

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

April 7, 1987



Luoma Photos

at the MASTER'S FEET

Born again to a living hope

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you . . ." (I Peter 1:3, 4 NASB).

My father-in-law used to have a banner that hung on his office wall which depicted a butterfly emerging from the confinement of a cocoon. The caption on the banner read, "You can fly, but that cocoon has to go."

As we celebrate Easter, as we rejoice in the reality of the resurrection, the Apostle Peter invites us to "bless the Lord" for the gift of new life in the risen Lord Jesus Christ.

The analogy of metamorphosis is a good one to help us understand what



God the Father did for us through the resurrection of His Son from the dead. To be born again to a living hope, we must be set free from the confinement of sin. The Holy Spirit must come to us and cause us to die to self and sin and live for God through Christ. The butterfly is not a reformed caterpillar, but a new creature, a butterfly, something totally different from what it once was. In order to be born again, the caterpillar must die and be completely transformed into a beautiful butterfly.

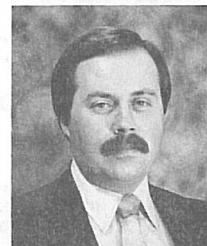
When the apostle Paul talks about the transformation that God wants to accomplish in us (Romans 12:1, 2), the word he uses is the word that describes the process of metamorphosis or complete change. In II Corinthians 5:17, Paul states that, "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." The Holy Spirit convicts us of the need to die to self and turn to Christ. The power of the resurrection causes us to be reborn to a living hope.

We are not reformed or rehabilitated, nor are we repaired, but we are "born again" by the power and the grace of God.

The words of exhortation prior to the distribution of the Lord's Supper remind us that Christ took "on Himself *our* nature, that so He might fulfill *for us* the whole will and law of God, and *for our* deliverance suffer death and all that *we* by our sins have deserved." Through His death, Christ paid the penalty for sin, once for all. Through the resurrection, He proclaimed His authority over sin and death.

Peter goes on to encourage us further by stating that because of this authority that Christ has the believer is heir to an inheritance that is imperishable and undefiled. The inheritance will last eternally and will not "turn" or "go bad on us." It cannot be defiled because it comes from a perfect God. It will not fade or diminish in its value and is reserved for us (kept by God's authority) with our name listed on the reservation.

As we celebrate the holiest of days in the church year, may we truly bless, praise and thank the Lord for His finished work. Let us praise Him for the fact that the Lord Jesus is seated at His right hand continuing His ministry of intercession on our behalf and let us thank God that we have been born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead!



by Pastor
Robert Lewis

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I believe in

the resurrection of the body

There is a thought that has come to me quite forcefully lately inasmuch as on August 30, 1986, I was 81 years old. I realize that I am in the evening of my life and ministry. According to life's expectancy, at the most I have only a very short stay left before I pass from time to eternity. I may drop dead of a heart attack, or die of other natural causes in a matter of hours or days.

This, to me, is a sobering thought. It should cause all of us, not the least those of us who are in the evening of our lives, to take to heart the words of the psalmist, "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psalm 90:12), because we have "no continuing city, but we seek one to come." (Heb. 13:14).

Inasmuch as it is true that we must leave this earthly transitory life, the question comes frequently and forcibly: "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14). Life is short. We must all recognize this truth, as it is often brought forth in many songs we sing: "Tiden forsvinner saa snart som en drom" (translated from Swedish: Time goes by quickly as a dream) or again: "I'm a pilgrim, I'm a stranger, I can tarry but a night."



by Rev.
Clifford R. Anderson,
Buffalo, Minn.

Therefore, the questions come to us: What does the future hold? What knowledge do we have, particularly regarding the resurrection of the body? The Word of God declares that man, who was originally made in the image of God, has been crushed and cursed by sin. The earth also has felt that curse. However, we read that the earth is to be renewed. New heavens and a new earth are to be fashioned "wherein dwelleth righteousness" (II Pet. 3:13).

The question remains, who shall govern that new earth "wherein dwelleth righteousness"? Angels cannot; For "unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come" (Heb. 2:5) Shall not man, redeemed from sin, be restored to dominion? Shall he not again be body as well as spirit? Shall he know his friends and shall he have communion with them?

God's revealed Word comes to our aid for much information. It tells us that infirmities, defects, weakness, corruption of body shall all pass away and the body shall be clothed with power and glory! (I Cor. 15:43).

"What knowledge
do we have,
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of the body?"

The Apostles gave witness to the resurrection with "great power" (Acts 4:33). According to the Book of Acts, the resurrection is an ever present and prominent theme. The Apostles loved it and under its proclamation thousands were won to Christ! Certainly evangelical Christianity confesses that the Holy Scriptures teach the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead.

The popular and prevailing view among evangelicals is that there will be a literal resurrection of the identical body laid in the grave at death. It shall hereafter arise out of it and live forever. Or shall we say it this way: all that constitutes and properly belongs to the body at the hour of death and is essential to its corporal identity will be raised again to life and will constitute the resurrected body.

Why do we say this? What have we with which to support this view and hope?

a) The Jews B.C. (before Christ) held the doctrine of the physical resurrection and their views were warranted by Old Testament Scriptures. The Jews had their sacred writings in possession from four to 15 centuries B.C. From these writings from Moses and the Prophets they derived the doctrine of the resurrection.

b) The books of the Apocrypha, although not accepted as "inspired" by Protestantism, may have some historical value having supposedly been written from two to six centuries B.C. They contain many allusions to the theology of the Jews at the time they were

RESURRECTION . . .

written: In II Maccabees 7, we read: "But the king of the world shall raise us up, who have died for his laws, unto everlasting life." Also in II Esdras 2, "And those that be dead I will raise up again from their places, and bring them out of their graves." So the doctrine of the resurrection was commonly accepted and taught among the Jews.

c) To quote from God's inspired Word: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:25-26). And note, in verse 27, "Whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

d) Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian, writes: "We have therefore believed that the body will be raised again; to every body shall its own soul be restored."

e) The Sadducees. An interesting account in Matthew 22:23-32 regarding their trying to trap Jesus with their foolish question. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection; however, they understood the doctrine in its most

literal sense and regarded our Redeemer as at least a defender of the doctrine of the resurrection!

f) Martha. At Lazarus' grave she spoke of the "*resurrection at the last day*" (Jn. 11:24).

g) When Christ began His ministry, King Herod said: "This is John the Baptist risen from the dead."

h) The Apostle Paul to King Agrippa: "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"

The Early Christians: The Catacombs of Rome are the early burying place of Christians. Over the graves have been inscribed such words as: "You will arise. A temporary rest is granted you." Also many symbols have been inscribed that suggest resurrection.

Polycarp, a disciple of John, suffered as a martyr in 166 A.D. He was 86 years old when he offered this prayer to God as he was dying: "I bless Thee that Thou hast thought me worthy of the present day and hour, to have a share in the number of martyrs and in the cup of Christ, unto the resurrection of eternal life, both of soul and body, in the incorruptible felicity of the Holy Spirit."

Justin Martyr, 140 A.D.: "If you meet with any who have the Christian

"When Christ
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name but deny the resurrection of the dead, do not esteem them Christians. For I, and all those Christians who in all respects hold the true opinion, do know that there will be a resurrection of the flesh."

Titianus Syrus (a disciple of Justin Martyr) in an oration said, "We shall be restored to what we are; though reduced to death to what I was, I shall be restored to my being again. Though my flesh be consumed by fire, yet the world contains the evaporated matter. Though I be drowned and dissolved in a river or sea, or be devoured by wild beasts, yet I am laid up in the repositories of God; God will restore my body to its former state."

Irenaeus (born before John's death): "Christ shall come and raise up all flesh." He says that this doctrine was received from the Apostles. "The resurrection of the flesh was an article of faith which was received by the entire church with one accord, and was immovable and unalterable."

The Apostolic Constitution compiled near the end of the second century had a long chapter, in part of which we read: "God almighty will raise us up, in the same form which we now have, without any mutilation or corruption."

The Romish and Greek churches teach the resurrection of the flesh.

The Lutheran Catechism: "Will the body that is raised be the same which was laid in the grave?" Answer (Evangelical Lutheran Catechism, page 121): "All that is essential to the identity or sameness of the body, will be raised; while its unessential particles will remain mingled with the mass of earth."

The translation of Enoch and Elijah in their material bodies supports teaching

JESUS IS KING

Rejoice ye people! It's spring at last,
The long cold winter is past.
The trees are budding, the earth is green,
The soft spring rain has washed it clean.
All nature sings a brand-new song,
Praising God the whole day long.

Come, ye Christians, let us sing!
The Lord has risen. It's spring! It's spring!
Cast off the old, He's made things new,
So let us praise Him all day through.
Let's tell that Jesus Christ is King;
Let's do His will in everything.

— Verna Kammen
Badger, Minn.

of physical resurrection. In Genesis 5:24 we read: "And Enoch walked with God; and He was not; for God took him." Enoch was translated by God. He did not experience death. So also in the case of Elijah, as we read in II Kings 2:11: "As they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven".

The fact stands unimpeached and indisputable that in two instances at least, holy men have been bodily taken up to heaven. Their bodies were "changed" in the translation. Nine hundred years after Elijah was taken up, we see Moses and Elijah on the mount of transfiguration with Jesus. Here we see that they have their absolute personal identity, because Peter recognizes them; he calls them by name. This suggests there will be no strangers in heaven; everyone will know each other. In Matthew 17:1-4, we read this story of the Transfiguration.

In I John 3:2, we read, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."

Another clear reference from God's Word that people will hold their identity, both in heaven and hell, is found in the story of the "rich man and Lazarus" as found in Luke 16:19-31. There we see the rich man in Hades was capable of seeing, hearing, thinking, remembering, suffering pain and feeling burdened for the lost members of his family.

So will the children of God, in their glorified bodies, be able to see, think, enjoy fellowship, enjoy blessings, have peace and remember how the Lord has redeemed them for, according to Revelation 7:10, they "cried with a loud voice, saying, salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

For the children of God there is also a blessed and interesting portion in God's Word, as recorded in Malachi 3:16: "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His Name." It seems clear from this passage that the children of God will be able to rehearse, to talk

about, to remember the things that were done here on earth! God makes this clear again in Matthew 25:37ff, when asked by the disciples, "When saw we Thee hungry and fed Thee, etc.?", the Lord reminds them of all that they had done in His Name and that they are rewarded for it.

I'm glad I'm a Christian! I was converted to Jesus Christ in 1930 at Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls in Minneapolis, Minn. I praise God for the privilege of living for Jesus these many years! I have been born again!

As I said at the outset of this paper, my time is running out. Moreover, the signs of the times indicate that Jesus is coming again soon! What a day that will be! In I Thessalonians 4:16-18 and 5:1-8 and also in I Corinthians 15:44-58, we read about the kind of bodies we will have: "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." A real, literal, tangible, visible body we will have! It will be immortal, incorruptible and a glorious body! It cannot be blind, deaf, maimed or in any respect defective.

Praise God, we can place our trust in Jesus, who said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (Jn. 11:25-26).

THE WRITER

Rev. Clifford R. Anderson, Buffalo, Minn., has served as a free lance evangelist for over 40 years. Prior to that he served parishes in the U.S. and Canada. In evangelistic work he has preached in half of the states, all of the western Canadian provinces (in ten different Lutheran synods), and on all six continents. Pastor Anderson has been in 66 of the world's countries.

At the time of his conversion, he was a streetcar conductor in Minneapolis.

Pastor Anderson and his wife were formerly members of the Lutheran Church in America, but are now members of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Cokato, Minn., an AFLC congregation they helped to organize.

At one time he served as pastor of Sunnyside Church, Stacy, Minn.

there is a solution to the problem of death

At Easter time it is well for us to take up the subject of death. We are told that man has a few basic fears which exercise a large influence on him and that one of those fears is the fear of death. Why do we fear death? Perhaps it is because death limits the extent of our life and our life accomplishments. Just when we feel we are the smartest and wisest, death steps in and brings it all to an end. Or perhaps we could say we fear death because it brings to an end what we instinctively hold as most precious, that is, our life. Another thing we could say about death that makes it so fearful is that it surely is a most dismal way of ending our earthly sojourn. However, I believe the greatest cause of the fear of death is that it ushers us into the realm of the unknown where we fear our meeting with God. We fear to meet Him with our life-record.

What is death? Where did it come from? Why do we have it as a part of our human experience? The Bible has answers to these questions. It says that death is the wages of sin, that is, the wages of our wrong ways. It says that sin entered the human race through one person, Adam, and that death entered through sin. Further, the Bible teaches that death has passed to all people of all ages. Certainly, we cannot deny that death is universal. The record has been perfect. Everyone born into the world has died or is clearly moving toward death. The Bible expresses it simply when it says that it has been given unto man once to die. In the same verse it

(cont. on p. 8)

Golgotha and the Sepulchre

by Henry van Dyke

"We ought to go again to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre," said the lady (a lady from Puget Sound traveling in the company with her pastor husband) in a voice of dutiful reminder, "we have not half seen it." So we went down to the heart of Jerusalem and entered the labyrinthine shrine.

The motley crowd in the paved quadrangle in front of the double-arched doorway were buying and selling, bickering and chaffering and chattering as usual. Within the portal, on a slightly raised platform to the left, the Turkish guardians of the holy places and keepers of the peace between Christians were seated among their rugs and cushions, impassive, indolent, dignified, drinking their coffee or smoking their tobacco, conversing gravely or counting the amber beads of their combolois. The Sultan owns the Holy Sepulchre; but he is a liberal host and permits all factions of Christendom to visit and celebrate their rites in turn, providing only they do not beat or kill one another in their devotions. We saw his silent sentinels of tolerance scattered in every part of the vast, confused edifice.

The interior was dim and shadowy. Opposite the entrance was the Stone of Uncion, a marble slab on which it is said the body of Christ was anointed when it was taken down from the cross. Pilgrim after pilgrim came kneeling to this stone, and bending to kiss it, beneath the Latin, Greek, Armenian and Coptic lamps which hang above it by silver chains.

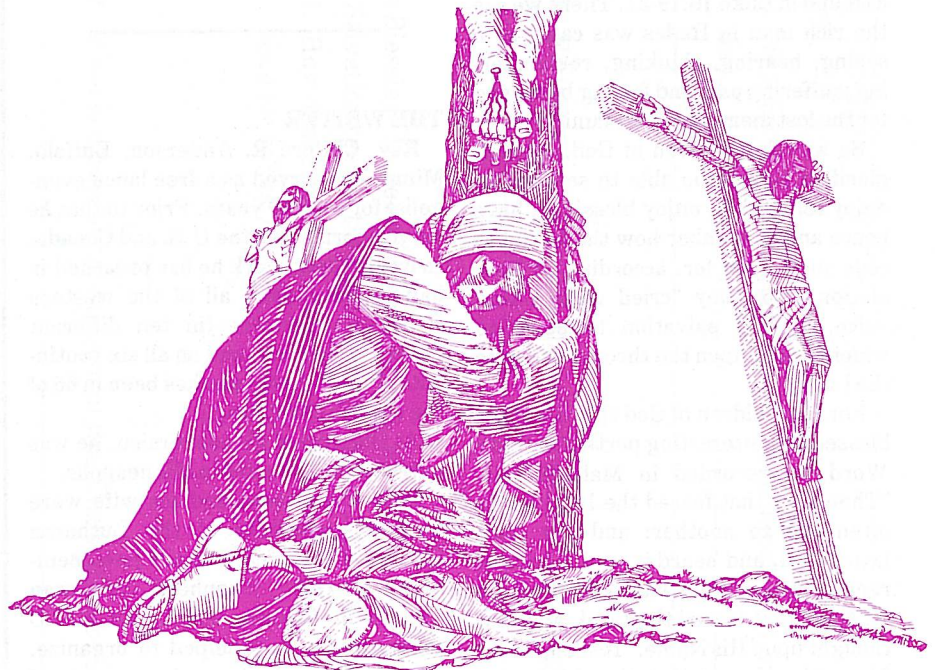
The Chapel of the Crucifixion was on our right, above us, in the second story of the church. We climbed the steep flight of stairs and stood in a little room, close, obscure, crowded with lamps and icons and candelabra, incrustated with

gold and silver, full of strange odours and glimmerings of mystic light. There, they told us, in front of that rich altar was the silver star which marked the place in the rock where the Holy Cross stood. And on either side of it were the sockets which received the crosses of the two thieves. And a few feet away, covered by a brass slide, was the cleft in the rock which was made by the earthquake. It was lined with slabs of reddish marble and looked nearly a foot deep.

Priests in black robes and tall, cylindrical hats, and others with brown robes, rope girdles and tonsured heads, were coming and going around us. Pilgrims were climbing and descending

the stairs, kneeling and murmuring unintelligible devotions, kissing the star and the cleft in the rock and the icons. Underneath us, though we were supposed to stand on the hill called Golgotha, were the offices of the Greek clergy and the Chapel of Adam.

We went around from chapel to chapel; into the opulent Greek cathedral where they show the "Centre of the World"; into the bare little Chapel of the Syrians where they show the tombs of Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea; into the Chapel of the Apparition where the Franciscans say that Christ appeared to His mother after the resurrection. There was sweet singing in this chapel and a fragrant smell of incense. We went into the Chapel of Saint Helena, underground, which belongs to the Greeks; into the Chapel of the Parting of the Raiment which belongs to the Armenians. We were impartial in our visitation, but we did not have time to



see the Abyssinian Chapel, the Coptic Chapel of Saint Michael, nor the Church of Abraham where the Anglicans are allowed to celebrate the eucharist twice a month.

The centre of all this maze of creeds, ceremonies and devotions is the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, a little edifice of precious marbles, carved and gilded, standing beneath the great dome of the church, in the middle of a rotunda surrounded by marble pillars. We bought and lighted our waxen tapers and waited for a lull in the stream of pilgrims to enter the shrine. First we stood in the vestibule with its tall candleabra; then in the Angels' Chapel, with its fifteen swinging lamps, making darkness visible; then, stooping through a low doorway, we came into the tiny chamber, six feet square, which is said to contain the rock-hewn tomb in which the Saviour of the World was buried.

Mass is celebrated here daily by different Christian sects. Pilgrims, rich and poor, come hither from all parts of the habitable globe. They kneel beneath the three-and-forty pendant lamps of gold and silver. They kiss the worn slab of marble which covers the tombstone, some of them smiling with joy, some of them weeping bitterly, some of them with quiet, business-like devotion as if they were performing a duty. The priest of their faith blesses them, sprinkles the relics which they lay on the altar with holy water, and one by one the pilgrims retire backward through the low portal.

I saw a Russian peasant, sad-eyed, wrinkled, bent with many sorrows, lay his cheek silently on the tombstone with a look on his face as if he were a child leaning on his mother's breast. I saw a little barefoot boy of Jerusalem, with big, serious eyes, come quickly in, and try to kiss the stone; but it was too high for him, so he kissed his hand and laid it upon the altar. I saw a young nun, hardly more than a girl, slender, pale, dark-eyed, with a noble Italian face, shaken with sobs, the tears running down her cheeks, as she bent to touch her lips to the resting-place of the Friend of Sinners.

This, then, is the way in which the craving for penitence, for reverence, for devotion, for some utterance of the

nameless thirst and passion of the soul leads these pilgrims. This is the form in which the divine mystery of sacrificial sorrow and death appeals to them, speaks to their hearts and comforts them.

Could any Christian of whatever creed, could any son of woman with a heart to feel the trouble and longing of humanity, turn his back upon that altar? Must I not go away from that mysterious little room as the others had gone, with my face toward the stone of remembrance, stooping through the lowly door?

And yet — in my deepest heart I was thirsty for the open air, the blue sky, the pure sunlight, the tranquility of large and silent spaces.

The lady went with me across the crowded quadrangle into the cool, clean, quiet German Church of the Redeemer. We climbed to the top of the lofty bell tower.

Jerusalem lay at our feet, with its network of streets and lanes, archways and convent walls, domes small and great — the black Dome of the Rock in the centre of its wide inclosure, the red dome and the green dome of the Jewish synagogues on Mount Zion, the seven gilded domes of the Russian Church of Saint Mary Magdalen, a hundred tiny domes of dwelling houses, and right in front of us the yellow dome of the Greek "Centre of the World" and the black dome of the Holy Sepulchre.

The quadrangle was still full of people buying and selling, but the murmur of their voices was faint and far away, less loud than the twittering of the thousands of swallows that soared and circled, with glistening of innumerable

blue-black wings and soft sheen of white breasts, in the tender light of sunset above the facade of the gray old church.

Westward the long ridge of Olivet was bathed in the rays of the declining sun.

Northward, beyond the city-gate, the light fell softly on a little rocky hill, shaped like a skull, the ancient place of stoning for those whom the cruel city had despised and rejected and cast out. At the foot of that eminence there is a quiet garden and a tomb hewn in the rock. Rosemary and rue grow there, roses and lillies; birds sing among the trees. Is not that little rounded hill, still touched with the free light of heaven, still commanding a clear outlook over the city to the Mount of Olives — is not that the true Golgotha, where Christ was lifted up?

As we were thinking of this we saw a man come out on the roof of the Greek "Centre of the World," and climb by a ladder up the side of the huge dome. He went slowly and carefully, yet with confidence, as if the task were familiar. He carried a lantern in one hand. He was going to the top of the dome to light up the great cross for the night. We spoke no word, but each knew the thought that was in the other's heart.

Wherever the crucifixion took place, it was surely in the open air, beneath the wide sky, and the cross that stood on Golgotha has become the light at the centre of the world's night.

— *Out-of-Doors in the Holy Land*,
copyright, 1908,

Charles Scribner's Sons
(Henry van Dyke, an American Presbyterian minister, wrote the hymn "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee.")

**As by the light of opening day
The stars are all concealed,
So earthly pleasures fade away
When Jesus is revealed.**

**Creatures no more divide my choice;
I bid them all depart;
His name, his love, his gracious voice,
Have fixed my roving heart.**

— John Newton

In North Dakota

AWAKENING

The awakening which took place in this district in 1900-01 through the work of Pastor (Ole) Swenson, Pastor H. S. Quanbeck, Evangelist O.M. Anderson and Layman Knut Bergstad had the result that many a "band of brothers and sisters" came to journey "on the way home." The heavenly home.

They were wonderful times which then swept as a wave over the homesteaders here. The older ones who are here today (1936) will surely never forget the blessed times round about in

the houses and groves when the testimonies and songs of praise of the saved sounded as a foretaste of that which shall be in heaven. There was hunger and thirst after the Word at that time. The way wasn't too long and the time spent not too much when one was able to gather with others to hear God's Word.

A person could drive 30-40 miles with horse and buggy in order to attend a meeting and when he went home in company with others the long distance, there was no one who thought the time was wasted.

Later on when that "band of brothers and sisters" became larger and the desire arose to have a "church home" here below in the winter of 1900-01 a sense of urgency developed to organize congregations. And so Bethania congregation was organized Jan. 1, 1901, in

Eric Jacobson's church built in Binford (N. Dak.), which then became the first congregation organized in that town. Gethsemane congregation was organized on Feb. 25, 1901, and the church was built in the summer of 1902.

Because Bethania congregation was very spread out and it became evident later that it would be better to have one more congregation, Bethlehem congregation was organized on July 17, 1901, and in the summer of 1903 a church was built.

From *Folkebladet*, Aug. 5, 1936.

Translated from Norwegian.

(Ed. note: The statement about the Bethania church (now Bethany) building is not clear in the text. Other records show that the church building was built in 1902 or 1903. The congregation is a member of the AFLC. Gethsemane Lutheran, rural Tolna, has among her members friends of Association work. Bethlehem Lutheran was discontinued a good many years ago. It was located not far from Red Willow Lake.)

DEATH . . .

says that all who die are then faced with God's judgment (Hebrews 9:27).

But there is a wonderful teaching of hope in the Bible that touches on the matter of death. That is the teaching that Jesus Christ, Who is God in the flesh, has met and conquered death. Jesus Christ took to Himself the seed of Abraham and became one of us, in order that He might die in our place. In His death He took the wages of all your sin. In other words He took the entire divine judgment due you, for your sins. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ died for all people, His death reaching to the extent of death's sway. The grand teaching about His death is that death could not hold Him. *He is risen!* And as the death of Jesus Christ has universal implications, so with His resurrection. One universal implication is that all men will experience bodily resurrection. Some will be raised unto the resurrection of judgment and others unto the resurrection to eternal life. So we see that death is not the answer to the problem of the unrepentant person who is tired of living. Suicide will not solve

that person's problem. He will be raised up some day to answer to God for his sins. But the good news about Jesus' resurrection is that we are sure there is justification before God for the repentant sinner. Further, Jesus' resurrection and exaltation above every created thing guarantees a glorious and exalting physical resurrection for all who have bowed to Him as personal Savior and Lord.

How about you? What is your state regarding the matter of death? Have you entered into God's solution to your problem of death? God calls on people to repent and trust Christ only, that they may escape the awfulness of eternal judgment. He calls on you to repent and to trust in Christ only as your escape from judgment. Have you done that? If not, God is calling you now to forsake the realm where death holds sway and to come to Jesus Christ the Savior, who said He is "the Resurrection and the Life."

— Rev. Emerson Anderson,
Cleveland, O.

the grave transformed

So Christ eternal, on Easter Day, has thrown wide open the outer and the inner door, transforming the grave into an open thoroughfare, a free way to the gates of heaven.

—Walter F. Troeger

editorials

FROM PALLOR TO POWER

On a TV commercial a man said, "I've always liked Easter; the world seems to get color in its cheeks again." We don't know the product or service he was offering and he likely was referring to springtime when he used the word Easter, but to us what he said suggested a spiritual truth. To Christians, Easter is the message of life, the possibility of life. As the world about us is ready to spring to life we remember the message of life which the resurrection of Jesus brought.

Our theme is "From Pallor to Power." The death of Jesus on the cross dashed hopes and spirits. The disciples were isolated and fearful. Color had gone from their cheeks. They were down. The pallor of death hung over them.

Then, day of days, when they knew that Jesus lived, color came back to their faces. Spirits lifted; soon they would take on the world — because Jesus lives!

Three women approached the garden tomb that first day of the week (Mark 16:1-7). They were Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, and Salome, mother of the other James and John. These women had no more faith than the other followers of Jesus. They weren't looking for resurrection, but they were dedicated. While many are immobilized by tragic events, there are always some who stir to action. Thank God for that.

The women had a problem. They knew a stone blocked the entrance to the tomb and that they couldn't budge it. The soldiers probably wouldn't help them — but perhaps they would. Anyway, there was a problem.

In life there are problems, too. They can look so big, so impossible. And *they are* for human strength, but there is this word from Scripture: "For with God nothing will be impossible" (Luke 1:37). The late Pastor Fredrik Wisløff of Norway, whose article for Lent was in our previous issue, had an embroidered motto above his office door. Against a dark background, intimating the inability of man's power, were the white letters "God Can," signifying God's power. God is able. He will make a way through.

And for the women that early morning hour, the stone had been rolled away! That was miracle No. 1.

Next, we notice the amazement they experienced. The women entered the tomb. They had intended to do that, of course. The body was there, after all. But something unusual had taken place. A young man sat at the right side. "Do not be amazed," he said. "You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen, He is not here; see the place where they laid Him." The women were amazed and dumbfounded at such a turn of events, as anyone would be.

A resurrection had taken place. But hadn't the dead been raised before? There had been some cases, but those happened only because this resurrection would occur. Jesus is the first fruits of resurrection. He was the offering for sin and His resurrection signalled victory. Others had been raised only to die again. Jesus was alive forevermore, the promise of eternal life for all who believe in Him.

From pallor to power. Because Jesus arose, there was color in the disciples' cheeks again. There was hope once more. They had thought they had come to a dead end. If one has been lost in the woods and getting out seems hopeless, there is great joy when one is found or stumbles on safety. Jesus had been dead, now He was alive. We believed He was God, *now we know*.

Hard times lay ahead for the disciples. They knew that evil men had crucified their Master and they were still around. But God would give them power to deal with the danger. The pallor of weakness was laid aside. Power would come to them. God can; God is able!

It's that way for believers today also. There are hard places. There are testings and trials. Some even experience persecution for the faith. But Christ is living; He is here. By now we are all familiar with the little word sketch "Footprints." It is interesting that the *Ambassador* was one of the first publications to use it, a good many years ago now. We have seen it many places since then. Anyway, the person in the little story found out that where only one set of footprints showed in the record of his life, and they in the hard places, it was then that the Lord carried His tired, wounded child.

Because of Christ's victory over death, the grave doesn't hold the fear that it otherwise would. Oh, we don't feel comfortable with death because it is the last great enemy. But knowing Jesus is the Victor, the grave loses much of its fear. "Because I live, you shall live also." Even though a believer dies, he still will live.

But we must believe in Jesus so that His death is ours and His resurrection to life is ours also. Bring your sins to Him; believe in Him.

Easter tells us how we can go from pallor to power, from weakness to strength, from hopelessness to victory.

May you have a joyous and blessed Easter.

BE REPRESENTED

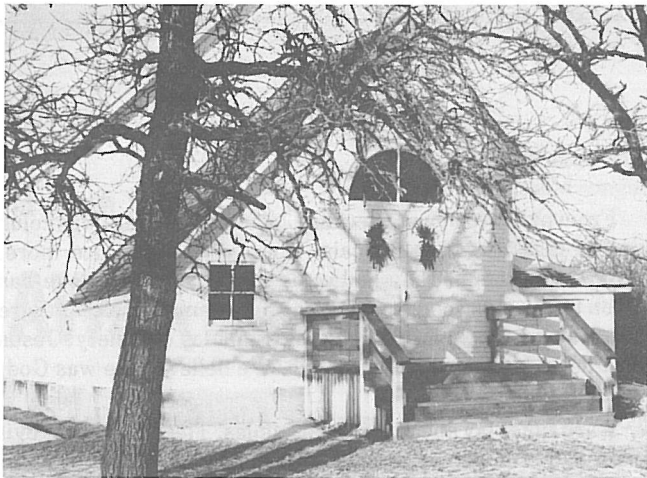
The 25th Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations will be held in Thief River Falls, Minn., June 17-21. It is an historic Conference since it is the silver anniversary of the church and is being held in the city where the Association was organized.

We are endeavoring to encourage all our congregations to have at least one lay representative at the Conference. It is a modest goal, but one that will require real effort and dedication on the part of our people.

At no Conference in the past have all the existing congregations been represented. Quite likely there are some old-line congregations which have never been represented at any Annual Conference.

In one sense it gives one a good feeling that some feel comfortable in leaving decision-making up to others. Is that

◇



A church you may want to visit

—by *Loiell Dyrud*

For two hours on the Saturday night between Christmas and New Year's, people who attend the candlelight service at Satersdal Lutheran Church are treated to a unique spiritual as well as historical experience. It is a Christmas service that would be more familiar to our grandparents than to most of us today.

Satersdal, originally a Norwegian-Danish Conference Congregation, was founded in 1888. The church was built in 1896 and moved to its present site along Silver Creek in 1908. A former sister congregation of Bethlehem, Rindal, Reiner and Our Saviour's, Satersdal stands about ten miles northeast of Thief River Falls, Minnesota. In 1959

the congregation voted to merge with Our Saviour's. Refusing, however, to let the building deteriorate and the cemetery grow up with tall grass and weeds, the former members began holding annual Memorial Day Services the following spring. Offerings have been taken each year to maintain the building and cemetery grounds.

In 1979, Paul Abel was interning at Our Saviour's. He was intrigued by the little country church and felt it was a shame to have only one service a year. Through his inspiration several former members worked to get the Christmas program started. Now, eight Christmases later, Paul and Becky Abel are

missionaries in Brazil, but the Christmas format remains essentially the same.

The tree for the program is cut locally and taken as close to the time of the service as possible. Still covered with snow, the tree is often brought in on the morning of the service. The old fuel stove is lit and former parishioners gather to decorate the tree and the church. Some of the old decorations found in the bottom of the baptismal font are still used. In charge of special decorating effects is Mrs. Mabel Anderson, daughter of Soren Moe, whose membership dates back to the late 1890s. Mrs. Anderson is also caretaker of the cemetery in the summer.

Because electricity was cut in 1959, this is a true candlelight service. Myriads of candles adorn the church. There are candles in the windows, on

(cont. on p. 16)

EDITORIAL . . .

not an indication of confidence and trust? Perhaps so, but the thought persists that things could be so much better if every local unit which we call the congregation were represented. Could the effort be made for this special Conference?

A quick study of four recent Conferences reveals this. Last year, at Warm Beach in Washington, far off from the center of our strength, 45% of the congregations were represented by one or more lay delegates. The year before, at the Association Retreat Center, 53% were represented. In 1984, at our church headquarters in Minneapolis, 59% had representation. Then to take an example from North Dakota, another strong numerical area of our church, we find that in 1980 at Valley City, 58% of the congregations had a lay delegate or more present.

A percentage of fifty or more per cent may seem not bad, but in these four cases we find that from 54 to 83 congregations were unrepresented. We don't see how anyone can be

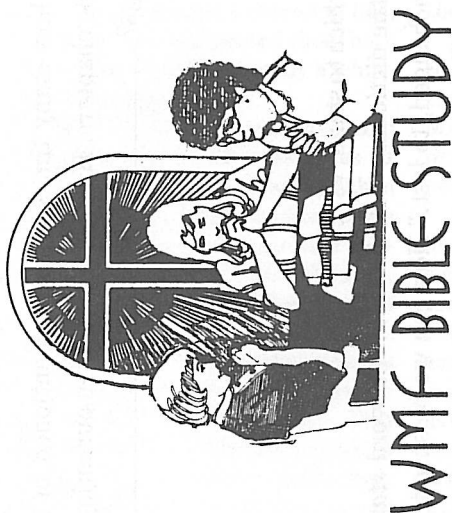
happy with such statistics.

In the AFLC every voting member in a member congregation has the right to speak and vote in the church Conference.

Why don't we make the effort to have every member congregation represented by at least one lay delegate at this year's Conference, preferably not by the pastor's wife, although we hope she can be there also.

This is purely unofficial, you understand, but a suggestion would be for every congregation to designate one person as an anniversary delegate. All others can attend and the more the better.

The Association is our church. God has given us these years. Much has been accomplished, much is before us. It would be good if all of us together could make the choices and decisions that fall to us at this time. Is the goal of full representation this year impossible? Or can it be done with some work, some problem solving? We think so.



Chapter 5

RESULTS OF JUSTIFICATION: SALVATION AND LIFE

Hymn No. 268 (*Concordia*): "How Blessed is the Little Flock"

In chapters three and four we considered faith and God's declaration of righteousness upon the one who has faith, as illustrated in the life of Abraham. In chapters five through eight we shall see the results which come about in the life of the believer on the basis of God's declaration of righteousness. Chapter 5:1-5 is an introduction to this section of Romans.

I. Blessings from the Beginnings to the End of Faith, vs. 1-5.

Note the marginal readings in this section: "Let us have peace" v. 1; "let us exult" (vs. 2, 3). Paul exhorts us here to hold and enjoy our blessings.

A. Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, vs. 1

1. How can we have the experience of peace? On what is the feeling based? Compare Jn. 16:33, Acts 9:31

4. Why are we "saved by His life"? _____

B. The free gift brings eternal life, vs. 12-21

Paul uses comparison and contrast to teach the truth about sin and grace. In verses 6, 8, 10, he again points out that sin is universal (see chapters one and two).

1. How did sin and death spread to all men? vs. 12-14 _____

2. How do we know that sin is universal? v. 14 _____

3. In what ways is the free gift like the result of Adam's sin? vs. 15-21 _____

4. In what ways is it much more? _____

Hymn No. 280 (*Concordia*): "How Gladly I My Place Have Taken"

2. Notice how many times Christ is mentioned in this and the following chapters. How is He central in our enjoyment of the blessings? _____

B. Grace in which to stand, vs. 2

1. One of the dictionary definitions of the word *stand* is "to remain unchanged, to last." How can we be sure that our faith will last, will be brought to completion in glory? v. 2 _____

2. In chapter 3:27ff., we saw that the Christian has no basis for boasting in regard to justification. In what should the Christian exult or glory during his life in grace? v. 2 _____

3. What does *exult* mean? _____ Why should we exult? See also Gal. 6:14 _____

C. Joy in the midst of tribulation, vs. 3-5

1. How can the Christian go on exulting in affliction? _____

2. By what steps does tribulation lead to hope? vs. 3-5; compare Jas. 1:2-4, 12. _____

3. How can we be certain that our hope will not disappoint us? v. 5 _____

II. These Blessings Have an Objective Basis, vs. 6-21

A. Salvation results through the death of Christ, vs. 6-11

1. How does Paul describe our condition at the time when Christ died for us? vs. 6, 8, 10 _____

2. What is meant by the statement that Christ died *for* us? _____

3. What did His death accomplish? vs. 9, 10 _____

Our hymn study

Concordia, No. 197
Michael Weisse, 1531
Tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1858
Tune: WORGAN
Lyra Davidica, 1708



God raised Him up on the third day, and granted that He should become visible, not to all the people, but the witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, that is, to us, who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name every one who believes in Him has received forgiveness of sins" (Acts 10:40-43).

"O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" . . . Thanks be to God, who gives us victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 15:55-57).

Christ the Lord is risen again;
Hallelujah!
Christ hath broken ev'ry chain;
Hallelujah!
Hark, angelic voices cry,
Hallelujah!
Singing ever more on high,
Hallelujah!

He who bore all pain and loss,
Hallelujah!
Comfortless upon the cross,
Hallelujah!
Lives in glory now on high,
Hallelujah!
Pleads for us and hears our cry;
Hallelujah!

He who slumbered in the grave,
Hallelujah!
Is exalted now to save;
Hallelujah!
Now thro' Christendom it rings,
Hallelujah!
That the Lamb is King of kings.
Hallelujah!

Now He bids us tell abroad,
Hallelujah!
How the lost may be restored,
Hallelujah!
How the penitent forgiv'n,
Hallelujah!
How we, too, may enter heav'n.
Hallelujah!

This 16th century text is based on a much older German Easter hymn from

the 12th century called "Christ is erstanden" (Christ is Arisen), a hymn Luther loved dearly. He said of it, "After a time one tires of singing all other hymns, but 'Christ is erstanden' one can always sing again."

Michael Weisse was born in a place called Silesia, a country located in the vicinity of what is now Czechoslovakia. The area was originally evangelized by missionaries from the Eastern Orthodox Church but defeat in war brought them under the Roman Catholics. The area then became known as Bohemia. (Many changes and divisions have since occurred, including the partitioning which followed World Wars I and II.) It was from this land that John Huss, the Protestant martyr burned at the stake, arose, and from that incident arose the Church of the Bohemian Brethren.

Michael Weisse, at one time a monk, joined the Brethren after some of Luther's writings came into his hands. He became a German preacher and official Bohemian representative to Martin Luther. (Luther called Weisse "a very good poet, with somewhat erroneous views on the Sacrament" of Communion.) Weisse produced the first German hymnal of the Bohemian Brethren, a collection of 155 hymns, all of which he either wrote himself or translated.

His hymns are typified as "spiritually earnest and manly, but yet tender and truly devout, and the best of them are distinguished by a simplicity of thought and expression" (John Julian).

For Catherine Winkworth, see #1 and #9.

—Don Rodvold

book review

Georg Sverdrup:

Educator, Theologian, Churchman

by James S. Hamre

Northfield, Minnesota 55057:

The Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1986, Cloth-bound,

194 pages, \$15.00, plus \$2.40 postage and handling.

Readers of *The Lutheran Ambassador* are well aware that 1987 marks the 25th anniversary of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. One tends to forget, however, that this same year is the 90th anniversary of the former Lutheran Free Church.

A new biography of Georg Sverdrup

(1848-1907) is a fine way to celebrate both occasions and James Hamre has done a service to our church by providing us with such a work. Hamre, a professor at Waldorf College (ALC), Forest City, Iowa, has been guest lecturer at our Summer Institute and annual pastors' conference and is recognized as the leading authority on the life and message of this Norwegian-American theologian.

Sverdrup, the guiding spirit at Augsburg Seminary during its formative years, is almost forgotten today. The reason for this neglect is that he wrote in the Norwegian language and that

(cont. on p. 16)

MORE ON IBSM STUDENTS NEXT TIME

We are interrupting the series on the students of IBSM (our Bible School in Brazil) briefly, but will resume it next time.

The Editor



FAMILY CAMP A TRADITION

June 29—July 4
Assoc. Retreat Center

July 6—12
Lake Bronson

August 10—16
Assoc. Retreat Center

FAMILY CAMP is a very special event in the life of any family that makes it a part of their summer schedule. At Family Camp the whole family can be together in a week of spiritual blessing, fellowship, recreation and relaxation. Family Camp can be one of the best family traditions that any family can ever take part in.

The AFLC sponsors several Family Camps during the summer. Family camps have been a part of the evangelical wing of the Christian Church for a long time. The Lutheran Bible Institute and the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement have been the prominent movements that have promoted Family Camps in the *Lutheran Church*. As the years have gone by it seems Family Camps have not been as well attended as they were some years ago.

The AFLC Family Camps are keeping this tradition alive and the response in the past few years of increasing interest and attendance has shown that many families and individuals still desire a week of fellowship and inspiration, a vacation with a real plus.

You can send your registration of \$2 per person or \$5 per family to: ARC, Route 1, Box 92, Osceola, Wis. 54020, either week. Rev. Laurel Udden is the Camp Dean.

For more information on the Lake Bronson Family Camp contact Rev. Lyle Aadahl, Dean, 1586 Hill Ave., Grafton, N. Dak. 58237.

June 29-July 4

Association Retreat Center
Osceola, Wisconsin
Evening Speaker -
Rev. James Gerdeen,
Chassell, Mich.
Adult Bible teacher - Lay Pastor
Kenneth Thoreson, Beloit, Wis.

July 6-12

Lake Bronson Family Camp
Lake Bronson, Minnesota
Evening Speaker -
Rev. Michael Brandt,
Cloquet, Minn.
Adult Bible teacher -
Rev. Christian Oswood,
Hampden, N. Dak.

August 10-16

Association Retreat Center
Osceola, Wisconsin
Evening Speaker -
Rev. David Molstre,
Fargo, N. Dak.
Adult Bible teacher -
Rev. Robert Lee,
Minneapolis, Minn.

AFLC Women's Retreat

"Revive us, O Lord," taken from Psalm 85:6, is the theme for the Women's Retreat scheduled for May 1-3 at the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis. Plan to attend and experience rich blessings through fellowship in the Word, prayer and sharing.

Reservations must be received by April 26. Send them to: Mrs. Ralph Beyer (or call 612-546-6053), 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Plymouth, Minn. 55441.

The cost for the full weekend is \$37.00. Offerings will be received to cover expenses for speakers, correspondence, etc.

May 1: 6:30 p.m. — Registration; 8:00 p.m. — Testimony - Marie Klausli; Sharing/Prayer.

May 2: 8:00 a.m. — Breakfast; 9:00 a.m. — Prayer; 10:00 a.m. — Bible Study - Marie Klausli; 12:00 — Lunch; 1:30 p.m. — "Teaching Missions to Children" - Joyce Andrews; 6:00 p.m. — Banquet; 7:30 p.m. — Program, speaker: Marie Klausli.

May 3: 8:00 a.m. — Breakfast; 9:00 — Bible Study - Marie Klausli; 10:45 — Worship Service - Rev. R. Snipstead; 12:00 — Lunch - Home.

Marie Klausli is a native South African. Her travels have taken her from

Rhodesia to England, northern Canada and to the U.S.A. where she currently resides with her husband Heinz. They are members of Triumph Lutheran Church in Ferndale, Washington. Marie's vibrant faith and gift for illustrations will be an inspiration and challenge you will not want to miss.

Joyce Andrews and her husband Robert, Director of the World Mission Prayer League, served as missionaries in Bolivia from 1957-73. Joyce has a special interest in teaching missions to children.

Nursery service will be provided on Saturday, May 2.

news of the churches

LCBI meeting set

The Lutheran Council on Biblical Inerrancy will hold its annual meeting Friday, May 1, and Saturday, May 2, at Concordia College, Interstate 94 and Hamline, St. Paul, Minn. The theme for the conference will be "The Trustworthiness of Scripture."

Keynote speakers will be Prof. Walter A. Maier of Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Ind., and Dr. Gleason Archer, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Ill.

The LCBI seeks to reassert the historic Christian and Lutheran position of Scripture and address contemporary issues as they relate to Scriptural teachings.

For those who pre-register, lunch will be available on the college campus. Registration fees are as follows: pre-registration, \$5.00; at the door, \$7.00; students, \$3.50.

For more information call 612-644-6416 or write LCBI, P.O. Box 16564, St. Paul, Minn. 55116.

Brochures and posters are available to those who wish them.

THANK YOU!

"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable" (Psalms 145:3).

We, the Coordinating Committee of the AFLC, praise God for His goodness to us and for each of you who have given gifts of money during this past year to the various departments of the AFLC. We reached 87% of the budget, which is \$939,966.28. You have been so faithful to the Lord's work. Continue to pray for God's leading as we look to the future. Thanks again for your faithfulness.

—The Coordinating Committee

THANK YOU

"I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me." "For the joy of the Lord is your strength" (Phil. 4:13; Neh. 8:10b).

All glory and praise we give to God for sustaining our family through the last two and a half years of my illness and for healing me. My lungs and right foot are healed and I'm walking without the aid of wheelchair or crutches. At this time I have regained almost full strength and have once again taken over my household duties.

Thank you to all you dear people who have so faithfully prayed for us and encouraged us. We have felt those prayers. May you be greatly blessed by Him as we have been. In Christ,

Mrs. Stephen (Linda) Odegaard
842 Kimberly Ave.
Kent, Wash. 98031

In memoriam

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

MINNESOTA

Spicer

Gertrude J. Christopherson, 87, Feb. 28, Green Lake.

Personalities

Rev. Walter E. Beaman will take up his work in Bethany Lutheran Church, Bluegrass, Sebeka, Minn., in May. He has served at McIntosh, Minn., since 1979.

from here and there . . .

Culbertson, Mont. — Rev. Eugene Enderlein, World Missions Director of the AFLC, spoke at evangelistic meetings in Bethel Lutheran Church, March 8-11.

Stanley, N. Dak. — Received into membership at Our Savior's Lutheran on Feb. 22 were Mr. and Mrs. Lance Giese and Donald, Mr. and Mrs. Doug Hovda and Tucker, and Mrs. Shannon Johnson.

Eben Jet., Mich. — Mr. and Mrs. Harry Johnson spent a month in Mexico visiting the AFLC mission field and staying with the Flores family in Leon.

Grand Forks, N. Dak. — At its annual meeting Trinity Lutheran Church decided to pursue plans to erect a new sanctuary and remodel the fellowship hall to better serve the Sunday School. Additional study is being done before actual building can begin.

CONCERT OF SACRED MUSIC

On February 15, the Luther League of Green Lake Lutheran Church of Spicer hosted a concert of sacred music presented by Pastor Wallace Jackson, Perham, Minn. He sang many Gospel songs and shared God's Word between the songs. Everyone was truly blessed and edified through this ministry of music. If you are looking for an evening of good Gospel music in your church, I would recommend Pastor Wallace Jackson. He is available for evangelism through music and the spoken word. His presentation is family-oriented and seeks to edify God's people and reach out to the spiritually needy.

— Pastor Rodney Johnson

ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

AFLC Benevolences

February 1-28

FUND	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% TOTAL*
GENERAL FUND	208,000.00	9,866.72	5
SCHOOLS - (AFLTS)	99,834.00	4,385.38	4
(AFLBS)	152,060.00	8,404.64	6
HOME MISSIONS	280,000.00	10,465.37	4
WORLD MISSIONS	250,000.00	10,740.23	4
CAPITAL INVESTMENT	25,000.00	565.20	2
TOTALS	1,014,894.00	44,427.54	4
1986-87 —	1,084,478.00	44,983.11	4
*GOAL 8%			

SATERSDAL . . .

the piano, on the altar, and on the old ornate pump organ. (No one really knows how old the organ is since it was bought used in 1910.) There are even candles encircling an old buggy wheel that hangs from the ceiling — a creation of Art Moe.

The lighting of the candles begins at 5. It is a time chosen so people can find their way to the church while there is still enough natural light outside.

When the candles are lit, the leader opens the program with Christmas carols. The programs are the responsibility of original church families who rotate alphabetically each year: Anderson, Dyrud, Joppru, Moe, Ose and Wold. This year the Wold family was in charge. Judith Wold did the arranging and her brother, Rueben Wold, led the program. The Wolds are grandchildren of Pastor August Bredeson, who served the parish for 27 years from 1893 to 1920.

Musical numbers from the various families are presented and the offering for the cemetery fund is taken. It is an offering in the true style of Christmas past. Everyone marches around the altar placing his offering in the plate while the organist festively pumps out Christmas songs.

Also this year, Missionary Connely Dyrud, home on leave from Brazil, was asked to give a greeting, and his wife Carolyn sang. Pastor Dyrud, a grandson of Knut Ose, a charter member of Satersdal, grew up on a farm about a mile away and attended church here until he was 17.

When the outside world has disappeared in darkness, the highlight of the evening takes place, the lighting of the candles on the Christmas tree. While the audience sings verse after verse of "Jeg Er Sa Glad Hver Julekveld" (How Glad I Am Each Christmas Eve"), one of the women of the congregation ever so carefully lights the candles on the tree.

It is difficult to describe the beauty of a tree with real candles lit in the manner of Martin Luther's day. Since the tree is usually quite large and filled with candles, the world literally does grow brighter as the song suggests:

*Then mother trims the Christmas tree,
And fills the room with light.
She says that so the Star shone forth
And made the dark world bright.*

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Second-class postage
paid at Wanamingo, Minn.

When all the candles on the tree are lit, the church is aglow with a warm, pinkish yellow light.

While the meditation is given, the leader becomes the designated "fireman." He is in charge of snuffing out candles that may burn too closely to the needles. A pail of water, a dipper and a fire extinguisher are usually at his disposal.

But the event is not over yet. Apples are handed out and old friends visit quietly about memories of Satersdal. This year the church was packed with one hundred people.

As the candles burn low, the audience walks out one by one into the complete darkness of a winter night in the country. It is a darkness unspoiled by street lights and marked only by the stars.

Those of you attending the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the AFLC this summer at Our Saviour's might want to take the short trip out to Satersdal, walk over the peaceful country cemetery and visit the old church. You are always welcome, for the doors at Satersdal are never locked.

SVERDRUP . . .

most of his scholarly work remains untranslated. Yet his vision for "free and living congregations" shaped the Lutheran Free Church and is a vital part of our AFLC heritage as well. He deserves to be remembered.

The book consists of three parts, beginning with a survey of Sverdrup's background and training in Norway. His career as a theological professor in America is divided into two parts, the first developing his years of service within the Norwegian-Danish Conference, and the second dealing with the Augsburg Controversy and the birth of the Lutheran Free Church. An epilogue describes Sverdrup's home and family life and concludes with an assessment of his impact on Norwegian-American Lutheranism.

The enthusiasm of the author for his subject is evident throughout the book and this reviewer was impressed by the way that Hamre emphasizes the positive aspects of Sverdrup's vision for the Christian congregation even as he recounts the conflicts of the era.

A comparison with an older (1947) biography by Andreas Helland, however, does suggest one criticism of Hamre's book. Helland devoted a chapter to "the awakening in the nineties," a powerful movement of revival that swept over the Norwegian Lutherans in America and was instrumental in the recovery of Augsburg after the division and in the growth of the Lutheran Free Church. Sverdrup was influential in the beginning and spread of this spiritual awakening and in a sense it was the fulfillment of his vision for church life in America. Yet Hamre has surprisingly chosen to be silent about this aspect of Sverdrup's ministry.

This exception does not detract from the total value of the book. Hamre's biography of Georg Sverdrup will be a welcome addition to the libraries of those who are interested in the roots of the AFLC. It also promises to be an important resource for understanding the unique role that we seek to fill within American Lutheranism today.

Rev. R. L. Lee