

# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

August 2, 1983



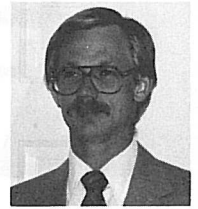
Show me  
thy way,  
O Lord;  
teach  
me  
Thy paths.

Psalm 25:4

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# AT THE MASTER'S FEET



Pastor Philip Rokke

## Importance of teaching

Much of Jesus' earthly ministry was His teaching. He was addressed as "Good Teacher." Again and again we read, "He began to teach," or "He taught them." Jesus' miracles, significant as they are, served primarily to establish the truth of His words. That is why they are referred to as "attesting miracles."

In His teaching, Jesus addressed multitudes and individuals. He spoke to five thousand men until dusk settled over them. And He exchanged a few brief sentences with a rich young

ruler. He impressed a young boy deeply enough to inspire him to offer his lunch of five loaves and two fish. He transformed the life of a woman He met at a well so that she brought her community to life. On one occasion he dealt with an adulterous woman and a group of self-righteous Pharisees with such force and precision that grace was declared to the penitent and law crushed the proud.

Jesus' ministry of teaching was a ministry of evangelism. He taught to bring men to a knowledge of the truth, because the truth makes men free. There is no freedom in deception or ignorance. To say that we have no sin, or that sin doesn't matter, is error and deception. It binds us to our guilt and uncertainty. But, to be assured that our sins have been forgiven and that God's love is limitless is truly liberating. Sin no longer has dominion. We are empowered to do good and live well.

Not all of Jesus' teaching was for the purpose of evangelism. Most of His teaching was directed toward His disciples. It served two purposes in the lives of believers. First, it made known God's will for His children. God wants to deliver us from evil. In order to accomplish that, He has given us His law. Paul thought he was perfectly justified in wanting the things others possessed until he read, "Thou shalt not covet." Then he realized that his jealousy had brought him much dissatisfaction and sadness. Happily he said, I have learned to be content with little or much. So it is with all of God's laws. We must be taught and teach God's will so that our daily lives can be character-

ized by the qualities of peace, joy, patience, kindness, etc. God's will teaches us what makes life good.

Jesus taught us evangelism. He also taught to equip for evangelism. After our lives have been transformed and the fruit of that transformation has become evident within, it also will become evident to others. That evidence should be enhanced by clear teaching from God's Word. That is how the kingdom comes and grows. Any effort at evangelism that doesn't regard highly the truth of God's Word is misguided. It runs contrary to the examples and precepts of Scripture. Much "evangelism" may in reality be emotional or psychological manipulation. It is a disservice to the kingdom of God to give people the impression that an emotional experience is the basis of their relationship to God. Our salvation depends on the truth of the Gospel, the finished work of Jesus Christ. We should be able to present sin, grace and sanctification clearly and accurately. For a beautiful and concise summary of these things see the *Augsburg Confession*. What a rich education it provides! What an embarrassment that many who subscribe to it have never read it!

Do not regard lightly the invitation to teach Sunday School or lead Bible study for the young people. Parents, especially fathers, should be diligent in teaching their children. Countless opportunities come daily when a brief lesson can be shared.

Being taught, and teaching, are important for all of us. Let us give thanks for the teaching we receive in our homes and churches.

### THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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by Renee Regnier, Executive  
Secretary of the Department  
of Parish Education

So, you've been asked to teach the second grade Sunday School class! Congratulations! You have been given an exciting opportunity to share God's Word with some mighty important "little people." What! You're not very thrilled at the idea? And you don't know what to expect from seven-year-olds? Well, it is quite an undertaking, but not an impossible one, if you get to know your students!

You see, you could be the most knowledgeable Bible teacher in your church or the one with the most thorough lesson plans and yet fail as a Sunday School teacher. What it takes is teaching to meet the needs of each individual. And the only way of doing that is by knowing your students.

But how should one go about doing this?

The first step is to understand that each person's personality is comprised of physical, social, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects. These react together in varying ways in order to make up an individual. Plus, to complicate matters, these personality aspects are affected by both heredity and environment. This means that the potential and possible personalities in a classroom are limitless. And since no two persons are identical in personality it is logical that you must be prepared to deal differently with each of your students.

But there are some guidelines that can help you make classroom decisions long before you ever meet your students. Although it is true that God has created everyone uniquely, He also set up a certain range of possibilities that can be somewhat predicted.

### General Characteristics and Needs of Children'

Physically — Children are very active and energetic. Their bodies are growing rapidly with periods of uneven growth and plateaus.

Mentally — Children's lives consist of discovering the world about

them. They think very literally and have trouble understanding abstractions, symbols and generalizations. They also think specifically and have trouble relating ideas together.

Jean Piaget, a Swiss psychologist, has defined four stages of cognitive development. The first is called the *sensorimotor period* which lasts approximately from birth to two years of age. The method of learning about the world is through the use of the five senses. The second stage is *preoperational thought*. Ages two through seven are generally involved here. Children at this stage can classify and categorize but use only one attribute at a time. Judgments are made on how things appear rather than on the basis of a mental operation. *Concrete operations* is the third stage, which lasts from seven to ten or eleven years. Although the child can define, compare and contrast, he can only do this in concrete terms. The fourth stage is called *formal operations*. It is only at this time, around 11 or 12 years of age, that children can think and reason abstractly. And at this time religious symbolism begins to have meaning.

Emotionally — Children are in the process of learning self-control. Therefore, at the youngest ages children have little control over their emotions, often erupting into tantrums and the like. But by age 11 children are capable of controlling their emotions to conform to behavior standards.

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"And since no two persons are identical in personality it is logical that you must be prepared to deal differently with each of your students."

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Socially — Most children are very friendly. As they grow they learn to relate to others and with growing self-control they learn to work in groups and enjoy the interaction. Primary children (to grade three) seek first of all adult approval while junior children (grades four, five and six) begin to seek more peer approval.

Spiritually — Children are capable of understanding Biblical concepts

no two people  
are alike

# KNOWING YOUR STUDENTS

and applying them to their lives if they are taught on their intellectual level. They also are influenced most by attitudes and actions rather than by the concepts that they learn.

Although this is a listing of children's characteristics it is important to realize that there are guidelines available for youth and adults as well. Plus, many books on education contain more detailed descriptions of typical personality development for each age level. For example, most of these listings could tell you exactly what to expect from a seven-year-old as compared to a six- or eight-year-old.

Once you have narrowed down the expected personality factors it is possible to do all of your lesson planning. For example, knowing that your second graders like to be active, are sympathetic with others their own age, and are beginning to work well in groups, you might try to teach about the good Samaritan by using a contemporary version of your own and using the class in a group role playing situation.

However, when you are actually confronted with your class you will immediately become aware of how your children do differ from each other and your expected norm. This is that uniqueness that God has given each individual. But how can you

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by Dr. Mary L. Lindquist,  
University of North Dakota,  
Grand Forks, N. Dak.

"We proclaim [Christ], admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all His energy, which so powerfully works in me. . . . Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach . . . with all wisdom . . ." (Colossians 1:28-29; 3:16).

Our pupils learn, first of all, because of the power of the living and active Word of God which we teach. Teachers of the Word can teach with a confidence that no secular teacher has. All God's energy powerfully works through the Word in the teacher and in the learners as they struggle together with the tasks of

## HOW DO OUR PUPILS LEARN?

teaching and learning. It is of primary importance, therefore, that the teacher place his confidence in Christ and in His Word to accomplish the work of God in his pupils. The teacher will then remember that the most important thing he can do is to help his pupils to see Christ and to know His Word.

And yet teachers are encouraged to struggle, to teach with all wisdom. Since the Word of God is precious and powerful, teachers should learn all they can about teaching and learning so that they can teach the Word effectively. Many of the learning principles discovered through educational research are applicable to Christian education. The following paragraphs suggest a few of them:

1. Pupils learn in proportion to our expectations for them. In an educational study, teachers were told that certain students would learn rapidly and that others would learn slowly. In fact, these learning rates had been assigned randomly to students and

had no relationship to their actual learning abilities. In the following weeks these students learned in proportion to the learning rates assigned them. The effect was probably mediated by differences in the amounts of teaching time and effort allotted to the students. If a teacher does not expect a pupil to be able to learn, he will not expend much effort in teaching that pupil. Christian educators should expect success for *all* their students and then use a variety of techniques to help each one learn. If one technique fails, another should be tried and then another until the student grasps the important lesson.

2. Every pupil comes to us ready to learn something. Some pupils will be eager and attentive and will respond readily to our efforts; others will be restless and easily distracted and will have difficulty in learning. Nevertheless, each one can learn something if only we will discover each one's present level of under-

## KNOWING . . .

learn about each of your children so that your lessons will meet those unique needs? The following techniques can make that possible.

1. Prayer. Since it is the Holy Spirit who indwells, enlightens and empowers us for effective teaching it is only right that your efforts should be preceded by prayer. Pray for your lessons, your teaching, but especially pray for sensitivity to the needs of your students. Do this regularly and expect that the Holy Spirit will teach through you and will cause your teaching ministry to bear fruit.

2. Become a keen observer. Watch your students before, during and after class. Be aware of how they act in

other situations besides that of learning. For each child keep a record of the things that you have observed. In this way you will be piecing together the various parts and will see more clearly the whole person.

3. Communicate with parents. Making home and neighborhood visits also help you gain insights into your children. Parents can also tell you important facts about their children that you should know in order to personalize their education. Besides, communication between parents and teacher allows for a better support base. The parents will know that you care about their children.

4. And lastly, another important technique is conversation. You can

learn a lot about an individual by simply talking with him or her. "What do you like to do best?" and "How was school this week?" are just examples of some conversational topics. Take an interest in each child and show him, too, that you care. Again, you can keep a record of important or insightful conversation that took place.

So, you're going to be teaching the second grade class after all? That's great! And perhaps you're more sure of yourself now since you've learned some tools to help you *know your students!*

1. Werner C. Graendorf (editor), *Introduction to Biblical Christian Education*, Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, 1981, pp. 129-130.



standing and interest and will teach to that level.

3. Teaching will be more effective if we regard each learner for what he *can* do rather than for what he cannot do. A student of mine who is physically disabled but very bright states that even now her understanding of Christian truth is limited because her Christian education was determined on the basis of her disabilities rather than her abilities. Because she and her physically disabled peers had difficulty in speaking, reading and writing, pastors and teachers did not expect them to learn much and thus taught them little.

Some of your students will read poorly but will learn readily if someone reads to them. Others will have difficulty understanding the Sunday School textbook even if it is read to them, but will understand if the ideas are explained more simply, in simpler vocabulary and with concrete examples. Still others understand, but may not express themselves well either in speaking or in writing; they may express what they have learned through art projects or through acting out the lesson, or they may simply require more time and more questioning to express themselves. The effective teacher will take time to determine if each student has grasped the truth being taught. Some pupils learn best through hands-on activities related to the lesson. The effective teacher discovers how his pupils learn best and uses a variety of learning activities in order to reach them all.

4. Pupils learn best if they participate in learning activities. Learning rates have been found to be related to

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“Every pupil comes to us ready to learn something.”

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the rate of student responses in learning activities. Pupils need to answer questions, to solve problems, to complete projects, to act on what they hear and read.

5. Pupils learn best if teaching is directed to a specific goal. Teachers should know what they aim to accomplish and focus the learning activities upon that goal.

6. Pupils learn best what is meaningful to them. In order to be meaningful, a lesson must be made relevant to both the personal interests and the understanding of the pupil. Meaningful learning is integrated into the learner's system of understandings and is thus remembered indefinitely. For this reason it is essential to prepare the student for the lesson. During an introductory discussion the teacher can discover each learner's present level of understanding of the truth to be taught and can then explain the new learning in terms of what is already understood.

It is also important that Scripture and catechism passages to be memorized are made meaningful to the pupils. Since the Word of God itself is powerful to accomplish the work of God in the pupils, memorization is important. Use of a good present-day translation such as the New American Standard Bible or the New International Version helps to increase meaningfulness, but the teacher will also need to explain the words of Scripture and lead the pupil to relate them to what he has already learned. When a Bible verse is understood, it

will be more easily memorized. Rote memorization requires practice even after the meaning is understood, both understanding and memorization are important and well worth the effort.

7. Pupils learn best when they experience satisfaction in learning. In fact, the centers of emotion and learning in the brain are so closely interconnected that emotional reinforcement or satisfaction may be absolutely essential for learning to occur at all. Emotional reinforcement provides the closure that “locks in” connections between the ideas to be learned.

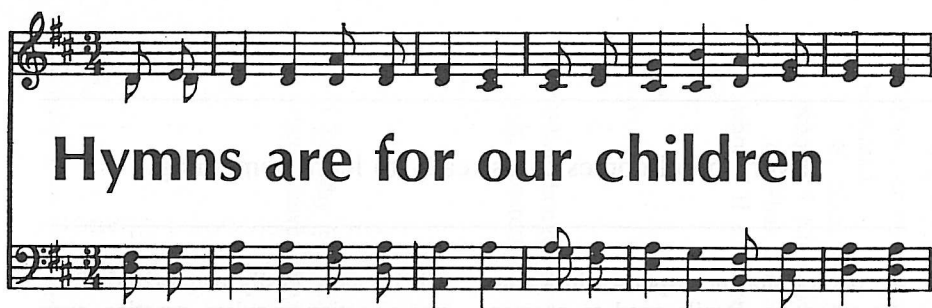
Every pupil needs to feel that he is an important member of the class and that he makes a valued contribution. He needs to feel successful at something which is important to the class. The effective teacher will plan his teaching so that every pupil experiences success and will give recognition and praise generously to each pupil when he achieves what for him is an important step, even though what he has learned may be different from what some others have learned. Even the behavior-problem pupil will learn appropriate behaviors more effectively if his appropriate behavior is praised than if he is scolded when he misbehaves. However, if students experience failure and anxiety instead of success and satisfaction, they learn, but not the things intended. They learn rather to expect failure. They may even learn that for them the study of God's Word is not very rewarding.

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*“ . . . and I will be with thy mouth, . . .  
and will teach you what ye shall do.”*

*Exodus 4:15*

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molding standards  
for worship

# Hymns are for our children

by Mrs. Kenneth Moland,  
Minneapolis, Minn.

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!  
Early in the morning  
our song shall rise to Thee;  
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!  
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

**Can God be merciful and mighty? What does merciful mean? Has God been merciful to you today? John, will you quickly look up Ephesians 2:4-7 while we stand tall and sing with enthusiasm the first stanza again? Children, put an accent on each beat. Good! Why has the hymn writer placed five exclamation marks in just the first stanza? . . . Next time we meet we'll discuss mighty and almighty.**

**Mary, will you prepare a written definition of "omnipotent" for next Sunday? And I'm very anxious to find out how many of you know what the Trinity is! How can God be Three Persons? This book about an apple (*Three in One*, Concordia Publishing House) will help us.**

**Before we go to our classes, please stand as we joyfully sing the entire hymn. The men (boys!) will sing the first half of the first and second stanzas, the ladies (girls!) the last half. Everyone will sing the third, and we'll ask our two instrumentalists (triangle and klave?) to accompany us all on the last stanza. Ready, men? Stand for a solid attack!**

The great hymns of our church are for our children as well as our men and women! Embodied in these hymns is a vast storehouse of spiritual wisdom and Biblical truth. They provide instruction in Christian living. They pass on the heritage of the church. In public or private worship, hymns help individuals find meaningful expression when one lacks the words to express himself. We *must* teach our children the great

hymns of our church. We *must*, by God's grace, use this wealth as a major tool to build solid Scriptural truths into our children.

The music, as well as the words of our hymns, is of great value to our children. Composers over the years have written rich and beautiful music to enhance our public and private worship. The solid chords of many a hymn fit the framework of the objective, doctrinal truths of the words and vice versa. The carefully planned flow of a devotional, subjective hymn is worshipful and honoring of God. The entertaining bounce is not present. As children grow up knowing fine music, they are more likely to develop an appreciation for good quality and will recognize and choose the same.

Shall we always ask our children, "What do you feel like singing?" They may always choose the light, catchy, entertaining, Christian chorus, not knowing of an untapped wealth of joy and reward in enthusiastically singing "On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand" or "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word." Can we wisely let our children choose between a piece of cake and vegetables for dinner today? Or will a good teacher give his students a choice between recess and math? Men and women who influence young people in the faith, let us challenge young people by teaching great hymns that are of sound Lutheran doctrine. Thus, the subjective is nourished by the objective. As the moods go up and down and circumstances of life change for or against us, we *stand* in Christ. "How firm a foundation, ye

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"Shall we always ask our children, 'What do you feel like singing?'"

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saints of the Lord, is laid for your faith in His excellent Word!"

Where shall we start? Start at home. Start with the baby in your arms. Many children can sing the first verse of "Beautiful Savior" before age three, having heard it often. Sing hymns regularly as part of family devotion time. Parents may discover small children choosing Beethoven's tune, "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee, God of Glory, Lord of Love" and "Children of the Heavenly Father." And surely "Jesus Loves Me" holds a wealth of truth in its emphasis on how we know "Jesus Loves Me"—"the Bible tells me so," not because I feel happy today. Parents, sing "Thy Word Is Like a Garden, Lord" while walking outdoors. Sing hymns on trips in the car.

As each child learns to read, he can be given his personal copy of your church's hymnal on a special occasion, such as a baptism anniversary, to use in family altar and other times. Help him become familiar with the grouping by subject and season in the hymnal. Help him notice paraphrases of Scripture in hymns, or hymns based on specific Scripture verses. (Hymn writers like Martin Luther turned the Psalms into hymns during the time of the Reformation.) Along with their worth in themselves, when great hymns of our church are used in the home, they become a unifying force that aids in building a stronger family life. Perhaps your family could learn one new hymn each month. The melodies of hymns sung over and over again year after year linger long in the memory. They carry with them the content and thought into the mind and heart. Children should be encouraged and helped to memorize them. They can often do so with ease. Children need not fully understand the meaning of a hymn in order

*Continued on p. 8*

## The Sunday School where copper is not currency

*Text: "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts" (Haggai 2:8).*

Hear the pennies dropping,  
Listen while they fall;  
Every one for Jesus,  
He will get them all.

### CHORUS

Dropping, dropping, dropping,  
Hear the pennies fall,  
Every one for Jesus,  
He will get them all.

Perhaps you used to sing this ditty when you were in the primary department. Many Sunday Schools still teach children to bring copper to Jesus. When the Wise Men came, long ago, they brought Him gold.

It would seem as if many Sunday Schools, and a great many grown-ups, too, for that matter, were trying to lay the foundation of the kingdom of heaven in copper. But John writes, that when he saw the City of God, it was "pure gold . . ."

I know one Sunday School where copper is no longer currency. Pennies are not accepted as coin of the realm. Every one plans to bring silver or gold or greenbacks. This Sunday School is teaching itself the difference between an offering and a collection.

Bobby had a dog, Fido, whom he loved very much. One day when the family was enjoying a chicken dinner Bobby's mother observed that he was putting the best pieces of chicken to one side of his plate and was cutting away at the bones and gristle to get something to eat.

She said, "Bobby! what are you doing?" You know how mothers can say that so that the creeps run up and down a fellow's back. And all confused and hesitating, Bobby said, "I was saving some of this good meat

for Fido." And his mother sternly said, "Bobby, don't you dare give that good meat to Fido. You eat it yourself and give Fido the left-overs."

After dinner Bobby put the plate of left-overs down before Fido and said, "Fido, I'm sorry—I meant to bring you an offering, but I can only give you a collection."

In this Sunday School where copper is not currency in the kingdom's work, they are learning to understand that it is not treating God fair if we first spend all we want to spend upon ourselves and then give Him a little out of what is left over, if there is any left over.

The "Copper-Is-Not-Currency" Sunday School believes that, first of all, we should set aside a definite part of all we have for God, and then faithfully use all that remains so as to please Him, remembering that both the Separated Portion *and all the rest* belong to God. That Sunday School does not take up a collection of copper—stray pennies (the very smallest coin we use); it makes God an offering of silver or of gold out of the Separated Portion which is set aside, first of all, before any money is used for anything else. Their giving starts where the Bible starts, "In the beginning, God."

If your Sunday School is still a copper school, why not turn it into a silver or greenback school? Bring God an offering of silver or of gold rather than giving Him only a copper collection. Instead of singing,

"Hear the pennies dropping,  
Listen while they fall,"

let us rather say,

"We bring our tenth to Jesus,  
We would give Him all."

the difference between  
an offering and a collection

TO TEACH—That God should not be carelessly given the cheaper gift (copper), but the thoughtful offering (silver and gold). The practice of the Separated Portion will give our giving the dignity and the chivalrousness which should mark our relationship to God. The Wise Men opened their treasures to presented Him their gifts—"gold and frankincense and myrrh."

(Ed. note: Many of our Sunday Schools, perhaps all of them, left the "copper standard" long ago. But the above article still brings out the truth for us that the Lord deserves our best, and our all.)

## HYMN

*Sing and memorize—"Take My Life and Let It Be"*

(Call particular attention to all stewardship implications in the hymn. See especially verse three.)

Take my life and let it be  
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.  
Take my moments and my days;  
Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands and let them  
move  
At the impulse of Thy love.  
Take my feet and let them be  
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my silver and my gold;  
Not a mite would I withhold.  
Take my intellect and use  
Every power as Thou shalt  
choose.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour  
At Thy feet its treasure store.  
Take myself, and I will be  
Ever, only, all for Thee.



## HYMNS . . .

to benefit from it. As a child grows, he will grow in his understanding of the hymns he has been taught. Perhaps 20 years from now a striking truth embodied in a hymn he learned in childhood will be understood and realized and experienced. Furthermore, children usually understand far more than we think they do.

Besides teaching hymns to our children from earliest years in our homes, hymns must be a vital part of our Christian education program in our congregations. Do not think of singing time only as a light time to help the students relax and have a break. Plan opening worship time and other singing times around hymns. (See brief example above.) Teach "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" and "Break Thou the Bread of Life." Sandwich a new hymn between old favorites. Start in the earliest years of Sunday School. The teen years are far too late to begin. You may find the Youth section of the *Concordia* a helpful place to start.

In the youngest years of Christian education, *Little Children Sing to God* and *A Child's Garden of Song* (Concordia Publishing House) offer great truths in simple hymns about God's Word, His care, His creation and giving of ourselves and means in His service. But do not hesitate to teach perhaps just one stanza of hymns from the *Concordia*. Use visual illustrations and seasons of the church year to arouse interest.

As children enter school age, build on what has been learned. Teach hymns with a spirit of conviction and confidence. Announce the hymn with enthusiasm. Show a genuine love for singing and praising God in music. Smile, or reflect the mood of the hymn in your face. Instruct loud sections, softer lines, faster or slower hymns. Teach small phrases when necessary and line upon line. Sing a line, then sound the pitch for the group to join. Use hymns written in different keys successively. Children with music training (or you can teach them) will enjoy identifying the key the hymn is written in. Does it have a major or minor sound? Let's sing this verse a capella and the other with accompaniment. (Good hymn

singing can be done without accompaniment entirely!)

Remember, you need not be a musician to teach hymns. Learn the hymn by rote yourself, if necessary. Have a pianist tape the tune only and then the accompaniment if this is helpful for your situation. A soft, non-solo voice can effectively teach children hymns. In fact, vocal soloists are encouraged to soften and lighten tone when teaching children so a child will not be tempted to force an unnatural tone. If children are unable to sing higher notes, they may be forcing a big, loud tone that is unhealthy for their voice development. Encourage a clean, relaxed, enjoyable tone.

In upper elementary and even in high school years we need to continue singing and teaching hymns. Create interest by learning hymns of famous authors and studying the environment in which a hymn was written. Study hymn groups by themes: praise, penitence, supplication, great missionary hymns, hymns of the suffering of Christ. Have a discussion of the value of certain hymns to today's society.

Be sure to include solid hymns of the Lutheran church in a children's or youth choir's repertoire. Encourage the use of instrumental skills in Christian circles by having an instrumental accompaniment or solo verse with the choir anthem. Use part singing on a hymn when possible. Always sing and play to God's glory.

If you have good community outreach even to unchurched in your Vacation Bible School, be sure to teach a hymn like "On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand." God only would know how mightily these truths could be used in lives when Christian influences are few.

A Christian day school provides an excellent environment for the teaching of large numbers of great hymns. In daily worship time a teacher can allot good time for singing the well-known hymns, studying their meaning, and also teaching many of the

The church is not here to exalt human wisdom or to propose human solutions. It is here to exalt Christ, who is the Alpha and the Omega. That is the reason why the church has endured through the ages.

Clarence E. Macartney

less known hymns which often have as much depth and teach great theological truths. Try a graded curriculum of the *Concordia*, teaching the new and reviewing the old each year.

We believe our congregational worship is of great central significance in our church life. Surely the vitality of singing in our Sunday worship service will grow as generations grow to adulthood. We will foster an appreciation of good music and quality hymns that will influence standards in worship for years to come.

The great hymns of our church are for young and old. Let us avail our church of this storehouse of Biblical truth and wisdom. Let us begin with our children.

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"Remember, you need not be a musician to teach hymns."

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# editorials

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## PARISH EDUCATION

There are many things in life one would like to do. A person may be attracted to several vocational fields. And then there may be many areas of interest beyond them to which one feels drawn.

But we learn early in life that we have to specialize and narrow our interests to one or two things as far as vocation or job goes and to a handful of outside interests. All that we might like to do beyond that must be left untouched.

It has been pointed out that one profession in particular allows a person to influence people who will go into many other professions and areas of work and that profession is teaching. Someone else will write the book the teacher would like to have written. Someone else will paint the picture, or climb the mountain, or discover the cure for cancer, but the teacher has laid his imprint on the mind and spirit of the student.

Now those words may pertain especially to the full-time teacher, but they do have something to say to the volunteer teacher in Sunday School and other teaching situations in the church. For those teachers, too, are laying a foundation and making an impact on young malleable lives.

That gives the work of church teaching new meaning. Parish education has the added dimension, too, of dealing with eternal, spiritual values. Children, young people, adults must constantly be faced with Christ's claim upon them. It is the teacher who is to do this and by the example of his or her life reveal what the walk with Jesus can mean.

Sunday School teaching is not a job which must be done to keep up a tradition and everyone should take a turn at it. It is Christ's work. The molding of young lives is at stake. Oh, it may at times be tedious work. Results may not be noticeable. But the teacher is handling God's Word. The Holy Spirit is present. A mark is being made.

Please put new heart into your work, teachers. Pray the Lord to help you. Go on to better things in your task.

Congregational members, support the parish education of your church. Tell your Christian education staff that you are standing with them. When did you last do something as a congregation to show your appreciation to them?

Today we present a number of brief editorials related to the recent Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations.

## BUDGET ANALYSIS COMMITTEE

To assure some continuity in the Budget Analysis Committee, the terms will now be for three years. In making the changeover from one- to three-year terms,

three men were elected for three years, two for two years and one for one year.

To our knowledge, this is the first time that a conference committee has had membership beyond one year. One wonders, is this permissible or does this change make the BAC a committee of the Association? If it becomes a standing committee of the Association does that change the character of it from its original purpose? We are only asking questions.

If the BAC remains a conference committee some further decisions will still have to be made. Will a person be entitled to two full consecutive terms as on other boards and committees? Perhaps not, since this is an annual conference committee. And a six-year span on the BAC seems entirely out of line with what was the original intention in setting up the Committee in the first place, as we understood it.

If terms are limited to one, then can those elected this year to one or two years serve no more than that?

Further, we think the BAC should share more information with the conference about its thoughts about the budgets presented to it, the minimum goals they recommend and the giving patterns of the Association. We need more of this sort of thing, although the latter point is one on which the Stewardship Board might well do more study.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE

It was said last time that the delegates to the 1983 Annual Conference were in a nominating mood. For instance, there was no problem in getting 41 candidates for the 11 positions open on the Nominating Committee for 1984.

Please understand, nothing against individuals is intended, but a few of the nominations were for people who are only now moving into the districts which they would represent next summer if elected. Those persons who were elected will know a lot more about the personnel of their new districts by next year, but it doesn't seem the wisest to nominate someone to represent a district or for the conference to elect someone who is so new to it. It's something like electing a very new member of the congregation to the church council.

Another thing, and here we tread on age-old tradition, is our present practice the best one, of permitting a person from one district to nominate someone from another district for the nominating committee? The election is by the whole conference.

Other ways of doing it would be a) to hold district caucuses at the conference for the purpose of placing persons in nomination for the committee; hence, the nominations would be made by someone from the district involved, or b) calling for nominations from the conference floor as is done now, but allowing only members of a district to place persons in nomination for that district.

It would probably not be necessary to amend the

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## EDITORIALS . . .

document "Order of Business for the Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations" (see Annual Report, 1967). That says nothing about how nominations are to be made except that it is assumed that they will be made by delegates to an annual conference.

It is at least implied in the above document that lay members of the nominating committee be in the majority. (At the time there were seven districts in the church four of the members were to be laity.) Next year six of the 11 members will be pastors.

Another stipulation is that no one should serve more than two consecutive years. We don't think that means a person can never serve more than two years, but only two years in a row at a time.

### MORE ON ELECTIONS

One delegate brought up the matter of mixing up names on prepared ballots to insure greater fairness. The ballots for corporation members are likely the chief concern here. His contention was that the incumbents are usually listed first and the first names on a ballot usually receive more votes than those further down the line.

We don't know the statistical data on these possibilities, but we suppose the upper names do get more votes. On the Schools Corporation ballot this year, seven of the top ten people, all incumbents, were re-elected, and three new members from the bottom ten.

Actually, it seems good if incumbent corporation members get a little help because there shouldn't be too much turnover on the corporation. It should be a corps of people who get to have an intimate knowledge of the schools and missions, as the case may be, and who then become the candidates for the board (committee) memberships as time goes on.

Present board or committee members who are up for corporation membership must be re-elected to the corporation in order to retain their board membership. In recent years, because some board memberships have been terminated rather unceremoniously in this way, the attention of the conference has been called to those who are board members and are up for corporation re-election. This year, perhaps for the first time, it was indicated on the ballots which board or committee members needed re-

election to the corporation. So that makes it very clear, but is that an unfair advantage?

It has always been our hope that conference delegates would know who hold board and committee memberships when they come to conference and will retain those they want in office and vote against those they want to replace. But we would hope not to turn someone out simply because delegates didn't know that person was in office in the first place.

One more point could be made while we are at it. A certain number of people are corporation members who are employees of the schools or missions. Is it good or wise? We're not sure. Personally, we were in that situation once ourselves.

We beg your indulgence, one more thing. Some people feel that no one should serve on more than one corporation at a time. We have no strong feeling on the question, but simply raise it because it is an issue to some.

### A NEW BUILDING

The Annual Conference asked a Facilities Committee to study the need and costs of a new building on the Bible school campus and report to next year's conference.

This resolution comes at a time when advance registration for the coming school year is behind last year's pace. If that situation continues, and following the graduation of a large senior class, enrollment at Association Free Lutheran Bible School may slack off a little from recent years. Then the question becomes, is the need for a new building that great right now?

All the projections we hear are that student high school population will be on the down side these next years. That means less graduates and less people to draw from for a Bible school, too.

However, we aren't limited to the 18-20 year olds. That's one thing. Another is that if more non-Association Lutheran youth can be invited to share the AFLBS experience, there is a large reservoir from which to draw.

So it isn't necessary to "hunker down" even though the statistics don't look all that good for the immediate future. It is possible to build for the future anyway.

These are things we have to think about and pray about.

## I Am Jesus' Little Lamb

I am Jesus' little lamb,  
Therefore glad at heart I am;  
Jesus loves me, Jesus knows me,  
All that's good and fair He shows me,  
Tends me ev'ry day the same,  
Even calls me by my name.

Should not I be glad all day,  
In this blessed fold to stay,  
By this holy Shepherd tended,  
Whose kind arms, when life is ended,  
Bear me to the world of light?  
Yes, O yes, my lot is bright.

Henrietta Louise Van Hayn



16. The following verses tell of God's promises to the meek. Let us read them.

Psalms 22:26 \_\_\_\_\_  
25:9 \_\_\_\_\_  
37:11 \_\_\_\_\_  
147:6 \_\_\_\_\_  
149:4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Isaiah 11:4 \_\_\_\_\_  
29:19 \_\_\_\_\_  
Matthew 5:5 \_\_\_\_\_

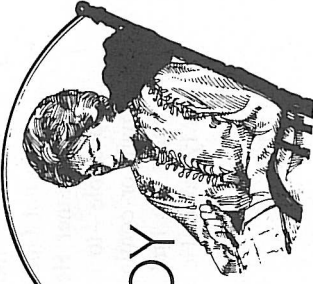
17. What are the benefits of gentleness and meekness? \_\_\_\_\_

18. How would you define gentleness in your own words? Is there someone that you know who personifies gentleness in its fullest? Are you willing to allow this threefold fruit of the Spirit to be a living part of your character? If so, what may it involve as far as your time, energies, talents and priorities are concerned? Who has set the greatest examples of humility, meekness and gentleness for us? \_\_\_\_\_  
Describe it. Philipians 2:1-11. \_\_\_\_\_

Hymn Suggestion: "Gentle Shepherd"

September, 1983

## WMF BIBLE STUDY



### FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

#### Gentleness

Galatians 5:22-23

If available, let someone read the definition of gentleness in *Unger's Bible Dictionary*.

1. What do the following verses tell us about God's divine gentleness?  
Psalms 18:35, Isaiah 40:11, Isaiah 43:3 \_\_\_\_\_

2. What two qualities must be present in a person's life to produce gentleness? Isaiah 40:11, 42:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Before there can be any fruit in our lives we must have accepted Christ's wonderful gift of salvation as our own.

3. Let us read the following verses which tell of (a) Christ's meekness: Isaiah 53:2,7; Matthew 11:29, 26:52; II Corinthians 10:1; I Peter 2:23 (b) Christ's humility: John 13:2-16 (c) Christ's gentleness: Mark 10:13-16.

4. What are we exhorted to seek, in Zephaniah 2:3; to put on, in Colossians 3:12? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What do we find is precious in God's sight, in I Peter 3:4? \_\_\_\_\_  
It is not God's will for us to be proud and seek the applause of the world. Rather He has chosen and appointed us to be as much like Him as possible—to bear the fruit of His own character—and have that fruit remain or continue in us. When we find this difficult, let us claim the promise we find in John 15:16: "Whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He will give it you."

6. a. What do we find to be a mark of meekness in Luke 6:29? \_\_\_\_\_

If a member of the group has W. Phillip Keller's book, *A Gardener Looks at the Fruits of the Spirit*, descriptions of gentleness in it could be read.

b. What kind of spirit is manifested in the following verses, and to whom? I Kings 19:2, Luke 4:29, Acts 5:33 \_\_\_\_\_

c. What kind of spirit is manifested in the following verses, and to whom? II Chronicles 16:10, 18:26, Mark 6:19, Luke 9:54 \_\_\_\_\_

7. What should our attitude as Christians be to the perverse and overbearing, according to I Peter 2:18? \_\_\_\_\_

8. I Timothy 6:11 emphasizes all the characteristics that we who love Christ should have. What are they? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What should our attitude be as we help restore sinners to Christ? Galatians 6:1 \_\_\_\_\_

10. Let us look at some examples of the gentleness of man to others. Luke 10:30-35, I Thessalonians 2:7, James 3:17 \_\_\_\_\_

11. In I Peter 3:15 we are admonished to live godly before all men but how are we to be ready to give an answer to all men? \_\_\_\_\_

12. What quality is essential in teaching? II Timothy 2:24-25, Titus 3:2 - \_\_\_\_\_

13. How are we to receive the Word of God? James 1:21 \_\_\_\_\_

14. What does the gentleness of God do for us, in II Samuel 22:36? \_\_\_\_\_

15. Let us look at the following examples of meekness.

Moses—Numbers 12:3 \_\_\_\_\_

David—II Samuel 16:9-11 \_\_\_\_\_

Jeremiah—Jeremiah 26:14 \_\_\_\_\_

Stephen—Acts 7:60 \_\_\_\_\_

Paul—II Timothy 4:16 \_\_\_\_\_

# WMF Convention Report

The 21st Women's Missionary Federation Annual Convention was held at the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis., June 15-16, with the women from area churches assisting.

The day opened with Mrs. Eugene Enderlein leading the prayer session. 206 ladies were registered the day of the convention on June 15. A large number also attended the ladies breakfast Thursday morning, and the festival service sponsored by the WMF on Thursday evening.

There was much good music, including the Dietsche family singing and playing, at all sessions.

Mrs. Robert Dietsche gave the Bible study on Wednesday, using the theme verse for the conference from Isaiah 30:15b: "In returning . . . quietness, confidence, strength."

The theme song was "Victory in Jesus."

The business session was led by the president, Mrs. Grace Syverson. She gave her annual report. (We hope someone from your group will read it to your aid, also the resolutions that were acted on.) The treasurer's report was read with thanksgiving to God for His bountiful supply and all sang "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow." The budget for the year was \$57,000.00 and \$76,801.51 was



Mrs. Oscar Folden speaking at the afternoon session.

Photos by S. Hjermstad

received. There is much work to be done and we need to press on.

The following new officers were elected by ballot: Mrs. Robert Lofthus of McVile, N. Dak., second vice-president; and Mrs. Gerald Mundfrom of Osceola, Wis., was elected treasurer. Mrs. Melvin Walla of Fergus Falls, Minn., was appointed secretary by the board to fill the unexpired term of Mrs. Kenneth L. Anderson, who has accepted the job as secretary to Pastor R. Snipstead.

A beautiful memorial service was conducted by Mrs. Esther Larson, with each district president or a representative taking part.

The morning offering was given to the General Fund of the WMF and amounted to \$2,477.50.

A delicious luncheon was served by the staff at the ARC.

The afternoon session was opened with Mrs. Kenneth Moland leading a singspiration. Devotions and musical

numbers were given. A group of ladies from Cumberland, Wis., sang.

The secretary's report was read and approved as read. The 1984-85 budget was read and approved, the total being \$65,000.00. The ladies will receive the itemized calendars in the fall packets.

The nominating committee for 1984 is: Mrs. Arlo Kneeland, Summit, S. Dak.; Mrs. Mike McCarlson, Webster, S. Dak.; and Mrs. Howard Kjos, Roslyn, S. Dak.

The resolutions committee for 1984-85 is: Mrs. Art Arneson, Spicer, Minn.; Mrs. Trygve Dahle, Spicer, Minn.; and Mrs. Gordon Grage, Brandon, Minn.

Mrs. Oscar Folden of Minot, N. Dak., was afternoon speaker. She showed slides and told of her recent trips into China, where she visited friends and saw firsthand the conditions there. She asked our prayers for them, especially the Christians.

◇



Mrs. Richard Shauland, Marquette, Mich.



Mrs. Francis Monseth, Mpls., and Mrs. Fritjof Monseth, Fergus Falls, Minn.





Mrs. Michael Brandt, Amery, Wis.



Mrs. Olive Willand, Ferndale, Wash.

## WMF . . .

The Thursday breakfast was well attended. Letters were read from the missionaries on the field and Priscilla Wold, presently on furlough with her parents. Missionary David Abel brought the message on the theme, "Doing all things for the sake of the Gospel." He challenged us to identify with those around us, always with the purpose of winning them for Christ.

The closing festival service was Thursday evening. This was shared with the whole church conference. The "Amery Belles" provided a prelude of beautiful hymns and also played two numbers during the program.

The new officers were installed by Rev. Snipstead, and the retiring officers and the year's Bible study writer were presented with pins and gifts from the WMF.

Missionary Abel was the evening speaker, using Acts 17:6-34 as his text, and challenging us to declare the full counsel of God that there be no "Unknown Gods." The world should be able to say, "That person knows the true God." The meeting closed with the singing of "O Zion Haste, Thy Mission High Fulfilling" and the benediction was pronounced by Pastor Snipstead.

—Mrs. Melvin Walla, Secretary

## NO AMBASSADOR AUGUST 16

Following longstanding custom, there will be no second issue of the *Ambassador* in August. But this year there will be a third one, dated the 30th. So that does become a second one, only it will appear two weeks later, or four weeks after this one.

We trust that you are having a good summer. The Lord bless your coming in and your going out.

When we meet again, by God's grace, we will be on the edge of the fall activities. This fall we will be having special emphasis on the Reformation and the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's birth in the *Ambassador*. Our Seminary will be providing some of the material for this. Watch for it.

Do you have something you could share in our Christmas issue this year? Some original poem, some story you've written about Christmas, some reminiscence about a Christmas in your life that stands out for a special reason? If so, we'd like to hear from you. Such contributions are needed by Nov. 12. We can't guarantee their use, but we'll try.

Again, the Lord bless you in the continuation of this summer.

The Editor

## CORRECTION

The name of Pastor Gerard D. Blais, Fall River, Mass., was incorrectly spelled in both the May 24 and June 7 issues of the *Ambassador*. We are sorry. The correct spelling is given above.

Four of the newer members of Medicine Lake Lutheran Church Cradle roll. Pictured L to R: Mrs. John Schlenk and David, Mrs. Eugene Murphy and Allison, Mrs. Saad Boktor and Eva and Mrs. Francis Guertin and grandson Matthew.

## Medicine Lake Cradle Roll

"What's A Promise?" was the theme of the spring Cradle Roll program held at Medicine Lake Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota, on Saturday, May 14. The morning's events included devotions for the children by Sunday school teacher Luisa Sikkink, devotions for mothers by Mrs. John Schlenk and devotions for grandmothers by Mrs. Amos Dyrud.

Association Free Lutheran Bible School students Sue Beebe, Sue Borck and Hoda Boktor presented a puppet show centered around the biblical account of Noah's Ark and God's promise to us as symbolized by the rainbow. Emphasis was placed on God's faithfulness in keeping His scriptural promises to us and on our honoring the promises we make.

The children participated in a game of "Musical Carpet," art activities and lunch while their mothers shared an opportunity to become better acquainted.

Recognition was given the nine children joining the Cradle Roll during the past year and a half and the twelve "graduates." Medicine Lake Lutheran Church currently has twenty-one children on its Cradle Roll.



Four of the "graduates" in attendance at the Medicine Lake Lutheran Cradle Roll program L. to R: Nicholas Dyrud, Jessica Dyrud, Naomi Moland and Rhoda Monseth.



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# news of the churches

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## Stacy, Minn.

The mortgage on Sunnyside Lutheran Church, Stacy, Minn., was burned at a service on Sunday, June 12. Rev. R. Snipstead, president of the AFLC, was present for the occasion and preached the sermon. The local pastor is Rev. Wendell Johnson.

## Grafton, N. Dak.

Dedication ceremonies were held recently for two projects at Bethel Lutheran Church, Grafton, N. Dak., Rodger Olson, pastor. Rev. R. Snipstead, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, officiated at the dedication of the new Rodger's electronic church organ and the exterior bricking of the church. The organ was installed in May, 1982, and the bricking was completed in the fall of the same year.

Mrs. John Presteng, Mrs. Marilynn Moe and Mrs. David Hensrud served on the organ committee. Mr. Lloyd Collins, a professional organist from Moorhead, Minn., presented a recital of sacred music for the dedication concert. —Corr.

## Middle River, Minn.

Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Ringbo, Middle River, Minn., had its first Father-Son banquet on June 17. There were about 65 people in attendance. After the supper everyone enjoyed a program by the Merle Lorensen family of Strathcona, Minn..

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## Personalities

**Rev. Raynard Huglen**, Newfolden, Minn., terminated his service in Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Greenbush, Minn., as of July 1, but he continues to serve Telemarken Lutheran Church, Goodridge, Minn. He has been replaced at Bethlehem by **Pastor Wm. Goodman**, Bemidji, Minn., who also serves Hegland Lutheran Church, Strandquist, Minn.

## Sunburg, Minn.

A Family Luther League was recently started at Sunburg Lutheran Church, Sunburg, Minn.. Rev. Carl Hort is the pastor.

Members meet once a month in the parish hall. A business meeting is held and afterwards we have a guest speaker, sing-along, games or Bible quizzes. Then a small lunch is served with two families as hosts at each meeting.

Approximately 30 are in attendance at each meeting.

Serving as officers for the first year are Kevin Hamborg, president; Mike Thonvold, vice-president; Kristi Medalen, secretary; and Mary Hamborg, treasurer.

Some things the Luther League has done are: roller skating party, bowling party, activity day with potluck dinner, bought green turf for steps on the parish hall, special program for mothers at the Mother's Day meeting, program for the residents of a nearby nursing home, and special program for fathers at the Father's Day meeting.

—Debie Hamborg

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**The saint who has sought to gain salvation through his own self-sanctification must perceive how behind his desire to effect it there lies concealed the pride of self-esteem, which Luther has called the "queen of sins."**

**Adolf Koberle, *The Quest for Holiness*, Augsburg Publishing House**

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**AFLC Family Camp**  
Association Retreat Center



## Newfolden, Minn.

Westaker Lutheran Church, Newfolden, Minnesota, had a membership Sunday recently. Thirteen were received into membership at the Sunday morning worship service. Immediately following the morning activities a fellowship dinner was served and a short program presented.

On March 25, Mrs. Selma Fisher also was received into membership.

Shown on the picture are: back row, Edward Nelson, Shawn Underdahl, Mrs. Debra Peterson and Mary Ellen Flaten. Front row, Yvonne and Elton Underdahl, Pastor Larry Haagenson, and Jennifer and Emory Flaten with daughters Gretchen and Ingrid. (Not pictured are Synceri Underdahl and James and Ruth Tostrup.)

## Minneapolis District Camp

AFLC evangelist Kenneth Pentti was the evening speaker at the Minneapolis District Youth Bible Camp at the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis., June 26-July 1. The Bible teacher was Pastor Yeddo Gottel of Morgan Avenue Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn.. Pastor Wendell Johnson, Stacy, Minn., served as dean.

## SW Central Minn. Camp

Faith Haven Lodge, Battle Lake, Minn., was the site of the Southwest Central Minnesota Youth Bible Camp, July 10-15. The Bible teacher was Rev. Gordon Grage, Brandon, Minn. Rev. Sterling Johnson, evangelist for the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement, was the evening speaker. Rev. Dennis Gray, Spicer, Minn., was the dean.

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**August 8-14**  
**Osceola, Wis.**

## A PLACE OF REFUGE

The warm days of summer have finally come to North Dakota. It's good to enjoy the trees, the flowers, the fields and gardens. Take time to gaze upon God's creation.

Discouragement. Where does it come from? Sometimes it feels like a dry barren wind off a lonely desert. And something inside us begins to wilt. What is it about discouragement that strips our lives of joy and leaves us feeling vulnerable and exposed?

One reason is because we don't have a refuge. Shelters are hard to come by out here in western North Dakota. We all need a shelter to pull into when we feel weather-worn by life. David writes of this in Psalm 31:1, 2: "I will exalt You, O Lord, for You lifted me out of the depths and did not let my enemies gloat over me; O Lord my God, I called to You for help and You healed me."

Failing in strength and wounded in spirit, David tells us of his need of a protective place, a place of safety, a refuge. He tells us his refuge is the Almighty God. *Why do we need a refuge? First*, because we are in distress and sorrow follows us (Ps. 31:9, 10). There is weeping. There are the heavy weights of sorrow. There is depression. That's why we need a refuge. *Second*, because we are sinful and guilt accuses us (Ps. 31:10b). Embarrassment. Failures. "It's my fault" are hard words to confess. We are haunted by the pain of guilt. That is why we need a refuge! *Third*, because of adversaries (Ps. 31:11-13). David had been misunderstood and it hurt him. Tortured by the whisperings of others, we feel wounded and bleeding. Gossip drives us to despair.

Hurt people need a refuge. A place to hide and heal. Why not share David's shelter: "My Strength, Mighty Rock, Fortress, Stronghold, and High Tower." David's refuge never failed. He is a very present help to you.

Pastor Allen Monson  
Tioga, (N. Dak.) Parish News

## THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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Second-class postage  
paid at Minneapolis, Minn.



Martin Luther

Martin Luther:  
500 years

### on home training . . .

With resistless energy Luther therefore impressed upon parents their obligation to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He insisted upon home-training. His writings show that he had a clear conception of the duties of parents towards their children. He admonishes them to honor holy wedlock as a divine institution and to look upon their children as precious gifts of God, as lovely fruits of marriage, strengthening the bond of love. He tells them that God has entrusted the children He has given them to their parental care, and urges them on, by adducing all possible reasons, to do their duty for the benefit of the individual, for the Church, and for the commonwealth. . . . It is to be sadly deplored that we all live as though God had given us children merely for our pleasure or amusement, and servants that we should employ them like a cow or an ass, for work only, or as though all we

were to do with those who are subject to our authority were to satisfy our wontonness, and that it need not concern us what they learn or how they live; and no one is willing to see that this is the command of the Supreme Majesty, who will most strictly call us to account and punish us for it."

W. C. Kohn

### on teaching . . .

And such education as he (Luther) demanded for the youth should not be given to boys only, but also to girls.

"I would have no one chosen for a preacher," he says, "who has not previously been a schoolteacher."

"For I know that next to the ministry it (office of schoolteacher) is the most useful, greatest and best; and I am not sure which of the two is to be preferred."

W. C. Kohn