

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

August 8, 1989



And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

Luke 2:52

LIGHT on the WAY

meditations on God's Word

Volume 27 Number 14

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

is published biweekly (except for the first issue of July and the second issue of August) by the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441.

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Subscriptions: \$10.00 per year.

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The Lutheran Ambassador
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

All communications concerning contents of this magazine should be addressed to: Rev. Raynard Huglen, Editor, Newfolden, Minn. 56738.

Second-class postage paid at Minneapolis, Minn., and additional mailing office.

USPS 588-620 ISSN 0746-3413

Postmaster: Send address changes to *The Lutheran Ambassador*, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441.

Studies in I Peter

Peter's epistle of comfort to the believers begins (1:1, 2) with a clear statement that the Church, scattered and alien, exists because it is created by God. The believers are the elect, chosen according to the foreknowledge of God, chosen by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, and chosen into a new covenant of obedience (faith) and sprinkling of blood not of bulls and goats, but the once-for-all blood of Jesus Christ (note Exodus 24:7, 8).

I Peter 1:3-9

As Peter continues his word of encouragement to the Church, he focuses the attention of the reader upon God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Church is described as those who have been born again; the "begetter" is God Himself. Thankfully, this is so because elsewhere the Word of God declares that every person according to his own nature is spiritually dead. The begetting to new life is the work of God through the Gospel and the Sacraments, whereby He not only calls us to faith but also creates the faith which He desires.

The result of the new birth is a living hope, which Peter describes as an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled and unfading. The word "hope" does not refer to a vague uncertainty. Rather, hope is a certainty concerning the future; it is certain because the God who has spoken concerning the future is always faithful and does not lie. The hope is a living hope, granted by the One who died and who then arose from death to live evermore. The certainty of the hope is described in verse 4 as an inheritance imperishable and undefiled and unfading. Peter is joyfully proclaiming Gospel, as he confidently declares that the inheritance has been "reserved in heaven for you." The verb "reserved" indicates a completed work with lasting results. This is no uncertain promise, but a powerful proclamation that God through Christ has truly reserved this inheritance "for you."

The "you" who are the blessed

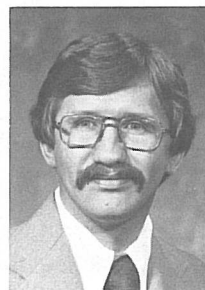
A living hope

recipients of the inheritance are the ones who have been born again. Peter emphasizes this in verse 5, where he gives a mighty word of comfort to the child of God. The inheritance is reserved for you "who are continually being protected by the power of God."

This power of God is His gracious power — active through the Word and the Sacraments — whereby He preserves you unto salvation. Peter says you are being protected by the power of God "through faith." This is not without faith or apart from faith, but is through faith according to the plan and order of God. Faith is not the *cause* of protection, however; rather, faith is the Spirit-wrought "empty hand" that appropriates to oneself God's gift of protection and preservation. Thus Peter directs our hearts and minds to God, who through Jesus Christ has provided all that we need for life eternal.

In verses 6-9, Peter reminds the believer that this present life is characterized by trials. Trials are never fun, but they are only "a little while," and the end result of trials is a tested faith that results in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

In light of the trials which the believer does endure, Peter's focus in verses 1-6 becomes especially delightful. In our trials we are especially made conscious of our weakness and failure. Thus the great comfort of the Gospel hope: it is God Who has chosen us in Christ, it is God Who has caused us to be born again, it is God Who has reserved the inheritance and Who protects us. Herein we rejoice; herein we face our trials with courage and hope.



I hope we sing at Bible School today! Singing is my favorite!" the four-year-old exclaimed with shining eyes. *Exuberance...* I thought to myself. That's one of the most delightful ingredients of childhood.

Standing tall, eagerly pounding little fists together with imaginary hammer blows, the preschoolers sang out joyously, "The wise man built his house upon a rock!" *Enthusiasm...* I observed. Certainly, it is wonderful to see the uninhibited enthusiasm of children.

She looked up at me with a worried furrow across her brow. "When they buried Jesus, did He get sand in His eyes?"

"No," I replied, "I'm so happy to tell you that His friends laid Him tenderly in a cave and didn't bury Him in the ground."

"Yippee!!" she responded in relief. "Then He came alive again and walked right out!"

Curiosity... I reflected. How thrilling it is to provide answers for a little child's searching questions.

Teaching children is a great privilege. No task on earth can equal the privilege of telling others about our Lord Jesus Christ; most assuredly the sweetest task of all is bringing a child to Jesus and providing daily nurture of that little one's precious faith.

I often tell my Christian Education classes at AFLBS that the greatest task of teaching is done by *parents*. Day by day they communicate the deepest meanings of life by their own example. Mishaps and problems can create opportunities to demonstrate love and better understanding. By the way they handle their child, parents remove fears and teach discipline. Parents can know their child's heart. Parents need to take time to listen and to talk over questions, problems, hopes and dreams. Beginning in the early years, it is parents who have daily opportunities to read Bible stories, teach little ones to pray and especially to look to Jesus for all things, to "trust and obey."

Dr. Oscar E. Feucht, former secretary of adult education for the Board of Parish Education of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, states, "Within the family, the child learns physical skills, customs, a language, basic house-keeping and standards of conduct that fit him for society. He also learns religion or irreligion.

The material on these next four pages has been supplied by the Department of Parish Education of the AFLC. The August issue of the *Ambassador* is traditionally a Parish Ed issue.

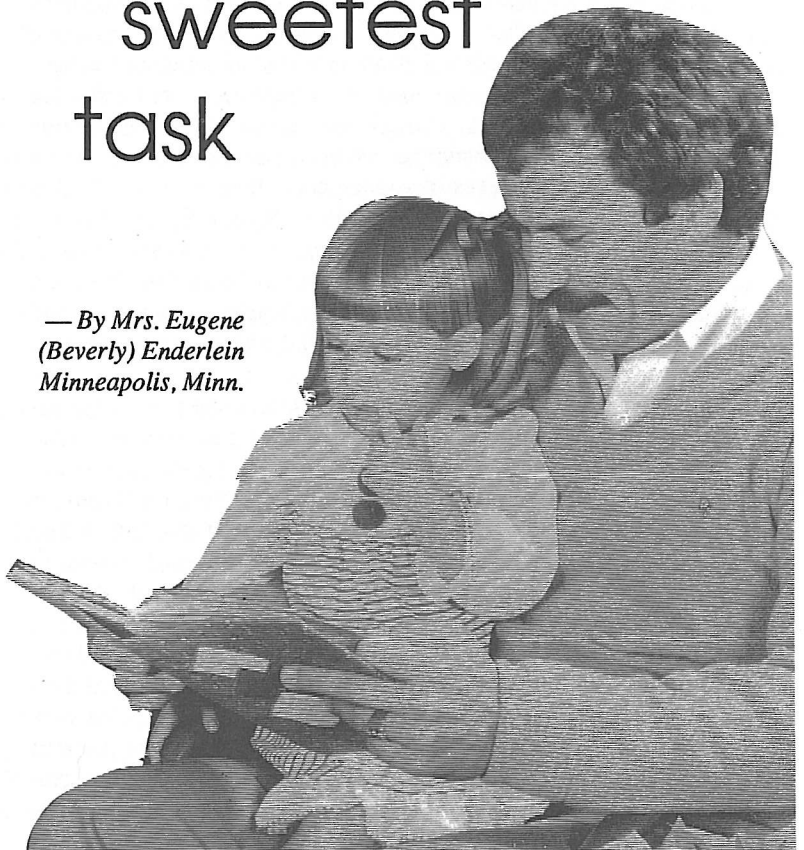
In this realm there is no neutrality. The decline of family worship and Bible reading in the home is an irreplaceable loss. The absence of personal and family worship further secularizes the home. The welfare of society and the stability of the family are so interrelated that a decline in one almost always involves a decline in the other."

Truly, the *family* is the primary place of Christian nurture. The New Testament summarizes the task of Christian teaching in one comprehensive term: Christian nurture. The word nurture in Ephesians 6:4 is the Greek word *paideia*, sometimes translated "discipline" or "instruction." The passing on of the Christian faith is to take place in all the interactions of life in the family. ◇

"...the greatest task of teaching is done by parents."

Teaching children Life's sweetest task

— By Mrs. Eugene
(Beverly) Enderlein
Minneapolis, Minn.



“...the concept
that Luther
made so clear
when he
stated,
‘We are little
Christs’.”

Timothy is an outstanding example of the impact that both parents and grandparents can have upon children. In II Timothy 1:5, Paul indicates that the vital faith of both mother and grandmother had been communicated to Timothy. Parents’ and grandparents’ roles are crucial!

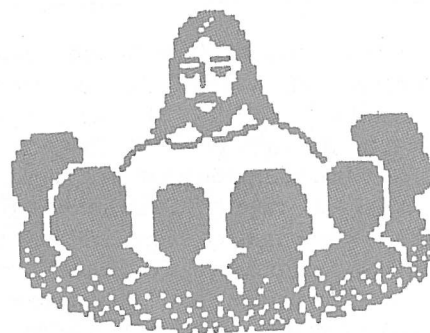
How then does the local congregation fit into God’s plan of providing this vital nurture?

“The Christian Church and the Christian home as institutions are closely bound together. They are like Siamese twins,” observes Samuel Hamilton, author of *Religion and Life*; “if you cut them apart you may sever an artery of life and cause one or both to die. The Church cannot function as she should in a disordered world unless she employs the home as her main reliance in Christian nurture. And I feel certain that the family cannot be a Christian family or a happy family unless it stays in the circulation of those spiritual influences of which the Church is the great custodian.”

Just think of the tremendous power of influence that the local congregation holds! The pastor, Sunday School teachers, youth leaders, choir director, as well as each “ordinary” Christian within the church, have the opportunity of being living textbooks. I often treasure in my own heart the concept that Luther made so clear when he stated, “We are little Christs.” Each one of us has the rare privilege of being an example to young people of a true lover of the Lord Jesus Christ. Though we are keenly aware of our shortcomings, we each can demonstrate before the eyes of young people how the grace of God is operative in our lives. By abiding in Jesus day by day, we have the power to be victorious over willful sin. By abiding in Jesus, we allow the Holy Spirit to bear His fruit in our own lives and to enable us to show this fruit to the young ones around us.

Parents and teachers sense the great responsibility of teaching these young children and often this seems frightening. Our encouragement comes from God’s Word: “We are laborers together with God” (I Corinthians 3:9). When we accept this responsibility of being a co-worker with God, teaching can be a rich and rewarding experience.

We must make it our priority that the children in our churches are taught sound Biblical doctrine. After all, everything is at stake! The worship of God, the honor given to His inerrant Word, the continuation of the Church on earth — these all depend upon a new generation being rightly taught the Word of God.



One of the greatest problems of the Sunday School is to develop the right attitude of the children to the holy things with which he is associated. This problem can be solved if the proper emphasis is placed upon certain fundamentals. And often the first impression a child receives will greatly influence the reverence he has for God’s house and God’s people. Reverence and worship will be strengthened by:

1. Order

If the room is disorganized, teachers and superintendent are unprepared and noisy, you can expect noisy and disrespectful actions from the children. Order is as contagious as disorder. An orderly, prepared Opening Chapel Time, a quiet atmosphere, and prepared, on-time teachers, superintendent, pianist and helpers will

Biblical doctrine may be taught in two ways: Indirectly and Directly.

“Sesame Street” is an example of the indirect approach in which children are motivated to learn because factual knowledge has been presented to them in a whimsical way in order to capture their interest and imagination. Many delightful books, skits and puppet skits, etc., are available in the Christian realm to capture the interest of children through fantasy, imaginary characters, colorful art, etc., before directing them to the Bible truth to be learned.

Reading to children is an important avenue of indirect teaching. Many life-building values come from the great children’s books of today and yesteryear, often supporting the Christian doctrines which we teach. (*Honey for a Child’s Heart* by Gladys Hunt is an excellent resource to use.)

Sharing experiences is a unique means of teaching doctrine. A walk in the woods provides a perfect opportunity for parent or teacher to discuss the wonder of God’s beautiful creation! A ride in the car can be transformed into a treasured experience by talking over life’s perplexi-

Opening Chapel Time

develop attitudes of respect, reverence and worship in the children of the Sunday School.

2. Regularity

"A child's respect for God's house is in proportion to that degree of regularity with which he has attended. The importance of the church and its related ministries is certain to suffer in his eyes just as soon as he detects any carelessness or indifference on the part of adults toward his attendance and punctuality" (*Understanding Children and Youth*). The attitude of parents and teachers to lesson preparation, punctuality, growth in Christ and the spiritual welfare of the child may influence that child for eternity.

Most Opening Chapel Time services in Sunday School contain these parts:

Prelude or Call to Worship

Hymn — A quiet hymn should be used to call the children to attention. The opening hymn might be changed occasionally to correspond with a particular theme or the season of the year. It is suggested that children sit in their class groups with their teachers during the Opening Chapel Time.

Bible Reading and Prayer — Can also be a responsive reading followed by prayer or the Lord's Prayer.

Pledges — American Flag, Christian Flag, Bible

Welcome

Birthday Offering — Usually once a month Offerings

Special Observance — A meditation, story (using visuals), object lesson, missions, etc.

Singing

Announcements — It is helpful to send notes home listing special events and inviting the parents to attend with their children.

The Ten Commandments and The Apostle's Creed — Recite in unison.

Closing Prayer.

Dismiss students to their classes in a quiet and orderly manner.

"God's Word — The Bible" and "Remember" (Lessons for use during Lent or Opening Chapel Time) written by Kathi Rokke for Opening Chapel Time services are available upon request from the Parish Education office in Minneapolis, Minn.

ties and sharing God's goodness and faithfulness. Watch for teachable moments!

Conversation has been wisely named a "pipeline between your mind and the mind and heart of your child" by Dr. V. Gilbert Beers. How can a parent or teacher know a child thoroughly without conversation? There is no other way to learn his innermost thoughts. Adults should take time to listen to children and to ask questions that will enable the child to tell why he thinks the way he does.

Christian songs are a delightful means of teaching doctrine to children. Important doctrinal concepts are fastened into children's minds as they sing Scripture songs and the great hymns of the Christian faith.

The direct form of teaching doctrine is the direct transmission of knowledge in a controlled situation. What are the vital tools for our task? Certainly, God's Word is our most important tool. We need to teach our children to love God's Word and to go to it for knowledge, wisdom, guidance, comfort, strength. Every teacher also needs good educational resources for the task of teaching Biblical doctrine. It is

always a delight to find educational books and manuals which uphold Biblical truth. Teachers should avail themselves of the rich sources available for making the task of teaching creative and challenging.

It is a great joy that our AFLC Board of Parish Education is in the midst of preparing Biblical tools for education. It behooves our congregations to support and encourage this tremendous task! Teachers need materials which they can use with confidence and our *Ambassador Sunday School Series* will meet that requirement.

Why is this task so important? As stated earlier, *everything is at stake!* When Jesus set the little child before Him to use as an example of perfect trust, He showed us how important children are to Him. They need to be to us also. Children are "next in line." They will carry the banner of Christian faith onward until Christ returns. All of our treasured values and beliefs need to be soundly transmitted to them.

Luther said, "If Christendom is to be helped, they must begin with the children." I agree!

"Sharing experiences is a unique means of teaching doctrine."

WHY CONFIRMATION?

And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, *confirming the souls* of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God' (Acts 14:21, 22 KJV).

The most important part of confirmation is not the ritual, but the instruction that precedes confirmation.

When an infant is brought before God for Baptism, the child is baptized into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, as commanded by Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20. That child is unaware of what takes place, but that child is "born again" in that act.

Baptism is a Sacrament. What is a Sacrament? "A sacrament is a holy ordinance made by God Himself, in which He gives and confirms His invisible grace through outward and visible means." Baptism is not what we do for God, but what He does for us. Through Baptism, God cleanses that child from inborn sin, and gives it eternal Life, as we read in Titus 3:5, "...according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." Read also Acts 2:38 and 22:16. There is no opposition from the child against God, so the Lord is able to accomplish His wonderful work and is able to give that child "unconscious life" in God.

After this comes the teaching, which should begin at home, continued in the Sunday School, and confirmation instruction. Through this instruction, a child must come into conscious life in God, so that it can give a clear account or testimony of what God began in Baptism and now has fulfilled through confession of sin and accepting Jesus as his personal Savior (I John 1:9). It is a real experience, to become conscious of sin, confess that sin unto

God and believe His promise, "and cleanse us from *all* unrighteousness."

Even if confirmation instruction and the rites of confirmation are abused by some pastors, it does not nullify its value. The vow in confirmation is nothing more or less than the vow taken in Baptism. Although it was received unconsciously in Baptism, now after instruction it can be repeated and taken consciously, and that brings peace and joy. Some refuse to take the

vow, but the confirmation vow has kept many a boy or girl from falling into sin openly. Even if that vow is broken, God has not broken His part and when a person returns to God in full confession of his sin, that sin is forgiven and the person is reinstated into fellowship with God. Baptism need never be repeated; God's work holds.

Pastor Trygve Dahle, 1891-1987

"Baptism need
never be repeated;
God's work holds."

We use *The Ten Commandments* and...

Teachers using the new 2nd grade books *The Ten Commandments* re-sponded to a survey with the following comments:

"I have taught Sunday School for 17 years and these are the best books I have ever used. This is my third year in the AFLC, before that in the ALC, and when our good books were disposed of I could not teach any more from the 'new modern' ones. Besides memorizing the Commandments and meanings, my class can recite all the books of the Old and New Testaments so when they find our lessons in the Bible they know where to go immediately. The class also memorizes the Bible verses in each lesson. There is such

eagerness to memorize at this age, I am amazed."

"The teacher's manual has been very helpful — especially like the Bible study and helps in teaching the hymn and personal applications of lessons."

"I taught this material to our 2nd and 3rd grade class. All the information and suggestions in the teacher's manual was very helpful."

"It is a great pleasure and honor to have the opportunity of teaching this material to the children."

"Your manual overview of each lesson has been most helpful — it is obviously the result of much prayer and love."

"The students really liked the colorful books and activities."



WMF Convention review

Two hundred and sixty-seven registered June 14, 1989, at Swain Hall on the campus of Minot State University, Minot, N. Dak.

The theme was "Go, Labor On," and the text was Psalm 126:5-6. "Go, Labor On" Spend and Be Spent," was the theme song. The program was led by WMF president, Mrs. Wendell Johnson. Mrs. Ted Berkas, Wallace, S. Dak., opened our day with a prayer service, stressing thanksgiving and praise. Organist was Mrs. Myron Anderson and pianist was Mrs. Dennis Jacobsen, both of Minot. Mrs. Don Olson, Fargo, N. Dak., was the song leader. Devotions were led by Mrs. Gerald Gettis, Vernon, B. C., Canada; Mrs. Rodney Stueland, Kenyon, Minn., and Mrs. Orville Hiepler,

Camarillo, Calif. the memorial service leader was Mrs. Bud Haugen, Snohomish, Wash. The morning Bible Study was given by Mrs. Amos Stolee, Kenyon, Minn. She emphasized first, the book of Psalms in an outpouring of the spirit of devotion to God. Second, she used Ps. 126:1-6, to encourage Go (intent) ...Labor (exert ones power)...On (going forward).

The afternoon message was given by Mrs. Paul Abel, Brazil. She spoke on how we are to be 'ready' – born again; 'set' – prepare, study Gods' Word and pray; 'go' – enter. We are all called to witness. She also included Mrs. John Abel, Brazil, and Mrs. Daniel Giles, Mexico, in sharing some of their daily experiences with us. Becky Abel, closed with singing "So



Miss Hildur Nordin, Minot, welcomed the WMF Convention.

Send I You." Joanna and Christina also sang.

Rev. Paul Abel gave the message at the Thursday evening Festival Service. He challenged us about obedience and to glorify God.

The special music was provided by Mrs. Steve Snipstead, Kalispell, Mont.; a ladies' choir from the Western N. Dak.-Eastern Mont. District; Rev. and Mrs. Steve Odegaard, Tioga, N.

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Mrs. Mae Swanson, Nogales, Ariz.



Mrs. Laurel Johnson, Stacy, Minn.



Mrs. Debbie Giles, Mexico

a parable of prayer

by Ruth Jesness Tweed
McHenry, N. Dak.

Anna has been a widow for ten years and lives alone in her house on an isolated farmstead. Neighbors doubted that she could make her way alone. Her life has been somewhat reclusive and she is almost totally deaf. For her there is no sound of voices, music or even the bark of her beloved dog. She cannot hear herself speak.

She was alone the day her husband had his fatal heart attack. There was only one way to get help. She dialed a neighbor's number, waited a few seconds and spoke. She heard no reply but knew that help would come.

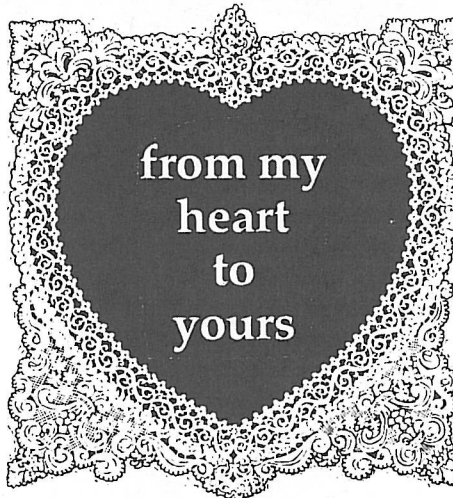
Since then she has freed herself from the confinement of her handicap by the use of the telephone. No — she can't make her way alone, but there are friends to help her, especially one who has become Anna's security.

Let's suppose she has an ordinary household problem — maybe a leaky pipe that needs fixing. She calls her friend, gives the message and hangs up, secure in the knowledge that in due time someone will come to help her.

Another day she may wish to make a shopping trip and invites her friend to accompany her. Because she needs an answer they have devised a system to get a reply. Anna speaks, hangs up and holds her hand over the phone. If she feels it ring the answer is "Yes". No reply means "Not today," an answer she must accept without question.

This involves faith and trust on Anna's part and complete reliability on her friend. Anna knows from experience that her friend will be there and cannot fret if there is no reply. Eventually she will know the reason.

I wonder if I would adapt as well. I'd worry — Is the phone really working? Did I dial the right number? Did my friend really answer? Will she bother? Ah — I of little faith!



Of course Anna needs to believe in her telephone. She says she feels the dial tone and the click when the receiver is picked up but her *trust* must be in the person who answers the phone.

As I think about Anna I realize that we are like her. We have handicaps and problems that we can't handle alone. Like Anna we have an instrument which enables us to call for help, comfort and companionship. We have only

to call but we don't have to wait for the dial tone nor worry that we will get a wrong number.

Like Anna we can speak out — even when we hear no answer. Like her we have a Friend who has promised to listen.

Anna's voice is not always clear. Not hearing, she often mispronounces words but her friend understands. Who says *our* prayers must be in perfect grammar and beautifully worded? Like Anna, we have Someone who knows and understands.

Anna's friend is not only there for her needs but she is her confidant. At least once a day Anna calls just to tell what she is doing. If a day goes by without a call the friend worries and checks on her to make sure there is no trouble.

If Anna's trust is remarkable, even greater is the faithfulness of a busy woman who has taken time to be a friend. This lady would be embarrassed to have her human relationship compared with the Divine one. She knows the greater Friend and has shared Him with Anna who has learned to love Him, too.

Can we say that the Lord still speaks in parables through His servants here on earth?

(This is a true story although Anna's name has been changed.)

REVIEW

Dak., vocal trio by Glorys Haakenson, Barbara Elmquist and Joanne Jorgenson, Tioga; Mr. Ron Nelson, Bottineau, N. Dak., and a beautiful violin duet by two local young ladies.

Our offerings were given to My Missionary for a Day and the WMF General Fund. A budget of \$82,500.00 was approved. The new president elected was Mrs. Lyndon Korhonen, Culbertson, Mont. Re-elected were treasurer, Mrs. Aini Myking and vice president, Mrs. Kenneth Rolf. Our

thanks go to Mrs. Laurel Johnson who has so faithfully and ably led us these past four years.

Thursday morning Ladies Breakfast was held at 7 a.m. in the Student Union at Minot State University. It was very well attended and a spirit of joy and friendship filled the room. Devotions were given by Loretta Grothe. She also brought greetings from the WMF in Brazil which she visited on the 25th Anniversary trip to Brazil in April. The executive board sang a very

special song. It was written and composed for this day by Laurel Johnson. Becky Abel spoke to us about compassion and action. Mae Swanson, Arizona, Ruby Abel and Debbie Giles also shared.

Thanks go to our hostesses from Bethel Free Lutheran, Minot, for all the help and work provided. We thank and praise God for His many blessings upon us. May we continue to be challenged each day to "Go, Labor On."

Carol Haugen, Secretary

CONFERENCE WRAP-UP

Now, some weeks after the close of the 27th Annual Conference, we shall comment on a number of matters pertaining to it. With the passage of a little time, the perspective may be better. We lead off with something about:

New Voting Procedure

At the Conference it was decided to adopt the so-called "ecclesiastical ballot" method of voting for the offices of president, vice-president and secretary. Together with that it was decided that the first ballot is a nominating ballot, that is, delegates may write the name of any eligible person they choose. The paring down of candidates begins after that unless someone has gotten 75% of the votes on the first ballot, which actually happened in the two times it was used at this year's Conference.

That was remarkable, that the vice-president and secretary were re-elected on first ballots in crowded fields. For the first 20 years of Association history men in those two offices never got past three years (one-year terms) in contests with one or two other candidates. Now they have reached five and four respectively.

While our personal preference was that this type of ballot, call it ecclesiastical or Roman, be used only in the case of the presidency when there is no incumbent, we can live with it. It does seem a little too much at times, though. Conceivably, the AFLC could have a succession of secretaries in one-year terms under the set-up we are adopting and there is some value in secretaries serving for several years.

A couple of other thoughts. To our knowledge, whenever a nominating ballot is used, and in the succeeding rounds until an officer has been chosen, the vote tallies are announced after each vote. That wasn't done at Minot. There could be argument both ways. Something to think about. The same holds true for the elections of board and permanent committee members under the new procedure adopted at the conference.

The other concern is this. Wouldn't it be good if this change in voting were incorporated into the *Rules for Work and/or The Order of Business for the Annual Conference*? Then we would all have the information where we could easily find it. There is some fine tuning and spelling out needed also before this change becomes permanent.

For our readers' information, the now three statements on elections of executive officers are printed elsewhere in this issue.

Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee plays a crucial role not only in an annual conference, but, logically, in the whole life of our church.

The regulation is that the majority of the Committee is to be made up of laymen. Yet we came away from the Conference in Minot with a seven to six majority of pastors. This shouldn't happen.

We know that membership could well shift the other way by the time of the 1990 conference in Bloomington, Minn., as substitutions are made out of necessity, but the lay majority rule ought to be clear at the conferences as well. It would be good if boundaries could be set as to the majority also, as a 12 to one majority could occur, although unlikely, and that wouldn't be good either.

New Congregations

The Conference passed two resolutions thanking God for new congregations.

Under No. 1, thanks was given for 11 new congregations on the congregational roster. Then under Committee No. 3, thanks was given for 11 "new" congregations, three of which were on the first list and eight not mentioned before. The latter are all Home Mission projects.

It's just a little confusing to have the congregations on the roster and to have others which are also "ours", but not on the roster. Perhaps the word "mission" could be used until the congregation has been accepted on the roster.

Financial Report

The financial report of the AFLC at this year's Conference set a record for brevity. It must have taken all of two or three minutes.

Some years ago time was taken to go through the report page by page, reading the receipt and expense totals and balances. That gave people a little more opportunity to see what was going on. Some delegates have had the Conference Reports a very short time before the oral report is given. Furthermore, while people trained in accounting and book-keeping can grasp a great deal in quick glances over pages of figures, others need more time to comprehend.

More time should be given to the financial report of the church.

Again this year the time spent on the Schools was very brief. To our recollection, there were no speakers on any of the resolutions pertaining to Schools.

That's nobody's fault in particular but one shared by us all. Such a vital area of our common work ought to produce some comments and questions.

Session Times

Afternoon sessions began at 1:30 this year. The morning sessions commenced at 8:30 and the scheduled noon recess was an hour and a quarter.

Longer session times are good if we make use of them. At Minot, all afternoon sessions closed short of five o'clock. Perhaps earlier starting times aren't needed for us.

An 8:30 start in the mornings seems difficult for those having breakfast meetings, such as the Missions Corporation. Let the Co-ordinating Committee know if there are problems.

For the first time in AFLC history, there was no Sunday afternoon service at Conference. We don't know if this is a new policy. The attendance at some Sunday afternoon ser-

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EXCERPTS FROM THE CONFERENCE REPORTS

Co-ordinating Committee

May we allow the Spirit of God to direct us as we take up the Lord's work as well as the fellowship together. May we encourage one another. "Fields White Unto Harvest" is the Conference theme taken from John 4:35. May the Lord give each one of us a renewed zeal for souls. We need to pray for more laborers in the Kingdom.

*Rev. Leslie Galland, Chairman
Business Administrator*

One interesting facet of my work is in the area of finance. We are all so grateful for our first year of reaching one million dollars and almost making our budget. We thank God and each one of you for your financial support and prayers. This money comes in and goes out about four times, which means the business office handled about four million last year.

*Mr. Ernest Miedema
Director of the ARC*

We mentioned the increase in capacity by the winterizing of Daniel (dormitory). We now have a total of 250 beds that are available for winter.

With the telemarketing we did this winter and with the promotion plans of the ARC Board, coupled with an actual shortage of retreat facilities, the increased use of the ARC looks encouraging. *R. L. (Bob) Dietsche*

Chillicothe hosts retreat

Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Chillicothe, Ill., is sponsoring a Community Women's Retreat to be held at Chillicothe Federal Savings and Loan, 917 N. 4th St. on Saturday, August 19, 1989, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The theme is, "For Such a Time as This". Reservations by August 14 — 579-3173 or 274-6032.



The WMF breakfast.



The executive officers sang at the breakfast.

Women's Missionary Federation

In memoriam gifts

Hazel Hanson, Tacoma, Washington
Leonard Dalager, Webster, S. Dak.
Florence Moe, Wallace, S. Dak.
Lillio Wallio, Finlayson, Minn.
Edna Kari, Finlayson, Minn.
Leda Walker, Kenyon, Minn.
Allen Greenwald, Dalton, Minn.

*Blessed are
those who die
in the Lord*



ABORTION WORKSHOP SET

A clinical skills training workshop on "Diagnosis and Treatment of Post Abortion Syndrome" will be held Sept. 28-29 at Concordia College, River Forest, Ill. The workshop leaders are Dr. Vincent M. Rue and Dr. Susan Stanford Rue.

Counselors, pastors, medical personnel and interested persons are invited to attend. Among sponsors of the workshop are Lutherans for Life (National) and Lutherans for Life of Illinois.

The Fall Rally of the Minneapolis Dist. WMF will be at Living Word Lutheran Church, Eagan, on Oct. 21.

EDITORIALS

vices in the past has been disappointing, to say the least. Yet we'd hate to see that session dropped for all time.

White Fields

The Conference theme of "Fields White Unto Harvest" was a striking one, wasn't it? Again and again through songs and messages our spiritual eyes were directed toward those needing to hear about the Savior.

We are to pray for more workers; we are to give; we are to go. We can point to some accomplishments and the Lord

knows about them. But the remaining needs are so great.

The mission opportunities in California were graphically presented to us. Soon there will be four AFLC pastors in that state where not long ago there were none. There are so many to reach there with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our prayers go out for that great state.

And in the other states and provinces, in Brazil and Mexico, the harvest is bountiful. May the Lord help us to be obedient and to make the effort to bring in the sheaves of a great spiritual harvest.

Hymn #313 (Concordia)

I WALK IN DANGER ALL THE WAY

- 1) I walk in danger all the way;
The thought shall never leave me,
That Satan, who has marked his prey,
Is plotting to deceive me.
This foe with hidden snares
May seize me unawares
If e'er I fail to watch and pray;
I walk in danger all the way.

- 2) I pass thro' trials all the way
With sin and ills contending
In patience I must bear each day
The cross of God's own sending;
Oft in adversity
I know not where to flee;
When storms of woe my should dismay,
I pass through trials all the way.

- 3) I walk with Jesus all the way,
His guidance never fails me,
Within His wounds I find a stay,
When Satan's pow'r assails me;
And by His footsteps led,
My path I safely tread,
In spite of ills that threaten may,
I walk with Jesus all the way.

- 4) My walk is heav'n-ward all the way,
Await, my soul, the morrow,
When thou shalt find release for aye
From all thy sin and sorrow;
All worldly pomp, begone!
To heav'n I now press on;
For all the world I would not stay,
My walk is heav'n-ward all the way.

H. A. Brorson

PSALMS IN THE NIGHT

WMF BIBLE STUDY SEPTEMBER 1989

PSALM 91

Memory Verse: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High
shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."
(Psalm 91:1)

Purpose of the Psalm: The security of the godly.

Here the psalmist describes the safety for the person who has faith in God. It is most important that we believe in the security that our Almighty God can give to us at all times.

This psalm may have reference to the time when other nations around Israel were experiencing calamity. The psalmist speaks in the first person in verses 1, 2, 9; the second person in verses 3-8 and 9-13. God is speaking in verses 14-16.

A. Define these words as used in verses 1 and 2. Give the results.

- 1) Dwelleth in the secret place _____
2) Refuge _____
3) Fortress _____
What is necessary to be secure? _____

B. From what evils will God protect His faithful followers? _____

Verse 3 — What could be the “snare of the fowler?” _____

See Psalm 124:7, Psalm 38:12 and II Timothy 2:26 _____

Verses 4 - 7 — What might befall us? _____

Who will protect us? _____

See Psalm 17:8 and Psalm 112:7 _____

What will happen to the wicked? _____

See Proverbs 12:21 _____

C. In verses 9-13, we read of ministering angels. What does this mean?

(See Psalm 34:7) _____

What will they do for us? _____

Why will the ministering angels protect us? _____

Note that verses 11 and 12 are quoted by the devil when he tempted Jesus, in Matthew 4:6 and Luke 4:10-11.

Will believers be able to overcome all dangers? _____

See Luke 10:19 and Romans 16:20 _____

D. Verses 14 - 16 — What is God's promise to the believer? _____

On what condition are the promises based?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

7) _____

“When thou passest through waters, I will be with thee;
and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee;

when thou walkest through the fire,
thou shalt not be burned;
neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.”

(Isaiah 43:2)

What are the end results of trust?

SALVATION

PROTECTION

GUIDANCE

JOY

...just to name a few.

ARE WE TRUSTING? _____

The Conference Sermons

Opening Service

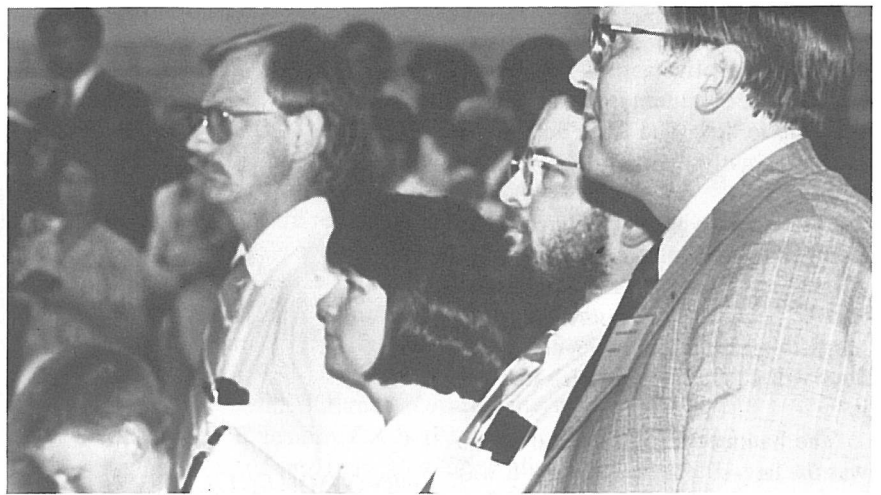
Following the singing of the hymn "O That the Lord Would Guide My Ways" by the large audience in Swain Hall on the campus of Minot State University, Minot, Dr. Steven Lombardo preached the sermon at the opening of the AFLC Annual Conference on June 15. The AFLC Schools' faculty member's text was John 4:34-38 and his theme was the Conference theme: "Fields White Unto Harvest."

After reminding his audience that Jesus was speaking about the great spiritual harvest when He spoke of fields white unto harvest and that every Christian believer is to be involved in that harvest, Dr. Lombardo went on to bring out three main points.

First (verse 34), there is the reminder to emphasize the *eternal*. The disciples had a tendency to see primarily the temporal issues of life; Jesus saw the eternal. Our inclination is to focus on the physical and material things. Jesus wouldn't be sidetracked from eternity's values and we mustn't either. The world says, "Live for the moment, for today." Jesus says, "Live for eternity." All of us will live in eternity, Dr. Lombardo said, "but where?"

Second, he saw a reminder from Jesus to *expend our energy* (verse 35). Jesus said that the fields are ready for harvest *now*. We are not to delay. There is an urgency about the task of evangelism. In the last century or so there has been an emphasis on the *duty* to evangelize. Prior to that the emphasis was on the *delight* believers had in bringing the Gospel. We have to get back to that attitude, Dr. Lombardo declared. If we are in love with Jesus, sharing Him with others is our delight.

And, third, Dr. Lombardo saw a reminder from Jesus to *share the earnings* (verses 36-38). He who reaps



Worshipping at the Opening Service were: Rev. and Mrs. Philip Rokke, Greenbush, Minn., Rev. Jerry Holmaas, Chassell, Mich., and Rev. Ragene Hodnefield, Vancouver, Wash.

souls is receiving wages and gathering fruit for life eternal. Sower and reaper may rejoice together. We don't evangelize in order to get the earnings, Pastor Lombardo asserted, but because we love Jesus; the earnings come as a by-product. Our burden is to win the lost.

He challenged the assembled delegates and visitors in closing to see the white fields Jesus pointed to and to do what God desires that we do.

Rev. Richard Snipstead, president of the AFLC, officially opened the Annual Conference following the service which had been led by Rev. Stephen Odegaard, Tioga, N. Dak. He read Titus 2:11-14, pointing out to all gathered that Christians are not *of* the world, but they are *in* the world — to do God's work.

Thursday Night

The message was brought by Pastor Paul Abel at the Women's Missionary Federation festival service and will be summarized in the report by the secretary of that organization.

Friday Night

Friday night was Laymen's Night. Mr. Arley Hartsoch, Ray, N. Dak., led the meeting and Mr. Henry Mohagen, Towner, N. Dak., spoke. He used Mark 2:13-17 as his Scripture text. From the call of Matthew by Jesus, he brought out some things about following Christ. It is a calling. He said, "Follow Me." That call comes to us through God's Word, the Bible. Where there is the conviction of sin, there is the invitation.

Then there needs to be a response on our part, Mr. Mohagen declared. Matthew got up and followed; so must we. Failure to respond means rejection. If we know Jesus, we are to tell others about Him, beginning with those here at hand first, even as Matthew invited people over to his place to meet Jesus.

Mr. Mohagen went on to speak about ways in which witness for Christ is made. Missions isn't only something far away, but also round about us. We might be, as Christ's people, the only Jesus with skin on whom children and co-workers with us will ever see, Mr. Mohagen challenged his audience. "What have you done with the calling?" he asked.

A time of testimonies followed the sermon.

Pastors' Banquet

At the annual pastors' banquet during Annual Conference this year, the message was brought by Dr. Francis Monseth, dean of Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary, as a part of the school's 25th anniversary observance. A choral group of pastors and seminarians sang two hymns under the direction of Rev. Donald Greven.

Dr. Monseth said the seminary's motto is Titus 1:9: "Holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict."

While sound doctrine is stressed at AFLTS, Dr. Monseth said there is

◇

SERMONS

devotional application of the Word. The men are students of the Word. They are to "feed the flock" entrusted to them, rightly dividing the Word of truth.

Pastors are to correct the erring and evangelize the unsaved through the mission of sound doctrine. Sound doctrine is healthful and nourishing. Dr. Monseth asserted, and living congregations will emerge and flourish through it.

The banquet of pastors and wives was the largest in AFLC history. It was held on the MSU campus in the Student Union.

Youth Night

Saturday night has traditionally been youth night at annual conferences and it was on June 17 at Minot also. Rev. James Johnson, president of the Luther League Federation, led the service. The AFLBS Ambassadors were among those providing special music.

The message was brought by Rev. Keith Quanbeck, of First Lutheran Church, Camarillo, Calif. He said that he wanted to set forth two challenges. The first was, how can you (youth) outlive your generation? He used Timothy, co-worker with Paul, as an example and Paul's words as found in I Timothy 4:12. The Apostle told the younger man not to let others despise his youth but to set them an example. Pastor Quanbeck recited the five areas given and which apply today also: speech, life, love, faith and purity.

The second challenge given by the young California pastor was, how can we motivate our youth to outlive their generation? This was for supporters of young people. He proposed three ways. 1) Instill in young people a sense of real need for the youth group, the church and personal devotions. 2) Encourage them and provide recognition. Know what to get excited about in their accomplishments. 3) We need to love our young people, warts and all. We need to get next to our youth, Pastor Quanbeck said, and get into their lives.

The closing hymn was "Christ for the World We Sing."

continued on p. 16



Mr. and Mrs. Elvin Behrens, Morris, III.

DEVOTIONAL LEADERS AT THE CONFERENCE

The devotional leaders at the Annual Conference are listed below: Thursday morning — Rev. Reuben Unseth, Roseau, Minn., Psalm 67. Thursday afternoon — Rev. Timothy Carlson, Wheatland, Ia. Jeremiah 17:5.

Friday morning — Lay Pastor Mark Olson, Ottawa, Ill. Acts 2:44-47, Hebrews 10:25, Colossians 3:12-17. Friday afternoon — Chaplain Mark Antal, Columbia, S. Car.

Saturday morning — Mr. Donald Norr, Virginia, Minn. Revelation 3:7, 8 and John 4:35. Saturday afternoon — Rev. Lynn Wilson, Roslyn, S. Dak. Ephesians 2:8, 9.

PASTORS ACKNOWLEDGED

These pastors were acknowledged at the Annual Conference as having been received on the Clergy Roster of the AFLC during the past year. Some of them have been listed in the *Ambassador* previously.

Rev. James Asp
Rev. Robert Koepp
Rev. Robert Giles
Rev. Milo Gudim
Rev. Norman Dornquast
Rev. John Skeie
Dr. Steven Lombardo
Rev. Gerald Gettis
Rev. Alvin Pinno
Rev. Russel Tessman
Dr. Orville Hiepler

Regulations on elections in the AFLC

"The officers of the AFLC shall be a president, a vice-president, and a secretary, who shall be chosen from the membership of the AFLC and elected by the Annual Conference. Voting shall be by ballot." (7)

"The president shall be elected for a term of three years and shall devote all of his time to the service of the AFLC." (7a)

"The executive officers after having served three (3) consecutive terms can be elected for additional terms only by a three-fourths majority vote." (7e)

Rules for Work

"The President, Vice-President and Secretary of the AFLC shall be elected by ballot and must have a majority of the votes cast. Nomina-

tions for these offices shall be made from the floor and at least two nominations shall be made for each office." (III, 1)

Order of Business

"Whereas, the present voting procedure often requires an unduly great amount of time, be it resolved, that we at this conference adopt the policy of Ecclesiastical method of balloting during elections for this and future conferences.

"The first ballot taken on the Ecclesiastical system be the nominating ballot, and if the incumbent receives 75% on the first ballot, shall be considered elected."

1989 Annual Conference

Resolution No. 4

Committee No. 1

Northern Michigan Family Camp

The Northern Michigan District Family Camp will be held Aug. 22-26, not at the earlier time given in the *Ambassador*. Lake Ellen Baptist Camp, Crystal Falls, is the place.

The evening speaker will be Rev. Ralph Tjelta of the AFLC Schools Faculty. Adult Bible teacher will be Rev. Jerry Holmaas, Chassell, Mich. Pastor Tjelta will teach the teenage Bible class each day. There are sessions for children, too.

Contact Rev. Harvey Jackson, dean, for further information, at Box 83, Ishpeming, Mich. 49849.

Schedule additions

The Radiant Life Support team sponsored by the Luther League Federation has two more appointments this summer: Aug. 13-18, Chassell, Mich.; and Aug. 21-25, Northern Michigan Bible Camp at Crystal Falls.

These students are teaching Vacation Bible School in the Dalton, Minn., parish at the present time (Aug. 2-11): Steve Carlson, Amery, Wis., leader; Brenda Kjos, Fergus Falls, Minn.; and Lisa Olson, Roseau, Minn. Merle Fagerberg is the local pastor.

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 he held membership.

NORTH DAKOTA

Stanley

Erling Hoseth, 61, Jan. 3, Our Savior's.

Binford

Elmer O. Miller, 82, June 11, Bethany.

MINNESOTA

Willmar

Earl P. Jones, 59, July 3, Green Lake, Spicer, Minn.

Badger

Vernon Peterson, 69, July 9, Badger Creek.

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

AFLC Benevolences - February 1 - May 31

FUND	TOTAL BUDGET	REC'D IN MAY	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	%* TOTAL
General Fund	\$ 169,600.00	\$ 13,399.98	\$ 47,753.58	28
Schools - (AFLTS)..	128,237.00	6,361.42	19,385.56	15
(AFLBS)..	187,650.00	6,685.35	29,363.63	16
Home Missions.	397,564.00	19,164.02	72,322.36	18
World Missions.	325,730.00	20,570.39	65,830.90	20
Capital Investment ..	30,000.00	1,983.95	8,317.32	28
Parish Education	69,500.00	1,975.12	7,260.90	10
TOTALS	\$ 1,308,281.00	\$ 70,140.23	\$250,234.25	19
1987 - 1988.	\$ 1,057,504.00	\$ 74,199.40	\$262,699.82	25
*Goal 33%				

AFLC Benevolences - February 1 - June 30

FUND	TOTAL BUDGET	REC'D IN JUNE	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	%* TOTAL
General Fund	\$ 169,600.00	\$ 11,384.91	\$ 59,138.49	35
Schools - (AFLTS)..	128,237.00	10,623.19	30,008.75	23
(AFLBS)..	187,650.00	7,666.06	37,029.69	20
Home Missions.	397,564.00	18,037.91	90,360.27	23
World Missions.	325,730.00	24,422.03	90,252.93	28
Capital Investment ..	30,000.00	3,170.78	11,488.10	38
Parish Education	69,500.00	1,479.19	8,740.21	13
TOTALS	\$ 1,308,281.00	\$ 76,784.19	\$327,018.44	25
1987 - 1988.	\$ 1,057,504.00	\$ 59,572.90	\$322,272.72	30
*Goal 42%				

Personalities

Rev. and Mrs. John (Ruby) Abel were honored on the occasion of their 40th wedding anniversary on Sun., July 16, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Fargo, N. Dak. An open house was held from 2 to 5 with a program at 3 o'clock. Their address while on furlough is Box 97, Hitterdal, Minn. 56552. Telephone: 218-962-3458. Congratulations to the honored couple.

Rev. David Molstre, pastor at St. Paul's, Fargo, since 1986, has resigned in order to accept the call from the Home Mission Committee to be pastor of the new congregation at Palmdale, Calif.

Mr. Donald Norr, Proctor, Minn., has accepted a call to serve as lay pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Virginia, Minn. He began his

work on July 1. He will continue for the present to live in Proctor where his address is 102 Anchor St. (55810).

Jim Laesch, Director of Ministries for the Lutheran Bible Translators, Aurora, Ill., returned to Liberia, Africa, this summer to officially commemorate the completion of New Testament translations in two tribal languages. The Laesch family, who served in Liberia for several years, are members of West Lisbon Lutheran Church, Newark, Ill.

Chaplain (Major) Timothy K. Skramstad and family have moved to 6120 Castle Rock Court, Colorado Springs, Colo. 80919. Their telephone number is 719-528-6185. Chaplain Skramstad has begun his new duties as the Family Life Ministry Director at Fort Carson, Colo.

SERMONS

The Service of Communion

This service was held at Bethel Lutheran Church, host church to the Conference. Rev. Philip Featherstone, Pukwana, S. Dak., was the liturgist.

The sermon was preached by Rev. Walter Beaman, Sebeka, Minn. He used Isaiah 5:1-8 as his text, showing how Isaiah's experience of God's holiness, of his own sinfulness and of the Lord's cleansing, which resulted in his offering of himself for God's service, can be duplicated in our own lives. He spoke also of the promise of blessing and strengthening for Christians through the Sacrament of the Altar.

In the Communion service, Rev. Jerry Moan, pastor at Bethel, gave individual blessings to each group of communicants at the altar.

Ordination Service

The morning worship service at conference was an ordination service for four young men and it brought the conference to a close. The sermon was preached by the father of one of the men, Rev. Einar Unseth, Glenville, Minn. He used the Conference text, John 4:35, and related verses for his message.

Relating how one of the astronauts, who is from Wisconsin, by his mother's testimony reached his ultimate goal when he went up into space, Pastor Unseth showed how John 4 reveals Christ's ultimate goal — the saving of souls. He went on to point out three things about that goal.

First, it is a *satisfying* goal. As the disciples were concerned about Christ's physical hunger, many have goals of corporate success and financial security. Jesus had a much higher goal, one which gave Him much joy. His food was to do God's will and fulfill His program.

Second, it is a *serious* goal because of the condition of the world. Someone has said that for every evangelical Christian in the world there are ten who aren't. As an illustration of what Jesus has done for the world, he told the story of Hazel Miner of Center, N. Dak., who gave her life for a brother and sister in a blizzard. We are to have the same concern for the souls of others, Pastor Unseth declared.

Third, it is a *sharing* goal. We have

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.

Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Second-class

NO ISSUE NEXT TIME

Due to our policy of not having a second issue in August, there will be none for August 22. Look for your next *Ambassador* soon after September 5.

Because we skip two issues in the summer, a certain backlog of material occurs. Some items get delayed in publication. Please be patient.

Thank you.

The Editor

OMISSIONS

Unintentionally omitted from his obituary (June 27) was the fact that Pastor Karl I. Stendal was a member of the Board of Trustees of the AFLC Schools from 1969 to 1970. We are sorry for the oversight.

The article "Fellowship, Fun and Forgetting What It's All About" in the May 30 issue was written by Moishe Rosen. We regret that his name was not included with this article.

Prayer hours at Conference

The prayer hours at the Annual Conference were led by Lay Pastor Rodney Stueland, Kenyon, Minn. Here are brief summaries of the three prayer hours:

Thursday

Pastor Stueland read Psalm 85:6. He quoted a pastor who said that a growing church without revival is a dying church. Revival comes only

had the opportunity to reap where others have sown. Harvesting and sowing go on at the same time. Those who do each can share the rejoicing when a soul is saved. Pastor Unseth told how an older missionary had told him after he had gained his first convert in Japan, "This is what will keep you going." Let us fulfill Christ's ultimate goal for the world, Pastor Unseth challenged the four ordinands and the whole congregation.

Pastor Snipstead officiated at the ordination service. Pastor Moan was the liturgist.

through the Holy Spirit's working. We have little revival because we pray so little. In verse 5 the prayer is to God that He would revive His people that they may rejoice in Him.

Friday

Jeremiah 33:3 was his Scripture passage. The disciples asked Jesus, "Teach us to pray," not "Teach us to preach." The Holy Spirit teaches us to pray. Jeremiah was in prison for doing right, not wrong. He was a man of tears, of compassion. Wm. Booth of the Salvation Army once said, "Try tears."

Saturday

Pastor Stueland read John 14:13-14 and called attention to five facts in the verses: 1) the scope — "whatsoever" ye shall ask; 2) the condition — "ask;" 3) the grounds — "in My name." The provision is in Christ; 4) the certainty "that will I do;" and 5) the purpose — "that the Father may be glorified in the Son." God is worthy of all glory and He alone.

In each prayer hour there was a season of group prayer.