

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

October 13, 1981



The 95 Theses

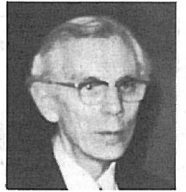
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A mighty fortress is
our God,
A bulwark never failing;
... Did we in our own
strength confide,
Our striving would be
losing;
Were not the right Man
on our side,
The Man of God's own
choosing.
Dost ask who that
may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth His Name,
From age to age the
same,
And He must win the
battle.

THE REFORMATION AND TODAY

AT THE MASTER'S FEET

by Pastor Harvey Carlson



Through the eyes of Jesus

In the previous three articles we have been looking at some of the things God's Word says about the far-reaching program Jesus will carry out when He returns. This time I want to add just one brief further thought.

When all the things we have noted have been fully cared for (salvation for believers completed, creation changed, Satan judged, etc.), then Jesus will bring about the eternal kingdom of God. "Then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father" (1 Cor. 15:24). This kingdom, which comes into being after the first heaven and earth have passed away (Rev. 21:1), is further described in Rev. 21:2-7. Sad to say, not all will share in that kingdom because v. 8 speaks of those whose "part will be in the lake that burns with fire." God's Word never teaches that eventually all

will be saved. We need to make certain that we are not among the unbelieving and unrepentant (v. 8).

Now we want to turn to some of the things that Jesus Himself said about his second coming and look into the future "through the eyes of Jesus."

READ CAREFULLY!

I would like to look carefully with you as to what Jesus taught as to the time of His return.

We all need the reminder to always examine the Scriptures closely to see exactly what is said. Only then will we really know the truth. Just the other day someone said that witnessing should begin at home, because Jesus taught that we should "begin at Jerusalem." I don't argue against serving the Lord right where we are, but in that verse Jesus was not saying that we should "start at home," because, for most of those to whom Jesus spoke, Galilee, not Jerusalem, was home!

In regard to the time of Jesus' return, it is often believed that Jesus gave no clear teaching on this matter, so that the early believers rightfully looked for Him to return almost immediately. Also, that Jesus discouraged studying what happens in the world, because "no one knows the day or hour" of His returning.

Is the above really what Jesus taught? Let's examine the Scriptures and see. The writer believes that Jesus indicated that His return would be delayed and definitely taught His early disciples to not expect Him to come back right away. Also, that Jesus urged us to look for certain things to happen and that when the time of His return is actually near it is possible to know it.

A DELAYED RETURN

Here are a few of Jesus' statements

declaring that His return would be delayed:

—speaking of the time of the coming of the kingdom, He told His disciples, "You shall long to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you *will not see it*" (Lk. 17:22).

—when some supposed the kingdom of God was to appear immediately, Jesus spoke (to cancel out this wrong belief) of a nobleman going to "a distant country" . . . and then returning (Lk. 19:12). This would take considerable time.

—Jesus said to Peter that "when you grow old" certain things would happen. "This He said, indicating by what kind of death he would glorify God" (Jn. 21:18-19). Peter would have to experience death. Jesus would not return in his lifetime.

—in speaking of His return, Jesus said "*after a long time*, the master . . . came" (Matt. 25:19).

—when the disciples asked if the kingdom was now going to be restored to Israel, Jesus spoke of their being His witnesses throughout the world (Acts 1). He was saying: "Don't concentrate on Israel's future; there is another assignment you must care for first."

Did the early church expect Jesus back immediately, or almost immediately? If so, they were disappointed, and this simply because they ignored Jesus' own clear teaching. (Earlier, His disciples had not listened to and followed His plain teaching that He would rise on the third day. No one was out at the tomb that Sunday morning to see His resurrection!) We, too, can avoid the disappointment of having certain hopes fulfilled, if we would only follow more carefully what the Bible says.

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BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

GREAT REFORMATION THEMES

by Pastor Wesley
Langaas
McVie, N. Dakota



"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9 NAS).

"By grace, through faith." Those words set the theme and the essence of the Christian religion and make it distinctive among all religions. They put it in a class by itself. Christianity is based on the eternal truth of the revealed Word of God, and that is something all Christians must keep uppermost in their minds.

The theme is a truth that separates and purifies the lives that are changed by it. And in our enlightened age one

would expect it to be clearly understood and accepted. However, the great truths of the Protestant Reformation, "Grace alone" and "Faith alone," still need to be stressed today that we might experience not only a *reformation* but a *regeneration* of lives.

Though the Gospel is preached freely and fully today, and the way should be clear to all who hear, many are still confused. Asking the average person about salvation will still yield answers such as this: "Oh, I do the best I can; I live a good, upright and moral life." Or, "God tells us in the Bible how to live and we have to do our best with what we know." Both of these are fine in their place, but these efforts have no place in obtaining the righteousness God demands. For under such conditions, how can a person ever be sure of heaven? When have I done enough? Or must I go to one more service, say one more prayer, or do one more thing? Is God satisfied now? Am I safe now? That hardly counts for a blessed assurance.

"Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6). And that must be a faith in the *one person* who is perfect and acceptable in God's sight—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, who by an act of divine grace was "delivered up because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification" (Rom. 4:25).

The Main Thing

"By grace through faith" focuses on the central doctrine of Christianity, justification by faith. This, as stated in the *Formula of Concord*, is "the chief article of the entire Christian doctrine," and "without which no poor conscience can have any abiding comfort or rightly understand the riches of the grace of Christ."

True understanding of this article is essential for the purity of the church. Luther says that "where this single article remains pure, Christendom will remain pure, in beautiful harmony, and without any schisms. But where it does not remain pure, it is impossible to repel any error or heretical spirit."

It must center on Christ and his atonement for sin, and that must be appropriated to each one of us personally. Again Luther writes, "It is the will and pleasure of the Father, that He

who sees the Son and believes on Him have eternal life. Would to God this fact would sink into the heart! It is stated plainly, bluntly, and clearly enough that he who has the Son is to have eternal life together with the forgiveness of sins and is to be rid of death. If only people would think what this means! *Whence* are they to have it? Merely from hearing and seeing the Son and believing on Him."

Faith Alone

This matter of faith can become complicated because of the many connotations and uses attached to the word. But in the matter of saving faith it is important to remember that it merely speaks of the means by which we lay hold of the merits of Christ. Faith must have an object. In a general sense faith must focus on God and His ability to accomplish anything in our lives. Such faith will be as strong as *He is*, whatever it may feel like to us. Saving faith must be focused in the same way on the One who is able to save, and has been gracious enough to choose to do so. By the means of "faith alone" His righteousness is imputed to the believer.

As used by the Reformers, and as must be stressed today, faith is removed from any connotation of effort on the part of man. The size, strength and effort of faith are of no consequence as long as it is directed to and rests in the One with whom nothing is impossible.

Luther had good reason to stress this matter of "faith alone." His Roman opponents were willing to admit that the sinner is saved by faith, but refused to admit he is justified by faith "alone." They knew that by this term the Lutherans meant to define faith merely as a "receiving means" of the righteousness of Christ offered in the Gospel. And to this they objected because in their view "saved by faith" saw faith as a human virtue or good quality implanted by God. Thus "faith" became

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ONE MAN'S JOURNEY TO FAITH

by Pastor Robert L. Lee
the Association Schools



FAITH . . .

a matter of human effort, a "good work" on man's part. As such it was often expected to show itself in one's natural efforts to love God and man.

But the emphasis on "faith alone" rejected all human efforts, as indeed it must. The Law requires love to God and man, but this effort of love is completely separated from justifying faith. Love and obedience follow faith, but they have no part in the work of personal regeneration. The believer is justified by faith alone, without the deeds of the law (Rom. 3:28, 4:5). Such is salvation by grace alone. The sinner is saved without any preceding, present or subsequent human effort. He must, of course, "look unto Jesus." According to the *Formula of Concord*, "Faith does not justify because it is so good a work and so God-pleasing an effort, but because it lays hold on and accepts the merit of Christ in the promise of the Gospel."

"The sinner is saved without any preceding, present or subsequent human effort."

Grace Alone

Where does it all begin? In the heart of God. It is by grace. That is to say that salvation is ascribed to God's gracious disposition in Christ. And it is offered for the sake of Christ's vicarious satisfaction on the cross. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them. . . ." (II Cor. 5:19). It was there that God chose to cancel out the "certificate of debt" (Col. 2:14) because Jesus paid it in full. Faith is the means by which we take hold of that act of grace. It is by the goodness and love of God, His "compassions that never fail" (Lam. 3:22), that sinners are brought to Him and forgiven.

"Remember this or you may fall into error by fixing your minds so much upon the faith which is the channel of salvation that you will forget the grace which is the fountain and source even of faith itself" (Spurgeon).

Grace is the first and last moving cause of salvation. Faith is essential in receiving and applying it. We are saved "through faith," but salvation is "by grace."

"Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!" (II Cor. 9:15).

The Reformation can be studied from many different angles. Politics, economics and philosophy have all been suggested as ways to understanding this great historical event; some have even tried to psychoanalyze Luther to find an explanation.

But the place to begin if one would understand the Reformation is the story of Martin Luther's journey to faith, his struggle to find peace with God. For the Reformation was, above all, a revival of religion.

The emphasis of the Church of that day was deceptive. Hell was portrayed in vivid horror; purgatory was presented as a middle ground between heaven and hell, where preparation of the soul for heaven could be continued, but even this was a fearful place of torment. Also, the world itself was described as infested with demonic spirits conspiring for man's doom.

No wonder Martin Luther was spiritually troubled! These fearful teachings were very real to the young man, who seems to have possessed a sensitive spirit. The Church tried to help him guard against such a fearful future, however, by suggesting that he receive the Sacrament (of the Altar), perform the works of mercy, and enlist the aid of the saints to help others.

But the most effective way to find peace with God was to become a monk. It is not surprising, then, when in July, 1505, while caught in a great storm of thunder and lightening, Luther cried out, "St. Anne, help me; I will become a monk!"

This decision led to a halt in his legal studies and Martin Luther entered a monastery. But this brought him only temporary peace, for the more he learned about God, the greater his fears became. The all-holy, eternal God both attracted and repelled him; Jesus Christ even appeared to be only a harsh judge.

Monasticism suggested means to bridge the gap between a holy God and a sinful man, but they were all centered around human effort. So Luther fasted night and day until even his cheeks caved in; he confessed his sins for six hours straight; in fact, in later years he believed that his health had been permanently damaged by this. Finally, he visited the Holy City of Rome, itself, in 1511, and worshipped at each of the shrines, viewing all the

sacred relics. Yet after climbing a sacred stairway on his knees, kissing each step, he still doubted.

The final blow to Luther's religious efforts came as he studied the teaching of St. Augustine, who maintained that the saved are saved, the lost are lost, and nothing man can do will make any difference; also, it is impossible to know for sure which way your faith has been predestined. How could someone ever love such a God? "Love Him?", said Luther. "I do not love Him; I hate Him."

His spiritual advisor tried to turn his thoughts to Christ, but this did not help because his idea of Christ was that of a condemning judge. Despair flooded his soul. Then his advisor directed him to a study of the Scriptures.

Luther's first studies, in 1513-15, were in the Psalms. While considering the 22nd Psalm, he was stopped by the words, "My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" What could it mean that the Son of God was forsaken? The Holy Spirit opened Luther's mind to grasp the wonderful truth that He who was without sin became sin for our sakes, taking upon Himself the iniquity of us all.

Later, while studying the Book of Romans, Luther grappled with the meaning of chapter one, verse 17: "For in it (that is, the Gospel) the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live' (RSV). Now the Spirit opened his heart to believe that he was saved by faith alone, not by works. Now he understood that since God had judged his sins in Christ, he no longer faced a condemning judge but a loving Heavenly Father.

As he himself expressed it: "Night and day I pondered until I saw the connection between the justice of God and the statement that 'the just shall live by his faith.' Then I grasped that the justice of God is that righteousness by which through grace and sheer mercy God justifies us through faith. Thereupon I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise. The whole of Scripture took on a new meaning, and whereas before the 'justice of God' had filled me with hate, now it became to me inexpressibly sweet in greater love."

"... his idea of Christ was that of a condemning judge. Despair flooded his soul."

Everything that follows can be seen as a fruit of Luther's faith discovery. Now he was shocked and angered by the indulgence racket which seemed to be a denial of that Gospel which had transformed his life. Following the custom of that day, he wrote out his objections and posted them on the church door at Wittenberg, All Saints Eve, 1517, and so we have the 95 Theses. These were soon followed by other tracts, reaching a wider and wider audience; then came his translation of the Bible into German, Biblical commentaries, hymns and numerous correspondence.

Luther's spiritual discovery is also the key to understanding the source of the courage that allowed him to proclaim his faith and convictions before the emperor and other leaders of church and state at the Diet of Worms, 1521. "Unless I am convinced by Scripture and plain reason ... my con-

science is captive to the Word of God, I cannot and I will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. God help me. Amen."

One man's journey to faith revolutionized his life ... and his world. And our world cannot forget him either, for his name is upon our churches, we teach our children from the *Small Catechism* which he authored, we sing his hymns.

But above all, we pray that our lives, and the lives of those around us, might be transformed by the same discovery of God's love for us in Jesus Christ, that touched the life of Martin Luther, that the world of today might experience the same Gospel power that turned the world upside down during Luther's day, just as it did when it was first proclaimed (Acts 17:6).

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever!" (Hebrews 13:8, KJV).



The Reformers

RNS Photo

by Pastor Francis W. Monseth
Dean, Free Lutheran Seminary



THE WORD ALONE

the formal principle of the Reformation

The great formal principle of the Lutheran Reformation of the 16th century was *sola Scriptura*—the Word alone. Why did this principle mean so much to Martin Luther and the rest of the Reformers? What does it mean for us in our relationship to the Word of God—the Bible?

The Discovery of the Principle

It is true that the authority of the Bible was not questioned by the church of Luther's boyhood. The official Roman Catholic position held to the authority of the Scripture as it does to this day. However, the Word of God, they taught, is not the *only* authority. The tradition of the Church stands on an equal footing with the Scripture in Catholic teaching. By tradition is meant the canons, decrees and decisions issued by the councils of the church and by the Pope himself. To place tradition on a par with the Bible effectively undermines the authority of Scripture since the Church is looked to as its interpreter. What the church says the Bible teaches, therefore, becomes decisive.

Luther's great rediscovery of "the Word alone" principle is traceable to the period just after his "tower experience" when he was able to say at last with assurance that he knew he was a child of God. Thus the great rediscovery of *sola gratia* (grace alone) and *sola fide* (faith alone) coincided with *sola Scriptura*. This is significant because if it is God Himself who is assuring us through His Word that our sins are forgiven, by grace through faith, then no one can take away that promise, not even the decrees of a church.

The Meaning of the Principle

While there are several implications of the principle of "the Word alone," the most prominent application of *sola Scriptura* during the days of the Reformation was in terms of the absolute authority of the Word of God in all matters of faith and life. There are few truths which Luther emphasizes more

often and more strongly than this one. In a sermon preached in 1534 on Luke 18:31-34, he declared: "We should not take offense at the Word of God even though it may sound strange, unlikely, and impossible; but we should firmly insist that if God has said it it must also come to pass. For no one should ask whether it is possible but should only determine whether God has said it. He is mighty and faithful enough also to do it. Therefore we should believe it. But he who does not want to believe it blasphemes God to the highest degree" (Ewald Plass, ed., *What Luther says*, Vol. III, St. Louis: Concordia, 1959, p. 1472).

Luther believed that the all-important consideration was to ascertain if God's Word had spoken on a matter. If it had, then the question was settled. It remained only to acknowledge it as true. Though one's reason might balk

MUSIC and the REFORMATION

a
singing
church

by Mr. Donald Rodvold,
Director of Music,
the Association Schools

John Huss was burned at the stake largely because of his efforts to introduce congregational singing. His followers were warned to cease the practice of singing hymns or face the same consequences. The Roman Church decreed, "Laymen are forbidden to preach and interpret the Scriptures; much more are they forbidden to sing publicly in the churches." Music belonged exclusively to the priestly office as did all the elements of worship; the congregation was restricted to silence and passive observation.

Luther declared that all believers constitute a universal priesthood, that laity should also participate in worship

and that congregational singing was an essential and inevitable part of corporate worship. Therefore, he wanted original hymns, because, while he loved the Latin hymns that glorified Christ, many were so permeated with Mariolatry and other doctrinal errors that they were unacceptable. He often expressed the wish that someone more gifted than he might return these refined gems to the people in the vernacular.

He extended a call. "We need artists who are able to prepare for us *pious* and *spiritual* songs which *deserve being used in the Church of God*."

But before the call was heard, a startling event gave blossom to an unknown bud within Luther himself. Two young followers were sentenced to be burned. As the fire and smoke smothered

at the acceptance of aspects of Biblical revelation, nevertheless all Scripture remains the truth worthy of full confidence.

The authority of Scripture also meant for Luther that the Bible is to be the final standard by which all doctrines and experiences are judged. Nothing should be allowed to contradict this Word of God. In his exposition of Genesis 37:9, Luther remarked: "While we are not to despise prophets and dreamers if their prophecies and dreams agree with the Word of God and faith, yet we should first of all urge the studying of Moses and the prophets, that is, that we have, before all, the pure Word and its true understanding. From this we shall then be able to judge all visions, all dreams and prophecies. Yea we shall be able to judge the angels, both the good and the evil" (Plass, 1473). Luther took exception not only to the Roman elevation of tradition to an equal footing with the Bible but he also warned of the danger represented by the so-called "enthusiasts" of his day. The enthusiasts, an element that considered Luther's break with Rome incomplete, believed that the Scriptures were not intended to be God's final revelation. They thought God still was adding new truths through the medium of certain charismatic gifts. For them, it wasn't the Bible *plus* church tradition; it was

"There are few truths which Luther emphasizes more often and more strongly than this one (the Word alone)."

the Bible *plus* continuing revelation through the medium of visions, prophecies, etc. In Luther's estimation, any revelation apart from the written Word is a satanic suggestion. Commenting on Isaiah 8:20, he said: "It is the Word which changes and touches hearts; revelations, however, puff people up and make them arrogant . . . God speaks to us through Scripture and through the man who teaches Scripture. He who hears these is not deceived. But we are to flee from special revelations concerning the faith, for they are satanic impostors" (Plass, p. 1463).

Luther's forthright stand on the authority of Scripture needs fresh enunciation in this day when many folks still want to go beyond the Scripture for revelation from God. Whether the church tries to be that media, or whether it is some alleged charismatic phenomenon, both serve the same purpose of undermining the authority of God's Word. The warning appearing at

the end of the Bible applies in either case, "I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book; if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18-19).

The devastating effects of adding to or subtracting from God's Word are seen on every hand today. Without the Word as full and final authority, every aspect of the Christian faith becomes tentative. One is ultimately robbed of true knowledge of Christ, assurance of God's forgiveness, the ministry of the Holy Spirit; in other words, of eternal salvation itself. In its place is the "sinking sand" of human and satanic opinion which, if followed, leads to eternal damnation.

We rejoice in this Reformation season for the Bible-believing testimony of Luther and other reformers. We thank God for the witness of our Lutheran Confessions which echo the stand of Luther. "We believe, teach, and confess that the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments are the only rule and norm according to which all doctrines and teachers alike must be appraised and judged, as it is written in Psalm 119:105, 'Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.' . . . Holy Scripture remains the only judge, rule, and norm according to which as the only touchstone all doctrines should and must be understood and judged as good or evil, right or wrong" (Theodore Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959, pp. 464-465).

ered their voices, they were singing "Lord God, We Praise Thee" (C-12). When news of the tragedy reached Luther, he sat down and wrote a hymn commemorating the first Lutheran martyrs, and before a year had passed, a little book of only eight hymns was published, half of them by Luther.

The little hymnbook flashed through all of Europe. Luther's enemies wailed that "the whole people are singing themselves into his doctrines." Within the year came another volume containing 25 hymns, 18 of which were Luther's. Evangelical hymnody was born and, although he didn't think he had the gift necessary to contribute, Luther set the example; he showed the rest how; he became the Father of Evangelical Hymnody.

The floodgates were open and a great

wealth filled the void. The fertilizing rains inspired the evangelical Lutheran poets and musicians, and the result was good. From Luther's time on the people sang. The Church was no longer solely comprised of priests and monks; it was now a congregation of believers and all were to take part. The Word was in their hands and through it God inspired their songs and poetry. Hymns were multiplied and there was little dross. Rains fertilize weeds and grains equally, but the crop was carefully cultivated by Luther's rigid de-

mands for piety and quality.

The popularity of the Lutheran hymns was astonishing. A Cardinal summed it up, "By his songs he has conquered us." A Jesuit put it this

"We need artists who are able to prepare for us pious and spiritual songs which deserve being used in the Church of God"
—Luther.

MUSIC . . .

way: "Martin Luther condemned more souls with his singing than with his preaching." The priest was expressing his great concern that Luther had accomplished much more in rescuing congregational singing and returning it to the people than did his sweeping doctrinal and practical reforms. The vital role of music in Protestant and Catholic worship today stems from Martin Luther.

One example of his work, based on Psalm 46, is "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" (C-239). Translated into over 60 languages, the "Battle Hymn of the Reformation" has become as traditional on the anniversary of the Reformation as is "Silent Night" on Christmas Eve. ("A Mighty Fortress" is the favorite hymn among Lutherans; "Now Thank We All Our God" ranks second.)

An African missionary once sang it to his native interpreter. "That man Luther must have been a powerful man," said the African. "One can feel it in his music." It is a hymn of war made sane because it has passed through Luther's soul and been purged by God. It has been called "the greatest hymn of the greatest man in the greatest period of German history." It has given courage to people of every generation, just as it did when it was sung by the people of Halle who lined the streets as Luther's casket was carried past on its way to Wittenberg.

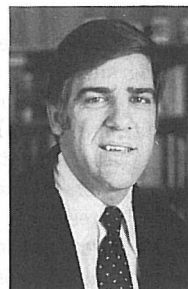
A storm followed Luther's death. The controversy among Lutherans, Catholics and Calvinists brought out the worst in everyone, resulting in a grievous decline in spiritual enthusiasm. The decline was reflected in everything except the hymns the people sang and were writing; they continued to be consistently excellent and of the highest worth. In fact, spiritual giants came forth in Philipp Nicolai, who wrote the "King" (C-426) and "Queen" (C-146) of Chorales, and Paul Gerhardt, the Prince of Lutheran Hymnwriters, who wrote more than thirty master-works (C-112, 130, 165, 167, 179, 212, 261, 275, 285, 291).

They were followed by others of stature whose religion was of the heart, spiritual and vital and practical. With

[Continued on page 10]

Every Christian commissioned

THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS



by Dr. James
Gerdeen
Chassell, Mich.

At the time of the Reformation, the priesthood had become restricted to an elevated few who were believed to have been endowed with a special grace after having received a "sacrament of ordination." One of the results of the Reformation was enlightenment again to the Biblical truth of the priesthood of *all believers*. This common priesthood was a conviction of Luther as well as of Georg Sverdrup, who is considered as a founding father of the Lutheran Free Church. This truth is also emphasized in the *Fundamental Principles* of the former LFC and of the AFLC today.

There is confusion today, too, with some minimizing the pastor's role and others limiting the priesthood to the pastor's office.

Luther's Conviction

The concept of the priesthood of all believers became a foundational principle for Luther.¹ From his mother Luther learned respect for the "holy monks." The priesthood and monkery were considered a "spiritual estate" vs. the "secular state" for the laity. Ordination in the Roman Church was a sacrament. After his conversion, Luther came to believe that this ordination was a "mockery" and that every Christian was a priest according to the Word of God—"not made, but born, . . . created, not ordained." He said baptism is "the true sacrament of ordination" and that "faith alone is the true priestly office." To Luther it was not either/or, but both faith *and* baptism. The Scriptural basis used was I Pet. 2:6-10 and Gal. 3:28.

Luther claimed every Christian has the commission to preach the Gospel (I Pet. 2:9; II Cor. 3:6; I Cor. 14:31). Luther agreed that not all are to preach at the same time though all have the right and power to do so, for

the sake of order (Acts 14:12). He concluded, too, for the sake of order, "that women keep silent when men speak," but women could preach in the absence of men. While he believed all Christians have the privilege of proclamation, not all have the "call" to the office of ministry.

*"To Luther it was
not either/or,
but both faith
and baptism."*

Sverdrup's Conviction

Georg Sverdrup who came to the U.S. from Norway in 1874, believed that the concept of the priesthood of all believers had been lost or hidden not under a bushel but under the papal church and the state church. He believed that in contrast to pastoral domination it is the congregation's responsibility to work with the gifts that the Lord has given by His Spirit.² He quoted Eph. 4:11, 12: "And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints, for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ."

He stressed that of equal importance to the pastor's preaching was the lay witness of the members of the congregation to their Savior out of believing hearts and life experience, quoting Eph. 4:11, 12 and Col. 3:16: "let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and as you sing psalms and

[Continued on page 14]

editorials

THE REFORMATION

One of the smaller Lutheran groups in the U.S. is the Lutheran Church of the Reformation. While the name doesn't contain that word so dear to us, "Free," or another one we like very much, "Evangelical," it isn't a bad name for a church to have—Lutheran Church of the Reformation.

The Reformation is a historical event precious to us. Without it, what would we be? Where would we be? It's something like asking, what if Columbus (or anyone else) hadn't discovered America? What if there hadn't been any America to discover? The questions boggle our minds.

The Reformation was set in motion by Martin Luther's realization, finally, that he was justified by grace through faith alone, as Pastor Lee states in his article in this issue. He went on in his remaining years to share that good news and those who so believed with him helped organize a church movement which had as a central tenet, man is saved by faith in Christ, not by his own good works. And with that was also the conviction that the Bible is the supreme authority in all matters of faith and life, as Pastor Monseth reminds us in what he has written.

Well and good, so far. But then, what is the situation in the Protestant churches today, these which are heirs of the work of Martin Luther and the other Reformers? It is our contention that there exists among them a great deal of works righteousness and that encouragement toward this comes also from the clergy. What do we mean? This, that people are not challenged regularly to see whether or not they are in the faith or holding to the faith (II Corinthians 13:5). The question should always be, am I in the faith *now*? Instead, too often church people are given the impression that if they are members, participate to some degree, show reasonable interest, attend services at least occasionally, and commune at least once a year they can rest assured that they will not be left out by a gracious Lord. And sometimes much less than the above is accepted on behalf of the Lord.

But churches are wrong if these are thought to be the standards of salvation. "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31a), said Paul and Silas to the Philippian jailer. "Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). "He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me" (John 14:21a). It is right for pastors and teachers to confront people with the question, "Are you in the faith?" This is what is meant, too, by the "quickening preaching of the Word of God," as we find it stated in the *Fundamental Principles* (No.4).

We trust that in our Association churches false assurance isn't given. We mustn't point the accusing finger only at others. Nor have we meant to suggest that no one can know whether or not he is saved. The Scriptures tell us there can

be certainty. "I know My own and My own know Me" (John 10:14b), Jesus said. And we weren't suggesting that a person flip-flops in and out of the faith from day to day or month by month. The person "unstable in all his ways" (James 1:8) is much to be pitied. What we do assert is that in congregations of people it must not be assumed that all have things right with God through Christ simply because of their affiliation with the church or because they are in attendance at a certain meeting.

Allegiance to Christ is something deeper than that. It is a commitment, a *life* commitment. People can fool themselves about this, and so they must be faced with God's Law. Also, they can be hurting because they don't know what to do, or knowing, don't have the courage to take the next step. And so there must be the Gospel invitation.

More could be said, but let us return to the Reformation. It brought back to the world's attention the fact that salvation is by grace through faith. Some say the Reformation is a relic of the past, that it is useless to dwell on it any more, that it is pertinent only if used as a means of bringing Protestantism and Roman Catholicism closer together. On the contrary, there is a great need for the truth of the Reformation in our time, in all churches—a person is just before God through faith in what Jesus has done for him or her. The life that then follows is a warm and joyous one, a difference one, salt and light among other people.

To God alone the glory (Soli Deo Gloria)!

TOBACCO SUPPORTS

In mid-September the U.S. Senate passed the new farm bill, called one which pretty well meets the desires of the administration.

We shall not discuss the merits of the bill except on one point, that relating to the production of tobacco. The new bill continues strong price support for the raising of tobacco. Attempts to abolish that support or at least diminish it were narrowly defeated.

It would have been good if a start could have been made to begin the phase-out of government involvement in tobacco production. We realize the economic factors in place for those farmers who raise most of the tobacco used in the U.S. But surely the tobacco lands could be diverted to other crops. It isn't tobacco alone which they can raise.

And the tobacco farmers should admit that their crop, an inedible agricultural commodity, is not an essential to life (although it almost becomes that for some). Furthermore, there is good evidence that the use of tobacco is injurious to health and tobacco would be better left alone. Therefore, the producers of this product should see the inconsistency in our government (administrations of both parties) on the one hand requiring the placing of warning labels

MUSIC . . .

their hymns they kept the flicker of the living faith aglow through troublesome and irreligious times until Philipp Jacob Spener and August Hermann Francke fanned it, restoring the reality of the living Christ to the Lutheran Church. The fire was Pietism and the pyre was at Halle.

Martin Luther was not an especially good or well-tempered or brave person. He was frequently uncharitable, impatient and fast to fall out with his friends and supporters. But he saw his duty and did it. He saw that the floundering institution, whose purpose was to make free the forgiveness already provided by Christ, had become a mockery. He saw the vacuum of life without God's real forgiveness, which alone makes life worth more than a jarful of chemicals. He saw his duty and did it, and we are the grateful heirs to his faithfulness.

He once said, "Come, let us defy the devil by singing a hymn." He felt the devil's work is to cut off from the power and forgiveness of God, and the best way to thwart him, to put on the armor of God, is to sing a hymn. Many millions will sing "A Mighty Fortress" again this Reformation. May it frustrate Satan on earth and may the vigorous music and rugged words resound like peals of thunder in heaven to the glory of God.

(© *The Concordia Hymnal*)

The Battle Hymn of the Reformation

*A mighty fortress is our God,
A bulwark never failing;
Our helper He amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.*

*Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing;
Were not the right Man on our side,
The Man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth His Name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.*

*And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us;
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us:
The prince of darkness grim,
We tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure,
One little word shall fell him.*

*That word above all earthly powers,
No thanks to them, abideth;
The Spirit and the gifts are ours
Through Him who with us sideth:
Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also;
The body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still,
His Kingdom is for ever.*

Martin Luther, 1483-1546
Tr. Fredrick H. Hedge, 1805-90
Based on Psalm 46

EDITORIALS . . .

on cigarette packages that the use of the product may be injurious to health and on the other hand using tax money for something we don't need, when there are so many genuine needs. But so many times we are told not to expect that the logical or reasonable thing is what will be done.

Perhaps the next time around enlightened public opinion will exert better influence on this matter. Let us hope so.

SUNDAY AUCTIONS

This year we have seen the beginning of a new practise in our small town and we don't like it. It is the holding of auction sales on Sundays. There have only been a couple, but if Christian people don't speak against them the practise will surely grow.

Auction sales are fascinating places to be although they're tinged with nostalgia, too, if it's a person's or family's goods being put on the block. But auctions are a place to

meet friends, to have a cup of coffee, and perhaps to buy something for any number of reasons.

However, they don't belong in our Sundays, which are fast becoming days of commerce as it is. Sunday is a day set aside for rest and worship. The auction brings in crowds of people with the attendant hullabaloo, exciting as that may be on any other day. If the auction is in town it infringes on the peace and quiet of neighbors, and may mess up lawns.

The obvious Christian reactions to Sunday auctions are to refuse to take part in them, to attend them and to serve lunch at them. Let our Ladies Aids take the stand against serving at them. If the policy is made there won't be any hassle later on.

There are proper uses for a Sunday afternoon and evening: attending church; visiting friends, neighbors, shut-ins; resting at home, and so on. The auction sales brings a discordant, unnecessary intrusion into the community and makes the Lord's Day one of everyday business.

a.) *Use your home.* Each of us resides somewhere; how can you use your home as a tool for witnessing and why is this so welcome today? Luke 14:12-14 _____

b.) Here is a specific way to use your home in one of the most effective ways for sharing the Gospel and watering the seed: Acts 5:42, Psalm 51:13 _____

c.) *Invest time.* "If it's worth doing at all, it's worth doing well." Witnessing will take effort, and that involves forethought, preparation and persistent blocks of time. What do these verses have to do with investing time: Proverbs 18:24 KJV, James 1:19a, Galatians 6:9, I Corinthians 15:58. What experience have you had investing time? _____

d.) *Be alert for opportunities.* Everyday conversation affords ideal openings to share a verbal witness. In what other ways can we be alert? Proverbs 17:17, 27:10, James 2:17 _____

e.) *Live considerably in your relationships with your neighbor.* Examine a taste of the practical counsel of the Proverbs: _____

11:12-13 _____

17:9 _____

24:28-29 _____

25:27 _____

27:24 _____

13.) How large is your neighborhood? What solemn words confront us concerning our commission? Proverbs 24:11-12, 28:27, Matthew 25:45 _____

No doubt you have recognized the needs of your neighbor. Some close to you are lonely, depressed, neglected, suffering, hungry and enslaved. Many are literally dying without Christ. We can look out our respective kitchen windows with open eyes, ears, hearts and hands to the cry of our neighbor and thereby enjoy being a gardener for God!

*Campus Crusade for Christ International

(last in a series)

Mrs. Michael Brandt

WMF Bible Study

I ENJOY BEING A WOMAN

November 1981

I Enjoy being a neighbor

When we moved to Wisconsin I was delighted with the large kitchen windows over my sink which faced the "U" of our curved street. From my advantageous position I could view the comings and goings of six different family units. During my first neighborhood gathering I proudly remarked on how much I already knew about my neighbors from my quiet observations. Perceptively, one of the women reminded me, "Don't forget, we all have windows and have been watching you, too!" No matter how confined we are, we cannot live an isolated life. Whether we intend to or not, we are Christ's witnesses (Isaiah 43:10; Acts 1:8). Hopefully, evangelism, God's great purpose for His Church, is a joyful, energetic, natural outflow of our walk with Christ. We can determinedly enjoy being a neighbor!

I. The Commission

1.) Visualize and define the word pictures given in II Corinthians 2:14-17 and 5:20. What is the fragrance? Who is the source? Can God accomplish evangelism any other way? _____

2.) Assuming you are a Christian and therefore a chosen vessel for evangelism, there are three reasons why our witnessing may not be fervent. Detect each reason and a probable remedy:

1.) Jeremiah 2:2b, II Peter 1:9, Revelation 2:4 _____

b.) Matthew 5:14, 15 _____

c.) I Corinthians 10:24, Galatians 5:14 _____

Let us use this lesson to evaluate our evangelistic outreach. Are we so "glued to our routines" that we cannot divert from them to consider the highest good of our neighbor? The symptoms of an ingrown life are subtle. What may be hindering us from "spreading the Gospel like a sweet perfume?" (LB).

II. The Witness

A familiar evangelistic organization has given this definition of witnessing: "Successful witnessing is sharing Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results with God."* The Bible has presented us with the comparable anal-

ogy of gardening. Witnessing involves planting the seed and nurturing and watering it on our part, but God alone produces life and gives growth (I Corinthians 3:6, 7). Continue the gardening thought as we pursue our individual witness.

3.) *How does your garden grow?* An important prerequisite to fruitful gardening is that the gardener be capable and knowledgeable about his task. How can we apply this to witnessing according to the following verses?

- a.) John 15:4, 14:23 _____
- b.) Matthew 4:19 _____
- c.) Isaiah 37:31, II Peter 1:8, 5-7 _____

Sometimes we become so anxious, looking for our fruit, that we fail to focus on the Vine. Jesus wants my desire to be fixed on Him and He will bring about my usefulness. Fruitbearing is a natural overflow of spiritual growth within.

4.) Does this mean we have to be spiritual geniuses before we are qualified to witness? Acts 4:13, II Corinthians 4:7 _____

5.) *The plot of ground.* Parallel the four strategic fields of Acts 1:8 with your own situation. Where are you meant to witness? _____

6.) How do we choose those to whom we witness? I Timothy 2:4, James 2:1, 8-9
Who is my neighbor? _____

7.) *Preparing the ground.* It is the Holy Spirit's work to prepare the hearts of individuals for a Christian's verbal witness, but we can do much to arouse curiosity and stimulate interest. Consider these:

- a.) Philipians 2:15-16a, I Peter 2:12, Colossians 1:10 _____
- b.) I Thessalonians 5:22 _____
- c.) Proverbs 13:20 _____

Whenever possible precede your planting with prayer. Speak to God about men, then to men about God.

8.) *Plant the seed.* We would consider it foolish to till our garden dirt all summer long and never plant a crop, yet so often spiritually we rely solely on our living witness and never plant the seed of a verbal testimony. (The seed is the Word of God, Luke 8:11.) Now, what do I say? There are two components to a spoken witness:

- a. Acts 4:20 _____
- b.) Acts 8:35 (see Luke 24:47-48) _____

Whichever may be appropriate at the time, notice it begins with "(he) opened his mouth."

9.) "But I just can't open my mouth; I don't speak well." We all have a measure of this fear. God has a message for us; what is it? Exodus 4:10-12, Jeremiah 1:6-9 _____

10.) It is important to communicate the *heart* of the message, not the secondary trimmings. What might be the difference between the two? II Corinthians 4:5, I Corinthians 2:1-2 _____

11.) Bible study is vitally linked to giving a sound witness. What key phrase from I Peter 3:15 indicates this? _____
Discuss some practical ways to fulfill the instruction of this phrase. _____

12.) *Some gardening tools.* Our consistent living witness has been mentioned as a powerful spade to prepare the ground. What are other potential tools for planting, nurturing and watering? _____

THEOLOGIAN, PREACHER, WRITER, Jonathan Edwards

by Pastor Eugene Enderlein
Minneapolis, Minn.

The second of two parts

In 1757, Princeton University (then called the College of New Jersey) invited him to be president. He felt too humble for such an honorable position, but after prayer and Christian counsel, accepted, and was inaugurated president in 1758. But five weeks later he died as the result of effects from an inoculation against smallpox.

His sermons, tracts and books reflect a subtle beauty, a knowledge that was universal and a total consecration to the will of God. Not only was Jonathan Edwards one of America's greatest 18th-century preachers, but he was also the outstanding theologian. Edwards has been and is still regarded as one of the greatest and best men that this country or the world has produced.

His passion in life was to preach the Gospel. But we know many of his inmost characteristics by reading his writings. In his "History of the Work of Redemption" he explains that all history, with its changes and revolutions, was one great divine work carried forward ceaselessly, from age to age, for the redemption and recovery of mankind. The Bible is the Book of redemption, and its histories and prophecies are the histories and prophecies of that redemption. The Apocalypse has the place of pre-eminence. What Daniel, Paul and John predicted, history sealed with 17 centuries of unerring testimony. The prophecies afforded argument for the inspiration of the Scripture, doubly needed in days of threatened unbelief.

As we can see from a study of Jonathan Edwards' life, he cannot be divorced from the Great Awakening in America. In fact, he was a tool of God in that awakening. Religion was at a low ebb in the opening decades of the

18th century. A survey of the various sermons of the period indicates that nearly all were denunciatory of the deplorable religious conditions of the day. The original Puritan fervor had passed. The encroachments of Arminianism, deism, and rationalism were making a marked impress, drawing men away from the old positions. There was a growing secularism, a fatal coldness and formalism in religious life.

The hour was ripe for a new kind of religious emphasis and leadership. A new revival movement began, climaxing in the Great Awakening of 1740. This was one of the most remarkable religious movements of the time. It was contemporaneous with the Herrnhut Revival under Count Zinzendorf in Germany and the Wesleyan movement in Great Britain.

The Great Awakening was first noticed among the Mennonites, Dunkers and Moravians of Pennsylvania in the third decade of the 18th century. Next came the revivalistic preaching of Theodore Frelingheusen among the Dutch Reformed, and of Gilbert Tennant among the Presbyterians. Then in 1734, a great awakening started among the people of Northampton, Massachusetts, under the leadership of Jonathan Edwards. He had a passionate evangelistic temperament and preached the Gospel with violence. He set forth God as a God of wrath and man as utterly helpless in his moral strivings. In 1740 George Whitefield visited Northampton and a far-reaching revival swept over the country, resulting in the conversion of 50,000. The Great Awakening was rooted in Pietism, not Calvinism. Congregational life became revived when the redemption of the individual was stressed.

The revival spread out almost immediately and simultaneously into various localities and from town to town. Local ministers became revivalists, even though they largely limited their efforts to Sunday preaching and mid-week lectures.

While primarily affecting Congregationalism in New England the Great Awakening affected the Southern colonies as well. It also touched the Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists.

There was little or no dependence upon external measures as a means of

promoting a work of grace. This, however, did not preclude the importance of prayer. The leaders of the Great Awakening were not only men of prayer but they were upheld by praying people. The preaching was stern, warning the people of their sins and the great displeasure of God. The sovereignty of God's grace in the salvation of sinners through justification by faith in Jesus Christ was the central theme about which all else revolved. God was present and did a mighty work in their midst.

The chief criticism was that the preaching of some of the revivalists terrified the people, resulting in fainting, cries, and bodily agitations. Yet Princeton's first five presidents were revivalists, including Jonathan Edwards and Aaron Burr.

The Great Awakening made a real impact on the American outlook. Previously there had been but three colleges in America: Harvard, established in 1636; William and Mary, in 1693; and Yale, established in 1701. But under the impulse of the Great Awakening others came into being, such as Hampton-Sydney and Washington and Lee. Then came the College of Philadelphia (later the University of Pennsylvania). Whitefield played a prominent part in the establishment of both the College of New Jersey (Princeton) and Wheelock's Indian School (later Dartmouth) in 1754. Kings College (later Columbia) and Rhode Island College (afterward Brown) were direct results of the revival.

A renewal of interest in Indian missions was another by-product of the Great Awakening. David Brainerd, a convert of the revival, expelled from Yale because of his insistent revivalism, transferred his membership to the Presbyterians and devoted the remainder of his life to work among the New Jersey and Pennsylvania Indians.

"There was a growing secularism, a fatal coldness and formalism in religious life."

PRIESTHOOD . . .

hymns and spiritual songs . . ." (RSV). He said the general principle limiting the extent of each individual's witness is edification of the church. I Cor. 14:12: "So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek to abound for the edification of the church." Eph. 4:16: "from whom the whole body, . . . according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."

Sverdrup said there should be meetings for mutual edification where lay people both pray and exhort one another. Heb. 3:13, "But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called 'Today,' lest anyone of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Heb. 10:25, "not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near." Acts 2:42: "And they were continually devoting themselves to . . . the breaking of bread and to prayer." He said the goal of the church is the upbuilding of the congregation

EDWARDS . . .

Furthermore, Samuel Hopkins' insistence that Christ died for all, Indians, Negroes, and the underprivileged—laid foundations for the first anti-slavery impulses, and Hopkins was a student of Jonathan Edwards.

Further fruits of this revival were seen in renewed Christian piety among the young and old, in increased respect for moral ideas, in the burying of old grudges, in higher esteem for the Lord's Day, and in holy reverence for the Word of God. No one can estimate the far-reaching results of this revival. Suffice it to say that by the end of 1742 there was hardly a parish which had not in some measure enjoyed a share in the fruits of the Great Awakening. It reached its height in 1744. Careful historians have estimated that from 25,000 to 50,000 of New England's population of 340,000 were added to the churches there as a result of the Great Awakening.

Jonathan Edwards has been rightfully called the "Father of the Revivalist Type of Protestantism in America."

†

and the spreading of God's kingdom over the whole earth. Col. 1:28: "And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man complete in Christ." Mark 16:15: "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all creation.'"

Our Conviction

Our conviction in the AFLC, at least on paper, is expressed by the *Fundamental Principles*.³ Let us consider four of them that pertain to the priesthood of all believers:

"2. The congregation consists of believers who, by using the means of grace and the *spiritual gifts* as directed by the Word of God, seek salvation and eternal blessedness for themselves and for their fellow men.

"6. A free congregation esteems and cherishes all the *spiritual gifts* which the Lord gives for its edification, and seeks to stimulate and encourage their use.

"7. A free congregation gladly accepts the mutual assistance which congregations can give one another in the work for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

"8. Such assistance consists partly in the mutual sharings of *spiritual gifts* among the congregations through conferences, exchange visits, lay activities, etc., whereby congregations are mutually edified, and partly in the voluntary and Spirit-prompted cooperation of congregations for the accomplishing of such tasks as exceed the ability of the individual congregation" (emphasis mine).

Note the emphasis on spiritual gifts which are people, you and me—active in our local churches—seeking the salvation of the lost—building up each other in the faith. Are we practicing what we preach? We need a revival of the priesthood of *all* believers. We need testimony meetings. We need training in discovering, developing and using our spiritual gifts.

A rabbi once was visiting Mendel who was dying in the hospital. Mendel was discouraged. He was reading about Moses and he said, "I am dying and I have never been able to be like Moses." The rabbi said, "Mendel, God is not going to ask you why you were not Moses, but why were you not Mendel?" Let us add a truth that the rabbi

"Are we practicing what we preach? We need a revival of the priesthood of *all* believers."

missed. First, we must answer to God concerning our salvation. Are we saved? Do we know Jesus as our personal Savior? Then we must stand before the judgment seat of Christ (I Cor. 3:10-15) and answer concerning our individual ministry in the priesthood of all believers and answer the question: "Were we Mendel?" "Were we Mary?" "Were we John?" "Were we what Jesus wanted us to be?" May we hear His answer: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

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2. Sverdrup, Georg, *The Heritage of Faith*, Augsburg Publishing House, Chapter 2, "Church and Congregation."
3. *Fundamental Principles of the AFLC* (Guiding Principles of the Lutheran Free Church since 1897.)

(Scriptural quotations are from the *New American Standard Bible* unless otherwise noted.)

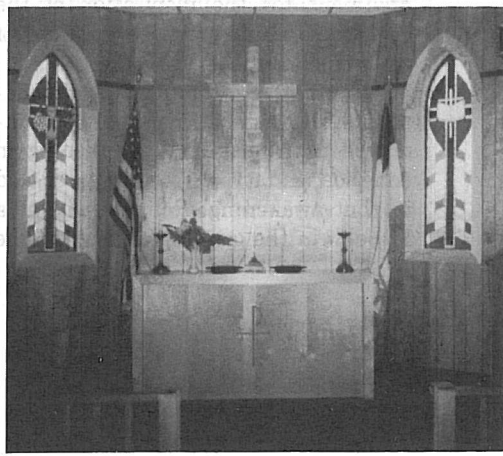
Church windows given

Frieda Elling donated two beautiful stained glass windows which were installed on each side of the altar at Slim Buttes Church of Reva, S. Dak., this summer in memory of her husband Bob.

A donation by Mr. and Mrs. Pete Larson for a large stained glass window over the double doors has added additional beauty to our place of worship.

Rev. Philip Rokke is pastor of the church.

—Corr.



With our Evangelist-Youth Worker

The work of evangelism is of vital importance to our fellowship. Rev. Kenneth Pentti has been called to this work and it is the privilege and obligation of the church to support him in prayer. Remember him also in the following appointments.

Boscobel, Wis.

Trinity Lutheran Church
Oct. 18-20
Pastoral vacancy

Minneapolis, Minn.

Medicine Lake Lutheran Church
Oct. 25-30
Rev. J. G. Erickson, pastor

Tioga, N. Dak.

Zion Lutheran Church
Nov. 1-5
Rev. Allen Monson, pastor

Kenyon, Minn.

Emmanuel Lutheran Church
Nov. 8-12
Rev. Kenneth L. Anderson, pastor

Fergus Falls, Minn.

Calvary Lutheran Church
Nov. 22-24
Pastoral vacancy

Preaching Missions

Stacy, Minn.

Sunnyside Lutheran Church
Wendell Johnson, pastor
Oct. 24-28
Rev. Donald Greven, speaker

Hatton, N. Dak.

Zoar Lutheran Church
Rev. Orville T. Olson, pastor
Oct. 25-28
Rev. Richard Snipstead, speaker

Minneapolis, Minn.

Morgan Avenue Lutheran Church
Rev. Yeddo Gottel, pastor
Oct. 25-29
Rev. Dennis Gray, speaker

Newfolden, Minn.

Westaker Lutheran Church
Pastoral vacancy
Nov. 21-24
Missionary Connely J. Dyrud, speaker

Bismarck, N. Dak.

Calvary Lutheran Church
Nov. 29-Dec. 3
Rev. Einar Unseth, pastor

Personalities

Rev. Lars Stalsbroten, Woodburn, Ore., celebrated his 94th birthday on July 19 (real date is July 21) at his home with some 30 friends present. Among those present were his son, Dr. Oliver, and wife, from Anacortes, Wash.; Pastor and Mrs. Stephen Odegaard, Eugene, Ore.; Pastors Clemence Dyrud and A. L. Hokanson, Silverton, Ore.; and Dr. and Mrs. Silas Bergstad, Silverton. God's blessings on Pastor Stalsbroten.

Mrs. L. Warren Hansen (nee Nellie Hagen), wife of Pastor Hansen, passed away in Portland, Ore., recently. With her husband they served parishes at Ellensburg, Wash.; Medicine Lake, Mont.; Tacoma, Wash.; Minneapolis, Minn.; Portland, and Silverdale and Toppenish, Wash. Pastor Hansen also served as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy during the War. More recently he has been working on the staff of an ALC church in Vancouver, Wash. Mrs. Hansen is survived by a son, Warren, and a daughter Mildred, in Portland, and a daughter, Dorothy, in Vancouver, in addition to her husband. Among other survivors are a brother, Rev. Holger Hagen, of the Twin Cities. Blessed be her memory.

Evangelist and Mrs. Joseph Erickson were honored on the occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary at

Luther Leaguers gathered at Newfolden

The Northwestern Minnesota District of the Luther League Federation held its fall convention at Westaker Lutheran Church, Newfolden, Minn., on Saturday, Sept. 12. Rev. Leslie Galland, Thief River Falls, Minn., was the morning Bible study teacher and also spoke at the evening banquet.

In the business meeting, Mr. Don Johnson of Badger was re-elected president and Mr. Emory Flaten of Newfolden was re-elected vice-president. New officers are Hope Dyrud, Middle River, secretary, and Ted Thompson, Newfolden, treasurer. Lay Pastor Burton Rygh, Greenbush, is the pastoral adviser. Planning committee members are David Swenson, Thief River Falls, Mark Knutson, Newfolden, and Susie Broten, Roseau.

The spring convention will be held in Greenbush. A winter retreat is being planned for Galilee Bible Camp, Lake Bronson.

Bethseda Lutheran Church, Westby, Wis., on Sunday, Sept. 27. They are the parents of Pastor J. G. Erickson of Medicine Lake Lutheran Church, Minneapolis. Congratulations and God's blessings.

Also honored at a 60th wedding anniversary recently were **Rev. and Mrs. O. J. Haukeness**, Everett, Wash., on Sunday, Sept. 20. Their open house was at Central Lutheran Church where Rev. Silas Erickson is pastor. Pastor Haukeness is a relative of the editor. Congratulations and God's blessings.

ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

BUDGET RECEIPTS

Feb. 1 - Aug. 31

Fund	Total Budget	Total Received to Date	% of Total (Ideal 58%)
General Fund	\$135,980.00	\$ 62,806.92	46%
Schools			
AFLTS	82,834.00	29,279.56	35
AFLBS	143,312.00	54,278.09	38
Home Missions	197,200.00	76,031.75	39
World Missions	218,880.00	60,759.75	28
Praise Fund	31,000.00	14,189.13	46
TOTAL	\$809,206.00	\$297,345.20	37%
1980-81	\$582,237.00	\$203,660.26	35%

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

Second-class postage
paid at Minneapolis, Minn

People. So many people could be seen hauling boxes, suitcases and other miscellaneous items across the Association Free Lutheran Bible School campus on September twelfth. The school opened its doors to incoming students on Saturday and held opening services Sunday to begin the 1981-82 school year.

Classes began Tuesday with a total enrollment of 107, of which 67 are Juniors, from all over the world.

New faces, new friends, new feelings. What happens behind the scenes at AFLBS as students meet these uncertainties? One Junior put it this way:

“‘Bible School,’ the words sounded wondrous, but more awesome was the thought that this school will become our life for nine months.

On the
first day
of Bible School

“We unpacked our cars, surveyed the forms, and then the sudden parting from families left us alone. But no, not alone.

“Laughter floated down the halls as Seniors met old friends and Juniors timidly began unpacking, wondering what roommates would be like. People were everywhere. How can one be lonely? But it was all so strangely new and I wondered how long I’d be homesick. The answer came quickly as faces became friends and fear turned to faith. Here, I discovered, is a place I can not only learn of Jesus but also see His love in and through other students and the teachers.”

Another year of Bible School is in progress and with eagerness we look forward to all God has for each one.

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Thy Kingdom Come

God Justifies

“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth” (Rom. 8:33).

Previously in this chapter Paul has said that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, and that what the law could not do, God did when He sent His Son. He has also said, “If God is for us, who is against us?” And “to them that love God all things work together for good.”

After having shown us this great miracle of salvation, it is as though he in thought is made free from himself, places himself in the midst of all creation, and then shouts, “Who shall lay

anything to the charge of God’s elect?”

One gets the impression that Paul directs his question to everything and all people without limit. He asks heaven, he asks hell, he asks the earth, but no one stands forth and says, “I can.”

When with few words he is to tell us the reason that no one stands forth he says, “It is God that justifieth.” God! He who shall render an accounting to no one, and who has the key to death and hell, He justifies us!

He who has seen the content of these words, he has seen the greatest thing a man can see on this earth. You who have grasped Christ in faith: go on to

your grave cheerfully. On the judgment day you will meet no other judge than your Savior.

The just is he—and he alone—
Who by this faith is living,
The faith that by good works is shown,

To God the glory giving;
Faith gives thee peace with God above,
But thou thy neighbor, too, must love,
If thou art new created.

—Reprinted from *Thy Kingdom Come*, by Ludvig Hope, Augsburg Publishing Company.