

THE SPRINGFIELDER

Vol. XXV

Summer, 1961

No. 2

THE SPRINGFIELDER is published quarterly by the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

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Clergy changes of address reported to Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo., will also cover mailing change of *The Springfielder*. Other changes of address should be sent to the Business Manager of *The Springfielder*, Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois.

Address communications to the Editor, Erich H. Heintzen, Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois.

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Called Teachers' Retirement: A Faculty Opinion

The following resolution was sent to the Faculty with a request for an opinion. Apparently some of the brethren in the Association had their misgivings regarding the enforced retirement provision in the resolution.

A RESOLUTION REGARDING CALLED TEACHERS BE IT RESOLVED:

1. (A) Called Teachers' retirement age shall be 65, or sooner, if he shall so elect. The retirement shall become effective at the end of the school term during which he shall have attained the age of 65.
(B) By mutual agreement between the School Board and said retired teacher, he may be rehired on a contract basis.
(C) Said teacher's salary, by mutual agreement by said teacher and the Board of _____ Lutheran School Association, shall be not less than the salary said teacher received before changing his status.
2. That said called teacher's status, after reaching the retirement age and/or sixty-five years of age, shall be that of a contract teacher.
3. That Contract Teachers shall be on a year-to-year basis of hire, the contract being between teachers or instructors and the _____ Lutheran School Association.
4. That teachers' or instructors' contract can be terminated, governed by the rules of the constitution of the _____ Lutheran School Association, directed by the School Board of the Association.
5. That this resolution be presented at the next _____ Lutheran School Association meeting; and if the resolution be adopted, that the first four points be made a policy of the _____ Lutheran School Association, _____, and of said School Board, and incorporated into the by-laws of the Constitution of the _____ Lutheran School Association, _____.

The Faculty Opinion follows:

1. The teaching ministry in the church is ordinarily a life-time profession for the individual. Thus, a servant of the Word expects and is expected to serve the church or the local congregation(s) to which he has been called during the normal course of his working life. He may, however, accept another call. Likewise, he can be dismissed for the usual reasons, such as persistent teaching of false doctrine, scandalous life, and refusal or inability to carry out his duties.
2. Under normal conditions the Call, which is a relationship established by God between the church and the servant, is limited only by circumstances affecting the ability of the servant or the needs of the calling agency.
3. A proper call must always determine the *area* of activity and may also determine the *length* of service required. (The best interests of the individual and of the calling agency may at times require a limitation of tenure. The divinity of the call is not affected by such limited tenure.)
4. It would appear that Paragraphs 1 (B) and (C) in the proposed resolution are designed to assure a servant of the Word that, if he is able and willing to serve, he will be given that opportunity.
5. While there is no conflict between the proposed resolution and the doctrine of the call, the matter of Christian ethics must be considered in the implementation of any such resolution. Care must be taken not to violate the sanctity of the call. Christian brotherly love dictates that the congregation(s) also fulfill its obligation to its servants. Thus, provision will be made for the decent maintenance of the servants, not only while they are actively engaged in their work, but also in their retirement. Pension plans, provision for housing, etc., need to be considered.

Respectfully submitted,
Martin Naumann
Otto Stahlke
Martin Luebke

Adopted by the Faculty, April 14, 1961