

# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

January 15, 1985

## SCRAPBOOK ISSUE

*Days should speak,  
and a multitude of  
years should teach  
wisdom. But there is  
a spirit in man; and the  
inspiration of the  
Almighty giveth them  
understanding.*

Job 32:7,8

# at the MASTER'S FEET

## A continuing state of mind

Last time we closed by saying, "Let each one of us bow before the Lord and confess our sins today, and sincerely seek the grace and mercy of God in Christ Jesus."

Now we shall continue to meditate on God's calling the people of old to repent of sin and seek His mercy. At the same time, let us also keep in mind that God is calling you and me to repent daily of our sins.

The call for repentance is clear in God's commands to Moses (see Leviticus 26:40). And repentance's brokenhearted reality and passion flows through King David's prayers of contrition in many of his Psalms.

Repentance is the consistent refrain of the prophets from Isaiah to Malachi. Repentance is a keynote in the New Testament as well. It is John the Baptist's dominant message: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2).

And according to Mark 1:15, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the Gospel" were among Jesus' first public words. And Jesus' last words to His disciples and to us before His ascension to heaven included the directive that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). The words repent or repentance appear more than 50 times in the New Testament.

Repentance is an indispensable part of the conversion process that takes place under the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. But repentance is also a continuing daily state of mind, expressed by a sinner saved by grace through faith in Christ.

What does it mean when you say, "I believe in Jesus Christ?", Martin Luther asks in his explanation of The Second Article. And the answer is clear: "Trusting in Jesus Christ with all my heart, I surrender myself to Him as my only Savior from sin, and death, and the power of Satan." And Jesus Christ is "the Son of God and the son of Mary, true God and true man."

"In none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4:12, Am. St.). Only the blood of Christ can forgive and cleanse away sins and purge our conscience from dead works to serve the living God (Compare Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 6:1 and I John 1:7).

True believers in Christ our Redeemer and Lord prove their repentance by their deeds, their everyday lives. Purity of life, as well as forgiveness of sins, is the sincere desire of a truly repentant sinner.

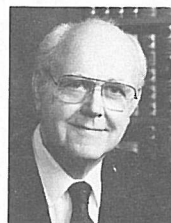
Without a continuing daily repentant attitude—that is, a persistent desire to turn away from our old nature and seek God's nature, Christian growth is impossible. Growing in Christlikeness is impossible without daily repentance from the heart. A truly repentant person realizes that the name of Christ is blasphemed when Christians live carelessly.

Now we turn to Psalm 51, one of the great Penitential Psalms. King David had made dreadful mistakes. He had committed dreadful sins. The account of these sins is written in Chapters 11 and 12 of II Samuel, where we read of David's sin of adultery with Bathsheba, Uriah's wife, and of David's purposely causing Uriah to be killed in battle. David was guilty of sinning against God's fifth and sixth Commandments.

Nearly a year had slowly passed and David had continued to harden his convicted heart against repentance of sin. But he had no rest of conscience, nor peace of mind. Then one day God reminded the prophet Nathan to go and visit the greatly troubled king. Please read the whole story in II Samuel 11 and 12 and then prayerfully read Psalm 51.

Next time we shall continue to meditate on Psalm 51.

Let us also ask God, with the Psalmist, in Psalm 139:23 and 24, to "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."



by Pastor  
Amos O. Dyrud

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When I was very young my great grandmother used to tell my brother and me stories from the Bible. We used to love to listen. I think that is why all my life I never doubted there was a God. I had also heard the story of Jesus, but it seemed the true meaning went right over my head. I have to say here, I was not brought up in a Christian family and church was not an important part of our lives.

I grew up to be a very self righteous person and I could see everybody's faults but not my own. I was slow to forgive and when I did "forgive," I didn't hesitate to bring it up again when the opportunity arose.

I was very strong-willed. My father used to say that when I'd get something in my head nobody could change my mind. "I was right!"

Well, needless to say, with this attitude I made a lot of wrong decisions that brought a lot of pain and heartache into my life and worse yet, to other people. I began blaming others for my problems, never myself. "I was right!"


About ten years ago I joined a church because I felt it was the right thing to do and "my children needed it."

I began to do a few things at church and we were going quite regularly. Not every Sunday, but I felt we were doing pretty good about the whole thing. We had religion. Not a personal relationship with Jesus, mind you.

Meanwhile, my family problems were getting worse and I worried about everything so much that it was affecting my health. I also developed quite a temper and that only made matters worse.

I found myself looking forward to the sermons on Sunday. I really wanted to know more. I knew I was missing something in my life. I was beginning to see myself for what I was. It was pretty hard to take. I began to little by little see all my sins and feel ashamed and guilty. I thought, here I am going to church and feeling worse than ever. I felt lost, and I was.

About this time Pastor gave a sermon on the Holy Spirit and how he picks away at us and makes us see our sins. God is so merciful. This



## MY LIFE WAS CHANGED

gave me new hope just when I needed it. I felt if the Holy Spirit were picking at me, God had not turned His back. Now I was sorry for my sins and I needed forgiveness. I had to invite Jesus in and expect His forgiveness by faith. How I knew this is easy for some people, but for me, as stubborn as I was, I felt I had to straighten my life out and earn it first. Here was Jesus saying, "I love you; I paid the price; you can't earn it; ask Me in." And here was "I" going around in circles. Trying to solve my own problems. Carrying the weight of my guilt and feeling sick inside.

Well, I thank God for the day I quit struggling and gave up. The Lord had finally gotten through. I did ask Him in and He changed my whole life. He filled my needs and I'm never alone. He took my guilt and replaced it with love. What a beautiful time when we can truly say, "You are the potter, I am the clay." I hear so many people say that seeing is believing, but with God I think believing is seeing. When you believe by faith, He will show you the way through His Word and prayer.

My problems have not vanished, but I have laid them at my Master's feet and it's so beautiful to see Him work in your life. My Lord, "How Great Thou Art!" Without God, we can do nothing. With God, everything is possible.

I just want to add that people sometimes think they have to give up something if they ask Jesus into their hearts. Well, I did give up my guilt and worry and sense of worthlessness. In its place Jesus gave me life and life abundantly. He's not a taker, He's a giver, a giver of life.

Billy Graham said, "If God can be fully proven by human mind then He is no greater than the mind that proved Him." By faith you must believe and He will bring you out of the darkness. Praise the Lord!

My prayer is that my testimony may help someone else, all to God's glory and in Jesus' name. Amen.

Cora Jensen  
Sunnyside-Hope Newsletter  
Stacy, Minn.



missions

## How to pray for missionaries

1. Pray for *essentials*. It is not so essential that you ask God to give us good health. The important thing is that *He give us only the measure of health that will best glorify Him*. Who knows but what it may be to His glory that we should be sick and thereby demonstrate to the host people that we have a God who can keep us in perfect peace and joy, even in sickness.

2. We do not want you to pray that God will give us an easy path on the mission field, but rather that *He might give us grace sufficient to be overcomers for Him*.

3. Do not pray so much that God will answer our prayers, He has promised that, as that *God will keep us from being too busy to pray*. Haven't you thought of the fact that it is just as easy for missionaries to be too busy to pray as it is for you in the homeland to be too busy to take time with God.

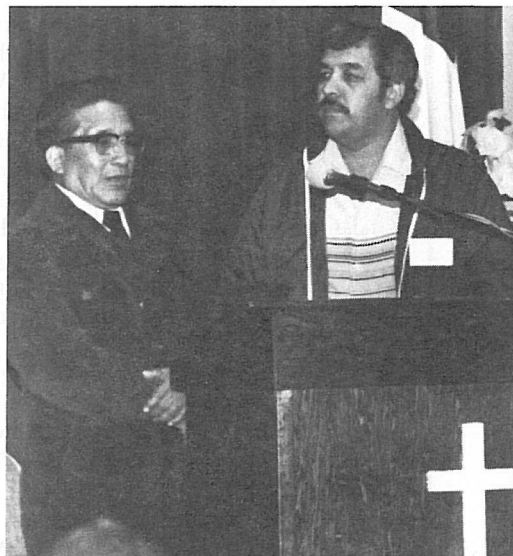
4. We're not so anxious that you pray that God will remove the obstacles as that *He might give us an unconquerable determination to go all the way with Him*.

5. It is not so important that you pray that God should bless our activities as that *God should censor our activities*, for how easy it is for a missionary's time and energy to be spent on second best things!

6. Please do not pray for us as though we are saints, living up on a high level, because we are missionaries. We who go as missionaries are subjected to temptations. Satan will determine in one way or another to hinder our testimony, to rob our lives of power, or make our witness futile. We need your prayer that *God will give us grace and strength to resist temptation*.

7. Won't you remember please that missionaries can become lonely; we can become discouraged; we can become irritable, sharp, impatient with other missionaries? Above all, we want to tell you we can do a great deal of missionary work without being on fire for Christ. Some of you know that you can teach Sunday School or be a church officer without being on fire for Him. So we covet, above all, your prayers for us that *Christ's person and glory might have our 'first love.'*

—Dalton (Minn.) parish paper.



Pastors Samuel Flores and Ted Kennedy

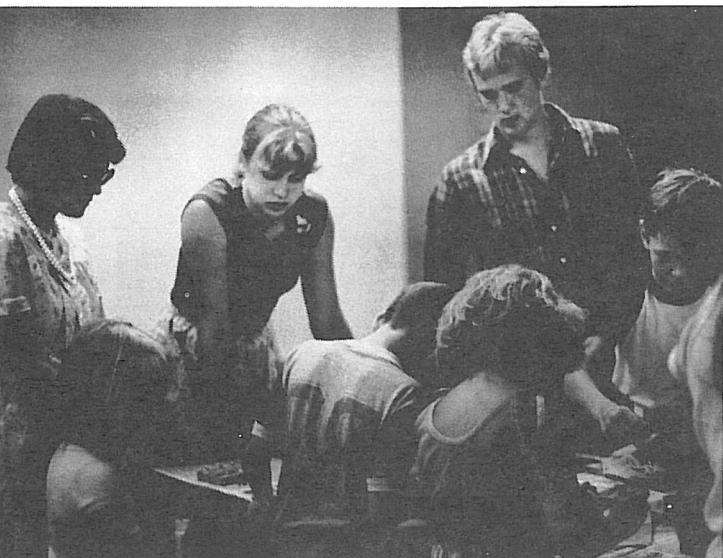


Miss Priscilla Wold

The George Knapp family







Mrs. James Gerdeen works with a BARNABAS team.



1981 Home Mission Board. Row 1: Mr. Paul Flaten, Mr. Joel Rogness;  
Row 2: Pastors Richard Anderson, David Molstre, and Philip Haugen.

## the goodness of God and our response

by Theo. Huggenvik

"Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Rom. 2:4).

We hear quite a little talk about the need of repentance when trouble besets us or when we believe that we are being punished by God. Even then many people harden their hearts against God and ignore the reminders that He sends them. When everything goes well with us we are likely to be puffed up, either boasting of our own ability or thinking that the Lord owes us something. We of the church have certainly enjoyed many blessings from God. How have we responded to the goodness, forbearance and longsuffering of God? Have we realized that every blessing which we enjoy is a call to us from God—not to make us think that we are more deserving than others, but a call to repentance?

The goodness of God will reveal to us our unworthiness. If we sense something of the awe and majesty and holiness of God, we come to realize our own insignificance.

God's call to us today is that His goodness toward us is a call to repentance. That holds good when we

think about our blessings as a nation and when we think of our blessings as individuals.

The only adequate answer to the call of God through His goodness and forbearance is a deep repentance, a life of faith, a humble thanksgiving, a noble resolve to respond to God's attempt at making us better, self-sacrificing service. God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble. We are to walk humbly with our God. His goodness will help us to do that when we receive it in the right way.

The goodness of God calls us to repentance. True repentance will find its expression in loving service of our Lord through His church. With the Psalmist of old we will say:

"I will take the cup of salvation,

and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people."

God's goodness towards us is continuous. Our response to Him must not be sporadic and niggardly; it must be frequent and generous.

There is so much of God's goodness in our midst; there ought to be a great deal of repentance, much of thanksgiving, a willing participation in the work of the church for the glorification of His name.

—*My Father's Business*

(Ed. note: Prof. Theo. Huggenvik was a long-time teacher of religion at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn., and author of numerous books.)

**"For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God"**

(I Corinthians 1:18).



schools

The late Dr. Hallesby was the author of such classics as *Prayer* and *God's Word for Today*, written originally in Norwegian.

## from a travel letter by Prof. O. Hallesby

(on his first trip to the U. S., 1923)

From Niagara (Falls) my itinerary took me to a young people's meeting in Milwaukee. Then further west by way of Chicago to Minneapolis, the Norwegian capital of America. When I had spoken there the first time and went down into the crowd to meet the people, I was at once surrounded by familiar faces, so that I could almost have believed that I was home in Norway. Yes, truthfully, ten or 12 friends from my home community stood there. Everyone of them I hadn't seen for 35 years, but I recognized them again. It was an unforgettable time for me in the center of a country new to me.

The next day I spoke at a Lutheran Bible school which holds classes in St. Paul in the winter, but conducts summer school in more open country by one of the many beautiful lakes in Minneapolis. The Bible school doesn't belong to any one church body, but is operated by two Swedes, (Samuel) Miller and (C. J.) Sodergren, and a Norwegian, (A. B.) Anderson. They are three younger men with a humble, warm and believing spirit, for which I am especially glad. From all that I have been able to learn of them, they are doing a quiet and deep work in young souls, without fuss or calling attention to themselves or by excesses in spirituality. And the attraction of the school is so great, both in summer and winter, that they cannot accommodate everyone. The summer school continues for six weeks, di-



1969 AFLBS Spring Banquet

vided into three sessions, in which a person can take one, two or all three sessions. There are four hours in the morning, from 9 to 1. The whole afternoon is free, and then there is a service in the evening. Many young people arrange their two weeks' vacation to take such a course. At the same time they get an inexpensive and refreshing stay at a lovely and invigorating place.

I felt myself so much at home at that Bible school that I found it very

difficult to leave it, even though the students spoke only English. But some of the young people could understand my Norwegian. The Lord bless them all!

—Translated from the Norwegian. *Folkebladet*, Oct. 31, 1923

(Ed. note: The Bible school of which Prof. Hallesby wrote was, of course, the Lutheran Bible Institute in its very early days. The school was later, and for many years, situated on Portland Ave. in Minneapolis.)



AFLBS Choir in Larvik, Norway, 1977.





Seminary Class, 1982



Orpha Flaten Schaffhauser, former secretary.

"The impelling motive for your giving is, of course, not the hope of return, but the joy that comes from serving God."

F. W. Hammarsten

"Courtesy will never demand that you do what conscience forbids!"

—John P. Milton

You never get a second chance to make a good first impression.

## O GOD, HEAR THIS PRAYER

O God . . .

Bend me low when I stand too straight and draw undue attention to myself because I think that I "know something."

Back me up when I go forward too fast and fail to consider those who are not able to walk.

Sit me down when I'm on my feet too long and think myself too important to give another my place.

Draw me aside and chastise me sore when I am so frivolous as to ignore the serious side of life.

O God . . .

Give me more to do than I can so I will not become idle and lazy.

Give me an almost impossible task so I will never be content merely to give you second best.

Give me trials and temptations to overcome so I'll be able to endure till the end.

Give me knocks and bruises lest I become too soft and unable to be the man I ought to be.

O God . . .

Ease the burden on my back only when I've learned to carry it well.

Dry the tears from my eyes only as I have learned to cry them freely.

Stop the aching of my heart only when it has hurt enough for me not to forget.

Make me truly happy only as I have learned what it means to be really sad.

O God . . .

Let the sun shine tomorrow only if I've noticed the clouds today.

Let the roses show their faces only if I have felt their thorns.

Let the birds sing their songs only if I have listened to their melodies before.

Let the whole world speak to me only if I have spoken first.

O God . . .

Give me numberless friends only as I have been friend to many.

Allow me success only as I have applied my abilities.

Let my dreams come true only as they are not foolish.

Make my life worthwhile only as I have lived it well.

O God . . .

Take away all that I have if I ever become selfish.

Give me constant pain if I never sympathize with those who have it.

Break my spirit if it ever becomes too proud.

Take my life from me if I ever forget to thank You for it.

O God . . .

Hear this prayer, and help me to pray it sincerely.

—Tommy Manning

—Selected

**I will be with thee**

As the old year now is waning,  
And the New Year comes in view,  
Blessed Savior, we acknowledge  
Thou hast led us "Hitherto."

"Hitherto" Thy many mercies  
Have encompassed every day,  
And we have Thy precious promise  
Thou wilt be with us all the way.

"Never leave thee nor forsake thee,"  
"Surely, I will be with thee."  
Promise of Thy blessed presence,  
Through each New Year still to be.

O, what peace and joy in knowing  
Thou art ever by our side,  
And Thy loving Hand of wisdom  
Will forever be our Guide.

And what blessed re-assurance  
That Thy mighty arm of power,  
That same power that made the  
heavens,  
Guards and keeps us every hour.

What a merciful Redeemer!  
What a wondrous Savior, too!  
What a gracious, loving Shepherd  
Who has led us "Hitherto."

Could we ever doubt Thy goodness?  
Could we doubt Thy loving care?  
No! Thy matchless love and mercy  
Will be with us everywhere.

And Thy love and goodness to us  
Are beyond all human thought,  
For Thou lovest without measure,  
Thine, with blood so dearly bought.

Entering another New Year,  
Pausing, we would contemplate  
All Thy love's accomplished for us,  
All Thy mercies, O so great!

And we praise Thee for assurance,  
Who has led us "Hitherto"  
That Thy presence will go with us,  
Every day the New Year through.

—Author unknown

# GOD IS A SPIRIT

**Rev. Gary M. Skramstad**

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

Many people about us at some time or other would like to be on the "in" side with God. Their motivations may vary greatly and their need of His blessing may be seemingly long or short lived. For this reason the various churches of our Flathead Valley have established services of worship.

But it becomes quite obvious in our community as in others that worship of God is approached by the various churches in different ways. The order of worship matters very little in our worship. Some have much liturgy while others have very little or none at all. Our Scripture verse tells us that the important matter to remember is that we worship God in spirit and in truth.

God is not interested in becoming a spiritual insurance company where He can be relied upon for protection in this troubled world. Nor is He interested in the double standards that some would try to impress Him with. Then there are those who seemingly worship God by degrading the followers of another church and by so doing try to impress God with their own worthiness. And it even seems that there are those who attempt to worship a God whom they are not quite sure even exists. These folks only desire to have the portions of Scripture that are suitable to them deemed as the real Word of God. God is allowed to be God only in the areas of life and religion that are allowable by the other controlling "gods" of intellect, influence, pride, etc..

The Bible, we believe, is the holy Word of God and gives to those who read and obey it the answers to a life fellowship with God. We must, according to John 4:24, worship God in spirit and in truth. To worship in spirit means that one's attitude is consistently controlled in the effort to please God. Our flesh is forever changing but the spirit of our being

is a constant factor of life. We often-times witness that our worship in spirit is hindered by the influence of our fleshly thoughts, words, and deeds.

When one becomes honestly interested in the worship of God as a full-time religion, he must reconcile himself to this broken relationship between himself and God. Some are unable to face such a God and therefore become antagonistic to all that God represents. Others use a comparative analysis of themselves with the rest of society or "church" people. They usually arrive at the verdict that the sins of others are more serious than their own. But God says that we must worship Him in spirit and in truth; sincerity is not enough.

The truth is that God already knows who and what we are. He is fully aware that in sin were we conceived and that there is none righteous, no not one! He, Himself, has stated that the soul that sins will surely die. If we are guilty of one offense, we are as doomed as though we were the most depraved of humans. Yes, God is fully aware of what a sorrowful condition we are in. And that is just the reason why He sent His only begotten Son into the world. He came to seek and to save the lost.

We worship God in spirit and in truth when we face the truth of His Word which tell us that even our righteousness is as filthy rags. This truth should make all who hear forsake their own salvation and accept His. A worship in love and childlike fear should develop. Such a love and fear would control us by our not desiring any harm or ill repute to come to our Father's name. When our spirits become tainted with the guilt of sin, the truth of God's Word in I John 1:9 becomes the bridge in our worship of God. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Amen.

—Kalispell (Mont.) paper



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# editorials

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## SCRAPBOOK ISSUE

This is our second Scrapbook issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador*. Mostly, the contents are made up of items that have collected over the years and for some reason or other haven't seen the light of day in our pages until today.

Most of the pieces are short. Some readers like shorter pieces. There are lots of poems. Some people like poetry in a special way.

Many of us are collectors of newspaper and magazine clippings, of tracts, of service and program bulletins. What we will do with them, once gathered, is a good question. Some folks do a better job of filing them, categorizing them, displaying them than others of us do. But all of us who save things have those moments here and there when we find delight in looking over those mementoes or clippings. A memory is jogged, a person who impacted on our lives is recalled, a "mountain top" experience is relived. It all becomes a part of the scrapbook of our minds.

We trust that you will enjoy this Scrapbook issue. It is a hodgepodge. There may not seem much rhyme or reason to it, but it is remarkable how the Holy Spirit is able to take an item, perhaps very small, and bring its truth to a person's soul. Sometimes it is the scholarly dissertation that is the means of attracting a reader's spiritual attention. At another time it is a brief poem, a quotation from the Bible or some famous person which causes the beholder to grasp living truth in a way which transforms an attitude, maybe a whole life.

So we present this Scrapbook issue of the *Ambassador* to you. Good reading, and God bless you.

## A FINAL REMINDER

May we, as kindly as possible, but as firmly as possible, remind our AFLC people that only days are left in the 1984-85 fiscal year in the Association. The books will close on the year when the gifts mailed in January have all arrived at the Medicine Lake office.

We do hope that every member is fully aware of the need for generous gifts by the end of the month. By the end of November 60% of the goal had been reached. Sixty percent in 83% of the time. So there is much to be done, almost \$400,000 worth. Or look at it another way: in two months, it was necessary for us to give about two-thirds as much as we had given in ten months.

But there are only days left in the fiscal year. We trust that through your pastor you have a more up-to-date progress report than we're able to give you. Perhaps he will have the end-of-December one or something even more recent.

There will be more talk about goals later, but the pressing need now is a great outpouring of love offerings

to God's work through our AFLC benevolences. Your interest and support were never needed more than now.

## THE BIBLE CONFERENCES

Winter Bible conferences have been a part of Association life since the beginning. The first one was held in McVille, N. Dak., and there has been at least one every winter since then, two or three each winter in recent years.

We have found these conferences to be times of rich fellowship and spiritual enrichment. The pace is much less hurried than at a church business conference. At most of the winter conferences there are five Bible sessions. All of these studies have been well presented. An equal number of hours is given over to Biblical topics and/or church work themes. And each evening there is a preaching service, almost always with special music to enhance the preaching.

Many people come—there could always be more—and it is good to meet old friends and make new ones. It is always too bad that not all who come can stay for the whole time. How we wish they could, but there are reasons why this is impossible, some better than others.

The time may come when it is no longer necessary for the Association as such to sponsor the Bible conferences. Regions or even districts may plan their own, and that should reach even more people, but for now they are planned and promoted by the church at large. Let's be thankful for our Bible conferences, support them and pray for them. This year they are to be held in Grafton, N. Dak. (Feb. 6-9), Osceola, Wis. (Feb. 13-16) and Lake Stevens, Wash. (Mar. 8-10).

## READERS' EVALUATION

In this copy of the *Ambassador* you will find a tear-out page in the center of the magazine. It is an evaluation sheet for your use and our help.

We do hope that you will take the time to fill it out to the best of your ability and will spend the twenty cents to mail it in to the address given.

At our office in Minneapolis the results of the survey will be tabulated. Soon after that is completed the Editorial Board and the Editor will meet and review what our readers think about our church paper and consider how we may improve it. And later on we'll share some of the survey findings and the new plans that may be worked out.

So you can see that it's important that many readers take part in this evaluation. The larger the number of respondents, the more we'll feel that we're really getting a true sampling of opinion. Please take the time to participate. And do so within two weeks of receiving this

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Mr. Ernest Meidema and Rev. Dale Melgren.

**ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS**  
**3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard**  
**Minneapolis, Minn. 55441**

*BUDGET RECEIPTS*  
 February 1-November 30

FUND	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% of TOTAL*
General Fund	\$ 193,152.00	\$143,097.03	74
Schools — AFLTS	102,232.66	55,875.65	55
AFLBS	165,251.34	92,603.54	56
Home Missions	237,739.00	141,685.63	60
World Missions	274,720.00	149,788.18	55
Praise Fund	30,000.00	22,825.36	76
TOTAL	\$1,003,095.00	\$605,875.39	60*
1983-84	\$ 963,916.00	\$508,882.03	53

\*Goal 83%

## EDITORIALS . . .

issue. Yes, we'll wait a little longer for replies to come in from those of you who are further away.

There are many ways in which this evaluation sheet could have been arranged and the questions asked. You can validly argue that this particular way isn't the best. But it's what we have; please make the best of it. Please make use of the space in Nos. 22 and 23 to note your comments and suggestions.

The survey is to be anonymous. *You don't have to sign your name or give a return address.* Do so only if you wish to be known.

You will make this effort worth-while by your participation. We thank you.

## I Longed for Peace

*With many cares, for many years, I longed for peace within my soul,  
 For I had heard the old, old story and longed for Him to make me whole.*

*And though I sought no peace, it brought the way I could not see;  
 As grains of sand my sins were many. How could He save a wretch like me?*

*Somewhere I'd heard in Jesus' Word (in Matthew chapter seven),  
 Not all that call, "Lord, Lord" it said, "shall enter into heaven."*

*But then one day I found the way: the key was in this part—  
 Ye shall seek (Me) and ye shall find (Me) when ye shall search (for Me) with all your heart.*

*And now I know He loved me so He gave His life for me;  
 For me He came to bear my shame, to die on Calvary.*

*My good I saw as filthy rags, my sins as scarlet as could be;  
 Each verse, each line, I claimed as mine, each promise written there for me.*

*God gave His Son, His only Son, to suffer shame and scorn and hate.  
 He let Him die for you and me; how could I doubt a love so great?*

*Oh, won't you claim His precious name, His grace He did impart,  
 And now my faith, oh, so great; He lives within my heart!*

—Mrs. Alfred G. Gunderson



## Right and wrong about Law and Grace

Only a short time after the apostle Paul had founded the church in Galatia did false teachers appear on the scene. They seemed to be so pious and Biblical in all their ways that the Galatians readily welcomed them. Their message was that God's grace was not as freely and unconditionally offered as Paul had taught, but that only through strict obedience to the commandments and precepts of the Law could man earn this grace. Just as many people today, the Galatians did not realize that by trying to earn grace through the covenant of the Law, they lost the covenant of grace. By depending on righteousness through our works we block the way for God's grace, and by trying to have a part in our own salvation we deny God His part in it. In this way Paul passionately spoke up against any corruptions of the Gospel. The only righteousness we will ever have is that which Jesus has earned for us. Faith does not know of any additions to the righteousness He won for us on the cross, and it

will not recognize any of our own contributions. Only faith in the Lamb of God who carried away the sins of the world is truly staying within the covenant of God.

After one year in Israel the time has come for us to say "Shalom." It has been a great experience for us to see with our own eyes the land we already knew through our Bible. We are especially thankful for the people we have met here, the many new friends we have got, and the wonderful hospitality we have been met with.

Our greeting to this congregation and to all the believers here is from Joshua 1:9:

"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

JAN, ANNE-GRETHER  
and ØYSTEIN  
—Immanuel Lutheran Church  
Tel Aviv, Israel

## RESPECT, a vanishing grace?

A few days ago I was one of several mourners at the funeral of a friend. In a proper air of somberness and solemnity the funeral procession slowly wound its way through a small city to the cemetery. Traffic hustled along beside us, the usual city noises jarring the air. People went about their business as usual. No hands were waved in farewell. Scarcely a single curious eye followed our passage. But all of a sudden, quite unexpectedly, out of the corner of my eye, I saw a middle-aged, dusky workman . . . his clothes covered with dust, perspiration dripping from his brow . . . set his wheelbarrow down, take off his hat, and stand at almost military attention as our cortege passed him by. This was one of the most genuine, natural, graceful, well-mannered demonstrations of pure respect that I have witnessed in many a day.

It was touching. And it set me thinking. Whatever happened to respect anyhow? Where did it go? When did it become unfashionable? Why did there used to be so much of it and why is there so little now? If there's a missing link with the past, this must surely be it. When respect went underground, a strange social revolution began. There's much of it still around. But not enough.

Most of our business problems have to do with people. And many of our people problems have to do with behavior. And many of our behavioral problems have to do with lack of respect. I reckon we need to combine ability and respect and come up with more respectability.

—Joseph W. Gawthrop  
—St. John's and Grace Lutheran  
Parish, Ohio, Nebr.

"For here we have no lasting city,  
but we seek the city which is to  
come"

(Hebrews 13:14).

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## JESUS IS COMING AGAIN!

*"When the cat is away the mice will play"*

When Jesus ascended into heaven He told His disciples He would come again. That has been almost 2,000 years ago. Many have awaited His coming believing that He would return. Still more have doubted His return.

Some would reason and say: "Jesus has been gone so long it is very doubtful if He will return soon, or return at all."

Somehow with Jesus delaying His coming, man seems to have greater freedom to sin. With Jesus gone so long, man acts as if there is no God who will judge sin.

But some day Jesus will return. The signs of the times would indicate that it will be soon. When He comes there will be those who will welcome His coming, because they have been

expecting Him. But there will be many who will be embarrassed when He comes. They will be embarrassed because Jesus will find them still in their sin. And their embarrassment will be greater than if they were caught in the nude in public. Their sin will be like nakedness to them. They will not be able to find anything to cover their nakedness in sin.

The Christian will be spared this embarrassment (and also God's judgment) because his sin will be covered. It will be covered with Jesus' own blood.

Have your sins been covered by the blood of Jesus? Jesus will cover your sin now, if you come to Him, and truly seek Him with a sincere heart.

Remember, when He comes it will be too late to seek a covering for your sin.

—Rev. Gerald F. Mundfrom



congregations

## Annual meetings

Many congregations are on a treadmill. They spend time, invest money, and put forth much effort but get nowhere because they have failed to determine where they should go. With blind allegiance they follow the well-worn rut of past programs and organizational projects and hope they can at least maintain the status quo. To question the old programs and methods is forbidden. And so the congregation which has gotten nowhere keeps getting nowhere barely.

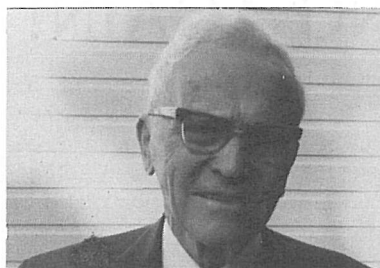
To be sure, such a congregation is not "getting nowhere." It is getting somewhere — backward. Consider yourself for a moment. You are never "in neutral" spiritually. If you are not growing spiritually and developing in obedient living, you are backsliding. So it is with the congregation.

Annual meetings give the congregation opportunity to take action or plan the action it will take in further establishing the Kingdom of God. If anything constructive is to be accomplished at the meeting it is imperative that some homework be done. Various boards and committees should meet ahead of time to evaluate the condition of their respective areas of concern. What are the financial needs? What is needed for the church building? What need is the Sunday School trying to reach? Is it meeting it? What are the needs among the youth? The elderly? After a careful and honest evaluation has been made of the needs, a plan should be constructed. If the present plan is effectively meeting the need then it needs to be reaffirmed. If not, some rebuilding is necessary. Every board should come to the meeting to either reaffirm the present plan (which they are sure is meeting the need) or to

propose a new plan which they would like the congregation to prayerfully consider. The congregation does not have time at its meeting to plan how various needs should be met. But, when a plan which has been prayed over and mulled over is presented the congregation has something which it can accept, modify, or reject.

Poor attendance at the annual meeting is a sad commentary on the condition of the congregation. Some stay away because they have had their opinions ridiculed or lack of love shown them at previous meetings. Those offending need to go and seek their forgiveness. Some are indifferent and apathetic; they need to be loved and challenged. Every member of the church should be present to see how the Lord's money is being spent, how the congregation plans to meet their needs, and how they can be used by the Lord in ministering to the needs of others in and through the congregation. Pitch in! God has led you to your church. Go to bat for it!

—Pastor Bruce Dalager  
Grand Forks, N.Dak.  
(from a parish paper)



Rev. Knut Gjesfield, 1965



Amery Free Lutheran Sunday School



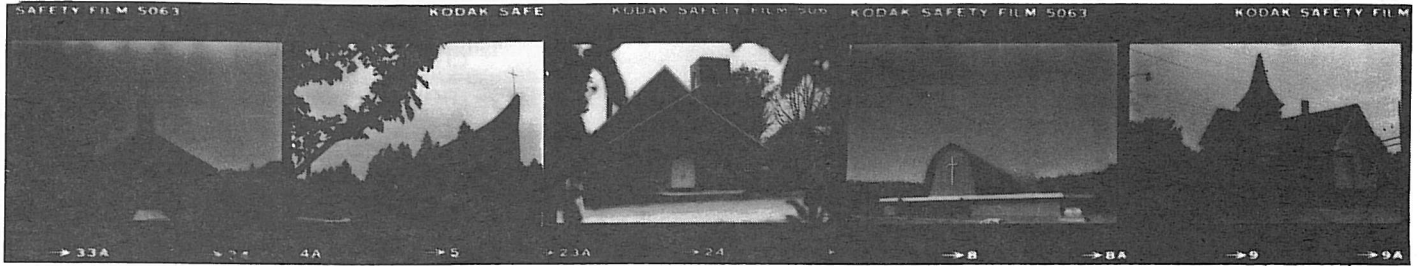
WMF officers, Mrs. Reuben Wee, Mrs. Arlo Kneeland, Miss Judith Wold, 1980



Rev. and Mrs. Julius Hermunsle, 1980



WMF National Prayer Breakfast



Rev. John Reith family.

## MY BEST FRIEND

Someone is very dear to me.  
All things with Him I share,  
And as He walks beside me  
I'm happy anywhere.  
When He smiles upon me,  
My heart is full of song,  
For I really wish to please Him  
The whole day long.  
But when I feel He's looking  
At me with saddened eye,  
I cannot happy be at all  
No matter how I try.  
The friend I have is Jesus,  
He always understands,  
And as we walk together  
I try to learn His plans.  
I'm glad He is my best friend  
He is others' best friend, too,  
And sharing brings us happiness,  
I know He looks for you.  
Just whisper to Him anytime,  
Don't wonder what to say;  
No matter how or who you are  
He wants you anyway.  
And then when He is your friend  
You will tell another, too,  
About this loving Friend we have  
And what He did for you.

—Selected

# Keep Sunday sacred

*"Should I worship God in church in the good old summertime?"*

This is a question that all of us must answer this time of the year. God has given us the Lord's Day for worship and rest. If we are to be healthy, growing, happy Christians, we need to use the Lord's Day as He intended. Then His physical and spiritual blessing will come to us. "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." May the Lord help us to come up with the right answer by considering these three questions:

1. *What would Satan have me do?*

Obviously he doesn't want me to worship God in church because he is afraid that I might hear about God's love and plan for my life; I might believe in Jesus as my personal Savior and dedicate my life to Him. Then he would lose his control and influence over me. Also, my example might encourage others to attend church, and he wouldn't like that either. "The Lord is in His Holy Temple. Let all the world be silent before Him."

2. *What would my flesh have me do?*

"My spirit is willing but my flesh is weak." My flesh tells me that it really doesn't make much difference to God if I miss church once in a while or even quite often. God is expecting too much if He expects me to worship Him every Sunday in His holy temple. And besides this, I can worship Him out in nature or at home . . . but do I? He also knows how tired I am after a Godless Saturday night. I've done it before and everything turned out all right . . . or did it? He even forgave me when I asked Him to. But I sometimes feel cheap about praying after I have de-

liberately despised His love and will for my life.

I also know that by staying home I am telling my neighbors and others that God and Jesus don't run my life . . . that I do as I please, that they don't mean very much to me.

God says in Galatians 5:17,18,21, "Walk by the Spirit and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for they are opposed to each other to prevent you from doing what you would . . . I warn you as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God."

3. *What would Jesus have me do?*

If I am a Christian, then I want to please Jesus in everything. He is my Savior and friend. Jesus said, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments." Jesus went, as was His custom, to worship His Father in His House every Lord's Day; even though He knew more than the preacher did, He knew what he was going to say, for He knew all things. He went there to please His Father, to pray, to worship, to listen to the read and spoken Word, to sing praises unto God.

He also went to the temple to set a good example for His family, friends, and others. Because He always sought to please His heavenly Father in everything, His home town people couldn't find any fault in Him and call Him a hypocrite.

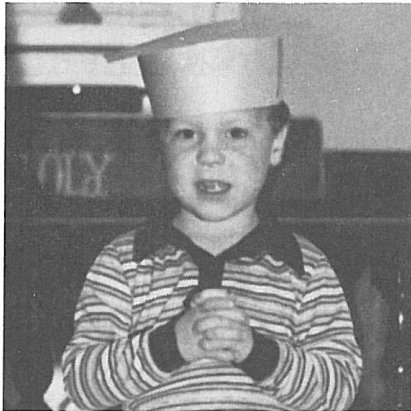
When we are tempted to skip church on Sunday, will we seek to please Satan, our flesh, or Christ?

—Rev. Arnold Stone  
Redeemer Lutheran Church Visitor





family



Cradle Roll graduation, Astoria, Ore.

## When children pray

God, who has made this world of ours  
And blesses every part,  
Most surely has a special place  
for children in His heart.

We know this, for He sent His Son,  
A child from heaven above,  
To be their Friend and Savior dear  
And keep them in His love.

He listens very closely, too,  
Every time they kneel to pray,  
And ever watches over them  
Along their busy way.

Yes, children are the special care  
Of God in heaven above,  
And when they pray, He favors them  
With everlasting love.

—Selected

The best monument that a child can raise to his mother's memory is that of a clean, upright life, such as she would have rejoiced to see her son live.

Anonymous

## At Mother's Knee

Many years ago I knelt  
And bowed my head in prayer  
Upon a checkered apron  
As my mother stroked my hair.

I have knelt at many altars  
Of wood, of gold, of stone;  
But that gingham-covered altar  
Is the sweetest I have known.

—Author Unknown

## If Jesus came to your house

If Jesus came to your house to spend a day or two—  
If He came unexpectedly, I wonder what you'd do.  
Oh, I know you'd give your nicest room to such an honored Guest,  
And all the food you'd serve to Him would be the very best,  
And you would keep assuring Him you're glad to have Him there—  
That serving Him in your own home is joy beyond compare.

But—when you saw Him coming, would you meet Him at the door  
With arms outstretched in welcome to your heavenly Visitor?  
Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in?  
Or hide some magazines and put the Bible where they'd been?  
Would you turn off the radio\* and hope He hadn't heard?  
And wish you hadn't uttered that last, loud, hasty word?

Would you hide your worldly music and put some hymnbooks out?  
Could you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about?  
And I wonder—if the Saviour spent a day or two with you,

Would you go right on doing the things you always do?  
Would you go right on saying the things you always say?  
Would life for you continue as it does from day to day?  
Would your family conversation keep up its usual pace?  
And would you find it hard each meal to say a table grace?  
Would you sing the songs you always sing, and read the books you read,  
And let Him know the things on which your mind and spirit feed?  
Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you'd planned to go?  
Or would you, maybe, change your plans for just a day or so?

Would you be glad to have Him meet your very closest friends?  
Or would you hope they'd stay away until His visit ends?  
Would you be glad to have Him stay forever on and on?  
Or would you sigh with great relief when He at last was gone?  
It might be interesting to know the things that you would do  
If Jesus Christ in person came to spend some time with you.

—Lois Kendall Blanchard

\*TV may also be used at this point.



Mrs. Fritjof Monseth

## I must go shopping

I must go shopping today,  
I am completely out of generosity  
and must get some more.

I also want to "exchange" the self-satisfaction I picked up the other day for some real humility. They say it wears better.

I must look at some tolerance, which is worn as a wrap this season.

I saw samples of kindness . . . well, I'm a little low on that and one can never have too much of it.

And I must try to match some patience. I saw it on a friend . . . it was so becoming, and—might look equally well on me.

I must remember to get my sense of humor mended, and keep my eyes open for some inexpensive goodness.

It's surprising how one's stock of goods is depleted.

Yes! I must go shopping today.

—Lora Dwire  
Drummond—Mason  
Free Lutheran Parish Newsletter

**"Let us not be too impatient to enter our chosen vocation. Let us not enter upon it only partially prepared. If Christ, the world's Redeemer, waited until He was 30 years of age, surely we ought to wait until we have the needed maturity and discipline."**

**L. S. Keyser**

## when the AFLC began . . .

A salute today to two people who played such an important role in the AFLC's early days at Medicine Lake. We refer to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bursheim.

While the Association was holding its second annual conference, in June 1964, in Valley City, N. Dak., Bob and Meredith were moving into the apartment of the church building at 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd. This is the area where the church offices are now. The apartment was comfortable, the church cavernous, being used only for the storage of some Hauge Innermission Federation materials.

A seminary was to begin there that fall. Much had to be done and Bob, caretaker and jack-of-all-trades, was fully involved in all the physical aspects of that preparation. He also served as treasurer of the Association for a time, although he didn't do the day to day bookkeeping.

Meredith acted as hostess for the headquarters building and when the

Bible School was started in 1966, she and Mrs. Reuben Wee, whose husband was a seminary student, did the cooking. Their apartment home now and then gave lodging to people who had come for special events. Meredith also worked with the taping of the radio program aired by radio station KRWB in Roseau, Minn. It was her weekly job to arrange music for it and put it together with the message.

Bob and Meredith Bursheim were charter members of the congregation started at headquarters, Medicine Lake Lutheran Church, and were involved in all aspects of that work, too.

After a few years they moved back to their home community at Winger, Minn., where they take part in many activities, not least in Dovre Lutheran Church, Roy B. Johnson, pastor.

The AFLC owes a debt of gratitude to this couple who played an important part in AFLC beginnings.

## Mr. Don Rodvold to leave AFLBS

Mr. Don Rodvold, director of music at Association Free Lutheran Bible School since 1967, has resigned, effective August 1. He has not announced his future plans.

The Board of Trustees of AFLBS, at its meeting on Nov. 30, 1984, accepted the resignation with regret and expressed thanks for the "excellence and dedication" of Mr. Rodvold's music ministry.

AFLBS had only been in operation for one year when he joined the faculty. He has brought school choirs to both coasts numerous times, once to Canada and twice to Norway, in addition to tours in the Upper Midwest. The Choir will make a tour to the East Coast this spring. The second choir, or Choral Club, has toured in the midwest, once to the West Coast.

Only Donald Hansen of the Headquarters-Schools staff outranks Don Rodvold in continuous service to the AFLC at Medicine Lake.

## LEM Conference

"Loved to Life" will be the theme of the 49th Midwinter Conference of the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement, Jan. 20-23, at Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls, Minneapolis, Minn.

Rev. David Hughes, LEM Director of Evangelism, will lead the morning Bible hours at 9:30 each day. Dr. David Glesne, American Lutheran Church pastor in Joliet, Ill., will be the evening speaker. Those services all begin at 7:30. Dave and Barb Anderson will be the conference music ministers. LEM's full-time ministry team, Living Dimension, will be present throughout the week to take part also.

On the weekend, Jan. 25-26, the youth conference will be held at Northwestern College, St. Paul, Minn. Evangelist Tom Bache-Wiig, Bruce Stumbo, Don Gutzman and Don Wright are among those participating in the weekend, as will Living Dimension.

**THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR**  
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"That for which the Christian should strive is to make his speech always pure, beautiful, and the medium of expressing such emotions, thoughts, and experiences as are not contrary to the will of God."

—John P. Milton

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MPLS MN 55441

## Bible Conference housing information

The western areas Bible Conference will be held at Bethel Lutheran Church, Grafton, N. Dak., Lyle Aadahl, pastor, Feb. 6-9. It will begin with a service on Wednesday night at 8 o'clock and close at noon on Saturday.

Pastor Aadahl provides this information concerning housing. The motel accommodations are:

	1 person 1 bed	2 persons 1 bed	2 persons 2 beds
Midtown Motel 732 Manvel Ave. (701-352-0231)	\$19.50	\$28.00	\$34.00
Leonard Motel West Hwy. 17 (701-352-1730)	18.00	21.00	23.00
Super 8 Motel Hwy. 17 & School Road (701-352-0888)	18.88	22.88	24.88

Not all rates given include tax.

Chairman of the Housing Committee—Mr. Vernon Rasmus (701-352-1762)

Chairman of the Hospitality Committee—Mr. John Presteng (701-352-0911)

Information Contact Persons—Mrs. Ella Bjornson (701-352-0201)

Mr. Juline Selliken (701-352-2677)

The Hospitality Committee will provide special assistance where needed (travel, emergency help, etc.). Housing will also be available in private homes for those who so choose.

Pastor Aadahl, speaking for himself and the congregation, states that "we look forward to this conference with much joy and anticipation of the Lord's blessings. We hope that many of our friends from the AFLC will be able to attend."

The Bible Conference at the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis., will be held Feb. 13-16. There is adequate room for all who come and no advance registration for room is needed.

A third conference will be conducted, at Elim Lutheran Church, Lake Stevens, Wash., Mar. 8-10.

### WE THANK THEE, LORD

Lord, we raise to Thee a thankful voice  
And for all our blessings we rejoice.  
We thank Thee for earth and all its beauty,  
For mountains, unfading fields and prairie.  
We thank Thee for the light of sun and moon,  
For each new day that is gone too soon.  
We thank Thee for the splendor of a sunset,  
The peace of each task well done in sweat.  
We thank Thee for the honest hand of a friend  
With whom our darkest hours we may spend.  
We thank Thee for giving us life and health,  
For material and spiritual wealth.  
We thank Thee for victory Thou hast won,  
A gift Thou gav'st for all man's salvation.  
We thank Thee for joy of a perfect rest  
That we can only find upon Thy breast.

—Doris L. Johnson