

MICHIGAN-INDIANA SYNOD

OF THE

EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH
(UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST)

PRESIDENT
REV. HENRY G. KROEHLER
888 HALSTEAD BOULEVARD
JACKSON, MICHIGAN
STATE 3-4996

VICE PRESIDENT
REV. E. A. IRION
812 HARRISON AVENUE
ST. JOSEPH, MICHIGAN

SECRETARY
REV. MELVIN MILLER
81844 MOUND ROAD
WARREN, MICHIGAN

TREASURER
MR. EARL H. SIEBOLD
1010 MARINE DRIVE
FORT WAYNE 4, INDIANA

LAY REPRESENTATIVE
MR. HENRY W. KLEBER
8733 CADILLAC TOWER
DETROIT 28, MICHIGAN



February 26, 1958

Rev. Meredith J. Sprunger, *B.A.*
215 North Slate Street
Culver, Indiana

Dear Meredith:

The enclosed letter as a reply to Mr. Hand and an acknowledgment for the information from him is self-explanatory.

I would, however, like to ask a question in regard to the letter which you circulated to your study group. As far as I can see the contents of the letter are quite proper. Now it seems to me as I read through the letter there is a slight hint to the effect that you and others might possibly feel persecuted in this matter. I know that you would want to avoid anything of a persecution complex. I am just wondering a little whether your expression "using subtle threats to make us conform" might possibly imply something of a feeling on your part that any threats would tend to make you more adamant. You know, of course, that no such threats will be forthcoming from me. I feel very kindly and congenial toward you as well as to the others involved in this study group. If at anytime, as I stated in South Bend, I find it desirable to talk with any of you concerning this study, I shall do it in that spirit. I would just hope that you do not feel that there is a degree of unfriendly pressure brought to bear upon you.

My best wishes to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Henry G. Kroehler".

Henry G. Kroehler

HGK:hs
Enc.

February 26, 1958

Mr. Donald B. Hand
426 State Street
Culver, Indiana

Dear Mr. Hand:

First of all, let me express my appreciation for the contents of your letter of February 25. I also want to add that I thoroughly agree with the procedure which you have outlined in regard to the matter of complaints. At one or two points I would think perhaps a different wording would be more desirable. Yet I think the general spirit of the procedure which you outlined is wholesome.

It seems to me that you are perhaps somewhat unnecessarily severe in the censure against the elder involved in this particular instance when you speak of his action as "an undemocratic request calling for an authoritarian action." I agree that the contact was made through the wrong channel but I am not aware of any request for any authoritarian action. Rather I am quite certain it was primarily an expression of concern.

I also want to share with you and the members of the consistory in the expression of confidence in the work which Dr. Sprunger is doing in your midst. Dr. Sprunger knows that the concern which was expressed in this regard in no way reflects any hesitancy in expressing our appreciation for the excellency of the work he has been doing. I gather, however, from your letter that there might be some thought to hinder "a strong progressive approach to Christian thinking." I feel that I need to assure you that in the Evangelical and Reformed Church there has always been an encouragement for such thorough Christian thinking and that I am sure we shall continue with that particular emphasis. Nevertheless, this will in no way imply that legitimate objections will not be raised against the development of any unchristian thinking in our congregations.

With these comments I want to assure you again that I have every confidence that the congregational life in Grace Church will continue to develop in every Christian sense as it has in the past.

Sincerely,

Henry G. Kroehler

HGX:hs
cc: Rev. M. J. Sprunger