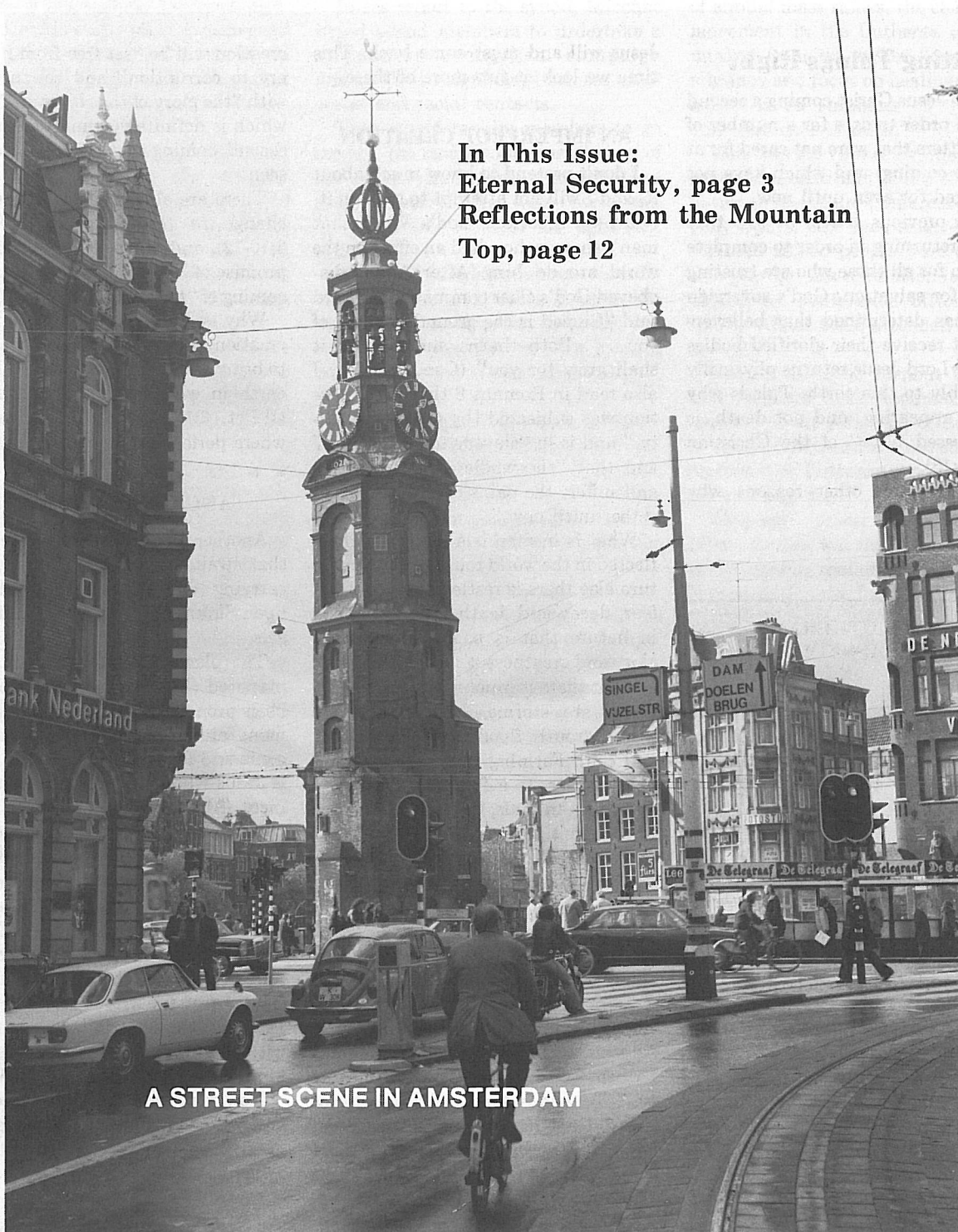


THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

September 15, 1981

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A STREET SCENE IN AMSTERDAM

AT THE MASTER'S FEET

by Pastor Harvey Carlson



Setting Things Right

Why is Jesus Christ coming a second time? In order to care for a number of vital matters that were not cared for at His first coming, and which have not been cared for even until now.

In our previous article we saw that Jesus is returning in order to complete salvation for all those who are trusting in Him for salvation. God's sovereign choice has determined that believers shall not receive their glorified bodies until the Lord Jesus returns physically and visibly to this earth. This is why Christ's appearing, and not death, is the "blessed hope" of the Christian (Titus 2:13).

But there are other reasons why

Jesus will and must come back. This time we look at two more of these.

AN IMPERFECT CREATION

I don't pretend to know much about it, and I will not attempt to explain it, but I do see from God's Word that man's sin somehow had an effect on the world around him. After Adam disobeyed God's clear command, the Lord said "Cursed is the ground because of you. . . . Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you" (Gen. 3:17-18). I also read in Romans 8 that "the creation was subjected [by God] to futility," and is in "slavery to corruption," and that "the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of child-birth together until now."

What is in man is also seen and reflected in the world round about. In nature also there is restlessness, conflict, fear, decay and death. There is much in nature that is beautiful, and the glory and greatness of God can be seen, and yet there is much that is not right. There are storms, hail, destructive winds, drouth, floods, extremes of heat and cold. Farming is always a battle; nature is never a full ally. There are ferocious animals, poisonous snakes, insects that are pests.

A change is needed! And a change is coming. And it is Jesus who will bring these changes about!

There are promises of changes upon the earth. Isaiah 11:6-8 speaks of great changes in the animal kingdom, and of children freely playing with the wolf, leopard, young lion, cobra and viper. All this to be brought about by the branch from Jesse's (David's) family (v. 1-5), who is the Lord Jesus. Since this did not happen at His first coming, and is not happening now, it must await His return. Romans 8:21 says the

creation will be "set free from its slavery to corruption" and connects this with "the glory of the children of God," which is definitely connected with the second coming of Christ, as we have seen.

There are also promises of a drastic change *to the earth itself* (II Pet. 3:10-12), and this is lined up with "the promise of His coming" (v. 4), and the coming of "the day of the Lord" (v. 10).

Why is Jesus coming again? To free creation from all the effects of sin and to bring about "new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" (II Pet. 3:13), a perfect environment where perfect people can live forever.

ANGELIC REBELLION

Another piece of unfinished business that awaits the return of Christ, is the carrying out of deserved judgment upon Satan and the other rebelling angels.

The place of punishment has been prepared (Matt. 25:41), judgment has been pronounced (Jn. 16:11). The demons are aware of the judgment to come and fear it and also know that it is Jesus who will carry out that judgment (Matt. 8:29; Lk. 8:28).

Satan and his organized kingdom of evil are now working (I Pet. 5:8; Eph. 6:11-12), yet are under God's control and can only go exactly as far as God permits (Job 1-2; Lk. 22:31). Greater limitations are coming, then a period of total restriction, then the casting into the lake of fire (Rev. 12:7-10, 20:1-3, 10). All of this is definitely put together with the coming of Jesus as judge and king (Rev. 11:15; 19:11-21; 20:4-6).

How wonderful that Jesus *is* coming, and will carry out such a needed program!

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ETERNAL SECURITY

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

The first of two parts



Rev. Gerald F. Mundfrom

Those who believe the doctrine of eternal security use the truth of God's great love for man as an argument to verify their teaching.

It is because God loves man that He gave him a free will to choose, or not to choose to follow and obey Him. And this never changes. Man still has this choice after he is saved as well as before. As a Christian, he can choose

"We are free to go back to the ways of the world any time we foolishly choose to do so."

whether he wills to remain a Christian and to follow and obey God or not.

Those who believe and teach eternal security cling to such passages as Romans 8:31-39 and John 10:27-30, which tell of God's great keeping power. But these passages only promise that God will protect man's soul from destruction to the extent that man wants that protection. This does not prevent man from carelessly or intentionally deserting God and following the ways of the world.

God never, in any way or at any time, forces His will or His love upon man. If He did it would be slavery and not love. The sad truth is that there are many who make a start with Christ but find the cost of continuing on with Him too high, or the pleasures of the world too inviting, and they turn again from God in order to follow the ways of the world.

If a young man says he loves a certain young lady but tries to force her to marry him or makes threats if she does not, we would question whether he really loves her. But if he is ready to let her make her own decision about becoming his wife without pressure, and at the risk of losing her, we can believe he loves her.

God's love toward us is like that. He has no intention of ever enslaving us against our will with His goodness or His commands. The commands He gives are for our good, but we are to obey them only if we want to obey them. However, to reject God's commandments is to reject God and suffer the consequences. God will save us from the consequence of our own sin, but only if we want to be so saved. We can be saved and have an inheritance in heaven awaiting us, but this salvation is only conditional and can be lost if we choose to carelessly or intentionally sever our relationship with God.

God in His plan of salvation has not set a trap of some kind for us in that if we once become saved that we forfeit our choice of free will and are forced to continue on with Him. We are free to go back to the ways of the world any time we foolishly choose to do so.

Neither is it true that once we become a Christian we will no longer have a desire to again follow and enjoy the ways of the world. Our old Adam still craves the ways of the flesh. The

Tempter, with his many temptations, ever remains a threat to our soul. Our only hope is to live in God's Word and to cling to the Christ of that Word and not give a listening ear to the Tempter with his beguiling ways.

We do well to realize that there is the danger of falling away. This will cause us to be on guard and to take no chances with our soul. As long as we keep our attention on Jesus and don't allow the devil, the world or our own flesh to distract us, we can be assured of Jesus' keeping power. He will so keep and protect us as long as we make Him our first love (Rom. 8:31-39; Jn. 10:27-30).

The most dangerous threat to the Christian is in thinking that he can serve both God and mammon (Matt. 6:24) or that he can be a Christian and also follow the ways of the world.

Many there are who claim to be Christians but their love is for the world. Such people will be very surprised when they come to the end of life on this earth thinking they are Christians but finding out too late that they are not. Perhaps at one time they were following Jesus, but then they allowed themselves to be subtly sidetracked by temptation, all the while assuming they were still on the narrow road that leads to heaven. They are lost, going in the wrong direction and don't know it.

We will never be entirely secure with no danger of falling until we put off the old Adam at the time of physical death and are safe in heaven. The minute we take for granted that we are out of danger and take down our guard we give opportunity to the evil one to catch us off guard. When we think we are secure pride sets in and pride readily precedes a fall (Rom. 16:18).

We can take marriage as an example. A man and wife may dearly love

each other and this holds their marriage together. But if either one yields to temptation and becomes unfaithful, he or she would be endangering their marriage.

When we give ourselves to Christ it is with the thought of remaining true and faithful to Him all the days of our life. But like a marriage relationship, through careless living it can be greatly damaged and broken. And though Jesus will protect us from all evil to both body and soul, nevertheless, such protection never exceeds the boundaries of our own will when we choose either carelessly or deliberately to go

“...the remark ‘being born again’ relates to becoming a Christian and not to remaining a Christian.”

against His will. Whenever a first love becomes something else besides Jesus and His will for us, we are on dangerous ground, and the Christian who has made a start with Christ is also capable of manifesting such a dangerous love.

Those who believe in eternal security would tell us that if once born (physically or spiritually) you cannot become unborn. But we can and could die (physically and spiritually) any time after birth.

The terms “born again,” “being saved” and other such phrases are earthly terms. They are terms we understand and they are used to describe the spiritual which by nature we do not understand. But in making comparisons we dare not go beyond the boundaries in which they do compare.

For example: the term “born again” vividly portrays for us the complete change that takes place in the life of one who decides to become a Christian. It is like starting all over again in this world with a new fresh outlook and a different goal and purpose for living. Before he was a Christian he was enslaved and confined to the consequence of his own sin, as an unborn child is confined to the mother’s womb. But in being born a new freedom is realized for both the newborn child and the newly born Christian.

But this is as far as the comparison dares take us. A physically born child cannot again enter the mother’s womb and be “unborn,” but this doesn’t compare in the same way to the spiritual life. We can slip back into our old pattern of life such as we knew before we became Christians and be spiritually “unborn” if we carelessly or deliberately choose to do so (Lk. 15:11-32). Note: It was Nicodemus (Jn. 3:1-7) and not Jesus who said we cannot enter the second time into our mother’s womb. But as Jesus speaks of being born again in a spiritual sense Nicodemus thought of it in a physical sense and was puzzled by such a remark. But the remark “being born again” relates to becoming a Christian.

Nicodemus was interested in making a new start in life with Christ, but was concerned about the old life he had lived. What was he to do with that? Jesus makes it plain that he didn’t need to start over again as a baby but could go on with Him from that point the rest of his life. The comparison goes no farther than this.

(To be continued)

(In his second article Pastor Mundform examines a number of Scripture passages which refute the teaching of an eternal security in this life.)

ONE’S SPIRITUAL LIFE

To this end it is necessary that one be diligent in the study of God’s Word, in prayer and in worship. These are the means of cultivating one’s spiritual life.

Chas. Enders

WMF RALLY SET

The fall rally of the Women’s Missionary Federation of the Southwest Central Minnesota District will be held at Our Savior’s Lutheran Church in Broton on Tuesday, Oct. 6, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Rev. and Mrs. Connely Dyrud of Brazil will be the guest speakers.

PERSONALITIES

Missionary John Abel of Brazil was back in the U.S. briefly during the summer and attended the Board of World Missions meeting on July 30 in Minneapolis, Minn. Also present were Missionaries George Knapp and Connely Dyrud, also of Brazil.

IN MEMORIAM

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

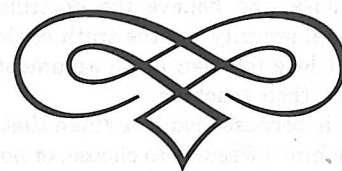
MINNESOTA

Sauk Centre

Palmer A. Svaren, 77, July 23, Elim Lutheran Brethren Church, Osakis, Minn.

Spicer

Mrs. Esther C. Pladen, 84, August 5, Green Lake



BY THE WAY

Go with me, Master, by the way,
Make every day a walk with Thee;
New glory shall the sunshine gain,
And all the clouds shall lightened be.
Go with me on life’s dusty road
And help me bear the weary load.

Talk with me, Master, by the way,
The voices of the world recede,
The shadows darken o’er the land—
How poor I am, how great my need.
Speak to my heart disquieted
Till it shall lose its fear and dread.

Bide with me, Master, all the way,
Though to my blinded eyes unknown;
So shall I feel a presence near,
Where I had thought I walked alone.
And when, far spent, the days decline,
Break Thou the bread, O Guest of mine!

Annie Johnson Flint
(Youth’s Favorite Poems)

The Railroad Evangelistic Association



An Interdenominational Non-partisan Christian Railroad Fellowship to Uplift Christ that He May Draw All Men Unto Himself in the Railroad and Transportation Industry.

by Paul Myhre, Hoquiam, Wash.

Because of the nature of the railroad and transportation industry it has been very difficult for many of these workers, even those who are Christians, to be active and participate in their respective churches. Calling on them by pastors and church members can be difficult, because the rail worker, likely the father, may not always be at home. For example, those in train operations are working away from home and families several days in a row. Also some are involved in shift work and thus unable to attend God's house regularly to hear God's Word preached and participate in fellowship activities of the local church.

Because of his conversion, a locomotive engineer, L. S. Harkey, in Sanford, Florida, a simple man of faith, as in Acts 4:13, felt the call from God to tell the Good News to his fellow laborers. In order that he could be a channel of blessing to railroad men, he called a convention by inviting Christian railroaders to attend, in 1941. And so the R.E.A. was organized. Thus they could be like a cloud of witnesses to the unsaved, as in Heb. 12:1. Also it was decided to have a national publication

called *The Railroad Evangelist* so Christian railroaders could leave God's Word to non-Christians without any comment and let the publication be the witness, as it says in its title. Its editor, since the beginning, is the Rev. Herman Rose, son of a locomotive engineer and he himself was a railroad clerk before he entered the ministry. He has had a great concern for the people in the railroad and transportation industry, for their spiritual needs. In addition to his evangelistic and soul-searching editorials which appear in *The Railroad Evangelist*, there are also pictures of railroad scenes, as well as railroad historical articles and personal testimonies which are written by railroaders.

Since it was the wish of the founder that laymen could assist busy pastors in reaching the unchurched, local REA chapters were formed. Currently there are about 20 active chapters in the country, including Minot, N. Dak.; Havre, Mont.; and Vancouver, Wash. These chapters usually meet monthly for fellowship meetings where Christians of the railroad and transportation industry can get together as well bring

non-Christians along also. At these meetings God's Word is read and shared, as well as songs of praise are sung and members bring their concerns for fellow workmen to the Lord in prayer. Through the year there are regional conventions, also the annual convention in July or August each year. At these conventions and local chapter meetings *The Railroad Evangelist* and tracts are available to the members for distribution.

Churches can extend their ministry to reach railroad workers, by including them in visitation, like the unchurched in the neighborhood or community. Bearing in mind the active family members in the church while he may be at work can provide him power to keep his faith. Those who are railroaders should try to seek personal fellowship with fellow Christian workers, that each other's faith may be strengthened and they can be of influence in sharing the news of salvation with others. When workers are transferred, we should advise them of churches in their new community and notify pastors there.

Let us bear in mind that we are dependent on rail and transportation services for movement of passengers and commodities. Railroad workers, too, have their spiritual need to call upon the Comforter in the time of need.

(Ed. note: I met Paul Myhre in 1963 at Chelan, Wash. He is the son of a former pastor in the Lutheran Free Church and takes a keen interest in the AFLC.)

BETHANY LUTHERAN CELEBRATES CENTENNIAL

Under the theme "To God Be the Glory," Bethany Lutheran congregation of rural Abercrombie, North Dakota, celebrated its 100th anniversary August 7-9.

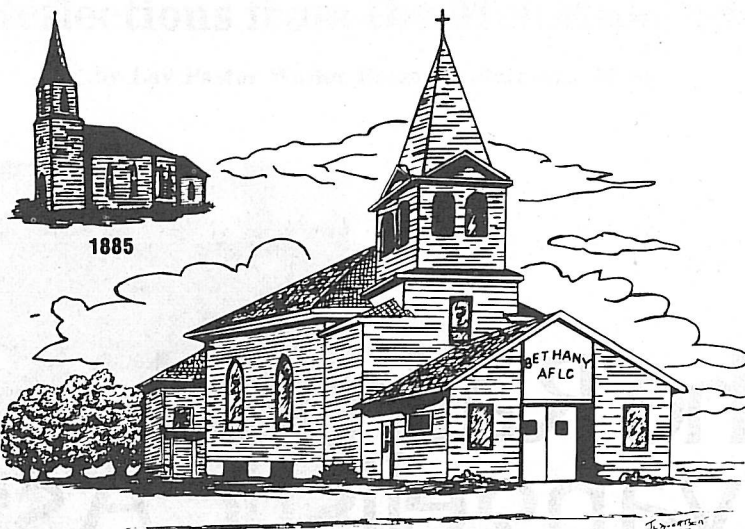
The Anniversary was marked by a weekend of special services and a banquet. Pastor Dale Mellgren of Kalispell, Mont., a former pastor at Bethany, brought the opening message at a special "Youth Night," Friday evening.

Saturday morning saw the return of former pastor Hans Upstad to lead in a special Norwegian service. The Eidsvoll Minikor, a ladies choir from Norway, favored the congregation with several numbers as well as adding color with their traditional Norwegian costumes. A Norwegian style buffet was served at noon with ample time to reminisce about the good old days at "Bethania," or brush up on one's Norwegian in a conversation with the ladies from Eidsvoll.

Following an open house at the parsonage in the early afternoon, a banquet took place at The Bowler in Fargo, N. Dak., Saturday evening. Pastor Francis Monseth, who served Bethany as a seminary student was the Master of Ceremonies for the evening, and several former members and friends of the congregation brought greetings or shared special music.

Sunday was a day of celebration and thanksgiving. We began our day with a communion service led by Pastor Larry Severson, now of Roseau, Minn. Pastor Severson served the congregation from 1967-1972. We were honored to have Pastor and Mrs. Richard Snipstead as our guests and Pastor Snipstead brought the morning message at the 10:30 anniversary service. The Bethany choir shared a medley of hymns, led by Mrs. Tim Viland.

The weekend of activities culminated in a Festival Service Sunday afternoon. Pastor Paul Nash, of Ishpeming, Mich., a son of the congregation, led the service which included a devotional from Pastor Julius Hermunsle, Fergus Falls, Minn., also a son of the congregation, and a mass choir led by Pastor



-from the Anniversary bulletin

Monseth. Special greetings were read from former pastors and missionary Priscilla Wold, who is a daughter of the congregation. Following the benediction a centennial cake was served in the church basement.

The church, which had sustained \$30,000 in storm damages just one year prior to the centennial, had been completely restored with a new roof, siding, basement ceiling and paint. The stained glass windows, destroyed by the storm, had been beautifully reconstructed, with some former members not even noticing the change.

At Bethany we are thankful that the Lord has given us not just a beautiful

building but the beauty of a Christian life. We are thankful that as we step into a new century as a congregation the Lord goes with us, giving us His grace to proclaim that Jesus Christ lives to the glory of God the Father. To God be the glory, great things He has done.

Rev. Rob. Lewis is presently serving Bethany. He is a 1981 graduate of Free Lutheran Seminary.

(Ed. note: Bethany was one of the congregations known as "The Friends of Augsburg" in 1893 and later and which became one of the founding congregations of the Lutheran Free Church in 1897.)

—from the Anniversary bulletin

SATAN'S WAYS

The devil always exhibits the fascination of sin, but conceals its bitterness. He recounts its pleasures, not its pains; its seductions, not its sorrows; its allurements, not its sufferings and sadness. Besides, his promises are lies. He never keeps his word. No wonder the Saviour wearies of his intrusions, impertinence, insolence and insults, as well as assaults, and repels him rudely, saying: "Get thee behind Me, Satan; for it is written, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve'."

N. Rieger

THE WORST OF ALL

But worst of all, is that condition into which a man comes when he does not recognize the day of grace—the day of visitation of the Lord who desires to save him. It is indeed, most lamentable, if we do not know what serves to our peace, what serves to give us true and everlasting salvation.

Louis F. Haeberle

WHEN JESUS COMES

Fear is dispelled, anxiety is pacified when Jesus comes and stands in the midst, and His presence is recognized.

Ernst G. Kuenzler

JOHN G. PATON

"The Saint John of the New Hebrides" (1857-1907)

Let us look at some fascinating pictures which this wonderful missionary has left for us in the story of his life. The first one is that of his little home in dear old Scotland, in the county of Dumfries. We see the boy's birthplace, a little cottage in the parish of Kirkmahoe, where, on May 24, 1824, he saw the light. This place is in the background. In the foreground stands the home in the busy village of Torthorwald, whither the child was taken when five years old, and where the staunch, godly Scotch parents, in the 40 years that went by, brought up their five sons and six daughters, and saw them go out into the world.

The cottage has stout oaken ribs, which the years of peat smoke have "japanned" until they shine, and they are too hard to drive a nail into them (sic). The roof is thatched, the walls are of stone, plastered, or pointed, with sand, clay and lime. There in the front of the three-roomed house we see the mother's domain, kitchen, parlour and bedroom in one, and in the rear room, the father's stocking-frames, five or six of them, which busy fingers keep in use betimes. The merchants of the county know and prize the good work of those frames.

There is a middle room, called a closet, which is "the sanctuary"; for here, in the bare little place, with only space for bed, table, and chair, with a small window to light it, the father goes by himself and "shuts the door" daily, and often three times a day. The children know that he is praying, and sometimes hear his voice through the shut door, but it is too sacred a thing to talk about. The one who is to become a great missionary never loses the memory of that place and those prayers, and often says to himself, "He walked with

God, why may not I?"

The thatched cottage with oaken ribs is the scene of busy days and happy Sabbaths, when churchgoing, and Bible stories and the Shorter Catechism at home, are not tasks but pleasures. Then we see the school days, and, when the boy is 12, the learning of the father's trade, with long hours daily, and all the spare minutes spent in study of first lessons in Greek and Latin. The boy has early decided to become a missionary, and even at the stocking-frames learns some things in the use of tools, and the watching of machinery, worth much to him in coming days and far-off fields.

The second picture that we look upon, as we follow the early days of the youth who is to become a missionary to distant savages, shows us many things. We see him working, saving, studying, going to school, earning money, going through all sorts of struggles and trials, teaching school, managing the unruly scholars without beating them with the heavy stick given him with which to "keep order," and finally, we behold him as a city missionary. His district is dreadfully poor and degraded, and after a year's work, there are but six or seven won to churchgoing to show for it.

But the indefatigable young city missionary struggles on. A kind Irishwoman whose husband, when drunken, beats her, and whose life is a toilsome one, gives the lower floor of her house for meetings. Classes are organized, meetings held in various places, visits are made continually, and the work grows wonderfully. The churches (now) receive many new members from this field, and eight lads work their way through educational courses to enter the ministry. So ten

busy, burdened, and useful, happy years pass by.

Now comes a third picture, which shows us the call to the foreign field. The Reformed Church of Scotland, in which Mr. Paton has been brought up, calls for a new missionary to help Mr. Inglis in the New Hebrides. Not one man can be found, after most earnest prayer and the use of all possible means.

Young Mr. Paton is deeply interested. He hears the heavenly Father's voice saying, "Since none better can be got, rise and offer yourself." He almost answers aloud, "Here am I, send me," but is afraid of being mistaken. At last, however, he feels impelled to make the offer, and he is joyfully received and accepted. His city mission parishioners rebel, and every effort is made to keep him from leaving them, but nothing now can dissuade him. His parents bid him Godspeed, saying, "We long ago gave you away to the Lord, and in this matter also, would leave you to God's disposal." Then he hears for the first time that at his birth he was dedicated to missionary work, if God should call, and that they have prayed ever since, that their first-born might be prepared and sent as a messenger to the heathen. The young missionary's happy marriage follows, and his departure with his bride for the cannibal island of Tanna, New Hebrides, in the far South

[Continued on page 10]

OUR MEMORY VERSE

"And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the Lord, and also with men" (1 Samuel 2:26).

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON HOME MISSION WORK

by Mr. Joel Rogenes, Ely, Minn.

The needs of Home Missions can be stated in three words: prayer, people and finances.

We need the earnest prayers of God's people who are obedient to the admonition given in Eph. 6:18-20. In these verses we are told to pray for all saints and for those who preach the Gospel, that they may speak it boldly. Pray for the pastors and their families that they be not overcome with loneliness. I don't think many people realize the difficulties of moving into a new area.

Pray that the Lord would call forth men with burning hearts like the one described in Jer. 20:9: "Then I said, 'I will not make mention of Him, nor speak any more in His name.' But His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." Men who will, out of love for the undying souls of men, obey the command given in Is. 58:1: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression and the house of Jacob their sins." II Timothy 2 gives a description of the kind of men we need in Home Missions. Faithful men who depend on the Lord to give them understanding in all things, according to the Bible, are needed. These men are spoken of in verses 24-26: "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

Leadership ability and sound business practices are needed to establish congregations, purchase property and build churches. Along with these qualifications a pastor needs a firm conviction that God is sovereign, that He has

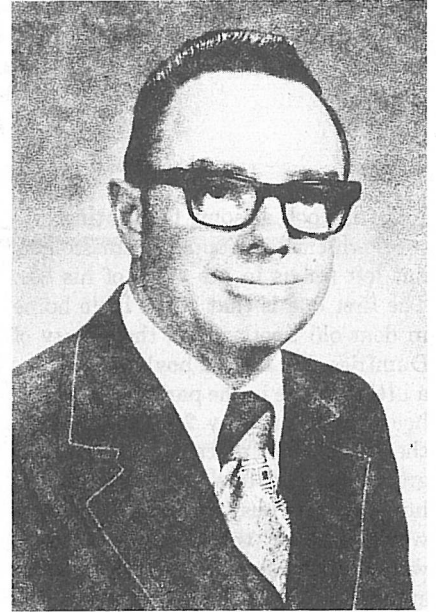
called him to this place, that He will provide all his needs, and give strength to do the work.

The most blessed place in all the world is the place where God has placed you. Then we can experience the same as Paul did when he wrote, in Phil. 4:11, "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content," and in I Tim. 6:6, "But godliness with contentment is great gain."

People are needed to begin a congregation. Most of all, I believe we need men who take their God-given responsibility seriously to be the leaders first in the home and then in the church. This is according to God's plan. There are many references to support this in the Bible. We have experienced more difficulty in establishing congregations where women were the leaders. It is not that women do not have the ability to be leaders but it is against God's order and we cannot expect God's blessing when we go against His Word. We need to pray for men and women who have the conviction that loving obedience to God's Word brings blessings both in the home and congregation.

Do you enjoy your church? Do you love to go to church on Sunday morning to worship God, sing in the choir, and enjoy the fellowship of other Christians? Do you enjoy going to midweek Bible study and prayer meeting so that you can grow in your Christian life? Do you appreciate the pastor whom God has given you and count it a privilege to uphold him in prayer? My wife and I talked about this and we truly would miss these blessings in our lives, which are often taken for granted.

Let us make use of the opportunity to attend all the meetings in our church and obey the words written in Heb. 10:23-25: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)



and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." When we consider all that Christ has done for us and the blessings we receive from attending our church, we should, out of love for Christ, give as the Lord has prospered. If we truly love God with all our heart, we will want others to be able to have the same joy and blessing that we receive from belonging to a congregation and knowing that Jesus is our Savior and Lord of our life. Let us give with cheerful hearts, knowing that God is faithful, for it is written in Heb. 6:10: "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister."

I am thankful to God and the people of the AFLC for granting me the privilege of serving on the Home Mission Board. It has brought great blessings into my life.

editorials

THE MULTIPLE PARISH

Last time we wrote something about the decline in multiple parishes over the years (a pastor serving two or more congregations). Today we would like to share some random thoughts on the multiple parish.

The idea of a pastor serving a number of congregations goes back to pioneer days in America. Because there were few pastors available, transportation was slow and the number of settlements was mushrooming on the new frontiers, it was imperative that one pastor take care of several congregations. And more than several, for there are instances of one pastor serving from 12-15 congregations and preaching places. Of course, he couldn't get around to each more than once a month or every six weeks.

Still another reason for the multiple parish was the fact that, among Norwegian settlers, for instance, two or more synods were at work in one community and so more pastors were required in order to serve the people. But that is another story and we shan't discuss that further here.

The economic factor entered in also. If a congregation had the means, it could call its own pastor. If the congregation were too isolated from other congregations of its own church body, it would be forced to support its own minister alone in order to continue. Some couldn't and lived a precarious existence. Of course, sometimes Home Mission subsidies kept small congregations, even small parishes, going even though there was little chance for numerical growth.

With a greater pastoral supply now, or without it, individual congregations have sought their own pastors, or two have gone together to do so whereas before three or four were hiring one pastor. Economically now it is possible to do so even though in number of dollars the amount needed is many times what it took, say, 25 years ago. Perhaps this says something, too, about the giving habits of people, that

they are better now than they used to be. Maybe our stewardship people can provide some statistics on that later on, factoring in inflation, etc.

The arguments made for one pastor serving one church include these: he can concentrate on one place, he will have more time for visitation (not as much time is spent on the road), he can participate in the Sunday School, he can run more of a program in one church than he could in two or more places, there will be more time for one's family. No doubt most pastors serving single congregations feel good about it and consider the situation ideal for what they want to be an effective ministry.

Having never served just one congregation in a real pastoral setting, this writer can only imagine what it would be like. As to the multiple parish, there we can speak from experience. In our first 19 years of parish ministry we served at least three congregations all the time, except for one four-month period, when there were two, and the majority of the time four. That sounds like a lot of work, but it wasn't so bad.

Having several churches to take care of is, we suspect, like having several children. Each one is different, each has its own personality. If there is disappointment in one, there may at the same time be some encouraging thing going on in another. And then the roles may be reversed. One congregation may have room for growth, another may be limited in that regard, but the core of faithful members in the latter gladdens the pastor's heart.

There is something pleasureable about driving out to one or more outlying churches on a Sunday morning, afternoon or evening, or during the week. Time spent in an auto is not lost time. It can be a time for prayer, for reflection, for conversation, for catching gems of truth from religious broadcasting. Then the pastor, when he arrives, greets the people in their own community, in the church they love.

It isn't difficult to preach a sermon more than once. If one has labored earnestly over a message, then one can trust the Holy Spirit also in the delivery of it. A pastor will vary his presentation somewhat, for it is different to talk to 20 people and to 200. The truth is the same, but the audience contact is not. If a pastor preaches in three churches on a Sunday the first sermon has the freshness of first-time delivery; in the second the pastor knows his message even better; in the third, he has learned still more, adding a new thought here or there, and the sermon is new to each audience.

As to visitation, does a pastor with one congregation do a better job of going out to see the people than a pastor with three or four churches? That depends on the pastor and on the number of people with whom he is working. If a pastor is serving one congregation he may have people living quite some distance away, too. They have to be called on in their homes. When a pastor serves a congregation some distance away, he drives out to the area and then stops at several homes while out there in order to make the best use of his time and travel expense.

What about the pastor's contact with the Sunday School? We are sure it is nice when the pastor can be present. But for many pastors this hasn't been possible and their rapport with the children hasn't been hurt that much. They can work in the Vacation Bible School, they will see them in

their homes and, it is to be hoped, in the church service. If at Sunday school, the pastor can be a teacher of a class. But again, it is to be hoped that even if he can't be there there is someone to teach the adult class, high school class or junior high class.

We have a book called *the Romance of the Ministry*, as yet unread, we are sorry to say. But the title says much. There is a romance, an excitement in being the pastor of a congregation or congregations. The church (the number of people) may be large. It is a challenge, an exciting work. The congregation may be small, unable to support a pastor alone, but the church is very close to the people and it can

be very exciting to see and hear the excellent Christmas program the few children and teachers in the Sunday school can present.

There will be one-congregation parishes and there will be multiple parishes. In the Association none of them are really large. Some are very small. What it means is that in either case there is a lot of room for personal work and contact. This can be one of our real strengths.

The Lord guide pastors and congregations in their important work. As doors open, let us enter them. But let us not read off the multiple parish as having less potential for accomplishing His work.

PREACHING MISSIONS

Ortley, S. Dak.

Ortley Lutheran Church

Rev. Wm. Moberg, pastor

Oct. 4-7

Lay Pastor Verle Dean, Spicer, Minn.,
speaker

Badger, Minn.

Badger Creek Lutheran Church

Gustav Nordvall, lay pastor

Oct. 4-8

Rev. Bruce Dalager, Mentor, Minn.,
speaker

Spicer, Minn.

Green Lake Lutheran Church

Rev. Dennis Gray, pastor

Oct. 4-8

Ev. Sterling Johnson, LEM, speaker
Bemidji, Minn.

Bethany Lutheran Church

R. S. Persson, pastor

Oct. 11-14

Lay Pastor Verle Dean, speaker

Willmar, Minn.

Zion Lutheran Church

Rev. Dennis Gray, pastor

Oct. 11-15

Rev. Arnold Stone, LEM, speaker, on
the Book of Acts

Ferndale, Wash.

Triumph Lutheran Church

Rev. Ronald Knutson, pastor

Oct. 11-15

Ev. Carl Jensen, LEM, speaker

Minneapolis, Minn.

Morgan Avenue Lutheran Church

Pastoral vacancy

Oct. 25-29

Lay Pastor Verle Dean, speaker

[Continued from page 7]

Seas. He is now 32 and the time is December, 1857.

Let us turn to the fourth picture, which shows us the island of Tanna. Dr. Inglis, and some native Christian teachers from the partly Christianized island of Aneityum, go with Mr. Paton, while Mrs. Paton stays for a while with the missionaries' wives who can tell her much of mission work, and she joins her husband later. The first view of the naked, painted, miserable savages gives a feeling of horror as well as of pity. They come crowding round to see the building of a wooden, lime-plastered house, chattering like monkeys.

Whatever interchange there is, must be by signs at first. One day the clever missionary notices a man lifting up some article that is strange, and asking another, "Nungsi nari enu?" He decides that his means "What is it?" and tries it again and again upon different natives. They always answer by giving the name he wishes. Again he hears a stranger asking, "Se nanging?" pointing to the missionary. "He is asking my name," thinks Mr. Paton. It is true, and another phrase of the language is added to his vocabulary. So he goes on, picking out words and meanings.

(To be continued)

—Julia H. Johnston, *Fifty Missionary Heroes Every Boy and Girl Should Know*, Fleming H. Revell Company

news of the churches

PASTOR DAHLE HONORED AT EARLY BIRTHDAY PARTY

Pastor Trygve F. Dahle was honored on Sunday, August 23, at an open house hosted by his family in honor of his coming 90th birthday, at Green Lake Lutheran Church, Spicer, Minn., of which he is a member. Rev. Dennis Gray, the local pastor, was master of ceremonies.

Pastor Dahle's actual birthday is November 14. The son of Pastor and Mrs. Ole Dahle, he was born at Duluth, Minn.

Most all of the family members were present for the birthday party at Green Lake.

FROM HERE AND THERE

Ferndale, Wash.—The parking lot at Triumph Lutheran Church was paved this past summer.

The West Coast District Family Camp was held at Lutherland, Aug. 12-16. Rev. Kenneth Moland, dean of AFLBS, was the guest speaker.

Drummond, Wis.—Seminarman H. Van Someren will be serving the parish during the present school year. He interned here this past summer.

Kalispell, Mont.—Faith and Stillwater Lutheran Churches conducted a family Bible camp at Dickey Lake, July 26-28. Pastor Dale Mellgren of Stillwater brought the Friday and Saturday night messages. Pastor Richard Bartholomew of Faith preached at the Sunday morning service. Around 50 persons were registered and others attended briefer parts of the camp.

Minneapolis, Minn.—At a special mission night at Rosedale Lutheran on Sun., Oct. 4, Mr. Earl Werner will demonstrate the Passover observance.

Rosedale and Faith Lutheran folks gathered at Rosedale one summer evening for an ice cream social. Jim. Hoialmen led the devotions and Elmer

Karlstad accompanied the lively singing of old Gospel songs. Mike and Kathie Klenner were the hosts for the enjoyable evening.

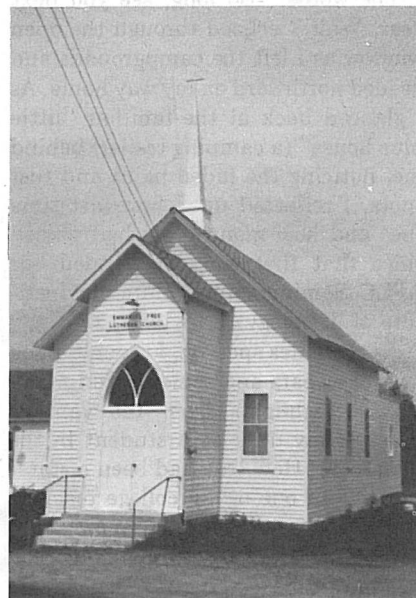
Winger, Minn.—The Pastor Bruce Dalager family included a visit to Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago on their vacation trip. PGM is the producer of the radio dramas of miracles of grace called "Unshackled."

Dalton, Minn.—Ken and Mavis Bolin presented the program at the Zion Luther League on August 2.

Christine Bystol, a member of Kvam Lutheran Church, was 100 years old on August 3. Her family helped her observe the occasion at the Broen Home in Fergus Falls, Minn., where she lives now. Congratulations.

Badger, Minn.—Women from Badger Creek and Oiland Lutheran Churches were among those who attended the district WMF Retreat at Galilee Bible Camp, Lake Bronson, Minn., Aug. 14-15. The chief part of the program were studies on Christ's Second Coming, Humanism, and Family Relationships given by Mr. and Mrs. Jim Sundby of Karlstad, Minn.

Minneapolis, Minn.—Gwen Snipstead, daughter of Pastor and Mrs. Richard Snipstead, spent six weeks in Norway this past summer under a program in which she studied the language and culture of Norway for eventual college credit. And, of course, she took some time to visit relatives.



Emmanuel Lutheran Church
Located south of Middle River, Minn., the congregation observed its 75th anniversary in 1980.

Miss Kathy Ostrand, Schools' librarian and secretary for the Seminary, became the bride of Eugene Murphy on July 11 at Medicine Lake Lutheran. Congratulations and best wishes!

Medicine Lake Lutheran Church had a picnic on August 2 after the morning service. It was held at Lake Independence.

Newfolden, Minn.—The parish is building an addition to the parsonage and renovating it in preparation for the arrival of the new pastor, Rev. and Mrs. Larry Haagenon and family, Dec. 1. The project will come to over \$17,000.

Bemidji, Minn.—Additional new members received into Bethany Lutheran Church are Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Wells, Wendy, Timothy and Andrew, Jr.

AFLBS HOMECOMING '81

Oct. 9-11

"The Lord delights in His people"

Psalm 149:4

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND!

The words, "So long, see you next year, Walt," echoed through the open window as I left the campgrounds and headed northward on my way home. As I glanced back at the familiar "little blue house" (a camping trailer) behind me, noticing the faded paint and rust spots, I reflected upon how fast time flies and how many years had passed since that first time I attended our AFLC Seminary for a Summer Institute of Theology.

As the miles sped by, I thought back over the years and remembered many of the highlights from the vantage point of my desk as a student in the classroom. How true had been a statement from one of my college teachers when he had once said, "You may never become a professor, Walt, but you will always be a student!" Through the years as a parish pastor I have realized the truth of that again and again. How grateful I am to those who have made it possible for pastors and laymen alike to continue their study of the sacred Scriptures yearly.

Someone had asked, "Will you write a few of your reflections this year?" I was so tempted to say, "Not this time," but I recall the remarks I have made to others to use every opportunity for service that God places in their pathway, trusting Him to use the service as unto Him, so I agreed.

Now . . . what shall I share? I pondered, as I gazed into the oncoming lights of cars in the other lane. Perhaps I could mention the beginning of each new day with the singing of a hymn—and there is something special about a group of men's voices floating through the hallways at Medicine Lake—or the devotionals from different men from many walks of life and the going to our knees in prayer as we turn to our Heavenly Father. Or would the mere mention of prayer time seem too insignificant to those reading about it?

What about the studies in Thessalonians from Pastor (Amos) Dyrud and the excitement of the Lord's return—what a blessed hope! Or American Church History with Pastor (Robert) Lee and the humor and enrichment of finding it as stimulating to me as an adult with greying hair as it had been to me as a younger student—or sharing the Lutheran Confessions as taught by Pastor (Francis) Monseth, reminding the readers how privileged we are as Lutherans to be able to look at each of

Reflections from the Mountain Top

by Lay Pastor Walter Beaman, McIntosh, Minn.



Pictured is Dr. Henry Brandt, Singer Island, Fla., who was a guest instructor at the Summer Institute. He taught the course, Counseling and Management.



Professor Robert Lee discusses a point with Lyle Aadahl, center, Mark Antal and Pastor Yeddo Gottel.



The 1981 Summer Institute in Theology family

our doctrines with the Scripture basis and a "thus saith the Lord!"

Then there was Counseling and Management as taught by Dr. Henry Brandt. How humbling to see such a learned man standing before us with his Testament opened and simply reading the Word. We were reminded again and again of its richness and that we are sinners in need of confession and forgiveness. We know that the Christian life is not just a matter of being saved but of applying the Word and of growing in sanctification by using profound and simple verses and examples from the Word of God as a means of helping ourselves, and others, toward greater victory as Christians.

Maybe . . . but it almost seemed as if I would be trying to describe a great banquet meal to one who had not tasted the food. . . .

Oh, what could I share from such a mountain top? I pondered this over and over as I traveled northward!

If only I could help someone to see how privileged we are as an Association to have a place where we can study with teachers who have the common goal of taking the inspired Word of God and sharing it with the students as together we "grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Again this year I realized how privileged and blessed I was to sit at the feet of learned instructors who had the capacity, by the grace of God, to cause me, the student, to sit with Mary of old at the feet of Jesus and "learn of Him." If only I could encourage someone—pastor or layman—to avail himself of such a unique and special time to spend a week, or two, at a summer session so they might experience what Paul was saying to Timothy in II Timothy 2:15: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth."

As I saw the lights of my beloved northland community coming into view, I uttered a silent prayer of thanksgiving to my Savior who had brought me safely from the mountain top of study yet another year into the valley of service and as I turned into the driveway I thought: "Well, Lord, we'll think of something! Just use it to encourage someone to come join me next year as we stand on the mountain-top of study!"

FELLOWSHIP CORNER

JUST THINKING

I have been thinking these early morning hours, what is wrong in our Christian world today? I mean among those of us who bear the name of Christ in all denominations. And I am searching my heart in the light of God's Word and asking, "Why aren't the unsaved all around me being saved and truly 'hurting' Christians being helped?" Are we losing time or sleep because of the unsaved today?

And I ask the Lord, "What am I doing wrong?" When I remember what real Christianity was like when I, too, was among the unsaved ranks, it seems so different now. It seems to me that Christians then never missed an opportunity to show love and concern for me. They didn't take the attitude that I was to blame for not coming to church, etc.

And as I think of this I want to know where I and others have gone wrong. In the early Church the Lord was "adding to their number day by day those who were being saved" (Acts 2:47b). Not as it seems today when people of all doctrinal persuasions are asking, "Who has a larger membership or more beautiful building, etc., etc.?"

Then could it be our pride first? I am asking myself, remember? Away back then, before my personal experience of salvation, I knew people weren't concerned just about "things," but had a burning desire to lead souls to Christ and encourage Christians in their daily walk. The place we met was just for the purpose of helping and teaching. I recall it being impressed upon me to search the Word of God for my answers. Now I realize we are being flooded with false cults much more now, so we have to be grounded. In what, is my question? Could it be the devil has built a wall between God's children here, too? What does God's Word say about this? I recall seeing something about whom the people were following. He, Paul, pointed each to Christ. I believe he included all true believers in his love.

Then, too, how long have we as God's children worried what other person was to carry on God's work? I can't

recall Christians being paid for everything they did for the Lord. If this had been true, I'd never have made it, because I mostly was broke in those early days of service for the Lord. Now we tune into a really good and Bible-founded message only to be informed long before the message from God's Word, "If you don't help, we'll have to give up, etc., etc." Now I know things are tough all over, but do we turn off needy souls by begging?

I can remember back there in the 40's when in Bible school, our dear president and teachers impressing upon us to only tell God our needs and not to write home. As I recall, we each were challenged to be responsible, by faith, for a certain amount of money for building, and to pray, not beg. And I saw lumber come in, where there was no lumber in those days, and our buildings were really built by faith.

Has God changed or have we? If I tell others my needs, am I really trusting the Lord only? My Bible says, in Phil. 4:19, "My God shall supply all your needs, etc." I don't believe that has changed either.

I really believe God has richly blessed and met my material needs today as a "senior citizen," because I tried to live like that in my younger years. I lived from hand to mouth, not for myself, but so I could work for the Lord. And even yet I have to check this out. When my Social Security check is almost gone, and I wonder if I dare share with someone, or ask my dear husband, these lessons I learned in Bible school come back to me.

Last month I was short again, and I shared again. Then I won a delicious box of apples from our little grocery store, so that verse came to me, found in Luke 6:38: "Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, etc." So I really believe God's Word is still the same. "Tell it to Jesus alone," when we need. Then maybe the unsaved won't be turned off and lose out for eternity. These things I have been thinking. What about it?

Mrs. Arnold Jodock
Hatton, N. Dak.

CONSTRAINING LOVE

"The woman left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, 'Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did'" (John 4:28).

When Jesus had conversed for a little while with the woman at Sychar's well, she left her waterpot and went into the city. But why did she leave her waterpot? She had come to the well for water today as so often before. But now it seems that she had completely forgotten what she had come for. Why was this?

Among children at play one day were some whose father was expected home from a long sea voyage. While the merriment was at its height these children heard their mother's voice calling to them the good news: "Father has come!" At once they were on their way home, forgetting all else in the joy that

Father had come. All their thought and interest centered around Father.

Now perhaps you understand why this woman of Sychar left her waterpot. She had experienced something vastly more important than anything that had interested her before. She, who until now had lived a life of sin and frivolity, had learned to know Jesus as her Savior. This was the most important day of her life. For that is always the decisive moment in any person's life when he learns to know Jesus, so that he can say: "He is my Savior."

Then these earthly interests, which before claimed all of life, become secondary in importance. One learns to distinguish between temporal and eternal values.

The woman of Sychar had not left her waterpot for all time. No doubt she returned to the well for it, and later

used it to carry water home. Nevertheless a great change had taken place. From this day on she used it in the service of Jesus her Savior. That is what always takes place when Jesus enters the heart. Then all our talents, powers and efforts are consecrated to the Savior's service, to help win the world for Him.

It is the love of Christ that constrains us. It is that love that makes us want to obey His precepts and carry out His commands.

When you learn to know Him as your Savior, you will want to say with all your heart:

"All that I am and possess I surrender,
If Thou alone in my spirit mayst dwell."

—Rev. Søren Dahl
(Courtesy, Tract Mission)

Thy Kingdom Come

"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye" (Matt. 7:3).

It is just as easy to see the faults of others as it is difficult to get your eye on your own faults. From our earliest childhood and on to the late evening of life this evil power pursues us and creates discord in land and kingdom, in house and home. I have often wondered why it is so easy to see the faults of others but not our own. Although we try to be upright it seems almost impossible to place ourselves in the right light. We may have great talents for studying the soul-life of others, but we are very incapable at learning to know ourselves. This, too, one can see best

when one looks at others!

It is a settled fact that the Christian who can get his own person and the faults of his own character up before his vision for examination has attained to something great and has won high wisdom in life. The person who has learned to know his own folly has taken a long forward step on wisdom's way.

How shall we learn to take this step? We shall say to ourselves: "Remember that you see the faults of others much better than your own! Remember that one of the most difficult things a person has to do is to find the beam in his own eye!" If one tries to awaken himself in this way, it will be helpful for him who desires to know the truth. And then, if we can be humble enough

SEEING OUR OWN FAULTS

to accept the light and the correction that come to us from God's Word and God's Spirit, we will be kept so busy with ourselves and our own faults, that we will think more mildly of others. But then we have gotten onto the road that a Christian should travel.

May we be more successful in this endeavor after this.

Wherever in the world I am,
In whatsoever estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts
To keep and cultivate;
A work of lowly love to do
For Him on whom I wait.

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

Church-World News

WISCONSIN COMMENDS FELLOWSHIP BREAK

Prairie du Chien, Wis. — (LC) The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod's biennial convention commended the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod for its recent action suspending altar and pulpit fellowship with the American Lutheran Church.

But the approximately 300 male delegates representing the 400,000-member staunchly conservative and independent denomination said the Missouri Synod still fell short of certain doctrinal requirements needed to restore relations with the Wisconsin Synod.

In 1961, the Wisconsin Synod broke off relations with the Missouri Synod which had existed for 90 years because the Missouri Synod had become too "liberal."

The delegates expressed thanks to God for the "strength shown" by the Missouri Synod for breaking ties with the American Lutheran Church at its convention held in St. Louis. But the Wisconsin Synod chided the 2.7-million-member Missouri Synod for continuing in the Lutheran Council in the USA, a cooperative inter-Lutheran agency which involves the American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church in America, Missouri Synod and Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches.

And the resolution also noted the widespread involvement of the Missouri Synod in other unionistic endeavors. By the Wisconsin Synod's own definition, such unionism includes cooperation in church work without prior agreement in doctrine.

The Missouri Synod originally established fellowship in 1969 for its pastors to preach and its members to take communion in congregations of the 2.3-million-member American Lutheran Church.

In other actions, the delegates meeting at the Wisconsin Synod's Martin Luther Preparatory School here Aug.

3-7, also re-elected the Rev. Carl H. Mischke to a second two-year term as president.

In his report to the synod, Mischke urged synod members to undertake a stepped-up evangelism campaign among their neighbors, business associates and social contacts.

That would require members to go beyond the traditional constituency of the synod—Lutherans of mostly German ancestry who were born and raised in the 131-year-old tight-knit synod.

"We need to bring people to our worship services and Bible classes. We need to make them feel welcome, not wonder whether they are the kind of people we want in our congregation," said Mischke.

The convention also took a document on "The Role of Man and Woman According to the Holy Scripture" and referred it to the synod's conference of district presidents for study and possible action at the 1982 district conventions.

The document, which looks at changing family relationships and the increased employment opportunities for women in the light of the synod's interpretation that Scriptures teach that "woman is not to exercise authority over man," is to be distributed to synod members for study as well.

The need for the document, first presented to the 1979 synod convention, came from questions arising from the role of men and women instructors at the synod's three academies or high schools, two colleges and one seminary. Unlike most other denominations, those schools serve only to train future teachers and pastors in the synod.

Also urged for further study is whether Lutheran Worship, a new hymnal expected to be published by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in early 1982, "is acceptable for use in our congregations or whether we can serve our worship needs better by the preparation of our own hymnal."

CHARISMATIC LUTHERAN SEES MORE MATURITY

Minneapolis (LC) — After a decade of annual mass rallies, the charismatic movement in the Lutheran church is moving from its earlier "excitement, vibrancy and focus on healing and miracles" to an emphasis on "maturity and obedience of faith."

This was the view of Dr. Morris Vaagenes, Jr., chairman of the 10th International Lutheran Conference on the Holy Spirit, held here August 4-7.

About 20,000 people were expected this year but the total attendance estimated by conference officials was 16,000. About 5,000 attended the closing rally.

Despite the lower turnout Vaagenes said the charismatic conference is "the largest annual gathering of Lutherans in this country and it's not something organized by Lutheran synodical structures in any way."

Vaagenes, pastor of a Roseville, Minn., parish, was the keynote speaker at the opening session. Others addressing the conference included Dr. Kevin Ranaghan, leader of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, South Bend, Ind., and the Rev. Larry Christenson, San Pedro, Calif., a well-known Lutheran charismatic leader.

Christenson, in a sermon at the concluding session, said, "I am glad that the Lutheran church historically has had a concern for Scriptural truth. But I'm unhappy about the evidence I see of an un-Lutheran and unbiblical neglect or even disdain of the practical application of that truth."

He added, "What a perversion of the Gospel to tell people that Jesus is the divine Son of God and by His blood all our sins are washed away and by faith in Him we become sons of God . . . and then when the Holy Spirit begins to bring people to practical steps of working out that faith, their ears are suddenly filled with all sorts of philosophical, psychological and humanistic jabberwocky."

In addition to four evening rallies, the conference included 40 workshops on prayer, holiness, healing, prophecy, lifestyles, anti-abortion, church-state relations, and the Christian in politics.

TRANS WORLD RADIO BROADCASTS FROM BON- AIRE REACH REMOTE AREAS OF BRAZIL

CHATHAM, NJ: Trans World Radio broadcasts are evangelizing the remote jungle areas in Brazil and in other South American countries. In recent years, Brazil has been flooded with transistor radios. Many of these "modern-miracle" boxes have been bought by isolated village people. They listen to Trans World Radio on medium wave (AM) because many of the radios do not have shortwave bands. The clear signal that reaches the rural population in the early morning hours meets the spiritual needs of thousands who live too far from existing churches to be able to attend.

A missionary working in the area around the lower Amazon River reported finding Christians in villages where no missionary had ever visited. From his base at Obitos, this missionary travelled in his river launch to open new areas along the Tapajos and Trombetas rivers. At one village he received permission to have a meeting. He explained to them that he wanted to tell them about Jesus Christ. A crowd gathered and as the missionary began to share his message, he was interrupted by a villager who said, "This is all familiar to us, but you go ahead." Surprised, he questioned the people and learned that they were regular listeners to the Trans World Radio broadcasts from Bonaire. As a result of the programs, the people had a clear Biblical perspective of the Gospel.

Trans World Radio has received reports from several mission organizations stating how the broadcasts have helped them in their evangelistic efforts. As was the case in this particular story, the radio programs have written off years of preparatory work in order to reach a river region with the Gospel.

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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BROADCASTER TO RETIRE

The Rev. Dr. Elmer J. Knoernschild, 67, who has been in religious broadcasting 47 years, has announced his retirement as program manager for the "Lutheran Hour," a job he has held for 35 years. Known among colleagues for insisting on high quality (he used to say, "for Jesus Christ, the best is none too good"), Knoernschild also produced a daily devotional program called "Day by Day With Jesus," aired over more than 300 radio stations. The "Lutheran Hour" is broadcast weekly over more than 1,200 radio stations in the United States and Canada. Knoernschild said he is retiring because of poor health: "Despite several surgeries, my right eye is now blind, and my left ear is almost deaf. Gout plagues both feet and makes walking difficult. . . . My wife Celeste also suffers from arthritis in both knees, and I shall have to provide her legs." Knoernschild said he hopes to help in the shut-in ministry at St. John's Lutheran Church in St. Louis, where he is assistant pastor. The Rev. Ken Roberts is the new radio program manager for International Lutheran Laymen's League, sponsor of the Lutheran Hour."

LUTHERAN MEMBERSHIP DROP APPEARS TO BE STABILIZING

New York (LC) — The number of Lutherans in the United States and Canada showed a small decline in 1980, with church officials seeing perhaps a leveling off of consistent membership decreases throughout the 1970s.

The Lutheran Church in America (LCA) and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod reported slight increases in their U.S. congregations, while the American Lutheran Church (ALC) and Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches showed decreases.

In statistics gathered by the Lutheran Council in the USA, total membership of U.S. and Canadian Lutheran churches was 8,824,353, a decline of 8,622 members from 1979. Those figures represent 17 denominations and nine independent congregations.