

May 4, 1976

The Lutheran Ambassador

SPRING PLOWING

With a flock of birds following closely behind searching for worms and insects in the turned-over soil, a farmer plows his field in Puyallup, Washington.

Religious News Service Photo
by Don Rutledge



MEDITATION MOMENTS

UFology

The Bible warns that the devil is a liar (John 8:44). There are no rules of fair play to which the devil limits himself in an attempt to deceive man. Ever since Adam fell into sin, Satan has used all kinds of false gods, false religions and false doctrines to tempt man away from God.

Within the last decade, or less, we have been alerted to the host of demons and fallen angels who are the devil's agents, closely working with him.

We are warned in Scripture that Satan's zeal to deceive will increase in the latter days (Matt. 24:22-26).

The devil disguises himself to be an angel of light (II Cor. 11:14), or a prophet, or as Christ Himself (Matt. 4:1-11). He can do miracles (Matt. 24:24) imitating Jesus.

Satan's latest onslaught is a new belief called UFology. This belief is closely related to the occult. With the help of his demon followers, Satan has been able to produce false evidence and signs causing man to see and believe that which is false.

For years man has been baffled by strange objects in the sky first known as flying saucers, and now called Unidentified Flying Objects (UFO). Many people have seen these objects. They can no longer be ignored as being imaginative.

Quite a few claim to have made contact with these objects, receiving a message from them. A careful study of all these reports reveal a great deal

of similarity. The message received is contrary to Scripture but relates to certain portions of Scripture. The greatest similarity is in prophecy relating to the end time. However, what they predict is very misleading.

The occupants of these flying objects claim to be from other planets. Briefly, their message is this: God is some super-technological Being who evolved to His present state on some remote planet long before man ever came into existence on planet earth. God now travels in a flying saucer visiting various planets. These visitors from outer space claim to be angels who have come to prepare the way for Christ's return. They warn of a great disaster which is to come, but promise peace and escape from doom if we listen to and obey their message. They claim that we earthlings know little about God and do well to learn from them.

Some who have made contact with these flying objects have been given extraordinary abilities, such as super-strength, power to heal and ability to tell future events. They believe they have a special calling to proclaim the message they received. Some of these contactees claim that they have been on board flying objects. Some claim to have visited other planets.

The most logical explanation is that the UFO's and their message is Satan- and demon-inspired. It is an attempt to deceive man. It could be that they are preparing the way for the anti-

Christ.

They want man to think that they come from outer space. It is a hoax, but we cannot say they do not exist. These flying objects seem to be more psychic than materialistic. No radar has ever been able to detect them. The method used in deceiving could be similar to that of flashing a picture on a screen, using the open sky as the screen, although demons do have power to transform objects, or themselves, so as to appear as flying objects. It is possible through hypnosis, and other methods, to cause man to believe he had some experience when in reality he did not.

The Bible says, "The truth shall set you free" (John 8:32). Realizing what is taking place, we dare not neglect the feeding of our souls on the whole of God's truth.

Even if we know the truth of the Bible, we may not be able to fully explain the mystery of the UFOs. But we will, at least, be able to detect their message to be false.

Even a little Bible knowledge is not sufficient. The message of the UFOs has enough similarity with the Bible message that a little such knowledge could cause a person to whole-heartedly subscribe to it. We need to know our Bible well enough to detect the falseness of other religions and doctrines so as not to be deceived by what they teach.

Gerald F. Mundfrom
(see page 14.)

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The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

by Pastor R. Snipstead,
Ferndale, Wash.

Article X: Of the Lord's Supper:
"Of the Supper of the Lord they teach that the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present, and are distributed to those who eat in the Supper of the Lord; and they reject those that teach otherwise."

Matthew 26:26-29 describes how Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper for His disciples. It is apparent that it was meant to replace the Passover of the Old Testament, for it was instituted at the conclusion of the Passover meal.

In our Lutheran Church, the Lord's Supper is one of two Sacraments. Baptism is the Sacrament of regeneration, and we refer to the Lord's Supper as the Sacrament of renewal. "The Holy water of Baptism runs at the door of the kingdom of God. Within by the the inmost hearth of the home, the table is set for the meal to strengthen the people of God" (F. Wisløff).

Since our space is limited in a short article, we cannot deal with all the aspects of the Lord's Supper as we should have desired to, but will seek to cover the most important points of teaching on this Sacrament.

1. The Necessity of the Lord's Supper.

The Christian has in the Word a powerful means for the furtherance of his spiritual development and for the sustaining of his spiritual life. However, it remains a fact that his consciousness is not always so clear and vivid, that he through this means is able to receive all the spiritual help which he needs. He needs a means which can have its effect upon him independently of his weakness. Christ



Rev. R. Snipstead

met this need by giving His Church the Sacrament of the Altar. What a good God we have! It is so welcome a means for those who are aware of their own weakness, and who hunger for spiritual food and refreshment. For them it can also become a means of realizing the deepest and most intimate personal communion that is conceivable.

The Lord's Supper is the festive occasion in the Communion of Saints. As Christians are gathered together, there will be no other occasion when they will be so united and bound together as at the Communion Table. We need this fellowship as believers.

Jesus said, "This do in remembrance of me." Each observance of the Lord's Supper should remind us of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord.

2. The Nature of the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper was expressly instituted by the Lord "in the night in which He was betrayed." The visible means are bread and wine.

The Lord's body and blood are the invisible gifts of grace which are given in and with the visible means of the bread and the wine. The Lord's Supper is therefore truly a sacrament.

The expression "Lord's Supper," an evening meal, points to the historical origin of this Sacrament at the evening meal which Jesus gave His disciples immediately before His suffering and death. It has also been called the Sacrament of the Altar because the communicants gather around the altar. It is called the Lord's Table (I Cor. 10:21) because the Lord gives the meal and the participants are His guests. It is called Communion because it serves to strengthen the union between Christians and Christ and, as we have noted, between Christians mutually. It has also been called the Eucharist because of the prayer of thanksgiving and consecration which in the ancient Church was offered by the pastor over the gifts which the congregation brought for use in administering the holy act.

The earthly elements in the Supper are bread and wine. Jesus did not say that they are changed into something else (transubstantiation). He did not say that they are merged with another element to form a new substance (consubstantiation). Nor did He say that they merely represented, or symbolized, His body and blood. We understand the words of Jesus in the light of what Paul writes in I Cor. 10:16: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the

body of Christ?" "Symbols are to be looked at, not to be eaten and drunk" (Luther).

When the Lord says concerning the bread: "This is my body," and concerning the cup: "This is my blood" (Matt. 26:26 ff.), the meaning is not that the bread is now no longer bread, that it is now nothing else than the body of Christ, and that the wine is no longer wine, that it is now nothing else than the blood of Christ. But the meaning is this, that as the Lord gives us the bread and the cup, He likewise gives us His true body and true blood.

3. The Effects of the Lord's Supper.

In the Lord's Supper as in Baptism, we must distinguish between a two-fold effect in the Sacrament, an effect in which all the communicants participate by virtue of the fact that the Sacrament is administered in accordance with its institution, without regard to their faith or unbelief (the sacramental effect); and a saving effect, which is contingent upon the recipient's faith (the saving effect).

The sacramental effect: When the Sacrament is administered according to the Lord's institution, each communicant receives the Lord's body and blood, the unworthy as well as the worthy. Our human nature comes into contact with the powers of heaven by this immediate communion with the heavenly human nature of Christ. Consequently, the one who receives the Sacrament in unbelief enters thereby into a certain relationship to Him, which is not the case with the one who has not partaken of the Lord's Supper. The Lord visits him. But since he is rejecting Christ, this sacramental relationship cannot only not effect his salvation, but will bring upon him God's judgment. That which is given to the Church as "a savor of life unto life" becomes to such a one "a savor of death unto death."

That Paul means that also the unworthy guest, of whom he speaks in I Cor. 11:27, 29, really receives the Lord's body and blood, is a necessary presupposition for understanding his statement that "he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body" (v. 29).

The saving effect: The Lord's Supper is called the Sacrament of re-

newal, and this is the saving effect or benefit of the Lord's Supper. The significance of this Sacrament as a means of strengthening and encouraging the Christian is shown by the choice of bread and wine as the material elements, for in those days these were the most common means of strengthening and refreshing oneself physically.

There may be times when one is wonderfully conscious of the Lord's presence at the communion table. At other times no exaltation is felt at all. The Lord's Supper has just as great an effect, however, regardless of how one feels. Christ imparts His grace to every needy soul who hungers and thirsts after righteousness.

The Lord's Supper is a confirming of that forgiveness of sins which the communicant had received before through faith in Christ by virtue of His finished work on Golgotha. Satisfaction is not made for anyone in the Lord's Supper; for the body of Christ is not sacrificed anew. The one sacrifice He made once for all. No new sacrifice can be brought or shall be brought. Satisfaction cannot be made anew for that which is finished.

We do not go to the Lord's Supper in order to become Christians, but because we are Christians. Because we have forgiveness of sins before we go to the Lord's Supper, the sacrament is the external pledge of that forgiveness of sins which we received in Christ.

4. The Cause of the Effects of the Lord's Supper.

"How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?" To this question Luther answers: "It is not the eating and drinking, indeed, that does it, but the words: 'Given and shed for you, for the remission of sins'. These words, together with the bodily eating and drinking, are the chief thing in the Sacrament; and he that believes these words, has what they say and mean, namely, the forgiveness of sins."

The Lord's Supper is a Sacrament because it was instituted by Christ, and it is His Word alone that will produce effects in the heart of the believer.

5. The Conditions for a Worthy Participation.

If one is to receive the assurance his heart needs, there must be a sincere and hearty desire for fellowship with the Lord when he comes to the Lord's Supper.

He who has such a desire must, in the next place, examine himself as to whether he is worthy, or in such a spiritual condition that he can have this desire satisfied in this way. The Lord's Supper is only for those who by grace are in fellowship with God, not for such as are still in need of entering this fellowship.

It is necessary for the one who wants to partake of the Lord's Supper to assure himself that he possesses spiritual life. That life may be very weak, but if it manifests contrition for sin and a faith in Christ's sacrifice for his sin, he is then a suitable guest at the Lord's Supper.

QUOTATION CREDIT CHANGED

The quotations from the *Book of Concord* used in the article "Faith and Good Works" by Pastor Ronald Hoehne, Fergus Falls, Minn., in the March 23rd issue should have been credited to the 1921 edition of the *Concordia Triglotta*, Concordia Publishing House, rather than to Fortress Press, copyright 1959.

LOVE HAS WON

I see You walk up Calvary
As if it were today,
But the path is a fearful one
And my heart turns away.

I see You reach Your hand to mine—
How can You still love me?
Your back is weighted with my sins,
They hold You to the tree.

And yet You gaze at me with love
Though I have caused You pain,
Though I have turned my back on You
And scorned Your holy name.

But love has come and love has won
What earth cannot detain,
And I reach out my hand to You
And keep the path again.

—Marlene Moline

NEWS of the Churches

PASTOR DENNIS GRAY INSTALLED AT GREEN LAKE LUTHERAN



Pastor Gray, left, and Pastor Strand

Pastor John P. Strand, president of the AFLC, officiated at the 11:00 am worship service, March 21, installing Dennis Gray as pastor of Green Lake Lutheran, Spicer, Minn. Special music was given by the Youth Choir String Band.

A reception and fellowship dinner for Pastor Gray and Family was served by the ladies of the congregation following the installation service.

Stan Block, president of the congregation, led a short program following the dinner. Devotions were given by Rev. T. F. Dahle and a duet was sung by Pastor and Mrs. Dahle.

MOGASHEEN RESORT SITE OF YOUTH RETREAT

Seventy-five young people from Faith-Moland and Drummond, and from Cloquet, Minn., churches enjoyed a retreat at Mogasheen Resort, Lake Namekogan, April 3-4. Among the activities were Bible study, shar-

ing, an indoor pool, game room, sauna and the movie "Eighteen." Our churches took turns serving the meals. The fellowship and atmosphere created spiritual as well as physical refreshment. Thanks to all who helped and prayed, especially the Faith Brotherhood, which paid half the cost for all who attended from our parish.

—Drummond-Mason Lutheran Parish Newsletter, Drummond, Wis.

NEW PLAN FOR DVBS AT DALTON

The Dalton Lutheran Parish will be doing something different this year for Daily Vacation Bible School. The classes will be in the evening, 7:45-9:40 p.m., June 14-18, and are for the entire family. Missionary John Abel and his wife will be sharing and taking part.

Start now to pray about this week and plan to attend. This week is set aside for spiritual growth for all our members.

—Newsletter, Dalton, Minn., Parish.

CHRISTIAN LIFE AND GROWTH SERVICES

Lay Pastor Verle Dean, Culbertson, Mont., is the speaker at a spring series of meetings in the Roseau, Minn., Lutheran parish, May 2-6. All services are held in Rose Lutheran Church, rural Roseau. Rev. Jerome Nikunen is the pastor.

FACULTY ANNOUNCED FOR FAMILY CAMP

Rev. David C. Molstre, dean of the 1976 Family Bible Camp, which will be held at Galilee Bible Camp, Lake Bronson, Minn., July 5-11, has announced the following faculty for the camp: Rev. Harvey Carlson, Grand Forks, N. Dak., adult Bible teacher; Rev. Donald Greven, Sedan, Minn., evening speaker; Rev. Ronald Knutson, Drummond, Wis., youth Bible teacher; Rev. John Abel, missionary to Brazil, missions teacher; and Seminarian Jay Eberth, Minneapolis, Minn., confirmation teacher.

Other teachers will be named for children below confirmation age, as well as other appointments for camp staff.

The Family Camp will be the 14th annual one. Prior to last year, they were all held at Lake Geneva Bible Camp, Alexandria, Minn., but in 1975 the camp was conducted at Galilee Camp. Additional improvements have been made at the camp since last year. It is owned and operated by the Northern Minnesota District of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations.

GOD'S PLAN

Changes come quickly through
passing years—

Loneliness, sorrow, and pain,
and tears—

Sunshine and darkness, clouds and
rain—

Mountain-tops, valleys, and endless
plains.

As we look back on days that are
passed,

We'll see, though dimly, God's plan
at last;

He has a pattern for coming days
And puts each part in its proper
place.

God knows the way; He will work it
out

After His will, when we trust, not
doubt;

And some bright day we shall
understand,

When we are safe in His promised
land.

Mrs. Laura Norum
Amery, Wisconsin

THE PRICE OF WATER

by Roger Ose

The ox cart had already travelled 25 kilometers with the load of water. Although the sun was setting, the driver didn't stop, as he wanted to make the last eight kilometers to his home before he stopped for the night. He had hauled water from the town of Ambovombe to a little bush village where he had his home, his family, and his corn fields.

The oxen were not happy. Pulling the oxcart up and down the sandy hills was hard work. The two barrels of water weighed nearly half a ton. And the burning hot sun made the trip even harder.

When they reached the village, the oxen were turned out to pasture. They immediately went to the swamp where the owner dug away some ground to make a water hole for drinking. The water was sour, but the oxen drank and drank. They had not had a drink all day. The water in the barrels was only for the humans.

Then the driver opened one of the barrels and gave a half pail of water to each of the dozen families so they could cook their supper. Then he loaded the second barrel into another ox cart. That barrel went on to another village five kilometers away.

Water is costly here just now. The

rains have not fallen for four months in the Ambondro area. There are 30 or more wells around Ambondro, and only nine of them still have water in them. It is common to see two dozen ox carts lined up at the wells that have water. The men fill their barrels and then head back into the bush with their precious cargo—drinking water.

Water is precious. I've seen hundreds of dirty little children playing in the small villages around Ambondro. What do they have in common? Dirty faces, dirty hands, dirty feet, and dirty clothes. When water is precious, it certainly can't be wasted on washing kids. What happens when children don't get washed? Ugly sores develop on their legs, arms and heads. When clothes get too dirty to wear any more, kids just run naked.

Water is one of the major projects of the United Nations teams working in the Ambondro area. I saw one team of 30 men putting in a concrete slab about 75' x 75'. It slanted toward the big 5,000 gallon cistern that they had built at the bottom of a hill. When the rains come, the rain water will run downhill on the concrete, and enter the cistern. Then the village will have a source of sweet water for several days.

Government farming programs are sometimes very successful because large dams and canals are built. For

example, 25 kilometers above Bezaha, Madagascar, is a huge dam on the Taheza river. The canals built by the farming cooperative carry that water into the valley just west of Bezaha. In the picture you see a whole series of rice fields that produce excellent crops every year. Before the dam was built, this area could barely produce even a poor crop.

Families are generally quite healthy if they have enough food. In the picture you see Mr. Rasolo, a farmer at Bezaha. He farms on irrigated land and has had good crops nearly every year. Water is the key to a good crop.

When Jesus said, "I am the water of life," He spoke of something that makes sense to the Malagasy. Village people out here know that water means life or death to people, cattle and crops. Water is costly. But it brings life. Jesus also brings new life to these bush farmers.

(Ed. note: Rev. and Mrs. Roger Ose and children plan to return to the U.S. in July on furlough. They hope to spend about two weeks visiting our mission field in Brazil on their way home. Pastor Ose is a cousin of Missionary Connely Dyrud, and a son of Mr. and Mrs. Torkel Ose, Thief River Falls, Minn.)



A big cooperative farm which is irrigated the year around. Such a farm produces two rice crops a year.



Mr. and Mrs. Rasolo and child. Christians, they farm on irrigated land.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

NO REST IN GRAND FORKS

Dear Sir:

Seven adults, including myself, from the Culbertson parish attended the Winter Conference and stayed at the Ryan Motor Hotel in Grand Forks, N. Dak. Incidentally, the hotel was chosen for its restaurant and its recommendation from the *Ambassador* in the Feb. 10 issue.

After attending services on the 26th, we went to our hotel, expecting a restful night. The ex-restaurant had become a pot-joint seating about 300 and illuminated by candle light. All seating room was taken. The occupants were "spaced out." A hard rock band was in attendance and literally rocked the whole building and those of our group who were on the 4th floor can attest to the noise and the vibration. The hotel was permeated with the odor of pot and the bed linen reeked of it.

Friday was a rehash of Thursday evening, with the addition of dancing to the pot party and the bar. Parking space for vehicles was nonexistent. This atmosphere invited parties in the hall and the occupants didn't have a restful night again.

May I suggest that a check be made of the lodgings that are available hereafter. It is discouraging to drive many miles to a conference and not have restful accommodations.

It is pathetic that people can abuse themselves and be sanctioned by the society in which we live.

Otto Kaschube
Brockton, Mont.

(Ed. note: We sincerely regret the conditions experienced by the above people during their stay at the Winter Bible Conference in Grand Forks. We used the list of housing supplied us. There was no intent on the part of any of us to deceive anyone. But the point is well taken that in the future care should be taken that no lodging place as "far out" as the one named above be recommended for people attending our conferences.)

BOOK REVIEW

IN THE PRESENCE OF MINE ENEMIES

By Howard and Phyllis Rutledge
with Mel and Lyla White,
Flemming H. Revell Co.

This book presents the heroic and intriguing story of a former prisoner of war and his wife and the faith that sustained them.

On November 27, 1965, Captain Howard E. Rutledge parachuted into the hands of the North Vietnamese when his fighter plane exploded under heavy anti-aircraft fire.

On November 28, Phyllis Rutledge heard the shattering news that her husband was missing in action.

For the next seven years this couple faced the loneliness of separation, the misery of not knowing.

Captain Rutledge recounts his experiences in enemy hands from the

moment of capture to his release. He describes the repulsive conditions of the prisons where he was held, the brutality of prison guards and interrogators, the unbearable loneliness of solitary confinement. He also shares those things which helped him to endure life in prison, the ingenious communication systems among prisoners, clever mental exercises and pastimes, deep allegiance to the United States, and, most of all, a renewed faith in God which gave him hope and enabled him to find things to be thankful for, even in the midst of torture and deprivation. Although he had completely neglected the spiritual dimensions of his life, prison with the sights and sounds and smell of death all around him, actually showed him how empty life is without God. Without a Bible or hymnbook, he daily, desperately, recalled snatches of Scripture, sermons, Gospel choruses and hymns. Through the long and horrible days in the prison, Captain Rutledge was led to believe there was a God who loved him and was working in his life. Prayer became a new experience for him and he discovered "Prayer really works."

Phyllis Rutledge experienced no physical torture, but she did go through five years of constant waiting for his return. During this time, she also faced alone the death of her mother and the tragic diving accident which left their teen-age son completely paralyzed. Yet, through all this God provided strength and guidance when she needed it most.

—Zion Church Library
Dalton, Minn., Mrs. Elma Matson,
librarian

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." Matthew 28: 19, 20

ENGAGEMENTS AT AFLBS THIS SCHOOL YEAR

Cindy Dragseth '76, Madison, S. Dak., and John Stewart

Susan Draeger, Medford, Wis., and Duane Haugen (former student), Canby, Minn.

Deb Wire '76, Minneapolis, Minn., and Arne Berge '76, Binford, N. Dak.

Mavis Miller '76, Binford, N. Dak., and Phil Schumacher '76, Minneapolis, Minn.

Deb Nelsen '76, Valley City, N. Dak., and Reuben Quanbeck '76, McVile, N. Dak.

Marge Benson '70, Colfax, Wis., and James Olson (Winter, 1975-76), Newfolden, Minn.

Kendra Broten '76, Roseau, Minn., and Keith Nash '76, Colfax, N. Dak.

Susan Sorteberg '76, Roseau, Minn., and Mike Rudebusch '77, Ortley, S. Dak.

Kathy Livingood '74-'75, Callaway, Minn., and Kim Erickson '74-'75, Badger, Minn.

COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES SET

Commencement exercises for three graduates of Free Lutheran Seminary and the class of seniors of Association Free Lutheran Bible School will be held on Friday, May 14, at Medicine Lake Lutheran Church. The service will begin at 8 o'clock. The speaker will be Rev. John P. Strand, AFLC president and part-time teacher in the Schools. A fellowship lunch will follow the service.

ONE OF LIFE'S RECIPES

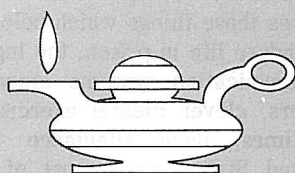
One cup of good thoughts, one cup of kind deeds, one cup of consideration for others.

Two cups sacrifice for others, three cups forgiveness. Mix these thoroughly, add tears of joy and sorrow and sympathy for others.

Fold in four cups of prayer and faith to lighten other ingredients and raise the texture to great height of Christian living.

After pouring all this into your daily life, bake well with the best of human kindness and serve with a smile.

Submitted by Marjorie Nelson
McVile, N. Dak.



SCHOOL NEWS

MINOT APPEARANCE CANCELLED BUT CHORAL CLUB TOUR WENT WELL

The 1976 Choral Club tour did not reach as far west as had been planned when word reached us that the concert in Minot, N. Dak., would have to be cancelled because of the flood threat there from the Mouse or Souris River. A last minute call to Pastor Timothy Skramstad and Trinity Congregation in Minnewaukan, N. Dak., found a welcome willingness to have the Choral Club stop there for a program on Monday night in Minot's place. We're very thankful to the friends at Minnewaukan for their graciousness.

The tour began on Thurs., April 8, when the 33 girls in the musical group, Don Rodvold, the director, and Pastor Huglen, faculty representative, left for the first concert at Green Lake, Spicer, Minn. Miss Orpha Flaten, accompanist, joined us later. We travelled in a very fine coach-style bus owned by the Medicine Lake Lines. Barry Hagen was the efficient driver.

On Friday we travelled to Blue Grass (Bethany), Minn., with stops at Long Prairie and Wadena. The next day, en route to Abercrombie, N. Dak., several hours were spent at West Acres Shopping Center, Fargo, N. Dak. It is a large and beautiful shopping center and was very crowded that Saturday. When we got to Abercrombie, we spent a short while at the fort on the edge of town. The concert that night (and the supper) was in the school gym.

Sunday was a busy day for us with stops at St. Paul's, Fargo, Grace, Valley City, and Bethany, Binford. At every concert on the tour but one

there were former students of AFLBS in the audience. The same was true of parents of Choral Club members. This added to the interest of our tour.

A stop was made at Devils Lake on Monday on the way to Minnewaukan. Various stores were visited. We drove out to Fort Totten, too. On Tuesday we picked up a number of Choral Club girls in McVile who had stayed over night there or at Binford and went on to Grand Forks where several hours were used for more shopping. A few girls went swimming at the Family "Y." The concert that night was at Ny Stavanger, Buxton.

Getting back into Minnesota for the last two appearances, the Choral Club reached Thief River Falls in early afternoon. A spaghetti supper was served at St. Paul's Church.

On the last day of the tour we travelled to Bemidji by way of Itasca State Park. Many of us crossed the Mississippi River where it begins. Again, many of us climbed a ranger tower and had a fine view of the park. In Bemidji there were pictures taken with Paul Bunyan and Babe, the blue ox. The concert was at Bethany Church.

We drove home that night with rest stops at Brainerd and St. Cloud, arriving back at AFLBS at 1:45 a.m. The trip had been a safe one with no problems except an overheated motor east of New Rockford, N. Dak., on Tuesday, but the delay was relatively brief.

We were blessed by visiting the churches and by the great hospitality of all the people. We trust that our visits and the concerts were a blessing to those we met.

R. H.

editorials

GOOD TO SEE THE CHURCHES

There is a report on the Bible School Choral Club tour in the School News section of this issue. As a member of the entourage this writer enjoyed the opportunity to visit the ten sponsoring congregations and to see their church buildings, four of them for the first time—Bethany, Blue Grass, Minn.; Bethany, Abercrombie, N. Dak.; Trinity, Minnewaukan, N. Dak.; and Bethany, Bemidji, Minn.

It is good to experience the hospitality and friendliness of the people in the congregations and to see their pride in the Bible School. Then, the girls of the Choral Club, and this is true of the Choir members also, and their director, Mr. Rodvold, work hard and they do nothing but make additional friends for the School. These personal appearances help to make AFLBS a living reality to our church people.

Then we want to mention the spiritual blessing which comes through the musical programs and the testimonies. We are sure that the fresh, wholesome and joyful appearance and witness of these young people have no little impact on the audiences which hear them as well as on all those who see them in their homes or as they travel.

But to get back to the churches, it is evident that the Association has some very fine church structures and parsonages. From what we have seen on this trip and others, our congregations have facilities adequate to their needs or will do what is necessary to make them such. That goes both for the church buildings and housing for the pastors.



Left to right, Pastor Dennis Gray, Mrs. Trygve Dahle, Don Rodvold and Pastor Dahle outside the parsonage in Spicer, Minn.

True effectiveness for Christ is not dependent upon material buildings, but effectiveness may be aided by good outward facilities and it is in that sense that we rejoice in the fine structures we see throughout the AFLC.

May we always remember: "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain" (Psalm 127:1).

THE LABORERS ARE FEW

We are reminded of those words of Jesus as we note that Free Lutheran Seminary will graduate only three men this spring, the fewest number for some years. True, the next two classes, the only ones we know anything about now, will be larger, but it would be good if this year's class were larger.

It seems that there ought to be half a dozen men coming out each year in order to avoid long vacancies in parishes, to allow for the gradual absorption of some pastors into new home mission work, and to provide new missionaries for the Brazil field.

In respect to the latter, there are at least three present seminary students who are seriously thinking of our foreign mission field, seriously enough to have visited with the Board of Foreign Missions about their interest. This is good. May God lead and guide.

Let all praying people in our church remember to pray for workers in that portion of the harvest field which is the responsibility of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. Here and there there are men who wonder whether God is calling them into such work, the work of the ministry. If God is indeed calling them, our prayers can influence them to the point of unmistakability, to the conviction that God does want them in that specialized service.

We may serve the Lord in various walks, but we will not be happy unless we are in the particular place He has in mind for us. May it be our desire that the Lord will be able to bring the need and the one who can help to meet that need together.



Nine Choral Club beauties on a bandstand in Wadena, Minn., during a stopover. They are, left to right, Deb Nelsen, Kathy Ostrand, Wanda Holmaas, Rita Ward, Vickie Bjorgaard, Janell Kneeland, Terry Rudebusch, Anna Oliver and Karen Livingood.

No Power Vacuum

Too many Christians pray and serve as though there were.

by William H. Pape

Mao Tse-tung has declared that power comes from the barrel of a gun. His own career seems to prove him right. Mao is correct, too, in thinking that power is the highroad to success, but wrong in assuming that gunpowder and bullets are the only kind of power.

Thine is the POWER

Listen to what Jesus said: "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory." The central word is power. Whoever has the power will have the kingdom, and whoever has the kingdom will have the glory.

To get the full impact of the words, repeat them aloud with different emphases: "Thine is the **power**; **thine** is the power; **thine** is the power. Believe that wholeheartedly, and your daily prayers and service for God will be revolutionized.

Thine is THE power

Who holds the greatest power? That is the most critical question in the world today. Conflicting answers hurl themselves at us. The western world, the communist world, the third world. Those with a decisive share of the world's money, its natural resources, its arms, or even its brains. Were ultimate power with these or any other groupings of men, then the world would be doomed and missionary enterprise vain. For behind today's global convulsions is the sinister, supernatural power of "the world-rulers of this darkness" (Ephesians 6:12, ASV) headed up by Satan himself.

Chaos in the world and weakness in the Church come from forgetting or denying that **the power**—sovereign and absolute—is in God's hands. **The power** rests securely with our Lord who at the cross "despoiled the principalities and the powers" and "made

a show of them openly" (Col. 2:15).

A mysterious conflict began with Satan's decisive defeat in heaven and climaxed with Christ's irreversible victory at the cross. The devil now is like a man falling without a parachute from an airplane flying at 30,000 feet. He kicks and struggles but cannot escape the final crash. He now wages battle not for the supreme place in heaven, which he can never have, but for the control of men's hearts. In this warfare we have a victorious part allotted to us by our Lord who holds **the power**.

THINE is the power

It is never yours or mine. When Christ promised his disciples power, he never implied that it would become theirs to use or manipulate as they chose. It remains his power, brought to us by the Holy Spirit given to those who obey him. God's power operates only in the direction of God's will; it never becomes a private possession for personal ends. A hot-rodding teenager grins with satisfaction at the sound of squealing tires as his car accelerates from zero to seventy miles per hour in a few seconds. But the power is not in his foot. An old lady of ninety could do the same if she had the courage.

Victorious living and effective service depend on a conviction that **the power** belongs to God alone. In faith we press down hard upon the promises and God does the miracles. Paul and Barnabas, back in Antioch after their first missionary journey, reported to the church "all things that God had done with them" (Acts 14:27). Political, religious, and satanic opposition had crumbled before the battering ram of irresistible power from on high. The fiery eloquence of Paul and quiet teaching of Barnabas

were no more than channels of obedience.

Thine IS the power

Always remember that. We wistfully read through the triumphant pages of the Acts of the Apostles, sometimes discouraged because we do not now see those stirring events repeated. But our Lord did not teach us to end prayer with, "Thine was the power, but I'm not sure about it now." Most Christians have no trace of doubt regarding the power of Christ on earth 19 centuries ago, and no lack of confidence in His future power when He triumphantly returns. But a materialistic, sceptical, and scientific age threatens our faith in his power in 1975.

When God said to Moses, "Call me **I Am That I Am**," he put Himself into an eternal present in world history. God is not trapped in the yellowing pages of ancient records. He is the same today as yesterday because He does not change. The power still is His, and He will establish His kingdom and receive the glory.

In some Bible versions the words "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory" are relegated to the margin. Their placement is not crucial since these themes are woven right through the fabric of the Bible. But make the truth of God's eternal, sovereign power marginal in your life, and witness, service, and prayer become weak. We Christians constantly face obstacles that mock us with their immensity. The only effective answer is a shout of confident praise: "**Thine is the power!**"

—Reprinted from **Horizons**
Magazine, publication of The
Evangelical Alliance Mission.

lowers never know the full joy of following Jesus. According to the following Scripture passages—

What are we to do?

Rom. 10:9, 10

Matt. 10:32

The woman's confession was by word and action. How can the absence or predominance of one over the other affect our testimony?

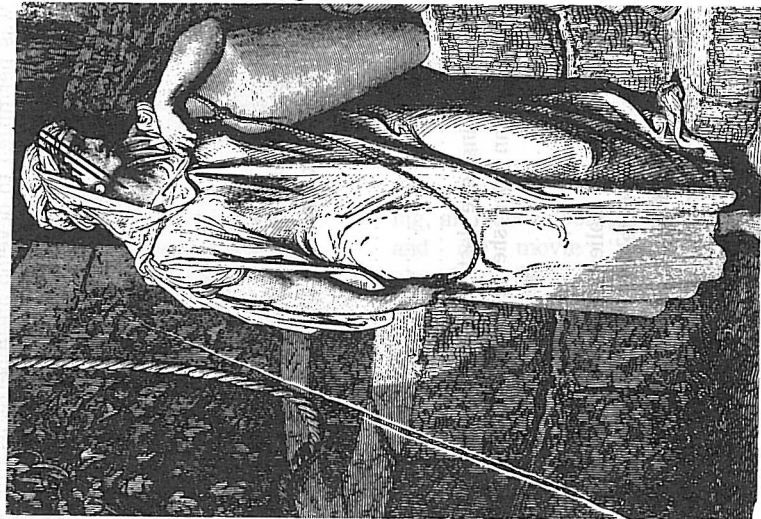
..... How long ago is it since I openly confessed Christ at a cost to my own personal pride or position? Perhaps some of us are neglecting to give our witness and therefore have not experienced what this woman with faith of new dimensions knew as we see her at Jesus' dismissal.

Rejoicing

What did Jesus grant her? Mk. 5:34

"Though healed as soon as she believed it, it seemed to her a stolen cure—she feared to acknowledge it. Jesus therefore sets his royal seal upon it. But what a glorious dismissal from the lips of Him who is 'Our Peace' is that 'Go in peace.' " (Comm. on the Bible).

It has been said "Faith honors God; God honors faith." The woman of imperfect faith has spoken. God honored her faith and she departed from Him possessing a peace that "passeth all understanding." Are we women of the faith, imperfect though we may be, honoring God by our faith? Have we permitted Him to say to us, "Daughter, go in peace"?



WMF

Bible Study

June, 1976

THE WOMAN OF IMPERFECT FAITH

The title speaks of one who needed help. Her faith was real, but deficient in honesty, commitment and understanding of spiritual truths. She sought blessings from Jesus without coming before Him. She, like some of us, needed not only a stronger faith but a better concept of Him who was the object of her faith. Does not our Lord look upon some of us today and grieve over the imperfection and stagnation of our faith in Him? Does He hear His immature children of the faith plead His blessings, but ignore His presence? As we follow this woman (1) Crouching, (2) Hiding, (3) Confessing,

(4) Rejoicing, we see how Jesus was permitted to develop an imperfect faith to a more genuine, confident trust in Himself. Pray that this may be your experience as you study the following references: Matthew 9:18-22; Mark 5:24-34; Luke 8:43-48.

Crouching

It was easy to be unnoticed in that jostling, pushing crowd. Jairus, a man of prominence, power and position, had sought help from Jesus. In the throng of people whom do we find? Mk. 5:25
What had brought her to this place? Mk. 5:27a
What had this hearing created? Rom. 10:17
What was her condition? Mk. 5:25, 26
In desperate determination she was making one last attempt to receive help. What approach to the Great Physician does she make? Mk. 5:27, 28
..... What part of His garment does she touch? (Lk. 8:44 The hem with tassels on it was considered by Jews to be the holiest portion of the garment. It served to remind them of the laws of Jehovah (Num. 15:38-39). Do you sense anything lacking in this woman's faith as she approaches Jesus? Why do you suppose she sought His healing without revealing her identity? Was it timidity? Or was it her understanding that the power of Christ was merely magical and mechanical? Whatever her thoughts, she erroneously saw no need to come before Him to express her needs or gratitude. She sought His help, but avoided coming before His divine presence, His omniscient knowledge and love.

Discussion: Are we ever guilty of seeking our personal desires from Christ, but ignoring the gifts He most desires for us? Is it possible that we ever seek His blessings instead of seeking Christ Himself?

Hiding

We cannot remain anonymous before Christ. In the noisy throng of people, He saw the sincere but imperfect faith of this unknown woman.

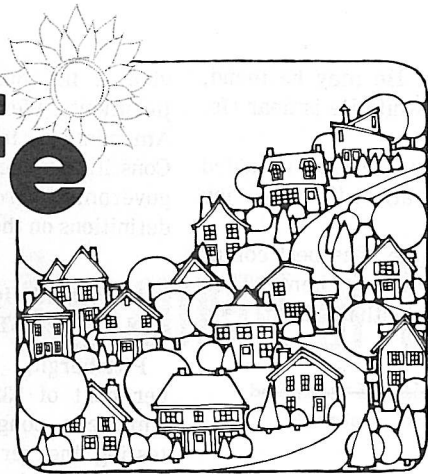
How was her faith rewarded? Mk. 5:29
How can we be sure the sensation of healing was not just a temporary emotional experience? Lk. 8:44, 46 What a comfort to know that our Lord does not wait until we have a perfect knowledge of Him or His way! But when we acknowledge our helplessness, He never withholds His help. Because He desires a more perfect faith, because He is a Great Giver who has even better gifts to give, Jesus would not permit the woman to go without one more opportunity to acknowledge herself before Him. What does Jesus ask? Mk. 5:30
Did anyone know what miracle had occurred with that touch?
Did the disciples understand the significance of the question? Mk. 5:31 Who denied a touch with the Master? Lk. 8:45 Who would that have included? Then what did Jesus do? Mk. 5:32 Imagine the hushed suspense as Christ's eyes met the hiding woman's eyes. She who had experienced miraculous healing had denied Him in her silence. It was a crucial moment. She could remain silent and depart with a healthy body and an empty heart; she could humiliate herself and bring honor to Christ in acknowledging what He had done for her.

Discussion: Have you, as a Christian, ever faced a decision such as this woman had to make? When? How did your decision affect your life? other lives?

Confessing

Decisions usually require actions as well as words. Notice what happens in Mk. 5:33 How do her attitude and action complement her testimony? In love and divine purpose Jesus accepted the imperfect faith of this follower and brought her to an open confession of faith. And so He also patiently deals with us. Secret fol-

Life on the Edge of Town



EVENSONG

Having been over at the University of Minnesota on a Sunday afternoon, I stopped in at Gethsemane Episcopal Church on the edge of the Minneapolis loop for their evensong service.

To be perfectly honest, I've not often been in an Episcopal (or Anglican) church and only once before for any kind of a service or program. It is my guess that Gethsemane and St. Mark's (Cathedral) are the two leading churches of that denomination in Minneapolis. Gethsemane's church building is not large and was featured in the Picture section of a Minneapolis **Sunday Tribune** last winter in connection with the installation of a new pipe organ (still not entirely complete).

An evensong is a service of Scripture readings, prayers and music. As to the latter, this service had both choir selections and audience hymns. A brass ensemble participated also. There was organ music, too, by the partially installed new organ. All the music was traditional, in my judgment. The choir did some of its singing in Latin.

It was not the type of service one is apt to find in an Association church, or in most Lutheran churches, for that matter. We place high value on free prayers as over against written ones. We feel a service is not complete without a meditation by some speaker. Our hymns are often subjective in nature and our Gospel songs have a lilting melody.

And yet, in the quietness of a late Sunday afternoon, my soul was blessed by the dignity of music, prayer and Scripture. There in the shadow of skyscrapers and within earshot of the wheels of commerce there was this opportunity of stillness before God in the company of other worshippers before another week of daily tasks.

THE TUMULT AND THE SHOUTING

They are over for another year, as far as the high school winter sports are concerned. They are crowned—basketball, hockey and wrestling—by tournament competition and that is always an exciting time.

I am one who has dabbled in many sports and mastered none. But in spite of that there has been real enjoyment in being a spectator, in watching others. Why do some people enjoy watching athletic contests and others don't? There is no good answer yet to that, but it is a fact.

There is the magnetism of the struggle to outdo the opponent, whether in individual competition or in team sports. There is the excitement of the rally, as when a basketball team comes from behind to win the contest. There is the fascination of the underdog battling the odds to defeat a supposedly superior foe. There is the thrill of witnessing the power of the home run hitter, the skating grace of the hockey star, the fierceness of the

running back who will not go down. There is the lure of thinking that on this specific occasion one may see a record broken.

Disappointments are to be found in the world of athletics today, to be sure. The attraction of the dollar has taken away some of the pull of professional sports. The commercialization of college athletics has dimmed some of the luster there. But on the high school level and below there is still the struggle for the love of the game and great energy and enthusiasm are displayed. It rubs off on a person.

You either go for these things or you don't. I happen to be one who does. How it came about, I don't know, but there I was, as a boy, at the ball park, later, at the gym, and listening to games of various kinds on the radio.

The Apostle Paul was aware of the sports world in his time. He used illustrations from it in his writings. So did the writer to the Hebrews (that might have been Paul again). We can learn some lessons from that world in our time, too.

—Raynard Huglen

(Ed. Note: The title for the second section above is borrowed from the title of a book by that name written by the late Grantland Rice.)

MY SOUL, BE ON THY GUARD

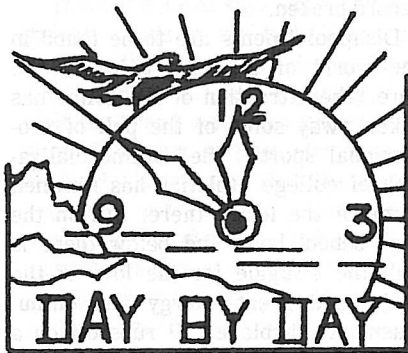
My soul, be on thy guard;
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the skies.

O watch, and fight, and pray;
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.

Ne'er think the vict'ry won,
Nor lay thine armor down;
The work of faith will not be done,
Till thou obtain the crown.

Fight on, my soul, till death
Shall bring thee to thy God;
He'll take thee, at thy parting breath,
To His divine abode.

George Heath
(from **Hymns of Praise**, No. 2)



OCCUPY TILL I COME by Lars Stalsbrotten

"Son, go work today in my vineyard" (Matt 21:28).

Hello! Who is calling? God is calling. The mighty God, even the Lord, is calling from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof (Ps. 50:1).

Who is He calling?

He is calling you right now while you are reading the *Ambassador*.

Nothing will ever be right in your life before you say "Yes" to God.

You have been called many times and you have said "No." Before you know it you might have your last call.

The call is first of all a call of grace unto salvation and there is power in the call to accept the call, so you have no excuse for not accepting it. You are called to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. This is the promise: "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name" (Jn. 1:12).

After you have become a son, He is calling you into His service.

"Son, go work today in my vineyard." In His kingdom there is no age limit. He uses all ages. You will notice in Matt. 20:1-7 that He went out early in the morning, at the **third** hour, at the **sixth** hour, at the **ninth** hour and, mind you, at the **11th** hour. Here you have the 80 year-old.

There is no such a thing as retirement or unemployment in the kingdom of God. Children, youth, middle age, the old, He wants to use everyone. Nobody is too young and nobody is too old. God's slogan is: Occupy till I come. It is wonderful to be in His service, to plead with sinners: "Seek

ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near (Is. 55:6).

When your joy of service is added to your joy of salvation, then your joy is full.

Occupy till I come. The best comes last. He comes to take us home. Then shall we forever be with the Lord.

SOURCE MATERIAL FOR "UFOLOGY"

Source material used by Rev. Gerald Mundfrom in his meditation on page 2 is this: *Sons of God Return* by Kelly L. Segraves, \$1.50; and *UFOs, What on Earth is Happening?* by John Weldon and Zola Levitt, \$2.95. These books can be ordered from Bible Book Mission, Grafton, N. Dak. 58237. Include 21 cents for postage and add sales tax if you live in North Dakota.

In life many expectations are greater in anticipation than in realization, but it is not so in the life of the soul looking forward to that Great Desire which we have been considering; but it, like God's gifts, surpasses our hopes and our dreams.

A. E. Viehe

[Continued from page 16]

described "is religious activity and to limit it to 'members' as the regulation suggests would not only be contrary to government regulation, it would controvert our understanding of the fundamental tenets of the Christian faith."

"The proposed distinctions border on theological judgments as to what a church should be," he said. "We feel that the Internal Revenue Ser-

vice is not qualified to make such judgments. We also feel that the First Amendment to the United States Constitution precludes the federal government from imposing blanket definitions on the churches."

NEW SERVICE DOES POORLY IN LCA TEST CONGREGATIONS

Pittsburgh, Pa.—(LC)—About 75 per cent of 232 Lutheran Church in American congregations involved in testing the service of Holy Communion planned for a new Lutheran hymnal now being prepared had "definitely negative reactions" to the service.

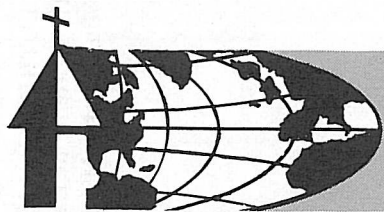
It was the music of the service which "bore the brunt of the criticism," according to a report given here March 29-April 1 at a meeting of LCA synod presidents. However, strong negative reaction was also registered against the new versions of the Lord's Prayer and some other traditional liturgical texts.

Of the congregations participating in the two-month test, 149 found the revised form of the Lord's Prayer developed by the International Consultation on English Texts, an ecumenical agency, to be "unacceptable." Only 14 test congregations found it acceptable.

"The music of the service was criticized more than the text or structure" of the liturgy, the report said, noting that "several responders stated that their criticism of the text may actually have come as a result of the music which they did not feel carried the text."

Congregations participating in the testing "represent a good cross section of the LCA," the report stated. They included congregations of varying size, both innovative and traditional parishes, those "highly liturgical" and those using "the briefest of liturgies," and city, suburban and rural churches.

The service of Holy Communion was developed by the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship, an agency including four Lutheran church bodies charged with the responsibility of preparing a new service book and hymnal for North American Lutherans. Publication date for the new book has tentatively been set at 1978.



CHURCH-WORLD NEWS

PRO-LIFE STANCE NOT ROMAN CATHOLIC ISSUE, LCMS REPRESENTATIVES TELL HOUSE HEARING

Washington, D. C. — Testifying March 24 before the House Judiciary Sub-committee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, two members of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Social Concerns Committee protested labeling opposition to abortion as a Roman Catholic position.

Dr. Eugene W. Linse, Jr., a professor at Concordia College, St. Paul, Minn., and Mrs. Jean Garton, Pennsauken, N.J., called for restoration of legal protection for the unborn, renewed recognition of the value of human life consistent with Judeo-Christian teachings and appreciation for legal history of the United States which has been "dedicated to protecting life, not destroying it." Both spoke on behalf of LCMS President J.A.O. Preus and the 2.8 million-member church body.

Representatives of the U.S. Catholic Conference also spoke in support of a human life amendment that would overturn the U.S. Supreme Court decision which legalized abortion. Testifying against such legislation were spokesmen of The Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights, representing 23 other religious groups.

Mrs. Garton told the subcommittee that "We of the LCMS protest the sectarian smokescreen which claims this to be a Catholic issue. Such an appeal to prejudice hinders the public's right to information and provides a mental detour whereby society can avoid confronting the basic issue: the destruction of human life." Noting the involvement of millions of Protestants active in pro-life groups, she said that in defending unborn life "we might really be talking about imposing Pro-

testant morality. Or, since polls indicate overwhelming support by Jews for abortion, should one conclude that abortion on demand is Jewish morality being imposed on society?" She went on to argue that none of these conclusions is true: "No denomination has a corner on reverence for life or indeed on callous disregard for life. Abortion is a civil and human rights issue and in a very real sense is a catholic (universal) issue—that which involves the interests of all."

Dr. Linse pointed out that leading theologians of both the Protestant and Jewish world hold human life in such high regard that abortion is not an acceptable alternative in any but the most compelling of crises. "The religions of the world all place a high value on life. To my knowledge, no religion, certainly no organized religion in Western civilization, advocates private executions among its tenets."

A professor of political science and a constitutional law scholar, Dr. Linse took issue with the argument that enacting proposals prohibiting abortion, except in limited medical and emergency situations, into law or into a constitutional amendment itself violated the guarantees of freedom—the freedom to follow the dictates of conscience, protected in the First Amendment.

LUTHERAN COUNCIL PROTESTS PROPOSED TAXATION CHANGES

New York—(LC)—The Lutheran Council in the USA has taken strong exception to proposed amendments of Income Tax Regulations to provide a definition of "an integrated auxiliary of the church."

In a letter to Donald C. Alexander, Commissioner of Internal Revenue,

Dr. George F. Harkins, general secretary of the Lutheran Council, registered the concerns of the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America, the two bodies that participate in the agency's Office for Governmental Affairs.

"While we understand the desire of the Internal Revenue Service to clarify the meaning of 'integrated auxiliary,'" he said... "we feel that the proposed regulations and criteria will not prove to be uniformly appropriate."

Under the suggested changes, an integrated auxiliary of the church is defined as an organization "whose primary purpose is to carry out the tenets, functions, and principles of faith of the church with which it is affiliated and whose operations in implementing such primary purpose directly promote religious activity among the members of the church."

As examples of auxiliaries that are not required to file annual information returns, the IRS cited theological seminaries, religious youth organizations and men's fellowship associations.

Not qualified for exemption, the IRS proposal adds, are church-related hospitals because their primary purpose is "to provide medical care for the community;" elementary grade schools because their primary purpose is "to serve general educational needs;" orphanages for children because their primary purpose is "to provide children with housing, medical care, guidance and similar services and facilities," and homes for the aged because their primary purpose is "to provide aged residents with housing, limited nursing care, and similar services and facilities."

In his letter, Dr. Harkins said, "We are troubled by the Internal Revenue

Service's attempt to set up a distinction between what the Church teaches and what the Church does" as "the two are inseparable."

"Speaking and writing about Christian precepts becomes real and understandable only as those precepts are lived and practiced by the Church itself," he said. "When the Church pleads for a response to the needs of the sick, the elderly, and the young, it also proves that it really cares when it is ready to sponsor and provide health care centers, homes for aging, schools and colleges, just to identify a few examples."

Dr. Harkins asserted that what he

[Continued on page 14]

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