

A black and white photograph of a winter scene. In the foreground, a path or road is partially covered in snow, with a dark, shadowed area suggesting a ditch or a deep shadow. Several trees are visible, their branches and trunks heavily laden with snow. The background shows more trees and a fence line, all in a wintry setting.

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

December 21, 1982

AFTERMATH OF THE STORM

Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.

AT THE MASTER'S FEET



Rev. John Strand

1982 Was a Good Year

Master, at Your feet today I think of the passing of time. My time on this earth is very limited. Now another year has come to an end. So many things come to mind.

A year again is now descending
Into the bosom of the past;
O may our souls not cease
attending
To things that bring us peace at
last!

O may each year that hurries by
Bear blessed fruit beyond the sky!

Master, I cannot live 1982 over again. It is gone. I cannot even live yesterday over again. When time has gone it is gone and cannot be relived.

Our time is gone, our year
departed;
But where is found the fruit we
bore?
God oft has sought, and yet,
sad-hearted,
Complain'd He found no fruit in
store.
From row to row He goes and
grieves,
For finding naught but withered
leaves.

Yes, Master, I ask myself about the fruit of my life and faith. You also ask for fruit. You have a right to expect fruit, fruit that glorifies You. Lord, I am sure there are some leaves from my life. But You want more. You want genuine fruit. You cursed the fruitless fig tree and it died. But, praise Your Holy Name, on another occasion You gave more opportunity and greater care that fruit might come (Luke 13:6-9).

Master, I come to You for Grace. 1982 has not been as fruitful as it ought to have been.

But You were wonderful in 1982. You are always gracious, and slow to anger.

The old year now hath passed
away,
We thank Thee, O our God,
today,
That Thou has kept us thro' the
year,
When danger and distress were
near.

Yes, Master, there are so many tragedies that could have come to me in 1982. But they did not come. You delivered from so much evil. Really, 1982 was a good year for me and mine. This is all because of Your grace and love. And You are not going to change. You are the same, yesterday, today, and forevermore. All around I see change and decay. But You change not. Your grace is greater than my sin and my need. That gives me hope for the future. Your Word is not going to change in 1983, or ever. That gives me peace. Here I have an anchor that will hold, no matter what. Thank You, Master!

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home!

Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.

A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an ev'ning gone;
Short as the watch that ends the
night
Before the rising sun.

Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while life shall
last,
And our eternal home.

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CHRISTMAS in the HEART



The Song of Simeon

Text: Luke 2:25-32

Most people breathe a sigh of relief the day following Christmas as they begin to remove the holiday decorations. This is especially true within the business world of merchandising and, of course, many of them are temporarily enjoying swollen bank accounts effected by pre-Christmas sales. Perhaps there would be someone reading this message who is silently breathing a sigh of relief that Christmas has come and gone and will not recur for another 365 days. And, sad to say, because of the type of celebration that goes along with the observance of the birthday of our Lord today, too many hearts feel little of the warmth and glow that should be a lasting effect

in lives where "the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared" (Titus 2:11). But the packing away of decorations with the holiday festivities left behind does not mark the end of this holy season for the true Christian. For him, there is always Christmas in the heart.

The text chosen for this message directs our attention to just such a child of God who experienced Christmas in his heart one day long ago. Simeon, an elderly gentleman of the Levite lineage for the priesthood, "came by the Spirit into the temple" at Jerusalem when Mary and Joseph brought the infant Jesus there to fulfill for Him the requirements of the ceremonial law. They came there with their two turtle-doves or young pigeons offering them as a sacrifice "according to that which is said in the law of the Lord" because the firstborn shall be called holy to the Lord. During this sacred ritual, Mary and Joseph were approached by a man "whose name was Simeon, and the same man was just and devout,

waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him."

Can't we just visualize this scene before us of an aged man making a request of the parents, Mary and Joseph, that he might be permitted to hold this little child in his arms, an honor and privilege for which he would be forever grateful. And then Mary and Joseph perhaps pondering this request as strange and senile. Yet, how could such a request be refused of a kindly, gentle old man. Then Mary, with a smile of a proud loving parent, placed her infant Son into the outstretched arms of this happy old patriarch. And not being able to hold back the joy that welled up in his heart, he began to praise God and spoke these often-repeated words, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel."

For almost countless centuries, God's children who had remained faithful were still waiting for the appearing of their Messiah. Simeon was one of those few who was holding fast in faith to the Old Testament promises concerning the Messiah. For years he had been "waiting for the consolation of Israel," the One who could bring true peace and hope to God's people. Simeon wasn't misled by the false concepts that were a part of the thinking of so many in his day, even the religious leaders, who disputed among themselves that this Messiah would be a political savior, a world ruler who would deliver their Jewish nation from their present enemies to again become a Davidic kingdom ruling over the earth. Simeon had studied the Old Testament Scriptures very well and relied upon the Word for interpretation, not on what might have been misconceived ideas from men.

Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit the promises of the prophets held great meaning for him and these writings were also cherished by him. Simeon looked for a spiritual deliverer; God's own Son, born of a virgin, who would eventually sacrifice Himself as the Lamb of God to re-

By Pastor Norman
S. Tenneboe, Eben
Jct., Mich.



“No one could ever take that moment away from him
or take the Christ Child from his heart.”

HEART . .

store a sinful and doomed world to its Creator. Ever since he had been given the special revelation “that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord’s Christ,” he couldn’t wait to see the reality of this revelation occur in his life. Perhaps we too, can envisage Simeon, with eager anticipation, visiting the temple each day, convinced that surely the long-awaited Savior would put in His appearance at God’s house.

But now, led by the Spirit, on this particular day he was present to see the fulfillment of his desire of desires. Christmas had come to Simeon and now Christmas would be in his heart forever. No one could ever take that moment away from him or take the Christ Child from his heart. Here was God Himself in human flesh. Here was forgiveness personified. Here was the end of all doubts and fears. Here, cradled in his arms, was the beginning of life, real life. Life that would reach its climax only when he would be numbered among that “great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues . . . before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands . . . saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb” (Rev. 7:9, 10).

On this given day of God’s grace, with the recent Christmas experience vividly etched in our thoughts, can we honestly say that during the past days Christmas came into our hearts to remain forever? Do we now dimly see the ultimate purpose for Christmas is that “whosoever” be ushered into the very presence of our Father in heaven some day? The tinsel, the cookies, the packages, the parties, the candies, the carols have little or nothing to do with Christmas in the heart. It is the Christ of Christmas that counts, the Infant nestled in the manger bed and later in the aged man’s arms. How much you and I need Him as our very present vital

life line to the Father.

Our communities, our nation, our world desperately need the message and the true spirit of Christmas all the year around. Today we look at the unrest, the insecurity, the guilt, the despair, the selfishness and lovelessness that characterize so much of life today; the grasping for the imitations and the temporals of this life. Something far more solid and permanent is needed. It is obvious that the One who is referred to as the “Consolation of Israel” is also a necessity for our lives today.

We need to follow the example of Simeon of old, daily seeking out the Lord and His healing presence. We need to hold on to Him ourselves and draw upon His sustaining grace and strength that never fails. We need to make our hearts the place of His throne room, especially set apart for Him. We need to live as Christmas Christians in January, February and on through the year, demonstrating the fact that the newborn Christ is a living reality in our lives every day. Each day we face alternatives of “being in the world but not of the world” in our complex society.

Sure, we have our problems and also our doubts; so did Simeon. You and I were born into the world as hopelessly lost sinners, and so was Simeon. But at the same time we are eternally saved sinners if Christmas is truly in our hearts. Only then can we confess with the aged Simeon concerning the Babe of Bethlehem: He is God’s Son, He is my Redeemer. He is here to be my Savior; He came to take my repentant heart and cleanse it from all sin with His shed blood on Calvary’s cross; He came to do this for every sinner born into this world, past, present and future. He came to lay down His life, the Guiltless for the guilty, the Sinless for the sinful. He came to restore “whomsoever” of the fallen human race to the favor of the Almighty God. This Christ Child in my arms, in my heart, came to bring healing to my soul and to bring forgiveness to my life that is burdened

with sin. He came to abolish eternal death and to bring life and immortality to light through the Gospel. This Babe of Bethlehem, God’s Son, is mine and I’m His.

You and I have been given the same opportunity as Simeon of old. True, we have not been able to cradle the Christ Child in our arms as was his privilege. But in faith we are able to cradle Him in our hearts which is far better and much more important. Everything that the Lord Jesus did for Simeon, this He has done for us also. And of this, Simeon himself assures us in that glorious hymn of praise: “Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.” No one is excluded. Christmas is for everyone because the Christ of Christmas was God’s gift to the world—to the heart of every person of all time in every place.

Never did our heavenly Father envision the celebration of His Son’s birthday as being what so many make of it today, a hollow ritual that has all but obliterated Bethlehem and its Babe under a mountain of goods and goodies. When Christmas isn’t in the heart, that is exactly what can happen and what has happened!

Christmas without Christ for a day or at most for a week? Never! Not if Christmas is in the heart! And then there will not be a sigh of relief when the season of our Lord’s birth is past, but rather the joyous response of Simeon of old: “Thank You, Lord Jesus, for being born for me. Thank You for coming to be my salvation and that of all other peoples of the world. Thank You, Lord Jesus, for letting me be Your child! Amen!”

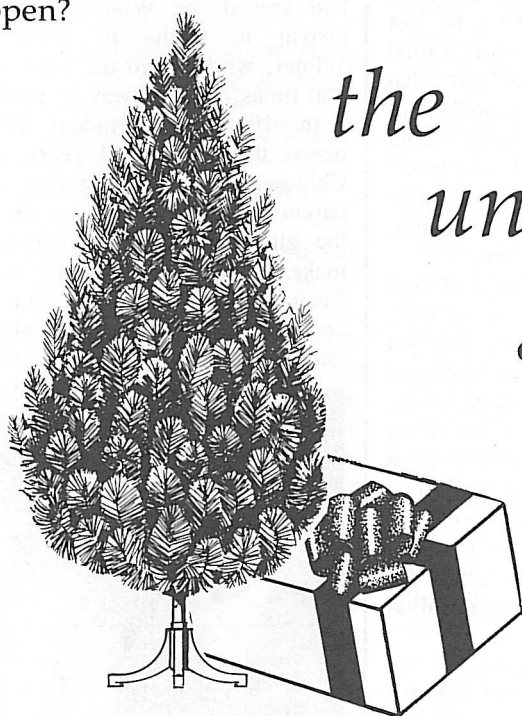
“But in faith we are able to cradle Him in our hearts which is far better and much more important.”

This is a Christmas story. The giving of gifts is a year-around custom, but as far as most folks are concerned, the giving and receiving of gifts is especially associated with Christmas. Some readers of this story will consider it just plain unbelievable. But maybe it could happen.

The Tyler Smithold family are my next-door neighbors. We attend the same church, too. On a crisp December 22, I had to make a service call to the Smithold home (I am a plumber). Eight-year-old Todd Smithold met me at the door and it was easy to tell that the excitement of Christmas had taken over in him. At once he exclaimed, "Come into the front room and see our Christmas tree!"

I followed the boy into the room. In one corner stood the tree. It was just a plain Christmas tree, the old-fashioned kind everyone used before the advent of the fancier trees now used for Christmas. The tree was literally surrounded with gift packages.

Could
this
happen?



the unopened gift

by Art Grimstad, Wadena, Minn.

Excitedly, Todd broke our momentary silence by saying, "See that big one that's kinda behind the tree? That one is for Dad."

I had no difficulty making out which package Todd meant; it was the largest one. There was no mistaking that in Todd's estimation it was by far the most desirable gift under the tree. It was wrapped in paper which was whiter than the first snow which falls upon the ground. The package was bound by an inch-wide, brilliant red ribbon, once about the length of the package and once about the breadth a little above the center of the package.

"Do you know what the tag on the package says?" Todd asked. Bending over the package, he read slowly, "To Dad—from one who will always love you?" It must be from Mom."

Before I left the room to take care of the service call, Todd enthusiastically declared, "I'll just bet that Dad will be glad to open that present!"

Christmas Eve finally arrived, as it always has done. No sooner nor later than it is supposed to. The gentle

snow which is typical of most Christmas stories was falling. In our home the children had just concluded our traditional Christmas Eve program—the reading of the Christmas story from Luke followed with prayer, a recitation from each of the children,

" 'See that big one that's kinda behind the tree? That one is for Dad.' "

and then the singing of all the familiar Christmas carols. After the program came the long-awaited time for the Christmas presents. And what a time that was for the youngsters! When all the gifts were distributed and opened and we were happily showing our gifts to one another and chattering about them, the doorbell rang. I opened the door and there stood our neighbor's boy, Todd, with two or three boxes tucked under his arm and more excited than when I had seen him by the tree a couple of days ago. Breathlessly, he half shouted, "I came to show the kids what I got for Christmas!"

Immediately our two youngest made a dash for Todd. Fifteen minutes or so later, after the three of them had been having a great time together, Todd abruptly said, "Well, guess I'll have to be goin'. I told Mom that I would be right back."

As Todd donned his jacket and picked up his gifts, I inquired, "How did your dad like that big package you showed me the other day?"

For a moment a look of disappointment appeared on Todd's face. Then he responded, "He didn't open it. He said, 'Not tonight. I've already opened so many. I'll open it some other time.' "

On Christmas Day I tried once more to learn whether or not the large package had been opened. Todd was at our house playing again with our children. As I stepped into the room to see them with their toys and games, I casually asked Todd about that special package. With no attempt to hide his disappointment this time, he replied, "Nope! He didn't open it today either. Dad said

◇

“... for the last time I’m telling you, don’t bother me about that gift any more!”

Gift . . .

that this Christmas had treated him so well that he just didn’t need another gift.”

As I said before, the inquiry made on Christmas Day was my last one. However, through chance remarks by Todd from time to time, we subsequently learned a little more about the gift which was not opened at Christmastime.

On Valentine’s Day someone in the Smithold family had suggested that surely that day was the appropriate time to unwrap the gift. But Mr. Smithold dismissed the idea by saying, “I’m sure that this gift is from someone who loves me very much. But that love will always be there for me—and so will the gift. Who knows, maybe I’ll find a better time to open it.”

Someone in the Smithold home dropped a little hint on Father’s Day about opening the neglected gift. Mr. Smithold had responded, “You know, I had thought that I might just do that on this my special day. And yet, I’ve been thinking that this gift is most likely much too expensive for me. In the first place, I do not deserve it, and perhaps I could never give as nice a gift in return!”

Nothing more was heard about that package until the next Christmas. Evidently Todd was the courageous one who was willing to make one more attempt to coax Mr. Smithold to open the gift. It happened this way. (Todd himself offered this information to us.) As the new gifts were being placed around the tree, Todd came with the unopened package from the Christmas before and said hopefully, “I’ll put this package under the tree with all our new ones.”

This time Mr. Smithold spoke up with considerable irritation: “Let’s forget that package! We have all these new ones to open. So, for the last time I’m telling you, don’t bother me about that gift any more!”

With that the story of the unopened gift in the Smithold house came to an end. Sorrowfully Todd

carried the unopened present to the attic. We never heard another word about it.

* * * * *

Most of us would think it strange if a loved one, a friend, or a neighbor would refuse a gift. Yet, when one stops to think about it, refusing to accept a gift is not that unusual. The most precious gift ever offered to mankind—the forgiveness of sins, salvation, and eternal life—is being left “unopened” by multitudes of people. “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 6:23). God’s Word makes it so clear that salvation is a gift from God to be received through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. 5:15 calls God’s gift a “free gift”—no strings attached, as we would say. It does not require the exchange of gifts; it is not offered in return for good behavior. “For by grace are you saved through faith” which is in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:8). Mr. Smithold did not refuse to open his gift that first Christmas Eve; he just put it off. His final action was a total rejection of that special gift. No wonder God says in His Word, “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (II Cor. 6:2). To the unsaved at this Christmas season, God is saying, “Receive Jesus as Savior now!”

Many have heard the Word of God for years—through Sunday School, church and Christian homes. And yet the gift of eternal life is not accepted by many. The joyful message of the Christmas season for each one of us is personal: “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour” (Lk. 2:11). However, on the other side of this happy message is God’s warning: “How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation” (Heb. 2:3).

So, to whom it may concern, accept God’s gift of salvation! Make it your very own. It is still true: “As many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name” (John 1:12).



Mrs. Oscar Folden

Mrs. Oscar Folden of Minot, N.Dak., returned last spring from China after her second visit with the four adopted daughters of the late Rev. and Mrs. Warren Winter and their families. Rev. Winter was Mrs. Folden’s father’s cousin, who with his wife Jennie went to China as missionaries in 1920.

For being Christians and Americans the Winters had been arrested in 1951 by the Communists. Rev. Winter, a well man when arrested, lived only a month in the Communist prison, according to later reports from the Red Cross. Mrs. Winter, when released, said the men were tortured more severely than the women. When she gained her freedom and returned to the U.S.A., she knew that her husband and three of their four adopted daughters were prisoners and that little Rachel was apparently being cared for by Ah Saam and Ah Lie, faithful ladies who had served the Winters since their arrival in China in 1920. Mrs. Winter, who visited the Foldens several times, passed away in 1959.

In 1980, the Foldens received news, the first in 30 years, of the Chinese girls. Knowing that if their parents were alive, they would go to the girls, prompted Mrs. Folden to make the long journey a year ago. Then she took into China four Bibles and much needed clothing, also several radios with recorders. On this



The young Rev. and Mrs. Warren Winter



journey she took in 15 Bibles, ten song books and devotional books. The Chinese authorities or customs people seemed apparently little interested in anything brought in, except those articles on which they could charge a duty, and charge they did! Half of the value of the radio-recorder and three times the value of the three cameras. Mrs. Folden felt repaid only when she saw the joy, the excitement and the thrill the Chinese experienced in operating the cameras. Also taken in were dictionaries, both English to Chinese and Chinese to English, and a medical dictionary. These were books they had waited years to obtain.

Esther, one of the Winter girls, now ladies, of course, has been ill periodically since her prison days. It is very difficult to get the medicine she requires and as a result her health had greatly deteriorated in the past year. Mrs. Folden was grateful to be able to bring her a year's supply of the necessary medicine.

Besides taking in needed articles, there was an added incentive to make the trip again this year, that of attending the wedding of Grace's daughter Viola. For the occasion Mrs. Folden supplied the wedding clothes as requested by the young couple. The groom, in his light blue suit, and his attractively dressed bride were a striking contrast to the many guests who came in the dull drab clothing similar to, or the same, as they had worn all week. The simple ceremony consisted of a government man handing them each a simple little red fol-

der, which contained their pictures, and pronounced them married, and a red medallion ribbon, pinned on them earlier, did add attractiveness to their costumes. Gifts of money also came in red envelopes. The ceremony was held in a dingy, dirty old room used for kindergarten. The gray walls were sadly in need of cleaning and painting. A wedding feast in China is a feast and this one, with about 20 kinds of food, was no exception. It was a masterpiece, if you like Chinese food.

“On this journey she took in 15 Bibles, ten song books and devotional books.”

On this trip, Mrs. Folden attended an established church on a Sunday with about 1,400 in attendance at 2 p.m. and usually three to four hundred attend the evening service. She also attended a service in a city in the northern part of the province. The latter was a small group meeting in a dismal little room in a portion of a once elegant church. Now, the building, used for a few apartments, and for storing lumber and rubbish, was literally falling apart. There was a piano, and the pianist, a blind lady, was one of about 30 blind persons attending. Led by one of the groups' children, they, in a line with one hand placed on the shoulder of the one ahead, walked a long distance to attend each Sunday.

Just prior to Mrs. Folden's depar-

ture for China she received a letter from a Chinese doctor who had been a close Christian friend of the late Rev. Winter. He told of Rev. Winter coming to him expressing the fear that he, as an American, would be persecuted. He told of sharing Scripture verses and praying, and of tears as they parted. It was the last time he saw his friend, Rev. Winter. The doctor made a long tedious journey to meet Mrs. Folden. Only then did she learn his own tragic story. There were many fears, heartaches and deprivations during the next 20 years, yet he continued as a surgeon. In 1970, in what was really a class struggle, the Red Guards took over and inaugurated their re-education process. He was demoted from surgeon, imprisoned, threatened, beaten and made to do the most menial labor, including cleaning the filthy outhouses China is noted for. But he was not bitter, as one might expect. He said that what was done to him was irrelevant, only what was important was his own relationship to his Lord and Savior. During his later “education” he was made a farmer, but those were his happiest years. His assignment was chopping wood up on a mountain, but he was now alone! He could worship, sing aloud and pray as he chopped down the trees. As he carried his heavy load on his shoulder on the trip down the mountain at the end of the day, he often rested awhile in the shade of a fir tree and sang the hymn, “Abide With Me.” In the evening, he, with his wife and two sons, with the light from a tiny kerosene lamp, studied the Bible verses he had earlier memorized and written both in his heart and on paper.

In recent years he has been restored to a responsible position in a hospital. Mrs. Folden inquired if he were again a surgeon. He replied by showing her his hands. The fingers and joints had been ruined by the

“He was demoted from surgeon, imprisoned, threatened, beaten and made to do the most menial labor . . .”

CHINA . . .

strenuous work as he was supposedly being "re-educated." Besides his hospital directorship, he serves in a legislative position and on a number of important bureaus. He speaks fluent English, as his mother had taught English. Also in years past, in medical school, the textbooks and the lectures by the professors were all in the English language. Besides his Bible, one of his prized possessions is a history book that was given him which contains a brief history of Christianity. He longs to learn more of the Early Church. In his frank, open discussion, he did not try to minimize the tragic events of those 30 years. He simply said, "It is history." Many do not share his view that the Chinese policies have or are changing for the better. He stated that a plank in the new constitution now being written, when adopted, will guarantee everyone the right of religious freedom. As he wrote in his letter. "Now 30 years have elapsed since that unhappy moment of history; the door for the Gospel is reopened in this part of the globe, though only partially in most of the places."

Life for the present is hard in China. Women and men labored in the fields even in the rain, though now many had pieces of plastic thrown over their backs as they waded in the water-covered rice fields picking weeds or cultivating between the rows with a hand rake. Girls were often seen breaking up rocks to carry to the road where the gravel was spread to fill up the broken areas. Many women in the cities were pulling heavy carts of gravel or coal. In one instance Mrs. Folden observed that a carload of slushy wet coal had been shovelled by hand out of a boxcar and on to the ground. Then one man and four women were

"Following the visit, a government-chauffeured limousine, with an official along in each instance, took Mrs. Folden and the ladies to their home. . . ."

assigned to moving the coal across three sets of tracks to a place where it was being made into briquets. Of course, baskets suspended from a yoke across their shoulders were the conveyances. They knelt just enough to let the open-ended basket touch the ground, then in that position used a hoe for filling the baskets. They straightened up to lift the heavy load and carried it to its destination in a seemingly unending treadmill fashion.

Of course, registration is necessary when the Chinese want to go to another village and that was also true for Mrs. Folden. A new government policy attempts to return seized property to the rightful owners. Because the large Winter home with all its contents was confiscated when the family was arrested in 1951, the four daughters are now working to regain possession of that property. Public records are almost unobtainable. Mrs. Folden testified in local and provincial foreign affairs bureaus as to the Rev. Winter's U.S.A. citizenship and that these ladies were his adopted daughters. The officials were extremely cooperative. Tea was always served. Following the visit, a government-chauffeured limousine, with an official along in each instance, took Mrs. Folden and the ladies to their home, and when Mrs. Folden departed for Canton and the U.S.A., a government van was sent for the transportation to the railroad station, along with an apology from the bureau stating that the bureau head could not be on hand because of an official meeting elsewhere! Certainly red carpet treatment for just an ordinary visitor from U.S.A., but Mrs. Folden explains that she was the one and only visitor that area of China has probably seen, with the exception of a close friend, Miss Joyce Marquart, formerly of Bismarck, N.Dak., now attending the Los Angeles University, who accompanied Mrs. Folden on this visit. Actually, cities many times as large as Minot had only rickety old buses and bicycle rickshaws powered by men or women, often the elderly. No one in China can have a car or truck, only the government, stores, factories and hospitals.

In just a year's time, Mrs. Folden

noted a vast change or growth in certain areas. Many new buildings were going up and even a new theatre in one city. But on the whole, the cities and villages are unattractive with lots of rubbish, a few green weeds, water buffaloes, pigs and chickens. In a children's park and playground, she found a small area of lawn grass. It had a fence around it to preserve it. Of course, the major cities have their parks and "show" places. Mrs. Folden's observations are mainly of the villages and cities in the large province of Kwangtung. This year, in Canton, she saw probably a half dozen Chinese women wearing dresses! In the large city of Shoa Guam one lady was seen wearing a dress and hat. In the street shops many more light colored jackets are being shown and bought by the younger set. The men are quite addicted to the cigarette. Many, carrying heavy burdens suspended from yokes over their shoulders, were seen to have a cigarette in their mouths. The Chinese men, including the new bridegroom, and other young men in the homes visited, did much of the cooking. Preparing all the meat, vegetable and rice over a wood fire required a special skill, and the men seemed adept in this culinary art.

Southern China, in May, with all its rain, is beautiful. The rice fields are no longer a muddy swamp but a bright green. On this trip Mrs. Folden visited a tungsten mining village and its hospital deep in a mountainous area. The narrow access roads had been hewn off the mountain side by hand. "The mountains were covered with a carpet of velvet." The trees of many shades of green and some in blossom were a beautiful sight. Rachel, the Winter daughter, the baby found by the roadside some 40 years ago, is a nurse, studying to be a doctor and her husband is a doctor in this mining hospital. Patients are often carried by people up to the hospital in a "chair" ambulance. There are 400-plus cement steps up the mountain side to reach Rachel's home. The mountain itself, solid rock, forms the wall of her kitchen. That is a delightful living area with fewer mosquitoes and not

Continued on p.14

editorials

THANK YOU, PASTOR STRAND

His many friends have appreciated the devotional articles by Pastor John Strand these past six months under the series "At the Master's Feet." He has used a different style than our previous writers, addressing the Lord personally, thanking Him for blessings, asking His forgiveness, seeking His help. And all of this in such a way that each of us could be the one speaking. It has been very effective.

Thank you, Pastor Strand, for being our writer. We trust that many people are expressing their appreciation to you for these meditations. May the Lord bless you as you continue in ministry, although a somewhat different one than you had in the years as church president. We know that you have responsibilities as a board and committee member, in speaking engagements, in teaching and in writing. Thank you for your interest in all aspects of AFLC work.

Our new writer, beginning with our next issue, will be Emerson Anderson, lay pastor of our congregation in Cleveland, O. We first heard of him through the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement, for his interest in that work. Later he had much to do with the organizing of our congregation in the great city of Cleveland, Word of Life Lutheran Church, and became its pastor. He has been an active participant in the Summer Institutes of Theology and is known by many through his attendance at annual conferences of the AFLC.

We welcome Pastor Emerson Anderson to the series, "At the Master's Feet." His stewardship in that regard will run through next June. The Lord bless you, Pastor Anderson, and thank you for being willing to write for us.

THE YEAR 1982

As has been indicated before, we hope to have projections into the future from our agency leaders in a future issue as we enter our third decade of existence as an Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. But now as we bid good-bye to an old year it is well for us to briefly

survey what has been in 1982.

The year has been a good one. A stimulating pastors' conference and three Bible conferences gave the year a good start. The closing of the fiscal year on January 31 brought the good news that we had reached 99 per cent of our minimum goal for benevolences and the total receipts for the year exceeded the previous year's by over \$200,000.

The special project for the year was the publication of the 20th anniversary book, *The AFLC: Twenty Years of Beginnings and Blessings*. That book was available at the Annual Conference in Dickinson, N. Dak., and is still available, while the supply lasts. It chronicles the history of our church, tells about the work we do, and contains pictures and information about our congregations and pastors.

Seminary and Bible School enrollments continue good in the current academic year, even as they were encouraging in the year which ended in the spring. World and Home Missions work is fruitful both in the outward statistics and in the more important area of spiritual growth. The Women's Missionary Federation and the Luther League Federation continue their important work among the women and youth, the former being much more active and closely knit than the latter.

There was one special loss to the church in leadership during the year. We refer to the sudden death of Rev. Kenneth L. Anderson, Kenyon, Minn., who was chairman of the Co-ordinating Committee. His place is not easily filled either in his parish or AFLC-wide responsibilities.

In summing up the year, perhaps we can't point to any unusual gains or notable successes, but it has been a good year. God's blessings have been many. Great is His faithfulness. There are some real challenges before us in 1983, including one we must confront early on. We refer to the minimum goal for 1982-83. But we have learned in the past not to sell AFLC people short when it comes to giving. What has been done before can be done again. So be it.

"Thou crownest the year with Thy goodness" (Psalm 67:11, Am. St.). We thank Thee, Lord.

*Our God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while life shall last,
And our eternal home.*

Isaac Watts



Letters to the editor

The Bible is a code book

I am writing concerning the article "Christian Public Policy" which appeared in the Oct. 12 issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador*.

At the end of the article appeared these words: "God did not give us the Bible as a code book for public policy."

If God's Word is not to be the code book for public policy, then what is? The author of the article says that natural law should be. He states, "Does this mean that as Christians we have no interest in public policy or morality? Of course not. It means that in such matters we will, as good citizens, argue our point and base our case on natural law rather than on God's written law in the Scriptures."

But when one takes away the unchangeable Word of God, what is left for natural law to rest on? Nothing but man's changeable, wicked heart. The great civilizations and empires of the world, the Greek, the Roman, the Aztec, etc., all arose to great power and influence because in the beginning of their days they followed the God-given natural law written on their hearts. This produced obedience to authority, united families, swift punishment of criminals, etc. Thus God blessed them and prospered their ways because He has promised, "Righteousness exalts a nation" (Prov. 14:34). But after years of prosperity, comfortableness and laziness set in, resulting in the magnification of self and reason, thus their hearts became further darkened. The natural law written on their hearts was no longer followed by their minds, thus their thoughts became, "There is no God," resulting in everything becoming right in their own eyes. This led to gross immorality, sodomy, bestiality, incest, the sacrificing of children to pagan gods, and even the killing of Christians.

Destruction resulted. "For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come" (Col. 3:6). God has promised, "Sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34).

America today is following the same route of the nations of the past, in spite of its tremendous beginning. Not only did the early Americans hold to the natural law written on their hearts, but also the majority of the founding fathers and citizens held the Bible as the code book for public policy. American law and education were anchored upon the Bible. The original constitutions of Massachusetts, Delaware, Vermont and Pennsylvania required their elected officials to take an oath affirming their belief in the Triune God, the Christian religion and the divine inspiration of Scripture. George Washington said, "It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible." James Madison said, "We have staked the whole future of America not upon the power of government, but upon the capacity of each and everyone of us to govern ourselves according to the Ten Commandments of God." Much more could be said to show that the Bible was the code book for public policy in early America.

But in the last century something has happened. Subtly and cunningly the Bible has shifted from being a great influence on American life to just another book. Now it is to be read only at religious gatherings on church property, but never from state-controlled property, as the Supreme Court has ruled as well as many other federal and state courts. Organized religion has adopted, by and large, the same mentality as the state, so that it almost feels ashamed, if not indifferent, to the proclaiming publicly of what God has to say in His Word about social issues and

Like hymnal plans

We would like to share a few thoughts in regard to the proposed new AFLC hymnal. We believe it could be a great blessing in our Association.

Some congregations feel the *Concordia Hymnal* is adequate for their needs, other congregations use two hymnals, the *Concordia* and another songbook, then there are congregations that don't want to have two sets of books and they don't feel that the *Concordia* suits their needs so they choose another hymnbook and in so doing they lose out on our well loved hymns in the *Concordia* like, "My

what American law should be like. All this is happening because the majority of Americans are allowing their hearts to grow cold and dark. Thus, not only is America following the course of past nations by departing from the natural law written on the heart, but it also is forsaking the unchangeable Word of God. Subsequently, a new law has formed in the hearts of most Americans—do as you please, do your own thing. The fruits: high divorce rates, homosexual rights, abortion rights, feminist movement, pornography, high crime rates, etc.

The light of God's Word spoken publicly from the mouths of Christians and backed up by their lives is the only thing that can put a check on the rampaging immorality in this country. Psalm 119:105 says, "Thy Word is a light." John 3:20 says, "For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed." Matthew 5:14 says, "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid."

The question is asked in the article: "Should Christian morality become prevailing public morality?" It ought to, or else this nation will be destroyed just as surely as any other nation. For Christian morality is Biblical morality, and a Christian principle is God's principle.

Don Grothe
Thief River Falls, Minn.

"My God How Wonderful Thou Art," "Beautiful Savior," "Children of the Heavenly Father" and many good chorales.

The new hymnal could contain the best of the *Concordia* and other good evangelical hymns and Gospel songs, such as, "The Old Rugged Cross," "Blessed Assurance" and "How Great Thou Art."

We attended the AFLC Annual Conference at Dickinson, N. Dak., this past June and heard the fine reports given by the Hymnbook Committee. They are a very knowledgeable and responsible committee and have given it a great deal of study. We can be confident that only hymns of high quality, both words and music, will be selected and only hymns that are in agreement with our doctrinal stand as an AFLC.

Concerning the financing of the project, it will be costly, but it will not come from the regular budget of the church. I'm sure other ways will be sought, perhaps grants and special gifts. The cost would be recovered as the books are sold.

Let us continue to pray that the Lord will guide us in the AFLC and the committee as this matter is considered further.

Rev. and Mrs. Trygve F. Dahle
Spicer, Minn.

ABOUT NEXT CHRISTMAS

Do you have something you can share with our readers next Christmas in our special edition then? Naturally, I am referring to something you have written or can write about Christmas. It could be a fictional story or it might be a true experience of yours relating to that blessed season. Perhaps you write poems and could share one with us.

Without a doubt, there is a lot of talent out there that we don't know anything about. Talent or ability which could bring a blessing to other *Ambassador* readers.

I hope you will be willing to share that with us. May I hear from you (your piece or poem) by October 1? Please, don't forget.

Thank you.

The Editor

1983 Lutheran Ambassador Schedule

Here are the deadlines for *The Lutheran Ambassador* for 1983. All those who plan to submit material during the year should pay special heed.

<i>Date of Issue</i>	<i>Editor's Deadline</i>	<i>Special Emphasis</i>
January 4		
January 18	December 25	
February 1	January 8	
February 15	January 22	The New Decade
March 1	February 5	Lent
March 15	February 19	Easter
March 29	March 5	
April 12	March 19	
April 26	April 2	Mother's Day
May 10	April 16	Pentecost and Pre-Conference
May 24	April 30	Pre-Conference
June 7	May 14	Father's Day
June 21	May 28	
July 19	June 25	Conference Reports
August 2	July 9	
August 30	August 6	
September 13	August 20	
September 27	September 3	
October 11	September 17	Reformation
October 25	October 1	Luther 500th Birthday
November 8	October 15	Thanksgiving
November 22	October 29	Advent
December 6	November 12	Christmas
December 20	November 27	Year's End
January 3, 1984	December 10	New Year

addresses, etc. . . .

The WMF Studies will usually appear in the first issue of each month (for the following month).

In going to 24 issues per year, from 25, one issue will be dropped in July.

There will be some other special emphasis editions in addition to those listed above.

All communications concerning material for the *Ambassador* (except those listed below and that arranged by one of the church agencies) should be sent to the Editor, Rev. Raynard Huglen, Box 128, Newfalden, Minn. 56738.

All material for the *Women's Page* should be sent directly to Mrs. Wayne Hjermstad, 16980 Duck Lake Trail, Eden Prairie, Minn. 55344. All requested material must meet her deadline.

Material pertaining to the *Youth*

Page should be sent directly to Randy Moe, 615 10th St. So., Moorhead, Minn. 56560.

(If at all possible, submit material in double-spaced typing. Handwritten material may be delayed in the publication process.)

(We appreciate photographs of newsworthy happenings in your congregational life. High contrast, sharp, close-up pictures reproduce well.)

Thank you.

Christ is the *Sower* (Matt. 13:3-9); the *Savior* (Rom. 5:10); the *Shepherd* (Jn. 10:14); the *Substitute* (I Pet. 2:24); the *Sufferer* (I Pet. 3:18); the *Star* (Rev. 22:16); the *Sun* (Mal. 4:2).

—Selected

THE WOMEN'S PAGE

for 42 years

Offering a new life to live

At her recent 80th birthday party, Marie Sandvik with all the enthusiasm of one half her age, encouraged her friends to continue to help "move mountains" in Minneapolis' inner city mission. "I'm still going strong and I feel very good," she said with a determined grin.

It was 42 years ago when Marie proclaimed, "I've come to offer you a new life to live!" She spoke these words to 200 men and 35 prostitutes during that opening meeting of the Minneapolis Revival Mission. The meeting place was the former Angelo's Bar. The first convert was the bar's former bartender, who then served the Lord at the mission for six years until he died.

Little did the girl from the Sognefjord area of Norway know that she would one day open an inner city mission in the U.S.. Marie clearly recalls going to Norway's renowned Ludvig Hope and telling him she was



Photos by S. Hjermstad

giving her heart to the Lord. As he put his hand on her head, he said, "This little girl is going to move mountains."

God indeed was at work in Marie's heart and life in preparation. As a 17-year-old immigrant, she found herself selling Lutheran magazines on the streets of Minneapolis. She met many poor people. "I was all alone," she recalls. "I was hungry and didn't have anything to eat. One day I thought that someday I'm going to come back here and start a place for poor people where they could come in and someone would talk to them."

Twenty-one years later, the Haugan from Norway invested her last forty-five dollars to rent the old bar on Nicollet Avenue. Marie Sandvik's mountain moving had begun.

Marie lived in a room at the back of the mission. Daily she fed and spoke to lost souls around her. Area churches began getting involved. Doris Nye joined the mission as Marie's assistant. Weekly medical clinics continued for 30 years. The mission moved and became the Marie Sandvik Center on Franklin Avenue.

Today the Center has day care programs, evening services, children's clubs, ladies' day and clothing distri-

bution. Breakfast club last summer fed about 6,000 meals to hungry children. Hundreds from the Inner City enjoy a delicious turkey dinner each Thanksgiving Day. Approximately 1300 gift boxes are handed out on Christmas Eve.

Though she has worked with people in despair for 42 years, Marie does not become despondent. "I have a different solution than all the rest," she explains. Better housing, food and other programs are fine, but "what's wrong is the people. The only thing that can change them is the Gospel."

The hair is white and thinning and perhaps the aches in the body are harder to conceal now than during those earlier days. But the years have not diminished Marie's vision and desire to serve her Saviour in the Inner City. Mountains are still being moved. The Gospel is still changing lives.

—Mrs. Wayne Hjermstad



How can I keep from singing?

*What though my joys
and comforts die?*

*The Lord my Saviour liveth;
What though the darkness
gather round?*

*Songs in the night He giveth;
No storm can shake my
inmost calm,*

*While to that refuge clinging;
Since Christ is Lord of
heaven and earth,*

How can I keep from singing?
Robert Lowry



Miss Sandvik at her 80th birthday party.



THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Why does the Lutheran Church baptize children as infants?

(We move now to this topic instead of the one previously announced.)

The author was once asked to answer the question, "Why are children brought as infants to baptism?" on the basis of the Bible without reference to the doctrines of the Lutheran Church. An effort is here made to do this. Let it be said in passing, however, that the Lutheran Church teaches no doctrines that are not plainly taught in the Word of God. In fact, it is one of the foundation principles of the Lutheran Church that every doctrine must have a definite Biblical basis.

Now then, to our question.

It will be answered by setting forth, under the head of a series of propositions, the Bible statements that have a bearing upon the problem.

I.

The first proposition is this: *Every human being must be born again in order to enter the kingdom of God.* Here are the clear statements of Scripture: "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:3 and 6). There is no exception made here as far as infants are concerned. They, too, need to be born again.

What is the reason that all people, even infants, need to be born again? the answer is *original sin*.

To be sure, the doctrine of natural depravity is not popular today. Many have been deluded by modern

preaching into the false view that man by nature is all right and needs no regeneration. We are, however, not concerned about whether a doctrine is popular or not, but about whether it is taught in God's Word.

Well, what does the Bible have to say about natural depravity, original sin? Note these passages:

Away back in Genesis 8:21 it is recorded that the Lord said: "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."

David said: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5). This passage is frequently misunderstood. The reference here is not to sin on the part of David's mother involved in his conception and birth, but it is a striking way of saying that sin was present in David's nature from the very moment of his conception and birth.

In Romans 3:23, Paul says: "for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God."

In Romans 7:18: "For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not."

In Romans 8:7: "The mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be."

And then this clinching passage in Ephesians 2:1-3: "And you did He make alive, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins, wherein ye once walked according to

the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience; among whom ye also all lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, *and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.*"

In the light of these passages, and many others that might be cited, can anyone deny the need of regeneration on the part of any human soul, even an infant?

II.

The second proposition to set forth is that *it is God that gives spiritual life.*

Just as we cannot bring ourselves into being in our first or natural birth, so neither can we bring ourselves into being in our second or spiritual birth. If we are ever to get spiritual life, we must be born of God.

This truth is clearly taught in Scripture. Here are some passages:

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13).

"No man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit" (I Corinthians 12:3).

"But God, being rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ" (Ephesians 2:4-5).

"For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).

"Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18).

Clearly God Himself is the Source and Giver of spiritual life.



LIFE . . .

III.

We come now to our third proposition: *Baptism is a means by which and through which God gives spiritual life.*

This is a very significant assertion, and we must make sure that we have solid Biblical grounds to stand on at this point.

Jesus said to Nicodemus: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

To be sure, the word "baptism" is not used here, but what else could Jesus have in mind?

Then we have the Great Commission: "And Jesus came to them and spake unto them saying, All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth. Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:18-20). Here the making of disciples is clearly tied up to baptism as a means.

In Mark 16:16, Jesus says: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned."

Note also the following passages:

"And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on His name" (Acts 22:16).

"Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" (Romans 6:3).

"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27).

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself up for it; that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the

washing of water with the Word" (Ephesians 5:25-26).

"But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and His love toward man, appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which He poured out upon us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by His grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:4-7).

Surely no fair interpretation of such passages as these can yield any other result than that baptism is a means by which and through which God bestows His regenerating grace.

(To be continued)

—From *Problems of Young Christians* by Martin Hegland, Augsburg Publishing House.

Next time: Why Does the Lutheran Church Baptize Children as Infants?—Part II

CHINA . . .

the sultry, damp, hot weather experienced in the valley.

Mrs. Folden feels that it has again been a special privilege to have been able to visit China once more, and to bring to some of the people Bibles, clothing and medicine so sorely needed. The fact that these simple needs that are unobtainable to those behind the bamboo curtain are so easily acquired in the U.S.A., leads Mrs. Folden to wonder if free Americans realize the privileges and blessings they daily enjoy, not the least being that of total freedom to worship, think, speak and travel at will. But, despite the bleakness experienced in the lives of so many, they are quick to say with gratitude, "China good now."

P.S. As the only foreigner at a hotel office in Canton, I tried, as I had done last year, to place a telephone call to husband Oscar, half way around the world in Minot. My request brought only blank stares. As I was about to walk away, I muttered,

Facts about the AMBASSADOR cost

1. The Annual Conference of the AFLC last June voted an increase in the subscription rate for the *Ambassador* from \$6.00 per year to \$10.00. The increase took effect on August 1.

2. The Conference did so in order to reduce the percentage of support needed through subsidies from the major agencies of the Association, such as World Missions and Schools. That is, more responsibility was shifted to the individual subscriber in defraying the cost of publication.

3. The increase in the cost of an individual subscription does not remove the need for subsidies.

4. Either way, whether through individual subscriptions or agency subsidies, the cost of producing the church paper must be provided for by the members of the AFLC, and other subscribers. The *Ambassador* accepts no paid advertising.

5. Postal rates continue to rise.

"Doesn't anyone here understand English?," when a soft voice behind me said, "Isn't this fun?" I wheeled around and found a smiling man about 40 years old. I joyously exclaimed. "You're from the States!" Indeed he was! This pastor from Massachusetts who, with a pastor friend from Thailand, had just arrived on a plane. They came to the hotel expecting to see only Chinese people, and to their amazement found someone interested in their cause at once. It was a joy to visit with them. I was able to direct them to Christians and to Christian churches.

These pastors had come on a three-day exploration tour, prior to returning the next week with fifteen Christians, including five from Finland who spoke Chinese. These were members of Asian Outreach in Hong Kong, who would be coming for the purpose of evangelism. This minister, with a wife and two children and little money, had felt a call to go to China. A business friend supplied the money. On this brief first visit to

news of the churches

West Coast youth gather

6. The Editor's position has been considered as a half-time job from the beginning, and continues so, with commensurate salary.

7. It is regrettable whenever a subscriber is lost due to the increased subscription price. It is hoped that there will not be many such, either of our AFLC members or other friends.

8. It is suggested that congregations and/or ladies' aid organizations aid those who are financially unable to maintain their subscriptions and have a real desire to continue reading the *Ambassador*.

9. Gifts toward the production of our church paper are always welcome and are much needed.

10. It is absolutely necessary to have a church paper. It isn't easy to finance a magazine in the present economic situation. Be sympathetic toward this problem and give us your support.

Thank you.

Chinese University, they were allowed to witness to a number of students.

When I left China, to my surprise, this pastor had been assigned a seat next to mine. We discovered we were seated among a Christian tour group. What a great three-hour ride to Hong Kong! It was almost like a Bible conference, with many walking around, visiting, and sharing experiences, on a Red Communist train. This was just another blessed bonus gift from the Lord.

ATTENTION: "SNOWBIRDS"

The new AFLC mission in Tucson, Ariz., is now meeting in Maxwell Junior High School at 2802 West Anklam Road. Please check locally for the time of service. The pastor of Living Faith Lutheran Church is Rev. Forrest Swenson, 4545 South Mission Road, #169, Tucson 85714. His telephone is 602-294-7329.

The West Coast District Luther League had a rally October 22, 23 and 24 in Kirkland, Wash. There was a really good attendance of 75.

The activities were very entertaining and helpful in the points that they gave us. One of the activities was a movie shown the first night about a devoted Christian girl and her struggles. Her main struggle was with her boyfriend who called himself a Christian. Her final decision was to leave him because she felt that they weren't going the same ways in life.

We had three Bible studies led by

With our evangelist-youth worker

Let 1983 be a year of much prayer, of much prayer for the work of evangelism also. Pray that people will confront their spiritual needs honestly. Pray for our evangelist-youth worker, Rev. Kenneth Pentti, in these coming appointments and in all the opportunities he will have this year.

Nogales, Ariz.

Triumph Lutheran Church
Jan. 9-13

Ted H. Kennedy, pastor
Osecola, Wis.

AFLC Pastors' Conference
Association Retreat Center
Jan. 18-20

Kirkland, Wash.

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Jan. 23-27

Stephen E. Odegaard, pastor
Granite Falls, Minn.

Faith Lutheran Church
Feb. 2-6

Pastoral vacancy

Virginia, Minn.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Feb. 27-Mar. 3

Henry A. E. Johansen, pastor
Chamberlain, S. Dak.

St. Olaf Lutheran Church
Feb. 13-17

Philip Featherstone, pastor

Pastor Richard Anderson of Lake Stevens, Wash.; Pastor Ronald Knutson of Ferndale, Wash.; and Pastor Dale Mellgren of Kalispell, Mont. These studies dealt with devotion to God and your religion and with dealing with non-Christians. The studies were very interesting and really informative.

On Saturday afternoon everybody piled into vans and went to see the battleship where the Japanese surrendered in World War II. It was really fun to ride the ferry across the bay and to see the ship. That night when we got back we had a snack and watched the film "Chariots of Fire." This was an excellent movie.

We also had a business meeting at the rally. Two new officers were elected: the vice-president, who is Lori Kiefer, and the secretary, who is Sara Harvey. We also discussed next year's Bible camp.

On Sunday there was a Bible study led by Pastor Mellgren and then the regular service led by Pastor Stephen Odegaard of Kirkland, Wash.

We would like to thank Kirkland for hosting the rally and we send special thanks to the host families who took us into their homes.

Sara Harvey
Secretary

District meeting held

The Southwest Central District of Minnesota held its annual meeting, Nov. 20, at Our Saviour's, Brooten, Minn., Carl Hort, pastor.

Coffee hour began at 10, with the session beginning at 10:30. Pastor Elden Nelson from the Home Mission office was our guest speaker and we enjoyed his slide presentation and challenging messages, both morning and afternoon. We learned of the latest developments in the Home Mission work and were challenged to remain faithful in our giving and praying for these fields.

◇

DISTRICT . . .

Bible Camp reports were given, and dates for the upcoming camps announced: Spring retreat at Faith Haven, March 11-13; Summer Camp at Faith Haven, July 10-15; Wilderness Camp at Lake Park, July 29, 30 and 31; Fall Retreat at Faith Haven, date to be set later. The group voted to give \$125.00 to Home Mission work.

Election results are as follows: Re-elected president, Elden Hermunslic; vice president, Douglas Johnson; secretary-treasurer, LaVerne Thompson. The annual meeting will be held at Bethany Lutheran, Abercrombie, N. Dak., Nov. 19, 1983.

Kenneth Nash, Secretary

LEM Midwinter conference set

Dr. John Wesley White of Toronto, Canada, an associate evangelist with the Billy Graham Association, will be the evening speaker at the 47th annual Midwinter Conference of the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement (LEM), January 23-27. The conference will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls, 5212 41st Avenue S., Minneapolis, Minn.

Daily sessions will be conducted each day, Monday through Thursday. Pastor C. M. Hanson of Emmaus Lutheran Church, Bloomington, Minn., will present Bible studies in Isaiah each morning at 10, to be followed by a Personal Growth Hour at 11. Teachers will be Pastor Philip and Judith Hyland, Pastor Jack Aamot of Emmaus Lutheran and Dick Erickson, LEM associate director.

Mr. Cliff Pederson of the Lutheran Bible Institute in California will present an elective at the 11 a.m. hour on Christian Family Living.

Following the conference will be a two-day conference for youth, January 28 and 29, at Central Lutheran Church, East Grant and 4th Avenue, in downtown Minneapolis. Featured will be evangelistic messages each evening, Bible studies, practical workshop electives and vocal and instrumental music.

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR
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The New Year

I am the New Year.

I am a new chapter in
your Book of Time.

I offer you new vistas
of life.

I offer you new
treasures sublime.

I hold for you exquisite
pleasure.

I hold for you a perfect
peace.

I bring all these to you
through Christ Jesus.

I bring through Him the
abundant life.

I urge you to obey His
Word, to follow His
guidance, to supplicate
Him in prayer, to witness
for Him daily and be
ready to do every good
work.

I warn you not to
squander my time.

I warn you that my days
are numbered.

I appeal to you to give
me due consideration.

I appeal to you to
accept my proffered
gifts.

—Unknown