The Lutheran Ambassador



MEDITATION MOMENTS

Reflectors of light

As we stand on the prairie late in the day, it is an impressive sight to watch the sun slip below the rim of the earth, leaving behind clouds, still lighted by the playing rays of the sun. The clouds are only passive objects reflecting the radiance of the sun with all its light, power and might. As the sun sinks farther below the horizon, the clouds soon lose their beauty and luster. Finally, all is dark and night has come.

We have just celebrated Easter with beautiful music and flowers at overflowing churches and sunrise services. As time moves on and Easter is farther in the past, it seems that the after glow fades and we, like the clouds, grow dark and even foreboding. This should not be so, for Christ says, in Matthew 5:14-16, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put in under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which in is heaven." In John 8: 12, we read, "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saving, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not

walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." These two quotations seem to be contradictory but they are not. The clouds at sunset have no light of themselves but they still lighten the evening sky. We, also, have no light of our own, yet, when we are in a right relationship to Christ, we can light up a darkened world. We are the reflectors or bodies through which Christ shines.

The same principle is true of the lighthouse that guides ships from some rocky point or dangerous shore. The light is an important element in saving a life, but not the only element; there is also the reflector. The lighthouse keeper is not only concerned that the light be burning, but also that the reflector be spotless. Without the light, the reflector has nothing to give and without the reflector the light is inhibited. Christ is therefore the Light of the world and we are the reflecting objects. We are the afterflow, the reflectors after the fact. It was Christ who died for our sins; it was Christ who rose again to give us life; it is His light and power and might that we reflect.

Let us look at some guidelines that help us become effective reflectors. First, the Light must be at the center

of our life. We must always remain in a close relationship to the Light or we will fade and lose luster. We must remember that we are only reflectors and not the source of light. As such, we must keep ourselves humble and dedicated to our task. A reflector must be spotless, as even the slightest piece of dust can reduce the light being given off. The lightkeeper polishes the reflector, and in the life of the Christian, the lightkeeper is the Holy Spirit. To be productive reflectors, we must be submissive to the cleaning Spirit of God. In Ephesians 5:8 we read, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."

As we watch reflections of the sunsets, others watch us, as reflectors of Christ. This makes our walk so very important. The old saying, "Actions speak louder than words," is so true in the lives of Christians. Colossians 2:6 states: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." Let us walk the walk of living faith, faith that radiates Christ to all who might come into the circle of our lives.

-Philip Featherstone

The Lutheran Ambassador is published biweekly (except the second issue in August) by the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441. Rev. Raynard Huglen, Newfolden, Minn. 56738, is the editor and all communications concerning content of the magazine should be addressed to him. Subscription price is \$4.00 per year in advance. Subscriptions should be sent to The Lutheran Ambassador, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441. Second-class postage paid at Minneapolis, Minn. Volume 17, Number 8 Lutheran Ambassador USPS 588-620

by Pastor R. S. Persson, Bemidji, Minn.

Of all of the prophets of the Old Testament Scriptures, there is none who spoke so meaningfully of the resurrection from the dead as did Job. How beautiful and powerful are his words. "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold" (Job 19:25-27). Job reveals for us the fulness of a great hope. that when the machinery of our body grinds to its halt, that there is something more, something far greater than the life of our body. Job spoke of resurrected life and of the great overwhelming confidence that was his He was already standing on resurrection ground.

Standing on resurrection ground

Enigma Of The Ages

It may be presumed that from the dawn of history man has wondered about the probability of life beyond the grave. He looked at the stars and wondered about a Hand that had placed them there and whether or not beyond the vast extremities of space there was a place where the souls of men might go and the possibility of a resurrection. There has been within man the hopes for such because of the sorrows. disappointments, frustrations and futilities of this life. On the other hand, those not having the satisfying experience of faith have doubted the same. One noted infidel, speaking at the burial of a friend, said bitterly, "Death is but a chasm, a deep valley to which all go and none has returned. We cry out in grief and despair but the only reassuring sound is the echo of our wailing voice." Thus, in contrast, the eat hope and reassuring confidence of that which is to come.

A Christian Must Have Hope

Luther spoke, "He who fears death or is unwilling to die is not a Christian to a succicient degree; for those who fear death still lack faith in the resurrection, since they love this life more than they love the life to come. Properly speaking, they are those about whom the Psalmist says: "They despised the pleasant land" (Psalm 106:24). You who read this, you who have stood by a graveside, what was your thought? That the grave was the end? Or could you say "that though worms destroy the body, yet in the living hope in Jesus the flesh would see God"? How sweetly the words of Jesus: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (John 5:25).

It Is A Personal Assurance

My mother was a victim of cancer. Just prior to her passing, I went to visit her in the hospital. She lay so still and weak from the ravages of the insidious disease. For the first time I realized that she was going to die. The tears came as Mama said so tenderly, "Stackars mina pojka" (in Swedish-"my poor boys"). Overwhelmed by sorrow, I left her. I wept in the elevator and in the lobby and finally wept uncontrollably in my car. In great anguish, I cried the Lord's Prayer. A great calm and peace came over me. I am inclined to believe that praying the Lord's Prayer in that way was the prelude of my acceptance of the Lord as my Savior. Jesus was heard in the "strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death" (Hebrews 5:7).



Now long after having experienced salvation in Jesus, I was called upon to share a Bible verse at an evening service. I shared, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live" (John 11:25). The pastor asked, "Do you believe that?" "Yes, I do," was my quick response. In the years that have passed, I have rejoiced in being able to say that I have the assurance of a resurrection.

A Redeemer Is Required

Job could say that he knew that His Redeemer lived. Now that was a most remarkable statement in that he was greatly afflicted and unquestionably thought of his demise. The miserable comforters had failed in their efforts to convince him that he was not righteous and therefore had to suffer. They did not know that the just would live by faith and that faith would be reckoned for righteousness. Hence they were miserable; they were sad, you see, as the Sadducees who did not believe in a resurrection. Job could praise the Lord and say even in his extreme suffering, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." Can you say that in the circumstances and the frustrations of your life? Job could because he had a Redeemer. Through faith he looked forward to that time when Jesus, the Son of God, "born of a woman, born under the law" would come and redeem them that were under the curse of the law. He who knew no sin was made to be sin on our behalf "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (II Cor. 5:21). He paid the price. "There was none other good enough to pay the price of sin; he only could unlock the gate of heav'n, and let us in." If one has not accepted the gracious gift, the price of redemption, there is no hope, there is nothing but the open grave waiting. How blessed it is to be a child of God and to be born again of God's Spirit.

Death Shall Be Destroyed

The last enemy comes to claim us all but thanks be to God that we can speak to death as did the Apostle Paul and say, "Where is thy sting, O grave, where is thy victory?" Some people, in a vain effort to outsmart death, are having their bodies frozen and stored in steel cylinders. When medical science perfects cures for cancers, heart transplants, etc., their bodies are to be defrosted and doctors are to try to bring them back to life. The slogan of those in such a business is "Freeze, Wait. Reanimate." But there still remains the last enemy, which shall ultimately be destroyed, death.

How good it is to know One who is the resurrection and the life right now and to have the blessed hope that is in Christ Jesus. Come then, ye worms, who shall feed one day upon this body, in Jesus there is resurrection and His new life now. To have experienced this is to be standing on resurrection ground. Upon what ground are you standing? Those who do not have the lively hope and do not believe in the resurrection, they are set in slippery places, they are cast down to destruction (Ps. 73:18). Their feet shall slide in due time. The hymnwriter has expressed it so beautifully-

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus blood and righteousness;
No merit of my own I claim, But wholly lean on Jesus' Name.
On Christ the solid rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.

"If one has not accepted the gracious gift . . . there is nothing but the open grave waiting."

The

by James Gerdeen, Student, AFLTS

Andrew Blackwood, in his book, *The Growing Minister*, makes four claims concerning the Christian ministry, namely that it is:

- "(1) the highest work in the world,
- (2) the hardest work on earth,
- (3) the holiest mission among men, and
- (4) the happiest life here below." Thus, he claims that "the pastor's life is higher, harder, holier and happier than that of anyone else on earth." We need to uphold this ideal to our young people. This should challenge pastors to be living examples, and lay people to be especially appreciative of the pastor's office.

The Augsburg Confession of our Lutheran Church states "that no one should publicly in the church teach (preach) or administer the sacraments except he be rightly called." There are two calls: the inner call by God the Holy Spirit and the outer call of the church. G. H. Gerberding, in his book, The Lutheran Pastor, lists six natural qualifications and two spiritual qualifications which he believes are marks of men who have really received the inner call. The natural are a sound body, a strong vigorous mind, common sense, moral courage, earnest activity and a tender heart. The spiritual are a living piety and an inner compulsion. The latter, I believe, is a conviction wrought by the Holy Spirit through the Word that God is calling me as an individual. The inner compulsion, I also believe, involves a vision, a vision of the lost, a vision of fields white unto harvest and a vision of my place of service in that harvest field. Then there is the conviction that I have a responsibility to obey that inner call of God or souls may be eternally lost.

Not only does the inner call come from God Himself, but the ordination to the office is from God through Jesus Christ. Dr. Sverre Norborg, our teacher during the INTER-TERM session this year, quoted his favorite verse: "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit . . ." (John

call into the ministry

15:16). We must realize that lay pastors are as much ordained by Christ as those who have graduated from seminary. In fact, I believe one should be sure of his call or ordination by Christ before coming to seminary.

Then we as congregations must be careful in our training and expectations of pastors not to force them all into one mold. There is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," (Eph. 4:5), yes; but diversities of gifts and varieties of ministries, (Eph. 4:11, I Cor. 12:4, 5). Some are called to be lay pastors, some to the parish ministry through the seminary, some as evangelists, some as teachers, some as missionaries, etc. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."

Dr. Norborg made another point, an observation that is worth noting. He said that we have a lot of pastors, but few preachers in the Lutheran church today. We need men called by God to preach the Word with conviction. I believe that why preaching many times lacks power is because of fear and compromise due to selfish desire for financial gain and popularity. Divorce, worldliness, and other societal sins of the day are often whitewashed. One cannot preach the Gospel text with power if he does not obey the Epistle text. Is not God's Word denied as much by the conservative who does not heed it, as by the liberal who does not believe it?

In the ministry we ought also to heed the words of Francis Schaeffer, who has pointed out the two dangers of either emphasizing doctrine without love, or love without doctrine. In this regard, the Apostle Paul has something to say. In one chapter, I Corinthians 13, he shows how preaching or pastoring or use of any spiritual gift by any member of the congregation is done in vain without love. In I Corinthians 15, he shows how preaching is vain and even faith is vain without the doctrine and power of the resurrection. One of the best compliments a preacher can receive is the comment, "He preaches as though he really believes it." The

best words that can be said of a pastor and people are "See how they love one another." God calls us to a labor of love.

God first calls and then He prepares. God prepared Moses during 40 years in Egypt and then 40 years in the wilderness, before Moses was ready. Joseph was prepared by God through slavery and prison in Egypt. Even the Apostle Paul, although educated under Gamaliel, had to spend a number of years in exile, after his conversion. The preparation today often involves seminary training. Luther points out the need for highly trained, consecrated men, educated in theology, in order to effectively lead the common people in Christian faith and life, chiefly through preaching and teaching. The education, he said, should include the languages of Greek and Hebrew. In Luther's day the common people were peasants. In today's technical society the common people are more highly educated. If Luther's point was true in his day, how much more today.

If one is truly called by God, he will be willing to spend time in preparation. This requires patience for the "eager beaver." Someone has said, "It takes only three months to grow a squash and the first sign of frost kills it, but it takes many years to grow an oak tree."

The needs are great today. Pulpits are waiting for preachers who will answer God's call to preach "Thus saith the Lord!" Sinners in bondage to Satan are lost in corners of our neighborhoods longing for someone to come with the "Good News." Foreign mission fields have to share only 10% of the world's pastors. God is still calling, "Whom shall I send?" He is still pleading, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest." Will you pray? If you will, then use spiritual gift-discernment in your prayers. We need preachers as well as pastors, teachers in seminary, as well as students, supporters as well as missionaries, and personal workers as well as evangelists.

"God is still calling,
"Whom shall I send?"
He is still pleading,
"Pray ye the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest.""



District youth, a project that worked

What is the purpose of having Luther League districts? I asked myself this question almost three years ago when I was first elected as the president of the Northwest District Luther League. Up to that point our district had not been involved in any type of outreach or ministry. As it was, we had no real purpose in existing except for the fact that it enabled us to get together twice during the school year, meet old friends, make new ones, and just have a good time together.

However, I was not satisfied in thinking that there was no other reason for the establishment of our district. Then the Lord showed me something that we, as a district, could work on together, a project that could help our individual youth groups bring in more people, bring our youth groups together on a district basis working for a common goal, and also help reach people in other lands. That project was to take on one Missionary Unit (\$500.00), raise this money as each youth group desires, and then send in its share (\$72.50) to the district treasurer, who in turn would send in the total amount. This would all take place over a oneyear period, with each church league putting on fund raising activities geared toward bringing in the unsaved.

At our district fall rally in September, I asked for a report of how each church league had raised its share, and

(Continued on page 8)

THE WORK of the HOLY SPIRIT

I am glad for this opportunity to continue to "visit" with you concerning the work of the Holy Spirit. It would be even better to talk with you personally but that is not possible now. In our previous article, we began to speak about the Holy Spirit and His part in our salvation. Our salvation has been purchased and provided by our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who now applies that great salvation wherever He is not resisted. The first need of every person is to realize that he is a sinner. This the Holy Spirit does through God's Word as a person is brought to the realization that he or she has fallen short of "the glory of God."

The Holy Spirit Points Us to Christ

The Holy Spirit does not leave us in our sins. He continues His wonderful work by showing us what Jesus has done for us. Jesus promised concerning the Holy Spirit, "He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you" (John 16:14). The Holy Spirit opens up our understanding to the fact that it was for us that Jesus shed His precious blood. Again, it is through God's Word that this "good news" is brought to us. The Holy Spirit always works through the Bible to effect our salvation.

The mighty work of the Holy Spirit is seen very vividly in what happened as a result of the preaching of God's Word on the day of Pentecost. First of all, the Holy Spirit worked conviction of sin in the hearts of those who heard Peter preach the Word. The Bible says they were "pricked in their hearts" (Acts 2:37). Secondly, these folks came with their heavy hearts to find out how that conviction of sin could be removed from them. The Holy Spirit worked through the apostolic Word to point them to Christ. Peter told them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive

the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). This brings us to a third part of what the Holy Spirit does in our salvation.

The Holy Spirit Creates Spriitual Life

Already in convicting us of our sins and pointing us to Christ, the Holy Spirit has awakened us to spiritual realities. By nature, we are completely unaware of God's kind intentions in Christ. We are born with our "backs toward God." But now, having shown us the salvation in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit works repentance and faith in us so that we can enter into "so great salvation." In other words, He creates spiritual life where none existed before.

Jesus told Nicodemus of the life-creating work of the Spirit when He said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he canot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). The Apostle Paul was speaking of the same thing when he wrote, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). Regeneration means to be "re-born" and renewing means being brought to life.

Again, just as the Holy Spirit worked through the Word of God to convict us of our sins (the Law), and just as He worked through the Word to point us to Christ (the Gospel), so now through that Word of the Gospel and through the "washing of regeneration" (Baptism), He creates spiritual life. Praise God for the miracle of salvation provided for us by our blessed Lord Jesus Christ on Calvary and applied to us by the blessed Holy Spirit through the Word and Sacrament.

In our next "visit", we'd like to speak about the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives as Christians. God bless you.

> —Pastor Francis Monseth (To be continued)

A PAGE FOR CHILDREN

Happy Acres



A NEW CAR FOR THE HACKLEYS

The sun beat warmly down on Ann, Mark, and Stephen as they pulled weeds from the long rows of potatoes. Most of the time the three were on their knees. They were hot and tired and their knees sore, when they heard the purr of a car coming down the road alongside the potato field.

They raised their heads to see a sleek and shining red sedan—and in it sat Lucia Hackley and her parents.

"Hello, there," called Mrs. Hackley. Mr. Hackley nodded his handsome head, and Lucia waved a whitegloved hand elegantly at Ann as the car swept by.

"Why, they've got a brand-new car," explaimed Stephen and Mark in one breath.

Ann stood up. With a grimy hand she pulled a wisp of stray hair from her eyes and said, "Hmm, I can just hear Lucia telling how simply lovely their car is, and how simply awful-looking ours is!"

"Why, come to think about it," said Stephen, "they get a new car about every year."

"And our car is five years old," observed Mark.

"How is it that the Hackleys can afford a new car, and we can't? We have a bigger farm," reasoned Stephen. "We have more crops. We milk many more cows than they do. I know Dad makes more money than the Hackleys do on their farm."

"Yes," agreed Ann, "and they don't have chickens or eggs to sell. Lucia is always telling me she doesn't have to clean eggs like I do."

"Well, for one thing," decided Mark, "they don't have as big a family. They just have Lucia. Dad has six of us to support."

Suddenly, there was Mom coming with a big thermos. "Hi," she called. "How about some limeade with ice cubes?"

In a few minutes, the four had settled in the shade of a tree. As they thirstily drank, the three weed-pullers told Mom about the Hackleys' new car.

"Mom," asked Stephen, "How come we can't afford a new car if the Hackleys can? We certainly make more money than they do."

"Yes," his mother replied, "we do make more money than they do. But we may have to wait another year before we can buy that station wagon we all want."

"But why?" urged Ann.

"Well now," asked Mom, "why should we get a new car? Because the Hackleys have gotten a new car?"

The three weed-pullers looked at one another, but none wanted to answer.

"We know," continued Mom, "that the Lord will supply all our needs—and when we really need another car, I am certain we'll be able to get one. But the Lord hasn't promised to supply us with luxuries, or with things we want just because our neighbors have such things. You know, there are a lot of people who are unhappy because they are working and worrying so much in order to be just as stylish or as up-and-coming as their neighbors."

Then she asked, "What would be a good reason for our getting a new car?"

"Well," said Mark, "us kids keep getting bigger and bigger. And our car stays the same size. It's getting so that we're packed like sardines when we all get inside the car."

"And it is wearing out," added Stephen.

"There," chuckled Mom, "you have

two good reasons for our wanting to get a station wagon."

"But, Mom," insisted Stephen, "I still can't see why Dad couldn't afford a new car as long as the Hackleys who earn less money can afford a new car every year or so."

"Stephen, what do we do with the money we earn from our farm?"

"Well, there's food and clothing for us all. Fuel in the winter. It costs a lot for machinery, and to run the farm. There's insurance, and I know Dad keeps putting away money for us kids for an education. We tithe to the church. Why, just what we give to the church every year—if we used that, we wouldn't be riding around stuffed into our old car. The Hackleys don't tithe—they just don't go to church, hardly ever."

"We mustn't consider our giving to the church according to what certain of our neighbors may or may not do in that respect, Steve. Would we be doing the Lord's will for us if we spent our tithe for new cars?"

Stephen shook his head.

"No, we couldn't be Christians and not give to the Lord's work. Having a new car every year couldn't possibly bring us the joy that is ours in the Lord when we help Him with His Kingdom building. Remember what we sing in church when we take up the offering? Let's sing it now, and perhaps we'll understand better about this business of giving to the Lord."

There in the potato field, Mom and the three weedpulling Johnsons sang:

"We give Thee but Thine own

Whate'er the gift may be;

All that we have is Thine alone,

A trust, O Lord, from Thee."

Mom stayed and helped pull the rest of the weeds. As they walked home to-

HAPPY ACRES . . .

gether, none of the Johnsons mentioned the Hackleys' new car. It wasn't important any more after Mom had reminded them that all the world, and all "they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1), belonged to the Lord. A new station wagon would be nice to have, and it would come when they needed it.

For now, it was best to remember: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

FAMILY DISCUSSION

1. What is the most important gift that we can give to the Lord? (Ourselves—see II Corinthians 8:5)

2. In the Old Testament, we find that the Hebrew people were advised to give a tithe of their earnings—that is, one-tenth of their herds or crops—to the Lord. What does God's Word tell us in the New Testament about how much we should give to the Lord? (I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:7)

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MEMORY VERSE
But seek ye first the
kingdom of God, and
His righteousness; and
all these things shall
be added unto you.
Matthew 6:33

DISTRICT YOUTH . . .

how much it raised. In *practically* every case only one activity was necessary to raise the \$72.50 plus. In some cases one youth alone raised enough money to take care of his church league's share for the entire year! Once we realized that we were underestimating our own potential we decided to take on two Missionary Units (\$1,000.00) for the coming year.

I would encourage fellow districts to consider engaging on such a project. It can bring more youth in to your youth group to hear the Word, give direction as a district, and benefit World Missions all at the same time.

Any questions? Write me:

Tim White, Pres. N. W. Dist. L. L. 13226 126th N.E.

Kirkland, Wash. 98233

The 1978-79 Minneapolis District Luther League officers are: (L-R) John Walker, Kenyon, Minn., vice-president; Stephanie Krueger, Amery, Wis., devotional life secretary; Chris Nessen, Stacy, president; Don Dike, Minneapolis, treasurer; and Kelli Peterson, Kenyon, secretary.



Perhaps I was Dreaming

a pastoral letter

A word to you, dear friends, who complain that your inner life is not what it ought to be. You see it as a landscape that should blossom as the rose, and billow with golden harvests, and glow with the fruit of the Spirit, but instead it is an untamed jungle.

The saddest part of your complaint is that it is so common. There are so many of us who suffer precisely as you do, and who are just as puzzled and discouraged as you are. What can be done about it?

Let us not say that nothing can be done. It is true that the new birth is a miracle that only God can perform, but it is also true that "we are God's fellow workers." Only God can make the grain to grow, but He will not go out and plant it: the farmer will have to do

that. Only God can give saving power to the Word, but He will not take down the Bible and open it and turn the pages and read it to you. You must do

Will you permit me to ask a few very personal questions? Not to find fault with you, but only to help you. You say that your inner life is an untamed jungle. What do you do to make it different? You will never make it a Garden of God by just letting it alone. You must "dress it and keep it." "The seed is the Word of God" and "he that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

Set aside a little time each day for inward agriculture. Get acquainted with your Bible and find your way to life-giving, nourishing passages. (The number will increase with the years.) Keep at least one good, edifying church paper. Supplement your Bible reading with the reading of other devotional books. If you do not know what books to choose, consult some experienced Christian who does. Do not neglect public worship, the Lord's Supper, and private prayer.

If there still are no "showers of blessing" and neither "grass, herb, nor fruit tree" appears, perhaps some hidden sin is the cause of your trouble. Be honest with God. "Repent and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

C. A. Wendell

editorials

THE INNER CITY

An interesting sidelight to attending the Colloquium on the Church in Future Society in Texas this past winter was meeting and talking with the different delegates. Among them was a young black pastor from Baltimore. Of the Lutheran Church in America, he has served parishes previously in such unlikely places as Young, Saskatchewan, and Gimli, Manitoba. In the former he served people of German and Swedish descent, and in the latter, Icelandic.

In Baltimore he is in a black community. His congregation is one of those worshipping in a large, moderately old church building abandoned by a mainline Protestant (Lutheran, perhaps) church as it moved (or fled?) to a suburb. Two things in his description of his congregation linger in memory. One, there is a great sense of despair in men who have never held real jobs. There have been the pick-up jobs for brief periods of time, but nothing permanent, not because there wasn't the desire but because there were obstacles in being black and/or lack of training.

Second, the pastor spoke of his congregation as being made up of troubled, hurting people. He meant that many of the people affiliating with or being reached by the church had had their scrapes with the law and had been guilty of the various forms of sexual immorality. Together with these were the experiences with chemical dependency. He called the pastorate in a situation like that demanding, but also rewarding and appealing

Such a type of ministry is very foreign to those of us in the AFLC. Our outreach tends to be toward the middle class. Our communities tend to be among the more stable in the country, also because they have known the influence of years of evangelical Christian work. The AFLC hasn't been called, yet, to the more unlovely parts of American society, to any significant degree. We hope that the day will come when that kind of outreach will lay more heavily upon our hearts.

In the meantime, let's pray for those who bring evangelical witness to the disadvantaged and overrun in our country and Canada, whether they be blighted inner cities or in racial enclaves in the open land. For without doubt, the Gospel of Christ is meant for all.

ADD OUR THANKS

Pastor Snipstead, our church president, has already eloquently expressed thanks to people of the Association and other friends for the fine ingathering of funds for the past fiscal year.

We simply want to add our commendation for the excellent response to the big challenge which faced our church heading into last December. As a result, the AFLC ended the fiscal year with a shortfall in contributions with which it could live, some over six per cent.

The president also made the appeal, not a new one, for more contributions coming in early in the year, rather than being made later on. We rather think there will be improvement in this area. When you stop to think about it, it makes good sense. Income is not nearly as seasonal as it was two or more generations ago. Many people can as easily contribute in May as they can in November or January.

At any rate, let's keep up the good work. Our people (members and other friends) have given ample evidence that they mean to support this work which the Lord has laid before us.

Plan now

youth • advisors • pastors

LUTHER LEAGUE CONVENTION

Medicine Lake Minneapolis

July 10-15

Theme: "For this is the will of God, your sanctification."

I Thess. 4:3a



Roseau, Minn.

Roseau Lutheran Church April 22 Spruce Lutheran Church Jerome Nikunen, pastor April 23-26 Rev. Kenneth Pentti, Bessemer, Mich., speaker

Newfolden, Minn.

Westaker Lutheran Church Merle Knutson, pastor April 29-May 3 Rev. Michael Brandt, Amery, Wis., speaker

JEVNAKER CHURCH TO HOST LAYMEN

The April meeting of the Northern Lutheran Laymen's Society will be held at Jevnaker Lutheran Church, Borup, Minn., on April 29 at 2:30 p.m.

The text for discussion will be Revelation 3:14-22.

Art Joppru, Chm. Joe Jacobson, Sec.



First row, left to right, Mary Ann Herset, Holly Thompson, Rachel Johnson, Tammy Hjermstad, Lori Finstrom, Debbie Carlson, Lori Jordan, Jean Strand and Jonathan Ostrand; second row, Judy Bergstrom, Julie Jenson, Karen Ellertson, Erin Barrett, Donette Carter, Bonita Carlson, Ruth Nelson, Kathy Johnson, Sue Gross and Dave Hjelvik; third row, Carol Twedt, Debbie Knuuttila, Keith Quanbeck, Barb Elmquist, Pam Anfinson, Pam Olson, Diann Walker, Mary Johnson, Heidi Smith, Jon Strand, Keith Kinneberg, Mark Gaulke and Steve Moan; fourth row, Craig Benson, Tammy Spading, Mary Haugen, Renita Molstre, Andrea Krueger, Julie Hass, Christie Dietsche, Arlen Aasness, Julie Schelling, Sandy Russum, Mike Palkie, Gene Vukonich and Randy Crestik; and fifth fow, Brian Pederson, Greg Schmitke, Alan Nagel, Debra Mortrud, Kristi Larson, Randy Moe, Twila Askvig, Russ Holmaas, Joel Nash, Larry Stulen, Robert Nelson and Duane Tenney. Not pictured: Don Grothe, Larry Miller, Naomi Stenberg and Kayleen Swajanen.

Association Free Lutheran Bible School Junior Class 1978-79

Chinese girl writes missionary after 30 years of silence

Thirty years ago in Shanghai, China, Lenorah Erickson, a missionary in China from Roseau, parted with two students whom she had helped to Christianity and who had been confirmed under her direction.

The Communists were taking over the country and she had to leave.

The students, a young Chinese man and a Chinese girl, also parted company. He left China for Japan where he became the chief accountant for the "Oriental Line," the largest shipping line in the Far East.

A nurse, she stayed in Shanghai and disappeared from Miss Erickson's life, but not her memories.

Miss Erickson saw the Chinese boy from time to time in her travels in the Orient but could never penetrate the wall of Communist regulation to learn about the girl. Some time ago she spoke to a Chinese man who reported that the girl, Irene Kao, had been sending out feelers to learn if Miss Erickson was still alive. "I was so thrilled," Miss Erickson told the Times-Region.

She had spent many years on Taiwan after leaving mainland China and did not know what had happened to the girl under Communism.

Last week she found out. She got a letter from Irene Kao!

The letter read: "My Dear Teacher Miss Erickson; Since we parted for 30 years I have always been thinking of you. Now that the United States and China have established diplomatic relations, we can correspond with each other . . . it would be such happiness if we could meet again and I wonder if you are able to do so by taking a visit here, you know, Shanghai is far differ-

ent from the old days in many ways.

"I remember John very much and wish to know where he lives. Will you please give him my best regards. (John was the Chinese boy with whom she was confirmed in the German Lutheran Church in Shanghai).

"There are so many foreign tourists coming in. Some are old with gray hair yet they appear so strong and robust. I hope you, too, are like them.

"At present I am taking part-time work as a doctor although I am retired, and I find this way very pleasant.

"Needless to say, you know how much I love to hear from you, so please drop me even a couple of words if you can spare the time. With all my love always, Irene Kao."

Miss Erickson's first letter to her former student in 30 years is on the way! Roseau (Minn.)

Times Region

(Ed. note: Miss Erickson, now retired, made a trip back to the Orient about two years ago.)

The articles of the Christian's dress are enumerated here, and we need to refer to this list continually in order to be sure that none of them are missing from our spiritual wardrobe. We must not always live in the negative of avoiding wrong; the positive has a clear claim on us, and in each circumstance of trial or temptation we must advance to meet it, arrayed in Christ.

14. What new insights on your "new life" have you received from the Bible

Project Calendar:

May: General Fund

Our General Fund helps WMF projects which do not reach their projected goals and is used for promotional literature and administrative expense.

W.M.F.

Bible Study

PUTTING ON THE NEW

May, 1979

Study Assignment: Colossians 3:1-17

We have learned that spiritual growth comes from within, from the power Christ brings to us. From our studies we have seen that keeping rules, obeying laws and following religious practices does not give a person new life. They cannot help withstand evil desires of the old nature. Only by yielding to the power of Christ can we resist all the evil from within and without. When we are "in Christ" there is to be a new life—not only the putting off of the old, but the putting on of the new. Christians must live in the realm of light, not in darkness.

In all the world there's none

There make the weary

hide me,

wanderer blest;

Dear Jesus, I would come

To give my soul the

beside Thee

longed-for rest.

Be Thine throughout

eternity.

to Thee,

Dear Saviour, in Thy bosom

1. If you have been raised with Christ, what three responsibilities should be yours? 3:1-5

a. Why is this to be true? —

b. What is the incentive? 3:4 —

2. "If" you have been raised. Does this give the confessing Christian any op-

а. W.

(Unknown)

tion?

assumes it as a fact and does not suggest any doubt. The resurrection is	presented in the New Testament, and it is at once a proof, a pattern, a	d a pledge.
He assumes it as a fact and does	variously presented in the New Testa	power, a prophecy and a pledge.

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wer, s	Œ	wer, a prophecy and a pledge.	and a	pledg	je.	
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the pattern—Rom. 6:4_ -rom. 4:20 rine broom b.

the power—Eph. 1:18-20. ن. ط

the promise—I Thess. 4:14

the pledge—Jn. 14:19 e.

What does it mean to "set your mind" on something?

ly, not earthly things. This attitude naturally and necessarily follows from our union with Christ. Remember, we are in the world, but not of it. Our everyday The word "mind" includes the entire personality and refers to the whole bent of our inner nature. We are to see that the tendency of our life is towards heavenliving, all of it, is governed by our relationship to Christ.

What do we learn in these verses?

a. Phil. 4:8 _

b. Rom. 12:1, 2

4. What are the "things above?"

We must guard against the defiling touch of the world, of sin, and of the old self-life. We stand between two worlds, each solicits us; let us yield to the influences that pull us upward, and not to those that anchor us to this sinful and vain world. Our eternal blessedness has begun, let us walk in it. Read Eph. 1:20-23 and Eph. 2:5-10. What is insisted upon for Christian believers?

5. Note the pronouns in v. 4—your life—our Life. From what enslavements does Christ set us free?

What motivation to live for Christ is presented in these verses?

a. Jn. 17:24.

b. IJn. 3:2, 3

c. I Thess. 1:10

7. Notice that when Paul writes he sets forth doctrine and also shows us how to apply it to our everyday Christian life. Correct doctrine must be applied if we

5-9?
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In these sins, so characteristic of men away from God, the Colossians had once walked, living in them unblushingly; but that was before they knew Christ. Now, isen with Him, these things, seen at last in their true light, must be refused as dishonoring to God and contrary to Christ. 8. What is the relationship of verse 11 to those that preceed and those that follow? Now those who through grace have believed the Gospel, from whichever class they may have come, are members of the creation and are seen by God as justified from all things and are possessors of a new and divine life.

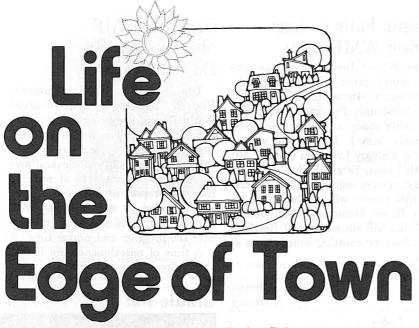
9. Note verses 12-17. There is a putting "off" and a "putting on." What is involved as to the feelings, will and actions if this is to happen? Discuss: What do these words mean to you: put to death—put away—to

10. Is it possible for a non-Christian to follow these admonitions? What makes the difference?

people live on. What are some things we should be doing if the Word of Christ is 11. "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly." What a starvation diet most to dwell in us richly? As the Word dwells (abides) in us so do the peace of God and the virtues in the ender to the omnipotent power of God supplies what is needed for impossible verses that we have just read. The Holy Spirit works through His Word. Our surthings to happen in our lives. His power supplies what is needed for holy living, for power to resist temptation, and for power to obey God's will.

How does this apply to the role of the housewife, nurse, clerk, etc.? Can all of this tianity." Can the "usual things" of everyday life be done in the Name of Christ? 12. Everything done under the authority of Christ eliminates "Sunday Chrisbe done in the "Name of Jesus?" Explain.

13. Why is the spirit of thanksgiving mentioned in this portion?



Old Rusty

I mentioned a while ago about seeing my first moose around our place on Feb. 4. A week later I saw another one, that time from 50-75 yards away.

But on Sunday, Mar. 18, one was very close to our yard and over the following week did make our place his headquarters. Most every night for a week he would lie down at night either in our street to the north of the house or near the corner, within the pale of the street light. (And this is a wild animal?) He seemed like a stray dog which hangs around a yard or farm, seeking companionship.

The moose isn't one of God's more beautiful creatures. Without its rack of antlers and with a shedding coat, it looks downright mangy at this time of year. I nicknamed ours "Old Rusty."

He would feed in the nearby woods on the tips of bushes and the tender branches of small poplars. At times he would stand for a long while thinking moose thoughts. One morning Mother came into my bedroom and told me to look out the east window. There Old Rusty stood in the driveway, less than 40 feet away. At other times he would walk down the street toward town in broad daylight and then turn back.

On the next Sunday, a week after he came, Old Rusty moved on. We're glad he's gone, but like the stray dog that hangs around for a while and then leaves, we miss him somewhat, too.

Senior Citizens

While in Hampden, N. Dak., last month to participate in a week of meetings in Zoar Lutheran, I was twice a noon dinner guest in the Senior Citizens' Center. The meals were excellent and the Center is very attractive and well appointed.

The Center is one-fourth of a mall which was constructed in the last year or so. The other three units are a cafe, a grocery store and a hardware store. A tiny beauty salon is also tucked into the building. The very presence of a mall in a town of 200 population or less is remarkable, but Hampden gives every evidence of a town with real pride in its past, present and future.

The development of the senior citizen movement in the past 15 years is one of the remarkable phenomena of that period of time. All over the land centers and activities for the seniors have been set up. They are providing social opportunities and nutritious meals for those who want to take advantage of them. It's been quite a thing.

The Places of the Passion

It was a tremendous ending to the Passion Story of our Lord Jesus to conclude the series of Lenten sermons with one called "Into the Garden of Life" on Easter morning. You see, we had been considering the places pictured in the suffering and death of Jesus, places such as the Upper Room, Gethsemane, Pilate's Judgment Hall and Calvary itself. Others could be used also. All of

these places carry a great solemnity in view of Christ's experiences in them.

Therefore, it is a great joy to come to Resurrection morning and the empty garden tomb. For there is the place of happiness and bright prospects. The resurrection gives meaning to all that which went before.

What service in all of the year is as bright and hopeful as the Easter service? No, there isn't any and for all who love the Lord Jesus it is just a great day. I trust that you found it so last Easter Sunday, too.

Recollections of Whitefish

My recollections of Whitefish, Montana, site of our church annual conference in June aren't many. Ive gone through it twice on round trips to the Coast by rail.

It is in mountain country. The air speaks of it as do the pines. In mid-June Whitefish is apt to be rather cool. Warm clothes will be in vogue for the outdoors.

There is an atmosphere of mystery about beautiful Whitefish Lake. I don't know if the conference site is anywhere near the lake, but you will want to see it.

Just being in the mountains will do something for your soul.

-Raynard Huglen

Sister Anna Bergeland

Sister Anna Bergeland, administrator of Lutheran Deaconess Hospital in Minneapolis, Minn., from 1928 until her retirement in 1960, died recently of a heart attack at the age of 88.

She was one of the last living deaconesses of the Deaconess Home and Hospital. She served as a nurse from 1915 to 1921 and was appointed assistant supervisor in 1921. In 1967 the hospital named its newly built nursing school building Anna Bergeland Hall.

Sister Anna was born on a farm at Dawson, Minn., in 1891.

Today the Lutheran Deaconess is affiliated with the Fairview Hospitals in Minneapolis.

Among survivors is a brother, Rev. Oliver Bergeland, one-time executive director of the Lutheran Welfare Society of South Dakota.

Grand Forks held preaching mission

Rev. David L. Rinden, Lutheran Brethren pastor at Maple Park Lutheran Church, Lynnwood, Wash., spoke at a preaching mission in Trinity Lutheran Church, Grand Forks, N. Dak., April 1-4. He is the son-in-law of the local pastor, Rev. Harvey Carlson.

The topic for the services was "The Christian in the World," based on I Peter 3:13-4:19. Special music was provided each evening and refreshments were served after every service.

Mrs. Rinden and the children accompanied Pastor Rinden to Grand Forks and all were house guests of the Carlsons during the week.

T. F. Dahle



Rev. Forrest Swenson, host pastor to the annual spring rally of the Southwest Central Minnesota District Women's Missionary Federation, will lead the Bible study at the gathering on Tuesday, May 1. The sessions will be held at Calvary Lutheran Church, 301 North Union, Fergus Falls.

Registration begins at 9:30 a.m., and the first session will commence at 10. Miss Renee Oscarson, Abercrombie, N. Dak., will show slides of Brazil at the afternoon meeting which starts at 1:15.

Visitors are welcome.

Mrs. John Arlen Johnson Secretary

Thoughts from Tryg

FRUIT

"I am the true VINE, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in of our work as we should have? Have we given of our means as we should have? Will it be any different in the future?

I. FRUIT. As we reflect on the past, it is with mixed emotions. Fruit for Him seems so very little and the lost opportunities so many. Are we satisfied with our accomplishments or are there regrets? Is God satisfied? Or does He look for more fruit? Have we really prayed for the local work, for our Schools, Missions and other branches of our work as we should have? Have we given of our means as we should have? Will it be any different in the future?

II. MORE FRUIT. If there has been fruit, God is interested that there should be "more fruit." We must grow in our spiritual life or there will be retrogression. There is no "marking time" or standing still, spiritually. We should not be satisfied with only holding our own; we should want to grow. Peter talks about growth in I Peter 2:2: "As newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby." Every

mother is interested in the growth of her baby. She watches for evidence, weighing the baby daily (especially the first one), to see if there is growth. If not, she is alarmed and seeks the advice of her physician. Oh, that we could be as interested in spiritual growth and as concerned. May we pray sincerely for spiritual growth, locally and church-wide, to His honor and glory.

III. MUCH FRUIT. Would a farmer be satisfied with 10 to 15 bushels of wheat to the acre if he could raise 40 or 50? Not likely, if he is a progressive farmer. The same should be true spiritually. There really is no limit to what God can do through a person who is fully yielded to Him. Remember, we are branches on Him, the true and living vine. All the branch should be concerned about is that it is vitally connected to the vine, and the fruit should come as a natural result. Dear members of our AFLC, are you vitally connected to the True Vine, Jesus Christ? If so, hear what Jesus says further: "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from Me ye can do nothing." "If ye love Me, ye will keep My commandments." "I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13).

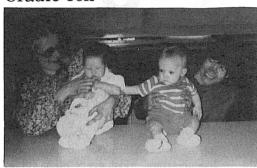
Trygve F. Dahle

Scandia WMF observed World Day of Prayer

The WMF of Scandia Lutheran Church, Sedan, Minn., observed World Day of Prayer on Friday afternoon, March 2. The program "Lord, Teach Us to Pray," written by Mrs. Einar Unseth, was used. Several area churches were invited to attend and five were represented. Special music was provided by several ladies. Mrs. Ernest Moen, local president, presided over the program and prayer time.

A time of refreshments and fellowship followed the prayer hour.

Cradle roll



Pictured above are two children recently enrolled in the Cradle Roll of Scandia Ladies Aid, rural Sedan, Minn. They are, left, Megan Jo, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Gary TeBrake, and Kevin, son of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Wohlman. They are shown with their mothers. Larry Haagenson is pastor of the church.

Buxton honors three



Three members of Ny Stavanger Lutheran WMF, Buxton, N. Dak., were given Honorary Memberships last fall. Mrs. Gerald Knudsvig, Aid president, is shown at the left, with Mrs. Reuben Gunderson, Mrs. Ted Morken and Mrs. Julian Harstad. Mrs. Rodney Stueland, wife of the pastor of the church, is seated at the piano.

Bemdiji, Dalton churches burn mortgages

A mortgage burning ceremony was held recently at Bethany Lutheran Church of Bemidji, Minn., at which time the parsonage debt was erased. The parsonage was acquired by faith in 1974 without the prospect of a pastor. In the spring of 1975 a call was extended to Pastor Ray Persson of Astoria, Ore., who came to serve as the first full-time pastor of the congregation in June. The congregation launched out by faith without Home Mission Aid. The Lord has blessed so that today the church has no debt, souls are being added and the Church is considering beginning an A.C.E. (Accelerated Christian Education) school this next fall. Two of the board members are shown in the picture, Nick Snustad and Norman Nelson with Pastor Persson and Mrs. Esther Norvold, whose deceased husband gave a sum of money in the early years of the church. Mrs. David Nelson, the treasurer, is in the foreground.

To God be the glory!

The Luther League and College Age Group of Bethany are busily engaged in repairing old *Concordia Hymnals* which will be given to the Redby Lutheran Mission which is close to Bemidji. The youth have also done painting in the church basement, which has been renovated with added restroom facilities, including the kitchen which has been completely redone with new cupboards, sinks, lowering of ceiling, new floor and lighting.

A note burning ceremony for Zion Lutheran Church, Dalton, Minn., was held on Sunday, February 11. Rev. Richard Snipstead, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, preached the sermon at the morning service. Board members and the pastor of the congregation, Ragene Hodnefield, participated in the ceremony.



Zion Church established a building program in July, 1974, under the leadership of then pastor Wendell Johnson. The addition to the church which hosted the 1975 Winter Bible Conference of the AFLC, extends to the south of the original church structure. It provides an inside main stairway to the sanctuary, additional seating in the auditorium, library, office and classroom space on the upper level and increased accommodations for Sunday School and WMF in the basement.

Our praise is to the Lord for enabling us to be free of debt at this time. Our thanks and praise to God for each one who had a part in making this possible.

Left to right, front, George Hartman and John Halvorson; middle, Mrs. George Hartman, Emil Grewe, Garmen Broud and Luther Melby; and, rear, Wally Young, Pastor Snipstead, Pastor Hodnefield and Roger Holo.

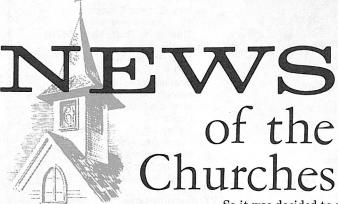


Mrs. Madison, left, and Mrs. Winget.

Now I am again in my rightful place beside the lectern and altar, where I am used by Pastor Hubert DeBoer. I am very thankful to these faithful women and the congregation for restoring me, and I pray the Lord will bless each one of you as you come to worship in this beautiful House of God.

The Old Preste Stol

Lille Gunderson Noer



The Preste Stol

I am not an ordinary chair! The people of the Norwegian Lutheran Free Church of Running Valley, Colfax, Wisconsin, bought me more than 100 years ago. So you see, I am very old. I was dedicated to the Lord's use, and I was used by many, many pastors. Therefore, these Norwegians called me their "Preste Stol" (preacher's chair).

I was really a beautiful chair, as I was upholstered in a rich, dark red velvet. But like older people as well as old furniture, I became tired and worn out.

So it was decided to store me away for a time. In spite of the dampness and cold in the storage shed, I did not fall apart or crumble, for you see I am made of solid oak.

Just recently, the members of the Church Board examined me and decided to try to restore my finish. Two very kind, artistic women of Faith Lutheran, as it is now called, stripped me of all the old varnish and dust and gave me a new look. These two ladies, Mrs. Opal Winget and Mrs. Ann Madison, also took out the old red velvet and put on a new brown upholstery.

Church annual reports available

Pastor A. L. Hokonson has the following church Annual Reports, which may be had upon request and the payment of postage:

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations: 1963-1975, inclusive (2-1974, 3-1968, 2-1965).

Lutheran Free Church: 1923, 1931, 1933-36, 1939-42, 1944-48, 1950-61 (2-1933, 1936, 1949, 1951, 1957, 1961).

His address is 811 South Water St. Apt. 28, Silverton, Ore. 97381.

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