

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

October 26, 1982



Matt's Cabin, Bronson, Mo. Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.

AT THE MASTER'S FEET



Rev. John Strand

God's older children

Lord, how marvelous the fall colors are. We are surrounded by beauty. No artist can duplicate what You do. You truly are a God who loves beauty. Help us to appreciate this beauty.

Master, the fall colors of nature remind us of the passing of time. Nature prepares for the rest of winter. There is some sadness here, but a rest is waiting. Lord, I am reminded of the older saints among us. They are beautiful. I love them. It is a privilege to work with them and to know them. They have learned so much. They know so much. Thank You for them. They are a wonderful gift to the church. I certainly realize that the hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness (Prov. 16:31).

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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Every heartbeat, each breath, every moment, is a gift from You, dear Master. And as we live in obedience to Your will, our days are lengthened (Prov. 10:27). Such is Your grace. You are a great and generous giver. In gratitude, help me to live in obedience to Your will, dear Master.

Lord, help me to learn from Your aged saints. You have said (Job 12:12), "With the ancient is wisdom; and in length of days understanding." Help me to show respect and love to those who have walked with You a long time. Forbid that I should ever believe that only my generation has understanding, concern and zeal.

Lord, I owe so much to my elders. They have fought so many battles and I enjoy the fruit of their struggles. Encourage them with the thought that their kingdom contributions have been substantial and are deeply appreciated. Remind them that their example is very important and necessary. Help me to assist them whenever possible. Help me to give them joy. Forbid that I should forget or ignore them.

Lord, I thank You that You are faithful towards Your older children. Lord, I am afraid many of us do not do right by them. Forgive us. I know the evil one, the devil, attacks Your children and especially Your older ones. But You are faithful. You do not forget when strength is gone. "Even to your old age, I shall be the same, And even to your graying years I shall bear you! I have done it, and I shall carry you; And I shall bear you, and I shall deliver you" (Isaiah 46:4). Yes, in Your faithfulness, You carry, You bear, You deliver, in old age. Comfort my elders with this truth. This truth comforts me as I

realize that the years are slipping by.

There is a rest for Your people. When the beauty of old age is over, there is nothing but eternal rest for Yours. Memories are wonderful for many. Some live only in the past. Lord, set our affections on the eternal future. The future for Your people is much better than even the most glorious past. The colors of the eternal rest surpass anything we may love or have loved here on earth.

Thank You, kind Master, for the many lessons I have learned from my elders. Help me to be a good example to those who follow after me. Bless the aged among us. Give them grace to trust Your grace. You are carrying those who are Yours, even when the evil one, the devil, and conscience accuse and weakness sets in. Help them to look forward to the rest awaiting them, knowing they are in Your care and keeping, even now.

In God my Savior, I put my trust alone;
His word and favor My help in need I own;
My life I tender, and all I have as well,
In full surrender to Thee, whose grace I tell,
My soul's befriender, my God, Immanuel.

The loss sin wrought me, through Satan's wiles,

O Lord,
Thou, who has bought me, hast all by grace restored:

My thanks I render, myself to Thee I yield,
My Savior tender, my rock, my sun and shield,
My soul's defender, on Thee my hopes I build.

Keep Me Thy servant, let me obey Thee, Lord,
In spirit fervent, according to Thy word;
When doth forsake me the frowning world for aye,
And suff'rings shake me, grant patience, be my stay,
Until Thou take me from this ill world away.

Dr. W. B. Percival

"I exhort then, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be offered on behalf of all men; including kings and all who are in high station, in order that we may live peaceful and tranquil lives with all godliness and gravity" (I Tim. 2:1-2, Weymouth)

No man, to whom the Spirit has unfolded God's plan of the ages as revealed in the Scriptures, can fail to recognize the trend of the age in which we live; neither can he be altogether indifferent to the rapid gathering of the clouds, which so clearly portend the near approach of that prophetic day of tribulation of which God's Word has given ample warning.

Thank God—as members of the body of Christ; as "children of light" and "children of the day"—we have no fear that that day should overtake us as a thief in the night and, though the outlook for the world at large seems darkly ominous of evil days, the future of the true child of God daily grows more luminous with hope: "for God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him."

It might be argued that, having such full assurance of salvation, there should be no need of giving ourselves any anxiety whatever about the future of this world; but in the very chapter in which this comforting assurance is given, we find the following: "Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men;" "Pray without ceasing;" "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

Furthermore, after admonishing Timothy in the words of our text,

Prayer for the world

Paul goes on to say: "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

But the Word of God, so rich in promise of a glorious destiny to them which are in Christ Jesus, is equally full of prophecy of vengeance on them "that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ."

This Epistle was written to Timothy for the express purpose (to use Paul's own words), "that thou mightest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God." It was written at a time when the testimony of the church was being hindered by the apostasy of some of her members and her doctrines were being polluted by false teachings on the part of some, who, "desiring to be teachers of the law," were without any true knowledge of the grace of God.

To a much greater degree, the same conditions obtain today and if such an exhortation to pray, earnestly and unceasingly *for all men* was needed in those early days of the church, surely it behooves believers of the present day to call upon God in behalf of the pleasure-loving and godless age in which we live.

The record of the past decade of this world's history has been replete with brutal crime and moral depravity. Poverty and pestilence, disaster and death, have swiftly followed one another across the trail of human events; war and rebellion, political corruption and civil strife, debauchery and degradation, sorrow and suffering, sin and its sequence, have been the rule rather than the exception; the wail of distress and the cry of the oppressed—by reason of their unremitting constancy—have fallen upon unheeding ears; treachery has been abroad in every land and the roar of conflict between Capital and Labor has been constantly heard throughout both hemispheres. In the face of most untiring efforts on the part of well-meaning reformers and despite the combined wisdom of conscientious legislators, the sanctity of the home has continued to be violated, crime and corruption have been steadily on the increase, while, among the nations of the earth, social unrest and apprehension of impending evil have in no-wise been abated.

Truly, from the human viewpoint, the prospect for the coming years is anything but bright; neither do the prophetic Scriptures, themselves, offer us any encouragement to hope for better things from men.

Seeing then that all these things are so and that the Day of the Lord is rapidly approaching, in which He shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, to judge the world and punish the enemies of God "with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power," what is our responsibility?

The judgments of God are sure; but He is yet dealing in mercy and we must not forget that this is still the age of grace. Ours is that same God, who—hearkening to the importunity of His servant, Moses—turned away

**"... the future of the true child of
God daily grows more luminous with hope: ..."**

false prophets

We cannot look into men's hearts, it is true, but we can see their lives, and we may know that, if they do not bring forth the real fruits of righteousness, but live in sin and selfishness, they are not Christians, no matter how loud may be their professions.

L. S. Keyser

PRAYER . . .

His wrath and repented of the evil which He thought to do unto His people. With us, it has often been a matter of wonder as to what extent Abraham—by ceasing to plead with God for Sodom and Gomorrah—was responsible for their ultimate destruction. How far then shall we be responsible for lives wrecked by sin and for souls lost, if we fail to cry—in the all-prevailing Name of Christ, the son—unto God, the Father, “Who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think?”

Day by day, one by one, thousands of precious immortal souls—deceived by the powers of evil; having no knowledge of Christ as a Savior; without God and without hope—are going out into everlasting darkness and separation from God and yet we, who are bought with His own precious blood and set apart to be witnesses for Him, not only neglect oftentimes to proclaim the Gospel of Christ, but devote the larger part of our prayer life to pleading for things of time, to be consumed upon ourselves and our own immediate circle of friends and acquaintances.

Oh! that the Lord would make us to increase and abound in love, not only toward one another, but also *towards all men*, to the end that the love of Christ might constrain us to give ourselves, unreservedly, throughout the ensuing years, to a faithful and untiring ministry of intercession, in behalf of the unevangelized and evil-deluded

among the inhabitants of the earth. Just here—dear fellow-servants of Christ—suffer.

A Personal Word

In the midst of the preparation of this message and as a result of the heart-searching incident thereto, God has laid upon me a burden for the souls of the lost, such as I have never before experienced.

I have been made to confess my own culpable indifference in the past and to realize my own individual responsibility for the future.

“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear.”

If this be true (and, with all my heart, I believe it) I am determined—under God—to devote a certain part of every day to definite, earnest and persistent prayer for the unsaved, confident that God is able to begin a work of grace, at once, in my own immediate neighborhood, which shall reach to the ends of the earth. Not because of any merit of my own, do I look for such results; but because my precious Lord—in whose Name I shall plead before the Throne of Grace—is not only unwilling that any should perish, but is also abundantly able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him.

Let us pray one for another; that God will make us faithful in the program of persistent prayer that His Spirit has seemed to outline for us.

—Selected

Fergus Falls church leaves Home Mission support

This is an appropriate time for our congregation to share concerning Home Missions. Just recently, we have completed paying our financial obligation to the AFLC Board of Home Missions and will be trusting Jesus for our needs. Our thanks to all who have helped our congregation become a reality.

A brief history of our congregation follows:

The meeting, held December 14, 1967, was opened with Marvin Tungeth reading the 103rd Psalm and thus the beginning of the Calvary Lutheran Church of Fergus Falls, Minnesota.

A committee including Stanley Christenson, Fred Van Sickle and Clarence Martinson was appointed to contact Pastor Harry Molstre, the Association Secretary, to see what steps should be taken in forming a new congregation.

At a meeting on January 11, 1968, the above were designated as the steering committee to look into possible meeting places. There were two church buildings available in the city but both were in need of repair. Thus far, there were 13 families represented at the meetings.

The first Bible study and prayer meeting was held January 16, 1968. Our first church service was held at the National Guard Armory on January 28. Student Pastor Forrest Swenson from the Seminary conducted the service and Ted Aasness conducted the Sunday School opening exercise.

By the end of April, 1968, an organ had been donated, the constitution committee had prepared a constitution, and the name of Calvary Lutheran Church had been voted upon. We began meeting in the old EUB church in Fergus Falls.

In October, 1968, a letter of call went to Pastor Julius Hermunslie to serve as full-time pastor. He was moving to Fergus Falls from Spicer, Minnesota. He accepted the call and the flock began to grow.



In January, 1969, a separate building fund was set up with an offering on the last Sunday of each month to go to this special fund. By March, we had 44 members, 31 of which were confirmed, and our building committee was busy looking for land. We were a small but determined group and with much prayer and God's guidance felt He would lead us to the proper decision. By April, 1969, incorporation papers were completed.

It took some time to find a suitable site for our church, but in March, 1971, we voted to purchase a piece of land on which to build. In two years, we had paid for the land. However, the decision to build had to be voted upon twice before it passed. On July 19, 1973, we voted to build a new church.

At that time, the pastor at Stiklestad Congregation, near Doran, Minnesota, was leaving, and we felt that the time was right to contact them regarding the forming of a parish with Calvary. It was not until 1977, however, that we formed a joint parish with them.

Pastor Hermunsleie resigned as pastor due to his health, and again our faith was tested.

On September 30, 1973, groundbreaking ceremonies were held with Pastor John Strand and Rev. Herbert Franz in attendance, followed by a fellowship supper.

In early 1975 a call letter was sent to Mr. Ronald Hoehne, a student at the AFLC Seminary in Minneapolis, Minn. He accepted the call and served

as our pastor until February of 1977. We were without a pastor for a few months, but managed to hold fast and in late 1977, Pastor Forrest Swenson accepted the call he had received from us.

We had grown in numbers and we were now averaging over 100 in attendance at each Sunday morning service, and over 50 in attendance in our Sunday School classrooms.

In August, 1981, Pastor Swenson resigned and once again we were without a pastor.

Pastor Roger Krueger began serving our parish on June 1, 1982. On October 31st, Reformation Day, Pastor Elden Nelson will be with us to formally accept our letter to leave Home Mission support.

Sometimes it seems as though we are moving slowly, but in a city of 15,000 with over seven Lutheran congregations, we are growing. We have grown because of our faith and trust in God to guide us. During the times when we were without a pastor our deacons performed the tasks of the pastor.

As we move forward, we will continue to ask God's blessings upon us as we strive to meet our obligations to Him. Our prayer is that we will be able to assist other congregations as we have been assisted. It is because of our working together as an AFLC that new determined congregations can be formed. Thank you all for your part in Calvary.

Sharon Odegaard, Secretary

The Blessed Secret

I have learned the blessed
secret
Of the soul that's satisfied,
Since the Saviour dwells
within me
And in Him I now abide.
I have learned the joy of
trusting
In the sureness of His Word,
Knowing that each promise
spoken
Will be honored by my Lord.

In the silence I have heard
Him;
(O, the music of His voice!)
"Peace I give thee, be not
troubled,
Let thy heart and soul
rejoice."
Yes, I've found my Lord
sufficient,
For He meets my ev'ry need,
Satisfies my soul's deep
longings,
Guards and guides my
thoughts and deeds.

Peace that passeth
understanding
Is His gift of grace so free.
And the power of His
presence
Is His promise unto me:
Blessed peace, divine
contentment
From the heart of God above.

—unknown

Stewardship seminar held at the ARC

"The New Testament Grace system of Christian Giving" was the theme of a stewardship seminar conducted at the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis., Sept. 28-29. It was led by Dr. Waldo Werning, Concordia Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.

"God's love in Christ is the cause of stewardship action," Dr. Werning asserted to the 80-100 participants in the seminar. He said that to raise money in the church we must first raise the man spiritually. He told of a church in Canada where giving was increased from \$52,000 to \$117,000 in two years. In the process 78% of the people became willing to make a pledge for the work.

Dr. Werning stated that we need to move from the traditional approach to stewardship which places methods first, then message, then theology. The right way is to focus on theology first, then message and methods. This second way points to "God's love in Christ" as the motivating force for true stewardship.

He spent a good deal of time talking about Law and Gospel and justification and forgiveness. The "new man" must come forward more and more in the individual. From this will come a new relationship to Christ and new relationships to one's fellow men. Out of spiritual growth will come Christian fruits, including a pocketbook open to God.

Dr. Werning said that we can hamper our good intentions by our choice of terms. For instance, he said that "quotas, dues, fair share, contributions" are poor terms and we ought rather use "offerings, proportionate giving, first fruits, commitment, tithing." He also reminded his audience that the expression, going "over the top," is a misnomer, because it really means going over the bottom. A better way is to encourage givers to go over the "minimum goal."

A positive affirmation which Dr. Werning has worked out is this: "God has given His people all the spiritual and material resources to get the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ to all

people in the world in our lifetime. 'God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply' (Hudson Taylor)."

He gave three steps for successful fund-raising and stewardship of giving. 1) Law and Gospel oriented messages. 2) Provide adequate information. 3) Adopt a practical system. The latter will take aggressive pastoral and lay leadership and must call for commitment by the people. To that end a program of Every Member Visitation should be developed, including group meetings, stewardship emphasis in worship services and stewardship interviews.

Dr. Werning told the stewardship seminar participants that it is a fallacy to think that prosperity creates a better sense of stewardship. No, "faith will determine what percentage of income we give to God." He said that he didn't know what percentage of their income Association people give to God's work, but in his own church, the Missouri Synod, it is two and one-half percent, and that after 30 years of stewardship work. Dr. Werning informed his hearers that a recent Forward in Remembrance drive in the LC-MS was successful in that a 40 million dollar goal brought in 75 million. But it was also a failure, he said, because only 18 per cent of the membership took part. He quoted Col. Lewis Wells of Wells Organization as saying that most church giving is token giving.

In his last session Dr. Werning gave a Bible study on Matthew 6:19-33. If Christ is our treasure, our hearts will be with Him. God will see that we have what we need if we put Him first. "God's system works," he asserted. "Don't try to beat the system. Believe Him. Trust Him."

Rev. Francis Monseth, dean of Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary, gave three devotionals during the seminar.

Rev. Richard Snipstead, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, led a session on the AFLC work. Reports were heard from Home and World Missions, the

By the Red Sea

Have you come to the Red Sea place in your life,

Where, in spite of all you can do,
There is no way out, there is no way back,

There is no other way but through?

Then wait on the Lord, with a trust serene,

Till the night of your fear is gone;
He will send the winds, He will heap the floods,

When He says to your soul, "Go on!"

And His hand shall lead you through,

Ere the watery walls roll down;

No wave can touch you, no foe can smite,

No mightiest sea can drown.

The tossing billows may rear their crest,

Their foam at your feet may break,
But over their bed you shall walk dry-shod

In the path that your Lord shall make.

In the morning watch, 'neath the lifted cloud,

You shall see but the Lord alone,

When He leads you forth from the place of the sea,

to a land that you have not known;
And your fears shall pass as your foes have passed

You shall no more be afraid;

You shall sing His praise in a better place,

In a place that His hand hath made.

—by Annie Johnson Flint

Schools, Publications and Parish Education, Pensions, Ernest Miedema, director of development, the Hymnbook Committee, and Rev. Richard Anderson for the Luther League Federation.

On Tuesday night the Aid Association for Lutherans film "Where Luther Walked" was shown.

The seminar was funded by a grant from AAL.

Alphabet of a good steward

TEXT: "I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last" (Revelation 1:11).

ALL things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made (John 1:3).

BOTH riches and honor come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all; and in Thine hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all (I Chronicles 29:12).

CAST thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days (Ecclesiastes 11:1).

DO all things heartily as unto the Lord, and not unto men (Colossians 3:23).

EVERY good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of Lights (James 1:17).

FOR where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (Luke 12:34).

GIVE unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; bring an offering, and come into His courts (Psalm 96:8).

HONOR the Lord with thy substance and with the first-fruits of all thine increase (Proverbs 3:9).

IN the uprightness of mine heart, I have willingly offered all these things (I Chronicles 29:17).

JESUS said: It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).

KNOWING that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord whether he be bond or free (Ephesians 6:8).

LAY not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:19-20).

MY little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and truth (I John 3:18).

NOW therefore, our God, we thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious name (I Chronicles 29:13).

OFFER unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High (Psalm 50:14).

PRAY without ceasing (I Thessalonians 5:17).

QUENCH not the Spirit (I Thessalonians 5:19).

RENDER therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's (Matthew 22:21).

SERVE the Lord with gladness; come before His presence with singing (Psalm 2:8).

UNTO whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required (Luke 12:48).

VERILY I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, My brethren, ye have done it unto Me (Matthew 25:45).

WILL a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings (Malachi 3:8).

XCEPT your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:20).

YE are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's (I Corinthians 6:20).

ZEALOUS of good works (Titus 2:14).

When upon life's billows you are
tempest tossed,
When you are discouraged, thinking
all is lost
Count your many blessings,
name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the
Lord hath done.

CHORUS:

Count your blessings,
Name them one by one;
Count your blessings,
See what God hath done.
Count your blessings,
Name them one by one,
Count your many blessings,
See what God hath done.

Guy L. Morrill,
Stewardship Stories,
Harper and Brothers
Publishers.

THE WOMEN'S PAGE

Honorary memberships recently given . . .

Newfolden, Minn.



Mrs. Alice Knutson, Mrs. Selma Hjelle, Mrs. Agnes Bjorgaard, Mrs. Olga Thompson, and Mrs. Olga Bothum were honored at Westaker Lutheran church.

Tioga, N. Dak.



Zion WMF honored three ladies. Mrs. Ronald Gravgaard was pinned by her daughter Renae. Not pictured are Mrs. Stanford Johnson and Mrs. LeRoy Lokken.



Ladies retreat to Galilee Bible Camp

The second annual WMF retreat of the Northwestern Minn. District was held at Galilee Bible Camp, Lake Bronson, Minn. Over fifty ladies stayed the complete weekend of Aug. 6-7, with approximately twenty ladies registering during the day.

Mrs. Curtis Emerson, Valley City, N. Dak., shared in testimony and song centering on the theme, "Accessorize Your Faith." Area ladies participated in the sessions with devotions and music. The Thief River Falls parish ladies provided the delicious meals.

Again it was good to draw apart feasting on His Word and in fellowship with sisters in Christ. It was encouraging to see more and more ladies making time for this blessing in their busy lives.

Mrs. Barb Johnson



Mrs. Curtis Emerson

Minot, N. Dak.

Miss Hildur Nordin (left) presented a pin to Mrs. Bruce Wolla and Mrs. Melida Haakenson (right) pinned Mrs. Duane Peterson at a recent Bethel Lutheran WMF meeting.

Cradle Rolls . .

Astoria, Ore.



Recent cradle roll graduates at Bethany Lutheran were (standing) Peter Birdeno, Jeremy Olson, (sitting) Thomas Birdeno and Heather Olson. The cradle roll added Erin Boyovich, Curtis Birdeno and Andrea Birdeno.

McVille, N. Dak.



New Luther Valley cradle roll added six children and graduated two. Pictured are: Mrs. Reuben Quanbeck with Martha and Alexandra; Mrs. Eugene Johnson with Nicholas; Mrs. David Cookman with Matthew and Davey; and Mrs. Wesley Langaas with Kristin and Eddie. Other members absent are Brooks Dockter, Lucas Hoyt and Christopher Knudson.

editorials

TO TITHE OR NOT TO TITHE

The tithe is the giving of the tenth of one's income to God's work. It was the command of the Lord in the Old Testament. Some go so far as to say that Christians in this New Testament era are also bound by the tithe. Others say that in this dispensation of grace there is no law on the tithe. Yet again, someone will assert that if the tithe was given in Old Testament times, it should be exceeded in the New.

Certain it is that the needs are greater now than they've ever been. In the Old Covenant the tithe was used to maintain the Temple in Jerusalem and the priesthood. Beyond that we don't know. In our time we not only have local churches to maintain and pastors to support, but we engage in missions at home and abroad, operate schools, charities, and so on. So it stands to reason that the needs are greater. There is no end to what could be done if the material means were available.

And if all people who claim allegiance to Christ gave the tenth there would be abundant resources to expand work for God greatly. We would be able to do some real planning about how to get on with the work and would have to sound the call for more workers much more than we do now. Elsewhere in this issue of the *Ambassador* it is reported that members of the Missouri Synod give about two and one-half per cent of their incomes to God's work. No one knows what the situation is in the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. There is no reason to believe it is any better than that. A lot of people give more than that but we're talking about the average.

Dr. Waldo Werning, who conducted the Stewardship Seminar at Osceola last month, told about the experience he and his wife had in deciding to tithe. She was a tither when he married her; he wasn't and he had just finished seminary. His wife wanted them to have the practice in their home. He balked at the idea of taking ten percent from their monthly check of \$125 (this was in about 1944), but his wife prevailed. Times weren't easy and they incurred debt, but they continued to tithe. God did not let them down.

The decision to tithe doesn't always come with a spiritual experience (conversion, for instance). Usually it doesn't. But it is one that is made when the Holy Spirit is able to confront us with the challenge and we accept it. We take the Lord at His Word that He will provide and bless also as we give more than we thought we could.

In the question and answer session at the Seminar, Dr. Werning was asked on what income a farmer should tithe. He said that it should be the adjusted net income. That is, he could subtract expenses for operating, certain repairs

and hired help, but not capital expenses such as the purchase of new land or much of the equipment he buys. He emphasized that no one should drive a hard bargain with the Lord.

As the six of us, five pastors and one layman, drove home from Osceola, we talked about our tithing. It was evident that we follow several different methods of determining income on which to tithe. It is unlikely that anyone short of Solomon could draw up guidelines which would satisfy everyone as to what the basis for the tithe should be for every person or even for every occupation. And if it could be done it would become a very legalistic thing.

But Dr. Werning made another good point, in discussing this whole matter of the tithe, when he said that we should suppose that a wealthy person said to us that he would like to give us a gift equal to ten percent of our income. What, he asked, would we say our income is in the face of such an offer?

And falling short of the tithe, let us consider increasing our offerings and commitment. Let us not be satisfied to remain at one or two per cent, even two and one-half per cent, but strive for better things, as a grateful response to Christ and His mercies and blessings. Think about it. Pray about it. Don't rule out the tithe either.

The great needs of our world cry out for a greater response than we have made so far. We could be a part of a bright and glorious future if we lay all, our billfolds and purses, too, on the altar for God.

We are glad to hear that the Stewardship Board of our church is planning a series of ten articles on stewardship over the course of the next year. Watch for these articles as they keep this subject before us. They will help us.

OUR POLICY

By mistake our editorial "The Proposed Merger" was placed on page 16 of our October 12 issue as a news item. But it was meant to be an editorial and we are sorry for the misplacement.

We follow the policy of most publications that expressions of opinion are either editorials or are signed articles, whereas unsigned articles should only report the news, the facts.

"The Proposed Merger" carried opinion and was meant to be an editorial.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

NEW HYMNAL NOT NEEDED

Aadalen Free Lutheran Congregation of Fairdale, North Dakota, wishes hereby to go on record as being unanimously opposed to the study and adoption of a new hymnal for the A.F.L.C.

Recently a poll was taken among all members of our congregation, and the result was 100 per cent against publishing any new hymnal. The following reasons were given:

1) We can better spend our money on foreign and home missions and in training our youth at the Bible School and Seminary.

2) Our *Concordia* is filled with beautiful, beloved, meaningful Lutheran hymns. We would do well to learn them all and even to memorize many.

3) Having a new hymnbook will undoubtedly open the door to much contemporary music which is more concerned with the "beat" than with the Gospel. One need only to observe what has happened to the music at the "Christian" radio stations since they began including all sorts of music in their daily schedules. The result is that many long-time listeners have turned off their radios in dismay. They are deprived of the comfort and joy of hearing music they love the most. Liberal listeners, on the other hand, have access to *their* type of music in most churches and radio programs, and will therefore not be deprived of any comfort they can derive from their contemporary tunes.

4) Since we are an association of *free* Lutheran congregations, there is nothing which prohibits individual congregations from choosing supplementary books containing the hymns they particularly want. Let us not spend valuable Association *time* and *money* in pursuing the idea of a new hymnal. Why risk another chance for liberalism to creep into the AFLC? If

we begin to compromise a little at a time, we will soon lose the qualities which separate us from the merged Lutheran bodies of our time.

Aadalen Free Lutheran Congregation
Helny Ohnstad, secretary
Fairdale, N. Dak.

(Ed. note: The above letter was also sent to all members of the hymnbook Committee. Those people will speak for themselves, but if I may respond to the third point, if I know the committee members at all, they will protect the doctrine of the words and the quality of the music of our hymns, not be a threat to these. The first sentence in Aadalen's fourth point is certainly true.)

EQUALS BEFORE GOD

At a Communion service it happened that a poor old man knelt beside him (the Duke of Wellington) to receive the Sacrament. When one of the church officers hastily urged the shabbily dressed communicant to move away from the Duke, the alert eye of the strategist who had defeated Napoleon at Waterloo immediately whispered: "Do not move! We are all equal here."

Walter A. Maier, Sr.

Familiar faces

Pastors Kenneth Moland and Francis Monseth entertaining at the Friday evening ice cream social.



Mrs. John Kjos and sons.



Vrenda Bengtson.



Debbie Anderson and Mrs. Allen Bergman.

The cafeteria was filled with students and alumni for the ice cream social.



Joyce Aasness and Mrs. Tonus Pollestad served on the Homecoming Committee.



Mrs. Jon Strand, Jerry Blake, and Carol Tweedt.

Homecoming 1982

October 8-10 found a large number of alumni being refreshed on the "good old" AFLBS campus. They were encouraged to be "Standing Firm" throughout the days' activities. Over 250 people attended the banquet at the Ambassador Hotel where Pastor Herbert Franz addressed the group. Other activities included talks by Lay Pastor and Mrs. Ken Thorson, an '81-'82 choir concert, and the traditional Saturday afternoon games. Classes of '72 and '77 were honored.



Jon Benson, Nancy Copes and Priscilla Mundfrom.

Missouri Synod president asks for careful study to guide inter-Christian relations

ST. LOUIS—Dr. Ralph A. Bohlmann, president of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, has called for a careful study of church relations, principles and practices to provide guidelines for the Synod and its membership in a broad area of Christian interrelationships and involvements.

Bohlmann said the guidelines should provide counsel for involvements ranging from neighborhood Bible studies to synodical membership in councils and federations of churches.

Calling it "high priority," Bohlmann noted that the Synod's convention has already called for such a study, as he spoke to a Team Leadership Seminar held Sept. 20-21, which was supported by a grant from Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL).

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

In citing needs for the study, the synodical president said, "Our Biblical and confessional position is not under question, but it needs to be understood more widely, developed more comprehensively, and applied to our lives in today's world."

The Missouri Synod is strongly committed to witnessing to a confessional Lutheran doctrine both to its members and to the world at large, he said, adding that the Synod is also committed to recognizing and giving appropriate expression to the unity of all Christians.

"Principles of truth and unity are on a collision course," he said in stressing that the synod must practice Christian love by witnessing to the truth (confessional doctrine) and in manifesting and deepening Christian unity.

Bohlmann added that love must also correct abuses that are shown in "excessive faultfinding, public character assassination, caricaturing positions of others . . . and . . . disregard for the corporate position of the Synod and consciences of others by engaging in practices contrary to our covenant."

One of the working assumptions for the study, according to Bohlmann,

should be the need to distinguish between principles of inter-Christian relationships and their application.

"Some historic applications of principles easily come to be regarded as principles, when in fact they are not," he said. "This easily leads to a kind of nomistic (directed by law) ecumenism instead of the Gospel-centered approach to our confessional heritage."

He stated that church relations actions—whether of individuals, congregations or church bodies—are, in fact, confessional acts bearing witness "to what we ourselves believe as well as to our perception of the beliefs of those with whom we relate." That is why theology and church relations belong together, he added.

"Since there will continue to be many gray areas," he said, "we need to develop deeper levels of trust within our membership so that responsible decisions by brethren are accepted rather than condemned."

To assist the trust level, he encouraged:

- involvement of people, especially pastors, in study and discussion of the decisions;

- commitment of synodical leaders;

- communication at all levels toward informing, educating and motivating proper interrelationships; and

- a means for receiving, evaluating and dealing with responsible expressions of dissent for responsible review of synodical policies.

He said the need for such a study is made more important in light of the new church being formed by three other Lutheran bodies as well as their decision to participate in interim Eucharistic sharing with the Episcopal church. He added that it is also needed for strengthening ties with Lutheran churches in other countries.

Bohlmann also discussed a proposal for a new inter-Lutheran association in the United States which he plans to present to the Synod's Commission on Theology and Church Relations and to the November meeting of the Lutheran Council and its church body presidents.

NW Minnesota Leaguers gather

The fall rally of the Northwestern Minnesota District Luther League Federation was held on Saturday, Sept. 11, at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Thief River Falls. Eighty-eight leaguers were present.

The rally opened with a welcome by Don Johnson, our Luther League president. Singspiration was led by Gary and Sherry Hauter. Pastor Bruce Dalager, Grand Forks, N.Dak., led the Bible study, which was based on our theme verses, Romans 13:11-14.

We had our business meeting and election of new officers. There was a "fun" afternoon of recreation with leaguers choosing between bowling and roller skating. Pastor Dalager was the special speaker at our banquet that evening.

The movie "High Point" was shown at the evening service. It was a very good movie dealing with the pressures most teenagers face. It turned out to be a very inspirational day that was a nice break from all our busy fall activities.

Hope Dyrud, Secretary

Attend the winter Bible conference in your area

The 1983 Bible conferences will again be held at three locations. The places and the dates are:

**February 2-5 —
Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Thief River Falls, Minn.**

**February 9-12 —
Escanaba, Mich., or the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis.**

**February 25-27 —
Triumph Lutheran Church, Ferndale, Wash.**

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Has God a plan for my life?

In consideration of the question, "What Shall I Do with My Life?" we have arrived at the conclusion that the first and basic thing to do is to give God the control of one's life by giving Him one's heart, the center of one's being.

Now life is meant to be active—to be spent in doing something worthwhile. God's thought is not that we should fritter away our lives in idleness or in meaningless things. He wants us to be busied with something that will really count.

A very natural question, therefore, for a consecrated young Christian who has given his or her heart to God, is to ask, "What does God want me to do?"

Before we try to answer that question let us look at another problem on which we must first have clear ideas: Has God a plan for my life? Has He a will for my career? Has He a definite program that He has thought out for me?

Now to say that God has such thoughts for me is to make a tremendous assumption. If God has a plan for my life, then He must have one also for every other life. And what does that mean? It means that among all the teeming millions of human beings that ever lived, are living today, and ever will live, God has a distinct pattern for each life! For every little babe that comes into the world God has a definite program! Can that be possible? For us human beings, with our limitations, it is extremely difficult, yes, impossible, to understand how this can be.

Have we then any sure grounds for thinking that God has a plan for each individual life? Yes, in the light of His own revelation we know that God is omniscient, that He knows all things past, present, and future. There is nothing hidden from His all-seeing eye. Not only that. God also cares about us. He has created us and is greatly concerned about each one of us. And He offers definite guidance on our way. In support

of these statements consider the following passages from the Bible. Read these carefully in the light of our problem: Has God a plan for my life?

1. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them" (Gen. 1:26-27).

2. "Every one that is called by My name, and whom I have created for glory, whom I have formed, yea, whom I have made" (Isa. 43:7).

3. "Jehovah alone did lead him. And there was no foreign god with him" (Deut. 32:11-12).

4. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of Jehovah, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust" (Ps. 91:1-2).

5. "Thine eyes did see mine unformed substance and in Thy book they were all written, even the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was none of them" (Ps. 139:16).

6. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am Jehovah thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior" (Isa. 43:2-3).

thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith Jehovah. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My

ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8-9).

8. "And Jehovah will guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in dry places, and make strong thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Isa. 58:11).

9. "Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add one cubit unto the measure of his life? And why are ye anxious concerning raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all His glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God doth so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matt. 6:26-30).

10. "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father: but the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matt. 10:29-30).

These passages, and many others that could be cited, certainly give reasons to believe that God not only knows in advance but also directs the course of human lives. But we have even more specific evidence in God's call to and guidance of individual men as recorded in Scripture. Call to mind the instructions to Noah, the call to Abraham, the shaping of the career of Joseph, the direction of Moses, the selections of Saul and David to be king, the vision of Isaiah, the deliverance of Daniel, and the remarkable and repeated experiences of Paul in revelations of the will of God to him.

Perhaps you will say, "Well, these were especially big men whom the Lord chose for especially important tasks." True, but do you believe that God has thoughts for only the great? ◇

"For every little babe that comes into the world God has a definite program!"

news of the churches

With our evangelist-youth worker

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." So wrote the prophet Jeremiah. In this day of grace the harvest may yet go on. Evangelist Kenneth Pentti is engaged in that work of sounding the Gospel call. Pray for him. His immediate schedule follows:

Lake Stevens, Wash.

Elim Lutheran Church

Nov. 7-11

Richard Anderson, pastor

Thief River Falls, Minn.

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

Nov. 28-Dec. 2

Leslie Galland, pastor

Leeds, N. Dak.

Lebanon Lutheran Church

Dec. 5-9

LeRoy Flickinger, pastor

Preaching mission

Eagle Butte, S. Dak.

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Ernest Langness, pastor

Nov. 28-Dec. 2

Ev. Philip Hanson, LEM, speaker

LIFE . . .

No, that is not His nature. He who notes the sparrow's fall, who cares for the transient lilies, who has numbered the hairs of our heads, is not indifferent to the career of a human being, however obscure.

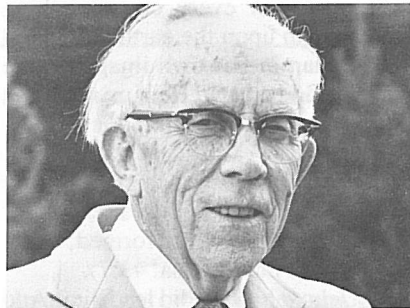
But what tremendous consequences flow from the fact that God has a plan for one's life!

It dignifies one's existence in a wonderful way. How ennobling to know that God has thought about one's life and laid out a plan according to which it is to be lived!

Another thought strikes us with force: If God has a plan for my life, then, of course, the only way in which I can attain to true success is to come

Pastor Tollefson honored in Astoria

We at Bethany Lutheran Church, Astoria, Oregon, praise and thank the Lord for the continuing blessing and inspiration that Pastor Hans Tollefson is to us here. Even though his eyesight has failed much, he is still used of the Lord as he serves on our Board



of Deacons, preaches at times in Pastor Grothe's absence and sings with a beautiful, clear tenor voice that God has yet allowed him to keep. He is also a pastor to the pastor with his wealth of experience.

Pastor Tollefson recently celebrated his 80th birthday on Wednesday, Sept. 22. On Sunday the 19th, we sang "Happy Birthday" for him at worship and he sang a solo, a song that he sang so beautifully, "Hold Thou My Hand." That afternoon he was honored at an open house at the Alfred and Trinna Tollefson home in Gearhart, where many friends and church members came to share greetings with him and a delicious lunch served by the Tollefson family. The photo is by Mr. John Birdeno, a member of Bethany.

—Corr.

into that plan. Any other career, naturally, will be more or less of a failure. To do God's will constitutes the highest goal and ambition for a consecrated Christian.

These considerations all make it overwhelmingly important to try to find out what the will of God for one's career is. This is one of the largest problems a Christian ever faces. Is it possible to



McVile church celebrates 100 years

The New Luther Valley Congregation of McVile, N. Dak., celebrated its 100th anniversary on Saturday and Sunday, June 26 and 27. Rev. Wesley Langaas is the pastor.

Guest speakers were former pastors Kenneth Anderson, Paul Ronning and Ernest Langness and Rev. Richard Snipstead, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations.

We thank God for His grace, mercy, forgiveness and sustaining power, making it possible to proclaim the Gospel of salvation for 100 years. Our prayers are that His Word may continue to go forth here for the salvation of souls until Christ returns.

—Corr.

Fellowship group is meeting at Devils Lake, N. Dak.

Evening worship services are being conducted on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at the Gate City Savings meeting room in Devils Lake, N. Dak. Pastor LeRoy Flickinger, Leeds, N. Dak., and Pastor Jerome Nikunen, Minnewaukan, N. Dak., are alternating in leading the services. The services begin at 7:30.

find out God's will? This question we shall try to answer in our next discussion.

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

Next Time: Is It Possible to Find Out the Will of God?

Personalities

Mr. Mark Antal, who graduated from the Association Seminary last May, has accepted the call from Bethany Lutheran Church, Bemidji, Minn., and has begun work there. Word has not been received as to when his ordination will take place.

Rev. Edwin Kjos has resigned as pastor of the Culbertson, Mont., parish (Bethel and Faith), effective as of Nov. 1. His future plans are not known.

Rev. David C. Molstre, Dickinson, N. Dak., is the speaker at Spiritual Emphasis Week meetings in Trinity Lutheran Church, Minnewaukan, N. Dak., this week. The services end on Thursday night (Oct. 28). The local pastor is Rev. Jerome Nikunen.

Rev. John P. Strand, Remer, Minn., is speaking at a men's retreat at Red Willow Bible Camp, Binford, N. Dak., this weekend, Oct. 29-30. His topics are "The New Testament Concerning the Congregation," "Various Offices of the Church," and "Building the Congregation." The retreat is an Eastern North Dakota District affair.

Bethel Lutheran Church, Minot, N. Dak., is receiving every other week pastoral service from **Rev. Phipp Haugen** of the AFLC Schools for the time being during a pastoral vacancy.

Rev. Francis Monseth, dean of Association Free Lutheran Seminary, is beginning every other week services at Royalton, Minn., for a mission group meeting there.

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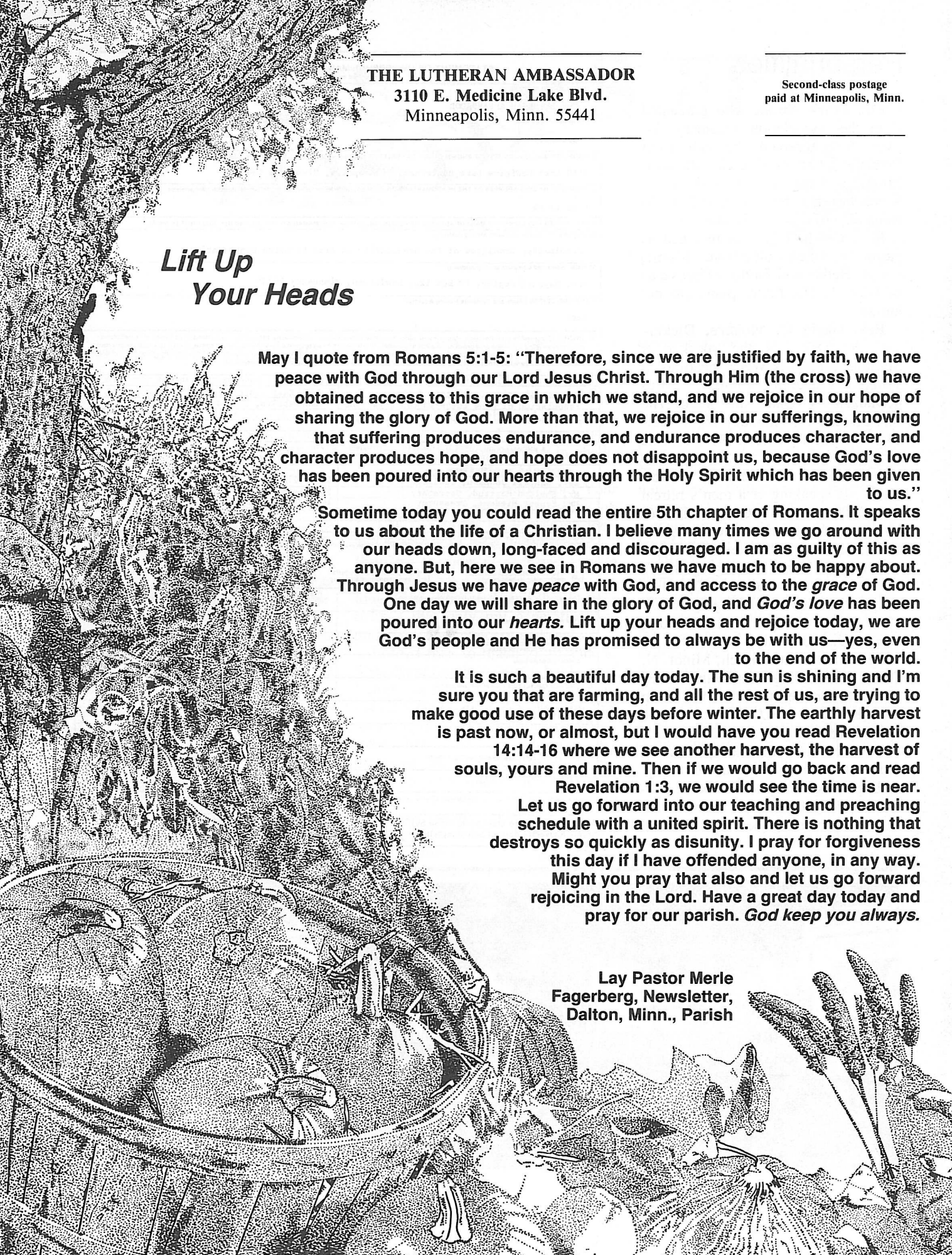
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July 1981

(See instruction on reverse)

(Page 1)



The Wilderness Camp staff. Left to right, Mr. and Mrs. George Hartman, Rev. and Mrs. Gordon Grage, Rev. and Mrs. R. Snipstead, Mrs. James Rolf, Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Dahlgren, and Rev. and Mrs. John Strand. Not pictured, James Rolf.



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Lift Up Your Heads

May I quote from Romans 5:1-5: "Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him (the cross) we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us."

Sometime today you could read the entire 5th chapter of Romans. It speaks to us about the life of a Christian. I believe many times we go around with our heads down, long-faced and discouraged. I am as guilty of this as anyone. But, here we see in Romans we have much to be happy about. Through Jesus we have *peace* with God, and access to the *grace* of God.

One day we will share in the glory of God, and *God's love* has been poured into our *hearts*. Lift up your heads and rejoice today, we are God's people and He has promised to always be with us—yes, even to the end of the world.

It is such a beautiful day today. The sun is shining and I'm sure you that are farming, and all the rest of us, are trying to make good use of these days before winter. The earthly harvest is past now, or almost, but I would have you read Revelation 14:14-16 where we see another harvest, the harvest of souls, yours and mine. Then if we would go back and read Revelation 1:3, we would see the time is near.

Let us go forward into our teaching and preaching schedule with a united spirit. There is nothing that destroys so quickly as disunity. I pray for forgiveness this day if I have offended anyone, in any way.

Might you pray that also and let us go forward rejoicing in the Lord. Have a great day today and pray for our parish. *God keep you always.*

Lay Pastor Merle
Fagerberg, Newsletter,
Dalton, Minn., Parish