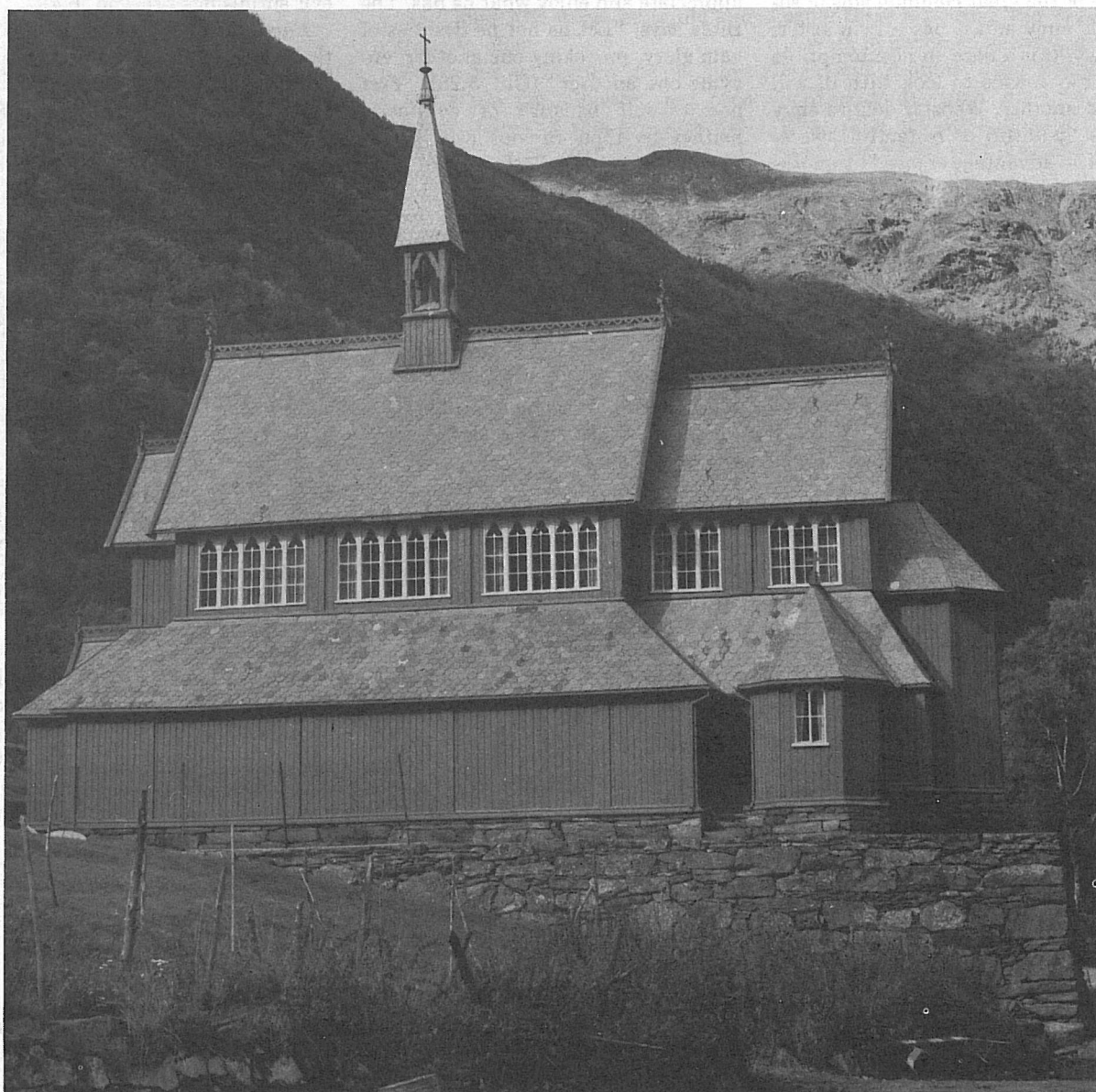


# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

February 17, 1981



New Church at Borgund, Norway

Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.

**PIETISM: ITS EMPHASIS ON CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE p. 3**

# AT THE MASTER'S FEET

Pastor Kenneth Pentti



## Envy

*"A sound heart is the life of the flesh; but envy the rottenness of the bones" (Prov. 14:30).*

One of the great common sins of society is envy and it has a twin sister, jealousy. It is a base and contemptible sin. Envy means to look with ill will toward another. Webster defines envy as the "painful or resentful awareness of an advantage enjoyed by another with the desire to possess the same advantage." Envy can be defined as pain, uneasiness, discontent and fear.

*Envy causes a person to fail to appreciate and enjoy what he has.* There are numerous people who do not appreciate and enjoy what they have because they are envious of what others have. Envy is the root sin that produces covetousness. The Bible plainly says: "Thou shalt not covet"

(Ex. 20:17).

To covet what another has or to be envious of what he has results in unhappiness. It causes a person to fail to appreciate and enjoy what he has. The Bible says, "Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another" (Gal. 5:26). "Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity" (Ps. 37:1). "Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long" (Prov. 23:17).

*Envy causes littleness.* To be envious is a sign of littleness. To be envious is a sign of narrowness of soul. To be envious is a frank admission that you neither have the ability nor the winsomeness to compete with those who excel, to compete with those who are your superiors.

*Envy keeps one from rejoicing at the success of others.* Envy keeps one from applauding the winner. Envy keeps one from honoring those who excel. Why should one suffer any pain, uneasiness and fear at another's success? Why should one be depressed and seek to discredit and depreciate another's victories?

Paul said to the Corinthians: "For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?"

*Envy causes one to dislike others.* When one sees what another has or enjoys he is prone to be envious. This envy can produce dislike or even hatred. Envy breeds contempt for superiors and there is no limit to which envy will not go to discredit and depreciate others who may excel.

Paul said about the envious: "He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings" (I Tim. 6:4).

*Envy causes destruction.* It was envy that brought about the death of our Lord Jesus Christ: "For He knew that for envy they had delivered Him" (Matt. 27:18). "For He knew that the chief priests had delivered Him for envy" (Mark 15:10).

Envy will destroy the individual. "For wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one" (Job 5:2). "A sound heart is the life of the flesh: but envy the rottenness of the bones" (Prov. 14:30). "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?" (Prov. 27:4).

Envy is so destructive that it will keep one from going to heaven. Paul said: "Envying, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and the like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21).

Biblical warnings against envy are many in number. David said: "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked" (Ps. 73:1-3).

Peter said, in I Peter: "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings" (I Pet. 2:1).

If you are given to envy ask the Lord Jesus Christ to drive it out of your heart. Determine with the LORD'S help to be big in soul, charitable in attitude, and Christian in spirit, for Jesus' sake. †

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by Rev.  
Philip Haugen,  
Minneapolis,  
Minn.

One of the accusations made against Pietism is that a pietist bases his certainty of salvation on his own subjective experience, and not on the Word of God. Since the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations supports and speaks for "wholesome Christian pietism," let us consider the truth of this accusation and the place and importance of Christian experience.

## Pietism: Its Emphasis on Christian Experience

### The Place of Christian Experience

The AFLC teaches, in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, that the assurance of salvation comes from and is based upon the sure and certain declarations of the Word of God and the Sacraments. This teaching neither denies nor ignores subjective experience. Christ speaks of a personal experience of sin and grace when He declares, "Repent and believe in the Gospel" (Mark 1:15). Peter speaks of Christian experience when he proclaims in Acts 2:23, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. . . ." Paul speaks of knowing sin through the Law (Romans 7:7), and of receiving life through the Gospel (Romans 1:16). This experience of sin and grace is a normal and necessary part of being a child of God (Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. I, p. 66).

When God effects conversion in the heart of a man through His means of

grace, that conversion sometimes will involve great feelings and emotions. Also in the process of Christian living, a person will have many different experiences: times of great joy, of struggle, of rest and peace, of disappointment, and so on. These experiences and feelings are also a valid and normal part of Christian living. The problem here is that some people base their Christianity on their feelings. Their certainty of salvation is based, not on the Word of God and the Sacraments, but on the fact that they have had a feeling of sorrow over sin, or a feeling of peace, or joy, or whatever.

It is necessary for these experiences to be kept in their proper place. Religious experience must never become the source or standard of truth and doctrine. Jesus Himself taught that truth could be known only as one abides in His Word (John 8:31, 32). Those who "refuse to accept Holy Scripture as the sole source of Christian dogma and substitute for it 'Christian experience' thereby abandon the principle which leads to sure knowledge of the Christian truth" (F. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. II, p. vii). The truth that leads to life eternal is not made known immediately through some experience or direct revelation, but is mediated to us by the Holy Spirit in connection with and through the Word of God (Romans 10:17, Ephesians 6:17).

Also, these experiences must never be established as a norm by which Christianity or "spirituality" is to be judged. The experience of one person does not determine the experience of the next; my experience cannot be used to judge or determine the authenticity of yours. Here again it is the Word of God that is normative. All experience must be subjected to the light of Scripture. Every experience which is not consistent with the Word of God is not and cannot be a Christian experience. The standard and basis and means of Christian experience is the Word of God.

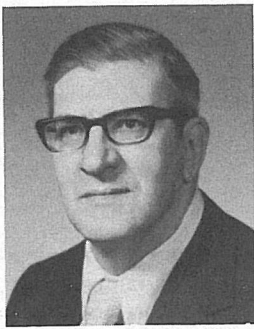
Neither is experience to be considered the basis of Christian certainty. A child of God can have confidence that he is indeed a child of God, not because he feels it, but because of the gracious declaration of the Word of God, "Your sins are forgiven you for Jesus' sake." Feelings are changeable and unreliable; one whose confidence is in his feelings will very quickly be driven to despair and uncertainty.

### The Basis of Christian Certainty

The assurance of salvation is based upon and comes from the Word of God. It is the Holy Spirit who, in connection with and through the means of grace, "bears witness with our spirit that we are sons of God" (Romans 6:16).

Every truly Christian experience is effected by the Holy Spirit through the Word. Martin Luther described faith as "a divine work within us. It transforms us and gives us a new birth wrought by God (John 1:13). It slays the Old Adam, makes us entirely different people in heart, spirit, mind, and all powers, and brings with it the Holy Spirit. Oh, a living, energetic, active, mighty thing is this faith. . . ." (E. Plass, compiler, *What Luther Says*, p. 498). Scripture teaches that this faith is the result of the hearing of the Word of God: "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). Francis Pieper declares that "a man becomes a Christian, in every single case and until the Last Day, only in one way: by way of

*"Feelings are changeable and unreliable; one whose confidence is in his feelings will very quickly be driven to despair and uncertainty."*



by Rev.  
Gerald F.  
Mundfrom,  
Osceola, Wis.

## Some thoughts about depression

Depression is hard to define. To a person who has never experienced depression defining it would be as difficult as trying to explain what daylight is to a man born blind.

And a person who has experienced depression needs no definition—he very well knows from experience.

Depression is a whole bunch of most miserable feelings, more or less, experienced at the same time.

It includes such feelings as guilt, failure, defeat, loneliness, confusion, listlessness, fatigue, restlessness and doubt about God and your relationship to Him (the depressed person may feel deserted by God and wonder if he is still a Christian).

Little problems become big problems. The depressed person feels unwanted, unloved, useless to everybody. He feels that he is in the way, just

taking up room, that he is a problem to loved ones and others.

And in manic-depression the person may find that he lacks the power to concentrate or figure things out as he once was able to do. He finds it hard, sometimes impossible, to remember, especially names and places.

It is often difficult and next to impossible for the depressed to make any decisions, especially major decisions, because of the inability to concentrate.

He feels hemmed in or pressed down with a multitude of problems which he cannot solve.

He feels tired, worn out. He would like to go to bed and sleep, but when in bed he cannot sleep.

When I was suffering from manic-depression, I felt as though I couldn't breathe deeply. I couldn't breathe a sigh of relief as I longed to do. I felt as though something very heavy was pressing on my chest, preventing me from breathing deeply, and yet my breathing was very normal.

A depressed person may have all or some of these miserable feelings. But this doesn't necessarily mean that the situation is as he feels, or as bad as he feels—but he feels that way neverthe-

less. For example, he may feel like a failure but not be a failure at all.

Depression can be experienced by degrees. Some people are more depressed than others. You may be more depressed at one time than at another time.

Acute depression, like any other sickness, can interfere with one's ability to function normally, to work, concentrate or organize himself. It affects the appetite. A deeply depressed person may look physically capable of doing work, but is truly unable to work because of his inability to concentrate, remember and organize himself.

A manic-depressed person may find it difficult to communicate with other people for the same reason. He may start to speak but suffer a mental block and never finish the sentence.

A deeply depressed person longs to confide in someone, to tell them how he feels, but because of his limited ability to concentrate finds it impossible to describe such a complicated, miserable feeling as he is experiencing.

Several years ago a very depressed man came into my office. He wanted to tell me how he felt and tried to do so, but couldn't express it in words. Since

## PIETISM . . .

contrition and faith; that is, he must experience the divine judgment of condemnation, which the Law, speaking through the Scripture, produces . . . and believe in the remission of his sins through the Gospel, proclaimed in the Scripture" (Christian Dogmatics, Vol. I, p. 311). Again, this is consistent with the teaching of Christ in Mark 1:15, "Repent and believe in the Gospel," and in Luke 24:47, where He says that "repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all nations." Faith and repentance come through the preaching of His Word (Romans 7:7ff, I Peter 1:23, Romans 10:17). "The Christian experience of sin and grace is wrought solely through God's revelation in His Word. . . . To the extent that men . . . separate themselves

from Holy Scripture . . . to that extent they are cut off from the Christian experience" (F. Pieper, op. cit., p. 68).

The error that must be avoided is that a man would put his confidence and hope in his own faith and contrition. A confidence that is based on our own faith and contrition is a confidence that has moved away from Christ and has ceased to be a Christian confidence. The Solid Declaration of the *Formula of Concord* states: "... in justification before God . . . faith trusts neither in contrition nor in love nor in any other virtues, but solely in Christ and (in him) in his perfect obedience with which he fulfilled the law of God in our stead and which is reckoned to the believers as righteousness" (T. Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord*, p. 544). The focal point of true and living faith is the promise of God concerning the reconciling work of Christ

as declared in His Word (Romans 4:5). The focal point of Christian assurance is this same promise of God.

A child of God will have, and can rejoice in, Christian experience. There will be times when the Word of God will overwhelm a person, and he will feel the truth, and he will stand in awe of the majesty and supremacy and mercy and love of the God of Scripture. But these feelings are not what makes a person a Christian, neither are they to be the basis of our confidence and joy. The only thing that can give confidence and joy to the trembling and guilt-stricken soul is the unchanging declaration of the Word and the Sacraments: "Jesus died on the cross for you; your sins are forgiven for His name's sake; go in peace." Therein is our confidence, and therein is our joy.

Note: Scripture quotations are from the *New American Standard Bible*.

# AND HOW TO DEAL WITH IT

I had experienced what he was experiencing, I was able to help him express his feelings. This man was amazed that I could do this. He had been to visit psychiatrists and they had never done that for him.

My helping that man express his feelings made him realize that I understood what he was going through and gave him confidence in me. I was better able to pray for him.

There seems to be a need for the depressed to relate their feelings to others and when they find that they can't do this they feel all the more alone and wonder if anyone really understands what they are going through. They even wonder if anyone else has ever experienced what they are experiencing. They feel so alone.

Now Christians very often experience depression. Some seem to believe that to be a Christian is all joy and sunshine and that God would never allow a true Christian to so suffer, especially to have such things as a weak faith and doubts about God.

But Christianity is a warfare, and we can become battle-weary in the Christian warfare as well as any other warfare.

However, depression is not all bad as many conclude and some false prophets would have us believe.

There are a number of good reasons why God may will that we go through a period of depression. Let me briefly mention some of them.

**1** God uses depression to teach us many things. To the Christian, depression is often a schooling.

**2** God uses depression to test us. In school we are given tests to see what we have accomplished in our learning. God, too, gives tests. He will test us to see how sincere we are in our convictions. He will test our faith in Him and in His Word and these tests can be in the form of a depression.

**3** Sometimes God uses depression to lead us. He may have a new or different route in life for us which we

have never traveled before. He may draw our attention to this new way by causing us to go through a depression. Or He may give us a depression to prevent us from going some way which is not His will for us. God has led in this way in my life.

**4** God burdens His own. He burdens us to pray for, and witness to, lost loved ones. And this is not an easy burden to carry. It is often heavy and painful. It brings depression.

I do not believe there is any other one thing that brings so much unhappiness to Christians as a burden for lost loved ones.

And God wills we carry this burden and endure this sorrow. And this is a pain and suffering which the non-Christian does not face. There may be exceptions. But, as a rule, a person who is not concerned about his own soul welfare, is not concerned about the soul welfare of anyone else.

**5** God wants us to realize the sinful, wicked condition of this world and how the devil is making great inroads in the war between good and evil. This is depressing to God, and He wants His own to also be deeply concerned.

This concern can also take the form of depression, especially when we face a responsibility in this warfare put on us by God.

**6** God may burden us to take up some new responsibility in the Christian warfare which we have never taken up before. And again depression plays a very important part in preparing us for this new responsibility.

**7** Sin can cause depression. We dare not conclude that it is not a contributing factor. However, it is far from the only cause of depression. In the life of a Christian, whose sins have been forgiven, it often is *not* the cause for a depression. It was not the reason that Job was depressed.

When sin is confessed and dealt with as God wills and leads, then God promises to forget it, and will not plague us

with it ever again. And He wills that we forget it also.

And if we are still plagued with such sin, it is the devil, and not God, who is reminding us of it. We need not pay any attention to such accusations.

Also in dealing with our sin, God never leaves us in confusion. He provides a way out and makes clear what we should do about it. God does not depress us because of sin in our life, without telling us what sin is.

Many Christians who are depressed think that it is because of sin, but do not know what sin or sins they committed. Now the depression came from God for some good reason. He wills it in order that directly or indirectly He may be glorified and His cause be realized. He works it all out for good (Romans 8:28).

Some believe, as Job's friends did, that depression is a sign that God is displeased with the one who is depressed. But, like Job's friends, they are wrong.

**8** It costs to be a Christian. And God wills that we have convictions based on the convictions of Christ. To stand on our own Christian convictions, on what we know is right, can bring depression. The world will ridicule us. It may even persecute us. That will bring a heavy heart to a Christian. Under such pressure he feels the heat of the battle and that can be depressing. But when we stand under such pressure we bring glory to God (Matthew 5:10-12).

Now, first of all, God teaches, tests, leads, burdens, causes us to realize the sinful condition of this world, gives responsibility, convicts of sin and gives us Christian convictions through His Word.

But He also does these things through experience and those experiences are sometimes depressing and can bring on a depression.

My own experience has been that next to God's Word I have sensed God's leading more through a time of depression than in any other way.

God has greatly used depression in

## DEPRESSION . . .

my life to make me what I am, as I testify in my book *Purged*. He used depression for good in my life.

Some of God's great men suffered depression. We see it in the life of Job and Jeremiah.

Jesus was depressed. He was depressed as He wept for the lost and as He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Paul was depressed when he wrote First Corinthians and Galatians, as he realized that the devil was making inroads into the churches which he started.

It costs to follow Jesus and a period of depression could be a part of the price we will be asked to pay in remaining true to Christ.

Some time ago, a man confessed to me that he never believed that God would allow a true Christian, truly dedicated to Christ, to ever suffer depression, until he read *Purged*. Now he realizes that God often uses depression to mature His own. The suffering of depression on the part of a Christian may be a sign of Christian maturity.

I say this because of how God may have laid extra responsibility on you, or an increased burden for the lost because of your maturity; you feel the weight of this responsibility, burden, or schooling and it brings a feeling of depression.

Depression can be like growing pains, pains which cause you to grow as a Christian.

Now I wish to speak about "How to Deal with Depression."

### Wait on God

In chapter 16 of *Purged* there are some suggestions (quite a long list) as to what we can do to help ourselves overcome depression or to help a friend who is depressed.

But here I shall mention just three things.

The first and most important thing to do is "Wait on the Lord" and here I would like to quote Psalm 27:14, "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord."

Notice that this admonition is not to

"have faith in God," or "trust in the Lord," but "wait on the Lord." There is a difference, I believe.

I have truly come to realize that it is as Martin Luther says in the explanation to the Third Article in his Catechism.

By myself and within the limits of my own ability I find that I cannot trust or have faith in God. But I can wait on Him.

Depression has had a part in my realizing this. I am so dependent on God for everything—even the ability to believe in Him.

If I am to have faith in God, He must first reveal Himself to me in some way—either through His Word, answered prayer, the Sacraments, or some spiritual experience. And if God is putting me through some kind of testing and seems to be hiding His face from me for a period of time—then I find it harder than ever to trust Him and to have faith in Him. I find it even impossible.

But God knows that it is impossible for me to have faith in Him in my own strength—and He doesn't expect the impossible from me.

He knows and remembers that I am made of dust—and God does not condemn me for my lack of faith, especially at times when my faith is being severely tested.

He did not judge me or condemn me because of my many doubts and near loss of complete faith in Him, when I was severely tested with depression while in a mental hospital. Again my book *Purged* tells of this.

It is as Jesus said of Himself in Matthew 12:20. I quote, "A bruised reed shall He not break, and smoking flax shall He not quench. . . ." And Isaiah said this also many years earlier. In other words, our faith may become bruised and at the point of falling apart like a bruised reed. Or it may lose its zeal and fire like smoking flax which was once aflame—but God won't let it go out completely. God may even, by testing us, allow our faith to almost die. But He doesn't let it completely die. Not if we continue to wait on the Lord. And not if we don't willfully reject Him or completely give up.

And God will again strengthen our

## TRUST AND WAIT

*Commit to God*

*your problems*

*When you know not what to do;*

*Lean upon His*

*promises*

*God has made for me and you.*

*Trust in the Lord's*

*faithfulness,*

*Knowing He is*

*staying by;*

*Then thank the Lord*

*and praise Him,*

*Though you know not fully why.*

*Some day you will*

*see clearly*

*And in gratitude*

*you'll bow,*

*For God's way is*

*the best way—*

*He is working for*

*you now.*

*"Commit your way to the Lord;*

*Trust in Him and*

*He will act."*

*(Psalm 37:5)*

*"I will wait for the Lord,*

*my soul waits,*

*And in His Word*

*do I hope."*

*(Psalm 130:5)*

Mrs. Laura Norum  
Golden Age Manor  
Amery, Wis.

saved Oregon for his country (1836-1847)

What is an explorer? One who travels over a country to discover what is in it? You will say so, if you go to the dictionary man, who is a good one to consult in very many cases. Think up some explorers that you have heard of. Perhaps you will begin with Columbus, who was certainly a famous one. But if the discovery of this land in the first place had not been followed afterwards, through many years, by other explorations and explorers, we might none of us be living just where we are now.

Among the explorers of the early part of the nineteenth century were two men named Lewis and Clark. Their names are always coupled together, for they went together, and they made their way far West, in 1802-4. Of course they found Indians in great numbers. The Indians had begun by this time to know more of the white men because of the many explorers who passed their way. From some of these the red men got some knowledge of God and the Bible. Lewis and Clark told them that in God and the Bible lay the secret of the white man's power. This was one of the most important things that these two explorers did. It made the red men long to know more of God and His Book. Every Sunday the Hudson Bay Company put up a flag to show what day it was, and the Indians called it "Flag Day" when they saw it float. There was a trapper who spent a great deal of time reading the mysterious Book and talking to the Unseen Being. The Indians wanted to know more about this new religion and were told that by and by missionaries would come to teach them. So they waited. Around their council fires they talked and wondered about the coming messengers. And they waited. But it was in vain, and years and years went by.

In 1832 the red men decided to send five Nez Percés far East to find the white man's Book, and beg for teachers. So they went, but only four reached St. Louis. They found General

Clark there, and their old friend, superintendent now of Indian affairs, treated them kindly. But when they told him for what they had taken the long journey, he did not make the errand public. Why he did not, we cannot imagine. He entertained them, as others seem to have done also, and took them to see the sights. They were taken to the cathedral and shown the pictures of the saints, but the story of the Saviour was not told, nor was the white man's Book given them. Two of the four died, and the remaining two sadly prepared to return to their campfires. As they were leaving the office of General Clark, one of them spoke such touching words of farewell that a young man who heard them took them down, and here they are:

*"I came to you over a trail of many moons from the setting sun. You were the friend of my fathers who have all gone the long way. I came with one eye partly opened for more light for my people who sit in darkness. I go back with both eyes closed. How can I go back to my blind people? The two fathers who came with us—we leave asleep beside your great water and wigwam. They were tired in many moons and their mocassins wore out. My people sent me to get the white man's Book of Heaven. . . . You showed me images of good spirits, and pictures of the good land beyond, but the Book was not among them to tell us the way. I am going back the long sad trail to my people. . . . You make my feet heavy with gifts, but the Book is not among them. When I tell the poor people . . . that I did not bring the Book, no word will be spoken. . . . One by one they will rise up and go out in silence. My people will die in darkness, and they will go on the long path to the hunting grounds. No white man will go with them, and no white man's Book will show the way. I have no more words."*

The young man who copied the words sent them East, and when asked about it, General Clark said that they were true. The story roused the Christian people. It was not strange, was it? Several people promised to go, five at least, but only two went to answer this call. In a log cabin, in New York State, where now is the town called Rushville, over 30 years before, was born the boy who was now to be a Pathfinder to the great West. The country was wild and new. The father was a tanner and currier, or leather-dresser. It was lonesome in the house, and the mother used to go and sit binding shoes in her husband's little shop. One evening when she came back, having left the baby Marcus in his quaint little cradle, she was frightened to see that a log had tumbled out of the big open fireplace, and had set fire to the lower end of the wooden cradle. The baby was almost choked with the smoke, but his life was saved for a great mission.

At 17 the boy became a Christian. His heart was set on becoming a minister, but his brother, fearing he would have to be a "charity student," discouraged him. The way opened for the study of medicine, and he took his diploma, really practicing eight years or more. At one time he was associated with his brother in running a saw-mill—not knowing that this experience, too, would be a help to him by and by. Hindered in his wish to study for the ministry, his heart turned toward missionary work. He offered to go anywhere the American Board would send him. He fairly panted for such service, and his passion for adventure and exploration only increased his zeal.

The opportunity had now come, and Dr. Whitman started from St. Louis, April 8, 1835. But this was just a little preparatory trip to see what could be done. He returned after a journey of 3,000 miles, and spent a busy winter in preparation. He secured the company of Rev. H. H. Spalding and wife, and Mr. William Gray, and the best com-

## MEMORY VERSE

"Ask of Me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession."

### Psalm 2:8 RSV

panionship of all, in the bride who consented with all her heart to go with him.

Try to imagine that journey. Think what supplies the company must take, and the untrodden, lonesome way before them. Part of the way the ladies rode in one of the two wagons, but much of the trip was made on horseback. At night came the encampment beside a fire, where buffalo meat, their chief subsistence, was cooked. Dr. Whitman proved to be an excellent cook. His wife said he cooked every piece of meat in a different way. The waterproof blanket spread on the ground, with another blanket above, served for a bed for each traveller. In crossing rivers, the women rode the tallest horses to keep from getting wet.

After four months and three thousand miles of travel, stopping at Fort Walla Walla, crowds of Indians met them, and some asked, "Have you brought the Book of God?" At last the journey ends in Oregon, the rude shelter is put up for housekeeping, the missionary work is begun. Little Alice Clarissa is born, but after a few years is drowned in the river. After a while seven orphan children are adopted, and at one time there are 11 of these in the family. At one time the only meat to be had is horse-flesh, which they learn to eat, because there is nothing else. But not once do one of the missionaries regret coming.

Now comes Dr. Whitman's great, patriotic, daring service. He learns that it is the intention to secure Oregon

to Great Britain. His famous ride in the dead of winter, 1843, on horseback across the continent, follows. After incredible hardships, he reaches Washington, with ears, nose, fingers and feet frozen. But he sees Daniel Webster, Secretary of State, and President Tyler, and secures the promise not to cede Oregon to England. He promises to take a wagon train of emigrants across the desert, and takes it, a thousand strong, proving that it is not impossible as has been thought. Oregon is saved to the United States.

Now follow years of mission work, of labours abundant and of every kind. But difficulties begin to thicken. Trouble with the Indians breaks out. There are reasons and incidents too numerous to tell. But the sad end is the death of Dr. Whitman and his wife, with the others . . . in 1847.

Remember this hero-patriot and pathfinder of that great country "where rolls the Oregon." †

—Julia H. Johnston,

*Fifty Missionary Heroes Every Boy and Girl Should Know*, Fleming H.

Revell Company.

## Letters to the editor

### THE FESTIVE DAYS

RE: *Ambassador* Editorial, January 6, 1981.

Yes,

What has happened to Christmas Day Services?

What has happened to New Year's Day Services?

Thanksgiving gets a little more attention.

There are some church members accustomed to observing these special days by attending church who are very sad because the doors are locked. People would come who would never be there during the year. They wanted to remember Christ's birthday. Now it is spent in feasting and starting a trip.

The impression is given by those who have eliminated New Year's services that God can wait until the next Sunday. Isn't it proper that Christians should begin the New Year by attend-

ing services instead of having church doors locked? After denying people this privilege for so long, it would be difficult to change their habits. These festive days, it seems, are for man's pleasure. Possibly they have about all they can take listening to Christmas music at the end of the year.

Ascension Day has fallen by the wayside, and who on earth would think that there ever was a Second Day of Christmas, Second Day of New Year, Second Day of Easter or Pentecost? Thanksgiving Day is another holiday set aside for just that, which many can do without.

These special holidays are slowly passing out of the picture. At least we are permitted to worship God without having authorities descend upon us and carry the pastor away to prison.

Mrs. Paul Schilla  
Dickinson, N. Dak.

### AFLC Summer Dates to Note

June 17-21, AFLC Conference; L. L. Convention July 7-12; Family Camp Bronson July 20-26; Arc Family Camp Aug. 10-16

### PRAY FOR STRENGTH

Do not pray for easier lives,

Pray to be stronger men:

Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers,

Pray for powers equal to your tasks.

Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle,

But you shall be the miracle.

Every day you shall wonder at yourself,

At the richness of life that has come to you

By the grace of God.

Phillips Brook  
(Youth's Favorite Poems)

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# editorials

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## THE WAY PREPARED

Americans were thrilled last month by the return of the 52 hostages held in Iran for 444 days. Who did not at some time in the drama feel his eyes moisten and a lump rise in his throat? Perhaps it was when he first heard that the planes were airborne at the Teheran airport, or when he saw the Americans deplane in Algiers, or arrive in Wiesbaden. Emotional impact may have been greatest when the former hostages left Germany on the last leg of their journey back to the U. S., or when *Freedom One* taxied into the Newburgh, N.Y., airport. Still again, it may have come in seeing the arrival in Washington on that Tuesday (Jan. 27) and who could be unmoved at the scenes of homecoming as each hostage really came home to his own community? Yes, for many of us there were numerous emotional peaks in this great human drama.

It was good to see again how life is valued in our country. No expense was spared in preparing for proper re-entry into normal life of these mistreated fellow Americans. Great care was taken to give them adequate de-briefing, to ascertain their physical health and emotional well-being and to help them catch up on events which had taken place during their unwanted captivity.

These 50 men and two women came back as heroes. With an exception or two, they were in government employ. They were forcibly retained while in the line of duty. They didn't betray our country. We can feel good about them, even as we could about the POWs of the Viet Nam War, and other wars.

But this thought came also during the unfolding of events in the release and return home of the hostages. What of those other prisoners who are constantly being released from prisons in our country and sent back into civilian life? They have "paid their debt to society," in many cases by spending more than 444 days behind bars. They don't come out as heroes but as objects of suspicion. "Institutionalized" by their imprisonment, they get no extensive de-briefing and they, too, come back into a world which has changed during their incarceration. With notable exceptions, they receive only some new clothes, some spending money and a "Good luck; I hope you'll make it." And many of these ex-prisoners don't make it for the rate of recidivism is great.

Government does what it can through parole officers and other social workers. Humanitarian-inclined persons and Christian agencies do provide some help through half-way houses and individual effort. But so much more remains to be done. Here is also an area where our Bible School graduates could one day work, giving assistance to released prisoners. It is also an area where the AFLC could become involved in that day when inner mission work is possible for us.

Since Jesus made the visiting of prisoners one of the tests of true Christianity (Matthew 25:31-46), it is not too great a leap to believe that He is for whatever can be done to help them become useful members of society once they are released. Yes, let us share the Gospel with them and let us help them find jobs and avoid the temptations which brought them so much trouble and caused them to be such a sorrow to others, remembering that we would have fared no better save for the grace of God.

## THE BEST AUTHORITY?

It doesn't seem adequate to say, as some do, that the Bible is the "best authority" we have. It sounds like there might be a better one if we only knew where it is or that maybe God will reveal a better one later. Another analogy might be that of a Biblical manuscript, say of the Gospel of Mark. We could say, "This is the best text of Mark that we have," giving the idea that a superior one may be discovered later.

Is it not better to say that the Bible *is* our authority in matters of faith and life? We don't apologize for it; we don't indicate that it is less than sufficient in any way. This is what God has given to us; it is all that we need.

Martin Luther staked not only his reputation but his life on the Bible. "I cannot do otherwise," he testified. We are lost unless we do the same.

We do not worship the Book, but we call it *the* Book above all others. We are to worship the God and the Christ of the Scriptures, but we could not know them apart from the Scriptures. No wonder then that we hold the Bible in such high esteem.

There are many excellent Christian writings in the world, but they have validity only as they are saturated in the Holy Bible. Beloved have been the Catechism, the hymnbooks and the devotionals, but they are good simply because the writers knew God's Word and were also moved by God's Holy Spirit as they wrote.

No, the Bible is not simply the "best authority" that we have. *It is our authority.*

## Christian Women—PRAY

We note that man first began to call upon the name of the Lord way back in Seth's time (Gen. 4:26). Even after all these years and this early beginning, man often does not know how to pray intelligently for himself. Our Heavenly Father knows this and has provided (as loving fathers do) a helper, the Holy Spirit, to intercede for us (Rom. 8:26, 27).

Our Father wants us to pray; in fact, He commands it (1 Thess. 5:17). Our prayers are a sweet odor rising to heaven. Our prayers delight our Father. We all enjoy bringing happiness to a loved one!

We are to seek our Lord's face continuously. It is there that we find our strength for daily tasks. Our flesh is weak and we need to watch in prayer that we fall not into temptation.

We are to humble ourselves to pray. We must remember that we are sinners. Daily we need our Savior's cleansing power. We must come to

prayer with a thankful heart for all the blessings our Father bestows on us continuously. We must seek Him in prayer with our whole heart. We must pray in faith to God, not putting confidence in man.

We are to ask in prayer for what we wish and it shall be given to us. Maybe the answer will not come at the time we expect it. Maybe it will not be the answer we waited for. But God will give a sure answer at the right time. He sees the end from the beginning. Therefore He knows the best answer, the correct answer, and the time to answer. We are to wait patiently upon the Lord.

Why should we expect an answer to our prayers? Because we have His promise in Luke 11:9: "Ask, and it shall be given; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

And how might you pray for us missionaries when on the field? If you have

our Prayer Letters, refer to them. They often mention specific prayer requests. If you don't have this reference, then try praying for us through Col. 1:9-12. For more inspiration try Phil. 1:9-11 and Eph. 1:17-19. St. Paul was a seasoned missionary and he knows our needs on the field.

We missionaries need effective, fervent, intercessory prayer partners. YOU, a true believer in Jesus Christ, have a job to do. Let us work together in the Harvest. Let it be said of your home as it says in Isa. 56:7: "MINE house shall be called a house of prayer for ALL people."

—by Mrs. George (Helen) Knapp

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Send all WOMEN'S PAGE news to Miss Solveig Larson, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Mpls., Minn. 55441.

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## fellowship corner

### A Valuable Lesson

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths (Prov. 3:5, 6).

I think I learned something very valuable yesterday and I'd like to share it with you now. First I want to stress that the leading and guiding of the Holy Spirit in this is most important if God is going to be able to bless. We as Christians cannot let ourselves be carried away with emotions as over against His guidance. We can't, as servants of God, pick and choose whom we want to help.

Now that I have gotten older and most of my friends and family are older and many have already gone to heav-

en, I have felt so inadequate to help those who lose loved ones. As far back as I can remember I hated to hear anyone say when a terminally-ill person or an older person died, "Oh, he was so old" or "He was so sick." Maybe I have said it myself; I'm not sure. But I know that is all wrong and not as the Bible tells us, that we should "weep with those who weep." I have found over the years that it matters whose grandparent it was.

Yesterday I went to a funeral in another church. I didn't know the deceased or most of his family, but I had gotten to be friends with one sister, mostly because Arnold, my dear husband, felt compassion to help her in her auction sale and he gave of all his

strength and mind. You see, this family has had three deaths in one year, but that is another story.

Yesterday was the 63rd wedding anniversary of some shut-in friends and I so wanted to celebrate with them, but the funeral was at that time and I felt I just must go to it. Instead, then, I spent some time with the anniversary couple in the morning, the funeral being in the afternoon. The pastor said some things that I feel are so helpful and needful for these times of sorrow. He said that we shouldn't think about the sufferings of the terminally-ill or all the regrets we ourselves have because of our neglect toward them. Then he said for the family and all of us present to try to remember the man when he was young and strong, doing all the wonderful things he did. And he went on to share about this man's beautiful attitude over the two years

# Prayer Concerns from the 1980 AFLC Conference and WMF Convention

## BE IT RESOLVED:

- That we continue to pray for and support the projects of our WMF.
- That we pray for the leaders of our nation that they may seek God's wisdom and guidance.
- That we pray for a spiritual revival beginning in our own hearts and reaching out to our congregations, communities, and our nation.
- That as we realize the strength of a nation lies in the fiber of its homelife, we ask God's guidance in our homes and family life in America.
- That we continue to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers needed to gather that which is ripe and standing in the fields of this world.
- That we thank God for the Co-ordinating Committee and continue to pray for them.
- That we be in continued prayer that the Lord reveal His choice for a new dean of our seminary.
- That we continue to wait on God concerning the goal to have our AFLBS facilities debt free by 1984.
- That we thank God for the work in our mission field and we pray that God will richly prosper His work.
- That we support the goal of planting 30 new churches in the next ten years, and that we should challenge our present congregations to "mother" a new congregation by providing encouragement, prayer support, and finances to that new congregation.
- That we thank God for the work of our Evangelist.
- That we encourage parents and youth leaders to offer sound, prayerful, and responsible examples to the youth based on Deut. 6:1-9.
- That we urge our members to prayerfully support our own AFLC as our number one priority (in giving).

*Lord, teach us how to pray aright,  
With reverence and with fear;  
Though dust and ashes in Thy sight,  
We may, we must draw near.*

he was gradually dying from cancer. He never asked, "Why me, God?" nor did he ever complain to him. And I felt sorry that I hadn't known this man.

Then, too, I have been thinking that if I, too, have to go by the way of death and not through the rapture of the church, what will my neighbors say about me? Then the pastor stressed very forcibly the importance of our friendship, love and care to the bereaved family in the coming days and even months. I thought that was wonderful to hear and a challenge to me to remember. And with God's help I plan on doing that.

The Holy Spirit's presence was so real in that place yesterday that I felt I was on holy ground and didn't stay for "coffee" because I just couldn't leave that sweet, sweet presence with idle talk.

I thank God for these new lessons

and I trust I'll never forget them and that my life might be more of a blessing from now on.

Mrs. Arnold Jodock  
Hatton, N. Dak.

(Ed. note: Other readers are also invited to send in accounts of lessons they have learned in their walk with Christ, blessings which have been received and the work of Christ which they have seen in the lives of others.)

## THE LAW

*The Law becomes a well-beloved guide. It does not drive him nor compel him. It does not threaten him nor give him the power to do that which is good, but it serves him as the plan of a house serves the builder. †*

C. O. Rosenius

Love is giving  
Of yourself and is  
Very rewarding.  
Especially, love God.

Love is of God.  
Offer your talents in  
Various ways,  
Especially in church.

Love your neighbor.  
Offer your services; it's  
Vital to serenity.  
Expect no return.

Love your family.  
Only you have that kind of love.  
Vows of marriage  
Expect to last a lifetime.

Love is sharing,  
Obeying, and believing. A  
Valuable future is  
Etched in Christian living.

Love. Is it real?  
Of course! I know Christ's  
Visit guarantees an  
Eternal life of love.

Edna Skramstad  
Valley City, N. Dak.

## Salvation is Free

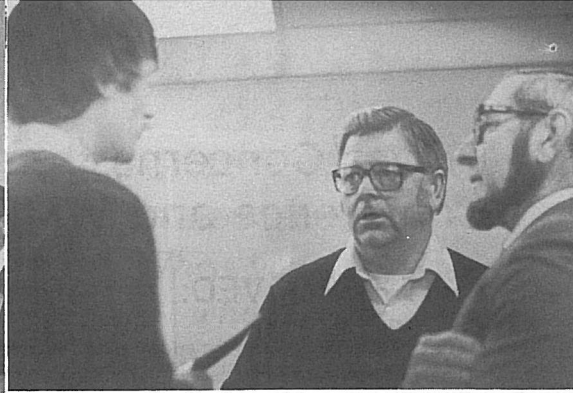
Thus he who tries to earn salvation by his own good works soon realizes his failure, his constant getting deeper and deeper into debt, until soon he grows discouraged, and gives up in despair, as Luther did in the monastery. If he has no person to direct him aright, according to the Word of God, he will be likely to give up all effort to please God and win salvation, and will sink into reckless sin.

No; we can never repay our debt; we can never merit salvation; our only hope is in the free forgiving love of God manifested to us through Jesus Christ. †

L. S. Keyser



The Conference concluded with a panel discussion.



Pastor Jim Fugleberg chatted with Pastors Norm Tenneboe and George Knapp.

## Annual Pastors' Conference held at the ARC

One hundred one men were registered for the annual AFLC Pastors' Conference which was held Jan. 20-22 at the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis. The number includes several laymen and most of the seminarians of the church, in addition to pastors.

There were two guest lecturers, Rev. Everald Strom, president of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren, Fergus Falls, Minn., and Dr. Herman Otten, editor of *Christian News*, New Haven, Mo. Dr. Otten spoke on dangers to and the potentials for American Luth-

eranism in this decade. Pastor Strom led the three Bible hours.

Pastor Herbert L. Franz, Cloquet, Minn., preached at the Tuesday night service of Holy Communion and also gave a lecture on Wednesday on "Priorities in the Ministry." Pastor Harvey Carlson, Grand Forks, N. Dak., spoke at the Chapel service on Wednesday. The Seminary Male Chorus sang, under the direction of Mr. Don Rodvold.

In one hour of the conference, Mr. Harris van Someren, a seminarian,

talked about "What a Layman Expects from His Pastor." In the other half of that session, Mr. Arlo Kneeland, Summit, S. Dak., spoke on the topic, "What a Layman Should Hear from His Pastor on Stewardship."

Concluding conference session was a panel discussion moderated by Pastor Francis Monseth of the Association Schools. Participants were Dr. Otten and Pastor Strom, Rev. John P. Strand, Fargo, N. Dak., Rev. Laurel Udden, Minneapolis, Minn., and Rev. Eldon Nelson, Minneapolis.

## Lutheran Camps to benefit from Grants

Appleton, Wis. (Jan. 23, 1981)—Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) is offering financial assistance to all Lutheran camps in the United States this year under a special, one-time program. Each full-time camp is eligible to apply for a \$4,000 grant while the amount available for camps open only in the summer is \$2,500.

"We're trying to enable Lutheran camps to try new ideas or approaches to deal with specific needs," said Randy Geving, AAL general benevolence administrator. "The funds aren't to be used for on-going administrative expenses, so we hope camp boards and directors use the money to meet the challenges of the future imaginatively and effectively."

Geving explained that the grants can be used in four general areas: program development for handicapped and family camping; staff development and enrichment; financial development; and energy conservation. Grant applications are now being distributed to the estimated 175 Lutheran camps in this country. After a review of the

proposals, \$500,000 will be distributed by early summer.

The AAL spokesman said an additional \$75,000 may be appropriated to fund significant efforts to benefit all Lutheran camps.

"A difference in the approach this year compared to 1976, when similar grants were made," said Geving, "is that grants this year will not be made automatically, only in response to completed applications."

"The response to the program five years ago was tremendous. We heard that many camping programs were strengthened and expanded, and many new opportunities were provided."

"AAL has been heavily involved in promoting family wellness. We see our continued support of Lutheran camps as an extension of this concern. Many of the camps no longer serve youth exclusively but minister to entire families."

"We think these grants, awarded on behalf of AAL's 1.2 million members, will provide a needed financial boost to deserving Lutheran camps," Geving said.



Mr. Lester Stine from Lutheran Brotherhood, presented a check of \$2,067.00 to AFLTS library on Jan. 26, 1981. Dean Amos Dyrud received the gift on behalf of the seminary.

## Cookbook for sale

A cookbook has been prepared by the WMF of United Lutheran Church, Greenbush, Minn. It can be ordered by writing to the following:

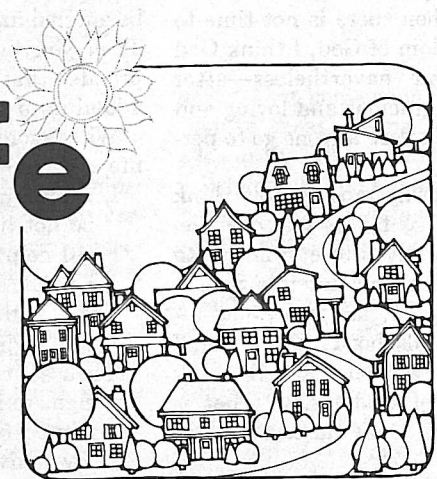
Mrs. Donald Christianson

Route 2, Box 117

Greenbush, Minn. 56726

The cost is \$4.75 postpaid.

# Life on the Edge of Town



## Whither January?

Where has January gone? I ask that question on one of the closing days of the month. When many of you read this you will be asking, "Where has February gone?" and I will be joining you. If we've heard it once, we've heard it said a hundred times (or a thousand?) that the older one gets the faster time goes. I am still young and time is going plenty fast.

Actually, ever since entering the ministry, a few years ago now, I've had the mistaken notion that January and February would be months for catching up on some things. It hasn't worked out that way. Not very much, anyway. *Ambassador* schedules fall in January, too. There are sermons to be prepared, people to visit. The Pastors' Conference is held in January. A person has to go to *some* basketball and hockey games, doesn't he? Storm days (over the years) more often than not have occurred on days when I had to be at home in the office. But it's good to be busy.

We've had a very nice winter. Personally, I think later February and March will make up for this past month. So far there's been little snow and the weather has been almost balmy at times. The squirrels have been digging acorns out of the snow up to now with the exception perhaps of a few days which they took off.

No sign of moose around our place so far, but I may have something to report later. We did see one on the way to Bethlehem Church yesterday (Jan. 25). The beavers are apparently snug in their house and under the river banks. It is hard to see how we can put up with equal destruction of the trees along the river this year as was caused last year. I've done some skiing and am sawing up a modest pile of logs by hand with my Danish saw for next winter.

## A Gold Mine

Through the courtesy of Mrs. G. F. Peeke of Astoria, Oregon, I have come into possession of a large quantity of

old magazines. Actually, they belonged, as the case may be, first to her father, Andrew Lillenaas, and then her brother Conrad. Mr. and Mrs. John Birdeno transported them to Whitefish, Mont., in June, 1979, and Pastors Jerome Nikunen and Burton Rygh brought them to Minnesota for me.

I received a complete file of *Folkebladet* (The People's Paper), Norwegian organ of the Lutheran Free Church, from 1916-39; most of *The Friends* from 1925 to 1945 and a year or two of *Visergutten* (Newsboy). *The Friend* was published by N. N. Rønning, a Lutheran layman and some of whose writings have appeared in the *Ambassador*. *Visergutten* was also an independent publication.

So you see that this is a veritable gold mine. I read Norwegian to some extent. The *Folkebladets* contain so much history and theology. *The Friends* have inspirational reading and theology.

Unfortunately I haven't been able to do as much with these papers yet as I'd like to do. But it is good to have all of this material at hand. Some day it would be interesting to see the home out from Astoria where these men, father and son, lovingly guarded several generations of history by binding together these publications. When I first began work with *The Lutheran Ambassador*, in those first few years, I had a great concern that what was done not be lost. Now I know that enough volumes of the *Ambassador* have been bound so that this history, too, is preserved.

## Pastors' Conference

It was good to be at the annual Pastors' Conference at Osceola, Wis., in January. Attendance has grown quite a little. Some really helpful things were set before us as pastors in the program.

The whole conference had a pall over it, though, because of the accident which seriously injured Pastor John Kjos of Cumberland, Wis., the Saturday previous. Many prayers were raised for his recovery and a love offering was given to help with immediate incidental expenses for his wife Sheryll and the children.

—Raynard Huglen

# Thy Kingdom Come

"But seek ye first His kingdom, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

Not many people are flippant enough to reject the kingdom of God in a shameless manner, determined never to have anything to do with it. Seldom does the deceiving guile of Satan plan to get people to say that they for all time give up all right to everything that belongs to the kingdom of God. Satan's usual tactics are to get us to postpone seeking God "till some other time." First one must use the years of youth for play, joy and fun. Then one must build his own home and his future, and after that perhaps one might see whether it was the right time to

seek God, and plan for eternal welfare. And if even then there is not time to seek the kingdom of God, I think God will accept me nevertheless—after death. God is gracious and loving and cannot endure to see anyone go to perdition.

That is the way most people think and live, and so far as eye can see, many pass quietly into eternal death on the strength of this deceit of Satan.

Reader, listener, are you being lulled by this falsehood? If you are, I beseech you to wake up. Repent! Seek the kingdom of God today! That is your salvation. Make haste and save yourself!

You who are a Christian must remember that your life, your day, your

## The Kingdom first

work, everything that you have are to be entered in the kingdom of God first. Then you have for always the great promise that all other things shall be added unto you.

What more do you need for a happy life and a blessed death?

I, the Lord, am with thee,  
be not thou afraid;

I will help and strengthen,  
be thou not dismayed;

Yea, I will uphold thee with Mine  
own right hand;

Thou art called and chosen in My  
sight to stand.

Reprinted from *Thy Kingdom Come*  
by Ludvig Hope, copyright 1939,  
1967, Augsburg Publishing House.

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## Rev. Sigurd Berg Passed Away

Rev. Sigurd M. Berg, 78, former pastor at Hampden, N. Dak., Brandon, Minn., and Thief River Falls, Minn., passed away on Dec. 21, 1980, at Bethesda Pleasantview Nursing Home, Willmar, Minn. He had suffered from Parkinson's disease for the past ten years or so.

The funeral service was held at Calvary Lutheran Church, Willmar, on Dec. 23, with Pastors John L. Spencer, Phillip O. Berg and Ernest Larson officiating. Interment was in the Calvary cemetery.

Pastor Berg was born at Donnelly, Minn., and moved with his family at an early age to Erickson, Man., Canada. He was a graduate of Augsburg College and Augsburg Seminary in Minneapolis, Minn., being ordained into the ministry of the Lutheran Free Church in 1935. In addition to the parishes mentioned above, he served at Hawarden, Sask., Can., Oconto, Wis., Battle Lake, Minn., L'Anse, Mich., and Pillager, Minn. He and his wife also operated a board and care home for the elderly at Brainerd, Minn., for some years.

He is survived by his wife Elsie; two sons, Arvid S. Berg, music director at Oak Grove Lutheran High School in

## AFLC Missions Week Held February 4-8 at the School's Campus

One of the AFLBS Gospel Teams sang at the opening service on Feb. 4. Pictured below, Dr. James Gordeen, St. Paul, spoke on our "Jerusalem" mission field.

### Personalities

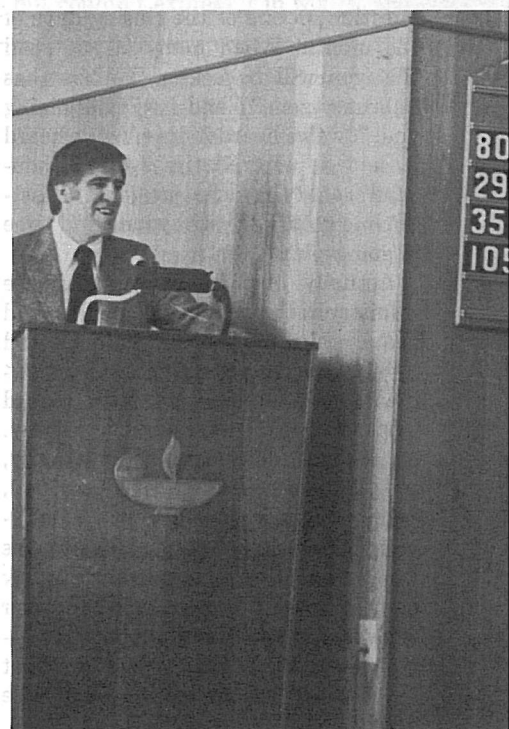
Address of *Pastor and Mrs. Gilbert Schroeder* at Tioga, N. Dak. 58852 is Box 546. Pastor Schroeder is serving the rural parish at Tioga and Ray.

*Rev. Richard Bartholomew*, who has served the Drummond-Mason, Wis., parish the past two years has resigned to accept the call to Faith Lutheran Church, Kalispell, Mont., and will take up his work there about April 1.

*Rev. Robert L. Lee* of the Schools faculty is serving Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Zumbrota, Minn., as vacancy pastor.

Fargo, N. Dak., and Keith A. Berg; two daughters, Virginia, Mrs. Wm. Mac Donald, and Muriel, Mrs. Larry Scholla; one sister, Mrs. Anna Ronholm; ten grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by one son, Eldon, in 1974.

Blessed by his memory.



# HOME MISSION NEWS

Eleven Home Mission pastors and the Home Mission Board met together on Monday evening and Tuesday, January 19 and 20, for a second annual retreat at the ARC, Osceda, Wis. The program included devotional and sharing times as well as sessions on practical aspects of Home Mission work, with Pastors Richard Snipstead, Fran-

cis Monseth, Robert Lee and Elden Nelson making presentations on the various topics.

Plans are being made again for two teams of Bible School students to travel and work in Home Mission congregations this summer. The BARNABAS teams help with Vacation Bible School, visitation and canvassing. Students giving themselves to this summer task are: Joyce Strand, Priscilla Mundfrom, Becky Wall, Pam Jacobson, Brad Sorenson and Anders Macy.

Grace Lutheran congregation at Aberdeen, South Dakota, will dedicate their new building on Sunday, April 12, at 3:00 p.m. It has been encouraging for the pastor and congregation to have men from the Ortley and Wallace parishes assist in the construction of the new building. Pastor Roy Warwick is pastor of the congregation.

Jamestown, North Dakota, has been named as an "'81 Home Mission Project." Plans are to call a pastor and begin at the earliest possible date.

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*Pastor Mundfrom's 173-page book, Purged, is available for \$5.00 by writing to:*  
Rev. Gerald F. Mundfrom, Printing Fund, Rt. 1, Box 503, Osceola, Wis. 54020

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## DEPRESSION . . .

faith as a bruised reed which becomes healed of its bruises. And He will again, in due time, reveal Himself so that our faith may become aflame like burning flax and not merely smoking.

But this is God's doing and not ours. God will not judge us for being tested when He does the testing.

He tested Abraham when He asked Him to sacrifice his only son Isaac. He put Joseph, Daniel and Job through great testings—and they were great men of God. And it was their testings which made them great.

And God will test us, too. If we "hang in there," and just wait on Him. Even when we can't have faith in Him, the end result will be a stronger faith than ever.

I feel very much that the end result of my testings was a greater faith in God, a greater assurance that He is, that He exists, and that He has an inheritance in heaven waiting for me—all of this, after having gone through a time of great doubt with little faith. So wait on the Lord. Wait on the Lord, even when He seems so very far away to you, and even if it seems that He has deserted you.

I didn't know where God was when I was being tested. I couldn't understand why He allowed me to be put in a mental hospital, when all my life I had had a desire to obey His commandments, to ever understand them better, and to bring honor to His name. If there was a God why did He allow this to happen to me?

But I had seen enough of the world to know that there was no future in living

for the world. Even if God had forsaken me, I would not live for the world because I knew the world certainly had nothing to offer.

Maybe one could enjoy the pleasures of the world for a season, but then comes death—and this was very evident to me. Death was out there waiting for everyone. With death staring me in the face, "Of what value was a short fling of pleasure in the world?" The pleasures of the world didn't really appeal to me when in the mental hospital. I had no desire to go out and live it up.

So what was there to do but to wait on the Lord? He still was my only hope, because there was no hope in anything else. I was determined to be faithful in all my Christian convictions, and to not willfully sin or bring discredit to my Lord no matter what happened to me.

Even though it seemed that God had deserted me, I would not desert Him, no matter what. I would continue to wait for a better day, even if I wasn't sure there would ever be a better day and with little or no hope within me (that I could see) that there ever would be a better day.

I wouldn't give up. I wouldn't take my own life or willfully harm my own soul. I wouldn't willfully sin. I didn't know how I could stand the depression much longer, but somehow I seemed to be standing it. I would just wait and continue on in my depression even if it killed me, and I was afraid it would.

It was sort of like waiting out in the cold late at night for a bus. You are not even sure the bus is running so late at night. But it is too far to walk to where you are going. And if you start to walk you will miss the bus, if there is a bus.

And so you wait for an uncertain bus. You will wait all night if necessary because there is nothing else you can do.

Well, in my case I found that the bus was still running. God honored my waiting. In due time, when the manic-depression had accomplished the purpose God willed that it should accomplish, He lifted the depression.

And the whole experience was a schooling. I learned much about life and about God and about Jesus through this experience, which now is of much more value to me than the schooling of depression cost me in the way of suffering. God has worked it all out for good. He strengthened me as He promised He would if I would wait on Him. Therefore, my friend, if you are depressed in anyway—just wait on the Lord. Wait on the Lord when you can't have faith in Him. If you don't know what else you should do, just wait for God to act. God will, in due time, honor your waiting.

To wait and have patience is never easy, but it is not impossible for anyone. And this is all that God really asks when you are bankrupt with depression.

When uncertain as to what to do in any situation, it is always wise to just wait on the Lord. Wait for His leading, wait for Him to show you what to do.

If you are not sure what to do, you are very apt to do the wrong thing. Some people just give up. Don't give up, but wait on God.

If you gain nothing else but a challenge to wait on God, you will have gained the most important truth from this message.

Wait on the Lord and don't despair.

(To be continued)

## WHAT IS THAT PRAISE FUND?

**The business of the Praise Fund involves land, buildings, and money. Expenses for property are handled in this fund outside of the current operating budgets of the boards.**

Since the beginning of the AFLC, Praise Fund monies have purchased or built property for a total of nearly one million dollars. AFLC headquarters, Seminary, and Bible school facilities and several residences are the visible expressions of wise buying and building. The twenty-five acre campus in prime suburban Minneapolis is now conservatively appraised at twice its original cost.

The present activity of the Praise Fund involves paying off the existing loans on the dormitory/classroom buildings of the Bible school. Loans from individual friends of the school provided the financing for building the original dorm in 1968 and the men's dorm in 1974. Total cost for the two buildings was \$775,000.00.

Steady progress in debt reduction has brought the loans payable to just under \$275,000.00 presently. The board of trustees of the schools has set a goal to retire this debt by 1985. This will be accomplished through dormitory income, special gifts, and praise fund monies.



The Praise Fund budget for 1981-82 is \$31,000.00, which includes: Interest expense \$19,000; overhead expenses \$2,000; and principal reduction \$10,000.

Future activity of the Praise Fund could include additional building projects and/or land acquisition for the needs of a growing AFLC. The Praise Fund will continue to be a means of furthering God's Kingdom through capital expenditures.