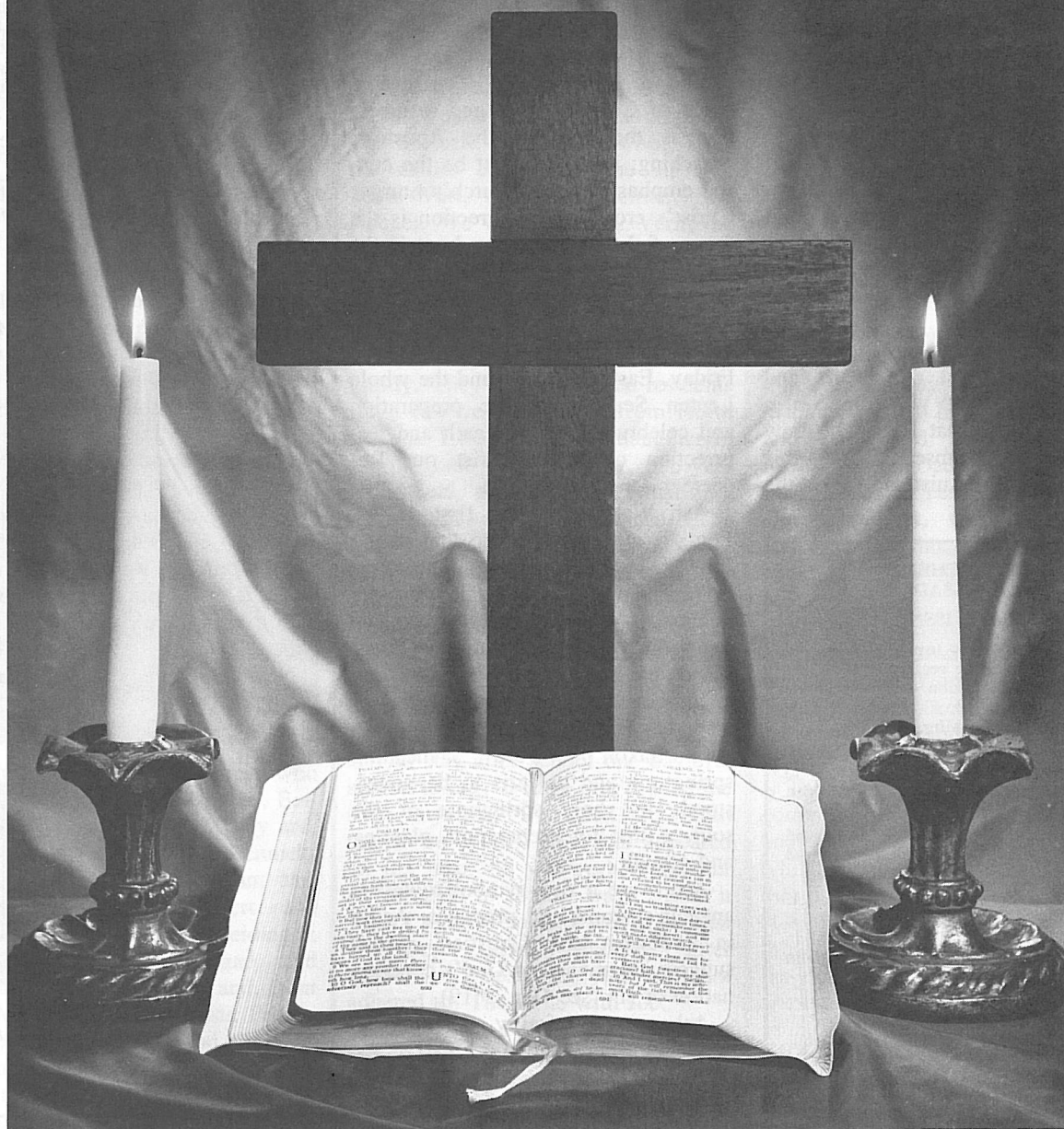


# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

February 26, 1985

"The word of the cross . . . unto us who are saved . . . the power of God"  
I Corinthians 1:18



Luoma Photos

# at the MASTER'S FEET

## Lent

The word "lent" means springtime. In the church year it also means the 40 weekdays (Sunday excluded) from Ash Wednesday to Easter.

Lent is the season devoted to special consideration and proclamation of our Lord and Savior's suffering and the events which brought about His crucifixion and death. Originally the 40 hours between Christ's death and resurrection were observed as a period of fasting and mourning. Later the 40 hours were lengthened to 40 days. It is believed that this was determined by the 40-day fasts of Moses, Elias and of our Lord Himself in the wilderness. Sundays, however, were never included (Sunday is the celebration of Christ's resurrection), so this period is still exactly 40 days in length.

The primary purpose of the Lenten season is to direct our hearts and minds to Jesus who was lifted up in death on a cross that He might draw all people unto Himself. During this season God's ministers have the

finest opportunity to proclaim Christ's vicarious suffering and death and thus, by the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, inculcate a profound knowledge of sin, a grateful acceptance of the blessed fruits of our Savior's work, a more disciplined denial of self, and a fuller surrender to our beautiful Savior who loved us and gave Himself for us (Cf. *Biblical Texts*, P. W. Nesper, The Wartburg Press, Columbus, O.).

The very central event of the Christian faith is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The uniting event of Christ's cross and resurrection is the core of the Apostolic preaching; it is and must be the central emphasis of the Church's liturgy. Christ's cross and resurrection is the focus of the church year. Lent is the preparation for the celebration of the mystery of redemption which Christ revealed unto us. (Please read Eph. 1:3-14.) Maunday Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, and the whole Lenten Season are the preparation and celebration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Redeemer—our redemption.

Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, is close in spirit to that of the Jewish Day of Atonement. The mood is repentance and reflection on the quality of our faith and life as we focus our redemption through Christ; by doing so we are renewed and strengthened in our personal relationship to Him. "Lent" is from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning springtime and so it is to be understood, the holy springtime of the soul, a time for preparation, planting and growth.

Ashes are a rich symbol rooted in ancient customs and practices. Ashes in a Jewish and Christian context suggest judgment and God's condemnation of sin (see Gen. 3:19).

Ashes suggest frailty, our total dependence upon God for life (see Ps. 90:3; 104:29; Eccl. 3:20; 12:7).

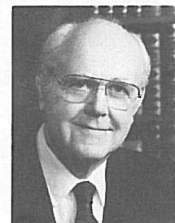
Ashes suggest humiliation (see Gen. 18:27; Esther 4:1; Jonah 3:6; II Sam. 13:19; Dan. 9:3).

Ashes suggest repentance (see Job 2:8; 42:6; Matt. 11:21; Lk. 10:13). All this forcefully reminds us of the words of the committal in the burial service, "... earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." One day those words will be said over us.

Moreover, ashes suggest cleansing and renewal. They have been used as a cleansing agent in the absence of soap, and on Ash Wednesday ashes have sometimes been used as a penitential substitute for water, as a sign of Baptism. Water both stifles and refreshes, drowns and makes alive; so ashes also tell of both death and renewal. A further example of death and renewal shown by ashes is the ancient custom of burning the fields in the spring to destroy the old and to prepare for the new. (Cf. *Manual on the Liturgy*, Lutheran Book of Worship, P. H. Pfatteicher and C. R. Messerli, Augsburg Pub. House, Minneapolis, Minn.)

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me; Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with a willing spirit" (Ps. 51:10-12). Amen.

Next time we shall meditate on Psalm 22, "A Cry of Anguish and A Song of Praise." Please read it and reread it.



by Pastor  
Amos O. Dyrud

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Volume 23 Number 5



by Pastor Harvey Jackson  
Ishpeming, Mich.

"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:3).

You and I have seen many trees! Trees of all sizes, shapes and colors have come into our view. But suppose someone were to come to you and tell you they were going to take a certain tree, cut it down, and use the wood to make a cross. No doubt, you would look twice at that tree and maybe more; in fact, you might even take a picture of that tree. Not because of the tree so much as for what it was about to be used. That tree and eventually that cross would stand out as pointing to the time of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. For the person who has come to realize the sin in life, the experience of repentance, and the welcoming of Jesus into the heart really has a special love for Jesus and a special consideration of the cross!

The theme to guide my sharing is "The Primacy of the Cross!" The longer one lives the more one experiences one's own need of Jesus and the greater is the importance of the cross to him. The Apostle Paul early in his first letter to the Christians at Corinth says, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (I Corinthians 1:18). He had received that power in his own personal life! He is not telling us something that he has heard and is now sharing with us. He saw himself as a sinner without hope outside of Christ! He had been blind to the One who could heal, restore and forgive him. When he permitted Jesus to come and make His home within his heart, all things became new! The greater the reality of the cross became for Paul, the more he realized the tremendous love

Jesus had for him. Jesus had given His best for Paul and that was not all; Paul realized that *His best* was for everyone!

*God's best* was given at the cross! The dictionary defines "Primacy" as that which is best. Can you imagine what it would be like if there had been no cross? If God had demanded perfection of us without providing any way of dealing with our failures? If every time we found ourselves regretting our thoughts, actions or words and there was no release from them? Our guilt would drive us to despair. There would be no way of having a good night's rest. One would face a terrible prospect for eternity. Friends, we are living in a day when Satan is seeking to remove the importance of the cross.

Peter, the apostle, with all of his concern for Jesus, tried to talk Jesus out of the cross. Then we remember the response Jesus gave to him: "Get thee behind me, Satan." Peter was saying to Jesus, "Take the easy way out, Jesus. Don't get so serious about this sin matter. Everything will be alright and You won't have to die." We can thank our Lord for all eternity that He didn't follow through with what Peter said. Jesus knew

what was in Peter's heart and mind and the need for Peter to look at the consequences of sin. Jesus knew what was needed to deal with sin so that there could be a remedy. It was not for Peter to bring the sacrifice, nor for Paul to come as a fine religious Jew, nor for us to come to God with our "good life!" That would never meet the test. *Only* the cross and the crucifixion of Jesus would ever answer the problem of sin. "Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling."

*God's best* was given on the cross! This truth is realized, in accordance with the Scriptures. The Old Testament is the New Testament revealed and the New Testament is in the Old Testament concealed. This truth we learned at the Lutheran Bible Institute. The Old Testament lifts up the answer of the need for a God-acceptable sacrifice. It was not what people brought to the altar and offered through the priest; it was the promise of the Savior who would come to give His life as a "ransom" for all mankind. Isaiah brings this truth out so very well in the 53rd chapter and the 6th verse. The verse begins with "all" and ends with "all."

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"The longer one lives the more one experiences one's own need of Jesus and the greater is the importance of the cross to him."

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# THE POWER OF THE CROSS



by Pastor Del Palmer,  
Everett, Wash.

## CROSS . . .

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

God's marvelous truth revealed in the person of Jesus Christ! What is so wonderful, my friends, is that each of us can claim that precious gift of salvation for our lives today. We can share this "Good News!" We can preach this Good News! We can live this Good News! Jesus Christ calls us to identify with this Good News of Calvary!

What does the cross mean to you today? How important is it in your daily life? Does it mean anything in your conversation, or in your daily work, to know that Jesus Christ gave His life for you?

The cross is *the* only answer to this world's problems. Jesus Christ our crucified, risen Lord is *the only answer*. How then, does this event become real in life? First, one must recognize the sin in one's heart and be willing to repent before God. Second, one must confess that sin to God and be willing to turn from that sin and walk in the light of Jesus and in His Presence. This was the experience of the Apostle Paul and that is what caused him to say: "for I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."

The future is bright for the child of God who has claimed the wonderful blessings of the cross and now lives in the reality of His daily forgiveness and mercy.

## I Corinthians 1:18

It seems as though we as humans are enchanted by things with great power. We can see this every day by those objects that gain our attention. As a young city boy I remember reading advertisements for a sports car called a Lamberghini. It was billed as the fastest stock sports car built in the world at that time. It was so powerful it would go from 0-90 mph in five seconds, with better acceleration after 90 mph. Our city had just opened a dealership and I had to go and see this powerful car. Those things of great power have always seemed to draw us as humans, whether it be a sports car for the city boy or the most powerful John Deere for the country boy.

Since we have this natural attraction to that with great power, what is the most powerful thing in the

world? The Scriptures tell us that the cross of Christ is the greatest power known to man. It was there that God exhibited His great power, in what He did for us. I Corinthians 1:18 proclaims to us, "The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved *it is the power of God.*"

The cross of Christ not only effects salvation, but also gives us the ability to walk day by day with God in our sanctification.

Considering salvation, we see that the power of Christ's death on the cross gives us a right relationship with God. After the fall, we as humans have each one been estranged from God because of the sin in our lives. That sinfulness causes us to do nothing but run from God. But because of the power of the cross Jesus is able to bring men back to Himself. Talking to His disciples about His death on the cross, Jesus said, "But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself."

Picture in your mind that we are walking down a lonely, dusty, desert road to an eternity in hell, because of our sin. There is only one force that can change our course. That force is the power of Jesus calling us to Himself as He was lifted up on the cross. Christ's death on the cross enabled the Holy Spirit to come in a special way, calling men to Jesus, confronting them about their sinful lives, and testifying to them about the love of God in Christ (John 15:26, 16:5-11).

Not only are we called to God by the power of the cross, but Scripture tells us that we are reconciled to Him by that same power. Speaking about both Jews and non-Jews, Ephesians 2:16 tells us He reconciled "both of them to God through the cross."

What does it mean to be reconciled to God? We commonly use that term today when we think of a husband and wife who have gone through a divorce. Many times after

## Pastor Harvey Jackson

Harvey Jackson, pastor of Hope Lutheran Church, Ishpeming, Mich., since 1984, is on the fellowship roster of the AFLC.

He was born in 1936 at Madrid, Ia., and is a graduate of the high school there. He has attended and graduated from the Lutheran Bible Institute, Minneapolis, Minn., Luther Junior College, Wahoo, Nebr., Augsburg College, Minneapolis, and Northwestern Lutheran Seminary, St. Paul, Minn. He was ordained into the ministry of the Lutheran Church in America in 1964.

Mr. Jackson married Shirley Darlene Bonnallie on Aug. 5, 1961. He has served parishes at Strandquist, Dalbo and Alden, Minn., before coming to Ishpeming.

The couple has three children: Linda, 20, Bradley, 18, and Beth, 17.



reconsidering and working out their differences they get back together. When this happens we say they have been reconciled. We praise God because the differences that they had have been made right. As people we have many differences with God, through no fault of His, but because of our sin. In fact, we were actually divorced from Him spiritually because of it. But because of what Jesus did on the cross those differences have been worked out. Jesus made them right as He exchanged His sinless life for our sinful life. Christ reconciled us to God as He gave us His good relationship with God, suffering on the cross for our divorced relationship with the Heavenly Father.

Also on the cross Jesus exchanged His death to give the believer life. He did this by fulfilling the law in our place, thereby canceling its accusations against us. Colossians 2:13-14 reminds us that God made us "alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; He took it away, nailing it to the cross." Because of our sin we stand condemned before the judgment seat of God. Yet, because of the power of what Jesus did on the cross, the law with all its regulations that stood against us has been canceled for all who will accept it by faith! Because of the power of the cross the Christian can rejoice! The cross is what causes the believer to really desire to love and serve God.

The cross not only gives us the desire to serve God, but the power of the cross also enables us to carry out those desires.

Man in this sinful nature became enslaved to sin, actually prisoner to sin, with no power to even choose to do what was right. Galatians 3:22 brings this out when Paul reminds us, "The whole world is a prisoner of sin." I agree, at times it appears that unregenerate men do what is right. Still the underlying cause, if known,

would be a proud and selfish heart, desiring to be seen as good. We desire to be seen as good by both men and God, even though we realize He knows our inward motives. It's true, man's heart is desperately wicked! Who can know it?

In spite of all this, the cross gave believers both the desire and the power needed to walk with God day by day. Paul proclaims to us that the believer was crucified with Christ and freed from the power of sin. Romans 6:6: "For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be rendered powerless, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin." The believer is no longer a prisoner to sin because of the cross. He is no longer held as a slave, able to do nothing but sin and stray from God. Now the believer has the ability to choose every day whether he will walk with his Lord or turn against Him.

Unfortunately, each one of us has to admit that all too often we have made the wrong choice. Paul realized this would be the case even after the grace of God had freed a person from the power of sin. Therefore, he continued, in Romans six, by encouraging them, and us, to live holy lives, to "count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God," not letting "sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its desires," not offering "the parts of your body to sin." He said rather, "Offer the parts of your body to Him as instruments of righteousness."

As we consider all the cross means to us, and the power it holds, the power to call us to Jesus, reconcile us to God, cancel the law against us, and give us the ability to walk with Him day by day, how can we turn our backs, and sin against God? I encourage you today, as Paul did the Romans, in 6:13,14: "Offer yourselves to God . . . for sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace."

## Savior, when in dust to thee

Savior, when in dust to Thee  
Low we bend the adoring knee;  
When, repentant, to the skies  
Scarce we lift our weeping eyes;  
O by all the pains and woe  
Suffered once for man below,  
Bending from Thy throne on  
high,  
Hear our solemn litany!

By the helpless infant years,  
By Thy life of want and tears,  
By Thy days of sore distress  
In the savage wilderness,  
By the dread, mysterious hour  
Of the insulting tempter's  
power;  
Turn, O turn a favoring eye,  
Hear our solemn litany!

By Thine hour of dire despair,  
By Thine agony of prayer,  
By the cross, the nail, the thorn,  
Piercing spear, and torturing  
scorn;  
By the gloom that veiled the  
skies  
O'er the dreadful sacrifice,  
Listen to our humble cry,  
Hear our solemn litany!

By Thy deep expiring groan,  
By the sad sepulchral stone,  
By the vault whose dark abode  
Held in vain the rising God,  
O from earth to heaven  
restored,  
Mighty, reascended Lord,  
Listen, listen to the cry  
Of our solemn litany!

Robert Grant  
(*The Hymnal*, Augustana)

# toward the hills of God

## Conclusion

by **Bernhard Christensen,**  
1901-1984

### IX. Christian Patience

To every human life on earth, sooner or later, come days of suffering and trial. To the Christian there may often come special burdens, too, just because he has been called to be a crossbearer. We cannot explain the mystery of suffering, but we do know that it is oftentimes an instrument in the hands of God for moulding the Christian's life. Also the pathway of suffering leads upward to higher ground.

For the Christian, therefore, suffering is not an enemy, but a friend—though often one very hard to understand. Yet always “we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.” There are no exceptions. Christ our Shepherd goes with us even through the deepest valley. With Him as our Companion, life's bitterest burden can be transfigured into a testimony of our unshaken faith in Him. Even our crosses can lift us nearer to His heart.

*Do I accept every disappointment, trial, and suffering as a part of God's loving purpose for the moulding of my life?*

### X. The Pilgrim Life

The Christian's life on earth is a pilgrimage. He follows a Master Who said concerning Himself that “the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head.” God is the Christian's true home. On earth he is a pilgrim and a stranger. Therefore he must have nothing that binds him too closely here. Even his most precious joys must be held “upon an open palm.” Money, possessions, friends, home, position—all must be in the Father's keeping, each day to be

to be a Christian

granted anew or to be withheld as His wisdom decrees.

Is such a pilgrim-life too hard? True, it is not easy to achieve. We naturally cling to earth and its treasures. But to be a pilgrim with Christ is really to be set free, as He was free. As we give up all to Him, day by day, we become partakers with Him in His joy. Earth loses its power over us as we walk with the Son of God. Giving becomes a blessed privilege, because all that we have belongs to Him. Whether we have much or little of this world's goods, we begin to learn the lesson of the sparrows and the lilies: our Father cares for us. We enter into the blessedness of trustfully praying, “Give us this day our daily bread.” And, unencumbered by the morrow's cares, we . . .

*nightly pitch our moving tent*

*A day's march nearer home.*

If we have learned thus to walk with the Pilgrim-Christ, Death itself will be only the last “letting go” of a life long ago exchanged for the Life that goes on forever.

*Am I a living pilgrim moment by moment with Christ, not looking back with regret, nor forward with anxiety, but filling each hour with glad service in His timeless Kingdom of Love?*

\* \* \*

The secrets of the life hid with Christ in God no one has yet learned fully and finally—no one save the Master Himself. His heart alone was ever at home in the hills of God,

even when His feet trod earth's lowliest places. His will alone knew the peace of an unbroken obedience to the Father's word. His footprints alone perfectly mark out the Way that leads onward and upward until it is lost in Light Eternal. Yet countless Christians, of every age and station, who have dedicated themselves to walk with Him in that Higher Way, have borne glad witness to the new joy and strength experienced there. But in the realm of spiritual living, the witness of others becomes meaningful only as we ourselves test out its truth. *Christ can share the secret of His life with us only insofar as we are willing to yield our all to Him.*

Should such a price seem too great, let us remember Who it is that bids us follow Him toward the heights. Let us once again remember the unmeasured price His love first paid to open up the Way for us. Who, remembering, would not bravely follow upward along even the most rugged pathway, in the company of such a Leader, and upon so high a quest?

*Wherever He may guide me,  
No want shall turn me back;  
My Shepherd is beside me,  
And nothing can I lack,  
His wisdom ever waketh,  
His sight is never dim,  
He knows the way He taketh,  
And I will walk with Him.*



“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast”

(Ephesians 2:8,9)

# ALONE WITH GOD

a form for the Morning Watch

## I

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

*Adoration:* Psalm 121, or some appropriate hymn-stanzas, such as "My God, How wonderful Thou Art."

*Confession of Sin:* Psalm 51:1, 2, 10, 11, 12, 17 may be used. Confession of specific sins.

*Thanksgiving:* Psalm 103:1-5. Give thanks for special evidences of God's goodness and love.

## II

*Reading of the Scriptures:* A portion for the day.

*Meditation:* Concerning God's will for me this day. Begin with Psalm 143:8, 10.

## III

*Intercession:* Prayer for others. Mention persons, causes, and special needs by name.

*Petition:* For myself and my tasks. Be specific. Close with the Lord's Prayer or Psalm 23.

*Benediction:* The Lord bless us and keep us! The Lord make His face shine upon us and be gracious unto us! The Lord lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace. Amen.

(Note: The Scripture passages used should be thoroughly memorized—truly "learned by heart." Other appropriate passages will of course suggest themselves from time to time.

To begin with, no doubt only a part of the suggested divisions will be found helpful. The form should grow, as needed.



## The knowledge of sin

If a sinner is ever to feel the need of grace, and have use for Christ and His redemption, then he must become conscious of his sin, not because the knowledge of sin in itself is prerequisite for grace, or because a knowledge of sin can be exchanged for grace, but simply because "they that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." For even if a person knows ever so much about Christ; if he knows that it is by faith in Him that we are saved and made eternally happy, still his heart will not desire Christ nor will he flee to Him unless he is grieved and troubled because he has learned to know his sin.

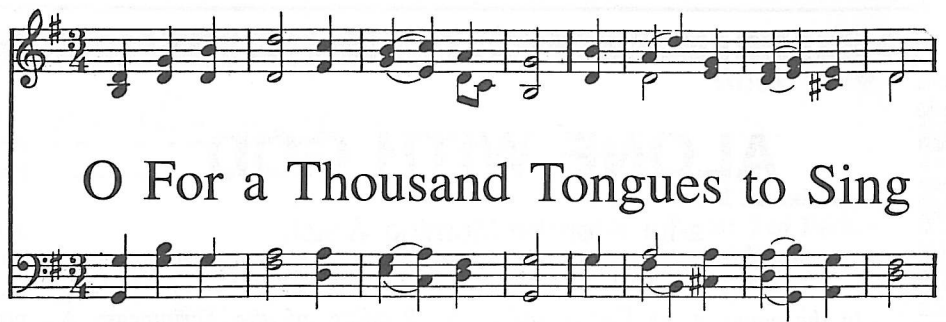
—J. N. Kildahl, *Ten Studies on the Holy Spirit*, Augsburg Publishing House



by Charles Wesley, 1738

Tune: Chesterfield

(Thomas Haweis, 1780)



This hymn was written on the first anniversary of Wesley's conversion, to commemorate that important event. The opening verse is thought to have been inspired by a remark of Peter Bohler, the Moravian leader who was the chief instrument in the awakening of the Wesleys: "Had I a thousand tongues, I would praise Him with them all." Perhaps this is true, but it must be pointed out that a favorite hymn of the Moravians, as well as other German Protestant congregations, was "O dass ich tausend Zungen haette" (O that I had a thousand tongues) and this is the likely source of both Bohler's utterance and Wesley's hymn.

1. O for a thousand tongues to sing  
My dear Redeemer's praise  
The glories of my God and King,  
The triumphs of His grace!
2. My gracious Master and my God,  
Assist me to proclaim,  
To spread, thru all the earth  
abroad,  
The honors of Thy Name.
3. Jesus! the name that charms our  
fears,  
That bids our sorrows cease;  
'Tis music in the sinner's ears;  
'Tis life, and health, and peace.
4. He breaks the pow'r of reigning  
sin,  
He sets the pris'ner free;  
His blood can make the foulest  
clean;  
His blood availed for me.
5. He speaks, and, list'ning to His  
voice,  
New life the dead receive;  
The mournful, broken hearts re-  
joice;  
The humble poor believe.

Originally the hymn of 18 stanzas was a personal testimony of Wesley's conversion and much of the content was about himself. Other stanzas were specifically addressed to

harlots, publicans, thieves, murderers, sons of lust and pride, and do not accommodate the objective of corporate worship, nor does it address the Object of our gratitude and devotion. The surviving five stanzas are fully evangelical and Christ-centered.

To run a household with 19 children requires organization. The Rev. Samuel Wesley and his wife Susanna had such a house. The methodical approach to living practised in the Wesley home no doubt contributed much to the organized approach to religion taken up by John and Charles. For example, each child learned to talk by repeating the Lord's Prayer. The first words the children read were the first words of the Bible: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The home life of the Wesleys was orderly and disciplined because of the strong character of Susanna.

The importance of their home training surfaced at Oxford University when John and Charles, disturbed by the corrupt moral and spiritual attitudes of the students, formed a "Holy Club," an organization devoted to the observance of strict rules in order to achieve a well-disciplined life. Because of these precise methods, the group was nicknamed "Methodists."

The Wesleys set about the task of evangelizing the world. In England their efforts were met with resistance and suspicion. So they set sail for the American colonies, where they would be missionaries, but ineptness and error frustrated their efforts. The entire venture was a failure. John reflected in his diary: "I went to America to convert the Indians; but who shall convert me?"

Back in England the search went on. There John met the Moravian, Peter Bohler. For several months they discussed various aspects of

Christianity. Wesley: "What shall I preach?" Bohler: "Preach faith until you have it; then, because you have it, you will preach faith."

In May of 1738, the great awakening came. John, at the age of 35, and Charles, at the age of 31, had profound spiritual conversions three days apart. Now they knew what Bohler meant. John described the experience in his diary.

"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading *Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans*. While he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed; I felt that I did trust Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given to me, that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the laws of sin and death."

Objective holiness leads to subjective holiness.

John's search was finally ended. But he needed more preparation, so he went to Halle, Germany, the center of the pietistic movement, to become better acquainted with Luther and the evangelical Pietists. This journey was a success and he returned to England ready to launch their great evangelical crusade.

In the 50 years of their ministry the Wesleys were instrumental in the conversion of a hundred thousand people. They published no fewer than 56 hymnals; Charles composed 6500 hymns. In addition to our hymn for today, these are in *Concordia*:

32 *Ye Servants of God, Your Master proclaim*

38 *Love Divine, All Love Excelling*  
120 *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus*

136 *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*  
150 *Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies*

(Continued on p. 10)

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# editorials

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## WATERS IN THE WILDERNESS

How many daily devotional books have we read? We don't know, but quite a few. And some of them more than once. Some are more edifying than others, more obvious in meaning, but all have had something to offer.

At this present time we are re-reading the AFLC devotional book *Waters in the Wilderness*. It was published in 1971 by the board of Publications and Parish Education and edited by Dr. Iver Olson of the Schools' faculty.

We just want to say that we again find the book a blessing. Each day's reading is a good length, not too short and not long enough to discourage anyone. And besides good devotional material, do you want to know what is so attractive about it? It is written by people we are apt to know. Most of them this writer knows well. It is good to hear a word from these friends. And even if a certain writer isn't known to us, some people know him or her and will feel the personal touch.

Some of the writers have gone Home but their works, their writing, follow after them. Having left this life, they yet speak. It is good to hear from them again. That's the case with the one who wrote for the date this *Ambassador* carries, February 26. We find it is Rev. Kenneth L. Anderson, who lived at Kenyon, Minn., at the last.

The January 29th *Ambassador* tells us that some of these books are still available. Information about ordering one or more can be found on page 16 of that issue. Something for postage would be appreciated, we are sure. The book is in a handsome blue hard cover.

You won't buy many books today as well bound for \$1.50 today as *Waters in the Wilderness*.

## FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH

A friend of ours with a hearing problem passed this information on to us one time. He said that he does a certain amount of lip reading when attending church and that he finds it more difficult to do that when the pastor has a moustache. Well, what do you think of that!

We pass this on for what it's worth.

## VOICES OF THE PASSION

Lent is here once more. It is a season of concentrating on the Passion or suffering and death of Jesus the Christ for us.

Lent is a time of looking inward. The look inward makes us wretched, as Annie Johnson Flint put it so well in her great song, "I Look Not Back." "Nothing I see save failures and shortcomings, and weak endeavors crumbling into dust."

But the sadness evoked by our introspection concerning ourselves and the look at the sufferings of the Master are mingled with joy at the knowledge that the Savior paid sin's penalty and is Victor over the devil, the world and our flesh. So there is a quiet cheerfulness, too, for those who stake their all on Jesus Christ.

We don't know how your congregation will be observing Lent except that there will be special services available to you in your own church or on a parish-wide basis if yours is a multiple one.

Here in the north country of northwestern Minnesota, most of our district congregations are joining together in a round robin series. Eight speakers will cover the preaching places, speaking six times in all. We're considering the general theme "Voices of the Passion." Here are the seven sub-themes: "The Voice from the Cross, Luke 23:39-43; The Voice of Pilate, John 19:15,16; The Voice of the Centurion, Matthew 27:50-54; The Voice of the Passers By, Matthew 27:39,40; The Voice of Peter, Luke 22:59-62; The Voice of the High Priest, Mark 14:57-62; and The Voice of Israel, Matthew 27:25,26.

It would be good to know what you are doing in your Lenten services, too. Of course, we won't know that for many of you, but let us pray for one another. Attend your Lenten services. In many places they aren't supported as they ought to be, as much as they once were. That's too bad. Lent is a time for renewal. Let it be that for you and then it will also help revive your church. Remember Jesus Christ and what He has done for you. Give Him your love, your all, in return.

## A QUESTION

When you read this, thoughts will be of approaching springtime. How pleasant that is after a long, rather cold winter.

And now may we ask you a question? How have you used the hours during the winter, if you live in northern climes, that you must devote to mowing your lawn in spring, summer and fall?

A rather sobering question to ponder, isn't it?

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Obedience is the only path that leads to the glory of God. Not obedience instead of faith, nor obedience to supply the shortcomings of faith; no, but faith's obedience gives access to all the blessings our God has for us.

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## Letters to the editor

### LAW AND GRACE

I read the article "Right and Wrong About Law and Grace" by Jan, Anne-Grethe (and Øystein-Ed.). Lord never intended the world be run by lawlessness. How could He (Lord) believe in lawlessness for salvation (meaning no laws required to earn salvation, except faith)?

Yes, grace is a virtue of God but so is law. Wasn't it the Lord who gave the law to Moses? How can we adore one virtue and ignore the other?

I think grace and the law complement each other. Law is needed because Lord is a "just" Lord.

Shahid Ahmed  
Hardin, Mont.

(Ed. note: The article to which Reader Ahmed refers (Jan. 15) does state the Lutheran understanding of Scripture correctly, indeed, of Protestantism in general. But that is not to say that the world is run by lawlessness. God gave the law and it is good, but the Explanation of the Catechism puts it: "Since the fall in sin no man can perfectly keep the law." Hence the need for salvation from some other source. You see, God's grace or unmerited favor is not

something which is added to the "good" which a person may feel he has done. A very clear passage of Scripture on this is Ephesians 2:8,9: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast."

Careful study of the books of Romans and Galatians is helpful, too, at this point. Romans 3:20, for instance, says, "For no human being will be justified in His sight by works of the law, since through the law comes knowledge of sin." And look at Galatians 3:11-13: "Now it is evident that no man is justified before God by the law; for 'He who through faith is righteous shall live;' but the law does not rest on faith, for 'He who does them shall live by them.' Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, 'cursed be every one who hangs on a tree'."

The justice of God, of which Reader Ahmed speaks, was satisfied in the sacrificial and substitutionary death of Jesus on the cross for us. If we believe (have faith) in Him, we need not suffer the penalty, the "wages of sin," Romans 6:23, but the free gift of God becomes ours.)

### Book review

by Pastor Gerald Mundfrom  
Reviewed by Pastor Ted Berkas,  
Granite Falls, Minn.,  
\$2.50 plus postage

In our little town of Granite Falls this winter we had a Lutheran pastor who took his life. He had been battling with cancer which led into depression and he had gone to Eitel Hospital in Minneapolis to seek help. In the days after Christmas, before the new year, he gave way to the loneliness, fear and confusion and chose that way to die. I knew the man: I had been at his house for the ministerial meeting in November. He was open and frank about his depression. We should have had a word to sustain him who was weary. I wish now I would have utilized suggestions from Gerald Mundfrom's book, *The Depressed Christian*. I have just reread the book, looking for insights that we might pass on to others who we know carry burdens that weigh disconsolately upon them. I encourage you to read the book yourself and glean from it that which you might use to be of help to a brother or sister living in doubt and defeat.

## fill your place

### HYMN . . .

154 Jesus, Lover of My Soul  
243 Come, Ye Thankful People,  
Come  
398 Lord of the Harvest, Hear

\*\*\*\*\*

The tune called "Chesterfield" was written by Thomas Haweis, in England, for his own hymn, "Thou from Whom All Goodness Flows," a good hymn set to great music. As is often the case, the stronger survives and is recast to an equally strong mate. Haweis was a practising physician before heeding the Lord's call to attend Christ College and enter the ministry.

### Satan's scheme

**Whatever else may be said, we may be sure that those liberals who reject the doctrine of the devil do not agree with the Master's theology; nor, indeed, with that taught in the whole Bible . . . As a rule, people who deny his (the devil's) reality make light of sin, and therefore do not feel that they need an atoning and divine Saviour. That is precisely Satan's scheme.**

L. S. Keyser

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (I Corinthians 15:58).

Deacon Hartvig Rasmussen of Trinity (Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, LFC) will long be remembered for his quiet and unassuming manner and his diligence in serving the Lord. He had found it his calling to visit the sick and the poor and bring them a simple message from his Lord. It was my privilege once to have him by my hospital bed bringing a message of cheer.

There are many more of these



# The Depressed Christian

First of all, depression is a tough illness—it can hang on for weeks, for months, for a year or longer. Decisions become difficult and memory and concentration power lose their sharpness. A tiredness comes over one which sleep does not seem to overcome. Fightings without, failures and fears within assail. Concentration on God's Word grows difficult and the guilt feelings and lack of self-worth well up from the depths. The goodness of God may be firmly attested to, but a personal application to one's own need almost slips from one's grasp.

In one of the questions about the Third Article we learned in our Catechism that God sometimes uses suffering, sometimes blessing, or anything else that can lead men to reflection. Mundfrom's conviction is that for not so few in our day, God is using depression to call men to reflection and ultimately to a closer walk with God.

God can work through depression to reveal to us our sinfulness and helplessness and our absolute need for the healing of the Savior. "If it is God's will that a depression or a

mental breakdown be the method of learning or the schooling by which He chooses to teach us (all for our good), who are we to question His method of teaching?"

Thank God that there is help to be found—we are not left entirely on our own to pass the test. God is there to encourage, to counsel, to comfort and to save to the uttermost. But to walk closely with God, to know His ways, may well mean suffering, purging, times of soberness and sadness—God has not promised skies always blue, with warm and radiant sunshine.

The book distinguishes between discouragement and despair. The former may come in waves, but the latter can be thwarted by waiting on God, assured that He has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Mundfrom notes realistically several kinds of aberrant behavior that can stem from a depressed condition. He acknowledges the value of tasks, of eating properly, of exercise, of turning outward to others, but the main thrust of his book is to wait on God—wait for the heaviness to lift.

"A bruised reed shall He not break nor smoking flax shall He not quench." Sometimes waiting for God can be like waiting for a bus on a cold corner in Minneapolis on a winter's night—it can take a long time for that bus to come. But eventually it does come. We in America expect quick relief. Depression can take time to lift. "To wait on the Lord is the only real cure for depression." Jesus can change heartaches into joy, but it may take time.

As you wait, Mundfrom suggests, keep a notebook or a journal in which you record signs of encouragement, promises from God, accomplishments that you see in yourself or in others, answers to prayer, encouraging words you get from a relative or friend. And when you get really down, get out the journal and review the encouragements of a past day. Go back to the Bible promise of a former day and claim it again.

Remember that sadness for a brother can be real. We should be careful not to minimize another's heartache, not to upbraid him for feeling sorry for himself, but try to "walk in his moccasins," try to understand that the Lord is speaking to him just now in that particular mode. "What are we to show to a brother? Love, empathy, prayerful concern, patience and compassion." Don't forget to be kind, encouraging and supportive.

Let feelings be genuine, but when joy lightens the disposition let it be joy of the Lord and not an artificial joy of this world. The old song says that the way of the cross leads home. That cross may well mean a brother is in the throes of agony, fear and depression. But praise God that the destination means it will be worth it all when we see Jesus.

In the meantime, let us pray that pastors, families, and Christian friends might learn anew how to sustain with a word the one who is weary. Pastor Mundfrom's book can help us, I feel, to soften our words and to seek to make them truly encouraging.

The book may be ordered from Printing Fund, c/o Rev. Gerald Mundfrom, Route 1, Box 503, Osceola, Wis. 54020.

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"... these quiet servants of the Lord in our congregations  
... they always find much to do."

quiet servants of the Lord in our congregations than we sometimes realize. They are not often noticed and sometimes not appreciated. But they love the Lord and love to be along in His work. And they always find much to do. They are steadfast as members of the congregation, always in their place as worshippers, as officers always to be depended upon and usually cheerful as they go about their work.

It is really very important that a Christian fills his place to the best of his ability, for God depends on him for certain things that must be done.

And there are those who see what kind of a life he is living and how well he works, forming their opinion of the Christian life accordingly. But most of all, a Christian must earnestly seek to please God with his life and work.

Child of God, you "know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." God has promised: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Rev. P. K. Lawrence Bueide  
(Family Devotions for Lent, 1952)

# First women's convention in India

Dear Fellow Believers of the AFLC:

My heartfelt greetings and Christian love to you in Jesus' Name. It is a privilege and delight for me to share our joy and thanks with you through this letter. I want to thank each one of you for your love, concern and support for Bible Faith Lutheran Church of India and especially to the WMFs from the depths of my heart, who made the first women's convention of our B.F.L.C. possible this year.

Our convention was held on July 2-4 for three days in a Baptist Student Center, which we rented. Approximately 100 women attended the convention. Due to inadequate advertisement, some people could not come. God blessed me as an instrument to organize this convention in planning the boarding and lodging facilities along with the meetings. I arranged two guest speakers, along with myself. We had eight sessions in all. Pastor Dasari helped us whenever needed.

This was a rich experience for every participant. Opportunities were given to everyone to witness, sing and pray either at a specified time or at the time allotted for the intercession. The Spirit of God moved so abundantly, which made everyone leave the convention place with

thankful hearts for the rich experience. The witness of the participants in their respective villages is very great. The people who could not attend due to personal reasons expressed their unhappiness for missing such a blessing. They expressed their great desire to attend the convention next time. I don't doubt that the next convention's attendance will exceed 250 women from our own churches, along with others, if we extend the invitation. I strongly encourage the WMF to send delegates to see and report firsthand what the Lord is doing through their prayers and support in India.

The two guest speakers were a pastor's wife and a Christian medical doctor. The pastor's wife sang before she spoke about the woman at the well (John 4) and Queen Esther. She brought out the truth of the sinfulness in all people and how the gospel of forgiveness is available from Christ. She also challenged the participants to do the witnessing, as the Samaritan woman witnessed, running into the village, leaving her water pot, and telling everyone about finding the Messiah. She also brought out from the life of Queen Esther that one may be in any position, yet God gives a special calling of witnessing. Queen Esther sought God's help in

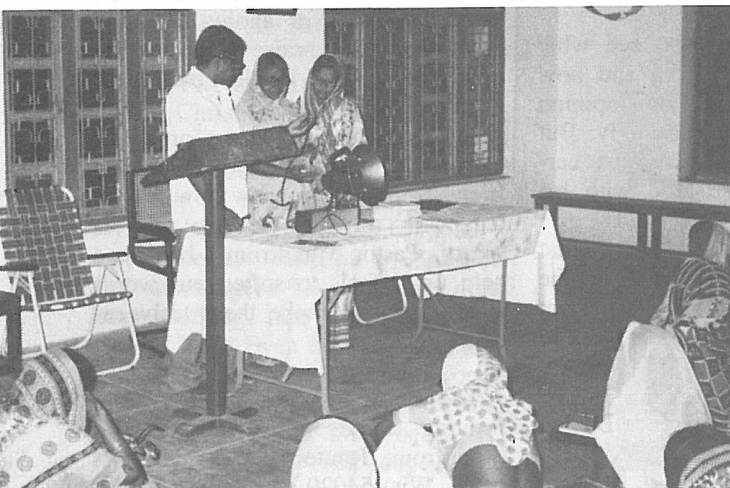
fasting for the trouble of her people. She cared more for the church of God than her own security. This is an example for every believer.

The medical doctor, a wonderful Christian, spoke about Jonah the Prophet. Jonah, though reluctant about his call, was used of God for His purpose. We as believers should not fight against the opportunities given by God in our witnessing. We have to care for the perishing world. She also spoke about hygiene and balanced diet.

I spoke about the importance of prayer and Christian living. The Lord used all of us in sharing.

We enjoyed great talent. Our women are enthusiastic singers. The opportunity was given to sing as groups from the various congregations. I was really amazed to see what God has given to the BFLC of India. Our women are prayer warriors. It is so strengthening to enjoy the power of intercessory prayer at every session.

The most joyful thing in this convention was the witness of the women. Most of our believers are first converts. They have tasted the power of God personally and have committed their lives to Him through His Word. The trials of many women are still our prayer concern and our



# AAL awards grant to seminary

joy is that they are firmly grounded in Jesus, as experienced by Paul in II Corinthians 4:8-18. It is like enjoying the fellowship of the early church when hearing these testimonies.

I am sure that the Lord is going to give His blessings to BFLC of India in such a measure that all of us will indeed thank Him. The fields are ripe, the hearts are open, laborers are few, resources are very limited. *Please pray* for BFLC of India. Your prayerful support is very much needed. If the Lord provides you the means, visit India. The orphanage is going to be a reality soon. May the Lord bless each one of you with all the richest blessings that are in Christ Jesus.

Yours in Christ,  
(Mrs. Rao Bhushana)  
Deva Karuna Dasari

Appleton, Wis. —Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minnesota, has been awarded \$5,500 from Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) through provisions of the fraternal benefit society's Church Vocations Enrichment Program.

The money is earmarked for three general areas: \$2,500 to provide continuing education programs for pastors, \$2,000 to fund continuing educational opportunities for faculty, and \$1,000 to make scholarships available to seminarians.

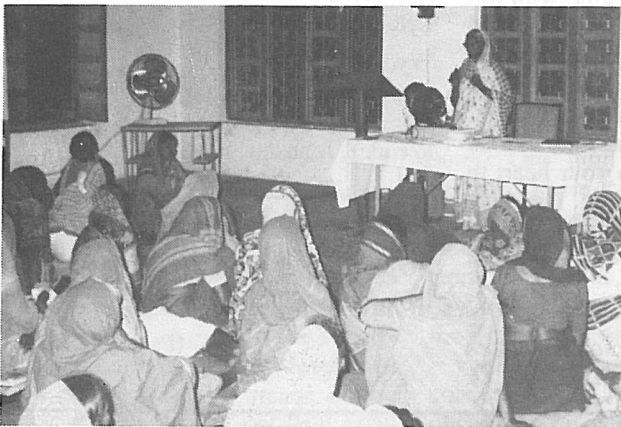
An "Inter-Term" continuing education program for clergy and lay persons was held early this year, and will provide "opportunity for participants to enhance their education through courses covering the major theological disciplines," according to

the Rev. Francis Monseth, dean of the seminary.

Faculty development program participants receiving financial assistance include Philip Haugen, who will receive a S.T.M. degree from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, in May; Francis Monseth, who will receive a Th.D degree from Concordia; and Robert Lee, who continued course work toward a S.T.M. degree last summer.

AAL's Church Vocations Enrichment Program helps provide educational growth opportunities to those who are or will be ministering professionally to the Lutheran community. Through the program, AAL distributed \$448,000 in 1984 to 16 Lutheran seminaries in the United States.

The Church Vocations Enrichment Program is one of the many educational grants administered by AAL.



## The Presence of God

There is no haste in the presence of God;  
There is no waste in the presence of God;  
There is no flurry, there is no worry,  
But perfect rest in the presence of God.

There are no fears in the presence of God,  
No bitter tears in the presence of God,  
No backward sorrows, no dread tomorrows,  
But golden years in the presence of God.

There is no care in the presence of God,  
No subtle snare in the presence of God,  
No loving of self, and no greed of pelf,  
But all things fair in the presence of God.

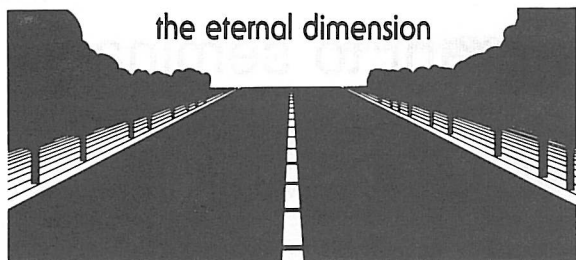
There is no want in the presence of God;  
No good thing is scant in the presence of God,  
If straitened in soul, you have wandered away;  
For wealth there is in the presence of God.

There is no pain in the presence of God,  
No tension, no strain, in the presence of God;  
From every disease His healing touch frees,  
And restores us again in the presence of God.

They hear His voice in the presence of God,  
Breathe in His breath in the presence of God;  
They eat of the tree of life, full and free;  
There is no death in the presence of God.

A. V. Middleton  
(*Youth's Favorite Poems*)





where  
is your  
heart?

Traditionally, February is "heart month." It is the time when Dan Cupid goes forth to win hearts for would-be lovers. Who has your heart? One song writer volunteered, "I left my heart in San Francisco." This shows we acknowledge we have a heart which we may dispose of according to our wishes. What are you doing with your heart these days?

One thing which is clear in the Bible is that God has ordained marriage and that a man and a woman should give their hearts to each other in love. This love is to be given to no other, and is to be given for life. This is one aspect of what a person may do with his heart. But there is more, Jesus was asked what He considered God's greatest commandment. His answer was that a person should love God with all his heart. Jesus left no other proper way to live than to love God with one's entire being. Proper living can only exist when there is no room for self-centeredness. No wonder God says, "My son, give me your heart" (Proverbs 23:26). Proper living means your heart will be completely in God's hands, in submission, thankfulness and worship. This will be true because you think very highly of God.

Jesus said more. He said you should love your neighbor as you love yourself. From this we learn two things. First, you are to love yourself. Therefore, loving yourself and self-centeredness are not the same things. Second, in the way you love yourself as God wants you to, in that way you are to love other people. You are to do that without qualification. Doesn't this teach you that if you are properly loving God, you will also be properly loving yourself and others? If your heart has been truly given to God, God doesn't prohibit you from giving it to others. In fact, it includes such loving. Thus, only the man and wife truly loving God can begin to approach the

ideal of a "Biblical-marriage" love. Perhaps this explains many marriage problems and failures. Biblical love excludes all self-centeredness.

Whom does your heart belong to? Does it belong to God or do you still keep it for yourself? None of us (not even Christians) keep God's law perfectly. But still God loves us and has sent us a Savior to save us from the sin of slavery to ourselves. In this month of wooing hearts, God would also woo you to Himself. He does this through the Good News of His forgiving love. The trouble with too many marriages is that there has never been a giving of hearts to each other on the part of marriage partners. That is also the trouble with too many people in their relationship with God. Such procedure in marriage leads to great heartache. Such procedure with God leads to greater heartache. It finally leads to eternal sorrow. Have you given your heart to God? Have you answered His love call? In this "heart month" we urge you to give your heart to God without delay!

Pastor Emerson Anderson  
Cleveland, O.

## With our evangelist-youth worker

Pastor Kenneth Pentti, our evangelist, is resuming his schedule of appointments on March 17 following his illness and recuperation. Pray for a special measure of grace and strength for him as he takes up his work again. Here are his first appointments.

### Fertile, Minn.

Maple Bay Lutheran Church  
Mar. 17-21  
Roy B. Johnson, pastor

### Leeds, N. Dak.

Lebanon Lutheran Church  
Mar. 24-28  
LeRoy Flickinger, pastor

### Minneapolis, Minn.

Rosedale Lutheran Church  
Apr. 14-17  
Ralph Rokke, pastor

### Grafton, N. Dak.

Bethel Lutheran Church  
Apr. 21-25  
Lyle Aadahl, pastor

### Wyoming, Minn.

Hope Lutheran Church  
Apr. 28-May 1  
Wendell Johnson, pastor

*"Open my eyes that I may behold  
wondrous things out of Thy law"*

(Psalm 119:18)

## Personalities

The address of **Rev. Thomas Baker**, new pastor of Section Ten Lutheran church, Cumberland, Wis., and Bethany Lutheran Church, Clayton, Wis., is Route 1, Box 27, Cumberland 54829. He is living in the parish parsonage.

**Miss Linda Butterfield**, bookkeeper of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, was united in marriage to Mr. Jeffrey Rigstad on Oct. 6, 1984. So now it is Mrs. Rigstad. Congratulations and God's blessings to the couple.

## Appreciation dinner for Mr. Rodvold

An appreciation dinner honoring Mr. Don Rodvold, who will be leaving Association Free Lutheran Bible School this summer after 18 years as music director, will be held Saturday, May 11, at the Ambassador Motel on Highway 12, Minneapolis, Minn.

You are cordially invited to participate in this special tribute to someone who has enriched many lives.

Further details will be forthcoming later.

—The Committee

## Preaching Missions

**DeKalb, Ill.**

Grace Lutheran Church

Dennis Gray, pastor

March 10-14

Rev. Gary Skramstad, Minneapolis, Minn., speaker

**Newfolden, Minn.**

Westaker Lutheran Church

Larry Haagenson, pastor

March 17-21

Rev. Michael Brandt, Amery, Wis., speaker

## In Memoriam

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

WASHINGTON

Everett

Mrs. Lillian Forsberg, 67, Jan. 24, Calvary

## Bismarck, N. Dak.



Pictured here are the people who joined Calvary Lutheran Church, Bismarck, N. Dak., in 1984. They are, back row, left to right, Kim Lennick, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Prischman, Mr. and Mrs. Randy Standaert and Jonathan, and Eunice Meidinger; middle row, Barbara Burgad, and Hope and Amy Prischman; and, front row, Mark, Erinn and Jessie Prischman, Joseph Standaert and Shannon Meidinger. Rev. Einar Unseth is pastor of the church.

He saw only love

# HONOR YOUR PARENTS

by Mrs. Arnold McCarlson,  
Langford, S. Dak.

Labor Day weekend was usually considered a fun weekend. To many of us it was the ideal time to get away from the pressures of work and enjoy the great outdoors. My husband and I had gone to our favorite retreat, our cabin at the lake. Our children and their families came to enjoy the fishing and swimming.

While we were getting ready to eat our picnic dinner on Saturday, we were listening to the local news. "Three Eagle Butte men killed on takeoff when the light plane crashed within a mile from the local airport." We all held our breath—who? Then the names came over the air . . . Vern Watt, George Heideman, Bob Heckel. We were stunned. Vern, the pilot, had six children, George had four, and Bob left aging parents. Both fathers were in their late thirties.

My thoughts turned to the Watt family. They had only been residents for a few years, coming from North Dakota. I had their only daughter in fourth grade that first year, one year I had Jeff, and this year I had Joe, red haired and freckle-faced. The family operated the Truck Stop Cafe. Mr. Watt was taking George up to a Minnesota Resort to meet his family who had gone the day before. Vern was of French Canadian descent, a man who ruled his family with a firm hand, but had their welfare at heart.

I learned that early when I asked Jeff to stay after school one day. He started to cry, "Please don't make me stay; my dad . . . dad . . . will punish me more." Real fear appeared on his face. So we worked out our differences in other ways. But it wasn't always so and we knew that if they were detained after school . . . "spare the rod" was not adhered to. The same with Joe.

On Monday I went to see the Watt family. Joe was sitting outside their trailer home drawing with a stick in the loose dirt. I put my arms around

him and said, "Joe, I'm so sorry." He looked up, tears streaming down his freckled-face. "Yes, it's unbelievable. Dad was a good pilot . . . airplanes were his thing and life. He even built one; I helped him."

He looked down and pointed to the ground. "See," he showed me, "I figure this is how it happened. They left the airport, leveled off and went right up high, and something happened because the plane came right down and "crashed landed" a mile away. It had to be "air turbulence". It couldn't be Dad's fault". I couldn't answer what the cause was because none had been given.

But Joe and I talked about life and death, how our lives hang by a thread, here today and gone tomorrow, sometimes compared to vapor but usually that death is but a breath away. The important thing is that we love our Savior and are ready to meet Him.

That next evening at the wake, Joe, dressed in suit and tie, stood quietly, close by his father's coffin. Walking over to him, I took his hand and he looked up at me, "Mrs. McCarlson, Dad looks happy, doesn't he?" "Yes, Joe," I replied. Oh, I thought, what a marvelous feeling that this ten-year-old boy could see only love in his father's face.

So often we as parents are afraid to discipline our children for fear of resentment, but in Proverbs 19:20, we read, "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying."

Then again, we learn in the fourth commandment, "Honor your father and your mother that it may be well with you and you may live long on this earth." Also in Colossians 3:20, "Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." But, children, you have a responsibility, obey your parents only in the Lord.

Christ gave His life for parents and children that they might all serve one another in the Lord.

## Scandinavian Splendor tour

June 29-July 13

Pastor and Mrs. Laurel Udden

Tour Hosts

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## Light on the Way

# FIRST LOVE

Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. 2:4).

There was much that was praiseworthy in the church at Ephesus. "I know thy works," says the Lord. And these works the church had no reason to be ashamed of. They were not accomplished without exertion. No, their works, which were directed toward promoting pure doctrine and pure life, had cost them much of exertion and patience, so that these people had suffered much for His name's sake, and had not grown weary. This testimony the Lord Himself gave them. Perhaps not all churches of today deserve such testimony.

But the Lord nevertheless had a little remark to make which was of vital importance as touching the relation of this church to its Master. "Thou hast left thy first love." The church had become so engrossed in work and activity for God, that it had neglected to keep alive the holy flame of love which had been kindled in the hearts by faith in Christ Jesus. These people had perhaps not permitted their love to Jesus to grow cold, but that love was no longer their "first love."

The various outward activities of the church, such as festivities, bazaars, revivals and church reforms, may play an important part in the building of the church. But such activities must never be permitted

to usurp so much of our time and energy that we neglect the upbuilding of our own spiritual life. We must never let anything prevent us from often finding our place at the feet of Jesus, in silence listening to Him.

If we become absorbed in these outward activities to the loss of our inner life, Jesus will say to us: "Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." Then we resemble a bride, who, while she respects her husband and is proud to bear his name, still can remain away from him without missing him greatly. Or, we resemble a child who in his anxiety to serve his father finds no time to enjoy his father's companionship. Then the child-like spirit is a thing of the past, and we have left our first love.

Let us beware that we do not become so absorbed in our service for the Lord that He finds no opportunity to commune with us privately. Live the Gospel, commune often with God in prayer, nourish your inner life at His communion table and live daily on His grace. Then God will preserve you in your first love, even though you may not always feel the same ecstasy of joy that you experienced when first this love took hold of your heart.

—Søren Dahl, Courtesy,  
Tract Mission