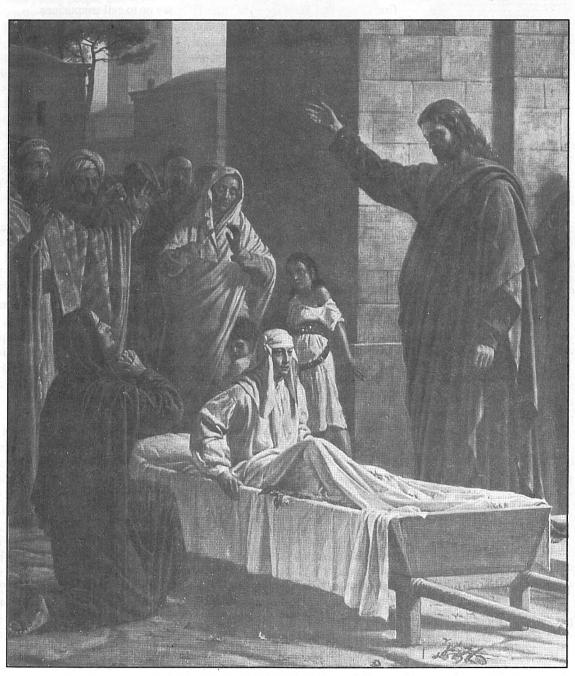
HEALING

In the Atonement
Is There Any One Sick?
Testimonies of Grace

Satanism Today
"From a Counselor's Study" Introduced
AFLC Missions Conference Schedule

AMBASSADOR

January 22, 1991



LGHT on the WAY

meditations on God's Word

COVER
The Son of the Widow of Nain.
Luke 7:11-15. Lund.

Volume 29 Number 2

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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

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Subscriptions: \$11.00 per year. Write to:

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

All communications concerning contents of this magazine should be addressed to: Editor, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441.

Second-class postage paid at Mpls., Minnesota, and additional mailing office.

USPS 588-620 ISSN 0746-3413

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

To Christ be the Glory

od's Word showed us in our previous meditation that, without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we are not God's children. When we ask Christ into our hearts, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell within. II Corinthians 5:17 reads. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new."

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to make all things new, and one of the first things that He does is to "glorify me: He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John 16:14). Also, I Corinthians 2:12-13 reads, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

One way that Christ is glorified through us is when we as God's children tell how Jesus came and sought us while we were walking in spiritual darkness, and that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, and that in Him we have spiritual light and eternal life.

Many times you will hear people say, "If God had not helped me ... or, if it wasn't for God ..." There are many so-called gods in this world, but only One who is true, and He says, "... this is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye Him" (Matthew 17:5). It is the Holy Spirit who reminds us to give all glory and honor, in our new way of life, to Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Revelation 5:13 reads, "... Blessing and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

The Holy Spirit, through the Word, also teaches us to glorify Christ through the lives we live. We are to forsake even all appearance of evil.

When others tempt us to walk in a sinful way, we should be willing to share that Jesus means more to us than all the follies of sin. There is pleasure in sin for a season, as far as our old nature is concerned, but because we love Jesus and want to glorify Him in our lives, we will not partake thereof. Moses chose rather to suffer with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Jesus is indeed glorified when we by His grace say no to evil temptations.

I believe that one of the most blessed truths that the Holy Spirit reveals to us, after we have received Christ as Lord and Saviour, is this word from God: "But you are complete in Him (Christ), which is the head of all principality and power" (Colossians 2:10). The Word also says, "Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10).

When the Holy Spirit reveals to us the awesomeness of God, the holiness, and the love which He gave to us through Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, then and then only can we truly worship God. The worship and praise of our Lord is what God our Father wants first and foremost, even before service. This brings glory to Him. "But the hour cometh, and now is, when true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him" (John 4:23).



— by Rev. Alvin Larson

he purpose of this article is to analyze these verses from Isaiah to determine if they can be used as a foundation for a ministry of healing as many today would believe and practice. Some, in fact, believe that because Christ has destroyed death He has also destroyed disease, and therefore Christians can, on the basis of the atonement, claim healing as well as forgiveness. There are those who would even say, and this on the basis of Isaiah 53:4, that because Christ died to atone for our sicknesses as well as our diseases, all Christians should expect God to heal their bodies yet today.

A theological answer could, indeed, be given to this question. Is physical healing in the atonement? Yes, and no, depending upon what is meant by physical healing. Take for an example the teaching of Sverdrup's "Explanation to the Small Catechism." There it is taught that the human body in creation received, as a benefit of the image of God, perfect health and immortality along with a life free from care in Paradise. When man sinned in the Fall the injury that resulted in the human body was that it became a tool of every evil passion and the recipient of disease, distress, countless pains, and finally death. So when Christ rose from the dead He brought with him the assurance that our bodies shall, with perfect health, arise in glory on the last day (Questions 139, 144, and 189).

In anticipation of the great event of the resurrection, Jesus healed many in His lifetime, others were given grace sufficient for bearing up when physical healing was denied (as with Paul's thorn in the flesh) so that God's great purposes could be accomplished, and all were given hope for physical healing in the hereafter. For this reason the sick are encouraged to call for the elders, James 5:14-15, to receive the ministry of the Church and its Christ through prayer and anointing in the name of the Lord. In fact, every time Christians pray for temporal gifts in the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer they make request for peace and health as part of their daily bread.

Does this settle the question, though, in regards to the healing of Isaiah 53:4-5? Do these verses provide foundation for a ministry of physical healing as some would maintain today? The evidence of Scripture concerning these two verses would indicate the contrary for the following reasons.

The fourth verse of Isaiah 53 is quoted in Matthew 8:17, as being fulfilled in the healing ministry of Jesus where all who were ill were

Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:4-5, KJV).

Is There **Physical Healing** in the Atonement?

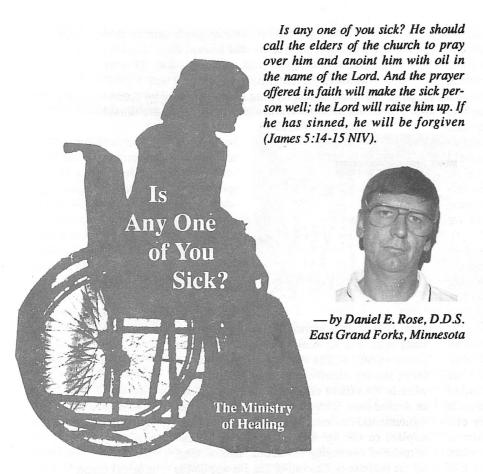
being healed. To associate the fulfillment of this verse in the healing ministry of Jesus rather than in the events of His atoning ministry on the cross is very significant. Jesus fulfilled His work in the offices of prophet, priest, and king in accordance with the Old Testament prefigurements. His miraculous healing ministry applies to the spheres of prophet, for the purpose of conveying revelation, and of king, for the purpose of illustrating that He was divine God. But for the sphere of priest are reserved those actions which have to do only with the forgiveness of sin in atonement. Miracles and healings, therefore, are not part of the universal atonement work but are rather subservient to the laws which govern revelation and kingship. In other words, that God can and does heal miraculously, instantaneously, and permanently the Christian Church joyfully and confidently affirms. But that He does this not as freely and regularly as sinners are forgiven the Christian Church must also maintain. We recognize the limits placed upon healing by the sovereign will of God as He furthers His purposes of revelation and omnipotence.

Further reasons for this understanding are observed in the fifth verse of Isaiah 53. The first observation to be noted is that while healing does mean physical healing in some passages, in this passage the immediate context demands that it be defined in the sense of spiritual healing. The wounds of this Servant (Jesus) were for transgressions, the rebellious breaking of the covenant relationship with God, His bruises were for iniquities, the perverted twisting and breaking of God's Law, His chastisement was for our peace with God and His stripes brought healing from iniquity which \(\rightarrow \)

"We recognize the limits placed upon healing by the sovereign will of God as He furthers His purposes ..."



- by Rev. Ralph D. Tjelta Blaine, Minnesota



here have been many things written and spoken about the ministry of healing throughout the history of Christianity. Certainly God does not need us to be involved when He chooses to heal, yet God's Word directs us to pray for one another, to pray regarding all things and to ask for His interceding hand.

The need for a healing ministry entered into the world with sin at the time of the Fall, and will only end at Christ's glorious Return. Throughout history the forces of evil have effectively used fear and pain to keep people from prayer, and at times to create a sense of futility in prayer. Yes, it is true, sickness, pain, death, and fear all entered the world at the time of the fall of man, and the battle has been fought ever since. Complete wholeness, freedom, and healing will come only with eternal life; yet, we must live in and work to change a sin-sick world wracked by fear and pain.

"Is any one of you sick?" James asks. To answer anything other than, "We are all sick," would be less

ATONEMENT:

"A study of the entire book of Isaiah would indicate ... defining this healing as a spiritual healing." was laid upon Him on our behalf. This iniquity is that of all who have gone astray spiritually and have turned each to his own way in moral rebellion against God. Further, if there would have been just two phrases in this verse, the possibility could have been that the first indicated a spiritual sense and the second a physical sense, but with four phrases linked together it is far more likely that the intended sense of the last is synonymous with the first three as applying also to the spiritual.

A study of the entire book of Isaiah would indicate that the broader context would also call for defining this healing as a spiritual healing. In Isaiah 6:10 it is a healing of the heart which comes through conversion. Chapter 19, verse 22, expresses it as a granting of spiritual knowledge of God in salvation. It is a healing from sinful ways in 57:18-19. And in chapter 30, verse 26, it is healing in the sense of God's reversal of judgment because of idolatry.

Finally, the New Testament use of this phrase (I Peter 2:24) would equate this with the work of atonement for sin which was accomplished on the cross. The consequence of His stripes in I

Peter is not physical healing, but righteousness in life because of our new condition, being dead to sins. It is interesting to notice that the "Explanation of the Small Catechism" agrees with the conclusion in seeing Isaiah 53:5 as a description of the anguish of Christ on the cross. (Questions 179-183.)

What, then, is the message of Isaiah 53:5 to Christians today? It is this. Jesus has offered Himself as a sufficient sacrifice for all sins (v. 10). Through His suffering in atonement the righteous wrath of God has been forever satisfied (v. 11). Justification, the declaration of sins forgiven, has now come to the many who believe (v. 11). Successful intercession is made for the transgressors. "By His death He has paid the wages of sin, which is death. He has buried our sins, hallowed our graves, and taken away their horror." His life and suffering are the atonement for our sins. And finally, He is the example to the believer of holiness in life and patience in suffering. "Explanation to the Small Catechism," Questions 183-185.

(Rev. Tjelta is a professor of Old Testament Studies at the AFLC Schools.)

than honest. We all need healing at different times and in different ways, and if we all need healing we should seek prayer more often. God's Word should challenge us to have routine prayer for healing at all regular and special services of the congregation. Although fear and pain have limited us in seeking the Lord in prayer, it is also certain that at times it is only through deep pain that we begin to cry out to our God to heal our hurts, whether they are emotional, spiritual, or physical.

However, another limiting factor in seeking God for healing is our own pride. Pride has worked a negative work in our hearts and minds keeping us from asking others to intercede on our behalf, and has limited us in our willingness to pray and intercede for others, or to become involved with a healing ministry within our communities or congregations. The key is our attitude; we must submit to God's Word, not be concerned with what others think when we step out to pray for others, leave the results to God, and, consequently, don't take credit or responsibility for what we've asked God to do. We need to come under the authority of God's Word and simply submit our needs and the needs of others before God's Throne of Grace. Sometimes people ask for formulas, special anointing, or a particular setting; however, David in Psalm 100 writes, "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name" (Psalm 100:4 NIV). Our attitude should be one of thanksgiving and praise. We may not feel like it is a time to be thankful or a time of praise; however, it is not the circumstance or the sickness for which we thank and praise, but rather, we thank and praise God for being greater than any circumstance or sickness. God's Word abounds with encouragement to come to Him in prayer. The Apostle Paul writes, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Philippians 4:6 NIV).

When discussing a healing ministry the question is often asked, "What about those cases declared 'hopeless' where all attempts at healing have failed?" The first thing to remember is that to declare any situation hopeless is to limit a limitless God. Does this mean that, "If we only have enough faith we will see people healed?" No! What it means is that we need to thank God for being our God, to pray that the Spirit of Almighty God will intercede. Yes, we ache, cry, hurt, wonder, fear, and question; but we must remember that God is the God of Creation, the one true God who created and put into place the beginning of all time.

The challenge to the Christian is to pray for all things, believing the Lord will respond; and then, submit to the authority of God. We pray for the sick out of obedience to God and His Word. Martin Luther, writing in 1532, listed four obvious reasons for us to pray: "... first, the urging of God's Commandment, who has strictly required us to pray; second, His promise, in which He declares that He will hear us; third, an examination of our own need and misery, which burden lies so heavily on our shoulders that we have to carry it to God immediately and pour it out before Him, in accordance with His order and commandment; fourth, true faith, based on this Word and promise of God, praying with the certainty and confidence that He will hear and help us — and all these things in the name of Christ, through whom our prayer is acceptable to the Father and for whose

sake He gives us every grace and every good."

Healing occurs spiritually, emotionally, and physically. For example, a person with chest pains may not be having a heart problem, but rather a response to emotional stress and unconfessed sin. This would need healing just as much as if it were a true physical problem with the heart. Healings not readily seen are as equally miraculous as those that are. If we pray believing with an attitude in accordance with God's Word, we will see people healed miraculously in every

"Is any one of you sick?" Call the elders of the church to pray. If you are an elder in the church, prepare yourself from God's Word to pray for those in need, and offer to intercede for those who are in need of healing. If you are a believer, join with others to pray for a healing ministry in your community or congregation in accordance with God's Word.

As a final word, let us be reminded that, when we lay hands on the sick and pray for healing, we are proclaiming God's authority and power to heal, we are God's instruments working in obedience to Him. The results are up to Him and we can take no ownership in what we have asked God to do.

(Dr. Rose, a member of Christ the King Free Lutheran Church, East Grand Forks, served as a medical missionary in Madagascar.)

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

AFLC Benevolences - February 1-December 31

FUND	TOTAL BUDGET	REC'D IN DECEMBER	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	%* TOTAL
General Fund	\$ 223,110.00	\$14,544.48	\$164,359.28	74
Schools - (AFLTS)	136,822.00	15,621.66	73,236.60	54
(AFLBS)	186,850.00	24,007.82	113,487.94	61
Home Missions	433,616.00	22,188.08	247,375.74	57
World Missions	366,197.00	34,344.62	221,511.11	60
Capital Investment	30,000.00	1,126.53	18,859.35	63
Parish Education	64,970.00	4,511.80	41,881.41	64
TOTALS	\$1,441,565.00	\$116,344.99	\$880,711.43	61
1989 - 1990 *Goal 92%	\$1,308,281.00	\$113,735.14	\$848,620.80	65

Living and Loving Life

Touldn't it be wonderful if life were physically and emotionally painless? I really don't think so! Some of the best lessons I have learned in life have come when God has allowed me to walk through some of life's hardships and turmoil. Those times have produced some scars, but looking back, we give thanks for those scars for they are an outward evidence of an inward healing.

I can't help but think of Peter and how, when he took his eyes off Jesus, he began to sink into the water. So it is with us. In any given circumstance, if we begin to look at the situation, we become swallowed up in the watery waves of despair.

Jesus is always there for us, loving us enough to give us choices. In several instances in our life, we looked at the situation and it seemed so futile. One such episode brought us to counseling where God used trained Christian people and skilled physicians to intervene in our lives that brought about healing in relationships for which we daily thank God! Another instance brought opportunity to gather the praying leaders in our congregation for my physical well-being. Following the scripture in James was an experience of getting our eyes back on Jesus as He chose to heal a portion of my body that became evident even on x-

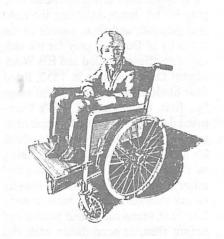
But even more important to me than any kind of physical healing is the Scripture that "in me (Jesus) you will have peace." John 16:33 goes on to say that in this world we will have trouble, but we are to take heart because He (Jesus) has overcome the world. Knowing Jesus and keeping my eyes focused on Him gives me a peace that transcends any kind of ailment whether it is physical or emotional. That is true healing!

May Jesus be your peace and healing so that you can thank Him for your scars. God bless you.

— by Mrs. Ray (Elaine) Klug Fairbury, Nebraska

God Healed My Son

During the winter of my son Matthew's sixth year, he was jumping off a six-foot wall, which bordered the stairway up to the front entry of his best friend's split entry house ... and landing in a pile of snow, which had been cleared off the driveway. His friend's Irish Setter dog accidentally pushed Matt off the wall, and he landed on the cement driveway, striking his



left hip. It hurt so bad that he couldn't sleep for two nights. The next summer he was diagnosed with Perthes Disease in his left hip, which softens the growth portion of the bone.

Normally the top of the thigh bone looks like a half circle where it fits into the hip joint. In Matt's case, the disease softened it so that it looked like a toadstool. His doctor put him in traction for two months, which was very painful. Then he was fitted with a ring brace and a built-up shoe for his right foot.

For eighteen months Matt regularly returned to his doctor for X-rays and an exam. But there was no improvement, and the doctor said that it would be at least half a year longer before he could get out of the brace. My patience was thin. My parents, Pastor and Mrs. Arnold Stone, and many other Christians prayed for Matt's recovery. But nothing seemed to help.

Then we heard about a pastor who was serving a church in St. Paul. I took Matt to him and told how the disease had affected the hip joint and kept the

The Healing Power of God's Word

I was awakened early this morning. My soul was disturbed in that pre-dawn hour. "Oh Lord." My lips barely moved as my thoughts focused on the suffering within our loved ones and church family.

My heart yearned to reach out to Mrs. A. and give encouragement in the Lord on her last mile in her struggle against cancer. I though of Mrs. B. and her first Christmas season without her husband of 31 years. I wondered what it was like waking up in a tent in Saudi Arabia for a young Lieutenant who had to leave his bride of three months. Then there was baby Jane, abused and bruised in body and spirit. My soul could not think more. It hurt too much. "But Lord, somehow heal that terribly broken family." My mind filled with names of people self-destructing with pride, bitterness, revenge and stubbornness; those paralyzed with physical pain and ... my soul began to see only endless blackness.

I opened my eyes to see if I could catch a ray of light from the morning sun. I could not. It was too early.

Then slowly my furrowed brow began to relax as the Lord graciously brought to mind: "Fear not, for I am with thee ... For thou art my refuge and strength ... Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ..." Verses kept coming.

I opened my eyes again. The night was still black, but dawn had come to my soul.

— submitted

left leg from growing normally. He anointed him with oil (which he called "God's medicine"), then the pastor prayed for Matt's healing in the name of Jesus.

Within an hour I took Matt to the doctor for his scheduled appointment. The doctor took X-rays, and said that for some reason the healing had accelerated ... and that the inside of the hip was okay!

I would not hesitate to recommend that, if any of you is sick, you call your elders and pastor and request anointing with God's medicine. Let them anoint your forehead with the sign of the cross ... and pray in Jesus' name for healing (James 5:14).

Matt never wore a brace again. Within two years the muscle tone in his leg returned so that the left thigh and calf were the same size as the right

one. He doesn't even have a limp and has never had trouble with the leg again.

May these words be of encouragement to you. Matt, my family and I thank God for this miracle. May His Name and power be glorified as we share it from our hearts with you.

— by Dale M. Stone Maple Grove, Minnesota (abridged)

A Testimony of Faith Refined in the Fires of Illness -

HE GIVETH MORE GRACE

- by Lay Pastor Gene Sundby, Outlook, Saskatchawan

Illness has always been a fact of human experience, and the subject of many discussions since the life and times of Job, and possibly before. It does seem to accomplish at least two things rather well, bringing out the gold and revealing the dross ... perhaps some of both, like Job, in most of us. Suffering in any form, in the life of a Christian, is to bring glory to God.

God, on the contrary, does know all things, and it is the first step of wisdom to realize that, whether we are sick or well, we all have to deal with Him. All good and perfect gifts come from above, while the rest have other origins. Sickness and death were completely foreign to mankind before the Fall. Thus, strictly speaking, all sickness, malformation and malfunction of the body are rooted in a universal evil germ. Sin has done its work well, invading the entire genetic code with which our Creator made us.

There is a definitive genetic flaw in my case. A chromosome went awry at conception, leaving an opening for a potential problem labeled "connective tissue disease." The flawed chromosome apparently begins to run amok only when triggered by a severe infection.

Unfortunately I had two instances of blood poisoning at age seven and three bouts of strep throat during my teen years. Thus, I have been battling this syndrome since childhood. My condition was further complicated by a

severe case of mononucleosis in 1973. Compounded by the connective tissue disease already in progress, this proved to be a devastating combination.

The Lord in His mercy restored some measure of strength from 1979 to 1986. Then, without warning, the disease began to attack the bowels and heart, as well as aggravate the ongoing problems with joints, muscles, glands, skin, etc. Progress is very slow, and my condition often regresses, but healing is definitely an ongoing reality, too.

There are a lot of miracles in a lifetime. Physical healing, in the strictest sense, is a daily process as we live and have our being only at the mercy of His grace. Could God remove a genetic defect? Of course He could, as He alone created the material in the first place.

The Gospels do not give us the impression that God received a lot of glory from the healing ministry of Christ. This ministry, in fact, was not a signal that all of God's people would be well on earth. Rather, it revealed the power and fullness of our complete redemption, for which we all wait together with all creation. Scripture seems to indicate that God received greater glory because His people were living celebrations of His grace, particularly in difficult times. We are a stiff-necked people who do not do well spiritually when life is too easy and comfortable. Obviously the Lord knew that even the great Apostle Paul needed a "thorn in the flesh" to remain grace-orientated.

Jesus certainly does still heal instantly or allow progressive healing through modern medicine, but we need to be careful not to read into Scripture something that is not to be fully realized until all things are accomplished.

We also need to remember that God's grace is more than sufficient. He has supplied and will supply all of our needs, and is not bound by our physical limitations. In fact, "His strength is made perfect in weakness" (II Corinthians 12:9). Like Paul, we are expected to find contentment in all circumstances and in spite of all difficulties, for He is Lord of all.

I Peter tells us that we also have been born again unto a living hope. This is a hope that will never cause us to be ashamed.

Eternal life, the possession of all God's people, has set us free from all earthly limitations, and thus it is no wonder that John could write with such confidence the first twelve verses of Revelation 21. Yes, we do live in the very center of resurrection power and hope. Our hope is new and confirmed every day.

What the Lord does with His power in my life is His business, for as Paul says, "Whether I live or die I belong to the Lord." My business is to see that He, and He alone, receives all the glory.

(Pastor Sundby, who served parishes in Minnesota and Montana before his illness, is president of the AFLC in Canada.)

Ed. note: Many of our readers have prayed for the healing of Mrs. John (Jan) Rieth, Amery, Wisconsin, and are waiting and hoping with them as the Lord's plan unfolds. Pastor John and Jan report that they received much encouragement from an old book by Samuel M. Miller, entitled HAVE FAITH IN GOD, and the following quotes from this book are some that especially spoke to them.

Il healing is from God, although He may use various means to heal. Therefore, it is certainly wise to seek His help even before we seek the help of a medical doctor. God is more available than the doctor; He is much more able to heal, and He does not charge as much. He may guide us to seek the help of a doctor, for medical science is also one of God's gifts of healing. But the doctor will be much more successful in helping us if we first have sought God in prayer.

When sickness attacks us it is the will of God that we should pray. First of all, we should pray that we might learn what God wants us to learn from the experience, for it is a chastening which is a part of our training as a child of God. See Hebrews 12:7-13. Then we should also ask for healing if that be in God's will for us.

But is it not always God's will to heal? The answer is no. We must avoid many prevalent errors. Some quote Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yea and for ever." Because He healed the sick when He was on earth, it must therefore be His will to continue to do so. But Jesus did not heal all the sick in His day.

Some say that healing of the body is a fruit of the atonement and can always be obtained by faith just as forgiveness of sin. ... It is cruel, indeed, to tell sick Christians that if they truly believed in the atonement they could claim and receive healing of the body, thus casting doubt upon the validity of their faith. ... When we pray and God does not grant us healing, then it is not His

ALL HEALING IS FROM GOD

will to heal. We must then humbly surrender, trusting His goodness and love as He says, "My grace is sufficient unto thee."

All healing is from God. He can heal directly by what we would call a miracle, but He most often heals by the forces of healing which He has laid down in our bodies, which forces can be aided by many and various means. It is God who decides whether we shall live or die ("God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are thy ways" Daniel 5:23) ...

However, in the will of God there is provision for the effect of prayer. "The prayer of faith shall save him that is sick." ... We may therefore pray earnestly for help when we are sick. God will answer by making us aware of His will. If He wills to heal us He will give us the special gift of faith by which we can pray with confidence and assurance and obtain the answer. This faith must not be confused with presumption so that we should demand healing regardless of the will of God. We recall the experience of the Hebrews in the wilderness. "They waited not for his counsel (did not seek God's will), but lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul" Psalm 106:13-15.

There is grave danger in presumptuously forcing God to grant our requests. Some Christian parents have demanded that God heal a sick child, only to wonder afterward if it had not been better to have yielded the child to its Saviour. The gift of true faith comes only to the one whose will is surrendered and who sincerely prays, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Suppose it is not God's best will to heal, how does He then answer our prayers? He may let us be sick or disabled for many years. He then also gives grace to bear the affliction. He also works out some good purpose in the life of the sufferer and through the sufferer in the lives of many others. ... Many suffering Christians have been channels for great blessings to their fellow men.

Then, too, God gives grace to be willing to die.

Many so-called faith healers insist that healing from God is by faith alone, and that it dishonors God and hinders healing to seek the help of a physician or to make use of drugs or surgery. They fail to recognize that all healing is from God and that He is the Creator of many things in nature which can assist the healing powers of mind and body. God also has given the knowledge and understanding and skill which makes the practice of medicine and surgery possible. It is all to be used with prayer and thanksgiving. ... If it is God's will to heal by any of the natural means, we have no right to demand that He shall heal by a direct miracle.

However, God can and sometimes does heal by a direct miracle. We should not call the above mentioned types of healing miracles, though we certainly may call them answers to prayer. A true miracle healing is recognizable as such. It is immediate, it is complete, and it is permanent. It is worked directly by God and is obtained by faith. ... The purpose of a true miracle is "that the Father may be glorified in the Son." It is granted only when it will help men to believe in Christ unto salvation.

When we are sick let us pray. Let us ask that we may learn the lessons God would teach us. God will heal, if it be for our good and to His glory, by His own choice of method. "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases."

EDITORIALS

WHO HEALS ALL YOUR DISEASES

A young man with a heart defect. An older man facing emergency surgery. A woman in the hospital suffering intense pain.

These are some of the cases that come to mind from my own ministry when it appeared that God answered prayer for healing. On countless other occasions the answer was not as dramatic, yet just as definite. The sick were brought to the Lord in prayer. He heard our prayers and performed healing miracles in body, soul and mind.

Probably every reader of this publication believes in divine healing. The sick are mentioned for prayer every Sunday in most of our congregations. But perhaps we are afraid to be specific in our prayers for healing; perhaps we fail to give God the glory when our prayers are answered. Perhaps, too, the world has molded us to its habit of finding a human explanation for every healing miracle.

The theme for this issue of The Lutheran Ambassador is a call to consider in a new way the ministry of healing in our midst. The abuses are acknowledged, and no attempts to condone them can be acceptable. But may we never use the existence of abuses as an excuse for neglecting or eliminating a God-given ministry from the life of the church!

THY WILL BE DONE

A woman was waiting in her hospital room for the nurses to come and prepare her for surgery. Her eyesight had been dimmed by cataracts, and the doctors had assured her that the operation was a routine one.

But what if there are complications? she thought as she waited. What if God would receive greater glory through my

I was her pastor, and she told me afterwards that God helped her to pray the hardest prayer of her life: Lord, may Thy will be done. No previous prayer had ever needed so much faith.

It may be for some that an appeal to God's will might be a mark of faithlessness, an unwillingness to take Him at His Word. But for many it marks the highest form of faith, a commitment to trust Him completely.

Is anyone among you sick? Come in faith to the One who heals all your diseases. Come in faith to the One who knows what is best for His beloved children.

THE MID-WINTER BIBLE CONFERENCES

The AFLC is a fellowship of people who love one another, a family that likes to get together. Our conferences and camps, retreats and rallies, all witness to the reality of a close relationship.

The mid-winter Bible conferences are still another opportunity to share this special fellowship. These have been scheduled every year since the AFLC was organized, hosted by congregations in different areas so that more would be able to attend. The growth of our church body has led to the need for several Bible conferences each winter, and in 1989 the Co-ordinating Committee turned the matter over to the districts for future planning.

Some of the mid-winter Bible conferences are announced in this issue. Unfortunately we have not received notice of the others in time to include them. Watch your church bulletins for further announcements.

Our fellowship with one another is founded on our fellowship with God, based on the fact that the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin (I John 1:7). The greatest feature of each AFLC gathering is that the light of His Word shines first and foremost, since the source and security of our fellowship is walking in the light.

Come for the fellowship! Friends in Christ will be waiting. The Father will be waiting, too.

EASTERN NORTH DAKOTA, NORTH **CENTRAL and NORTHWESTERN MINNESOTA**

Dates: February 8-10, 1991 Host Church: Christ the King, East

Grand Forks, Minnesota

Theme: "What God Has Prepared" I Corinthians 2:9

Speakers: Dr. Steven Lombardo and

Rev. Craig Wentzel

ILLINOIS

Dates: February 9, 1991

Host Church: Helmar Lutheran

Mid-Winter Conferences

Church, Newark, Illinois

Theme: Evangelism and Missions

Speaker: Rev. John Abel

NORTHERN MICHIGAN

Dates: February 15-17, 1991 Host Church: Hope Free Evangelical Lutheran Church, Ishpeming, Michigan

Theme: "The Just Shall Live By Faith."

Speaker: Rev. Philip Haugen

WEST COAST

Date: March 1-3

Host Church: Calvary Lutheran

Church, Everett, Washington

Theme: "What God Has Prepared"

I Corinthians 2:9

Speaker: Dr. Steve Lombardo

W. NORTH DAKOTA, E. MONTANA

Date: February 8-10

Host Church: Our Saviour's

Lutheran, Dickinson, North Dakota

Theme: "That I May Know Him"

Philippians 3:7-14

Speakers: Rev. Ralph Tjelta, Rev.

Lyndon Korhonen

euteronomy 18:10-14 is a very strong warning against any form of Satanism. We cannot relegate this warning to Old Testament days, either. Jesus spoke about Satan many times in the New Testament. He warned the Apostle Peter about Satan desiring to sift him like sand or wheat.

The Apostle John brings out the fact that Satan is a defeated foe when he teaches us in I John 4:4 that Jesus, the power within every born-again person, is greater than he who is in the world. In I John 5:18 we learn again from John that the wicked one cannot touch the Christian. Satan has no power over those who are saved.

Still our strongest enemy is Satan. He does appear as an angel of light or as a lion seeking whom he may devour. While we might believe that Satan has no power over the Christian, we must follow the clear commands of Jesus who told His disciples to "pray" and "watch."

In my hands is a report by a criminal investigator by the name of Robert Simandl. It is dated April 25, 1990. I am not certain how I received this report, but it probably was at a conference of police, sheriff investigators and social workers at Rockford, Illinois. The report addresses crime and its apparent connection with the occult.

It begins with what is called the experimental/dabbler and ends with occultic networking, establishing the fact that there is most certainly a relationship between crime and the occult. Many different kinds of symbols are given, a few of which are listed in this article.

When you see these signs, you know for certain that the person has had or is having contact with the demonic world or is dabbling in it, often out of innocence! You must certainly realize that Satan is an ever present reality in this world of ours. However, most parents and youth do not, I feel, realize how much Satanic activity is all about them!

Not only is Satanism related to robberies, but it is related to some of the most horrible murders, sexual abuse and crimes of violence ever seen. In the highest form of Satanic worship, the Satanists use a travesty of the Roman Catholic Mass.

Young people get involved in what seemingly is some kind of a fun game. They use the ouija boards, Dungeons and Dragons, advanced Dungeons and Dragons, "games" which are entrance level activities. Later they can become trapped, unless the Lord intervenes!

SATANISM

It is believed that Satan also uses various forms of rock music to gain control of the minds and hearts of people. This has been documented by Al Menconi Ministries, P.O. Box 969, Cardiff, CA 92007-0810 and the Peters Brothers in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Signs of the Occult

The Mark of the Beast (Revelation 13:16-18)

Four different ways which refer to the "mark of the beast" or Satan. Note that the letter "F" is the sixth letter of the alphabet.

Horned Hand

The "horned hand" is the sign of the recognition between those who are in the occult. It may also innocently be used by those who identify with heavy metal music.

Swastika

The "swastika" or "broken cross" is of ancient origin. Originally, it represented the four winds, four seasons, and four points of the compass. At that time, its arms were at 90° angles turned the opposite way as depicted here. It turned in a clockwise direction, showing harmony with nature. The "swastika" depicted here shows the elements or forces turning against nature and out of harmony. The Nazi's, SWP groups, and occult groups use it in this manner.

Anarchy

The symbol of "anarchy" represents the abolition of all law. Initially, those into "punk" music used this symbol, but it is now widely used by heavy metal followers.

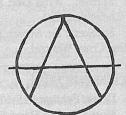


06









YOUTH PAGE

Another result of Satanism is suicide. While we can't blame Satan for every suicide, we can be certain he is involved somehow. Satan wants the lives of young people! He wants the lives of older people!

Truly, no one has called the church together to discuss the power of Satan. At least I have not heard of any conferences to discuss the concerns of youth in this area and how to meet them.

If you want additional information

from Robert Simandl's article, I would be glad to send it to you. You can have copies of the complete report by sending a donation to the Youth Ministry of our AFLC.

It is not, however, with conferences, as important as these may be, that we will combat the forces of Satan. It is with showing the love of Christ to our young people. Prevention is the best! If Jesus can reach them, Satan's power will be overcome by the power of the

risen Lord Jesus Christ!

Do we believe in this resurrection power of Christ? What do you think?

—by Dennis Gray AFLC Youth Resources Director

Discussion Questions

- 1. Do you see any evidences of Satanism in your school or community?
- 2. Discuss the use of the games listed in the article.

Have you heard of anyone who uses these games regularly?

- 3. Discuss Deuteronomy 18:10-14.
- 4. Using a Concordance, look for other warnings given by Jesus.
 - 5. What is your conclusion?

Anti-Christ

The "upside down" cross is a blaspheme of the Christian cross.



Cross of Nero

This symbol represented peace in the early 60s; but now, among the heavy metal and occult groups, signifies the "Cross of Nero." It shows an "upside down" cross with the cross member broken downward — "The Defeat of Christianity".



Ankh

The "ankh" is an ancient Egyptian symbol for life. The top portion represents the female and the lower portion, the male. This symbol had magical significance.



Cross of Confusion

The "cross of confusion" is an ancient Roman symbol questioning the existence or validity of Christianity.

District Youth News

The Northern Minnesota District sponsored a youth retreat on Friday and Saturday, December 27-29. A talent night was scheduled, with each church participating, and the sessions ended on Saturday morning before lunch.

A Ski Retreat was sponsored by the Western North Dakota — Montana District on December at Bottineau Ski Resort, hosted by Zion Luther League, Tioga, North Dakota. Skiing lessons were offered for beginners, and a movie entitled "Thin Ice" was shown. The two-day retreat also featured a discussion of youth concerns called "Ask the Panel," and a district organizational meeting was held.

The days were very inviting with good weather and good fellowship on November 9-10 for the fall youth retreat of the Northern Michigan District. Gathered at the Lake Ellen Bible Camp were fifteen teens from the district and two pastors, plus five Bible School students (Tara Clark, Natalie Moe, Jon Gunderson, Matt Greven, and John Knuuttila). Other special guests were Pastor and Mrs. Dennis Gray, Greenbush, Minnesota. Pastor Gray, AFLC Youth Resources Director, led the studies and discussion on personal evangelism and dating relationships.

The Progress of the Pilgrim spiritual problems as expressed in

his issue of The Lutheran Ambassador begins a series of studies on problems regarding the various states and conditions of our Christian faith. This matter is most acutely summed up in the words of the epileptic boy's father who said to Jesus, "I believe; help my unbelief"

We are called to be strong in faith. (Mark 9:24). What is strong? What is faith? Strong means intensity in degree. Faith refers to relationship. We may then define a strong Christian faith as a matter of the intensity in degree of our relationship with Jesus Christ our Saviour, lived out in our daily lives. This is Christian piety. This is our quality of life.

But the quality of our lives is interrupted by a conflict within us. Let me mention two men in history who experienced some critical life parallels. John Bunyan, an Englishman, and Hans Nielsen Hauge, a Norwegian, both had vital Christian experiences. Both became lay preachers, both ended

During his imprisonment, Bunyan up in jail. wrote his marvelous depiction of the factors that provide the crisis times in our Christian faith and life. Bunyan uncovered the chinks and cracks in our well-meaning and well-intentioned Christian piety. Bothered by the inconsistencies in his own life, his theme could have been that of the Apostle Paul who cried out, "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord"

Bunyan entitled his book, Pilgrim's (Romans 7:24-25). Progress. In it he likens the Christian life to a journey, a pilgrimage from, as he states it, the City of Destruction to the Celestial City.

A great influence on John Bunyan was Martin Luther's commentary on Galatians. In an expanded form, Pilgrim's Progress is an echo of Paul's

Romans 7:13-20, and specifically verse 20, "For I do not the good that I want, but the evil I do not want is what

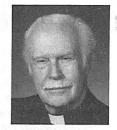
Our Bibles tell us that our sins are I do." forgiven through the death of Jesus on the cross, and that our eternal life has been guaranteed through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. However, beyond my acceptance of the benefits of the cross and the empty tomb lies a span of time called my Christian life. Through the cross and my saving relationship with Jesus Christ I have justification. Now comes my sanctification, or, again, my Christian life ... which has the quality of a yo-yo!

These days we are rightly concerned about the Christian meeting and dealing with societal problems and sin. We face alcoholism, drug addiction, as well as marital, racial, and a host of other problems. These are, of course, humanity's external problems.

But what about my internal problems, my personal "inside me" problems? Oh, I may look so strong, so confident, so self-reliant on the outside, but the blessed hymn says, "Just as I am, though tossed about with many a conflict, many a doubt, fightings and fears within, without, O Lamb of God, I come."

Bunyan saw the daily Christian life, not as a steady drumbeat march through life, but rather as a staggering from conflict to conflict, problem to problem, crisis to crisis. A famous psychiatrist stated that the fundamental issue of life is defeat or victory. I become a loser or a winner! The Christian has the tools of victory at hand, but, oh, the price of victory!

We are a battlefield. Paul states, "For I delight in the law of God, in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my mem-



- by Dr. Howard B. Franzen Hastings, Nebraska

bers" (Romans 7-22-23). James says, "What causes wars, and causes fightings among you? Is it not your passions that are at war in your members?" (4:1) Sensitive to this internal

struggle within his own life, Bunyan wrote Pilgrim's Progress and exposed the core of the human conflict in living the Christian life. So, as he uncovers our consciences, we will consider Temptation, Doubt, Unbelief, Sin, Guilt, Desire, Depression, Idealism, and Reality. These and other ogres lurking in the shadows of our minds are what Bunyan saw robbing the Christian of the joys of the Christian I will be looking life.

forward to sharing some insights with you in five forthcoming issues. In the meantime, read Pilgrim's and Progress "have this mind in you which was in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5).

from a counselor's study

CAMPUS PAGE

AFLC Missions Conference

February 1, 7:30 p.m. and a 9 - 4 p.m. Seminar on Saturday, February 2, entitled, "The 4000 year connection."



Featured speaker is Don Richardson

The author of Peace Child will share his testimony and unfold the missions basis of the Bible in a panoramic survey of Scriptures during the Saturday Seminar. Six dollar early registration, eight dollar registration at the door, will include Saturday lunch and the Seminar workbook.

Bring your family and friends!

Both Friday evening and Saturday sessions will be at the AFLC Schools campus, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis. (612) 545-5631.

Come, discover how you are a vital part of God's plan for the world!



AFLTS Inter-Term 1991

Three courses were offered during the 1991 Inter-Term. Rev. Elden Nelson taught "Principles of Church Growth." "The History and Aims of the AFLC" was taught by Rev. Richard Snipstead. Rev. Ralph Tjelta lectured on "Thesis Preparation." Pictured is Rev. Nelson and Seminarians James Molstre, Victor Young, Paul Pillman and Dan Klug.





The AFLBS Christmas Party on December 19, was the end of a busy December schedule. Parents' Day on the 8th began the season. The next day the annual Christmas Concert was performed before a large audience. December also means yearbook deadlines and the beginning of men's and women's basketball. After Christmas, the choirs begin preparation for their tours, beginning March 16. The Choir plans on a southwestern U. S. tour and the Choral Club expects to visit Iowa, Illinois and Wisconsin. AFLBS Campus Days are scheduled for April 5 - 7 for all prospective senior high students.

Town to get first church in 40 years

Faith Lutheran builds in London, Minnesota

aith Lutheran Congregation of London, Minnesota, was born out of a real need for a Bible-believing, evangelical Lutheran congregation in its community. A group of concerned Lutherans was strongly convinced that they must not join the last Lutheran merger, and met together in June of 1987 to discuss what steps to take. After sharing Scripture and praving for guidance, sixteen families expressed their hearts' desire to form a new congregation. The first worship service was held shortly thereafter in the London Township Hall.

During the next few months this group started a prayer meeting, chose a name, prepared a constitution, elected officers, and became incorporated. Several of the men took turns with the preaching. Then for about a year they were served by Pastor Theodore Anderson and several Seminary students. Bud Davis came many Sundays and is credited with bringing much encouragement. In May of 1988 Pastor Einar Unseth accepted the call to serve them.

After Pastor Snipstead held an Information Meeting, Faith Lutheran indicated its approval of the Free Lutheran principles, polity and piety by voting to affiliate with the AFLC.

For the first six months the services and Sunday School classes were held in the London Hall. When the Hall eventually became uncomfortably cold, God provided a better meeting place, The Carlyle Greibrok family graciously invited the congregation to use a room in their farm home. This was not an ordinary room, for it seated 75 people. When this room became too small two years ago, Carlyle enlarged it to seat 130. Being churchly in appearance, it has proven to be a comfortable and worshipful meeting place. When the need arises, people can be seated in an upstairs room, also, where closed-circuit TV brings the service to them.



Faith Lutheran 1990 VBS

In a few more months we will have our own church building, for we have just commenced construction in the town of London where there has been no church for 40 years. We believe that it is God's purpose for us to reach many people in our area with the Gospel of Christ. Several families are already driving 25-30 miles to worship at Faith.

We are thankful to our Home Mis-

sion department for their financial assistance and guidance. We have experienced heartaches and trials through the unexpected deaths of four young members and through strong opposition. However, we trust our faithful God, who has carried us thus far, to continue to bless us as a Biblebelieving, evangelical Lutheran congregation.

- submitted

AFLC Board Member Sent to Asia by Gideons

- by Lavern Thompson Fergus Falls, Minnesota

Selected by God and Gideons International, I recently returned from Singapore and Indonesia, having completed an extension-action program where 29 Gideons from seven countries gathered to help the local Gideons distribute God's Holy Word.

Wherever God's work is being done, you will find opposition. In Singapore and Jakarta, Indonesia, there was opposition from the Moslems, police, and prominent religious organizations. We were refused permission to distribute, and were stopped by the police, the Moslem teachers, and security guards. One of our Gideons was arrested and brought to the police station where he was interrogated for two

Here Am I,

hours before finally being released. In Singapore we seldom were allowed to distribute testaments in the schools, but could hand them out on the sidewalks.

Despite all of these obstacles, however, we were richly blessed in our missionary outreach. I have been a Gideon for nine years, and have never been able to go into a classroom of students and present the Word of God. In Jakarta we were able to go to class after class and witness for the Lord Jesus Christ and give out His Holy Word. It was a joy to hand them the testaments and hear the reply, "Thank you, sir."

The Christian churches in these countries are attended by Spirit-filled people. I spoke in a Pentecostal church at a 7 a.m. service to 600 members in a building of four floors, three with

AFLC Bible School Graduates Serve in New California Church

Lisa Carr and Adam Lee, 1990 graduates of our AFLC Bible School in Minneapolis, wear several hats in the new Oceanside AFLC congregation, which held its first service on November 4.

They are the Sunday School and youth work leaders, and sing with the "Praise Singers," a volunteer choir, or provide special music themselves each Sunday. These young people also serve on the Friendly Greeter's Committee, and their enthusiasm for the Lord, His Church, and our AFLC has been a great gift to this infant congregation.

Lisa, from Astoria, Oregon, and Adam, from Helmar, Illinois, are students at Christ College Irvine, and have recruited a fellow student, Cathi Quast, Moorhead, Minnesota, to lead the Nursery Care each Sunday.

Oceanside is the third mission established in the past twenty months by Pastor Orville Hiepler. The first two, Palmdale and Murrieta, are now served by Pastor David Molstre and



Lisa and Adam often sing at the morning worship service.

Pastor David Skordahl respectively, sponsored by AFLC Home Missions.

The new mission church has three "prayer-supporting" congregations in California: First, Camarillo; Shepherd of the Valley, Palmdale; and Shepherd's Church of the Valley, Murrieta. The prayers and gifts of other AFLC friends are most welcome, too, as the new congregation plans to be self-supporting.

A growing and committed core of over fifty people attend worship ser-



vices. It is a true "mission," also, since none of them are transferring from another Lutheran church, nor, as far as it is known, are members of any church.

The new congregation presently meets in the Roosevelt Middle School, 850 Sagewood, Oceanside. Correspondence may be addressed to Pastor Orville Hiepler, 3151 Westmont, Fallbrook, CA 92028; Phone (619) 731-0980.

- submitted

Send Me

closed-circuit television. They had six services each Sunday.

We believe that great and wonderful things are going to happen in Singapore and Jakarta because 175,230 copies of God's Word were presented to the citizens of these cities, one copy at a time. Each copy of God's Word has the potential of reaching five other family members. Many of these Scriptures went to people who had never darkened the doorstep of a Christian church.

When you see hands reaching out for the Word of God as we did, your missionary heart grows in size. We give God all the praise for His work that was accomplished in fourteen days. Pray for the people of these countries!

Here am I, send me.



All visitors are greeted on their way in by at least three couples at the Neighborhood Bible Church. Pictured are Miss Michelle Anderson, the congregation's first adult confirmand, and Mr. Mark Hiepler.

(Lavern Thompson, who serves on the Pension Board, is a member of Kyam Free Lutheran Church, rural, Dalton, Minnesota. He is the superintendent of a chemical dependency treatment center.)

Colorado 1991 Update

It is difficult to think of July when I'm looking at a blizzard outside. But the 1991 National Luther League Convention in Estes Park, Colorado, will be here sooner than we think.

Here are a few considerations to keep in mind for that event:

- 1. To register, send \$25 with your registration form before April 1, 1991, and your total cost (excluding transportation) will be \$150. The total for registrations after April 1 will be \$175. Send to: Bob Halvorson, 8443 Second Avenue South, Bloomington, MN 55420.
- 2. Transportation to Estes Park is available for an additional \$100 per passenger. This payment is due in full by June 15, and can also be sent to Bob Halvorson. The buses will be leaving from Fargo, North Dakota; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Sioux Falls, South Dakota; and Des Moines, Iowa.
- 3. Families of conventioneers are certainly welcome. However, accommodations at the convention site are limited to youth and staff. For alternative accommodations contact the Chamber of Commerce, 1-800-44-ESTES.
- 4. If you desire to be a counselor at the convention and/or a chaperone on one of the buses, please contact Mark Johnson (612) 462-4163 or Eric Westlake (602) 578-1821. We cannot allow individuals who have not been approved to stay on the premises as part of the staff.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

— Pastor Terry Wold National LLF President 417 - 20th Street NW East Grand Forks, MN 56721 Phone (218) 773-2357 THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd. Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441 Second-Class

As anyone among you sick?

"Cet him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins they will be forgiven him.

JAMES 5: 14.15 N.A.S.

Calligraphy by Ken Thoreson

Mesa, Arizona Dinner Scheduled

The annual AFLC fellowship dinner will be held February 11 at King's Table Buffet, 1526 East Main, Mesa, from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. For further information, contact Orville and Shirley Olson, 4860 East Main, Mesa, AZ 85205. Phone (602) 832-1731.

February at the ARC

February 1-3 — Youth Sno-Daze Theme: "Taking a Stand" II Timothy 2:22

Speaker: Rev. Terry Wold
February 22-24 — Men's
Retreat

Theme: "Men on Target" I Timothy 6:11; II Corinthians 8:21

Speakers: Rev. Michael Brandt and Seminarian Tonnes Pollestad

For further information about the ARC retreats, write or call The ARC, Route 1, Box 92, Osceola, WI 54020; phone (712) 294-2877.