsei, Gail Haaland, Rev. Oscar C. Hanson, adviser, Lillian Kvamsdale, Richard Nelson. Bob Borgwardt not on picture