

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

February 21, 1989



LIGHT on the WAY

meditations on God's Word

COVER

The Triumphal Entry
Gustav Doré

Volume 27 Number 4

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes" (I Corinthians 11:26).

During Lent we often reflect upon the Lord's Supper. This isn't unusual as its establishment is closely tied to Jesus' passion and suffering. Scripture tells us Christ established the Sacrament just hours before His arrest, trial and crucifixion. Having gathered the 12 disciples to celebrate the Passover, a meal of remembrance of when Israel was delivered from Egyptian bondage, Jesus took some unleavened bread, broke it and said, "This is My body given for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." He then took wine, declaring, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. Do this as oft as you drink it in remembrance of Me." As Lutherans we believe this was no ordinary meal but a way Christ gave and continues to give His incarnate self to all who partake of its elements. Though the bread and wine remain bread and wine, we teach and hold that "in, with, and under" these elements Christ Himself, human and divine, is present to bring Himself to all who eat and drink, even the ungodly. We are warned to be sure to examine ourselves carefully, for if we eat and drink wrongly, trusting self-produced goodness rather than resting in Christ as our only salvation and light, the Savior is indeed received, but for our damnation and loss. On the other hand, if we see our own unworthiness, confessing and flee to Christ as sole worthiness, it is a meal of strengthening, a closer union with Him who is to be our complete redemption before God.

St. Paul, in recording the establishment of the Lord's Supper in I Corinthians 11, states, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." Do these words mean we are to only historically, frequently, recall Jesus' death on the cross when we commune, lest we take His atonement too lightly? While this is significant, it is to mean much more. Romans 6:3 and 11 state, "Do you not know that all

The Lord's Supper

of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ...So you also must consider yourself dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." In Jesus' death, we also are to die. We who are united to Him by the means of grace are to consider self, the old nature, from which sin arises, dead, so Christ in us can be our new life, nature and wholeness. Baptism, when rightly understood, is not to be a dead, outward formalism but a continual dying to the old Adam, in Jesus' once-for-all death, through daily sorrow and repentance. In this way the new Adam can come forth in us to live before God in righteousness and holiness forever, as Luther says in Part IV concerning Baptism in the Catechism.

In relating this to the Lord's Supper, we should see our participation in this meal as a proclamation of our own death in His. We declare, "Put me to death to my old nature, Jesus, so that Your coming to me in these blessed elements may be my sole righteousness and completeness." Communion is to be another dying to self, rising to newness of life in Christ as our only wholeness. Where this does not happen, but the sinful self remains in control, glorying in its own worth and achievements, then one indeed eats and drinks but only to bring damnation to one's self.

In this season of Lent, as we reflect on Holy Communion, let us see it in its fullest depth as it affects us, not eating and drinking in an unworthy manner. May we by God's power discern the body and blood. Let us come as lost sinners, seeing in Christ and His death and resurrection our only hope as He puts us to death to self, in His death bringing us to new life in Himself as our sole salvation and wholeness.



—by Pastor
Christian Oswood

Daddy, you can use my money." Those were the words of my 6-year-old daughter Sarah a number of weeks ago. Our entire family was out for a day of shopping, traveling from one stop to another, when discussion of a need came up in our conversation — prompting Sarah's generous offer. She recognized the need and desired to meet it. What Sarah failed to understand completely was the size of the need in proportion to her resources; she had no idea just how far short the contents of her pink wallet fell from meeting that need.

The opening verses of Hebrews 5 acknowledge an infinitely greater need: "For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins" (v. 1).

Without saying it directly, these words are expressing a need. Do you see it? If a "high priest...is appointed...(to) offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins," the need at the root is for a go-between or mediator between sinful man and the holy God. It is in response to that need that God established the Levitical priesthood with Aaron as the first high priest — not as God's solution to the need but to keep an awareness of the need before the people. Again, the high priest "taken from among men" was never intended to *meet* the need. He never could.

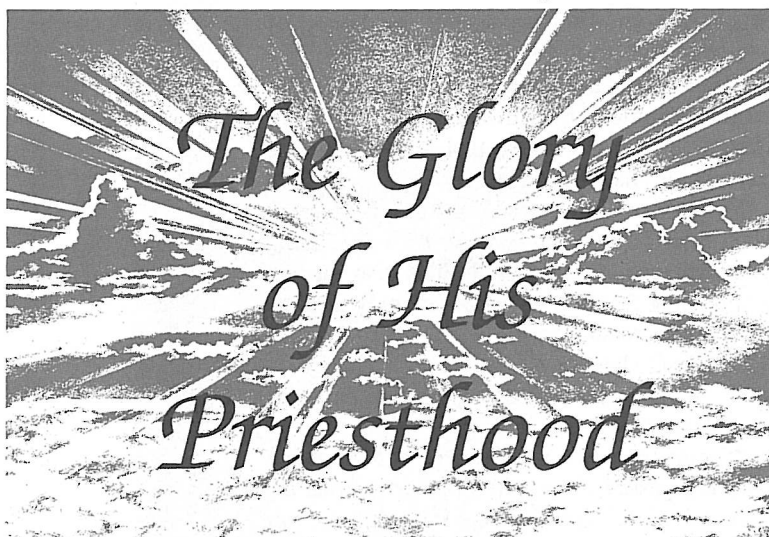
The priest's connection with the people he served was to direct. He not only knew and understood their sins and weaknesses. He shared them! So, verse 3, "Because of this he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins."

God knew our need and planned to meet it with a great High Priest having a different nature, bringing a unique sacrifice, and providing a complete salvation.

A Priest of a Different Nature

The mediator we need to step between our sin and the punishment it deserves from God is one both separate from sin Himself and able to offer to God a sacrifice of great enough worth to cover the sin of the whole world. Only the miracle of God's wisdom and His grace was able to provide such a High Priest in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Like the high priests of old, Jesus did not claim this position of His own will. He was called by God (verses 4-5a). But His nature was very unlike those who went before. Though He had taken on human flesh and blood, He was none other than the sinless, eternal Son of God



(verses 5b-6).

Why is that so important? Only because of Jesus' different nature as both God and man was He able to become also

A Priest with a Unique Sacrifice

Think about it: What kind of sacrifice can possibly be of great enough value to pay for the guilt of our sin before God and at the same time cleanse us so completely that we could be considered without sin, holy and able to stand before His throne uncondemned? The most complete rendering of our lives to His service, the most noble works for our fellowman and the most painful self-denial may contribute some by way of outward appearances of uprightness. But they in no way clear us of the sin and guilt of the past or "cure" us from sinning again in the present or the future.

Jesus became a man so that He, as a man, could live a perfect life under God's Law that we are so unable to live (verse 8) and, as a man, suffer and die in innocence (verse 7) as the full payment for the sins we have committed. Unique sacrifice! This High Priest not only makes the offering but is Himself the Sacrifice.

Because this is true, He is finally

A Priest with a Complete Salvation

"And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him" (v. 9).

How does what Jesus Christ did have anything to do with any other person? It is because of His different nature, being God and man, that His unique and perfect sacrifice of Himself becomes a source of complete salvation. Jesus Christ is God, so His perfect life and death are of great enough value before God the Father to cover the sin and represent the life ◇

"This High Priest not only makes the offering but is Himself the Sacrifice."

*By Pastor
Richard Long
Chillicothe, Ill.*

PRIESTHOOD

of every human being. Recall the beautiful words of II Corinthians 5:21: "He (God) made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." He took our sin so that in exchange we can receive His righteousness.

Do you see your need for such a glorious High Priest? Have you come to Him confessing your sin, recognizing that He died also for you and trusting that you can be saved only through His life and death for you?

To all who believe in Him, the words of chapter 4, just before our text, express the beautiful confidence that is ours:

"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:14-16).

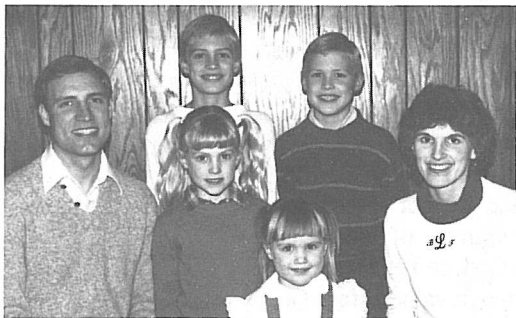
Biographical Sketch:

Pastor Long was born on November 25, 1955, in Ypsilanti, Michigan, to Christian parents. He counts it a rich blessing to have been trained in early years in an elementary school, high school and college of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran synod.

After marriage to Barbara Rhodea in 1976, he joined the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, received seminary training at Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary in Mankato, Minnesota, and served churches of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, and Marietta, Georgia.

After affiliating with the Association in the summer of 1988, he received and accepted a call to serve Our Savior's Lutheran of Chillicothe, Illinois.

Pastor and Mrs. Long are expecting their fifth child in early summer. This one will join Lucas (10), Jesse (8), Sarah (6), and Anna (3).



Pastor and Mrs. Long and their children.

King ever glorious

He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth" (Isaiah 53:7).

When I was younger, I used to watch the TV show "Dragnet" every Friday night. I especially remember how the show ended when one of the detectives read the arrested criminal his rights: "You have the right to remain silent; everything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law."

When Christ was arrested and brought before the authorities prior to His crucifixion, He chose to remain silent. Everything He *didn't* say was used against Him. The silent Christ was given no rights, and He was tried and condemned at an illegal trial. His silence was a grand manifestation of the glory of His patience.

When Christ was shoved in front of the high priest, we read in Mark 14:61, "But He was silent and made no answer." In chapter 15, verses four and five: "Pilate again asked Him, 'Have you no answer to make? See how many charges they bring against you.' But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate wondered."

If anyone had the right to speak up and defend Himself, it was Jesus. Falsely accused, falsely tried at an illegal trial, He was handed over to the animal desires of the mob which kept shouting, "Crucify Him!" Legally, all His rights were taken from Him, yet He chose to remain silent.

Ironically, one of the few times Jesus had chosen to speak was when the high priest asked Him, in Mark 14:61, "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus' reply was, "I am; and you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." His answer cinched His death sentence. "Blasphemy!" cried the high priest, and they sentenced Him to deserving death.

When Christ stood before Pilate, it had been a long night for Him. His body ached from the fists that beat Him. His face was a bloody mess from the blows of the guards. Already the silent Christ had suffered greatly. Having endured all this pain and suffering, not a word of curse do we hear from His lips. The silent Christ "was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth."

Chapter 53 of the prophet Isaiah has been a stumbling block to the Jews. In biblical times they had looked for the coming Messiah to be a glorious war hero who would set their nation free politically. Some missed the message and

The Glory of His Patience

ministry of Jesus because in the face of death He willingly accepted His suffering and chose to not defend Himself in the face of wrongful accusations. He was willing to be led to the cross to die "like a lamb that is led to slaughter."

Yet it was only through Christ's suffering and death that sin could be atoned for. It was necessary that Christ die on a cross. He didn't go to the cross grudgingly, He went willingly. He manifested His glorious patience in His suffering and death.

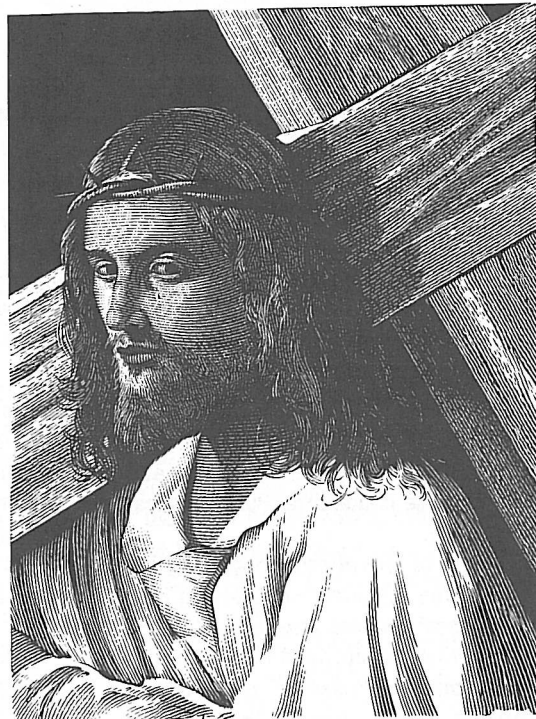
The season of Lent affirms that weakness and death manifested by Christ is true glory. It affirms that God is glorified through pain and suffering. It finds meaning and hope in the pain and misery that somehow always manages to find people and to capture them.

Christ chose to be silent. He chose to silently stand in our place and bear the punishment for our sins. The silent Christ died the death we deserve to die. The silent Christ was condemned to death for our sakes, led to the cross like a meek, mild lamb led to the slaughter.

This silent Christ is the same Christ who stood in the bow of the boat and commanded the wind and raging storm, "Be still," and it quieted immediately. The same Christ drove the moneychangers from the temple, shouting at them, "You have made my Father's house of prayer into a den of robbers." The same Christ baffled and confused the Pharisees and scribes with answers to their trick questions. The same Christ cast out demons and commanded them back to the abyss of hell. The same Christ healed the dumb and blind with a single word. This same Christ chooses to remain silent, even though His words had great power and authority. His silence pays the price of death.

You ask why? Why did Jesus remain silent and refuse to defend Himself against His accusers?

Remember, Pilate wondered also. "But Jesus made no further answer, so that Pilate wondered." For a moment he defends Christ, as he says to the crowd, "Why, what evil has He done?" But the crowd shouted louder, "Crucify Him!" Christ remains silent, willing to be cast



into the hands of the mob intent on killing Him. Finally Pilate gives in to the ruckus of the crowd.

Do you wonder as Pilate wondered? Do you wonder why Christ remained silent through this ordeal of suffering and pain? It was the silence that nailed Him to the cross. It was the silence that killed Him.

Let me ask you this. Parents, when your seven-year-old rushes home from school to tell you the greatest discovery he has ever made in his life, is all out of breath and his eyes sparkle with excitement and he tells you, "Mommy, Daddy, did you know that Columbus discovered America?", why do you keep silent and let him finish his story? Because you love him.

Love is why Jesus remained silent and took our punishment for our sin. Love is why Jesus allowed Himself to be condemned at the hands of a bloodthirsty mob. Love is why Jesus hung on the cross and died. John 15:13 says, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

I urge you this Lent to set aside some silence and meditate on God's word concerning Christ's suffering and death. Recall His last words from the cross, as He is nailed to the wood and hoisted up. The mob's excited war cries seem victorious and they scream at Christ, "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." The crowd wags ♂

*"Everything
He didn't
say was
used against
Him."*

*by Pastor
Joel Lohafer,
Bruce, S. Dak.*

Materials Available

The Board of Publications and Parish Education has purchased seven VHS video cassettes titled, "Jesus' Life." This series of videos combines the four Gospels into one story which includes every event in Jesus' life. The videos use the New International Version translation for word-for-word narration. For further information and rental please contact the Parish Education office.

A list of devotional books which express the Lutheran emphasis on Law and Gospel and are true to the Lutheran doctrines is reprinted below. A limited number of *Rosenius' Daily Meditations* is now available from the Parish Education office. This hard cover book includes a Scripture portion, a meditation and prayer for each day of the year. It is otherwise out of print. \$5.00

Gockle, Herman W., *Daily Walk with God*, Concordia 1982, paper \$10.95.

—*My Hand in His*, Concordia, 1961, paper \$6.50. Consists of 110 brief devotional readings, not coordinated with the year.

—*What Jesus Means to Me*, Concordia, 1956, \$4.95. A compilation of several longer devotional readings.

Hallesby, O., *God's Word for Today*,

Augsburg, 1979, paper \$5.95.

Huxhold, Harry N., *Family Altar*, Concordia, 1964, \$12.95.

Jahsmann and Simon, *Little Visits with God*, Concordia, 1957, paper \$6.50. Primarily for families with small children.

—*More Little Visits with God*, Concordia, 1961, paper \$6.50.

Luther, Martin, *Day by Day We Magnify Thee*, Fortress Press, 1982, paper \$10.95. Daily devotional readings arranged according to the church year.

Norden, Rudolph F., *Day by Day with Jesus*, Concordia, 1985, paper \$10.95.

Rosenius, Carl O., *Rosenius' Daily Meditations*, Lutheran Colportage Service, 2101 Chicago Ave., Minneapolis, Minn. 55404. \$2.50. Five or more copies, \$1.00.

Starr, Frank, *Light for the Way*, Concordia, 1986, \$2.95 per booklet. Daily devotional Bible-reading guide in four Old Testament and four New Testament books takes the reader through the Scriptures in two years. Historical background notes, brief commentaries and Gospel applications for daily life.

Wisløff, Fredrik, *On My Father's Knee*, Augsburg, 1973, paper \$5.95. Devotions for times of illness.

Out of print:

Frost, Gerhard E., *These Things I Remember*, Augsburg.

Hegland, Martin, *Walking with God*, Augsburg.

Haakonson, R. P., *Altar Steps*, Lutheran Colportage. For families with children.

Hoh and Hoh, *Two Minutes with God*, Abingdon and Cokesbury. For families with small children.

Hope, Ludvig, *Spirit and Power*, Hauge Lutheran Innermission Federation.

—*Thy Kingdom Come*, Augsburg.

—*John Gozner's Treasury*, Augsburg.

Lache, N. J., *Book of Family Prayer*, Augsburg.

—*Light and Life* by pastors and lay people of the Lutheran Free Church.

Olson, Iver, *Waters in the Wilderness*, by AFLC people.

Rolfstrud, Erling, *Family on Maple Street*. For families with children.

—*Happy Acres*, Augsburg. For families with children.

Rosenius, C. O., *A Faithful Guide to Peace with God*, Augsburg. For people seeking a deeper realization of grace and assurance.

There are also several song books for use in the Sunday School available. They are, *Little Children, Sing to God*, \$7.95, spiral-bound; *Songs of God's Love*, \$6.25, spiral-bound; *Action Songs for Boys & Girls*, Vol. 1, \$2.95; and *Songs of God and Me*, \$4.95, spiral-bound.

—Board of Publications and Parish Education

PATIENCE

their heads and screams insults at Jesus. Then a few words slip from the silent Christ: "Today you shall be with Me in Paradise." "I thirst." "It is finished." But don't forget these words: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

If you ever needed to listen to Jesus' words, listen to these. Just a few words from a silent Christ, but to those who hear them and believe them, He gives eternal life. Did you hear them? Do you believe them?

You know, you were just like Pontius Pilate when you gave in to the pressures of society and

rejected the truth of God's Word. You may not have held the actual hammer that drove the spikes through Christ's hands and feet, but the weight and severity of your sin was felt by Christ as He suffered and died. He suffered and died for all people for all time.

May God grant to each one of us this Lent some time of silence to remember the glory of Christ's patience. Though His silence meant death for Christ, it can mean new life and restored hope for us when we believe and when we keep believing in the face of suffering.

Brazil Tour Group '89

As missionaries just returning from Brazil, the needs of the church and the Brazilian people are fresh in our minds. The economic struggle and the spiritual battle that our Brazilian loved ones face continue to be an important part of our prayers. We're happy to be able to have a part in these peoples' lives. Being involved in missions not only changes lives overseas, but it changes us as well. You, too, have an opportunity to get a taste of missions first hand by joining a tour group to Brazil this coming April. We hope that many will take advantage of this tour to become better acquainted with our missionaries and their work in Brazil.

As you visit a Third World country you will gain a new appreciation of your own heritage and you will gain a better understanding of your Christian brothers and sisters in another land.

In addition to visiting our Free Lutheran churches, you will experience the outstanding beauty of a land rich in varied geography - from the famous tourist attractions in Rio, to the rolling farmlands, from the majesty of the ocean to the awesomeness of the Itaipu Dam and magnificent Iguacu Falls. You will taste new foods and learn about a different culture as you travel to Brazil with a group of other interested Christians.

As missionaries, we encourage people to make such a trip because we recognize its personal benefits to the traveler as well as its benefits in developing new friendships and informed prayer partners for the missionaries and Brazilian churches.

The tour group to Brazil is tentatively scheduled to leave Minneapolis for Rio on April 8, and return to Minneapolis on April 25, 1989. The following is a tentative itinerary:

April 8 - Depart from Minneapolis for Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (arrival on April 9).

April 11 - Depart Rio de Janeiro for

Mexico update

The Central Mexican Lutheran Church celebrated her 9th Annual Conference on July 28-31, 1988, in midst of much joy.

From Pastor Samuel R. Flores' report, we take out some details and deduce that this year has been a year with many blessings from God.

In October, 1987, and February, 1988, we had two evangelism campaigns in Leon. In the first (October 25 to November 1) several persons and families listened to the Gospel for the first time; Mr. Ramon Castillo and Miss Rosa Valdespino professed faith and were confirmed as members of our church; also, the Lopez Chagoya family members accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. The preacher each night in this time was Pastor Flores. In the other (February 7 to 14) the speaker was the Rev. Arnulfo Dominguez from Monterrey, N. L. In both campaigns all the congregation worked together actively.

In November, with attendance of 22 young people and 11 adults, we had one encampment where several young people listened to God's Word for the first time and accepted Christ as their Savior.

In July of this year (1988), we had four Vacation Bible Schools: one of

two weeks in Leon with 32 children; two in Irapuato of one week with 20 children; and one in Celaya of one week with an average of 12 children in attendance.

After our Annual Conference (August 11-14), the congregation, St. Andrew Apostle in Leon, joyfully received the V National Inter-Lutheran Congress of the Mexican Youth. This gathering was begun eight years ago by the initiative of our church. We believe that this Congress is now and will be in the future a great blessing for the Lord's work in Mexico, because the purpose is to promote the vocation for the Christian Ministry among our Lutheran youth.

In October, we will have General Evangelism in Leon, Celaya and Irapuato. The congregations are preparing to collaborate.

The Lord's work in Irapuato this year will be attended by Raul Hernandez Ramirez, who finished his theological preparation in Mexico City on September 2nd, the date of his professional examination.

Please pray for the Lord's work in Mexico and also for those who serve Him.

*In the Love of Jesus,
Leticia Elena Flores Robles*

Iguacu Falls.

April 13 - Bus ride from Iguacu Falls to Campo Mourao.

April 17 - Night sleeper bus from Campo Mourao to Curitiba.

April 20 - Depart Curitiba for Brasilia.

April 21 - Depart Brasilia for Vitoria.

April 24 - Depart Vitoria for Minneapolis (arrival on April 25).

The estimated cost is \$1,750 per person. This includes \$1,150 for all travel and an estimated \$450 for hotels and meals while in major cities. A

deposit of \$300 per person is required at the time of the booking. The final payment is required by the first week of March.

All travelers will be required to have a valid U. S. passport and visa to enter Brazil.

For further information and details contact Pastor Eugene Enderlein in the AFLC World Missions Office.

Write: Brazil Tour
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441.
or Call: (612) 545-5631.

—Missionaries Paul and Becky Abel

HEARING *the perception senses in God's wondrous design*

Today you and I have probably heard a bird call, the wind blow, and maybe the rain patter. This week you and I have listened to the church choir and the organ, sounding forth with their various volumes and pitches. You and I attended while our pastors read from the Bible and shared a sermon. A few saints harkened when God whispered to them. To *hear* — what a wonder!

When God created man, He gave him two ears, not for earrings, but to act as primary instruments for communication. With these ears man can hear: the Word of the Lord, the speech of one another, the newborn's cry, shouts of victory or defeat, songs and psalms of praise, and our prayers. "...the Lord said to me, 'Gather the people to Me, that I may let them hear My words, so that they may learn to fear Me all the days that they live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children so'" (Deuteronomy 4:10).

Again, in Deuteronomy 5:1, we come to know that Moses, servant of God, summoned all Israel and said to them, "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the ordinances which I speak in your hearing this day, and you shall learn them and be careful to do them."

Cruden's Concordance has arranged many Bible sources for: to hear, hearing, heard, and listening. We can use them to discover how God's people have learned of Him and have passed the information from one generation to the next. "And Joshua said to the people of Israel, 'Come hither, and hear the words of the Lord your God'" (Joshua 3:9). Then, in Isaiah, these words, "All you inhabitants of the world, you who dwell on earth, when a signal is raised on the mountains, look! When a trumpet is blown, hear!"

Songs would not exist without our capability to hear them; David's psalms would not have been heard and passed on for us today. As early as Genesis 4:23, we were given our first hymn — a song of praise for Yahweh

our Lord. In Judges 5:3, we are told, "Hear, O kings; give ear, O princes; to the Lord I will sing, I will make melody to the Lord, the God of Israel." In Ephesians 5:19, we are taught, "...addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart."

Basically we can hear because our ears, located on each side of our head, are in close proximity to the brain. They change vibrations into messages. Sound waves enter the outer ear and travel to the eardrum, making it vibrate. This vibration causes three tiny bones (hammer, anvil and stirrup) to move in turn. The vibrations are passed along to a fluid-filled cochlea in the inner ear. From here, nerve impulses are sent to the brain, which interprets the frequency, pitch, volume, amplitude and quality and tells our bodies what to do about it.

John Illman, in his book, *The Body Machine*, illustrates the greatness of the ability of mankind to hear: "Imagine a keyboard the size of a pea with some 20,000 notes laid out with the treble notes at one end and the base notes at the other end; and an amplifying system built up from the body's three smallest bones: and a drum which vibrates like a loudspeaker cone — these are some of the more remarkable features of the human ear, which enables the brain to transform the vibrations of sound waves into the sounds of language and music." Ears also include the organs of balance.

Mary heard God when she was told that she was to deliver the Son of God — Jesus. She heard His first cry when His lungs expanded as a man on earth. The shepherds were made aware of Jesus' birth, when in Luke 2:10, we learn, "Be not afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all people." In Matthew 2:3, Herod the king also heard about Jesus' birth.

During Jesus' time on earth, the

people heard about God, our Holy Father, repentance, baptism and salvation. We hear these things today. Jesus summarized His reason for His message this way: "If any one hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world" (John 12:47). Read I John!

Then Jesus was tried. "And Agrippa said to Festus, 'I should like to hear the man myself.' 'Tomorrow,' said he, 'you shall hear him.'" When Jesus was before Pilate, the Roman procurator asked Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears My voice."

While He hung on the cross, the world heard Him say, "It is finished." Mary Magdalene heard Jesus when He said to her, "Go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to My God and your God'" (John 20:17).

For many years and times, we Christians, and some of the rest of the people, have heard the story: In the beginning was God, Jesus' birth, His crucifixion and death, and the Christian way. But the greatest function of hearing is the knowledge that God hears our prayers, whether through the Lord's Prayer, by groups, or when one is alone and speaks in either petition or praise. We are promised this ability in Psalm 66:19, "But truly God has listened; He has given heed to the voice of my prayer." It is my prayer, between Him and me. "Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry; hold not thy peace at my tears! For I am thy passing guest, a sojourner, like all my fathers" (Psalm 39:12).

We have ears. We have heard the word. It is "now" that we should "Go, tell it on the mountain" so that others may hear about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and the glorious message of salvation, and tell others.

—Illman, John. *The Body Machine, Your Health in Perspective*. New York: Crown Publishing, 1981.

COPYRIGHT LAWS

We are carrying a news release in this issue from the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation. The subject of the release deserves our attention and also that of state and national legislators.

Apparently many, including churches, are in violation of the law when they show videocassettes which have been bought or rented to non-home groups or audiences. Again, apparently having a videocassette and a television set does not in itself make every showing of the cassette legal. Warnings or disclaimers imprinted on the videos don't get much more attention than those on cigarette packages.

The word is, "Let your conscience be your guide." Seek to be as above board in your dealings as you can be. Having no videocassettes of our own and never having personally rented any, the problem doesn't strike close to home. But there is a related situation.

We are thinking of the use of copyrighted written material and laws requiring permission to copy or reproduce. It is hard to imagine that very many of us have never violated the laws referring to the use of written material which has been copyrighted. Securing permission to reprint or reproduce takes time and effort. It may also involve money.

The use of copiers, now found in many of our church offices, and in some homes, make duplication of articles, music, etc., very easy. Many times there is no intent to cheat or take advantage, but the duplication may not be right.

Actually, things have gotten out of hand. The easy access to tape recorders and copiers, as well as video cassette recorders and TV sets, has made duplication of sounds, pictures and words very easy. It's very hard to police one's self entirely. A nation of violators of copyright laws has been created. Here is where state and national legislators can step in and show us how we can deal honorably in a world where technology has made duplication so simple that even a child can do it.

The Lutheran Ambassador has tried to be quite careful, but hasn't toed the line completely. We're not proud of the lapses, but neither do we want to parade as being blameless either.

Let us encourage one another in reference to this matter.

THE LENTEN ROAD

Our personal library contains a book entitled *With Him All the Way*. It was written by Oscar A. Anderson and has been out for quite a few years. In 15 chapters the former parish pastor traces the steps of Jesus from the time He went "up to Jerusalem" (Mark 10:32-34) until He emerged from the tomb on resurrection morning into what Anderson calls the "Garden of Life." That is how one man approached one Lenten season with his people.

In reality, it is what every pastor and his people ought to do in that time of the church year which we call Lent. Oh, it may not be a geographical or strictly chronological journey, as Anderson does in his book, but there should be some retracing of the Way of Sorrows our Savior went in that last fateful week.

Any number of themes may be chosen for Lenten preaching, but let there be frequent reference to the cross of Jesus even if the texts are not specifically from the Passion Story. After all, as Lutherans we choose to concentrate on the vicarious atonement of Christ for us in this particular part of the year.

It is too bad that some Lutheran churches today don't seem to know what Lent is for and fail to make use of the midweek service as a preaching and worship service. Why this change and departure? Let us see the midweek Lenten service as a great opportunity for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

May the Lord bless this Lenten season in your own life and in your congregation.

O Christ, Our King, Creator, Lord

St. Gregory
Tr. Ray Palmer
(Service Book and Hymnal)

O Christ, our King, Creator, Lord,
Saviour of all who trust Thy Word,
To them who seek Thee ever near,
Now to our praises bend Thine ear.

In Thy dear Cross a grace is found,
It flows from every streaming wound,
Whose power our inbred sin controls,
Breaks the firm bond, and frees our souls.

Thou didst create the stars of night,
Yet Thou hast veiled in flesh Thy light,
Hast deigned a mortal form to wear,
A mortal's painful lot to bear.

When Thou didst hang upon the Tree
The quaking earth acknowledged Thee,
When Thou didst there yield up Thy breath
The world grew dark as shades of death.

Now in the Father's glory high,
Great Conqueror, never more to die,
Us by Thy mighty power defend,
And reign through ages without end.

Principles and

(In the previous or fourth installment of this paper, Dr. Monseth continued his discussion of the question, "How do we balance godly concern for the salvation of every member of our congregation with proper regard for the grace of God bestowed on them in the sacrament of baptism?" He further went on to answer these two questions, "What is meant by the expression, 'coming to a conscious experience of sin and grace?'" and, "Is this necessary for every person even though they may have been baptized?" In this concluding installment which follows, he deals with several other questions regarding our ministry of evangelism.)

Part V Conclusion

3. Given our Lutheran understanding of the bondage of the will and the nature of divine grace, is it appropriate to use such terms in describing the application of salvation as "accepting Christ," or "receiving Christ?"

As Lutherans, we understand God's Word to teach that as a result of the Fall of man into sin, man not only does not desire to have fellowship with God restored, but also his will is powerless to make any kind of spiritual decision. Our Small Catechism expresses what we believe on this score. "I believe that by my own reason or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him" (*Book of Concord*, Tappert, p. 345). The Formula of Concord amplifies this matter when it says:

We believe that in spiritual and divine things the intellect, heart, and will of unregenerated man cannot by any native or natural powers in any way understand, believe, accept, imagine, will, begin, accomplish, do, effect, or cooperate, but that man is entirely and completely dead and corrupted as far as anything good is concerned. Accordingly, we believe that after the Fall and prior to his conversion not a spark of spiritual powers has remained or exists in man by which he could make himself ready for the grace of

God or to accept the proffered grace by and for himself or can apply himself to it or prepare himself for it, or help, do, effect or cooperate toward his conversion by his own powers, either together or half-way or in the tiniest or smallest degree (Formula of Concord, Tappert, p. 521).

The concern of our confessors was to ward off the inroads of synergism, the idea that man has the capacity somehow to cooperate with God in his salvation. Every pastor in our AFLC heartily agrees with the Confessions in affirming the bondage of the will. Yet, if we use terms like "accepting Christ," or calling upon people to "receive Christ," are we in effect undermining this affirmation and becoming synergistic? Let us put it this way — we may or we may not be.

The synergistic problem arises in this regard when there is an attendant failure or neglect in rightly distinguishing Law and Gospel. When the Law is clearly and fully proclaimed, the Law that convicts not only of sins but also of sinfulness, when it is taught in such a way that the absolute depravity and inability of the human will is painfully clear — and, on the other hand, when the Gospel is shown to be in its essence an unconditional announcement of forgiveness that not only is true but also dynamic in creating the very faith that is called for, the problem of synergism evaporates. It is then evident that "the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, etc." (SC, p. 345). He is the One Who gives me the strength to accept or to receive. Thus, if the proper distinction and delivery of Law and Gospel is the context, not only is it not synergistic to employ terms that call for response, it is unscriptural not to do so. In the context of Law and Gospel, one finds the appeal for a verdict throughout Scripture. Our Lord began His earthly ministry with the call, "Repent and believe

in the gospel" (Mark 1:15). He spoke of the need to "receive" the kingdom of God like a little child (Mark 10:15). He spoke of receiving the "good seed," the word in the parable of the four soils (Luke 8:11-15). The Apostle John wrote of the need to "receive" Jesus if one would become a child of God (John 1:12). The Apostle Peter called for repentance and a turn to God if his hearers would appropriate the offered forgiveness of sins (Acts 3:19). The Apostle Paul often spoke about "receiving" and "accepting" Christ and His Word (Colossian 2:6; I Thessalonians 2:13). None of these references suggests for a moment that somehow a person has the innate ability to come to Christ, but rather, they teach that in the context of Law and Gospel, one can well expect that the Holy Spirit is at work through the Gospel to create the response appealed for. To omit the mention of need for responding, however, is to ignore the biblical ingredients of repentance and faith.

The real issue in the so-called synergistic controversy of the sixteenth century as well as today was the source of one's salvation: man or God? The opponents included not only Romanists but also some who professed to adhere to the Augsburg Confession. Can fallen man cooperate in any way in obtaining his salvation? The answer of the confessors and our answer with them is no. However, this biblical recognition did not hinder our confessors from employing such expressions as "accepting the forgiveness of sins," "obtain his (God's) mercy," "receive this grace of God" (Tappert, pp. 119, 121, 154-155, 531, 532, 535, etc.), nor should it hinder us.

Some years ago, Dr. John Warwick Montgomery, a pastor of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, conducted a seminar on the campus of the AFLC schools. In describing the divine economy of salvation, he compared conversion to the familiar illustration of

Practices of Evangelism

entrance through a gate. Looking at the top of the gate from the outside, one sees an appeal "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved..." (Acts 16:31). Responding to that call, one enters the gate of salvation only to observe another biblical passage over the inside of the gate, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). The person believed according to the promise and was saved; yet, it was not a faith he had been able to muster but a faith created by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel promise.

While we need to be ever on the alert for the tendency within all of us to become synergistic, we must not be so intimidated in our ministry of evangelism that we approach people with the Gospel on the basis merely of telling the story without the accompanying call for response. There is a God-wrought repentance that is necessary. There is a God-created faith that is indispensable. These elements must not be omitted if we are to remain biblical and evangelistic Lutherans.

4. How should we assess the practice of "altar calls" or "coming forward to receive Christ" in light of our theology?

This question is closely related to the previous discussion. Again, it is the fear of synergism that raises a "red flag" for some. They are concerned lest the impression is given that walking down the aisle is construed as in some way a human contribution to the divine economy of salvation — a meeting God half way. Again the theology coming forth from the pulpit is vital in the matter. If it is made clear that to come forward is not a part of one's salvation but merely taking advantage of an opportunity to receive Christian counsel regarding the way of salvation as well as perhaps to pray with a fellow Christian, there need be

no problem. The issue really is not an aisle or an altar but an availing oneself of an opportunity to discuss one's relationship to Christ. On the day of Pentecost, there is not evidence that the Apostle Peter issued an invitation for anyone to come forward for spiritual help, but three thousand did. Instead of rebuking them for breaking up an orderly service, the apostle recognized their situation, heard their question, and gave them instruction on the way of salvation (Acts 2:37-39). Ideally, we would always have it so that people would assume the availability of spiritual counsel from the pastor or evangelist and make their needs known. But people may not necessarily assume this kind of opportunity. They need to hear that spiritual counsel is available, that we are available at any time to deal with life's most urgent question — "What must I do to be saved?" This availability need not take the form of an altar call; in fact, these may be relatively infrequent. The heart of the matter is that people with whom God the Holy Spirit is dealing through the Word know where they can find spiritual help.

C. K. Solberg, one-time evangelist for the Norwegian Lutheran Church of American, later a pastor at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, and remembered today by his books, hymns and poems, comments on this matter.

Is there not something lacking in the soul-winning ministry in the church of today? We have the Word of God in its truth and purity, and we preach our message on Sunday morning and evening. And if it is a soul-searching message in its application, we often see that there are some present who are deeply impressed. They may be seeking souls who for a longer or shorter time have been convicted of sin but have not found the way to peace with God. Perhaps some secret sin stands in the way, or possibly they have a mis-

taken idea of what is required to find peace with God. Often people are striving seriously but in vain to prepare themselves by doing this, that, or the other thing, before they feel they can come to the Lord and accept His forgiveness. It is surprising how many there are who, in various ways are laboring and groping in serious and honest, but mistaken ways, to be saved. I wonder if there should not be given an invitation and an opportunity at the close of services occasionally to meet the pastor in the sacristy for consultation and prayer (*Scriptural Evangelism*, pp. 2-3).

In the same context in which the Apostle Paul charged his young pastor-friend, Timothy, to preach the Word, he called on him to "do the work of an evangelist" (II Timothy 4:1-5). When the Word of God is proclaimed, we can always have the confidence that the Holy Spirit is at work according to the three-fold ministry our Lord outlined: "And when He comes, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:8). In this setting of the Spirit's working through the preached Word, we find a most opportune time to make private spiritual counsel available in some way.

5. What is the place of "testimony meetings" in the life of the congregation and how can we help and encourage our people in this regard?

In 1947, Dr. John Stensvaag, later to become president of the former Lutheran Free Church, spoke at the annual conference of the LFC on the subject of Georg Sverdrup's ideals for a truly "free and living" congregation. He pictured the local church at its best as a "flaming evangelizing force." Alongside "a zeal for evangelism," which was an unfailing mark of a living congregation, Sverdrup called for "frequent testimony meetings." He considered such occasions a wonderful means of mutual Christian edification

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and an opportunity for inspiration and help in the evangelistic mission. It was in the context of the preaching of the Word that such meetings would thrive best. After a message from the Word, an opportunity would be given for anyone from the congregation to bear witness of God's grace in Christ to them. The result of such testimony could be manifold: conviction of sin, worship and praise to God, increased concern for the unsaved, and help in seeing how God works through His Word in another believer's life.

Opportunity for Christian testimony when the congregation assembles appears to be more infrequent among us. Some would defend their lack of encouragement in this regard on the basis of abuses they have observed. Perhaps they have heard testimonies which were little more than "mini-sermons," or they many have been very self-centered or self-righteous. They have concluded that it is too risky to open up a meeting for testimony. Beside the problems experienced in terms of the content of testimonies, there is the difficulty sometimes of the "long pause" amidst a flutter of embarrassment by the congregation.

There is no doubt that abuses occur in regard to testimonies. But the blessing and mutual help of the testimony meeting far outweigh the abuses.

As an aid in helping one another to share our faith publicly, it would be very worthwhile to consider some of the testimonies in God's Word. For example, the frequent testimonies of the Apostle Paul could be traced for their recurring themes: the grace of God, personal unworthiness, the spirit of thanksgiving, the attention to Christ, etc. The pastor's own testimony could serve as an example for his people in its content and purpose. A personal word of encouragement to a timid soul could initiate a real breakthrough in his life. When the fear of sharing one's faith in the congregation is overcome somewhat, it is often easier to share that faith out in the community as well. This is one of the important connections of testimonies to evangelism.

Testimonies cannot be forced. It is the ministry of the Holy Spirit to embolden for witness. The best and most we can do as pastors is minister the Word, trusting the Holy Spirit to give our congregations a deeper hunger for Christian fellowship, and a deeper appreciation of how God has worked and is working in the lives of each other, all by His grace.

"Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the Lord and who meditate on His name" (Malachi 3:16).

There are many other questions that could be discussed in our desire to uphold truly biblical evangelism in content and practice. Again, the Word of God is our source of instruction. Its Gospel content is our message and our power. The Holy Spirit indwells us and infills us for courageous and loving witness to that Gospel. Let us pray that the salvation of precious souls, precious in God's eyes, may increasingly be our primary mission. C. K. Solberg writes,

"There is no more vital subject for the Christian Church to consider prayerfully and seriously than evangelism. The supreme mission of the Church is to evangelize the world, to bring the Evangel, the Gospel, the Glad Tidings of salvation to every sinner" (Solberg, p. 1).

We are not alone! The same Lord Jesus who commissions us as evangelists promises,

"Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

(The end.)

Lenten advice

Fast on criticism and feast on praise.

Fast on self-pity and feast on love.

Fast on ill-temper and feast on peace.

Fast on resentment

and feast on commitment.

Fast on jealousy and feast on love.

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Fast from selfishness
and feast on service.

Fast on fear and feast on faith.

— Selected



Reuben Unseth

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Son of Rev. and Mrs. Einar Unseth

Married to Amy Judkins

Children: Josiah 18 months, one pre-born

Home congregation:

Morgan Avenue Lutheran Church

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Graduated from St. Paul Bible College; Bismarck Jr. College

Also attended: Wm. Carey Int'l Univ.

AFLBS

U of Minnesota

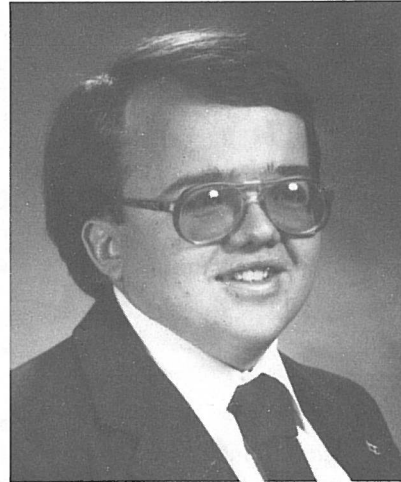
U of Texas, Arlington

Special interests: family activities, reading, Bible translation.

Personal Testimony — Through Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit has blessed me with all good things in Christ. I thank God that "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal. 2:20). Bringing me first to Christ in baptism — the washing of water with the Word — my wonderful Christian parents nurtured me in Scripture so that God brought me to a conversion when I was about eleven. The Lord has impressed me with twin life purposes — to know Him and to make Him known. God has blessed me so I might bring blessings to others.

Seminary Experience — While at AFLBS God pointed me to the seminary. I have studied with the intention of preparing for work as a Bible translator. My wife and I, therefore, spent one year studying linguistics in Dallas. Why then am I open for a pastoral call? Due to some health questions my wife has, we are unsure if a primitive living situation would be feasible. So, for a couple years, at least, we put Bible translator work on the shelf, until the questions can be resolved. Mission work, however, is the heartbeat of the church, and as part of God's church we will continue to be burdened to reach those without God's Word.

'89 AFLTS graduates



Lynn Wilson

Geneva, Nebraska

Son of Pastor and Mrs. Woodrow Wilson

Home Congregation:

Medicine Lake Lutheran Church

Minneapolis, Minn.

Graduated from York Junior College

and University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Special Interests: Reading, television, basketball.

Personal Testimony: I was saved through baptism as an infant. Christ came into my heart through the means of the water and the Word. I wish I could take some credit for my salvation, but I can't. He has done it all. My peace is His forgiveness. My strength is His grace. My comfort is His love. And I am so glad I have this "Friend so patient, kind, forbearing, of all my friends this Friend doth love me best; though I am weak and sinful, yet, when sharing His love and mercy, I am ever blest" (Concordia #295).

Seminary Experience: I felt the call to the ministry around the end of my high school years. The thing which motivated me most was lost souls — without Jesus there is no hope. After graduating from college I attended another Lutheran seminary in Iowa. I then took a leave of absence from seminary training to work with the handicapped. After two years I applied to a more conservative Lutheran Seminary, AFLTS, and was so thankful when my application was accepted. I spent my internship in the "Promised Land" of Valley City, North Dakota, under the helpful care of Pastor Terry Olson. I have at times feared that I would never make it through seminary, that I would be a failure. But God has been greater than my fears. For He has said, "I will never fail you nor forsake you." Because of that I can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid; what can man do to me?" (Hebrews 13:5-6).



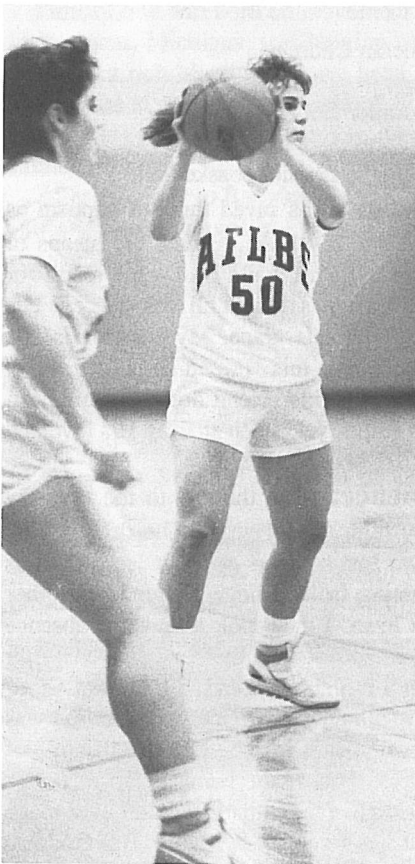
Annie Boleyn, Liberia, and Sahito Banaga, Ethiopia, at the Monday evening missions banquet.



Missionaries Paul and Becky Abel.

Missions Conference held

On February 5-8, the AFLC Schools, together with the Home and World Missions departments hosted the annual Missions Conference. Guest speakers included Rev. Einar Unseth, Rev. Paul Larson and Missionaries Paul and Becky Abel. The theme was "Proclaim Salvation Day After Day."



Sarah Huglen, Roseau, Minn., at a recent game. The men's and women's basketball teams are in the midst of their schedule which ends in March.



Tom Hanson, Fergus Falls, Minn., and Rebecca Nikunen, Escanaba, Mich., at the Wednesday morning prayer breakfast. Seminarian Todd Schierkalk shared his experiences in Mexico.

NEWS OF THE CHURCHES

Newark, Ill.

The installation for Rev. Rob Lewis as pastor of West Lisbon Lutheran Church, rural Newark, Illinois, was held on Sunday, January 8th, during the 11 a.m. worship hour. Rev. Robert Lee, AFLC vice-president, officiated at the service, which was followed by a fellowship dinner.

A reception for the Lewis family began at 2 p.m., with Gordon Hatteberg as the master of ceremonies. Devotions were shared by Donald Mickelson, and Rev. Harold Masted and Rev. John Skeie welcomed the new pastor on behalf of the district.

The program included musical numbers by a ladies' triple trio and a children's choir, together with a trumpet solo by Earl Gillum and an organ solo by Mrs. Gary Anderson. Gilbert Blankenship, chairman of West Lisbon, spoke on behalf of the congregation and presented cards and gifts to the new pastor and his family, who responded with appreciation.

Pastor and Mrs. Lewis and their four children moved to Illinois in late December from Abercrombie, N. Dak., where he had served the Bethany-Unit-ed parish since 1980.

Bemidji, Minn.



Former pastor of Bethany Lutheran in Bemidji, Minn., Chaplain D. Mark Antal of Columbia, S. Car., paid a visit to the church last fall, where he brought the morning message. Chaplain Antal was on vacation. Pictured with him is the present pastor at Bethany, Patrick Spicer.

Minnewaukan, N. Dak. — Rev. and Mrs. Jerome Nikunen and family left for Escanaba, Mich., on Dec. 19, to make their new home. Rev. Joel Rolf, Devils Lake, N. Dak., is serving as interim pastor for Trinity and Antiochia Churches.

Preaching Missions

DeKalb, Ill.

Grace Lutheran Church

Dennis Gray, pastor

March 5-9

Speaker: Rev. Terry Olson

Valley City, N. Dak.

Darrouzett, Tex.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

John R. Chandler, pastor

March 5-8

Speaker: Rev. Robert L. Lee

Minneapolis, Minn

Please remember these services in prayer.

Amery, Wis.

Students from AFLBS conducted a Basketball Clinic for the students of Mustard Seed Faith Academy in Amery, Wis. on December 2nd and 3rd. Along with basketball skills, the Bible School students shared testimonies and challenged the Academy students to press on for the Lord. Approximately 18 participants came to the clinic. The staff of Mustard Seed would like to thank Wayne Peterson, AFLBS boys' basketball coach, who lead the clinic.

— Pastor Brian L. Davidson

Goodridge, Minn.



Reiner Lutheran Church, eight miles southeast of Goodridge, Minn., was built in 1937. Through the past few years it has gone through a complete remodelling process done entirely by volunteer labor. The dining room addition, built in 1983, has been especially appreciated. Reiner Lutheran serves 15 families and shares a pastor with Our Saviour's Lutheran of Thief River Falls. Pastor Del Palmer will be serving both churches beginning April 1.

Mpls. District Men's Retreat announced

Victory In Christ Lutheran Church invites all men of the AFLC Minneapolis District to the annual Men's Retreat March 3-5, 1989. This year's topic is a continuation of the series begun last year of *Raising the Vision for Lay Ministry*. The specific area of focus will be Developing Devotional Life. Mr. Gene Quist, president of Emmaus Lutheran Congregation, Bloomington, Minn., will lead us in considering our theme.

Registration begins at 7 p.m. Friday, March 3, with refreshments and the first session follows at 9 p.m. The retreat ends after the Sunday service with lunch. Total cost is \$49. Reservation should be sent to Victory In Christ Lutheran Church, 1695 Gervais Ave., St. Paul, Minn. 55109.

Wilderness Camp Board meets

At the meeting on Nov. 19, 1988, there was a report by Norman Haugen on building a structure 112 feet by 62, similar to the one at Faith Haven Bible Camp, Battle Lake, Minn. It would cost about \$7.00 a square foot to build it. Rev. Gordon Grage and Sheldon Mortrud reported on new camp sites on the grounds.

A group from Fargo and Valley City, N. Dak., worked at the camp on the weekend of Sept. 15. The camp has a few ski trails for winter use. We would like to see more church groups using the camp.

A motion was carried to hire Sheldon Mortrud as caretaker. There will be a prayer and work breakfast at the camp May 12 and 13.

Present at the meeting were Norman Haugen, Lyle Narveson, Roland Peterson, George Hartman, Pastor Grage and Sheldon Mortrud.

—Lyle Narveson, secretary

Seminary receives Lutheran Brotherhood IMPACT funds

Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary has received the following funds through the Lutheran Brotherhood IMPACT program: \$700 in the third quarter of 1988 and \$1,495 in the fourth quarter. There were seven gifts in the third quarter and 16 in the fourth by Lutheran Brotherhood members, matched on a percentage basis by the company.

Since the beginning of the IMPACT gift program in 1979, AFLTS has received \$41,868.

IMPACT is one of Lutheran Brotherhood's many fraternal benefits provided for its members.

Here is comfort for the believers: that Christ patiently endured insults and mockery and thereby hallowed the mockery and the insults which the world hurls at Christianity.

—Wilhelm Friedrich Besser

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Second-class

Respecting copyright laws

Some months ago, then President Reagan signed the omnibus trade bill, putting foreign governments on notice that they will have to pay stiff penalties if they continue to condone violation of U.S. copyright laws and piracy of American intellectual property, such as motion pictures and home videos.

Theft of intellectual property is not restricted to foreigners, Motion Picture Licensing Corporation (MPLC), a Stamford, Connecticut, based copyright licensing organization, reports that religious institutions are responding in ever increasing numbers to the licensing requirements of the U.S. Copyright Act. The company says that since the beginning of the year clergy and church workers representing more than 12,000 U.S. churches of all denominations have obtained licensing proposals of which a large number have already been executed.

MPLC says it is the video revolution which is mainly to blame for the public's initial confusion about public performance restrictions in the federal copyright legislation. In the past, religious institutions — like most other organizations — wanting to exhibit motion pictures at church functions, rented 16mm films directly from studio representatives, with public performance fees included in the rental.

Today, most institutions take advantage of videocassettes readily available at local video stores. But in many

instances they overlook the warning — imprinted on each video — that they are "*For home use only*," that their purchase or rental does not include performance rights and are thus illegal to be shown publicly without a license.

In *Video Copyright Guidelines for Pastors & Church Workers*, Dr. Jerome Miller, a recognized copyright authority, points out that the law gives copyright owners almost complete control to regulate public performance of their creative works. And, says Miller, the U.S. Copyright Act defines all non-home showings of home videos "public performances" and illegal unless properly licensed. To simplify such licensing, a group of former motion picture executives formed MPLC and, with U. S. Justice Department permission, created the Umbrella LicenseSM for unrestricted public performance of home videos released by MPLC-affiliated studios.

The churches and institutions which have taken advantage of the Umbrella License are literally paying only pennies per member to legally show videos at various functions. Commenting on the increased licensing by churches, a prominent Pennsylvania clergyman told *USA Today*, "the church needs to set some kind of standard here." (Address: MPLC, 1177 Summer St. P. O. Box 3838, Stamford Conn. 06905-0838 or call (203) 353-1600.)