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EMPHASIS ON YOUTH

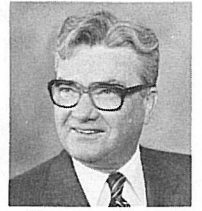
THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

July 6, 1982



Trollhaugen, the home of Edvard Grieg, near Bergen, Norway
Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.

AT THE MASTER'S FEET



Rev. John Strand

How great Thou art!

Master, dare I come to You, even to Your feet? I have nothing to commend me. I am a sinner, not loving You as I ought. Dare I come?

Lord, how good to remember that You washed Your disciples' feet! That You reached out to the rich young ruler. That You sought out doubting Thomas and cursing Peter, along with the rest, after the resurrection. How good to remember this.

But more than this remembering, I come simply because I am what I am; there is no one else, and there is no other place to go that will meet my needs. My needs call for a great Lord.

My Lord, You are a great Lord, a

great God. Psalm Eight expresses Your greatness in a wonderful way.

- O Lord, our Lord,
How majestic is Thy name in all the earth
Who hast displayed Thy splendor above the heavens!
- 2 From the mouth of infants and nursing babes Thou hast established strength,
Because of Thine adversaries,
To make the enemy and the revengeful cease.
 - 3 When I consider Thy heavens,
the work of Thy fingers,
the moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained;
 - 4 What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him?
And the son of man, that Thou dost care for him?
 - 5 Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than God,
And dost crown him with glory and majesty!
 - 6 Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands;
Thou hast put all things under his feet,
 - 7 All sheep and oxen,
And also the beast of the field,
 - 8 The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,
Whatever passes through the paths of the seas.
 - 9 O Lord, our Lord,
How majestic is Thy name in all the earth!

My God, how great Thou art! Thy Name is majestic in all the earth, not only in my little provincial part of it. Thou art over all the earth. Surely my needs are not too great for Thee? Nor are the tremendous needs in our world today too great for Thee! I confess that

sometimes I get discouraged, frightened, and in despair about myself and our world. But You art a great God, and this is Your world. Help me not to forget this, dear Lord. And help me to remember that Your power can meet my every personal need, too. Yes, and I as your child am to think of You as a loving heavenly Father. What a comfort! What a hope!

Lord, You made a beautiful natural world. As I gaze into the vast heavens, how beautiful! As I see the ever-changing prairies, how awesome! As I view the lakes and streams, the flowers and forests, the oceans and seas, they all speak of beauty and power, but most of all, of Thee. How great Thou art to create such a universe. And You populate it with animals and man. Lord, how great Thou art! And to think that with such a creation You still think of me is unbelievable. But You do! Yea, You have made mankind (and I am one of them) the pinnacle of Your creation. Yes, man is little lower than God, You have said. This is true even of me! You have made it so. This humbles me, but glorifies You! Lord, there is hope!

And, Lord, to think that You died for me! This is high, I cannot attain to this. You thought me worth dying for! And You have not changed! You think the same today. Lord, the only explanation is that You love me! You are concerned about me. You seek me out! You forgive me! You desire to guide me! Yes, You have even gone on to prepare a place for me in heaven. *O Lord, our Lord, How majestic is Thy name in all the earth!*

O Lord, babes and sucklings do not question Your power and majesty. *Give and sustain in me a simple, childlike faith!*

Amen

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The Luther League Federation: It's Aims and Goals

by Pastor Allen Monson
President

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—which is your spiritual worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will. For by the grace given to me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us" (Romans 12:1-6a NIV).

The objectives of the Luther League as stated in the Constitution and By-Laws of the Luther League Federation are:

1. To promote and foster a true Christian spirit and fellowship among the young people so that those who are Christ's may grow in His grace and knowledge.

2. To win the straying and unchurched for Christ and His Church.

3. To help the young people find their place of service in the Kingdom of God.

4. In a general way: To work for the extension of God's Kingdom and to support such activities as may from time to time be designated by the Federation.

We also read in the AFLC Luther League Guidelines that "The purpose of the Luther League is to aid in reaching and training young people so they may be an active part of free and living congregations, growing into spiritually

mature adults who are able and willing to carry on the kingdom's work in their midst. *The Luther League is part of the congregation . . .*"

The "body of Christ," which is made up of believers in Christ, is described in Scripture as having "many members" and that "all the members do not have the same function." One member of the body could not say to the other, "I have no need of you" (I Corinthians 12:21 NIV). All the members were to contribute to the growth of Christ's body. This means that every member (young and old) of the body is important! Every "joint" must function and every "individual part" is to make its contribu-

"The Luther League is a part of the congregation' and is not to be something separate from it."

tion to the life of the church (Ephesians 4:16 NIV).

Today, all too often the "body of Christ" is separated and not working together. We have categorized everyone in our congregations into their separate departments and classes. We have classes and activities for the youngest to the oldest. They hardly ever do things together except for Sunday morning worship. Could this be one of the reasons why the "body of Christ" fails to grow and mature? Christians cannot grow effectively in isolation! They need to experience each other.

"The Luther League is a part of the congregation" and is not to be something separate from it. This separation from the congregation can come from both the young and the old. The youth are guilty many times of

separating themselves from the adults and the adults are also guilty of isolating themselves from the youth. It is important that they each have some time alone in their areas of need but not to the place of isolating themselves from each other. Paul said, "So in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others" (Romans 12:5 NIV). We must remember that the Luther League is a part of the congregation and not a separate congregation of only young people. The Luther League is a ministry of the congregation and should have the support of the whole congregation.

God's love is the cement that unites Christians of all ages together. Only when we love one another, become involved in one another's lives, care for one another, bear one another's burdens, does the "body of Christ" begin to grow and mature. Jesus said, "A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. All men will know that you are My disciples if you love one another" (John 13:34, 35 NIV). This love that Christ spoke of is a forgiving love and an accepting love.

It is a love that has depth and discernment. It is a love of commitment to live and die for the benefits of others. Is this the love that is flowing through Christ's body today? If it is, others will know that you are Christ's disciples. All too often today there is not a Christlike love in congregations between the young and the old. This is hindering Christ's kingdom. Hebrews 10:24, 25 says, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us

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"MY LITTLE CHILDREN"

The Lord's standard for His children is established in I John 2:1. These words: "My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin."

In Romans 6:1, the question is asked, "Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase?" The answer is found in the next verse, "May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?"

God has but one standard for His children, that we sin not. I do not believe there is any argument for any Christian, who knows God's Word, that this is still the case today. We do not have any allowance or license to sin.

Interestingly enough, the standard of God's Word is not reaching the ears of our youth because many of them are absent from our churches. Why are they missing and why is it so difficult for our youth to remain faithful to their Baptismal covenant and to stay pure from the moral temptations of today?

I believe our youth are facing problems today because the church has been lax in fulfilling her duties.

First of all, have we, as leaders of the local congregation (pastors included), been able to recognize the devices that Satan is using. He gets us so busy that we completely forget about our youth. Satan has been using this same device for thousands of years and we are slow to learn from it.

To bring an illustration to point—if we go to the Old Testament, to I Samuel 12:1-5, we see the old prophet Samuel addressing his people. There he asks the people, "Have I ever defrauded or oppressed any of you?" The people say, "No, Samuel you have been morally pure; we have found nothing in your hands." Sounds good so far. The man Samuel had followed the Lord from his youth, but let's turn to an earlier portion of Scripture, I Samuel 8:3. Here we see that Samuel's sons did not follow "his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain, and took bribes and perverted justice." Because of the sins of Samuel's sons, the people had a lever to use against Samuel in getting their own way. I Samuel 8:5: "Behold, you have grown

old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations." What a terrible thing to happen. Samuel was crushed! He was rejected and the people rejected God as their king. Why?

I believe, if Samuel's sons had remained faithful to the Lord and would have been demonstrating the power of

"I believe our youth are facing problems today because the church has been lax in fulfilling her duties."

God in their lives, the people may have been satisfied and been challenged to remain faithful to God. However, when the people saw the corruption of the sons of Samuel, there was no spiritual leadership or protection and they began to want to be like the rest of the world. What a tragic thing to happen. Yet it is still happening today, and many of us (parents, church leaders and pastors), experience this ourselves.

Is there any evidence of why Samuel's sons were not faithful to the Lord? I believe there is something that sheds some light on the "why." In I Samuel 7:15-16, we see, "Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life, and he used to go annually on circuit to Bethel, Gilgal and Mizpah, and he judged Israel in all of these places. Then he returned to Ramah, for his house was there." Could it be that Samuel neglected his family and this is why they rebelled against God. Although he was faithful to his people and remained morally upright, he may have forgotten one of his most important responsibilities, his family. I think it is very possible that this was the case.

Have we forgotten our families? Friends, if we are going to fail in something, may it never be in the area of our families, children or youth. The family ties demonstrate to the world the greatest witness or deterrent to our Lord!

Are we, as an Association, building churches at the expense of the family, or are we building families that will expand the church.

When we look at God's first institution, it was the family, and upon this everything in society operates. As the family goes, so goes the church, the community and the country.

The evil one has learned, if he can turn the hearts of the children against their fathers, a whole generation can be lost. The most effective way he has found to turn the children from their parents, is to have the parents preoccupied in many trivial things, or even becoming so busy in the church they neglect their own children. The children have needs which only the parents can fulfill with "quality time" together. If there is going to be effective youth work, there needs to be strong families.

Secondly, in looking at the Great Commission found in Matt. 28:16-20, we often apply verse 19 in baptizing our children, but we fail in verse 20. That is, we fail to live in a way which *teaches* our children how to observe or see Christ's likeness in us. In other Scripture verses we also see that we are to train our

"We can no longer assume everything will work out if we but feed and clothe our children."

children and youth. I believe our youth have a right to expect to see a Biblical principle in action, working, before we try to ram it down their throats. If they can see the power of God in the lives of their parents, church leaders and pastors, this will create interest and a desire to serve a risen Savior, who is in the world today. If we are preaching a Biblical principle, and it is not demonstrated by us—why? Is it our sin?

Thirdly, perhaps we as adults are not

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Train up a child . . . IN THE WAYS OF THE LORD



by Pastor Bruce Dalager
Chairman, Youth Board

In the history of Israel we find a sad example of neglected youth work. In his final address to the people of Israel, recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, Moses reminded the people of all the things they had learned from God and about God. As they were about to cross the Jordan River to enter the promised Land they were exhorted, "You and your son and your grandson (are to) fear the Lord your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments . . . all the days of your life" (Deut. 6:2).

Moses knew from experience how easily and quickly man could forget God and warned them, "Watch yourself, lest you forget the Lord" (6:12). And further, "Beware lest you forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes . . . lest when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them . . . your heart becomes proud, and you forget the Lord your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt" Deut. (8:11-14). Good times can be dangerous for the soul.

These truths they had learned about God were to be transmitted to their children. "These words . . . you shall teach diligently to your sons" (6:7). Their children would not immediately understand all the teachings, but the day would come when further teaching could be given. "When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What do the statutes and the testimonies and the judgments mean . . . ?' then you shall say to your son 'We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt; and the Lord brought us from Egypt . . .'" (6:20-25).

The people knew God's grace and care; they were told not to forget it; they were told to pass their knowledge of God to their children. What happened?

During the lifetime of Joshua, Moses' successor, they were intent on capturing and inhabiting the land God had

promised them. Their dream was coming true. But Joshua died, "and all that generation also were gathered to their fathers (died); and there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel" (Judges 2:10). They had taken the land, but they had lost their children. As a result, one of the darkest ages of Israel's history followed—the 400-year period of the judges when "everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25).

We have seen the same trend in our nation so that today we are living in what some analysts call the post-Christian era. The trend can be reversed, but only as Christian parents take pains to instruct their children in the will and ways of God.

"Where dads and moms are neglecting their responsibility, other youth workers will find their tasks most difficult."

While there is a place for structured and organized teaching of Scriptural truths, the Christian home is still the best place for teaching children the simple, practical lessons of God's love and care. Where dads and moms are themselves growing in the knowledge of God and are faithfully instructing and guiding their children, no other youth workers are necessary. Where dads and moms are neglecting their responsibility, other youth workers will find their task most difficult.

What can parents do?

1. Keep up your own devotional life. You can lead only as far as you have come and teach only what you have learned. Time spent here will result in great reward.

2. Teach the Bible. Use it. For help, go to the Catechism. Luther, in warning parents about secular institutions in

general and secular universities in particular, wrote, "Every institution in which men are not unceasingly occupied with the Word of God must become corrupt." The home, too, can become corrupt.

3. Teach children where they are. They do not need to be sitting at a desk in order to learn. Talk of God's intervention in all affairs. He sees the hungry baby birds and has given them a mother to care for them. He sees the teenager in front of the mirror frustrated over the pimple on his nose. It will pass, but the heart attitude developed will go on.

4. Teach children where they are, part B. A little child does not need a lesson on the Sacraments, but he can be told God loves him and made him His child. An older child needs deeper issues addressed.

5. Be honest. Admit it if you cannot answer his question. Be willing to search and discover with your child. It is better to look for answers *with* him than to find the answer yourself and bring it to him.

6. Learn from your mistakes. There is no perfect parent, but neither is there a completely hopeless one. Confess your sin to your child when you have wronged him.

7. Pray for your child. Ask him to pray for you. Pray together.

Our children are exposed to many strange and Godless philosophies. Many of them who were brought to the Lord in Baptism fall from grace because the ways of God are not being diligently and clearly taught them. The fallen ones as well need to know that God is merciful and will forgive. May we parents not be like the generation of Israelites who were so busy accumulating and enjoying God's gifts that they overlooked the spiritual training of their children. We need to be faithful lest they become pagans. "Train up a child in the way he should go . . ." (Prov. 22:6).

Clouds! Clouds!

... While they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they stood there looking up, behold two men stood by them and said, "Why do you stand here looking up? *This same Jesus* that you saw going up into heaven will come again just as he went" (Acts 1:9-11).

Clouds have really fascinated me since I read these words and I wonder sometimes just what the clouds will look like when Jesus appears again.

I remember one day a few years ago, as I was on my way home from work, about 5 p.m., a horrible black cloud was coming up from the south. I was hoping I'd get home before the storm struck, but I started to think that this cloud looked like what I'd pictured the coming of the end of the world would look like. It was really a frightful sight. There was no break in it anywhere, just a pitch-black, eerie sight.

Then, again, I've sat on a fallen log in the pasture and watched the lazy, puffy clouds drift by, all white with shiny edges where the sun was making a halo around them. There was nothing fearful about them, just a quiet peaceful feeling, as if there could never be any problems. All was right with the world.

I have wondered many times, what kind of cloud is going to bring the Lord back to earth. We are told in Heb. 12:1: "... Seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses ... let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Will the cloud the Lord comes in be a cloud of "witnesses?" And I wonder will I be in that cloud that returns with him or will I be one of those who is here standing, looking up, with nothing in my life to show that I have been redeemed?

Will I be one whose heart is failing for fear as I look and see the Son of man coming in a cloud "with power and great glory"? (Luke 21:27). Or will I be thrilled to know that He is taking me to share His glory with Him. Sometimes I feel most unworthy and yet I long to be

with Him in the clouds. In Mark 14:62, Jesus answered the high priest who had asked Him if he was the Christ the Son of the Blessed with these words, "I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

In Revelation 1:7, we read, "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye

shall see Him, and they *also* which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen."

I pray that I will not be included in the group of those who pierced Him and who will wail at His coming. I want to be ready, watching for His return, but it would be a real blessing to be counted among those who will be in the clouds of witnesses who will return with Him.

One day as I was watching the clouds, I wrote a poem and would like to share it with you.

Look upon the clouds

Today, I stood watching
The clouds go drifting by;
And thought that one day a cloud
Would bring Christ from on high.

There were white fluffy ones,
With halos shining bright;
And big black ugly ones,
with flashing streaks of light.

We are told that one day He will come
In a cloud, as He went away.
But, what sort of cloud do we look for,
When He comes on that glad day?

Will it be a happy cloud,
Or one filled with stormy flashes?
Will it slowly drift along,
Or whip away in thunderous dashes?

We know we'll go to meet Him
In the clouds, as He descends,
And no matter what the clouds look
like,
We will to our Lord ascend.

The stormy cloud, or one of fluff,
It really doesn't matter.
We'll go beyond *all* clouds above,
To dwell with our heavenly Father.

Praise the Lord! To God give thanks
That we can meet Him there,
In clouds above, and filled with love,
Glory and heaven with Jesus share.

So look upon the clouds,
That drift across the sky;
For soon, we'll meet Him there,
In a cloud that's drifting by.

God bless you all

Beatrice Davy
Wannaska, Minn.

Youth Page

A new start

NEW! IMPROVED! We see and hear these words a lot, don't we? Well, I hope they will be true of the Youth Page. It is new in the sense that it has returned after a long absence and with your help it can be better than ever. The Youth Page is the place to look from now on for news about Luther League events, and special features and devotional articles to help you in your Christian life.

The terms "new" and "improved" can also be applied to a Christian. There should be a real difference in our lives when Christ is in control. If not, how will people see that our faith is real?

The people around us are on a search, whether we realize it or not. Everyone is looking for some way to make sense of the world around him. Some search philosophy and religion, while others pursue pleasure to help them to forget the emptiness inside. Many people know that their lives are not as they should be and they are burdened with guilt.

Our real problem is not other people or the events of the past: it is our sinful nature. Since Adam and Eve, people are sinful to the core. This sin separates us from God and this separation makes us feel empty and guilty.

God's word is the key that unlocks the door to freedom. Romans 8:1 says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

How wonderful to know that we can be free from the condemnation we deserve because of our sin. In Christ we become new creatures, no longer prisoners of our sinful natures. This is the message we can pass along to others: there is freedom in Christ.

Coming up

How time flies! Plans are already being made for the 1983 Luther League Convention, and you should be making plans, too.

- Plan to attend.
- Plan to pray between now and then that the convention will be a spiritual blessing for those who attend.
- Plan to work on projects to help your youth group attend.

Watch for details in upcoming issues.

FLY Team report

Are you interested in missions? Every Christian should be participating in spreading the Gospel to those who have not heard. This year's FLY (Free Lutheran Youth) Team is an opportunity for such involvement. This group of young people is traveling to Brazil this summer to gain firsthand experience in mission work. It is a unique opportunity for the members to grow in their faith and to help our missionaries. The team needs your prayers throughout the summer. They also need your financial support. The Luther League Federation has set a goal of raising a portion of the team's support. Your youth group can help. Consider a special fund-raising activity to help the FLY group. Begin to pray now about being a part of a future FLY team.

Help wanted

We have a job for you. We need reporters from each youth group and district to contribute news for this page. Each group should select one person to report League activities. Please send the information well in advance to: Randy Moe, 615-10th St. So., Moorhead, Minn. 56560.

The AFLC Family Camps

GALILEE BIBLE CAMP
Lake Bronson, Minnesota

July 12-18

Dean—Rev. Bruce Dalager, Grand Forks, N.Dak.

Assistant Dean—Rev. LeRoy Flickinger, Leeds, N. Dak.

Camp Manager—Sheldon Mortrud, Thief River Falls, Minn.

Registrar—Glen Espe, Thief River Falls, Minn.

Adult Class—Rev. Larry Severson, Roseau, Minn.

Evening Speaker—Rev. Bruce Dalager

Family Life Hour—Dr. Mary Lindquist, Grand Forks

Confirmation—Lay Pastor Walter Beaman, McIntosh, Minn.

Children—Janell Kneeland, Summit, S. Dak., and Barbara Myhre, Abercrombie, N. Dak.

Costs: adults—\$35; youth—\$30; children, 4-11—\$25; under 4—free. Maximum family rate \$130. Parking fee for campers, no meals—\$3.50 per day.

ASSOCIATION RETREAT CENTER Osceola, Wisconsin

August 9-15

Dean—Rev. Michael Brandt, Amery, Wis.

Assistant Dean—Rev. Donald Greven, Radcliffe, Ia.

Registrars—Mr. Delzer and Art Arneson
Adult Class—Rev. Yeddo Gottel, Minneapolis, Minn.

Evening Speaker—Ev. Kenneth Pentti, Ishpeming, Mich.

Youth—Rev. Kenneth D. Moland, Minneapolis, Minn.

Confirmation—Rev. John Kjos, Cumberland, Wis.

Children—Miss Judith Wold, Thief River Falls, Minn.

Missions—Pastors Einar Unseth, Bismarck, N. Dak., Eugene Enderlein, Minneapolis, Minn., and Elden Nelson, Minneapolis.

Costs: adults—\$35; youth—\$30; children—\$25; under 4—free. Maximum family rate—\$130. Parking fee for campers, no meals—\$3.50 per day.

"Come away . . . and rest a while" (Mark 6:31).

Eichhorst to become new president of LBI

Mr. Leonard R. Williamson, chairman of the LBI Board of Trustees, has announced that the Rev. Dr. C. Jack Eichhorst, St. Cloud, Minnesota, has accepted a call to become the third president of the Lutheran Bible Institute of Seattle, Wash. He succeeds the Rev. Conrad E. Lund, who retired last August after serving as president for a decade. Dr. Eichhorst assumed the duties of the presidency on June 7.

The Lutheran Bible Institute of Seattle, founded in 1944, is an accredited post-secondary educational institution which offers on-campus programs in Biblical studies and a variety of extension ministries to Lutheran congregations. In 1979 the Institute moved to a new campus in suburban Seattle. This spring ground was broken for a 180-acre retirement community surrounding the campus which will be part of a pioneer project in inter-generational ministry.

Eichhorst has served as pastor of Atonement Lutheran Church in St. Cloud since 1972. During that time the congregation doubled in size to 1500 members. Prior to that he was Associate Director of the Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research at St. John's Abbey and University, Collegeville, Minnesota. He has also served as a college professor at Dana College, Blair, Nebraska, and Lea College, Albert Lea, Minnesota. As a college student himself, he organized a mission congregation and saw them through their first building program.

Dr. Eichhorst is a graduate of The Lutheran Bible Institute of Minneapolis, Minnesota (1954), and Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota (1958). In 1962 he graduated with honors from Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, and went on to further graduate study at the University of Muenster, West Germany. A Danforth Fellow Scholarship winner, he went on to pursue additional study at Yale University. He received the M.A. degree in 1965 and the Ph.D. in 1972.

Dr. Eichhorst was a runner-up for the position of bishop in the Southwestern Minnesota District of the American

Lutheran Church. He attended Vatican II as a member of the press corps and has been a pioneer in Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue. In 1981, he represented the ALC at the installation of the new president of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Pastor and Mrs. Eichhorst (Judith) are the parents of four children and plan to move to the Seattle area in June.

Barth accepts presidency of Concordia Seminary

Dr. Karl L. Barth of Milwaukee, Wis., has accepted the call to become president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and will assume that position on July 1.

The eighth man elected to that position, Barth succeeds Dr. Ralph A. Bohlmann, who became president of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) in September, 1981.

Barth was president of the South Wisconsin District of LCMS and relinquished that position at the conclusion of the district convention on June 20.

The 57-year-old church leader was elected seminary president in March after an eight-month process which included 50 nominees for the position.

In accepting the call, Barth told Dr. E. J. Otto, chairman of the Board of Regents of the growing institution, that after deliberating for several weeks on his call to become president, "I am now convinced that it is the Lord's will that I accept this call.

"For over 142 years, Concordia Seminary has trained men for the office of ministry in the LCMS, and I now look forward to joining you and all the members of the seminary community in that exciting task. Our ministry is centered in God's grace and mercy to us in our Savior, Jesus Christ, revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures. May the Lord bless us in that service to him and our fellow Christians."

Barth, a 1947 Master of Divinity degree graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, following a visit to the St. Louis campus last week, said that he was favorably impressed with the faculty and

staff, as well as the student officers with whom he met.

"I saw their deep commitment on behalf of the seminary in preparing men for the holy ministry," Barth said.

Barth served the synod as chairman of the Commission of Theology and Church Relations from 1974-1981. He currently serves as one of the three LCMS representatives to the 10-man Division of Theological Studies of the Lutheran Council in the United States of America.

Barth, born in Milwaukee into a Lutheran clergyman's family, attended Concordia grade school in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Concordia high school and Concordia College in Ft. Wayne, Ind. In 1975, Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Ill., conferred the Doctor of Divinity degree upon Barth. This sister institution in the LCMS has since relocated to Ft. Wayne, Ind.

Barth is married to the former Jeane Kelly of St. Louis. They have five children: Linda Barth Grams, Karl C. Barth, Laurel Barth Adler, Kurt L. Barth and Lisa Barth Schroeder, all of the Milwaukee area.

Dr. John Klotz, director of graduate studies at the seminary, has served as acting president since Bohlmann assumed the LCMS presidency.

(Ed. note: A number of our pastors and professors have studied or are studying at Concordia Seminary in post-graduate work.)

AAL to make anniversary grants

In an effort to help Lutheran congregations recognize and celebrate their centennial and other important anniversaries, Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) has initiated a new fraternal program called Milestone.

Lutheran congregations in the United States reaching their 100th anniversary or any subsequent anniversary in 25 year increments (125th, 150th, etc.) are eligible to receive as much as \$1,000 from AAL to be used to enhance their anniversary observance.

"AAL is trying to create greater opportunities for congregation members to

[Continued on page 15]

editorials

THANK YOU, PASTOR DALAGER

In our previous issue we carried the last devotional article written by Pastor Bruce Dalager in the series "At the Master's Feet." We say "thank you" to Pastor Dalager for his very fine messages revealing a solid theological foundation. Our readers have noticed this, we are sure, and have been both enlightened and blessed. And where there has been explanation there is the greater possibility of lasting blessing.

Readers of *The Lutheran Ambassador* want to pray God's blessing upon Pastor Dalager in his continued ministry in Trinity Lutheran Church, Grand Forks, N. Dak. His parish is in a large residential area of one of North Dakota's largest cities. The field is open and he will do what can be done for the Lord Jesus Christ there.

Of our new writer, whose first article appears on page 2 of this issue, it can truthfully be said that he needs no introduction to 99% of our readers. We refer to Pastor John Strand, former president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. His 16 years in office were very busy ones. Then followed several years as pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Fargo, N. Dak. Now he is in semi-retirement, living near Remer, Minn., at a lake home he and his wife built over a period of several years. He intends to do other writing, too, from that place, as well as to maintain keen involvement in all AFLC work.

Pastor Strand is adopting a little different style for his devotional writings. We think you will appreciate them. God bless you, Pastor Strand, as you write.

EMPHASIS ON YOUTH

In today's *Ambassador* you will find several articles on youth in the church as well as a revival of the Youth Page after a long interruption.

One of today's articles speaks of the Luther League Federation, the youth auxiliary of the Association. It is the organization which ties the local societies in the congregations together. That hasn't been an easy job to build a real spirit of fellowship and cooperation. It still has to be worked at.

Pastor Allen Monson, the LLF president, makes the point that the local Luther League is a part of the congregation. Many of our church members will be glad for that emphasis. They don't want their youth work going off in some other direction. Yet Pastor Monson speaks of the need for both adults and youth to "have some time alone in their own areas of need." No one should quarrel with that.

The other two articles, one by Pastor Bruce Dalager and the other by a writer who wishes to remain anonymous, both lay strong stress upon the home as the place where the primary and most important teaching of Christian truth must take place and the one writer also places great responsibility upon the churches. The need for Christian instruction and example can't be stated too strongly. There has been a breakdown in this. A revival of this nurture in the ways of the Lord is needed desperately.

In this connection, it is significant to note that a survey in the Church of the Lutheran Brethren conducted by Search Institute found, among other things, that regular family devotions are held in only 29% of the Church's homes. Among all denominations which have been sampled the percentage is only 14%. Where would the AFLC come down in such a sampling? Certainly no better than the CLB. Rather, we think, somewhere between the 29% and the 14%. If the family altar isn't strong, then Christian nurture in the homes can't be expected to be very strong either.

Now, as to the Youth Page, we hope that Randy Moe, LLF devotional life secretary, will get lots of cooperation from the people he asks to write articles and from the local leagues in sending in news. Make his job easier by helping him. Everyone would like to hear from other places, but in order for that to happen someone will have to do the writing and the sending of news.

Interest heightens, too, as another Luther League convention approaches. The next convention will likely be held in the West next year. That sounds great. Car caravans will be forming.

God bless our youth work. Youth are a part of our church. They are not only the future, they are now.

EASY PENITENCE

Hosea 7:14

"They do not cry to Me from the heart." R.S.V.

"And they have not cried unto Me with their heart." K.J.V.

It is so easy to regret our misfortunes; it is an entirely different thing to repent of our sins.

When he entered the pastor's study, it was easy to see he had been very much shaken. His ashen face, his trembling hands, his tremulous voice, all betokened a man who was laboring under a terrible strain. After five minutes of conversation the case was perfectly plain. Years of outrageous sinning had caught up with him, and he was looking down into an inky black pit. But by no word or tone of his voice did he intimate the slightest penitence. He was sorry, of course, but only sorry that he had been caught. He was tormented by fear, but not overwhelmed by shame.

Only in the rarest of instances do the Scriptures make any promise to the terrified man, but they are replete with assurances to the penitent. The help of the Lord is guaranteed to those who do truly and earnestly repent of their sins and who find the memory of them grievous.

There is a wide difference between an escape from punishment and redemption from sin. No man is truly penitent who looks back wistfully on his sinning and is restrained from new sins only by the fear of being detected. Only when his past sinning appears loathsome to him has he cried unto the Lord from his heart.

Let us then inspect our prayers for forgiveness. Let us examine them with the utmost care. Let us test them by the most rigid standards. Do they represent true penitence for sin, a determination to forsake it because it is sinful, or are they no more than a pious voice of our fear of retribution? Do they indicate a determination to live a new life free from the corruptions which have character-

ized the former life? If God forgives us this time, will He have to forgive the same sin within the space of a few hours or days?

True penitence is far from easy. It calls for a searching of soul few of us are

willing to make, for few of us have the courage to face the ugly facts.

—*New Light from Old Lamps*

by Roy L. Smith

Abingdon Press

Nashville, Tenn.

news of the churches

From here and there

Minnewaukan, N. Dak.—A meeting was held on Monday, June 7, at the Otter Tail Power Company meeting room in Devils Lake, N. Dak., with interested persons to discuss the possibility of beginning a congregation in that city. Pastor Elden Nelson, Home Missions director of the AFLC, and area pastors Jerome Nikunen and LeRoy Flickinger were also present.

A general church cleaning took place at Trinity Church on Saturday, June 12, following the men's prayer breakfast.

Roseau, Minn.—The Rose Men's Club had a fishing party recently. The fishing forays took place at 11 a.m., 2 p.m., and 4 p.m., a different group each time. The launchings took place at Nikunens' cottage on Springsteel Island, Lake of the Woods.

Ferndale, Wash.—The Triumph Lutheran parish paper reports that a Mini-Conference was held by the West Coast District churches on Saturday, May 22, in Eugene, Oregon, Rev. Wm. Moberg, pastor. Among other things, the annual report to the Church of AFLC president, Richard Snipstead, was read to the assembly. Pastor Stephen Odegard of Kirkland, Wash., announced the District Teen Bible Camp which will be held at Orcas Island, Moran State Park, July 10-12.

Dalton, Minn.—Seven young people were confirmed in the parish this spring: two each at Tordenskjold and Kvam Churches, and three at Zion Lutheran.

Thief River Falls, Minn.—Seven "Backyard Bible Schools" were held simultaneously through Our Saviour's

Lutheran Church, June 1-5. Six were at private homes, one at the church. Fifteen teachers were involved.

Reiner and Our Saviour's Churches held a family picnic at Tilburg Park at Cross Lake, near Gully, on Sunday, June 13. A short worship service was held at 3 o'clock with the offering going to the building fund of Our Saviour's Christian Academy.

Wyoming, Minn.—The Hope Lutheran Sunday School, all ages, went over to the Museum of Wood in Spooner, Wis., to view the life-size carvings out of Ponderosa pine, among them many Biblical characters, such as Jesus, Mary, Daniel, etc. A picnic lunch was enjoyed after the tour.

Minneapolis, Minn.—A sound system was installed recently in Faith Lutheran Church, with speakers both in the sanctuary and the basement. Wash basins have also been installed in both restrooms with running water, obviating the need to carry water in as in the past.

At Rosedale Lutheran, part of the basement floor has been carpeted, the area which can be used as a worship center in the coldest part of the winter. An altar, kneeling rail and drapery will also probably be secured.

Newfolden, Minn.—Men of the Westaker-Bethania Parish served a pancake supper at the Community Center on June 26 to raise funds for the parsonage building project recently completed. Lutheran Brotherhood matched the funds which were raised.

Kalispell, Mont.—Evangelist Robert Griffin of the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement will be speaking at special meetings in the fall at Faith Lutheran.

We again notice Ruth's spirit of humility and her willingness to acknowledge her own unworthiness while courageously pleading her cause. True humility engenders courage!

15. Why can we have boldness as we approach God in Christ? _____

Unless we recognize our own unworthiness and make the approach in the spirit of humility, we will miss the blessing (Is. 64:6).

This hymn expresses the invitation to come to God.

O come to the Savior, He patiently waits To save by His power divine; Come, anchor your soul in the Haven of Rest, And say, "My Beloved in mine."	I've anchored my soul in the Haven of Rest, I'll sail in the wide seas no more; The tempest may sweep o'er the wild stormy deep, In Jesus I'm safe evermore.
--	---

What a peace and a refuge!!

Ruth

WMF Bible Study

August, 1982

Read the third chapter of Ruth, vs. 1-8.

Chapter three brings us to a dramatic climax. Naomi's former hopeless sorrow had given way to the joyful hope that Boaz, as a near relative, having taken an obvious interest in Ruth, would be willing to take upon himself the duty of redeeming her property, which she had been obliged to sell, and at the same time, as the custom in the case, to enter into marriage with her (Deut. 25:5-10).

1. What is the meaning of "rest" in verse 1? _____

In Leviticus 25 we read of God's provision with regard to inheritance in the Promised Land.

2. What difference do you notice between 3:1 and 1:9? _____

When we are in the right relationship to God He is able to help us see our responsibility to others. Then we will not ask, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

3. Deuteronomy 12:9—What type of rest is this? _____

The sinner should seek rest from all his sin at the hand of Jesus (Matt. 11:28).
4. What do Naomi's actions reveal to us? _____

Boaz himself had blessed Ruth for having taken shelter under the wings of the Lord God of Israel and having come to trust in His name.

5. What happened to the darkness of Ruth's lot when she returned to Bethlehem? _____

6. In verse 2, we find Boaz working. Did he do any of the other work recorded in this Book? Why did he do this work? _____

In those days the threshing floor was out on the field where the grain was reaped. _____

7. Read Deuteronomy 25:7-9—Had Boaz shown his intention of carrying out his obligation as near-kinsman? _____

8. Do you think it was easy for Ruth to make that promise in 3:5? _____

The seeming indelicacy of these verses (3-5) disappears when viewed in the light of the practices of those days. _____

9. Can you think of some objection Ruth might have raised to Naomi's suggestion? _____

May that be our response every time the Lord bids us do something that takes courage and humility and other qualities as well! _____

10. Take note of the word "kinsman." Ruth said, "... thou art a near kinsman". What does the word kinsman mean? _____

The Jewish law was that if a man died without issue, his nearest kinsman was to marry his widow in order that the family would not become extinct.

11. Boaz was a type of Christ, as we have said before in these lessons. In what way is this Israelite, who might lose his fields because he did not have a son, similar to us in our natural state? _____

12. Who shall deliver us and lift up our heads and restore our inheritance in the Lord? Who will bring us back into the fold? _____

13. Have you sought Him as Ruth did Boaz? I John 1:9; Acts 4:12 _____

14. What was the relationship of Boaz to Ruth? _____

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

What is the unpardonable sin?

by Martin Hegland

Some serious young people who have difficulty in getting assurance as to their state of grace with God come to be afflicted by the fear that they have committed the unpardonable sin and therefore cannot be forgiven. It may therefore be helpful to say something about this subject.

The Bible does speak of an unpardonable sin. It is the sin against the Holy Spirit. The most definite passages relating to this sin are the following:

"Therefore I say unto you, Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come" (Matt. 12:31-32).

"Verily I say unto you, All their sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and their blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin" (Mark 3:28-29).

"And every one who shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit it shall not be forgiven" (Luke 12:10).

"For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of

God afresh, and put Him to an open shame" (Hebrews 6:4-6).

"For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries. A man that hath set at nought Moses' law dieth without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be judged worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Hebrews 10:26-29).

In his *Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, page 252, Dr. Heinrich Schmid gives the following definition of the sin against the Holy Spirit: "This sin consists in a malicious denial of, a hostile attack upon, and a horrid blasphemy of divine truth, evidently known and approved by conscience, and an obstinate and finally persevering rejection of all the means of salvation."

According to the Scripture passages quoted and the above definition the sin against the Holy Spirit is a very terrible thing. It represents an extreme stage of obstinacy on the part of a hardened unbeliever.

It is very unlikely that any ordinary young person has committed this sin. In fact, theologians take the position that if a person is worried about the possibility of having committed this sin, that very concern is the best evidence that he has not committed it. So, friend, if you are

afflicted with fear on this point, be assured that you have not committed the unpardonable sin. Be assured that God in His love and mercy stands with open arms ready to receive you as a repentant sinner and, for Christ's sake, grants you a full forgiveness of all your sins. Go to God just as you are and believe that you are forgiven. Jesus invites you: "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

While these words of assurance are written for afflicted souls, let there also be sounded a warning of the extreme danger of repeatedly resisting the call of God and rejecting His offered grace. As the ear may become dulled to the ringing of an alarm clock by repeatedly ignoring it, so the conscience may become increasingly hardened by repeatedly rejecting the call of God. If such an attitude is

"... the sin against the Holy Spirit is a very terrible thing."

persisted in there may come a time when the soul is no longer capable of hearing the voice of God. It is a terrible thing to become thus hardened in one's heart. Therefore, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near."

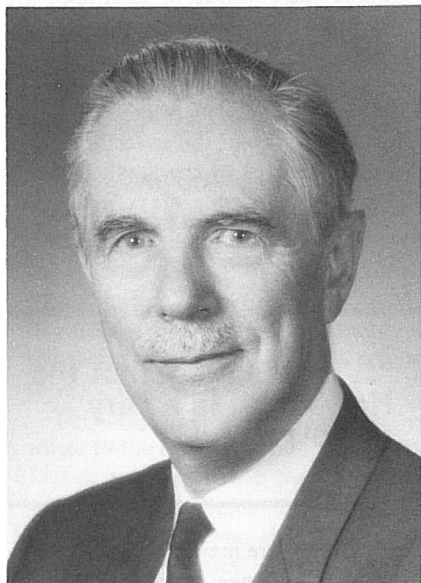
—From *Problems of Young Christians*
by Martin Hegland
Augsburg Publishing House

Next time: In What Kinds of Amusements May a Christian Take Part?

Summer Institute of Theology to begin shortly

The annual Summer Institute of Theology will begin at Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary on July 26 and will continue through August 6. During the second week, August 2-6, the guest lecturer will be Dr. Ralph Turnbull, shown here. Currently a professor at Warner Pacific College in Portland, Ore., he will teach a course on expository preaching in the Institute.

Also during the second week a seminar on Creationism will be held during the evenings of August 2, 3 and 5. Rev. Walter Lang, director of the Bible Science Association, will conduct it.



For more information on the Institute, write or call:

AFLTS
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441
(612) 545-5631

Cumberland church cradle roll

At a cradle roll party on April 24 in Section Ten Lutheran Church, Cumberland, Wis., four children were honored. Two of them, Faith Mendlik and Michael Hustad, were also graduated to the Sunday School, having reached age 4.

Pictured here are, left to right, Connie

Mendlik and Faith, Kathy Hustad and Michael, Mary Riebe and Corrie, Sherry Mackrill and Angie, and Sheryll (Mrs. John) Kjos and Sarah.

Mr. and Mrs. Loris Hustad, Shawn and Michael became members of Section Ten a year ago in June.

—Corr.



High School youth honored

Grace Lutheran Church, Valley City, N. Dak., held a Graduation-Recognition Banquet for the High School youth group. Each graduate was honored and the different achievements and activities of all the young people were recognized, such as special awards, clubs, honors,

etc., that they gained throughout the school year. The formal dinner was held at the Valley City State College for the young people as well as their parents. A good time was had by all.

—Shirley Bjornson



Minnesota Laymen to meet in North Dakota

The Northern Minnesota Lutheran Laymen's Society will hold its July meeting in Ny Stavanger Lutheran Church, in Buxton, N. Dak., on Sunday, the 18th. The text to be discussed is Romans 7. All are welcome.

Art Joppru, Chm.
Joe Jacobson, Sec.

In Memoriam

Key: The name of the town is the address of the deceased. Following that is listed the name of the deceased, age, date of death, and the church in which he or she held membership.

MINNESOTA

Roseau

Jenny Marie Dahl, 91, June 3, Spruce

Once Tioga pastor dies

Rev. Arthur G. Hansen, 91, who served the Tioga, N. Dak., parish from 1916-20, passed away April 15. He was living at Stewartville, Minn. Besides the Tioga pastorate, he had served a year in Minneapolis, Minn., and for 40 years as pastor of Bethel Lutheran Church, Rochester, Minn. He was a member of the Lutheran Free Church Board of Home Missions from 1946-50.

Pastor Hansen was born in Ishpeming, Mich., March 24, 1891. He was educated at Augsburg College and Seminary, Minneapolis. He married Inga S. Estenstad in 1916.

Blessed be his memory.

(Ed. note: Pastor Hansen was a classmate of my father, both ordained in 1915. To our knowledge, he may have been the last surviving member of that class.)

LUTHER...

encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching" (NIV). It would be good for congregations "to consider how to spur one another on toward love and good deeds." We need to consider what the needs are of the whole body of Christ in

CHILDREN...

willing to admit that youth have needs we might not have had when we were young. Youth, on the same hand, may not be willing to admit that adults have some of the very values they are seeking. Children are not carbon copies and must be all reached as individuals.

Credits omitted

In our June 8th issue, the following credits were omitted on the cover photos: The large picture should have read "Lake Jeppy" Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S. The inset photo should have been credited to Mrs. Wayne Hjermstad.

AFLBS Homecoming

Homecoming XVI is fast approaching! The biggest ever, if you reserve the dates October 8-10! This year the classes of '72 and '77 will be honored. See you there.

Homecoming Committee

Book offer

HEAVEN and EARTH is now on sale for only \$6.75. Eighty pages of exquisite photographs interspersed with some of the best-loved verses from the Bible. This book is an inspiring way to express your love and will make a distinctly original gift for any occasion. You can order this book from Vincent Raaen, Erskine, Minn. 56535. All monies received will be given to Missions. Please make check payable to Dovre Church.

our midst. The Luther League can be of great help in many areas of ministry and service in a local congregation. As a church works together the world will notice the unity and love expressed to both young and old and the kingdom will be furthered.

Our youth today are faced with many temptations and snares which we as parents never had. We can no longer assume everything will work out if we but feed and clothe our children.

I believe that in order for our youth to be of service and remain in the church, we must not treat them as spectators, for they are part of the "body of Christ." They are so vulnerable and valuable; we must give their faith every opportunity to *grow* and to *exercise*.

In closing, youth, if you apply the rest of I John's exhortation as seen therein, you will be on the road to eternal life and happiness. Therefore, concluding in John's words: I John 2:12: "Little children . . . your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake;" 2:18: "Children, it is the *last hour* . . .;" 2:28: "And now, little children, *abide in Him*, so that when He appears we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming;" 3:7: "Little children, let no one *deceive you* . . .;" 3:18: "Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in *deed and truth*;" 4:4: "*You are from God*, little children . . .;" and, finally, 5:21: "Little children, guard yourselves from idols."

We are counting on you—youth. We are behind you! Please allow us an opportunity to demonstrate it to you. God's Blessings! I Timothy 4:12: "Let no one look down on your youthfulness."

Name withheld

AAL...

appreciate and become involved in their anniversary celebrations," said Fred Pahl of AAL's staff. "A major anniversary should be a time of reflection and celebration, as well as a time to think about the congregation's future and about ways to extend its ministry."

Pahl says congregations from all Lutheran church bodies will be invited to participate in Milestone. AAL has identified more than 250 Lutheran churches in the United States eligible for the special anniversary grants this year. These churches will divide approximately \$142,000, based on the number of members in each congregation.

AAL is the nation's largest fraternal benefit society serving Lutherans and their families with insurance and other fraternal benefits since 1902.

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paid at Minneapolis, Minn.

*Savior, while my heart
is tender,
I would yield that heart
to Thee;
All my powers to Thee
surrender,
Thine and only Thine to be.
Take me now, Lord Jesus,
take me,
Let my youthful heart be
Thine,
Thy devoted servant
make me,
Fill my soul with love divine.*

*May this solemn consecration
Never once forgotten be;
Let it know no revocation,
Registered, confirmed
by Thee.
Thine I am, O Lord, forever
To Thy service set apart;
Suffer me to leave
Thee never,
Seal Thine image on
my heart.*

John Burton, 1850

