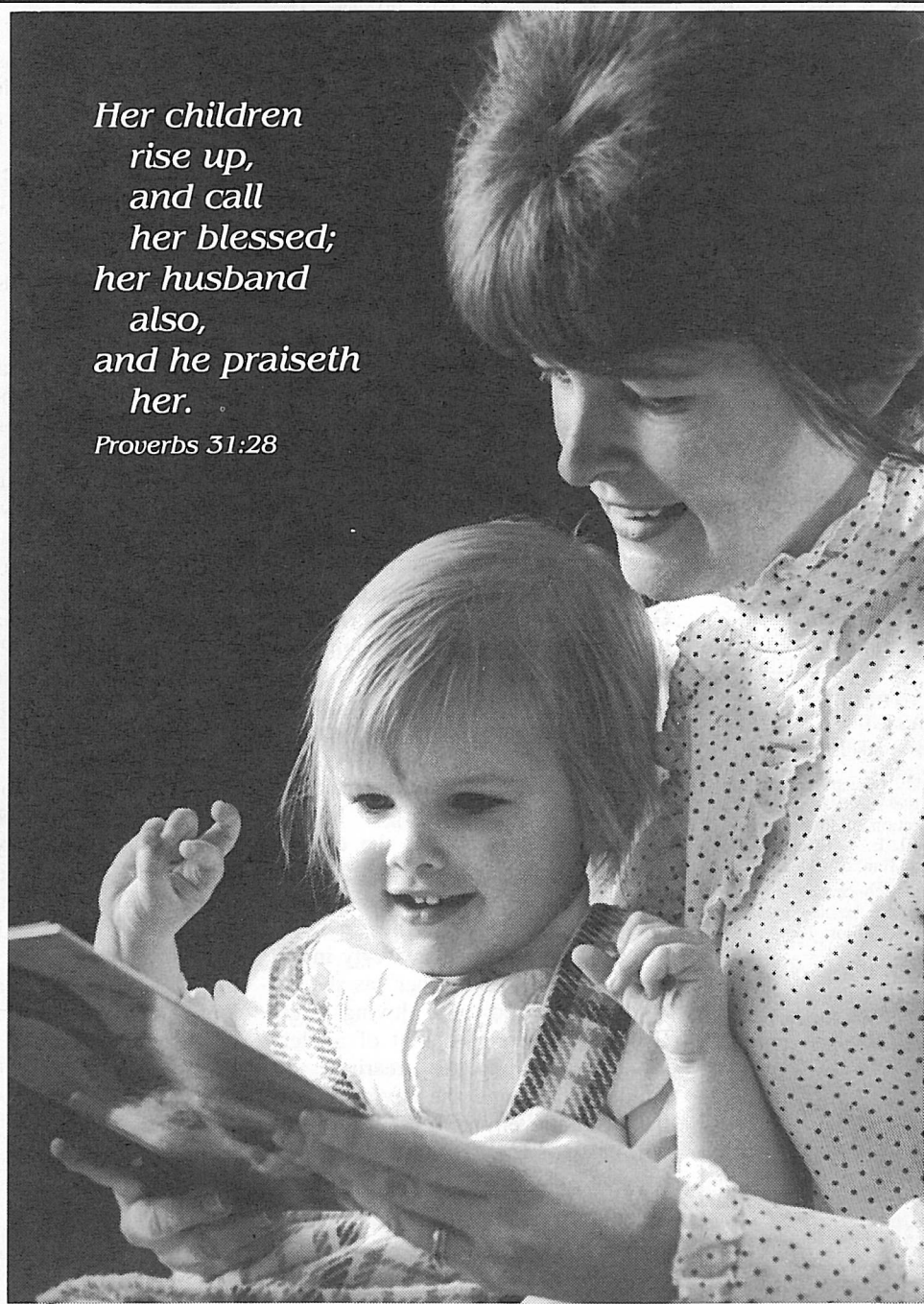


THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

April 24, 1984

*Her children
rise up,
and call
her blessed;
her husband
also,
and he praiseth
her.*

Proverbs 31:28



AT THE MASTER'S FEET



Pastor Wallace Jackson

Those loving hands

"And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hands of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it" (Jer. 18:4). Most people are programmed to respond to the fine artwork of a truly talented artist, even though their eye is not that of the practicing connoisseur. The fine lines and delicate tones touch an aesthetic nerve. The impression given by the prophet is that the potter is bitterly disappointed by the lack of grace in the lines of the vessel as he lifts it from the wheel. It is not the potter's fault. Somehow the clay did not assume the form intended. It is marred, malformed, defective and useless. It is of too great value to cast away. Something must be done; it will be placed again on the wheel. Under the careful and direct touch of the Master's hand it will be "born again."

Our thoughts turn first to a heavenly Father bending over the

great wheel upon which a life is shaped and fitted for usefulness. His touch is masterful and precise. His patience is nearly inexhaustible with this mass which appears totally unresponsive to the skilled hands of the Craftsman. That the Potter has a great scheme underlying His efforts becomes increasingly apparent. To accomplish His ends He must reshape the vessel that it may be endowed with His design.

The marred vessel is readily seen to resemble man in his old nature. Both the Old and New Testaments verify that which even the most casual observer sees. Jeremiah compares man's righteousness to filthy rags; David refers to a depraved nature when he alludes to being "shapen in iniquity;" Christ states unequivocally that it is "out of the heart" all mischief erupts. To the end that the vessel may become an object of glory, God has provided a glorious redemption through His Son. Through faith in Him renewal is effected. Through the new birth the vessel is transformed into that which can grace the king's palace.

Enter Mother. In a more direct and understandable sense it is Mother whose hand manipulates the clay as the wheel of life rotates. See her as she bends low over the cradle where this "flesh of her flesh" lies in sweet repose. Her heart throbs nearly in unison with this "part of her" as she beholds this child with loving eyes. Even now there is a hint of anxiety as she contemplates rearing this child. In her mind she envisions castles of future eminence she hopes he will occupy. Could she have her way he would reach pinnacles of success

in both character and position. She would, if she could, propel him to the stars.

A Godly Mother. If she is a godly mother, her aspirations reach beyond the stars. She beholds the distant glory as he, in ancient years, steps across the threshold into the very presence of his Redeemer and Lord. The delicate and loving hand which rocks the cradle, and is said to rule the world, is, in fact, molding a life with each creak of the rocker. One day she will awaken to a dreaded discovery: she will be eighteen years older! He will be a man! The toils of child-rearing will be behind her. The eaglet will launch from the nest before she is ready to sever the apron strings. Then, at last, she will be able to mop her brow, believing in her heart of hearts that she has done what she could with the gradually hardening clay. It will be "hands off" then. She can only leave him to the touch of the Master Potter. When at last she sees how her "grandkids" turn out, then her success in this greatest venture in the world will become apparent.

For now she will content herself to reveling in the joys and traumas of motherhood. Each day will be treasured. She will devote herself to incessant toil, costly sacrifice, necessary discipline and importunate prayer. Loving eyes will overlook mistakes; loving hands ignore callouses; a loving heart will sacrifice all to produce a vessel pleasing unto God. She will be satisfied if he will rise up to call her blessed!

(See the poem by Pastor Jackson on page 11.)

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Volume 22 Number 9

Quiet Faith

"He who believes will not be in haste" (Isaiah 28:16).

Steadiness and calmness come with faith. It is unbelief that makes one restless and anxious.

Impatience in prayer comes from the failure to commit oneself to God. Much prayer that thinks itself to be faith's wrestling with God is nothing more than the attempt of self-will to get its own way. Perseverance and earnestness in prayer belong to faith, but a restless and demanding spirit reveals a littleness of faith.

The spirit of haste in the work of the Lord may also be due to a lack of faith in God and His Spirit. Zeal for the Lord's house is sometimes merely an eagerness of the flesh and a desire to assert oneself. Many servants of the Lord wear themselves out too early because they reckon too much on themselves and too little on God.

He who really believes has learned to wait on the Lord. When he does act it is with an inner calm, which comes from reliance on God.

Lord, let me not take myself too seriously. Give me the steadfast faith that links my prayers and my labors to Thee and less to human programs and schedules. Amen.

Daniel Nystrom
The Home Altar

"The sorest sense of loss"

Once I suddenly opened the door of my mother's room, and saw her on her knees beside her chair, and heard her speak my name in prayer. I quickly and quietly withdrew with a feeling of awe and reverence in my heart. Soon I went away from home to school, then to college, then into life's sterner duties. But I never forgot that one glimpse of my mother at prayer, nor the one word—my name—which I heard her utter. Well did I know what I had seen going on every day in that sacred closet of prayer and the consciousness strengthened me a thousand times in duty, in danger, and in struggle. And when death came, at length, and sealed those lips, the sorest sense of loss that I felt was the knowledge that no more would my mother be praying for me.

Dr. J. R. Miller

A TRIBUTE TO MOTHER



by Bernhard M. Christensen

My earliest memories of Christmases are closely intertwined with memories of Mother and of home. As I think back over the years now, I am sure that we children did not then understand how much Mother was adding to the riches of our life. Perhaps no child does. When we awaken to an appreciation of life's most precious treasures, we have already long been receiving them unaware. Love must often give of its best for a long time before the heart of the receiver responds in conscious gratitude.

Ours was a simple home in a rural community. As a farmer's wife of thirty-five years ago, Mother's life was not an easy one. She always rose early in the morning, and I still vividly remember how she often worked in the lamplight after day was done. Besides bearing the burdens of the daily toil in the farmhouse through the years, she gave to the world ten children. All but one grew to maturity. Eight still live. Surely no words written with mere pen and ink could justly portray the unsung nobility of the poem she thus wrought out in the brave language of actual life—each day a stanza, each

year a "book of days." Even the bronze of the strong "Pioneer Mother" can only begin to suggest the struggles and the victories, the suffering and the quest for joy, the weariness and the hope, the mornings and the evenings, the darkness and the light, of a life such as hers!

She was but one of millions, it is true. Only one immigrant girl who came across the seas to find her home—and her grave—in the far-stretching West-land of America. But would Millet's *Gleaners* be any less beautiful if there were a million others equally touched with the same tragedy and hope?

When she left her native Jutland, she was but a slip of a girl, sixteen years old, weighing considerably less than a hundred pounds. Arriving in America, she nevertheless began to work almost immediately. Like so many other immigrant girls, she began with domestic employment. Her ignorance of English added to the difficulty of being a stranger in a strange land. Those for whom she worked were sometimes kind, sometimes cruel and vulgar. After four years of checkered experiences, she married.

I was her seventh child. By the time I was old enough to observe and

by N. N. Rønning

Tenderly they told me that Mother was failing. One day I received a letter from my brother. It began, "My brother, now you must be strong."

But I was not strong, and for a long time my heart refused to be comforted.

The evening before I returned to America, I went alone to the graveyard.

* * *

Just before the curtain falls in Maeterlinck's drama "The Blue Bird," a boy and girl stand at midnight in a cemetery. They had been told that the dead would come out of the graves at the stroke of twelve. When the bell rang out and nothing happened, the boy steps forward, lifts a radiant face toward heaven and

cries, "There are no dead."

No, there are no dead, and therefore I could speak to Mother.

"Dear Mother of mine! I had hoped with the heart of a lonely boy in a distant land to meet you in our dear old home, but our heavenly Father saw how weary you were and beckoned to you to enter the eternal rest.

"You were such a good mother; the first to rise at dawn of day, the last to retire at night. You had but one thought—to make it pleasant for your children. Gladly you plucked the sharp stones in our pathway, that our tender feet should not be wounded, though you might bleed. When fever flamed in our frail little bodies, how cool and soothing was your hand? Your hand was gnarled from hard work, and your fingers

to remember, life had already placed its ineffaceable marks upon her form. The "livsglad" immigrant girl was no more. I never think of Mother as a young woman, although she was only thirty-four when I was born. I cannot recall her as ever being really well or really happy. The symphony of her life, as much as it was given to me to hear, was written in the minor key. When I was nineteen, and her youngest child was twelve, just when there might have been a bit of rest after the struggle of the years, she fell asleep. . . .

Mother believed in Christ. I never knew how clear and strong was her faith—for hers was a quiet spirit and she did not speak much of religious things—until one day, when I was about fifteen, we went to call on a young woman dying of tuberculosis. I wish that always, in my ministries at the sick-bed, I might be able to set forth the Gospel message as clearly and simply as she did that day long ago. Her letters, too, written in the somewhat ornate hand she had learned in her childhood, were touched here and there with the same light of a humble and sincere Christian faith.

She loved the Bible, though as I think back upon my childhood days, I do not recall often having seen her

reading it. I think she must usually have been too tired when the days tasks were over. And during the busy day there was little opportunity for meditation. Yet she walked with God. She loved the church when she had opportunity to attend, and day by day she brought her burden to the Lord in prayer. To me it seems that there must have been at times an unutterable loneliness in her heart. Perhaps I, who have never as yet had to walk the pathways that she trod, cannot really understand the unspeakable comfort that God gives to the soul that really needs Him.

Long before Christmas time came she had begun "saving," so that there should be gifts for us all. She taught us, too, to prepare simple gifts for one another. We always had a Christmas tree. And on Christmas Eve there were always "Aebleskiver" and "Pebernødder" in abundance. Yet Christmas was not to be for ourselves alone. Many times, I recall, she arranged that we should share our tree and our Christmas Eve gathering with some other family who otherwise would have no "Christmas." Already at that early age, I could understand that such sharing of our happiness brought us the greatest joy of all, though it is only in later years

I have learned that our joy was rooted in the joy of God Who shared His *All* with men who otherwise would have had no Christmas.

* * *

I still see you, Mother, sitting there in the "front room" beside the Christmas tree, with the family and the guests of the evening gathered round you as you read the old, old Christmas story. You do not read so very well, for your eyes have grown dim before this time, and your days have not given you opportunity for the reading of many books. But your voice is music to my ears, nevertheless, and the Story, coming from your lips, seems more precious than it has ever seemed from any others. When you have finished the reading, and have slipped away to the kitchen to prepare the coffee again, while the other children are busy re-examining their presents, trying on the new articles of clothing or playing the new games, may I, too, steal away to you and press upon your forehead a single kiss of gratitude for all that you have meant to me, and to us all? And as you smile back to me, may I not believe your smile to mean that I am forgiven for having waited so long before coming?

Christmas Echoes, 1935

(Dr. Christensen is president emeritus of Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minn.. He now lives in Lyngblomsten Home in St. Paul.)

twisted from pain, but none had so soft and tender hand as you.

"You had solutions for all our problems. And still you had read only a few books. You had never been outside the chain of mountains forming a wall round our parish. You knew very little about the world on the other side of the mountains. You had never seen the thousand glittering lights of a great city after dark, but you would often look at the starry sky and the flaming northern light. You had never seen the paintings by the great masters, but you were thrilled by glorious sunsets and the beautiful blending of colors of the flowers in the field and in your own garden. You had never heard any of the great symphonies, but the laughter of your children was sweet music in your ears, and you often

stopped in your work and listened to the bells in the distant church tower and to the silvery song of the lark in the sky.

"You were so quiet, so mild and meek. The peace that passeth understanding was yours. We saw it in your eyes, and we heard it in your voice. An undertow of sadness beat eternally against the shores of your soul. Therefore you could sorrow with the sorrowing and weep with the weeping.

"No beggar ever came to your house and asked for bread and went away empty handed. You gave more than bread; the way you gave it sent the beggar away with a new light in his eyes. Not only your children went to you with their troubles, it seemed that everybody went to you with their troubles. When you de-

parted, people said, 'There was none like her.' No, there was none like you.

"How could you do so much and do it so beautifully? I know You could do it 'as seeing Him who is invisible.' God was that real to you. You were always conscious of a Presence. And this I know, that some day you and I shall meet in the land that is light as a day, in the land that is tearless and eternal."

from "A Memorable Morning"

(The late N.N. Rønning was a freelance Lutheran writer and publisher. For many years he edited a publication called *The Friend*.)

PRAYER

By Bernard W. Nelson
Atlantic Mine, Mich.

(The ninth of ten parts)

VIII. Does God Hear and Answer Prayer?

The answer is definitely yes. No prayer is lost. Praying breath was never spent in vain. Horatius Bonar said, "There is no such thing as prayer unanswered or unnoticed by God and some things that we count refusals or denials are simply delays."

God answers the prayers of His children. You see, there is a vast difference between the Christian and the unsaved. The Christian has God as His Father, the unsaved, Satan. The Christian is bound for heaven, the unsaved for hell. The Christian is in God's eternal plan, the unsaved out of it. The Christian has been washed clean of all iniquities, the unsaved is dead in trespasses and sin. The Christian has the promise of God to answer every prayer. The unsaved has no promise whatsoever.

Psalm 43:3 says, "The Lord will hear when I call unto Him." Isaiah 65:24: "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." Jeremiah 29:12: "Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you." Yes, we do have God's promises to hear when we call.

"Sometimes we wonder why prayers are not answered promptly, or why the reply is not what we expected."

Let's be clear, too, that God answers every prayer. God is never indifferent to any petition of His child, even the least of His children. But, of necessity, many of the answers must be "No." And for that we should be profoundly grateful. If we could remember the shortsightedness and folly of many of our prayers we should praise God for His refusal to grant foolish petitions.

All of this is illustrated in the family relationship. The wise earthly parent hears every petition of his child. Some he gladly answers immediately. Others He refuses because he knows them to be either harmful or unnecessary. Still others He plans to answer, but in His wisdom, and because of His foresight, He knows that this is not the time to answer. Still other wants and needs of His children He grants even though they do not know they need them.

Sometimes we wonder why prayers are not answered promptly, or why the reply is not what we expected. The following story may help us understand.

Three large trees in a forest prayed that they might choose their destinies. One prayed to be made into a beautiful palace, the second, to be a large ship to sail the seven seas, the third, to stay in the forest and always point toward God.

One day the woodsman came and chopped down the first tree, but instead of a palace it was made into a common stable, wherein was born the fairest Babe in all creation. The second tree, instead of a large ship was made into a small vessel that was launched on the Sea of Galilee, on the deck of which stood a tall young man who told the multitudes, "I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly." The third tree was made into a cross, and to it men nailed that young man, the loveliest personality who ever walked the earth. Ever since then that cross has been pointing men to God. And so each prayer was answered with greater honor than expected.

God's relationship to us is like this, only transferred to an infinite scale. His love is unfathomable, His wisdom omniscient. God loves us as He loves His Son. He wants for us

the very best. He delights to answer our prayers for we are dear, so very dear to God; dearer we could not be, for in the person of His Son we're just as dear as He.

Some prayers God waits to answer. Often into the Christian life God sends trials and difficulty. The purpose of these messengers is to teach us valuable lessons. Many times the lessons are difficult and we could wish them terminated. God, however, is faithful and continues the lesson until we have learned it well. It could be that as we pray for relief God would withhold the answer until the appointed time of His wisdom. Don't mistake it, God is answering our prayer, but answering at the right time.

In Habakkuk 2:3, we read, "For the vision is yet for an appointed time . . . though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Another verse, Isaiah 30:18, says, "Therefore will the Lord wait, that He may be gracious unto you."

Should we be persistent in prayer? Remember, in Matthew 15, the story about the woman of Canaan in the coast region of Tyre and Sidon who cried after Jesus, saying, "'Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.' But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came and besought Him, saying, 'Send her away; for she crieth after us.'" Then, after some discourse, He said, "'O woman, great is thy faith: be it done unto thee even as thou wilt.' And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." She was persistent and was rewarded.

We, too, should persevere. There are cases where God has withheld the answer to prayer just to test the perseverance of the intercessor. If the need is there and if the answer would be to the glory of God, then nothing should interfere with the continued petition. There are occasions, too, when God may fully intend to answer the need, but the time is not yet right. Yet God has inspired the prayer and expects us to patiently continue to ask. Some prayers fail an answer through lack of perseverance.

(To be continued)

A stewardship labyrinth

A PAGE FOR CHILDREN

Text: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" (Matthew 25:21).

Interest can be raised and a very considerable amount of stewardship information may be imparted through stewardship puzzles like the sample given on this page. (Make your own, emphasizing the stewardship phrases you wish to emphasize.)

This puzzle may be used in small groups. Pastors might wish to print it in their church calendars and use it in connection with a children's sermon. It will be found that adults will be interested as well as the children. This, and other original stewardship puzzles, may be chalked upon a blackboard for use with larger groups.

Directions

The square marked "Well Done" is the goal of all good stewards. Start at one of the outside squares and go in any direction, one square at a time, spelling out words and forming sentences containing stewardship truths. The last letter of the last word of each sentence must be on the margin of the square marked "Well Done." (Note that sometimes the letters on the margin are used in the midst of a word or sentence *as well as* to end it.)

How many stewardship sentences can you find? Among others, the following form pathways to the place of the good steward's commendation—"Well Done."

"God owns all things."

"To have is to owe."

"Honor the Lord with the first fruits."

"God loves a cheerful giver."

TO TEACH—The aim of specials like this Stewardship Labyrinth is to develop a stewardship vocabulary and to register some basic stewardship principles. The primary need right now in stewardship instruction is thoroughly to familiarize children,



Hymn

Sing and memorize—"Lead, Kindly Light." (Call particular attention to all stewardship implications in the hymn.)

Lead, kindly Light, amid the
encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on:
The night is dark, and I am far from
home;
Lead Thou me on;
Keep Thou my feet, I do not ask
to see
The distant scene, one step enough
for me.

young people and others with the distinctive stewardship terms and ideas.

—Guy L. Morill,
Stewardship Stories,
Harper and Brothers Publishers

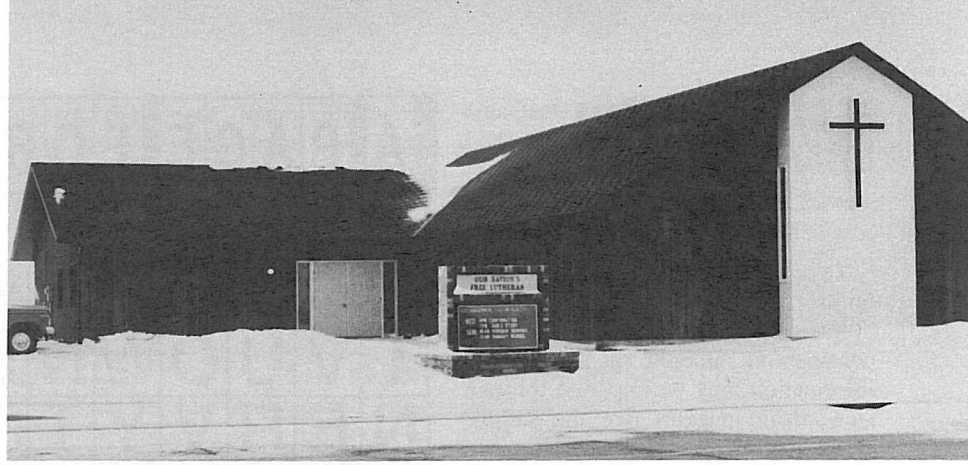
I was not ever thus, nor prayed that
Thou
Shouldst lead me on.
I loved to choose and see my path;
but now
Lead Thou me on.
I loved the garish day, and spite of
fears,
Pride ruled my will; remember not
past years.
So long Thy power hath blest me,
sure it still
Will lead me on
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and
torrent, till
The night is gone;
And with the morn those angel faces
smile
Which I have loved long since and
lost awhile.

Each mission is unique

I remember during my second year of seminary sitting and chatting with Pastor Elden Nelson in his office one morning during a break between classes. During the course of our conversation he asked me if I felt the Lord leading me into any one specific area of ministry. My reply went something to the effect that while I had no clear indication of one specific calling I was certain that I could eliminate one area. I was sure that I would not be called into home mission work. I had an image of home mission work in general and of the man who would be called into such work. I envisioned the typical home mission pastor as a high profile, door-knocking, never-say-die salesman. I figured that such a person was required in order to even get a new work off the ground, much less going strong. Having worked in sales for some two and a half years prior to entering seminary, I knew from the experience the ups and downs of "cold-calling" for prospects and knew with even greater certainty that such was not the life for me.

Yet here I am, almost two years into my first pastorate, writing an article for the *Ambassador* about the church I serve, a Home Mission congregation, Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Stanley, N. Dak.. It would be an understatement to say that things here have not gone according to my stereotype. I had to scrap those notions long ago. There must be some insight in all this about Paul's comments in I Corinthians 1 about the wisdom of man and the foolishness of God.

As you continue to read articles about the various Home Mission works in our AFLC during the coming months, I'm sure you will come to realize that each work is unique. I don't think it will do any of us much good to try to compare them. I read Pastor Unseth's article last month about the work in Bismarck. The work here in Stanley does not com-



pare at all with that work. He wrote there about a slowly progressing work and many hours spent in door to door visitation. The work here has progressed quite rapidly and I have yet to go door to door. In fact, I think such a practice here would be detrimental to this work. Of one thing I have become convinced, God knows each situation for what it is and leads accordingly in each. Let me tell you a little about the congregation I serve.

We have a self-appointed archivist in our congregation. Her name is Evelyn Ege. Evelyn has faithfully compiled a scrapbook highlighting the development of our congregation from its beginnings. I am indebted to her for much of the information I share with you concerning our early history.

Although concern for an AFLC work in Stanley had been expressed prior to 1981, I suppose the "official" beginning to the story of Our Savior's can be traced to an ad which appeared in the local newspaper in May 1981. The ad invited anyone interested in seeing a Free Lutheran Church begun in Stanley to contact the headquarters of the AFLC in writing. The response to this ad was impressive. I recall the excitement it created around the headquarters that spring.

Pastor Nelson scheduled a meeting with the interested parties in June of that year and concluded that services should be begun as soon as possible.

"The work here has progressed quite rapidly and I have yet to go door to door."

On July 12, 1981, Pastor Nelson conducted the first worship service in Stanley with 91 people in attendance for that first service. Shortly thereafter, a steering committee was formed to help get the congregation formally organized. In October the congregation chose Our Savior's Free Lutheran Church as its official name.

Sunday, Jan. 24, 1982, was another important date for our congregation. On that day the charter was opened for signatures during the morning worship service. Our charter membership consisted of 72 members from 21 families. This day was also the first annual meeting of the congregation. The Steering Committee was dissolved and regular officers elected.

We rented the church building of the Seventh Day Adventist congregation in town but soon began longing for a place of our own. Numerous buildings and parcels of land were considered. In April, 1982, the congregation voted to accept the bid of a local lumber company and undertake the construction of a new facility on the site of a recently purchased plot of ground in the southeast section of the city. A new building gave us our own identity and much needed room. The Seventh Day Adventist building was small, barely seating 100 people. Our new building seats twice that with considerable overflow seating available at the rear of the sanctuary. We never averaged more than 70-75 people a Sunday or took in any new members while in rented facilities. That all changed when we moved into our own building. I think the move gave us a credibility in the community. We now have a membership of 149 souls and have averaged 140 and 141 in attendance during the last two Sundays.

(Continued on p. 10)

editorials

MODERN MOTHERS

Much of our emphasis on mothers in this issue is on the mothers of several generations ago. The lives of Dr. Bernhard Christensen and N. N. Rønning bear testimony to the singular influence of their mothers upon them. And the sons have written beautifully of their evaluation of the mothers in the homes in which each was brought up. We can all feel we should like to have known these two women.

It is always to be hoped that today's children are grateful to their mothers and are vocal about it, that is, they put their feelings into words. Both the giver of praise and thanksgiving and the recipient will be blessed and warmed by the expression. Don't neglect to say what you feel in the way of gratitude to someone so dear and close as Mother.

A generation or two from now sons and daughters will write tributes to the mothers of today. It is interesting to think about how those mothers will be described in comparison to those written about by the men mentioned above. Of course, some things don't change. Some mothers will be remembered for their warm, strong faith in the Lord. That will be a dominant part in the recollections of a grateful son or daughter. "Mother showed the way to Christ." "Mother not only showed the way, but she walked in it herself." "Mother had a strong faith." "Mother had a great God." Yes, accolades like these will always be in order for some. Thank God for that.

But there will be some variables between a look back to 1984 and a look back to 1900 or 1910. For one thing, the mother of today is better educated, certainly a high school graduate, perhaps even having a college degree. She has travelled more than her grandmother and it would be hard to find one whose world is as small as Mrs. Rønning's narrow mountain valley in Norway.

The mother of today must rear her children in the presence of the marvelous invention of television. But what a mixed blessing that situation is! She can rejoice in the open vistas for her children as the whole fascinating world is brought into the family room or the living room and at times cringe at the violence, the crudities and the inanities to which her little ones are too often exposed, albeit unwittingly. What a call for wisdom to use the miracle of television rightly.

And the son or daughter looking back to 1984 will be writing very likely about a mother who was working outside the home while he or she was growing up. That's quite a change from the "old days." What are the statistics? Over 60% of America's married households now have a working mother. Today's woman has all the conveniences unknown to the mothers of Dr. Christensen and Mr. Rønning. But the time spent away from home negates much of the saving brought by those devices. We

mean, the mother's time at home, if she works at a job away from home, gets very crowded.

The best, of course, is if mothers, whether the year be 1914 or 1934 or 1984, can be remembered for their godliness, for their influence for Jesus Christ. That's the important thing. If mother is a tower of strength for good, that's a real blessing.

Mothers, are you maintaining the kind of home for which your children, as they look back in a later day, can have hearts filled with great thanksgiving to the Lord for the blessing it has been all through life?

Fathers, children, are you such members in the home, in the family, that Mother's lot is a happy one and she can rejoice in being a part of it all and have hope for the future?

God bless all mothers who serve well in their appointed place. God bless our homes.

THE WORSHIP SERVICE

Raymond Calkins writes in *The Romance of the Ministry*, "Thus he (the minister) comes up to every service of worship with the most glowing spiritual expectations. Surely nothing in life can be more romantic than this." Dr. Calkins places very great importance on the pastor as a leader of worship, in fact places that as his "highest and most delicate task."

We don't wish to get into an argument at this time about this, whether the statement is too strong or too broad or too narrow. But there shouldn't be any disagreement among us, the congregation's hour of worship is a very important function, for the pastor and for the congregation.

We trust that the worship service is considered important among us. We like it to be said of us, as an Association, that we hold the sermon, the preaching of the Word, as very important. But it shouldn't be the only part of the service that is. Every segment should be a part of the whole, all should make up a single unit.

Some people feel that a service should be very informal and relaxed. God is our heavenly Father. We can be very free with Him. He is very near, no need to put on airs.

Others believe the Sunday worship service should have a certain formality about it. Yes, God is our heavenly Father but in this service we should see Him also as God, Creator, Lord.

Perhaps the approaches aren't so very far apart at that. Perhaps there is a middle ground. But in the Association we are apt to go on the side of informality rather than formality. Certainly we want worship to touch people's hearts, but something dignified and formal can do that also. By "formal" we do not mean something highly liturgical. Few of us in the AFLC are interested in that for our worship expressions. But we do mean by

◇

MISSION . . .

ing our Sunday morning services these last two months. Interest in our congregation remains high in the community. I cannot remember a Sunday since I started here full-time that we have not had at least one visitor in our midst for the worship service.

What are the reasons behind our rapid growth? I think first of all that this was simply a part of the Lord's plan and that He was ready for a harvest of souls into his Kingdom. We are fortunate to be a part of that reaping. Secondly, it is important to note that our growth has not simply been numerical but even more importantly, deeply spiritual. Many of our members have backgrounds of only a nominal church membership. Church to them was perceived as little more than a highly ritualistic Sunday morning service with little if any practical relevance. In this new

church they have heard Bible-centered messages and have been challenged in a relationship with the living God—an intensely personal and practical affair. Many have seen their lives dramatically changed by the Gospel and are now living in a personal relationship with Christ. They, in turn, have enthusiastically endorsed our church to their friends. The cycle repeats itself as the Holy Spirit graciously applies the Word of God to an ever-widening circle of people.

Another tremendously important factor in our growth is the attitude of our people. It is contagiously positive. We aren't simply against a liberal Lutheran church, we are for a life-changing Gospel and are desirous of seeing it spread. Enthusiastic, eager and friendly are words aptly descriptive of many in our congregation. That is good because life is never at its best when it is ap-

proached from a negative viewpoint. Life is at its best when we have something significant to affirm. What greater, more satisfying affirmation can there be than that of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ?

Like any congregation, we've encountered difficulties and tests. Bigotry and suspicion of others pose significant hindrances to the development of any truly Christian fellowship. But here again, God's Word has ministered to our needs and through our times of testing I believe that we have grown stronger in our relationships to each other and to our Lord.

We are excited about what God has in store for us in the days ahead. We desire to be used of Him and pray that He will make us fit vessels for His service. Then we will bring greater glory to His name and see growth in His kingdom.

Pastor Gary Jorgenson

SOLEMN WORDS

If you are too busy for Christ and His Church, too busy for prayer and the Bible, may God Almighty bring you to your knees (if necessary, by sickness, loss, reverses, collapse of hopes), so that you will realize how terrifying it is to live without Jesus, to deprive your own children of His love!

Walter A. Maier, Sr.

EDITORIAL . . .

formal some liturgical order such as that in Order of Service No. 2, used by many of our congregations.

Some years ago a pastor gave the suggestion that an article on the parts of a church service would be of value some time as people, in that pastor's view, don't understand the various parts, that is, just what they mean. That article has never been written. It was a legitimate suggestion.

We come out of a low church, free church tradition. Not a few now come from traditions with more liturgy than some of us are familiar with. They come because of what they see in the Association. Yet, it is for us all to do all things decently and in order whether we want to be very low churchly and informal or choose something a little more formal.

A final quotation from Dr. Calkins: "For the church which has ceased to be a center of worship has lost its authority and the influence over the lives of men." We don't know just what all he means by that, but it does prompt a discussion point for pastors, church councils and people in general. Do you feel good about how you are doing as a congregation in the matter of the Sunday worship service?



Sanctuary of Our Savior's

Sunday School



THE EASTER PEACE

(Luke 24:36-43)

Our risen Lord and Savior,
Remove our doubt and fear,
And help us by Thy Spirit
To know that Thou art near
To change our grief to gladness
And make our sorrows cease,
To give us sweet assurance
Of precious grace and peace!

Lord, speak Thy Easter
Greeting
Of Peace and Victory
O'er sin and death and devil,
Now and eternally!
Reveal to us Thy mercy
And make our pardon plain!
Without Thy blood-bought merit
Our efforts are in vain.

Our faith is often feeble,
Our will is very weak,
We feel, O Lord, unworthy,
As we Thy presence seek;
But at Thine invitation
We come, and humbly pray:
Bestow on us Thy mercy
And take our sins away!

We praise Thee, our Redeemer,
For pardon, power and peace;
Anoint us with Thy Spirit,
Our faith and love increase!
Our efforts in Thy service
With blessings, Lord, attend,
And keep us ever faithful,
Our never-failing Friend!

(May be sung to "I Need Thee,
Precious Savior.")

C. K. Solberg
(*The Quiet Moments*)

Then opened He their understanding

Unless the Master Himself helps you, the meaning of the Scriptures will remain hidden from you. You will find many interpretations, but they will be general and abstract, having nothing especially for you, to light your road. Usually you will read vaguely, half unconsciously, only to discover suddenly that your retina alone has been busy.

Some children read well only when their mother holds the book, and when her patient finger helps them to confront the mysterious words. So you will have to learn to know your Bible at the side of your Master. He will reveal to you the deep meaning of each line; the radiance of His face will make the language clear. Underlining the words, His finger will inscribe them forever in your heart.

Each truth that He shows you will

be fused with a reflection of Himself that will make it live. Your spirit will be filled with His presence, and no longer with fancies. You yourself will become intelligent and clear-minded, wider awake, stronger, more alive, able to lift higher and carry farther a little of the light that He pours into you as in the long ago He poured it into His disciples.

Like them you will learn how to read souls. The Holy Spirit will work in your renewed mind, helping you to penetrate the mystery of the world, causing you to meditate upon the unsuspected meaning of things, and their hidden convergence in the glorification of God.

"The entrance of Thy words giveth light," declared the ancient psalmist long ago.

Philippe Vernier, *With the Master*, Fellowship Publications, 1943

THE MASTER'S TOUCH

I took a softened lump one day
And fashioned it in my own way.
No certain pattern could I find,
When searching deep within my mind.

T'was then that I began to pray,
That God might help see what lay
Within the mass of human clay.

At last I saw a living soul
With need of grace to make it whole.

The Master's touch was needed
now,

For I had lost my touch,
somehow.

I'd come again when years had passed,
To find that God and I had cast
A form of man, well-pleasing,
grown,

That God in Christ, could call His own.

Pastor W. M. Jackson
Wallace, S. Dak.

Self-will

The greatest sacrifice a person can bring to God is his will. God has no pleasure in any other sacrifice as long as we hold fast to our will.

G. Steinberger

God's people hate sin

God's people hate sin. They cannot bear to live in it. This does not mean that they do not sin. They do sin unwillingly and unintentionally because of the weakness of their flesh, but they confess their sin and fight against it. They do not remain in their sin. They know God will not hear their prayers if they harbor sin in their hearts (Psalm 66:18).

Rev. Bruce Dalager
Newsletter, Trinity
Lutheran Church,
Grand Forks, N. Dak.

Only one way

There is salvation in no other. In Jesus Christ and in Him alone do we find a full and complete salvation for our soul. Men are not saved by character. Men are not saved by merely joining a church. Men are not saved by performing good works. Men are not saved by an accumulation of money. There is only one way and that is by faith in the blood-bought merits of Jesus Christ.

Elmer C. Kieninger

We search the world for truth; we cull
The good, the pure, the beautiful,
From graven stone and written scroll,
And all old flower-fields of the soul;

And, weary seekers of the best,
We come back laden from the quest,
To find that all the sages said
Is in the Book our mothers read.

—John Greenleaf Whittier

Our hymn study



MY SOUL, NOW BLESS THY MAKER

by Don Rodvold

Tune: *My Soul, Now Bless*

Johannes Graumann, 1540

Tr. Catherine Winkworth

Ludvig Lindeman, 1850

Johannes Graumann was born in Bavaria and studied at Leipzig University, earning a Master of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Divinity degree at age thirty-three. He immediately won a post (rector) at St. Thomas' School where J. S. Bach later became Kapellmeister.

In 1519, as Johann Eck's secretary, Graumann attended a dispute between Eck, Martin Luther and Karlstadt. So impressed was he with Luther's Scriptural foundation for his opinions and his appeal to the dictates of conscience, as opposed to Eck's cleverness in debate, that he took up the cause of the Reformation and joined Luther and Melancthon at Wittenberg. He served as a preacher at various churches until asked to further the Reformation's cause in Prussia. There he labored with great zeal and success, refuting the Anabaptists and other sects, and establishing evangelical schools.

This hymn was written at the request of Margrave Albrecht, another catalyst in the reform of Prussia. It is based on his favorite psalm, Psalm 103, and it was joyfully sung by him on his deathbed. It was also used by Gustavus Adolphus at the first Protestant service at Augsburg and was sung by the people of Osnabruch, Westphalia, as a thanksgiving at the close of the Thirty Years War.

My soul, now bless thy Maker!
Let all within me bless His Name,
Who maketh thee partaker
Of mercies more than thou dar'st
claim.

Forget Him not, whose meekness
Forgiveth all thy sin;
Who healeth all thy weakness,
Renews thy life within;
Whose grace and care are endless,
Who saved thee through the past;
Who leaves no suff'rer friendless,
But rights the wrong'd at last.

He shows to man His treasure
Of judgment, truth, and
righteousness,
His love beyond all measure,
His yearning pity o'er distress;
Nor treats us as we merit,
But lays His anger by;
The humble, contrite spirit,
Finds His compassion nigh;
And high as heav'n above us,
As break from close of day,
So far, since He doth love us,
He puts our sins away.

For, as a tender father
Hath pity on his children here,
He in His arms doth gather
All who are His in childlike fear:
He knows how frail our powers,
Who but from dust are made:
We flourish as the flowers,
And even so we fade;
A storm but o'er them passes,
And all their bloom is o'er,
We wither like the grasses,
Our place knows us no more.

God's grace alone endureth,
And children's children yet shall
prove

How He with strength assureth
The hearts of all that seek His
love,

In heav'n is fixed His dwelling,
His rule is over all;

Angels, in might excelling,

Angels, in might excelling,
Bright hosts, before Him fall.
Praise Him who ever reigneth,
All ye who hear His word,
Nor our poor hymns disdaineth,
My soul, O praise the Lord!

Catherine Winkworth is regarded as the greatest of all translators and most of her work was from German to English. She is represented twenty-two times in the *Concordia*, all translations. Winkworth's translations are excellent and will be found in any good hymnbook.

- 1 All glory Be to Thee, Most High
- 3 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
- 40 Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now
- 45 Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty
- 46 Blessed Jesus, at Thy Word
- 53 O Holy Spirit, Enter In
- 84 Thy Word, O Lord, Like Gentle Dews
- 86 Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word
- 98 Baptized into Thy Name Most Holy
- 100 Deck Thyself, My Soul, with Gladness
- 105 O Living Bread from Heaven
- 130 All My Heart This Night Rejoices
- 145 The Old Year Now Hath Passed Away
- 147 O Christ, Our True and Only Light
- 163 Jesus, Priceless Treasure
- 185 O Darkest Woe
- 197 Christ the Lord Is Risen Again
- 242 Now Thank We All Our God
- 299 If Thou but Suffer God to Guide Thee
- 355 O Blest the House, Whate'er Befall
- 420 My Life Is Hid in Jesus

Women's Retreat scheduled at the ARC

The first annual Mpls. District Women's Retreat is scheduled May 4-6 at the ARC in Osceola, Wis..

Registration begins at 7 p.m. on May 4, followed by a film, "Two Masters." A Bible study by Mrs. Wendell Johnson, Amery's Bell choir and a variety of activities fill Saturday's schedule. Rev. Francis Monseth will lead Sunday morning worship.

Total cost is \$30. Please bring your own bedding and toiletries. Nursery will be provided for infants. Women of all ages are welcome.

Pre-registration is requested but not required. Send \$5 to:

Linda Brown
Rt. 3, Box 26, Sveam Rd.
Brodhead, Wis, 53520
(608) 897-2393

or Nancy Thompson
Rt. 1, Box 189
Orfordville, Wis. 53576
(608) 879-2743

Scripture Cake

1 Cup (Not liquid)	Judges 5:25
3½ Cups	I Kings 4:22
3 Cups	Jeremiah 6:20
2 Cups (Fruit)	I Samuel 30:12
2 Cups (Fruit)	I Samuel 30:12
1 Cup	Genesis 24:17
1 Cup	Numbers 17:8
6	Isaiah 10:14
1 tbsp.	Proverbs 24:13
⅛ tsp.	Leviticus 2:13
To taste	I Kings 10:10
2 tbsp.	I Corinthians 5:6

To find the names of the ingredients used in this Scripture cake—just look up the passages in your Bible and they will give you each ingredient to finish this recipe.

Viola Shroyer
Elim Ladies Aid
Pukwana, S. Dak.

THE WOMEN'S PAGE



When I my thoughts review in
serious mind
And think upon the days that used
to be—
Then, I was guided by a heart
so kind
That not the slightest harm could
come to me.
How often I did grieve that gentle
heart
And caused deep sorrow where
but joy should reign;
Yet in my childish cares she took
my part,
I would repent and be forgiven
again.

A mother's love—fresh as each
new-born day,
Pure as the moonbeams in the
darkest night—
I would in all I do somewhat
repay
That love which serves in sadness
and delight.
So now I shall, that I might happy
be,
Return that love so freely given
for me.

Einar E. Ryden
(Youth's Favorite Poems)

from here and there . . .

Minneapolis, Minn. - Rosedale and Faith Lutheran Churches, both served by Rev. Ralph Rokke, are discussing the possibility of merging into one congregation. There will be further discussion at the next quarterly meetings of the churches.

DeKalb, Ill. - Lay Pastor Rodney Stueland, Roslyn, S. Dak., was the guest speaker at evangelistic meetings, Mar. 25-29.

Roseau, Minn. - The Rose ladies hosted the district spring Women's Missionary Federation rally on Sat., Apr. 14.

Grafton, N. Dak. - Rev. Allen Monson, Tioga, N. Dak., preached at special meetings in Bethel Lutheran Church, Apr. 1-5.

Tioga, N. Dak. - The community Good Friday service was held at Zion Lutheran.

Newfolden, Minn. - Westaker and Bethania Lutheran Churches have decided to publish a pictorial directory of their memberships through Fellowship Directories, Inc.

Minot, N. Dak. - Rev. Bruce Dalager, Grand Forks, N. Dak., a former pastor at Bethel Lutheran Church, spoke at a preaching mission here, Apr. 8-11.

Brazil Mission School graduates six

Recently six fine young Brazilian nationals received their diplomas from a one-year course at our AFLC Mission's Bible School (Instituto Biblico Mouraonse). They were thrilled to have successfully completed the highly disciplined year of study. Their testimony is, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). Several of them have more secular schooling to accomplish before they can continue their Bible Institute studies. Pray for each one of them: Neide, Valdecir, Vilma, Cleunice, Celia, Carlos Eduardo.

—Corr.

The graduates are shown in the front row, left to right. Pastor George Knapp, partially hidden, Pastor and Mrs. Connely Dyrud, and Pastor John Abel may be seen in the back row.

news of the churches

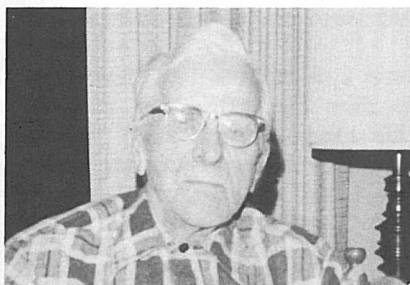
Wyoming, Minn. — Hope Lutheran Church was the scene of nightly meetings, Apr. 11-14, with Rev. Elden Nelson, Home Missions Director of the AFLC, as the speaker.

Dalton, Minn. - New member at Kvam Lutheran Church is Mrs. Charles (Lynda Lou) Jaenisch, Jr.

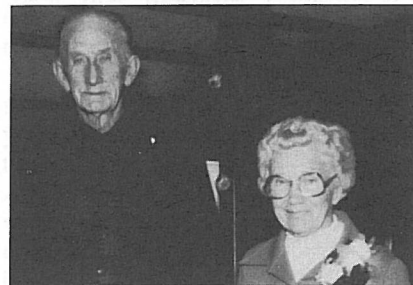
Sedan, Minn. - Scandia Lutheran has recently honored some of its oldest members. See photos.



Eddie (age 92) and Olga Lagred.



Simon Kolstad, age 94.



Mr. and Mrs. Orin Olson celebrated their 60th anniversary.

Miss Mildred Joel passed away

Miss Mildred Joel, 70, retired registrar of Augsburg College in Minneapolis, Minn., passed away on April 3. Funeral services were held on April 9 at Trinity Lutheran Church, Minneapolis.

She was a sister of Mrs. Richard Snipstead.

(Ed. note: I had known Mildred Joel for many years. She was a gracious Christian woman. Blessed be her memory.)

If you feel that money spent to save the heathen is wasted, does it not show that you know nothing of the worth of a human soul?

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

Thief River Falls

Pete P. Sorter, 94, Mar. 6, Emmanuel, Middle River

Mrs. Selma E. Breiland, 86, Mar. 18, Our Saviour's



Kenyon, Newfolden to celebrate anniversaries

Under the theme "Great is Thy Faithfulness" Hauge Lutheran Church, Kenyon, Minn., will observe its 125th anniversary at several times during the spring and summer.

On May 20, the Family Night will take a look back at the church's centennial in 1959.

On June 29 "Our Heritage Program" will be presented and a Country Store will be held.

On July 1, the ordination of Ted Berkas will take place and there will be a mission service with greetings from former pastors and missionaries.

English and Norwegian services at the Old Stone Church will be held on July 15, with Pastor Knutson and Pastor Arnold Windahl speaking, respectively.

Reservations are needed for the catered dinner on July 1. The approximate cost will be \$5.00. Please contact Mrs. Connie Albright, 627 3rd St. in Kenyon about this.

Bethania Lutheran Church, rural Newfolden, Minn., oldest AFLC congregation in Marshall County, will observe its centennial in activities on Aug. 4-5.

Hymn authorship found

Lay Pastor Gerard Blais, Fall River, Mass., sends the following information in a recent communication: "... I noticed your reprint (Feb. 28 *Ambassador*) of the hymn 'Father of Heaven, Whose Love Profound...' on p. 11. The citation is given as 'author unknown.' This hymn is in the *Service Book and Hymnal*, #140, and the author is Edward Cooper (1770-1833). It appears in the Episcopal hymnal 'Hymns Suited to the Feasts and Fasts of the Church' at #78, E. P. Dutton & Co., Boston, 1870. *The Common Service Book and Hymnal*, United Lutheran Church in America, Philadelphia, 1918, carries it at #165 and notes it was written in 1805. The Rev. Edward Cooper, according to the index of that hymnal (p. 592) was a clergyman of the Anglican Church, and a native of England."

West Coast Bible Conference report

The West Coast Bible Conference was held March 1-4 at Spencer Creek Lutheran Church, Eugene, Ore., with 96 registered. The Women's Missionary Federation Spring Rally and the Mini-Conference were incorporated into the conference to reduce travel this year.

The conference, with the theme "Practical Christian Living," was opened Thursday evening by host pastor Stephen Odegaard.

Basing his sermons on the conference theme, guest speaker Pastor Eugene Enderlein, AFLC World Missions Director, spoke strongly on personal evangelism. With the text on "Whom Do You Serve?" he expressed that our greatest call is to the discipleship of our Lord Jesus Christ, serving with complete, unreserved, unrelenting, undivided loyalty. It doesn't take much of a person to be a Christian, but it does take *all* of him. Through the text on "God's Purpose for Us," he taught us that a Christian should purpose to do God's will—search Scripture, be attentive to it, live it, share it, evangelize. We must have world vision by starting right here at home. As he spoke on "Commitment," he pointed out that Christ's commission is a *command*,

(Ed. note: Is our face red! We use the *Service Book and Hymnal* in the church I serve and have sung the hymn in question three times and yet did not recognize the hymn when we used it in the *Ambassador*. We took it from *The Church and Sunday-School Hymnal*, published by the United Lutheran Church, 1898. There the hymn is ascribed to Geneva, 1551. That does add an element of mystery, but the authorship of Edward Cooper must be well established. We sing the hymn to the tune by Louis Bourgeois, although the tune in the SBH is Rivaulx, L.M.)

Consecration avails nothing unless it means presenting yourself as a living sacrifice to do nothing but the will of God.
—Andrew Murray

not a mere request, to full-time service. If we do not personally labor in the harvest field, we can support someone who will—either be sent or be sending. Pastor Enderlein's last challenge to us was "Obedience" to Christ's command. Our threefold mission is to (1) reveal God to mankind, (2) share Christ's redemption plan, and (3) build His church.

Pastor Enderlein also shared an excellent slide presentation on the AFLC evangelism vision, particularly in India.

Friday Bible study leaders for the men's group during W.M.F. were Pastor Ronald Knutson, Ferndale, Wash., and Pastor Richard Anderson, Lake Stevens, Wash. Bible study leaders for Saturday, whose texts were taken from I John 3, were Mr. Kit Kittleson, Eugene, and Pastor Del Palmer, Everett, Wash.

We are a conference and as sister congregations request that you join us in praying for congregational concerns for:

- Ferndale, Wash. - to become more mission-minded;
- Bellingham, Wash. - to begin a full-time church work there;
- Arlington, Wash. - looking for church property, growth and a full-time pastor;
- Lake Stevens, Wash. - greater sense of nucleus (oneness) within the congregation;
- Kirkland, Wash. - that the congregation would be willing to do God's will;
- Everett, Wash. - to bring back into oneness the church fellowship now that the pulpit is again filled;
- Astoria, Ore. - their youth of all ages;
- Eugene, Ore. - consecrated visitation program;
- Revival in all churches;
- W.M.F. - that working women may attend;
- Harmony in churches and someone in each church who can promote this;
- Humility;
- Breaking the bonds of sin habits in Christians so that they can speak freely and victoriously of Christ.

Mrs. Stephen (Linda) Odegaard
West Coast Secretary

Personalities

Rev. Dennis Gray, has resigned as pastor of Green Lake Lutheran Church, Spicer, Minn., and Zion Lutheran Church, Willmar, Minn., where he has served since 1976, to accept the call to Grace Lutheran Church in DeKalb, Ill.. Pastor Gray and his family will move to DeKalb in August.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

The AFLBS Alumni Association has three grants available for the 1984-85 school term. Applications may be obtained by contacting the school. The address is

Association Free Lutheran Bible School
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

The deadline for accepting applications is May 15.

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IT CAN MEAN A DIFFERENCE OF NIGHT AND DAY!

Time spent in concentrated study of
God's Word will change your life.
Don't plan to come unless you are
prepared to have your life changed.



Association Free Lutheran Bible School
Applications for fall quarter now accepted.