

What is the WCC?
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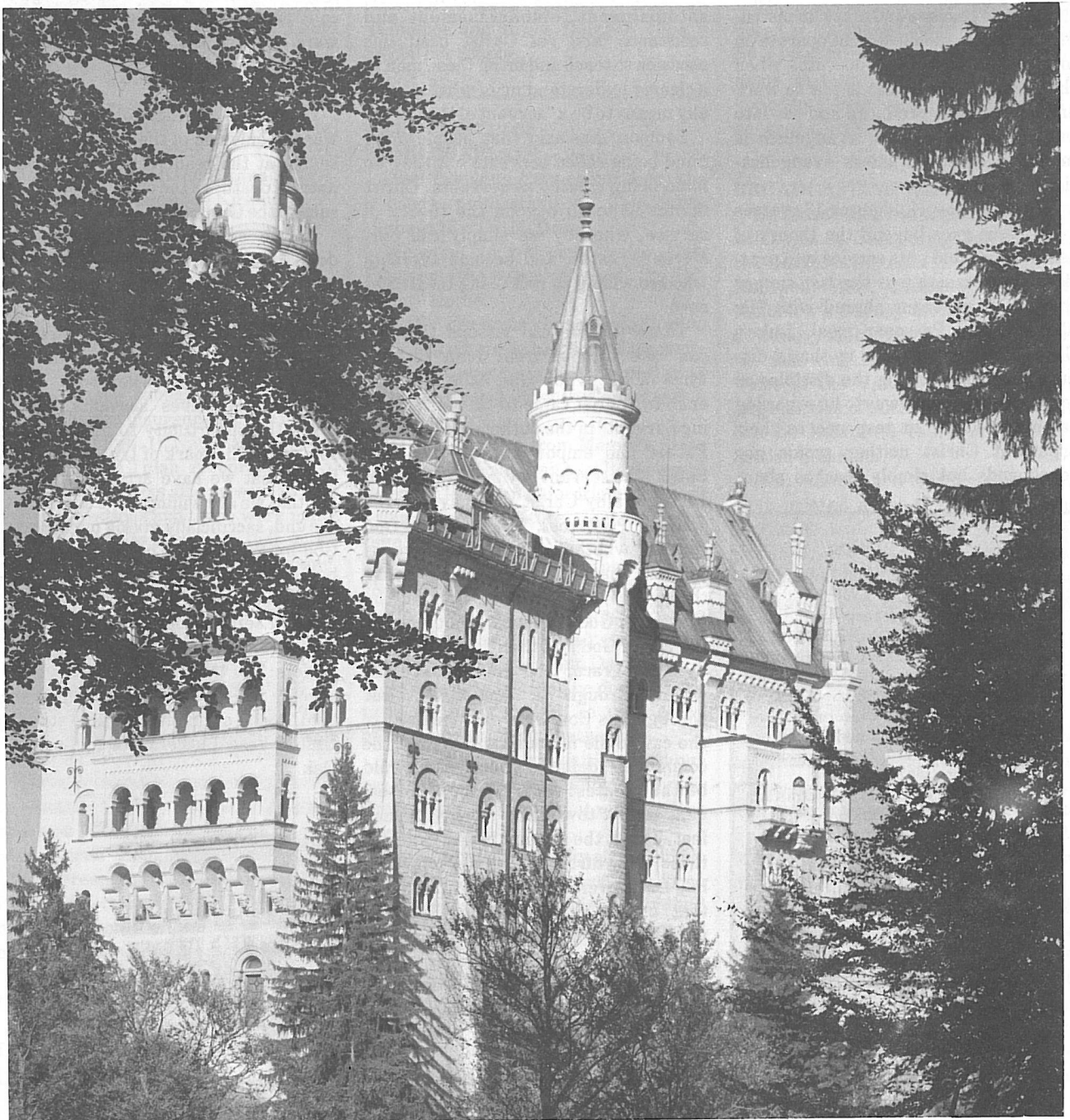


Photo by Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.

at the MASTER'S FEET

Theoretical Servants?

The word *theoretical* is defined as that which is not practical or is speculative. There are many theories that exist, that put into practice become realities. Musical theory becomes a creative reality when a musician puts theory into practice and plays an instrument. An automobile cannot operate on mechanical theory, but operates when the theory of mechanics is put to work and an engine is produced and set into motion. In the church, evangelism is merely theoretical unless evangelization takes place.

In John's Gospel, chapter 13, verses 1-15, Jesus goes beyond the theory of servanthood and puts service into practice. The occasion was the last supper that the Lord Jesus shared with His disciples, the Passover meal. Luke's Gospel (chapter 22) tells us that a dispute had arisen among the disciples as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. In response to their argument Christ neither scolds nor reprimands but simply teaches about

servanthood by becoming the servant. Taking some water and a towel He dressed Himself for service and washed the feet of the disciples one by one, a task reserved for the lowest servant.

The response of the disciples was astonishment, embarrassment and resistance, and yet Christ used this occasion to teach and bring these men to a clearer understanding of what it actually means to be a "servant of the Lord."

Someone has said that people *don't* mind being *called* servants but they *do* mind being *treated* as servants. Christ invites us to go beyond the theory of service, whereby we simply call ourselves servants, and become servants who are willing to risk being treated as such.

There are several lessons that we can take with us from John 13:1-15. First of all, when God calls, He also enables. Christ came to be the "suffering Servant" in the authority of God the Father and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The servant of God is authorized for service by Christ who gave us His spirit at Pentecost. The task that God calls to, whether grand or obscure, is the task that God wants to accomplish through us, His servants. Second, the servant of God responds in obedience to the call of God and then "gets to work" by God's grace. God did not save the world through a committee, but through His Son who was obedient to the call to die for our sins. While "the committee" debated about who would be the greatest servant, the true servant took a towel and began to wash feet. Third, the servant had to confront those with dirty feet. Peter objected but Christ reminded him of his need, that unless he allowed the Lord to wash his feet he (Peter) could have no part with Christ. As servants of the Lord, we must confront a needy world even if it means opposition. The world is

unclean with sin and must be washed in the blood of Christ.

It was not until after the resurrection, and even Pentecost, that it became apparent to the disciples what servanthood really was. The disciples had to allow their ideas of a political triumph and the establishing of a physical kingdom in which they would have a significant part to die. By God's grace they were brought to the place where they were willing to give their very lives in service to Christ.

History tells us that John the Apostle was the only one of the twelve commissioned at the resurrection who died a natural death, all the others died for the sake of the Gospel.

Is the suggestion, then, that we deliberately put ourselves in jeopardy for the satisfaction of feeling like we've become servants? No, rather the Lord invites us by His grace to give ourselves to Him without reservation, knowing the time may come when we will not only call ourselves servants but be given the opportunity to be treated as servants. The mark of true spirituality is not that we have actually suffered, but that we are willing to be servants to the end, sacrificially giving ourselves to God by His grace. The true servant is not one who vies for position in the kingdom, but one who accepts the garment of servanthood as God's gift and privilege.

Note: The thoughts for this devotionals come from a good discussion on servanthood at our midweek Bible study at United Free Lutheran of McLeod, N. Dak.



by Pastor
Robert Lewis

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history,
theology,
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THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

“... the history of the
last twenty-five years
shows that concerns
about the WCC were
well-founded.”



by Pastor
Ralph M. Rokke
Minneapolis

The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations was organized in 1962 at a conference at Thief River Falls, Minnesota. At that organizational Conference five reasons were given for why this new church body was being organized. The fourth reason was this: The AFLC “believes that Christian unity is a spiritual concept and not a man-made organization or body such as the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches, etc.”

The founders of the AFLC saw that participating in the merger at that time would have led them into membership in the World Council of Churches, and that they did not want. Today the AFLC still does not belong to the World Council of Churches (WCC) and history of the last twenty-five years shows that concerns about the WCC were well-founded.

Let us look briefly at the history of the WCC and then at some of its theology and practice. Let us consider how historical precedent suggests that there is great danger in an organizationally-united world church such as the World Council of Churches is seeking to form. Let us consider how prophecy warns us of efforts to unite all churches and all religions into a world-wide religious confederation and, finally, let us consider what the AFLC's continuing stance should be with regard to the WCC and the ecumenical movement of which it is a part.

History of the WCC

The World Council of Churches arose out of the ecumenical movement which has been a very significant part of 20th century church history and the WCC has also served to advance the goals of that movement. Simply put, the goal of the ecumenical movement is to bring all of the churches and denominations of the world into one united organization which can then speak and act on behalf of all Christians.

The vision for the modern ecumenical movement began in the 1800s, largely in the churches of England. Liberal churchmen there longed for an end to denominational separations. They wanted unity and they cared little about doctrinal differences. The British ecumenists were not very successful, however, in bringing their dreams into reality.

Liberal American churchmen took up

the same goals and they carried them forward with more success in this country. The Federal Council of Churches was organized in Philadelphia on December 2-8, 1908. At that time, for the first time in history, 33 denominations became linked together in one inter-denominational organization.

The Federal Council of Churches emphasized from its beginning a social gospel. Particularly, it supported the development of the labor union movement in the United States. The FCC focused on social concerns rather than on the Gospel of salvation from sin through faith in Jesus Christ. The Federal Council existed from 1908 until January 1, 1951. At that time it was succeeded by the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

The World Council of Churches is an organization which was founded to achieve on a world-wide level what the Federal Council had achieved on a national level in the U. S. The World Council was formed on August 23, 1948, in a meeting at Amsterdam, Holland. Originally, there were 150 churches enrolled as charter members. Twenty-eight of them were American. Today there are approximately 300 member churches from 100 countries. The main headquarters for the WCC is located in Geneva, Switzerland.

Theology and Practice

In 1978, the World Council of Churches announced that it was giving a grant of \$85,000 to the Patriotic Front, a guerilla group in Africa. That guerilla group had strong Marxist connections and it had recently killed 35 Christian missionaries and their children. Shortly after the grant was announced, the Patriotic Front shot down a civilian airliner, and then it proceeded to kill the survivors of the crash.

One month later another \$125,000 was given by the WCC to SWAPO, another African guerilla group. Such use of WCC money, much of it contributed by American churches, was so astounding that it even prompted 60 Minutes, the TV news program, to do an expose' of the World Council of Churches.

In 1983, the Sixth World Assembly of the World Council of Churches was held at Vancouver, British Columbia, in

WCC . . .

Canada. The Assembly began with the offering of dried fish and tobacco leaves to an Indian god. The fire of the sacrificial offering was kept burning for the duration of the Assembly.

A totem pole was presented to the WCC assembly by native Americans. It was erected in Vancouver during the Assembly and afterwards it was shipped to Geneva to be placed on the front lawn of WCC headquarters. There it is to serve as a permanent reminder that the WCC respects other religions and will not try to convert members of other religions to Christ.

In John 14:6, Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me." He said, in John 3:18, about Himself: "He that believeth on Him (Me) is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Because of these words of Christ, true Christians have always believed that preaching the Gospel and leading souls to Christ is the highest service that can be performed for them. The WCC does not believe in true evangelism. It apologizes for it. It prefers social action and even then its efforts are so radical and so far from the teachings of Christ that it supports revolutionaries and murderers.

Historical Precedent

The professed aim of the World Council of Churches is the same as that of the ecumenical movement as a whole. It is to unite all of the churches of the world into one global organization which can then speak and act on behalf of all Christians.

The last time in Western history when all Christian churches were organizationally united was in the centuries preceding the Reformation. Before Martin Luther and the Reformation, all the churches of Europe were united under the pope, and yet the churches at that time were not faithful to God and His Word simply because of their organizational unity. On the contrary, the Church was riddled with more corruption, more abuses of power, and more false doctrines than it had ever known before.

**"The Assembly began
with the offering
of dried fish
and tobacco leaves
to an Indian god."**

Luther wanted to restore the pure teaching of God's Word to the church, but to do that he had to shatter its outward unity. Luther found that the strongest opposition to his work of proclaiming the truth of Christ came from a church which was organizationally united but which was apostate.

Because of this historical precedent, it is right for us to be very wary of any effort to unite churches organizationally but without agreement on pure doctrine. Concentrated power is too easily corrupted. When power is concentrated in the hands of one man or a small committee of men, it is too easy for that man or those men to become corrupt and support error rather than truth. A corrupt authority in the church is deadly to souls.

We in the AFLC believe that the congregation is the right form of the kingdom of God on earth (Fundamental Principle #1) and that rightfully there should be no authority above the local congregation other than the Word and Spirit of God (Fundamental Principle #5). These convictions guard against corrupt, centralized authority, and they are biblical. Christ is our head. He guides us through His Word.

Prophetical Concerns

Prophecies in the Bible suggest that in the last days, before the return of Christ, a man of sin called Antichrist will arise in the world. Antichrist will head a world government which will control a world economy and he will persecute the true church of Jesus Christ.

In Revelation, chapter 17, the Bible declares a vision of a woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast and decked with precious stones and pearls and having in her hand a golden cup full of abominations and filthiness. The Bible calls this woman Babylon and it says that the beast upon which she sits will make war against Christ and against His people.

Many Bible interpreters view this woman in Revelation 17 as a symbol for an apostate world religion which will exist in the last days. They also see the beast upon which she sits as a symbol of the world-wide government of Antichrist who will be her ally and will join her in persecuting the church.

If these interpretations of Revelation 17 are correct, then God has forewarned us in His Word of exactly the kind of world-wide government and world-wide, apostate religion for which we now see the foundations being laid. Let us continue in the Word and in prayer, for the Bible tells us in II Timothy 3:1, "... in the last days perilous times will come."

The AFLC and the WCC

Our AFLC statement on the World Council of Churches says that we believe that Christian unity is a spiritual concept and not a man-made organization or body. That statement accords perfectly with the Lutheran Confessions. In the Apology of the Augsburg

Nourish Our Souls

Dear heavenly Father,
From whom cometh
Grace and wisdom
Unto life eternal,
We humbly pray
That these precious gifts
Be bestowed upon us
In rich measure.

Feed us with the
Bread of Life
That has come down from
heaven, that our souls
May be nourished,
Fitting us to fight
The good fight
Of faith.

"Many Bible interpreters view this woman . . . as a symbol for an apostate world religion which will exist in the last days."

Confession, we read, "The church is not merely an association of outward rites like other civic governments, however, but it is mainly an association of faith and of the Holy Spirit in men's hearts" (Se Tappert, p. 169). Christian unity is not man-made. It is God-given.

The Apology goes on to say that the true church is made known by its pure teaching of the Gospel and its use of the sacraments in harmony with the Gospel of Christ. We in the AFLC also hold this to be true.

Since the beginning of the AFLC in 1962, we have wanted to be a basically positive church body. We know that the devil is at work in the world in many ways, but our mission is not merely to point out the devil's works and attack them. Rather it is primarily to build the church of Christ. By building Christ's kingdom we oppose the devil and the best way to build Christ's kingdom is to preach faithfully His Word and rightly administer the blessed sacraments which He has given to us.

This, then, is and should remain our perspective on the World Council of Churches. We are wary of it. We see much in it that is wrong and sinful. Nevertheless our major calling is not to focus on that, but rather to preach the Word. As we do that, as we have Christ's Word richly among us, then the Holy Spirit will also fulfill among us the prayer of our Lord in John Chapter 17. He will make us one. He will grant us true spiritual unity among ourselves and with other Christians.

MY CAPTAIN

Out of the light that dazzles me,
Bright as the sun from pole to pole,
I thank the God I know to be
For Christ the conqueror of my soul.

Since His the sway of circumstance
I would not wince nor cry aloud,
Under the rule which men call chance
My head with joy is humbly bowed.

Beyond this place of sin and tears—
That life with Him! and His the aid,
That spite the menace of the years,
Keeps, and shall keep, me unafraid.

I have no fear though strait the gate;
He cleared from punishment the scroll.
Christ is the Master of my fate;
Christ is the Captain of my soul.

Dorothea Day
(*Youth's Favorite Poems*)

(Ed. note: This poem is the Christian's answer to William Ernest Henley's "Invictus.")

Let Thy Holy Spirit
Brood over us
And unvail to us
The glorious riches
To be found only
in close fellowship
With Thy Son,
The crucified and risen
Christ Jesus,
Our Savior.

Defend and uphold us
When we are tempted
Of the world,
Of the flesh and
Of the devil,
And at all times
Keep us near to
The throne of grace
Where is to be found
Help in time of need.
Hear our prayer
For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Gerhard Rasmussen,
Vesper Meditations

A personal testimony

I was raised in a Christian home in Egypt. I used to go to church every week on Friday, which is our day off, according to the Muslims. When I was 12 years old I took a position in the church as a priest's helper in the temple of a Coptic Church because the church asked me to do so. My parents were so glad to see me in the church as they saw their dream come true, for they promised the Lord that if they ever had a son they would give him to the Lord to serve Him. The second reason for my being in the church was that it was good in the sight of others. Besides pleasing my parents and others, my main reason for going to church was that it was the only way to heaven (in my thinking). After leaving the church there always



by Saad
Boktor
Minneapolis, Minn.

Christ's peace in my heart

was happiness in my heart. But the sad part in my life was that I did not have much to do with the Word of God and I did not open the Bible for myself. I totally depended on the church for my salvation but I always had the feeling that I could not go to heaven because I could not live the perfect life the church asked me to do; I could not live up to the law. In the church they told me that I had to be a good person, confess my sins and do good, and that is the way to heaven. I thought, "What if I die now before I confess and do good work?" All my previous good work would go to waste and I still would not go to heaven. I felt that there was no hope for me, so I made the decision to leave God and the church alone and have nothing to do with them, which is the same decision so many people have made after they find out they cannot earn their way to heaven for they have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

◇

PEACE . . .

By then I was 18 years old and for six years I lived the worst years of my life, away from God. I was in pain, yet my conscience was not ready to give up. I knew something was wrong in my life, if not everything. I had the love of the people, but it was not enough for me and later I started to lose it day after day. Finally, I decided to go back to the church, repent, and stay with God even if I was not able to continue on very long. So I went back and a few months later I became engaged to one of the church's girls; God answered my prayer in the best time possible. I was accepted at Bible School and the government gave permission also. I was married and came with my wife to the U. S., to Bible School. After so much struggle with the language, I was able by God's help to sit in the classes and understand the Word of God through the mouths of faithful teachers and the reading of the Word.

Now, living in the Word of God, I began to know the truth. I was right when I said to myself before, "I cannot make it to heaven by myself because of all the mistakes I have made in my life." Even today I am not perfect; I still make mistakes as an employee, as a student, and as a husband. And now as I have become a father, I make more mistakes, which is as God calls it, sin. The Bible says that not only I am a sinner, but all men. From the Bible I knew that we do not have to make mistakes to be sinners, for even if we do not make them, we are still sinners because of our father Adam and his disobedience to God. "For as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners . . ." (Romans 5:19). Even if we do not make mistakes we are still guilty of not doing good and that is sin, too. The Bible says this in Romans 3:20: "Because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin." From studying the Word I found out that I am not in the boat alone, but all men are sinners and spiritually dead. We cannot save ourselves. We are guilty, and sinners, but God is perfect, and He must justly punish us as sinners. The Bible says, in Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death." God did not leave us without hope, however. He is merciful and will

help us. The Word says God came to earth in human body in the person of His Son Jesus Christ, the One who is perfect, powerful, and all-knowing, the One who is the ever-present God-man. Christ is He who lived on earth and died on the cross, not because He was guilty of something, for He never sinned. He was God Himself, but he obeyed the Father who is in heaven by taking all our guilt and sins and putting them to death with Him on the cross. And He rose from the dead that we may believe in Him and His Father who is in heaven and have a new life with Him now and hereafter in eternity. As Romans 5:19 says, "even so through the obedience of the one the many will be made righteous," Christ Himself said, in Matthew 26:28, "For this is My blood of the covenant, which is to be shed on behalf of many for forgiveness of sins." The Bible goes on to say, in Romans 3:24, "Being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

Now I know it is possible to go to heaven. The Word says it is a free gift; it is God's free gift to man. You and I cannot earn it and we do not even deserve it. But I know I have to do something to get that gift. I have to stretch out my hand and take it. But how? The Bible says, in Acts 16:31, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved, you and your household." It says that all we need to do is let God deal with us. As Christ said, in John 6:29, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."

After reading Romans 10:17, "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ," I have no question; it is just faith in God and His Son Jesus as our Savior that saves us. I believe in God and in Christ as my own Savior with all my heart. Believing is not just a word to say, but we have to trust Christ alone for our salvation, trusting the Holy Spirit to create that faith in our hearts day after day, more and more, as we continue reading and studying the Word of God.

I repent of my sins to God with a feeling of deep, deep sorrow, looking to the Lord for forgiveness, loving Him with all my heart from growing in the Word, serving Him and looking to Him in prayer and thanksgiving, telling His love and kindness to all people. I do

Long-term effects of Incarceration

Society suffers a tremendous cost whenever someone is sent to prison. There is the expense of a trial and welfare along with the actual cost of lock-up for a period of years. The author estimates that all the expenses of his trial, appeal, incarceration, parole and final discharge probably cost our government more than one hundred thousand dollars. His crime was relatively simple and easy to prosecute and his actual prison sentence was less than one year. Some criminal trials alone have totaled more than half a million dollars. These costs are not the only price society pays for crime and the justice system. The final and total figure may never fully be counted because the prison population is growing so rapidly in America and there are the long term effects or costs of locking people up. This is the hidden price that society pays for incarceration many years into the future.

"What is the ex-offender going to be like after a few years of freedom?"

what I can today, not to earn my salvation, but to show how much I love our Lord because He put that peace in my heart that is referred to in Romans 5:1: "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

(Saad and his wife Hoda came to the United States as newlyweds to study at AFLBS. Since their graduation, Saad has attended some classes at the seminary. They continue on the campus staff with the desire to eventually return to Egypt in Christian service. They are the parents of four-year-old Eva.)



**"It is not normal
for a human being
to be locked up
over a long period of time."**

Christians need to be aware of the long-term results of a prison sentence so they can effectively minister to anyone regardless of how long it has been since he left the jail cell. While most Christians never return to prison, almost any ministry to ex-offenders will eventually deal with the delayed effects of a prolonged lock-up. What is the ex-offender going to be like after a few years of freedom? Here are seven things you can look for:

First: Ex-offenders who have served a substantial prison sentence (six or eight years or more) may permanently withdraw from society including church attendance. This is not a hard and fast rule, but if they have served 15 years or more they may never fully re-enter society through regular church attendance and other public events. They are not against the church or any organized meetings, but they would rather just not be in any group. They seldom attend meetings of any kind as a result of their prison experience.

Second: They will distrust the justice system in spite of many good years of prison-free life. They have seen the system fail for them so many times that

they probably will never fully trust *any* political system ever again.

Third: They know how to live a simple life without a lot of material possessions. While you can say that this is a matter of economic necessity for many of them, the truth is that they have learned to live the simple life while they were in prison and they are satisfied with it.

Fourth: They don't rock the boat. Ex-convicts seldom change jobs or leave satisfactory employment situations once they get established on the outside of the prison wall. Again, this is not a firm rule, but they tend to make basic economic changes in their lives less often than the average man on the street.

Fifth: They tend to "think evidence." They know what makes up "proof" or "evidence" in a criminal trial and they tend to conduct their legitimate affairs on a daily basis as though they might have to "prove" their actions in court some day. They seldom get lost for several days. They are always able to substantiate their activities and daily location by paper work or a bona fide witnesses. They get receipts for cash purchases. This is done to various degrees by long-term convicts.

Sixth: They are loners by regular social standards. They are very nice fellows to be with (or talk to) but they would rather be alone.

Seventh: Almost all of them have a deep-seated faith in some kind of higher power or God. This may be the reason that they have stayed out of jail for so long. It may take the form of true Christianity through a positive salvation experience with our Lord Jesus Christ or it could be a simple respect for a higher power. They know that God is very real from experiences that they have had inside the prison. We need to direct that faith to include a personal relationship with our Lord and Savior.

Not all of the above traits will show up in every long-term ex-offender, but most men who have served an extended prison sentence will show some of these attitudes. When we minister to them we need to review the list and see how each of these potential problems can affect our ministry. The ex-offender may seem distant and aloof when he is really not that way at all. He probably will not beat your door down to talk to you and "fellowship," but he can be very cooperative because he has had a lot of training in just getting along in the world. He represents very little threat to society and his passive attitude will make your approach to him easy to present and the message difficult for him to actually receive - don't misjudge him because of his conservative or loner attitudes. He is hearing you. He respects your message and you are reaching him for our Lord Jesus Christ. Work him into one or two activities in your church such as a Bible study or your local jail ministry and then let him do his own thing. You can successfully minister to the long-term ex-offender if you know and understand your subject.

It is not normal for a human being to be locked up over a prolonged period of time and the long-term effects of incarceration become more evident the longer an individual is held in custody. If the prisoner makes good use of his time and regularly exercises his mind and his body, he can survive many years of incarceration without undue loss of normal human responses. Much will depend on the actual type of lock-up. Outside of the emotional damage to his well being, the brain and body tend to function very well in a lock-up. Prisoners are generally free from drugs and alcohol during their sentence and some medical care is usually available. The *type* of medical service is what contributes to their trauma. This is why you
cont. on p. 12

Attitude toward sin

To say the same thing another way, no one is ever saved without hating his sin and consciously turning his heart away from sin, toward Christ and righteousness.

John R. Rice

I want to grow, Lord!

—Mrs. Richard (Clara) Gunderson,
Lake Stevens, Wash.

Deliver me from an anxious heart

"Martha, Martha, thou art anxious and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful; for Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:41-42 Am. St.)

What, Lord? Are You talking to me? Are You telling me there is something here that is hindering me from being that child of Yours in whom you delight? I look to see the sparkle in Your eye that tells me You are happy with me. I long to know at the close of this day that I have not hindered You and Your will in any way. You have shown me that I do not need to measure up in the eyes of my fellow men, but only by the measure of Your Word. Did I say *only* by the measure of Your Word? Is not that the highest standard of all? I have pledged to You, yes, I have made a vow to You that I will serve You as long as I live. Now take from me all the anxieties in my day that prevent me from completing that promise. And show me the "good part" which will fill the empty places.

I remember telling the Lord one time that I wished I were a puppet and I'd just give Him permission to do with me what He would. That would be so much easier than having to make choices all the time! Scripture shows me clearly this is not the kind of submission He wants—no, I myself must make the choices of my own free will if I want the anxieties to give way to the "good part." These choices must be made daily.

Daily, I think that is a key word for me. How quickly the anxious thoughts creep up and tighten their hold on me. In looking back through the jottings of

my own spiritual diary I am almost embarrassed to see how preoccupied I have been in the area of our finances. There don't seem to be many days of quietly trusting in God's provision. There *are* lots of entries of trusting, but they are words of *anxious* trust. "You are going to answer, Lord, I know" "Lord, I'm still here, waiting for You." "You haven't forgotten, have You, Lord?" And more to the point, "When, Lord?" "We are overcome, Lord!" I would so quickly forget the verse in Matthew 6 which our heavenly Father gave to Dick and me as our verse even before we were married. Verse 33 says, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these things shall be yours as well." This verse both precedes and follows admonitions to not

"... there were always
so many things to do
and I fretted
from one to the next . . ."

be anxious! "Do not be anxious," Jesus said. "Clara, you are anxious and troubled . . . choose the good part like Mary has done."

Anxious thoughts about finances rival my worry about my children, another very vulnerable area in my life. What can I say here that has not already been written? Have we been faithful in teaching them thoroughly? Have we spent enough time with them? Have we been partners with them in pursuit of their interests? Will they make good decisions today? Is the negative out-

weighing the positive in our home? Is my own life a good example to them? How I longed for each of these children! How gracious my Father was in giving them to us. Do I now doubt His own concern for them? Do I now think I am on my own? For what purpose are all those promises in His Word that I claim? Are they not to give me a hope? Do we not hold one end of the covenant of baptism? How thankful I am for that handle to hang on to and to present before the Lord on their behalf! Daily I lay my anxious thoughts before our heavenly Father, accepting literally Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

This portion of Scripture in Luke, where Martha tries to make Jesus do her bidding, conforming Mary into what she herself thought Mary should be, speaks to me so clearly regarding my own outlook on the circumstances of my daily life. For many years Martha's role of hostess was also mine and there were always so many things to do and I fretted from one to the next, never realizing that they weren't all necessary. I thought I could get more done by being organized, making lists, checking off, never admitting to myself that my lists weren't working because they were too long! Too unrealistic for anyone short of Super Mom herself! Where did this get me? To the same spot in which Martha found herself, a complainer's spot, a martyr's spot! No, Jesus was telling her . . . all those fancy dishes aren't necessary. I know how to live more simply. A piece of bread will do. Let *Me* give *you* food that does not perish. Let *Me* fill *you* with Myself! Come, spend time with Me, as your sister Mary is doing.

cont. on p. 10

But take care that you use the world and its passing goods like a man who is awaiting the last trump; so that when it peals and when the last thunders resound you are prepared and ready, walking in holy ways and with a godly spirit. If you live like that, you are in no danger.

Martin Luther
(*Day By Day We Magnify Thee*)

editorials

YOU FIGURE IT

Hats off to the Lutheran pastor in Thief River Falls, Minn., we heard about who raised the issue of gambling in a recent sermon to his congregation, which was also broadcast over radio.

He, like we, was somewhat dumbfounded at the report that \$4.7 million dollars were spent in his city on local charitable gambling from July 1985 to June 1986, and especially when it is remembered that this (we live in the area) is considered an economically depressed area.

It is common to hear rumors of farmers quitting or on the brink of having to give up. There are rumors of stores in Thief River Falls, our larger trading center, having to close because of declining business. And yet there are people who have money for gambling and apparently plenty of it.

Pennington County, in which Thief River Falls is located, has a population of some over 15,000 people. If we give Thief River a trade area of 60,000 people, a generous figure, including the 15,000, this would mean that each man, woman and child had spent \$78.64 in the year for gambling. This doesn't take into account undercover and private wagering or money bet at racetracks at Canterbury Downs near Shakopee, Minn., and Winnipeg, Man. That would be a sizable amount also.

You figure it out. Are only the well-to-do doing this gambling or are those economically strapped putting down money in the hope that they will strike it rich somehow? Another sad fact is that much of this \$4.7 million is coming from church people, because this is a highly-churched area. It cannot be blamed entirely on agnostics and atheists.

There is more and more talk of lotteries and other forms of gambling as means by which cities and states can lift themselves up by their own bootstraps. Where is the moral leadership in government to stand against this and other evils? Let's look for it and when we find it, support it.

NOT TO DESPAIR

In a religious periodical recently we read about the conversion of Paul. Then there was a reminder that we shouldn't despair of those who persecute others, the innocent. Their lives can be changed, too. It was a good reminder to get.

Saul of Tarsus, an intellectual, believed so strongly that Christians were heretics to the Jewish faith that they didn't deserve to live. "I persecuted the Way to the death," he said (Acts 22:4). It is hard for us to imagine this now. Saul became such a courageous and beautiful follower of Jesus Christ and we know him by his new name, Paul.

The conversion of Paul should give us hope for the souls of society's unloveliest members: the terrorists of the Middle East, the members of the KGB, the criminal element which populates our prisons, the abortionists who "play God" with conceived but unborn life. And the list goes on. If a Paul, feared by believers in Jesus, could be saved, why not anyone else who fights God?

The writer of the thought before us suggested prayer for those who persecute. What a good idea. It's so easy to give up on people. Why not pray? We believe in prayer, do we not? Not all will be saved, although God wills it (II Tim. 2:3, 4). It is for us to approach the throne of grace with our supplications and intercessions and it may be that the Holy Spirit will be able to effect the salvation of someone of whom we have even despaired.

Remember Paul. He is a reminder that we shouldn't give up on others.

TO CONFIDENT ASSURANCE

Mrs. Alvin Grothe told this in her Bible study at the Annual Convention of the Women's Missionary Federation two years ago this coming summer.

An elderly lady answered an inquiry about her salvation with the words: "I hope so" (I hope I'm saved). Another said to her, "But you do believe." And the inference was that the lady did so. The point was that we have to encourage one another to stand on the promises of God's Word.

There can be little doubt that there are those in the Association who are *hoping* that they're right with God. And for some it is only a hope. There is something missing in their experience. But others should do more than hope. They ought to claim the promises.

What we mean is this. When asked if they have confessed their sins to the Lord, they answer yes. When asked if they are holding anything back from the Lord, they say no. When asked if they believe that Jesus died for them, paying the penalty against them, they testify that they do. And still they are apt to use that expression, "I hope so," in regard to salvation.

It can be a great modesty which causes them to be so cautious and unassuming. Modesty is good, but it can rob a person, in this instance, of the joy and peace which the Lord can give. It can keep them from entering fully into the Christ-life and throwing themselves into His service.

Paul said, "I know whom I have believed" (II Tim. 1:12). Jesus said, "I know My own and My own know Me" (Jn. 10:14). The promise is, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I Jn. 1:9). To the Philippian jailer, Paul said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). And Paul could write to the Christians at Rome, "Therefore, since we are justified by faith (that faith of Acts 16:31), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1).

The one who does believe but hasn't dared to step out in confidence must do so. The Christian religion is not a "hope so" one but a "know so" faith. That isn't bragging or boasting. It is all of Jesus; all the glory goes to Him. "Far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal. 6:14). And He is honored if we take Him at His word.

If you are one who has problems along these lines, we invite you to talk to your pastor about this matter we have raised. He would rejoice to discuss this with you and pray with you. He will have other Bible passages at hand to show you that will be helpful.

Minneapolis, Minn.

Morgan Avenue Lutheran of Minneapolis is presently undergoing extensive remodeling and decorating of the lower level of the church proper. In helping to raise needed funds for this project, ladies from the Midweek Finnish Fellowship group served two very successful "mojakka" (vegetable soup) and dessert suppers. Pictured are those who were involved in this endeavor: Mae Kangas, Alma Piilola, Hanna Perterla, Elsie Lillquist, Irja Lewis, Helen Kumpula, Lillian Toivonen, Celia Mackie, Phyllis Kangas and Martha Tieva. Rev. Yeddo A. Gottel is the pastor.



TO GROW . . .

Have you always thought this portion to be primarily for us women who hurry and fret so? Let me tell you about Henrick, who claims this verse as his. Henrick and his wife spent many years in Bolivia as missionaries and I doubt I know another couple more dedicated to the work of the Lord, more organized in their approach to it and more relaxed in carrying it out, as well as having the joy in seeing souls brought to the Lord. Yet Henrick's testimony is that he was a Martha, anxious and troubled about many things until he responded to the Lord's speaking, allowing changes to take place through the time spent daily in God's Word in worship, praise, meditation and memorizing. Now in illness and advancing years the sweetness of God's Spirit in Henrick is very evident to all.

How well the psalmist understood this penchant to anxiety! David, in Psalm 30, says he wants to be loosened from his sackcloth and girded with gladness so that his soul may sing praises to the Lord, and Psalm 46:10 says to "be still and know that I am God . . ." And again, in Psalm 139:23, "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any wicked (anxious) in me and lead me in the way everlasting!" I know that stress robs me of the joy of life.

Challenge me, Lord, to choose the good part and may I no longer be hindered in my growth by an anxious heart.

how I know I'm saved

Do you know how I know I'm saved? When the devil comes to make me doubt, to question my salvation, you know what I do? I do not dig into my own heart. No! I look elsewhere than within myself. I look to the blood-stained cross of Calvary and know that my sins are forgiven. The devil is resisted by the cross. He flees from me. He cannot whip that cross. He just cannot do it! That cross is our full assurance!

Do you know why Jesus died on the cross? I do not know how it is with you, but this is my religion. Do you know why the Son of God died on the cross? I am like that Presbyterian preacher Dr. Jones told us about; I think I am the biggest thing in the world because Jesus died for me! I sure am! So are you! But, listen, when Jesus died, God thought of me. I know He did. I do not have aesthetic sensibilities sharp enough (those are two big words that I've waited all week to use, but I have been to college, and I know several big words), perhaps I do not eat the right kind of food, perhaps I do not have brains enough, perhaps I am too dumb, perhaps my understanding is too limited, but I need the physical cross. If God had said ten thousand times, "God

so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son," and there had been no cross, I for one would have doubted, because there is too much suffering, there are too many tears, there is too much heartache, there are too many crippled children, too many hospitals, too many orphans, there is too much inequality on earth. Life is at times a dark, dismal proposition. The devil, calling attention to these blighting experiences, is constantly asserting the temptation to question God's love, even His existence. Yes, the old devil comes along and says, "Listen, do you mean to tell me you believe there is a God? Do you mean to tell me you are crazy enough to believe that God is love? Why look at the millions of your people, the Jews, who died in Germany under the bootjack for the Nazis."

I just close my eyes to think once again of that parade to Golgotha. I see Jesus Christ dying for my sins. I say, "Devil, as long as I can remember that the blood of Jesus Christ stained a cross for me, you cannot make me doubt the love of God!" There is the satisfaction I press upon your hearts.

Hyman J. Appelman,
How to Have a Revival

THE WOMEN'S PAGE

MINNEAPOLIS DISTRICT WOMEN'S RETREAT

May 1, 2, 3, Friday evening through Sunday noon. Theme: "Revive Us, O Lord." Psalm 85:6. Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wisconsin. Cost for entire retreat — \$37.00, Saturday and Sunday only — \$28.00.

PLAN . . . PRAY . . . PREPARE . . .
COME.

Tioga, N. Dak.



Zion Free Lutheran graduated thirteen 3-year-olds from their Cradle Roll. Pictured are: (seated) David Peterson, Shane Thull. (back row) Malinda Jorstad, Amber Haakenson, Ranie Wiedmer, LeAnn Eide, secretaries JoAnn Thull and Deanna Peterson. Graduates not pictured: Julie Ellis, Joshua Johnson, Austin Lee, Trevor Powell, Taylor Seibel, Christopher Syverson and Jacqueline Topel.

Foz do Iguacu, Brazil



Matthew 28:19, 20 ". . . go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

These ladies from our Foz do Iguacu congregation represented some of the continents and nations that we need to go to as Jesus says in our Bible verses. This skit was given at a Spiritual Retreat in September. 32 ladies and 5 children from our Londrina, Central, Lar Parana and Poema churches went on a two day bus excursion to Foz. We visited Itaipu Dam, shopped in Paraguay and went to the cataracts one day. Sunday we had a blessed time with all the ladies being involved in presenting the program. The Foz ladies group was well organized in serving tasty meals and we slept in the church property. A joyful time was had by all of us.

When facing trials . . .

A few months ago a friend and former teacher colleague received shocking news and began dealing with one of life's greatest trials. With her permission, I share this recent letter.

"Thank you for your prayers, cards, notes, and letters. They have been a wonderful evidence of the Lord's grace in my life throughout these weeks of cancer treatment. Never having carried a burden of illness like this, I could not anticipate the blessing and encouragement the kind of expressions of your love and concern would bring.

I would like to wait until my chemotherapy treatments are over and send you my praises for their termination; however, the Lord is worthy of my praise in the midst of trials as well as their conclusion. I have completed four monthly treatments. They have made me indescribably sick; . . .

Your mind probably rushes ahead with mine to 1987. What can we expect then? As of now, there is no test to determine

the effectiveness of these treatments on my cancer. The Lord may have healed me completely with or without them. Though unanswered questions linger, other more important questions come to mind which I can answer.

Who are you trusting?

I am trusting the Lord.

Is He trustworthy?

He is completely trustworthy.

What are you trusting Him for?

I am trusting Him for His perfect will.

What is His perfect will?

To make me like Jesus Christ.

What was Jesus' purpose while He was here on the earth?

To do His Father's will and glorify Him.

I know these truths are elementary, but against a "black drop" of cancer, they beacon as clarion truths which comfort my heart. May they do the same for you. Thank you for your continued prayers."

—Solveig Hjermstad

INCARCERATION . . .

will often hear prisoners complain about medical care in a prison and frequently they are right. Remember Hebrews 13:3 and picture yourself locked up and dubious about the medical care you were receiving for a health condition or symptoms you thought you had. You can't see a different doctor of your choice so this dilemma would have long-lasting emotional effects on anyone. You may think you are sick from imprisonment long after you are released and you may just be right. When you enter a prison and stay there for years, you lose track of prices, automobile models, the job market, clothing styles, and even everyday idioms or street slang. Time literally stands still as one month turns into the next. So do the years and even the decades. Correctional officers, prison volunteers and chaplains who go in and out of prison on a daily basis don't fully understand what it is like to enter a prison one time and abruptly stay there for months or years. As we begin to deal with the individual ex-offender and minister to him we will always encounter the long-term effects of incarceration. It will be evident for many years even after he is released.

The ex-offender tends to blame his economic and family problems on his incarceration. If his wife was unfaithful or his children undisciplined he tends to blame "the system" that went wrong for him rather than himself for committing the crime. "After all, look at all the ones that they didn't catch who have done things much worse than I did," he says. "How come I didn't get probation when so many others did." These are real questions that defy firm answers except to be judgmental and this is the last thing that Christians should do to win this ex-offender for Christ.

What can we do and how can we win this wary individual for Jesus Christ? It's not easy but let's look at some real answers from the *standpoint* of the ex-offender: 1) *God is love* and the former prisoner needs love and not judgment. Simple, kind gestures and real friendships are more meaningful to prisoners after incarceration than they ever were. He needs a real friend. Take time to be one and take the Gospel with you each time you go.

2) *He appreciates little things* more than ever. The sunrise, a little child, a

dog or cat, and a home-cooked meal. Anything that he was deprived of in the prison has a special meaning. Real silverware and a wooden toilet seat are little things that he was deprived of for many years.

3) *Recognize him as an individual* with a personal experience background and not as a "jailbird" with a past. He may regard your overweight or your divorce or other socially acceptable personal problems as far more serious than his own prison stay. His background and yours are different. Recognize it as such and accept his background as "equal" to yours. Maybe this is tough for a Christian to do, but it is necessary to reach this man for Christ. Our Lord associated with sinners and tax collectors who were regarded as the very worst type of people in New Testament days. Our Master would readily befriend ex-convicts today regardless of their crimes and prison terms. We can hardly do less.

AFLC 25th Anniversary Hymn

The vision of a dying world is vast before our eyes;
We feel the heartbeat of its need, we hear its feeble cries:
Lord Jesus Christ, revive Thy church in this, her crucial hour!
Lord Jesus Christ, awake Thy church with Spirit-given
power.

The savage hugs his god of stone and fears descent of night;
The city dweller cringes lone amid the garish light:
Lord Jesus Christ, arouse Thy church to see their mute
distress!
Lord Jesus Christ, equip Thy church with love and
tenderness.

Today, as understanding's bounds are stretched on every
hand,
O clothe Thy Word in bright, new sounds, and speed it o'er
the land;
Lord Jesus Christ, empower us to preach by every means!
Lord Jesus Christ, embolden us in near and distant scenes.

The warning bell of judgment tolls, above us looms the cross;
Around are ever-dying souls—how great, how great the loss!
O Lord, constrain and move Thy church the glad news to
impart!
And Lord, as Thou dost stir Thy church, begin within my
heart. Amen

Anne Ortlund

4) *Involve the ex-convict* in your Christian social life and use *his* talents whenever you can or wherever he is willing. You may find him very reluctant shortly after release but this is normal. It takes one to three years or more after release from the penitentiary to "brush the cell hall dust off your shoes" as we say of a return to normal life by regular social standards. The long-term effects of his jail experiences will still be evident, but he will be thinking more normally after that. It is at this time that we can draw him into our Christian group and use his talents. If he can cook or write or do carpenter work, then we should request his help and tell him that we *really* need him. It will be hard for him to say no because he wants to help and he wants the love and he needs the attention that your project will give him. Most of all you will be there to lead him closer to the Lord and do it on a basis that is real as far as an ex-offender is concerned.

our hymn study

Concordia, No. 313
Hans Adolf Brorson, 1734
Tr. D. G. Ristad, 1909
Tune: PILGRIMAGE
Freylinghausen's Gesangbuch, 1704

"Teach my Thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a level path, because of my foes" (Ps. 27:11).

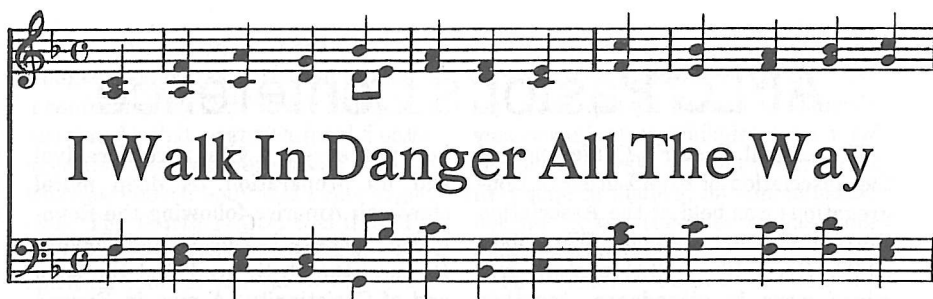
The first half of this hymn is a dramatic and powerful warning to the Christian of the inherent threats that accompany this life. The second half is a statement of trust in the Lord Jesus Christ whose guidance will unerringly lead us to heaven.

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.

Don't forget the long-term effects of incarceration. Years after his release from prison the ex-offender still doesn't trust our justice system or "fly the flag" so to speak. His mistrust may not be fully justified but it is very real to him and a permanent part of the cost of jail time in America today. Billions of dollars in productivity has been lost to our society by talented men who had the misfortune of going to jail. When they get out of prison their attitude is often wary and mistrusting. As Christians we can help to overcome this gigantic social problem and not only minister to the ex-offender, but help him return to society as a normal, productive individual.

—by Allen D. Hanson

(Ed. Note: Allen Hanson lives at Ottertail, Minnesota. He regularly lectures and writes about prison ministry and prison reform. In 1978 he served a nine-month sentence in Minnesota State Prison for a property offense.)



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 soul dismay,
I pass through trials all the way.

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.

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.

St. 1) I Peter 5:8 is the basis of this stanza: "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

St. 2) Life is uncertain. "In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world" (Jn. 16:33).

St. 3) "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jn. 8:12).

St. 4) "For our citizenship is in heaven . . ." (Phil. 3:20). "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (Jas. 1:2).

Author Brorson was not a stranger to spiritual pain. His life included more than the usual ills and assaults. For example, at the age of 36 his wife gave birth to their 13th child but both lost their lives in the process. Brorson was

extremely downcast and inclined to resign his call. His melancholy was exacerbated by attacks from his critics. John Dahle wrote the following account:

"Bishop Hersleb, his contemporary, especially took occasion to attack him, when, in a report to the church council, he described Brorson as 'a good man, but simple, and on account of weakness and hypochondria well nigh inefficient.' In order to prove the injustice of this judgment, one of Brorson's successors, Bishop Daugaard, undertook a thorough investigation of Brorson's official acts and came to the conclusion that Brorson 'was as much a right-minded, zealous and efficient bishop, as he was an excellent poet . . . Brorson proves to have been not only a mild, patient, and Christ-minded officer of the church, but also a man who was in every respect equal to his position . . . possessing the necessary knowledge, insight, and considerations befitting a bishop . . . undeterred by any fear of men from doing his duty, especially in keeping unworthy and immature candidates out of sacred office and the removal of ministers who led improper lives.'"

Brorson, a member of the pietistic school, was deeply pained by the charge of Hersleb, a member of the orthodox party and an opponent of pietism. But through his hymn writing he found a spiritual intimacy with the Lord that sustained him both in faith and in office with unflinching zeal until his death. (For more about Brorson, see #153.)

Translator Ditlef Georgson Ristad (1863-1938) was born in north Trondelag, Norway, and emigrated at age 27. He studied theology at Luther Seminary and Chicago University and became a considerable contributor to the Lutheran Church as a pastor, administrator, educator and editor.

For Freylinghausen's Gesangbuch, see #52.

—Don Rodvold

AFLC Pastor's Conference

The annual Pastor's Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations was held at the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis., Jan. 20-22. Over 120 AFLC pastors and wives were in attendance, together with 20 some visitors, over 150 in all.

The conference began with a Holy Communion service on Tuesday evening. Rev. Laurel Udden, Minneapolis, Minn., was the leader. The message was brought by Rev. Elden Nelson, Minneapolis, who spoke on the 23rd Psalm. Special music was sung by Rev. and Mrs. Wendell Johnson, Stacy, Minn.

Conference Bible studies were given by Rev. Steve Lombardo, Newark, Ill. He showed how the discouragements of the ministry are more than matched by the blessings of encouragement. Drawing from the life of Paul, Pastor Lombardo illustrated how the Apostle was gifted with the Holy Spirit and the promise of glory, he was made a minister, he was renewed by the resurrection and he was encouraged by the promise of a harvest of souls.

In the final of three studies, Pastor Lombardo spoke of the marks of an encourager and used Barnabas as his example. He saw in him an unselfishness in attitude (Acts 4:36, 37), a trusting spirit (Acts 9:26, 27), and an enthusiasm in outlook (he was glad for what was happening in the lives of others (Acts 11:20-24).

Two lectures were presented by Dr. David Glesne, Joilet, Ill., on "Revival Among Lutherans." He said that revivals have three major contributions: 1) a revival of believers, 2) the awakening of the masses, and 3) the producing of social action reform. A revival may be brief or last a lifetime and it is the work of God the Holy Spirit.

In his first presentation Dr. Glesne discussed revivals in Europe, among them the Haugean and Johnsonian ones in Norway, that of Carl Olof Rosenius in Sweden and Wm. Loehe in Germany. In Finland Paavo Ruotsalainen was used to bring spiritual renewal to his country. Later revivals touched Norway in the 1880s and early 1900s.

The second lecture dealt with the American scene and Dr. Glesne showed

how prayer was a vital part of revival and its preparation. A deep moral slump hit America following the Revolution. Voltaire in Europe and Thomas Paine in the U. S. predicted the soon end of Christianity. A man in Europe wrote a book on the need for union in prayer. People did join in prayer and revival came in 1795.

Revival under Charles G. Finney came in the middle third of the 19th Century. Lutherans argued against methods used in the revival but were touched by it. In their churches there were no disorderly excesses. American revival in 1857-58 jumped over to Europe. In the 20th Century there was the revival under Dwight L. Moody.

Dr. Glesne also talked about the revival in Wales in which 100,000 were converted to Christ. Four principles widely promoted in that revival were: 1) confess any known sin and put right everything you can, 2) put away any doubtful habit, 3) obey the Holy Spirit promptly, and 4) confess faith in Christ publicly.

Dr. Francis W. Monseth, dean of Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary, presented two lectures on the Law and Gospel in Evangelistic Preaching. He spoke of the command to evangelize and said that the work of an evangelist also belongs to the parish pastor. The means of evangelization is the Word and the method is preaching. Vance Havner said that it is the duty of the preacher to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable.

As to the Law in evangelistic preaching, Dr. Monseth said that it is the moral law with which we have to do. It is a law which demands complete obedience. He talked about its distortions by man, such as antinomianism, moralism, and legalism. The Law always accuses us for we fall short of its demands. It should be preached in such a way that the sinner flees to the cross of Jesus.

The Gospel is the Good News about Jesus. It should be preached in every sermon. The Law can be distorted and so can the Gospel. Dr. Monseth pointed out some of those distortions. The design or purpose of the Gospel is two-fold: to create faith and to increase faith. The Gospel is God's own absolu-

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 church in which he or she held membership.

WASHINGTON

Everett

Mrs. Alfreda McDowell, 73, Jan. 15, Calvary.

MINNESOTA

Fertile

Reuben Moland, 70, Jan. 26, Maple Bay.

Wadena

Chester Galland, 80, Jan. 16, Zion. Mr. Galland was the father of Pastor Leslie Galland, Thief River Falls, Minn. Trail

Francis Arnold Wold, 76, Dec. 14, 1986, Our Saviour's, Thief River Falls, Minn.

St. Hilaire

Elmer Gutterud, 53, Jan. 6, Our Saviour's, Thief River Falls, Minn.

tion. Faith is increased as the Gospel is heard again and again. It must always be understood that it is Christ who saves.

"Marks of a Living Congregation" was the subject of a panel discussion on Wednesday afternoon. Pastors Dennis Gray, DeKalb, Ill., John Rieth, Williston, N. Dak., Laurel Udden, Minneapolis, David Molstre, Fargo, N. Dak., and Robert Lewis, Abercrombie, N. Dak., were the panelists. Rev. R. Snipstead, AFLC president, was moderator.

The congregation was seen as existing to worship and serve Christ. The preaching and teaching of the Word were seen as essential parts of the pastors' work. In all, a spirit of prayer is needed. Someone said, "People are hungry and need to be fed. They are lonely and need to be loved." A pastor leads his people but doesn't drive them. One panel member gave three goals for this new year: 1) a growth in numbers, 2) more souls saved, and 3) Christians growing, gaining new insights and experiencing new blessings.

A banquet was held on Wednesday evening. In lieu of the program which had been planned, several pastors shared remembrances of earlier work in the Association and challenges exper-

from here and there . . .

Burnsville, Minn.—Mr. Lynn Tharaldson, a member of Minnesota Valley Lutheran, is a Director of the U. S. organization of Lutherans for Life, a pro-life group.

Ferndale, Wash.—The annual Brotherhood Sweetheart Dinner for Triumph Lutheran was held on Feb. 14 at Johnson's Restaurant.

Devils Lake, N. Dak.—New members received recently at Christ Lutheran were Mr. and Mrs. Curtis (Sandi) Rekkedal, Macy, Curtis, Jory, Tanis and Holly; Mr. and Mrs. Lee (Karen) Tangelin and Kristi; and Mrs. Laura Watne.

Greenbush, Minn.—New members at United Lutheran taken in on Nov. 16 are Mr. and Mrs. David (Lynette) Trangsrud and Jacob; Dr. and Mrs. Lyle (Corrine) Mattson, Anna, Carla, David and Joel; and Jody Kirkeide.

anced. There was a singspiration in which many old favorites were sung.

After the banquet Mr. Dale Hertle, our insurance consultant, introduced the new health insurance carrier for the AFLC (as of Feb. 1), National Insurance Trust or the ACI plan. A representative of the company was also present to help answer questions and there were many of them. It was stressed that more members in the plan was desirable. Some companies will not insure an association unless there is 75% participation. The AFLC has less than that in their plan.

Morning prayer hours were led by Rev. David Skordahl, Pipestone, Minn., and Rev. J. G. Erickson, Fosston, Minn.

Three sessions for women only were conducted. Mrs. Wendell Johnson spoke on "Christian Parents at Home," Mrs. Karen Haugen and Mrs. Brita Ylitalo presented "Christian Parents in Public Education" and Mrs. Eugene Enderlein considered "Christian Parents in Private Education."

A workshop for Home Mission pastors preceded the Pastors' Conference.

A grant from Aid Association for Lutherans covered the cost of meals and rooms for the conference.

news of the churches

Minneapolis, Minn.—Faith Lutheran had its annual Sweethearts Banquet on Feb. 15 at the church.

Doris Nye of the Marie Sandvik Center will be speaking at a Sunday evening service at Faith on March 22.

Minnewaukan, N. Dak.—Trinity Lutheran is to participate in the Couples' Retreat at Red Willow Bible Camp, Binford, N. Dak., Feb. 27-28. Speakers are to be district pastors Christian Oswood, David Molstre, Norman Tenneboe and Bruce Dalager. Cost is \$35.00 per couple.

DALE FINSTROM HOME CHAPLAIN

(The following item comes from the in-house publication of Tri-County Home in Hatton, N. Dak.)

We want to welcome Pastor Dale Finstrom, the new chaplain at the Tri-County Home.

Pastor Finstrom comes from Buxton (N. Dak.) where he has farmed for many years and now he is also the pastor at the Zoar Free Lutheran Congregation in Hatton.

He is a graduate from Mayville State College (N. Dak.) with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Education so enjoys doing some substitute teaching when time permits. Then he went to Minneapolis and graduated from the Association Free Lutheran Bible School.

His wife, Chris, is a nurse at Union Hospital in Mayville. Their children are Matthew, 7, Laura, 4, and David, 2.

He is so busy working he doesn't have time for hobbies, but he does enjoy golfing when he can take the time.

He says he enjoys visiting with our residents and enjoys singing. The residents enjoy his singing at our services very much.

We all enjoy his friendly smile and his quiet and friendly manner. We hope Pastor Finstrom and his family will enjoy their work at Tri-County Home.

—Mrs. Quie, Adm.

(Ed. Note: A friend from Hatton sent this item to us. One correction in the above. Dale attended Bible School before beginning his college work at Mayville State.)

Dalton, Minn.—Anna Erickson, member of Sarpsborg Lutheran, celebrated her 100th birthday on Jan. 16 at Broen Home in Fergus Falls, Minn., where she is a resident.

DeKalb, Ill.—The Luther League at Grace Lutheran met recently to elect officers and chose Timothy Gray, president; Jill Eike, vice-president; Nathan Swedberg, secretary; and Michelle Kisterke, treasurer.

The congregation of Grace Lutheran voted at its annual meeting on Jan. 28 by a two-thirds majority, to change its name to Grace Free Lutheran. It is hoped by this change to show that it is a congregation affiliated with the AFLC.

BROADCASTING THE GOSPEL

On March 1, Faith Lutheran Church will begin its fifth year of broadcasting the Gospel over radio station KALS in Kalispell, Mont. Pastor Richard Bartholomew's Sunday sermons are taped on Sunday mornings and then broadcast the following Sunday at 9 a.m. "The Voice of the Valley" is heard over a large section of northwest Montana and can be heard on cable in southern British Columbia.

—Corr.

(Ed. note: It is a long time since we have printed a list of radio programs produced and sponsored by AFLC parishes. We would be glad to get information about these so that a log can be provided to *Ambassador* readers. Please help us.)

Personalities

Rev. Michael Brandt has resigned as pastor of Amery Lutheran Church, where he has served since 1978, to accept the call to become pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Cloquet, Minn. He will begin his work in the new parish on Apr. 1.

Rev. Tony Stockman, assistant pastor at St. Paul's, Cloquet, has resigned to accept the call to Chippewa Lutheran Church, Brandon, Minn. He has been in Cloquet since his ordination in 1983.

Rev. Mauritz Lundeen, Bagley, Minn., will begin his work in Grace Lutheran, Aberdeen, S. Dak., on Apr. 1.

AFLTS Library enhanced

The AFLC Schools Library recently took an important step forward with the reception of over 2,000 volumes. These books were the personal library of the late Andrew E. Johnson, Grantsburg, Wisconsin, who was an Evangelical Free Church pastor. Both Pastor and Mrs. Johnson had ties with the AFLC, through his attendance many years ago at Augsburg College and her family connections in our Cumberland, Wisconsin, congregation. Pastor Johnson, who once was said to have the finest library of any pastor in his denomination, had a keen interest in the AFLC and was a faithful reader of *The Lutheran Ambassador*.

This gift is the largest single acquisition of books that our library has received during its 22 years of existence.

Youth Group to train at the ARC

The Royal Servants of America, a national youth ministry to Europe, will be conducting a two-week training camp at our ARC the end of June. Approximately 250-400 teenagers, ages 13 to 19, will spend these two weeks "roughing it" and learning survival techniques, working together and developing areas of ministry before leaving to work six weeks among the peoples of Europe. They will be tenting in our field and doing their own cooking with the ARC providing their water. About three hours of their schedule each day will be spent in volunteer labor around the grounds at the ARC.

As we consider this tremendous opportunity the Lord has opened for us, we ask for your prayers for us as we plan and prepare for these two weeks. Secondly, we would ask that you save ice cream pails and rags for us. We would also be very grateful to receive donations of white and redwood latex paint from businesses and individuals.

As we have seen in our years here at the ARC, God faithfully provides for the needs here and we exclaim with the apostle Paul, "Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory!"

—Bob Dietsche

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June 17-21, 1987

Thief River Falls, Minnesota

Every congregation represented by a lay delegate!

Workshop planned for Christian schools

Pastors, board members, administrators, and teachers are invited to a WORKSHOP DAY at Medicine Lake Lutheran Academy in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on March 20, beginning at 9:45 a.m. and concluding at 3:00 p.m. Workshop sessions will include Starting a Christian Day School, Board/Staff Relationships, Ministering to the Total Child, Organizational Skills, Creative Teaching, Science Enrichment Ideas, Creative Writing, Physical Education Ideas, Understanding the Junior High-er, Stress and Spiritual Life. The afternoon will conclude with an informal hour of sharing and encouragement.

Please write or call for further information. Medicine Lake Lutheran Academy is an arm of Medicine Lake Lutheran Church which meets at AFLC headquarters in Minneapolis. However, the workshop sessions and luncheon will be held at the academy location 6300 Walker St. (corner of Highway 7 and Wooddale Ave.), St. Louis Park, Minnesota. Phone: (612) 922-8276.

Mexico church to be built in honor of Pastor Pentti

The church which is to be built in Mexico City will be in memory of Rev. Kenneth Pentti, AFLC evangelist who died in July, 1985. This was decided at the 7th Annual Conference of the church. A beautiful plaque giving Pastor Pentti's date of birth and death was dedicated at the conference last July by Rev. Eugene W. Enderlein, director of AFLC World Missions.

Pastor Pentti visited the work in Mexico in the summer of 1983 and is remembered with gratitude to God for his Holy Spirit-empowered preaching.

AUTHOR IDENTIFIED

It has been called to our attention that the poem "Jesus Wants Me", which appeared in our Scrapbook issue, Jan. 27, was written by Mrs. Alvin (Ruth) Holmstrom, Karlstad, Minn. We had listed it as "Author Unknown." Ruth has written a number of poems for us through the years. Formerly of Strandquist, Minn., she is a member of Hegland Lutheran Church.