



THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

April 1, 1980

*"The Glory
of the Spring
How Sweet"*

—Thomas H. Gill

Photo by Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.

Baptism—A Question Answered p. 3
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AT THE MASTER'S FEET

Pastor Gary Skramstad



Going God's way

"For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 55:8).

Do you remember a time when you were so convinced that you were positively right, throughly convinced of it, only to be proven wrong? That has happened to me many times. Misplaced keys, dates and theological issues are only a small part of my human frailty and limited vision.

It is especially hard to confess one's wrongness to a child. Yet God asks us to be honest with each other and with Him. It is likewise hard for us to refrain from asking, "Why?", to God. All of us have asked that question which reveals our inability to have enough of our own faith to really trust God in all situations. God knows this to be true. For that reason, even faith must be a gift from God. That gift of faith comes to us from the living Word which has the power to change our souls.

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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In the Word we see God's enduring faithfulness to His own. So many terrible things happened to Joseph and yet he did not forsake the Lord. Neither did God forsake him. What man would interpret as trouble God can translate as victory. As God moved in His mysterious way, Joseph was elevated from the pit and jail to a place of prominence in the king's palace. But always Joseph reigned above the regions of Satanical defeat as he trusted God and kept in fellowship with Him.

Likewise in the New Testament, we see God's ways surpassing the ways and thoughts of man. In Acts 8, we read about the Christians fleeing Jerusalem to the regions of Judaea and Samaria. Only the Apostles stayed in Jerusalem. Can you imagine their thoughts during this time of grabbing a few special belongings and running for their lives? Oh, how many times wouldn't the question, "Why?", be repeated. What good could ever come out of such a persecution? Has God forgotten about those who believed in Him?

Those who fled were really only going God's way. Christianity was spread into the world, not by the professionals, but by the lay people. Their faith was living and those around them soon realized that this Christ whom they may have heard about was indeed alive in the lives of the believers. In a different way the Lord was adding to the church—His Church. Those former residents of Jerusalem could now see that God's ways are really the best ways.

One of those who fled to Samaria

was Philip, one of the first deacons. The message of Jesus was shared and many believed. Rumors filtered back to Jerusalem and the Apostles decided to send Peter and John to find out what was really happening. Excitement was high. Peter and John just had to listen to Philip as He shared what God had been doing in this despised Samaria. Even though one of the new converts was a fraud and had to be sharply dealt with, the ministry Philip was experiencing was good.

In the midst of such a successful ministry, God told Philip to go into the Gaza desert. Again God's thoughts are above ours. Why, Lord, would you take our pastor away when everything is going so well and so many are being won into the Kingdom? Maybe some of our readers have echoed a similar question as they have said farewell to a pastor they truly loved and appreciated. But as we continue to read in that 8th chapter of Acts, we find that God keeps His promise that the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. The Spirit led Philip to the treasurer of Ethiopia, who was reading Scripture in his chariot. This Ethiopian eunuch was converted and baptized and continued on his way to influence his Queen, Candace, in the ways of God.

God's way could be questioned earlier but not now. God does know what He is doing. Those early believers could trust Him as time after time they saw God's secrets revealed. We, too, can trust God. Ask for more faith to truly believe that God's ways are indeed better than all of ours combined.

Baptism

A question answered

By Eivind Berggrav

There is nothing I enjoy more than baptizing babies. They are so lovely, these baby eyes, and it is a living gospel to see them carried forward and offered to God. Their crying matters not at all, as it is not their nor my goodness which gives us a place in Jesus Christ. There is a gospel in this too.

This boy didn't cry. He was half a year old, so he sat on the arm of the one who carried him, and was pretty lively. I noticed that it was the sparkle of my pectoral cross that caught his attention, so I gave it to him to hold. Then he looked wide-eyed at her who carried him as if to show her the cross. She looked at me in return, and when I saw her eyes, I thought: this is the mother. It is most appropriate that the mother carries the child to the font. Why a stranger, a relative or another on this occasion? No one is more intimately concerned with this than the mother. And besides, all the others do it so awkwardly; they are so self-conscious. This one was entirely caught up in the

glory of the moment. When the boy was being held over the baptismal water, he looked up with his big blue eyes, alternately at mother and at me, holding the cross in his little fist. None of us could keep the tears back. Now I knew she was the mother.

"Idar Bjornar Skog, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen."

Later I learned where their farm was. It was a long way above the farthest end of Rosvatnet, half a mile from the Swedish border, farthest away of all. After the service, on the way home, I said to the parson, "Take these kroner and deposit them in Vefsn savings bank. In the passbook write: 'For Idar Bjornar Skog.'"

This was the first part. The rest deals with something altogether different. We continued to Hattfjelldal and Susendal, and then the chaplain and I went by automobile all the miles down to Mosjøen. We had an evening meeting there in Dolstad's two-hundred-year-old octagonal church; then we

boarded the local boat and sailed out the fjord.

The following day we held a visitation in a branch church out by the ocean. The parson came early and said: "There is great excitement in this parish. A discussion about baptism is going like a storm over the district. There is a fermentation that threatens to carry everything with it—man against man; homes are being divided, sheer bitterness is controlling the people. What shall we do? Lecture against it?"

"No," I replied. "When it has gotten thus far, lecturing against it will do no good. That would only incite ill feeling. Speak directly on the matter to all who will listen and who ask. Let the baptism come positively, not controversially, to its proper place in the service. Gather those who will come; strengthen their faith and encourage them. But do not controvert."

Nevertheless I felt a trembling within me. Weary from the journey, I had been looking forward to a peaceful service with a sympathetic congregation. I had no idea of this conflict which had flared up in this last half year. The precentor came into the vestry: "They will soon burst the walls. The church is crowded with opponents of infant baptism craving an opportunity to argue. The air is electric."

I don't remember what I preached about. It was not a difficult audience. But I realized that it would be hard to take over immediately the examination of the children in this poorly ventilated church. So I asked the parson if he would accommodate by taking the children the first ten minutes, so I might have a breathing spell. I almost sank down on a chair in the chancel. I was thunderstruck when I heard the parson say to the children: "Now we shall talk about child baptism. I shall start, and the bishop will conclude." I dreaded this. Difficulties were looming up. There were only a few minutes in

**"a little child
shall lead
them"**

WE HAD A LITTLE ANGEL FOR A WHILE

by Mrs. Reino E. Hill
Ashland, Wisconsin

Tyler's first ten months of life had been normal ones. He had been the picture of health when he was born, weighing nearly 8 lbs. and responding normally. He was a good-natured baby who gained weight readily, progressing normally in both his physical and mental development. He hadn't doubled his birth weight at nine months (as some growth charts indicated he should have) but he was always well-proportioned.

When Tyler was approximately ten months old, my mother expressed concern over a blueness that seemed to be apparent in Tyler's fingernails. Reluctant to admit there might be a problem, my husband and I delayed making a doctor's appointment. Finally a

friend of ours, a nurse, spurred us to action when she expressed concern that the blueness could indicate a heart problem.

I prayed, *Heavenly Father, let there be an explanation for Tyler's blueness, but don't let there be anything wrong that can't be "fixed" easily. Tyler can't possibly have a heart problem, can he, Lord?*

Our local doctor knew immediately upon seeing Tyler's blueness that a heart problem existed and in turn referred us to a heart specialist in another part of the state. We kept thinking how healthy Tyler had been since birth, convincing ourselves that whatever heart problem existed, it *had* to be minor.

Dear Lord, don't let it be serious. Don't let heart surgery be necessary.

BAPTISM . . .

which to straighten it out. But minutes—in this atmosphere, the problem of child baptism—it was only to declare in advance that I was checked. If I only hadn't been so absolutely spent. I couldn't even think. Now all the long-distance driving and the many sleepless nights were taking revenge.

I looked at my watch. The ten minutes would soon be up. The pastor was rapidly nearing the burning question. I prayed. I felt myself powerless in this situation, physically and spiritually. I could only say: "Heavenly Father, I don't know anything." Then I went into the Lord's Prayer.

As I stood in front on the chancel floor with the rows of children before me and the congregation crowded on the floor, in the halls, in the gallery, in corners, I felt as empty and lost as anyone could be. I did not have an idea, much less any plan—not even a starting point. But I had to say something. An old experience has taught me that in an impossible situation, it is best to go right ahead and tackle the worst. So I said, "But children, these little ones we carry to the baptismal font, can they really have faith?" I was so sure they had the correct answers from school and from books. "No!" It resounded through the church, a unanimous chorus of **no!** I could have fallen over backwards!

In this terrible second, something strange happened. In the middle of my knock-out, I saw two blue baby eyes above a baptismal font and two chubby fists playing with a cross. In one-tenth of a second, I was a new man. How the association of ideas came, I do not know. But I answered the children very quietly: "Is that so; so you say that such a little child cannot have faith. Very well. But now let me ask you something else: Can such a little baptismal child have a bank book?" Now the children felt positive. They actually roared: "No!"

A smile went through me. "Now I've got you," I said. "You really think such a little boy cannot own a bank book! Now I'm going to tell you what I did last Wednesday. I baptized a little shaver whose name is Idar Bjornar Skog. He has a bank book! You may step into Vefsn savings bank and ask, and they will tell you. But why did you tell me that he and other little children could not have a bank book? Well, because you thought they were too small for that. A bank book is a book one gets by earning, by accumulating, and by saving; and this an infant cannot do. But you forget that we can be given a bank book. Idar Bjornar had been given his."

In the meantime it had become evident that I could not keep on talking to the children; the time, the air, the ten-

sion of the congregation, all indicated that now I should only complete the picture and then stop. So I continued:

"And now, you adults: have not both you and I asked ourselves many times, 'Can God really receive an infant who can have no faith?' Wherein is our fallacy? Ah, we regard faith as something that we ourselves can furnish. We will gradually arrive at a point where we think we can say, 'Now we believe.' We think faith is a matter of our accomplishment, an achievement which God recognizes and accepts as a basis for receiving us as His children when we have become mature enough to believe thus, then there may be sense in being baptized."

**"Faith is God's
gift to me
in Jesus Christ."**

"But, my dear people, when do we ever get to where we think we have sufficient faith? If I should have to postpone my baptism until I could stand before God and say: 'Now I really have enough faith, now I have provided and gathered together and can show you so much faith that now you can safely baptize me'—ah, then I'm afraid that I would still not be baptized. Certainly, I believe. But can I stand before God

Can't You make it so that it will fix itself? As Tyler matures physically? Please?

Only a week's time elapsed before our next doctor's appointment. As we waited in the doctor's office for the test results, we were relatively calm and patient, still convinced that Tyler couldn't be seriously ill.

There is no way we could have imagined how serious Tyler's problems really were. The tests showed that Tyler was missing walls in his heart between both upper chambers and between both lower chambers (common auricles, common ventricles), several valves were missing as well as part of his pulmonary artery. Our doctor referred us to still another clinic, this time the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, but not without first tell-

ing us that there was a possibility that nothing could be done to help our Tyler.

O God! This can't be happening! Perform a miracle, Lord. Heal Tyler for us, dear Lord.

The whole situation didn't seem real. I found myself hoping that we'd get to Rochester for tests and the doctors would find that Tyler had been miraculously healed—they'd be shocked, of course, but we'd have proof that God had performed a miracle and we could spend the rest of our lives telling the world what God had done for us.

We didn't truly believe, though, that Tyler *would* be healed instantaneously. We'd heard of people who had been rid of ailments they'd had for years, but never had we heard of anyone re-

and say: 'On this my faith you can build. It's a sure foundation. It is strong and ample.' No, I would have to say, 'Not yet.' Thus I'm afraid I'd be postponing and postponing until my dying day. For if a human being is to be received by God on the foundation of his own accomplishment—be it in faith, or be it in works—how can we then endure?

"But here comes Jesus and says: 'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God.' That is to say: 'I give them the kingdom of heaven, I give them faith, I give them into God's hand.' In short, Jesus gives them the gift of faith from God. To be a child is to accept openly, without deception or doubt—to be a child is to possess more than one knows. To be full-grown is rather to acquire the faculty of dissipating that which one possesses. I do not understand where I must go if I should be required by God to show forth any accomplishment as a fee for admittance to His kingdom. But He is not like that. He gives. He also gives faith.

"The grown-up is a much more unstable and unsafe recipient for the gift of God than the infant we carry to Him. The adult's mind is filled with opposition and enmity to God. He does not, however, reject us. But is it easier for God to give His gift to such a full-

"The grown-up is a much more unstable and unsafe recipient for the gift of God than the infant we carry to Him."

grown mind than to a little child? No, we must re-learn what faith is before we can say any more about infant baptism and understand it correctly. Faith is not my accomplishment; faith is **God's gift** to me in Jesus Christ.

"And now, children, tell me, do you think we can bring a little child to God and have it baptized into His kingdom?"

"Yes," they answered, heartily. The congregation was so quiet that I only whispered: "Amen." But that was loud enough.

As long as I live, I shall never forget what I learned from Idar Bjornar Skog.

From *Land of Suspense* by Eivind Berggrav, translated by O. Herbert Aanestad, 1943. Chapter: "The Children of Haalogaland." Reprinted by permission of Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota, copyright owners.

a story
of testing
and surrender



LITTLE ANGEL . . .

ceiving a body part that had been missing from birth without some type of corrective surgery.

I'm scared, Lord.

I couldn't understand why this was happening to our dear little Tyler. Was I doing something displeasing to God that He was punishing *me* for? I knew it was ridiculous to even think that: our heavenly Father wouldn't punish an innocent child for the sins of those around him.

I did believe, though (and I still do), that God has a purpose for each and every one of us. And I knew of verses in the Bible that stated how God allows trials in our lives that would enable us to grow closer to Him. It was hard to accept, though, that a heart problem could help a little one grow closer to God and it just didn't seem fair that a young child should have to suffer even if it meant others could somehow accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

It isn't fair, Lord. It isn't fair. Why Tyler?

Why Tyler? Why *our* son? I wanted to scream, "If there has to be suffering, somebody else must be more deserving of this pain and suffering! Why not *me* instead?" I felt as if Tyler had been singled out and the unfairness of it overwhelmed me. Why a little boy who'd been conceived in love and who had felt that love from the day he was born? Why a little boy who had an enthusiasm for life unequalled by anyone I'd ever known? Why a little boy who was so gentle, so good, so obedient, so eager to please?

I thought of people I'd known who'd had loved ones who'd endured repeated surgeries and who had spent agonizing months recovering. I thought of children with serious illnesses who seemed not to be getting better despite the fact that they were under doctors' care and who seemed to be suffering, as well as those around them who had to observe the suffering.

Dear Lord, don't let Tyler suffer. Let surgery be possible, but if his whole life will mean surgery after surgery, Lord, take him home now. I don't think he could endure the suffering and I know I couldn't.

The doctors at the Mayo Clinic were surprised to see Tyler doing so well with so many things against him but

"O God! This can't be happening! Perform a miracle, Lord."

were reluctant to express much optimism for his future without surgery. The surgery they were recommending wouldn't eliminate Tyler's problems but would hopefully help assure Tyler's survival until he was old enough to undergo the extensive heart surgery he would one day require. The surgery would involve a re-routing of an artery from Tyler's arm to his lungs, resulting in more oxygenated blood to his body.

Lord, I know I asked that Tyler wouldn't ever have to suffer, but I know that if he undergoes surgery, he'll have to suffer a little bit anyway. How do I pray, Lord? I don't know what I'm even supposed to want anymore.

It was at this time that I finally realized I wasn't giving God any "say" in my prayers. I had been telling God what I wanted, but I wasn't listening for an answer. I finally realized I had to ask that Tyler's life would be fulfilled according to God's will. A cousin of mine, a pastor, emphasized to me that all healing is not of a physical nature.

Dear Lord, whatever Your will is for Tyler's life, let it be. Guide the doctors in surgery and let Tyler be healed—either physically, through the doctors' hands, or healed completely by being taken home to You. Help us to accept Your will.

Tyler did well during surgery. Nonetheless, we were shocked when we saw him for the first time in intensive care. He was truly a pitiful sight with all the tubes extending from his frail little body. What bothered me the most, though, was that he was wide awake, looking right at us, unable to move, crying without making a sound.

Dear God, be with Tyler. Keep him from pain. Let him know he's loved through everything. Help him to accept what's happening to him.

Even now I don't understand how God did it, but Tyler never seemed overly upset by his hospital experiences. Someone might argue that he was too heavily drugged to actually be aware of what was happening, but I believe that God was there giving him the strength to endure it all emotionally. If Tyler was fearful of the hospital personnel, he never showed it. He didn't

like to be poked at, of course, but he was generally very cooperative.

Tyler recovered quickly and we had him home again in just one short week following surgery.

Praise God! Thank You for letting us have Tyler a while longer. Help him to grow to be a strong Christian man, winning others for Christ.

Anyone who has a child with serious health problems knows how we felt as we saw our precious son grow. Knowing his life with us on earth might be relatively short, we were as protective as we could be without smothering him. We prayed often that Tyler might grow to be a strong Christian man who would win others to Christ. We realize now that we were praying selfishly: we chose words that would express a willingness that God's glory might be shown but what we were desperately asking was that Tyler would be with us for a long time.

"I finally realized I had to ask that Tyler's life would be fulfilled according to God's will."

Reluctantly, we scheduled doctors' exams. I say "reluctantly" because I could never quite rid myself of worry. I knew God had been good to us and had been our strength in every hardship we'd ever faced, yet I kept worrying about the surgery that we knew was inevitable. I knew that God would always be there, but I couldn't help but ache when I thought Tyler might have to suffer.

Take care of Tyler, Lord. May Your will for his life be done.

Tyler did well at home though he couldn't keep up an active pace in playing with other children. He tired easily and it wasn't at all uncommon to hear him say, "Me tired." If he played too hard too soon after eating, he would vomit. Nothing seemed to bother him, though, and he was always very happy,

[Continued on page 8]

missionary heroes

JOHN ADAMS AND THE TRANSFORMED ISLAND (PITCAIRN)

1789-1829

Now you shall hear a very wonderful story of what came about through one copy of the Bible and one man, in a tiny island in the Pacific Ocean.

The little speck of an island, but two and a quarter miles long, and one mile broad, is about 1,200 miles from Tahiti. This is a tale of the South Seas.

In the year 1767 (how long ago?) Captain Carteret, of Great Britain, was cruising round in those latitudes, and with him a young midshipman named Pitcairn. He was the first to discover the hitherto unknown island, and gave it his name. The poor young man died not long after. His naming of the island went down in the ship's log-book, and the next man who made a chart of the South Seas put a new dot on it for Pitcairn, and that was the last of this speck in the ocean for a long, long time.

Twenty years after, the good ship *Bounty*, flying the British flag, took her way homeward with plants of the breadfruit tree, which the government wished to introduce into the West Indies. Captain Bligh was in command. The master's mate was Fletcher Christian, a bright young man, but quick-tempered and revengeful. The captain was not as wise and kind as he might have been, and the mate was ready to resent everything, so that there was a bad state of feeling on board. At last

a page for CHILDREN

Fletcher Christian, who was not well named, led the men in a mutiny. They overpowered the captain and his handful of faithful men, put them into a small boat loaded to the water's edge, within a few inches, and carrying a small allowance of provisions, and sent them adrift. It is dreadful to think of.

The mutineers then turned the vessel back to Tahiti, where they told a lie to account for their return, saying the captain had gone, with some of his crew, in another boat, with a friend met on the sea. But the wicked men were in terror every moment, afraid they would be found out somehow and pursued to their death. They left the island, landed upon another, leaving some of the men behind, and taking some natives of Tahiti with them. They tried to build a barricade, but the work did not go well, and soon the *Bounty* was at sea again. Then was discovered the little island of Pitcairn, that seemed so solitary and forsaken that it promised safety. They landed and took up their residence there.

Let us imagine the scene. The men unload the ship and cast all her lading upon the shore. If we look carefully, we shall see an old Bible among the things tossed down. Now it is decided to "burn their bridges" by burning the ship, and soon the *Bounty* is a mass of flame, burning to the water's edge. Now these men must live with the savages brought with them, and see their English homes no more.

But shall we follow Captain Bligh and crew, set adrift nearly four thousand miles from any European settlement, with scanty supplies of food and water? They dare not land upon unknown islands for fear of being killed by savages. With two coconut shells for scales, and a leaden bullet for weight, the captain daily measures and weighs the supplies for each man. Sometimes the storm-tossed boat quivers between waves "mountain-high" as the story-books say. Daily they pray for help, and God is good. At last they reach home, and tell their strange story. The ship *Pandora* scours the seas for the mutineers. Some are found at Tahiti but two have been murdered. Three



are drowned on the homeward trip, the rest are punished with death on reaching England. But of Fletcher Christian and the rest not a trace is found.

The life in Pitcairn is very terrible. The men are in hourly dread of a visit from a man-of-war, and many a false alarm sends them scuttling to their hiding places in the rocks. Fletcher Christian is so cruel that by and by the natives of Tahiti kill him and four other whites. Then the whites left, struggle with the natives, till all the Tahitian men are killed. It seems as if the tiny island runs blood. But time goes on. Children are born. A man who knows how to make an intoxicating drink from native plants brings this curse upon them.

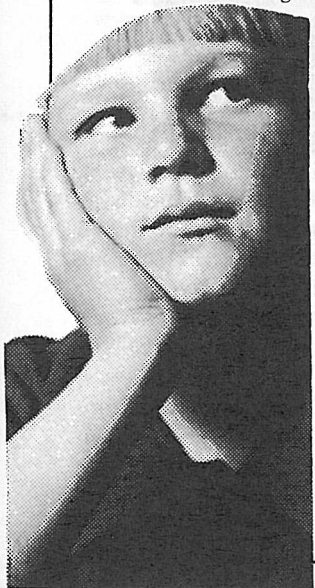
At last one man only of the crew of the *Bounty* is left. He used to be called Alexander Smith but takes the name of John Adams. He taught himself to read when a boy from the signs and handbills on the London streets. One day he goes rummaging among the old things taken from the *Bounty* and finds the Bible. Sick at heart over all the wickedness on the island, he reads God's Word. He prays. He finds and trusts God's promises. He gives his heart to God.

It is twenty-five years since the mutiny on the *Bounty*. Two men-of-war, one September evening, find an island not laid down in their charts. Next morning they see the homes of people on the shore—neat and comfortable they look. See. A canoe from the shore, with two young men, comes towards the ships, and hails them in the English tongue. How amazing! They are taken on board and given some refreshments. Before they eat, they fold their hands and say earnestly, "For what we are about to receive, the Lord make us truly thankful."

[Continued on page 8]

MEMORY VERSE

"Thy Word is a
lamp unto my
feet, and a light
unto my path"
Psalm 119:105



LITTLE ANGEL . . .

contented and well aware of the love showered upon him by everyone.

My husband and I were showered by that love, too. Everyone we knew showed their love and concern for us all. Tyler seemed to be in everyone's prayers and everyone smiled as they watched him grow.

Sixteen months after his hospitalization, Tyler required surgery again. The surgery this time involved the structure of a "window" in a major artery and more re-routing of blood vessels. Again, more oxygenated blood was the desired result and, just as the first time, wouldn't eliminate his problems but would help assure Tyler's survival until he could undergo the more extensive corrective surgery when his body was big and strong enough to handle it.

Dear Lord, we're putting Tyler in the doctors' hands again. Be with the doctors, Lord, guiding them. If it be Your will, help him to survive surgery. And, God, please don't let this whole experience traumatize him.

Just as the first time, Tyler did well. The hospital experience was again very frightening for all of us but left no emotional scars on our dear Tyler.

Tyler was on a very restricted diet those first couple of months after returning home from the hospital, but his acceptance of it was phenomenal. Tyler would ask for something his diet restricted and when we wouldn't allow it, he'd quietly ask, "Did the doctor say no?" and wouldn't ask for it again. (It becomes even more remarkable when we remember just how old he was at this time—two years and four months.)

MISSIONARY HEROES . . .

By and by the story comes out. John Adams has been the missionary who has taught those on the island to worship God and love His Word. It is this which has changed everything. He dies in 1929, forty years after the mutiny.

Another missionary goes out by and by, and the wonderful story goes on in the Transformed Island.

—Julia H. Johnston
*Fifty Missionary Heroes
Every Boy and Girl Should
Know, Fleming H. Revell
Company*

The results from this second surgery were even more promising than we'd expected: Tyler underwent a real growth spurt, had good coloring and was more active than he'd ever been. The doctors were optimistic about his future and so were we. There was no question in our minds that Tyler would continue to do well, would undergo one or more surgeries and would live to be a young man.

Two years ago, in April, as our family of five was eating supper, we discussed plans for Tyler's third birthday which was then just five days away. During the discussion Tyler said shyly, "I'm going to die before my birthday."

I looked at my husband not quite knowing how to respond to Tyler's startling remark. We asked him to repeat what he'd just said, only to hear a second time, "I'm going to die before my birthday."

It was inconceivable to us that Tyler could possibly understand what he was telling us, so rather than discuss it further, we let the subject drop.

The next day as I was dressing Tyler to go outside to play, he complained of a headache. I sat holding him for just a few minutes, talking casually with him

about the morning's happenings. Almost before I knew it, he cried out in pain, threw his head back and became listless. We rushed him to the hospital, telling him again and again how much we loved him. As he lay down relatively comfortably on the hospital bed, he said, "I want to sleep now." They were his last words. In less than a half hour he was dead.

Almost immediately my husband and I remembered Tyler's words from the night before and we knew that it had been God telling us that this was the way it was meant to be. Why God took him home then we'll never know but we do know it must have been the best time for all of us. How blessed we were to have that little angel living with us as long as we did!

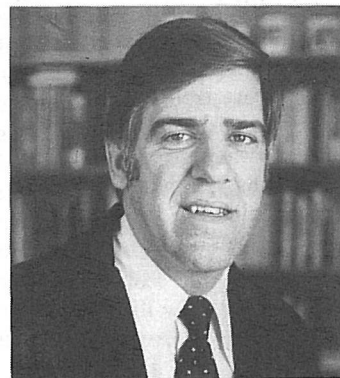
We know that Tyler is with our Father in heaven and wait anxiously for the day when we can join him.

Thank You, dear Lord, that Your will has been done in Tyler's life. Thank You for the peace that is ours knowing that Tyler is safe and secure in Your loving arms. Help us to witness to others the love You have shown us. In Jesus' name, we pray.

Amen.

Introducing our senior seminarians

James C. Gerdeen



Who am I? My name is James Gerdeen. I am a father, a husband, an engineer, a seminary student and an interim pastor. My wife is Wanda and we have three children: Lori, first year at St. Paul Bible College, St. Bonifacius, Minn., Sonya, in the 9th grade and Timothy, in the 7th grade.

As an engineering graduate of Michigan Tech in 1959, the first nine years found me working as a research engineer in Columbus, Ohio, where I also studied part-time for a Master's degree at Ohio State University, Columbus. The Lord provided time off with full financial support to pursue the Ph.D. degree at Stanford University in California from 1963-1965. In 1968, I accepted a position as professor at Michigan Technological University in Houghton, Michigan, where I served

nine years. During six of those years, the Lord gave the privilege of being lay pastor at Maranatha Lutheran Church, which started in 1971. During two of those years, I also served jointly with Rev. Ernest Langness in a new church, Grace Lutheran in Pelkie, Michigan.

In 1977, our family moved to Minneapolis so that I could attend seminary at Medicine Lake. Financial support has come through a consulting engineering practice out of an office in our home. During these seminary

editorials

SANCTIFICATION

That was an interesting interview with Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, conducted by a former editor of *Christianity Today*, Carl F. H. Henry, and printed in the February 8 issue of that publication.

Dr. Lloyd-Jones is an aging and well-known Christian leader in Britain from the evangelical school. A physician to begin with, he later became a clergyman and much sought after preacher and Bible teacher. Westminster Chapel was his most famous pulpit, which had been occupied previously by that other great expositor, G. Campbell Morgan.

Dr. Lloyd-Jones expressed some opinions sure to draw challenge from other evangelicals. As examples, he professed unhappiness with organized evangelistic campaigns, believing that revival comes when ministers and deacons call down Holy Spirit power through prayer and fasting; and he declared displeasure with calling people forward in these campaigns, citing Billy Graham's practice as a case in point. Here again, his argument would be that the so-called altar call gets into the area of techniques rather than trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit. But, as we said, his answers won't satisfy all evangelicals.

But what we want to specifically comment on, and as our title suggests, is sanctification. While he didn't say much about it in the interview, Dr. Lloyd-Jones did assert his belief that "sanctification is a process" in opposition to the Keswick Conference idea, "Let go and let God," which he termed "quite unscriptural." Whatever "Let go and let God" means, the conviction that sanctification is a process strikes a responsive chord for that is what we have always taught. In fact, it should be a *lifelong* process in the life of the justified person.

The Catechism definition of sanctification is this:

"Sanctification is the gracious work of the Holy Spirit whereby He day by day renews the believer more and more after the image of God." Other definitions have been used. Sanctification is the process of becoming more holy, more Christ-like.

Justification, the act of being declared righteous, is instantaneous, although the soul struggle which precedes it may be long. But the living out of the life which is begun in justification goes on through the remainder of life on this earth, providing the believer remains faithful and doesn't fall back.

And the importance of this "living out" of the life with Christ was stressed by the writer to the Hebrews (12:14) when he wrote: "Pursue after peace with all men, and after the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord" (NASB). Or the word sanctification here may also be translated as holiness. The idea is that there must be growth and progress in the Christian life. There can be no standing still. As the old Latin proverb puts it, "Qui non proficit, deficit" (he who does not advance, falls behind). It is the spirit of the Apostle Paul when he wrote to the Philippians: "Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me His own" (3:12, RSV). He was sure that he had been saved ("Christ Jesus has made me His own"), but he knew that he must grow in grace and press on. Of course, this is the Holy Spirit's work in the yielded heart.

We have never forgotten Dr. Gerhard Frost's picturesque description from the Luther League Federation convention of 1960 at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn. At that time he said, "All of God's grown up children are in heaven." We took that to mean that every Christian in this life is in the process of becoming, not a Christian, but more beautiful *as a Christian*. Also, that no believer reaches a level in his walk with the Lord beyond which he cannot go. It is only at physical death that the process ends. While one lives here there is the possibility of more fulness of the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22, 23).

Therefore, we are in agreement with Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones that sanctification is a process. He also averred that godliness is a note missing in modern evangelicalism. How sad if that is true. For our part, let us be for holy, godly living, revealing it first of all in our own lives.

years, the Lord has again given me the privilege of serving as interim pastor at Bethel Lutheran in Minot, N. Dak., Faith Lutheran in Minneapolis, and at Victory in Christ Lutheran in St. Paul.

Who am I? I am a saved sinner. I was brought up in the best of Christian homes, but did not make a profession of faith in Christ as my personal Savior until the age of 14 at a summer Bible camp. I definitely sensed God's call to preach His Word in 1971. God has given me a burden for lost souls and a vi-

sion of the Church as the Body of Christ.

Who am I? I hope the above answer suffices. But who are you? Are you a saved sinner or a lost sinner? Our Lord Jesus Christ asked a similar question of His disciples, "But who do you say that I am?" (Matt. 16:16). My answer is Peter's answer, and that answer is the theme that God has called me to preach: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

James C. Gerdeen

Personalities

New address for *Pastor and Mrs. Ralph Rokke* and family is 5837 Pleasant Ave. So., Minneapolis, Minn. 55419. The Rokkes formerly lived in the church parsonage at Rosedale Lutheran, which he serves, together with Faith Lutheran.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

WANTS PROPHECY ARTICLES

Recently I was visiting with a nephew who has been attending an ALC Seminary in Iowa and who is presently interning in Michigan. When discussing the times in which we are living, he stated that he had not studied prophecy and that they do not study prophecy in the ALC. I mentioned that large portions of Scripture are devoted to prophecy (that is, foretelling future events), that it seemed the time is short and that the Lord must be coming soon. He replied Christians in the first century felt the same way, that it could well be another 2000 years yet before Christ comes, and that the important thing was that we should be ready. In other words, the impression he gave me is that it is useless to try to relate current events to prophetic Scripture.

In our own church of Our Saviour's here at Thief River Falls, we had a series of meetings on Revelation conducted by Pastor Arnold Stone in 1972 and another series on Matthew 24 and 25, Mark 13, and Luke 21 conducted by Pastor Harvey Carlson in 1977. I really appreciated these studies and I'm sure many others did, too. I realize we can go to extremes and have wrong attitudes regarding prophecy (which Pastor Carlson warned us about), but what about the other extreme of practically ignoring the prophetic Scriptures?

Some years ago when we had the *Evangelize* magazine, I remember a series of articles in there written by Pastor Theodore Hax on current events and prophecy. How about having a similar series in our own *Ambassador*? What do other readers think? It seems that most of what I have read on this subject has been by authors from Reformed churches. How about something from our own Lutheran church?

Recently at a meeting a Christian said to me, "Are you waiting for the

sound of the trumpet?" It seems that momentous and unprecedented events are taking place in our time. I noticed the other day from Mark 13 that three times Jesus said, "Be on the alert." Maybe giving more attention to what is happening in our day in the light of Bible prophecy would help us do that.

Philip Grothe

Thief River Falls, Minn.

(Ed. note: The Editorial Board and I will give this suggestion consideration. In the meantime, other readers are invited to express their opinions to a member of the Board or the Editor, or to write a letter to the Editor for publication. Nothing that anyone writes on the subject of eschatology or last things beyond the basic facts will satisfy everyone and that is what makes the task both interesting and difficult.)

SOME GOOD, SOME BAD

Thank you for "Euthanasia" in the Feb. 5th issue. Miss Rokke makes the reader aware of a variety of pertinent thoughts.

In the same issue you remark in your editorial (The New Look) on the new look in the *Ambassador*. I'm not against change very often, but I really feel (and husband Gust does, too) that this change is not for the better. It has a dark crowded look. I really wish you'd go back to your 1970-79 *Ambassador* cover. It's clear, well spaced and easy on the eye. Also, your (Dr.) Huebner cover pictures are great.

Mrs. Susan Nordvall
Roseau, Minn.

(Ed. note: No, we can't go back. Since the above letter was written another new cover style has been put in use. Perhaps this one will be easier on the eye. Reader Nordvall and others will be happy to know that we will continue to use the beautiful pictures supplied by Dr. Huebner of Austin, Minn.)

Sunnyside-Hope ladies entertain annual WMF workshop

The Women's Missionary Federation banquet and workshop on February 15, sponsored by the Sunnyside-Hope (Stacy, Minn.) ladies was quite well attended. Seventy-three ladies registered. This is an annual event and we are happy that each year we have some who have never attended before and who find it an uplifting, spiritual and worthwhile experience. We would like to urge more of you to come and "taste" of the good things you receive through this fellowship and "learning" experience made available. Ladies, we need each one of you to carry on this important work of the WMF in our AFLC, not only for self-enrichment, but reaching out, sharing and receiving the spiritual blessings that are and can be ours. May we challenge you to be present at our next workshop in February of 1981?

The host ladies had decorated the church parlors beautifully and we rejoice in the Christian hospitality extended us in every way. Each place setting had little tokens of love provided by the hostesses. The tracts, "Christ, the World's Greatest Need Today" and "Oh, What Joy," were soul-searching and reminded us again that true and lasting peace can only come through the "Prince of Peace." There is still time for us to repent of our sins and turn to God. Do not put off this most important decision until it is too late and thereby lose out on the joy that is promised to all who have received Jesus Christ as personal Savior.

Mrs. Eugene Enderlein, national WMF president, welcomed us and introduced Mrs. Ed McDonough, president of the Sunnyside WMF. She greeted us with Hebrews 10:24-25, in which we are admonished to be helpful and kind to one another, encouraging and warning one another as the day of His return is drawing near. We all joined in singing "His Banner Over Me Is Love," "The Love of God," "Near To The Heart Of God," and the table grace.

Mrs. Arlo Kneeland, first vice-president, graciously thanked the

Can you see how this story is a type of the life that flows from faith in Jesus?

Lazarus dead—

you were “dead in your trespasses and sins” (Eph. 2:1).

Hears the voice of Jesus and is awakened to life—

“Hear and your soul shall live” (Isa. 55:3, KJV).

Comes forth from the grave, living—

“Made us alive” (Eph. 2:5).

Is loosed from grave clothes that he might walk—

“Old self was crucified with Him . . . no longer be slaves to sin . . . raised from the dead . . . so we too might walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:6, 4).

CHAPTER 11:45-57 THE MURDER PLOT

22. What were the results of the miracle? On the Jews? v. 45 _____

On the chief priests and the Pharisees? vs. 47-53 _____

On the multitudes? v. 48 _____

23. What was the result of the speech of Caiaphas? vs. 53, 54 _____

Do you think some of those Jews took for granted they would have Jesus to watch and listen to for a long while? He was only 33. But now the door of opportunity was closed for them (v. 54). Could it be we are taking too much for granted? Our privileges could suddenly be snatched away. Are we watching, praying, preparing with all of our hearts? Take fresh courage, dear friend, from the promises in 11:25, 26 and 40!

(1) Ryles *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels*

Watch, my soul, and pray,
Arm for life's affray.

When the danger least thou fearest,

Watch, the tempter's snares are nearest,

Such is e'er his way:

Watch, my soul, and pray.

Watch, and fight, and pray

Through this mortal day;

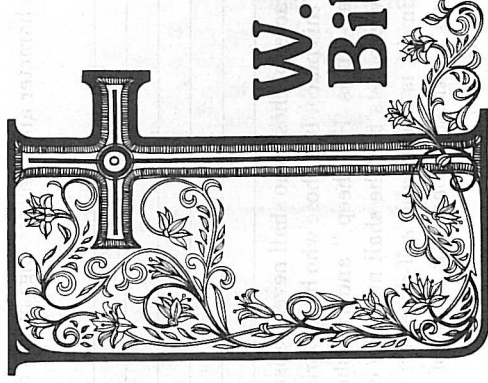
Soon thy Canaan thou attainest,

Soon the crown and palm thou gainest,

Peace is won for aye:

Watch, my soul, and pray.

Johan Olaf Wallin, 1816



May, 1980

The Gospel of John

Study assignment: 10:22-11:57

Springtime is here with all the glorious signs of new life. This lesson in John is about new life, but it is about the miraculous new life from the dead (chapter 11), and it is far more exciting than any springtime experience in nature. This portion of Scripture is truly an anthem of victory. It is full of comfort and hope. If we take the words of Jesus in this lesson by simple faith, the fear of our most dreaded enemy, death, will vanish. If faith in Jesus can enable us to stand at the grave of a Christian loved one and sing, “All hail the power of Jesus’ name!”, this is the greatest of victories!

We hope you begin your work on this lesson soon after the postman brings this to your door, so that your WMF meeting is a rewarding time of review of many blessings received in your personal quiet time of study.

Chapter 10:22-42 JESUS’ WITNESS AT THE FEAST OF DEDICATION

The feast of the dedication (v. 22) was a Jewish festival mentioned only in this one place in the Bible. It was winter and Jesus was walking in the temple on the porch when the Jews gathered around Him to ask questions.

1. In v. 24, did the Jews have good reason to be in suspense and doubt that Jesus was the Christ (the Messiah)? _____ What did Jesus say was a real proof He was the Messiah? v. 25 _____

2. How does Jesus go on to describe the character and the blessings of His own true people and servants? v. 27-29

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____

"Let it only be remembered that the character of those who shall never perish is most distinctly and carefully laid down in this place. It is those who hear Christ's voice and follow Him who alone are 'sheep.' It is 'His sheep,' and His sheep alone, who shall never perish. The man who boasts that he shall never be cast away, and never perish, while he is living in sin, is a miserable self-deceiver. . . . To the humble, penitent believer, who puts his trust in Christ, it is one of the most glorious and comfortable truths of the Gospel." (1)

3. Even though Jesus had done no wrong, He only "went about goind good" and His whole life was love, yet what did the Jews do that reveals the extreme wickedness of human nature? vs. 31 and 8:59 _____

4. What teaching of Jesus made them raise objections? v. 33 _____

Vs. 34-36 might be a little hard to understand, but here Jesus is offering an argument to enforce His claim that He is God. In v. 34 He uses the Scriptures (Ps. 82:6) which He states "cannot be broken" (v. 35). He is saying, "If mortal men in Scripture were given such dignified titles as 'you are gods' (v. 34), how much more should He, the Sanctified and Sent One, be allowed to claim for Himself the title of the 'Son of God.' "

5. They tried to seize Jesus, in v. 39, but why did they seem paralyzed? _____

CHAPTER 11:1-16 THE MESSAGE TO JESUS

6. Who were the friends of Jesus? vs. 1-3 _____

7. a. What was the trouble? _____

b. What is the best action we can take when we are in trouble? v. 3 _____

8. a. Why was this illness allowed in the home so loyal to Jesus? _____

b. Why was it sent? _____

c. What application can we make? Share blessings out of illness you have received. _____

9. Why did they not beg Jesus to come? _____

10. If Jesus loved them, why did He deliberately stay away two days longer? v. 6

11. What are some blessings that can result from pain and suffering? _____

12. Why did Jesus call this death a sleep? v. 11 _____

Men have called death the "King of Terrors" but Jesus knew He was about to abolish death and bring life and immortality to light. Later the disciples learned to call death sleep and we have this priceless comfort in I Thess. 4:14, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus."

CHAPTER 11:17-27 THE MEETING WITH MARTHA

The portraits of Christians in the Bible are faithful likenesses of saints just as they are. We see in Martha a strange mixture of grace and weakness, as is found in the hearts of believers today. Read Luke's account of Martha and Mary in 10:38-42.

13. a. How were they different? _____

b. Did Jesus love Mary more than Martha? _____

c. What does this teach us? _____

14. a. What did Martha do? v. 20 _____

b. Are her words in vs. 21, 22 a rebuke or an expression of faith? _____

c. How was she rewarded? _____

15. Meditate on or memorize vs. 25, 26.

a. Who are the dead in v. 25? _____

b. Which group of people is He speaking of in v. 26? _____

CHAPTER 11:28-37 THE MEETING WITH MARY

16. a. Where do we find Mary in v. 32? _____

b. Why do you think Jesus wept? _____

CHAPTER 11:38-44 THE MIRACLE

17. Did Martha's faith break down? v. 39 _____

18. Now comes the solemn reproof of our Lord, in v. 40. This is rich in meaning for us. What promise in v. 4 did Jesus want Martha to remember? _____

19. Why did Jesus call Lazarus by name? _____

20. What proved He had been really dead? v. 44 _____

21. What does this story and miracle show about the Person and ways of Jesus? _____

WMF WORKSHOP . . .

ladies for coming out and extended our appreciation to the host ladies. She shared a portion of Paul's letter to Philemon, thanking for the love and faith toward Jesus Christ and toward the members of the WMF. May our hearts be refreshed through this fellowship in the Word and with one another. We joined in singing "Hearty Thank You" to our hostesses.

Mrs. Joanne Weinkauff, president of Hope WMF, led in devotions, reading 1 John 4:7-16, in which God's love for us is manifested and we are exhorted to show this same love to one another. If we truly love God, we will love our fellowmen.

At this time, Mrs. Enderlein reminded us that as we possess Christ, our Christian fellowship grows sweeter each time we meet, whether it be at a conference, Bible Camp, WMF or whatever. She introduced those at the head table—the present WMF executive board, host WMF presidents, Mrs. Wendell Johnson, local pastor's wife, and Mrs. Richard Snipstead, wife of our AFLC president. She also recognized the presence of four past national WMF officers: Mrs. Raymond Jacobson, Mrs. Amos Dyrud, Mrs. J. C. Eletson, and Mrs. Bob Dietsche. Ten WMF districts were represented at the workshop. Mrs. B. Dasari, formerly of India, was introduced. We extend to her a most hearty Christian welcome.

Mrs. Grace Syverson, second vice-president, read a letter from Mrs. Hass, treasurer, encouraging us to read II Corinthians 8 and 9, which give us complete instructions in giving, making special note of 8:5. She also shared information from the financial report for the past year. The Sunnyside-Hope ladies sang a medley of songs of praise. All joined in singing "Love Lifted Me."

The WMF seeks to be a very "alive" group and has very high goals. To illustrate the difference between a non-productive and a productive or fruitful meeting, Mrs. Marlin Benrud, Minneapolis district president, together with six ladies from Hauge and Immanuel (Kenyon, Minn.) and Our Savior's (Zumbrota, Minn.) congregations, put on a skit she had written. It was humorous, yet showed what can happen if we lost sight of a "Christ-centered" meeting and get side-

tracked on irrelevant discussion of business which could be delegated to committees. We trust that this humorous, yet true, illustration is not a picture of your local WMF meeting. Several suggested having the Bible Study first, thus allowing ample time for this most important part of the meeting. This might also help keep the business meeting more to the point. If any group feels that the Bible Study is too long, we suggest that you need not discuss each question. Suit it to your situation. The larger the group, the more discussion there will be. You might need to eliminate small details. The entire study should be prepared by each one *before* the meeting. Don't expect your leader to do it all. The more you study and prepare, the more you will receive from the lesson. Make the best use possible of the excellent studies that have been written. This sharing of ideas is another of the many good things one gleans from attending workshops. (A copy of the skit was enclosed in your last Newsletter. We hope that you will share this with your ladies as well as each Newsletter.)

Miss Cindy Alpert, who has returned from the Brazil Mission Field, was scheduled to share her experiences with us, but due to illness, was unable to be present. Perhaps she will have this opportunity at a later date. Mrs. Enderlein, however, shared a little about her trip to Brazil last spring. She also gave us current news about our missionary endeavors in Mexico, and now India. We need to increase our home base in order that we can give more to our missions and other projects. We are in this work together as "laborers" for the Master. We urge and encourage each one to accept the challenge before her. Can we count on you?

The time always slips by too swiftly and we know that you have many unanswered questions. Please feel free to write and we shall try to give you the needed information. As a climax to another interesting workshop and a time of Christian fellowship, Judith Wold, executive secretary, closed with prayer and the group joined in singing "The Bond of Love."

Mrs. Reuben Wee
Secretary

Which Form?

GOD said, "Let us form man in our image."

The WORLD says, "We must conform man to our image."

The DEVIL says, "I will deform man by sin."

EDUCATION says, "Let us inform man by knowledge."

SOCIETY says, "We will reform man by culture."

Only CHRIST says, "I will transform man by love."

—Our Saviour's Lutheran Church
Thief River Falls, Minn.

Soup labels used

Save your Campbell's soup labels. The Amery Lutheran Church will be able to use them to purchase recreational equipment for their church school. Please send them to:

Rev. Michael Brandt
311 Montgomery
Amery, Wis. 54001

Also, please cut and save "cents off" coupons that you find in newspapers and magazines (except those that specify a particular local store). Even those that have expired dates on them can be used. The Senior Citizens in Boyceville, Wis., sort them all and the monies (5 cents for each) received back from the various companies goes to help the Northern Colony for Retarded Children in Chippewa Falls, Wis., to buy recreational equipment. Groups of ladies joining together to save coupons can easily turn in hundreds of dollars worth. This is an ongoing project. Send them to the following address and they will be delivered to the proper place:

Mrs. Alice Kinnunen
6908 - 18th Ave. So.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55423

(Ed. note: Perhaps other organizations make use of these labels and coupons also, but for those not otherwise involved, we pass on these two opportunities.)

Kirkland WMF grateful

At Kirkland, Wash., the Women's Missionary Federation of Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church has had a very blessed year of activities. The ladies there are rejoicing over the culmination of their year, the privilege of sending \$1250 to both Home and Foreign Missions. They expressed thanks to the Lord for allowing them to serve Him.



World Mission Director named

The Board of World Missions of the AFLC announces that Pastor Eugene W. Enderlein has accepted the position of World Mission Director as of March 1, 1980. At the Annual Conference of the AFLC, June, 1979, the Church recognized the need for a Director to coordinate the activities of World Missions, to visit and encourage the mis-

sionaries, to better acquaint the people of AFLC congregations with mission events and opportunities, and to investigate new fields of opportunity.

At the present time Pastor Enderlein will assume the responsibilities of World Mission Director on a part-time basis along with his pastorate at Thief River Falls, Minnesota. He served with the Wycliffe Bible Translators before coming to the AFLC Seminary in 1968. He has served on the AFLC Board of World Missions since 1973, and as Chairman since 1977.

Pastor Enderlein stated, "I am thankful to the Lord for enabling me to have this unique opportunity of promoting world missions within our AFLC and I look to Him for wisdom and strength to perform my duties to His glory. I am very grateful to my parish at Thief River Falls for their willingness to allow me to serve part-time

so that I may assume these new duties. This is an expression of their love for our Lord and their love for our Lord and their sincere desire to see the work of our AFLC advance. Many Christian members have expressed their hope that our congregations will now see many more lay people taking on the responsibilities of visitation, occasional mid-week Bible teaching and other roles. I praise the Lord for this willingness to work and serve!"

Pastor Enderlein is eager to share the work of AFLC missions with local congregations, and is open for opportunities as his schedule permits. He has recently traveled to Brazil (including Paraguay and Argentina), Mexico and India, and has slides for programs. Correspondence should be directed to him at Box 275, Thief River Falls, Minnesota 56701.

it happened at easter

by Margarete Arndt

The little family of Father and two children had lived for half a year in a new housing project in the big city. Mr. K. had been placed in charge of his firm's new branch office. The 22-year-old daughter, Inge, was a nurse and had a good position. Fifteen-year-old Hans attended high school. Their mother had died four years ago. The family's life style was very unassuming, even withdrawn; they never had visitors. Others who lived in the project received friendly greetings from them, but no conversation ever followed.

Nobody in this large complex knew that a 25-year-old son also was part of this family. His name was Peter. He had vanished. He had worked as a cook on board a ship, but there had been no news about him for two years now. Inquiries about his whereabouts came to nothing. The family had heard from the shipping office, but only that he had given up his job. This uncertainty lay like a dark cloud over the family, a cloud which—in the wake of the mother's death—only made these three retiring people draw further back into their shell.

It was about a week after Easter.

Late one afternoon their doorbell rang. Hans broke off his school work and went to answer it.

"Peter!" he shouted. Mr. K. and Inge sprang to their feet. Peter! Could it be true?

But there he stood in the room, a little thin and somewhat shy but looking straight at his father with a confident air. His little brother Hans was beaming with joy behind him.

Father asked no questions. He laid his arm around the returned wanderer and led him over to the sofa.

And now a long tale came to light, a tale full of much darkness and terror but also with much light.

When Peter had left his ship with quite a bit of money in his pocket, he had had no thoughts of any new job, but only of a couple of weeks' vacation. Naive and inexperienced as he was, he had fallen into bad company and committed a crime. Then he had disappeared behind prison walls.

After his release Peter had no job, no definite residence, no real record of employment. Like others in a similar position, he found himself on a corner along a busy street in the big city and turned to begging. He had a sign which read: "Released convict, without work

or lodging, begs your support." At night he stayed with the Salvation Army.

One day, a week before Easter, a woman spoke to him.

"Why don't you go to the City Mission?" she said. "They may know what you can do!" She gave him some money. "I'm keeping my fingers crossed for you!" she had said as she went on. Her words had given him new courage. He went to the City Mission where a young student worker had shown concern for him, finally even taking him into his own quarters. To this young man Peter finally had been able to pour out his heart, sharing all of his sorrows and fears.

Peter wanted to go home to his family, but he didn't dare to do it. How could he return home as the prodigal son? But the student, Konrad, had heard all this before. They talked many times far into the night.

And then it was Easter.

"Tomorrow morning we're going to church together," Konrad had said. "It's Easter." Peter refused. What did Easter mean to him? Resurrection? But how could one believe in such a thing? Jesus? Oh, a good man, to be sure, but He failed and died, and then



Some of the women of Calvary Church.

The male chorus which sang at the banquet. Pastor Jackson is at the extreme right.

Appreciation banquet held at Wallace

On December 22nd, 1979, the men of the Calvary Lutheran Church, Wallace, South Dakota, hosted an Appreciation Banquet for the women of the congregation.

The dining room was neatly arranged, using white table covers, Christmas candles and other centerpieces for decorations.

After a festive meal, a program opened with the singing of Christmas carols under the direction of Rev. W. M. Jackson. The male chorus, consisting of Harris Kasin, Keith Hogstad,

Alan, Dale and James Keller, Larry Wasland and Rev. Jackson, sang several selections.

Special guests were Rev. and Mrs. Snipstead. They favored us with a vocal duet and Rev. Snipstead brought the message, "God's Great Gift to the world—Jesus Christ."

The women are very appreciative of this honorable and enjoyable event, and wish to whole-heartedly thank Rev. Jackson and the men for their thoughtfulness and wonderful evening.

—Calvary Lutheran Church Women
Mrs. Arthur Wasland

"... he didn't dare do it. How could he return home as the prodigal son?"

it was all over with Him. Resurrection? There is no such thing!

Then Konrad had said very seriously: "Peter! You mean you don't know? Jesus lives!" He explained to Peter with great enthusiasm, yet with simple, strong words, that Jesus' cause had continued to grow after His death, that Jesus in fact hadn't remained dead but that He is alive! "Do you think"—this was his crucial argument—"that I would have bothered about you if the living Jesus were not my Lord?"

Peter had learned something. He had experienced the love of Jesus, His forgiveness, and the possibility of a new beginning.

After that things developed rapidly. After the joyous Easter festival services, which Peter took in more reverently and attentively than he had done at any time since childhood, he went to some acquaintances and learned the new address of his family. Konrad gave him the money for the train trip. Now, there he stood, in his new home, the returned "lost son."

Director of Development of the AFLC



Mr. Ernest Miedema
145 N. E. 12th St.
Valley City, N. Dak. 58072
Telephone: (701) 844-1418 (H)
845-2732 (O)

Counsellor in will, estate and gift annuity planning. He is available for assistance in the above areas. Employed by the AFLC.

And the family celebrated with deep joy and thanksgiving.

(Translated from the German by Pastor Edward A. Johnson, LCA, Ohio, Nebr.)

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Rev. Theodore Aaberg, Mrs. C. J. Carlsen deaths noted

Rev. Theodore A. Aaberg, 54, president of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, Mankato, Minn., passed away on January 8 in Mankato from a rare lung disease. He served as president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in 1962-63. His parish ministry was conducted at Scarville-Center, Ia., 1949-68, and at Norseland-Norwegian Grove parish, St. Peter, Minn., 1968-76. He was managing editor of *Lutheran Sentinel* for several years and authored a history of the ELS, *A City Set on a Hill*.

Among his survivors are his wife Melvina, three sons and two daughters.

Mrs. C. J. (Agnes) Carlsen, 80, widow of a one-time vice-president of the Lutheran Free Church, passed away in February in Minneapolis. She was a resident of Ebenezer Towers. Her husband was the translator of the Hallesby books from Norwegian to English, such as *God's Word for Today*, *Prayer*, etc. Together they served parishes at Wanamingo, Minn., Minot, N. Dak., and St. Olaf Lutheran, Minneapolis.

Mrs. Carlsen was a daughter of J. L. Nydahl, long-time professor at the former Augsburg Seminary in Minneapolis.

She is survived by three sons, Rev. Carl J., Gig Harbor, Wash., Rev. Erling N., Blair, Wis., and Rev. Glenn T., Stillwater, Minn., and two daughters, Grace, Mrs. Rev. Luverne L. Nelson, Westby, Wis., and Ruth, Mrs. Rev. Thomas Moen, Rogers, Minn.

Blessed be their memory.

(Ed. note: I met Pastor Aaberg in Waterloo, Ia., at a Free Lutheran Conference in 1964. He later wrote an article, "The Lord's Return," for the *Ambassador*—Apr. 20, 1965. We were both born in Wildrose, N. Dak., when our fathers served parishes there. The C. J. Carlsens were personal friends of my parents. Son Erling was a college and seminary classmate of mine.)

Housing for the 1980 Annual Conference at Valley City, N. Dak.

June 11-15

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Second-class postage
paid at Minneapolis, Minn.

Dormitory Housing

Conference sessions will be held at Valley City State College. Some housing will be available on campus in Snoeyenbos Hall. There is room for 196 people, two to a room. No linen, bedding or towels are provided. The charge will be \$5 per person per night (double occupancy) or \$8 for a single room.

For reservations write:

Mrs. Darlene Reynolds

Snoeyenbos Hall

Valley City State College

Valley City, N. Dak. 58072

Information about food service available on campus will be published later.

Campers, Trailer and Motor Home Facilities

The Valley City State College will allow campers and trailers to park in various areas around the college. That can be arranged at the time of the conference. They will allow parking on the lot adjacent to the Bubble (field house) which is about 3 blocks from the Campus. There are no hookups there, of course, but many trailers are self powered and self contained and if there is not any debris scattered or thrown around, the college will allow parking.

We also have a Trailer Park on the east end of the city as you enter from Exit 70—I-94. They have ten spaces with hookups for water, sewer and electricity. There are 20 additional spaces without water and sewer, but with electricity. Showers are available to all.

Just across the street—west—there is a gas station and grocery store. The name of it is "Brothers III." This will make it handy for the campers.

Reservations for the city trailer park can be made with Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Miedema, 145 N.E. 12th St., Valley City, 58072. Phone: (701) 845-1418.

Valley City Motels

Valley City Motel

1139 West Main

Valley City, N. Dak. 58072

1 Double bed—1 person
2 persons

2 double beds

3 double beds, minimum

Phone (701) 845-0710

12 Rooms

\$13.00 + tax

\$16.00

\$18.00

\$24.00

Flickertail Motor Lodge

Exit 68—I-94

Valley City, N. Dak. 58072

1 double bed—1 person
2 persons

2 double beds—2 persons

4 persons

Phone (701) 845-0300

38 rooms

\$16.00 + tax

\$20.00

\$22.00

\$24.00

Super 8 Motel

Exit 69—I-94

Valley City, N. Dak. 58072

1 double bed—1 person
2 persons

2 double beds—2 persons

4 persons

Phone (701) 845-1140

31 rooms

\$16.88

\$19.88

\$20.88

\$24.88

Mid-Town Motel

905 East Main

Valley City, N. Dak. 58072

1 double bed—1 person
2 persons

2 double beds—2 persons

4 persons

Phone (701) 845-2830

13 rooms

\$13.00 + tax

\$16.00

\$18.00

\$22.00

Bel-Air Motel

Hwy. 10 West

(Take exit 68—I-94, turn right—
about 1/4 mi.)

Valley City, N. Dak. 58072

1 double bed—1 person
2 persons

2 double beds—2 persons

3 persons

4 persons

Phone (701) 845-3620

19 rooms

\$14.00

\$17.00

\$19.00

\$21.00

\$22.00