

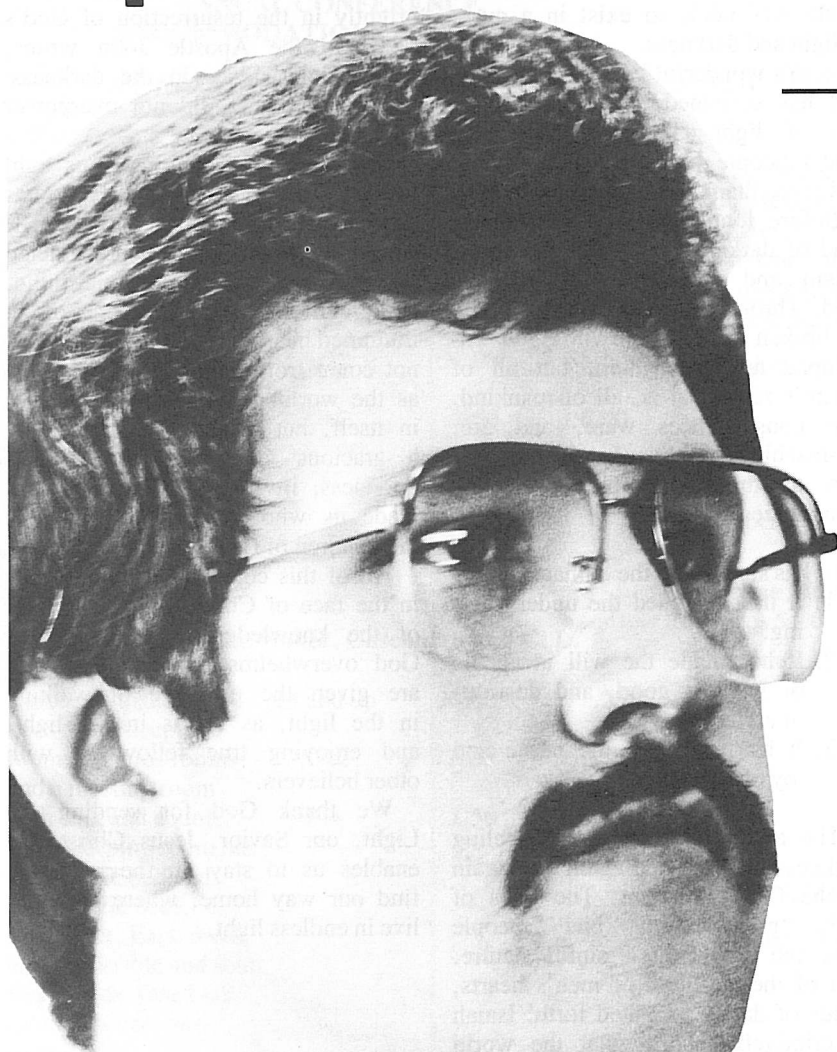
# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

January 28, 1986

**PARENTS!**

Why baptize your baby? p.5  
Can you help your teens? p.6

*in the  
pursuit  
of wisdom  
at AFLBS*



Story on p. 10, 11

# at the MASTER'S FEET

## The gift of light

While driving in the fog one evening recently, I was reminded again of the importance of light. I was able to keep on the road and find my way home because of strong lights, both on my car and along the road.

Today as we sit together at the Master's feet, let's consider God's gift of light. "For God, who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness,' is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" (II Corinthians 4:6).

Picture in your mind's eye the darkness which covered the earth before God commanded light to appear. It was total darkness, without sun or stars or fire or any form of artificial light. God knew that life could not exist in darkness, so on the first day of creation He called

forth light. He spoke and it was so. Then God separated the light from the darkness. In His wisdom, the world was made to exist in a cycle of light and darkness.

In this wonderful light, God created and has sustained the world in His gift of light. Throughout history, God's people have worshipped Him and given thanks for this gift of light.

Before long, however, a different kind of darkness fell upon the earth. Adam and Eve chose to disobey God. Through their sin, the darkness of broken fellowship with God enveloped not only them, but all of Adam's race, that is, all of mankind. The consequences were, and are, far-reaching. In Sverdrup's explanation to the Small Catechism, he summarizes as follows:

How has sin injured the human soul?

1. It has darkened the understanding.
2. It has made the will incapable of what is good, and desirous of all that is evil.
3. It has disturbed the peace and joy of conscience.

The awful result of this disabling darkness is illustrated again and again in the Old Testament. The lives of both "good" and "bad" people bore the mark of a sinful nature. Out of the darkness of men's hearts, deeds of darkness issued forth. Isaiah descriptively records that the world walked in darkness.

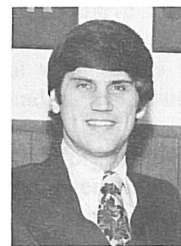
But God did not abandon the world to the forces of darkness. Just as He dispelled the darkness that covered the earth at the time of creation, He chose to dispel our moral and spiritual darkness by sending Jesus as the Light of the world. This same Jesus then took on the powers of hell itself on the cross. There the darkness tried

to overcome the Light, but it could not. After a symbolic three days in the tomb, the Light shone even more brightly in the resurrection of God's Son. So the Apostle John writes, "The Light shines in the darkness; and the darkness did not overpower it" (John 1:5).

The effect of this miraculous light for the believer is this, "(God) has shone in our hearts. . ." (see II Cor. 4:6 above). God has counteracted personal darkness, our spiritual blindness, and now we can speak of an illumined heart. This illumination does not come from within, however, just as the world could not find its light in itself, but rather it is infused by a gracious God. He, out of His goodness, invaded our darkness and made us who trust in Christ to be the children of Light.

All of this comes to us, says Paul, in the face of Christ. There the light of the knowledge of the glory of God overwhelms our darkness. We are given the privilege of walking in the light, as He is in the light, and enjoying true fellowship with other believers.

We thank God for sending the Light, our Savior, Jesus Christ. He enables us to stay on the road and find our way home, where we shall live in endless light.



by Pastor  
Kenneth Moland

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Volume 24 Number 2

This is the theme that has been chosen to set the goal of revival in 1987 before the people of our AFLC. Our 25th anniversary year is 1987 and we pray that all the people of our AFLC will be gripped by a burden for revival in our church.

It is an effort for which we desire to enlist the support of every pastor, every congregation, yes, every member of our AFLC. It is perhaps the most challenging undertaking that has ever been presented to us. But it is a goal that, if attained, will have most significant and far reaching results for our entire church body.

It was about a year ago that Pastor Robert Lee, now vice-president of the AFLC, and a teacher at our seminary, shared the idea of the goal of revival for our 25th anniversary year. The suggestion met enthusiastic support from the rest of the faculty. It was then shared with the Coordinating Committee and the blessing of those men was given to this objective.

Through much prayer and discussion, a two-phase effort has been set up. May our most earnest desires and efforts be given to this vision that the much needed revival might become our experience in 1987.

Phase 1 embraces this year, 1986. Our emphasis this year is on prayer. "If my people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face"—these are the first conditions given by God's prophet for God to move in healing power among His people.

Throughout this year, we will be calling the people of our AFLC to prayer. Pray for revival in our AFLC, in your congregation, in your own heart. As we pray, and seek God's face, and turn from our wicked ways, may God be pleased to send renewal among us.

The key individual to lead the prayer effort in our congregations is the pastor. We began 1986 with the annual Pastors' Conference at Osceola, Wis. Here our pastors were challenged with messages on revival by Rev. Richard Owen Roberts. If every pastor's appetite was whetted for revival at that conference, we will have taken a major step toward accomplishing the desire that God has set before us, revival in our church

# IF MY PEOPLE

in 1987.

The Bible Conferences pick up the prayer emphasis. The Bible study sessions at the Conferences will be on the theme: "Pray as Jesus Prayed." May the people who meet at Portland, N. Dak., DeKalb, Ill., and Kirkland, Wash., catch this vision and bring it back to their home congregations.

When our church assembles at Warm Beach, Wash., for the Annual Conference in June, we will meet under the banner proclaiming the words: "A Church Fervent in Prayer." May those be days when we experience the reality of a "church fervent in prayer."

Phase 1 will receive one additional emphasis at the Summer Institute of Theology. Rev. Armin Gesswein, the guest speaker, is a noted man of prayer, and a man widely used by God to move hearts to revival prayer. We look for it as a rich time of inspiration for our pastors. May they become catalysts for prayer in their congregations so that every heart and home in our AFLC will be burdened for revival in 1987.

Phase 2 embraces our Anniversary Year: 1987, a Year of Revival.

Special efforts focusing on the needs for revival will again use the avenues of the Pastors' Conference in January and the Bible Conferences in February. It will be of special significance for us to gather for our 25th Anniversary Conference at Thief River Falls, Minnesota. It was there that the AFLC was organized. May it be there that the AFLC experiences revival and renewal.

The Summer Institute of Theology in 1987 will also have a special evangelism emphasis.

We do not equate evangelism with revival. But surely revival will result in a new desire for evangelism. A revived people will have a new love for souls and a new concern for those about them who are lost without Christ.

The culmination of two years of prayer and seeking for God's moving in our hearts will be a special evangelism

effort throughout the AFLC in the fall of 1987. There will be some value in doing this throughout our church at the same time. Special speakers and students from our Seminary and Bible School will be made available to assist congregations in a special evangelism effort.

We are pleased to announce that Mr. Clifford Johnson, a well-known layman in our AFLC has consented to be the co-ordinator of our two phase goal. He has asked that a committee representing various areas of the church work be appointed to work with him. This committee will consist of the following people: Pastor Robert Lee, vice-president of the AFLC; Pastor Francis Monseth, dean of our Seminary; Pastor Donald Greven, dean of our Bible School; Mrs. Wendell Johnson, WMF president, and Mr. Lloyd Quanbeck, vice-president of the Luther League Federation.

We are also very pleased to announce that Aid Association for Lutherans has given our AFLC a grant of \$15,000.00 for Phase I to assist us in our objectives for 1986. A good portion of these funds will be used to defray expenses of our pastors in attending the Pastors' Conference and the Summer Institute of Theology. We anticipate a similar grant from Aid Association for Lutherans for Phase 2 in 1987.

"If my people"—these words will become very familiar to us all in the next months. May God spare us from a familiarity that breeds contempt. May these words, His Word, rather stir us to prayer and move us to confession of sin that the Spirit of God can work renewal among us.

"If my people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (II Chron. 7:14).

Pastor Richard Snipstead  
President, AFLC



a letter  
to the  
baby's  
grandparents

# FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

(Guiding Principles of the Lutheran Free Church since 1897)

1. According to the Word of God, the congregation is the right form of the Kingdom of God on earth.

2. The congregation consists of believers who, by using the means of grace and the spiritual gifts as directed by the Word of God, seek salvation and eternal blessedness for themselves and for their fellow men.

3. According to the New Testament, the congregation needs an external organization with membership roll, election of officers, stated times and places for its gatherings, and other provisions.

4. Members of the organized congregation are not, in every instance, believers, and such members often derive false hope from their external connection with the congregation. It is therefore the sacred obligation of the congregation to purify itself by the quickening preaching of the Word of God, by earnest admonition and exhortation, and by expelling the openly sinful and perverse.

5. The congregation directs its own affairs, subject to the authority of the Word and the Spirit of God, and acknowledges no other ecclesiastical authority or government above itself.

6. A free congregation esteems and cherishes all the spiritual gifts which the Lord gives for its edification, and seeks to stimulate and encourage their use.

7. A free congregation gladly accepts the mutual assistance which congregations can give one another in the work for the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

8. Such assistance consists partly in the mutual sharings of spiritual gifts among the congregations through conferences, exchange visits, lay activities, etc., whereby congregations are mutually edified, and partly in the voluntary and Spirit-prompted cooperation of congregations for the accomplishing of such tasks as exceed the ability of the individual congregation.

9. Among such tasks may be mentioned specifically the training of pastors, distribution of Bibles and other Christian literature, home missions, foreign missions, Jewish missions, deaconess homes, children's homes and other works of mercy.

10. Free congregations have no right to demand that other congregations shall submit to their opinion, will, judgment, or decision; therefore, domination by a majority of congregations over a minority is to be rejected.

11. Agencies found desirable for conducting the joint activities of congregations, such as conferences, committees, officers, etc., cannot in a Lutheran Free Church, impose any obligations or restrictions, exert any compulsions, or lay any burden upon individual congregations, but have the right only to make recommendations to, and requests of, congregations and individuals.

12. Every free congregation, as well as every individual believer, is constrained by the Spirit of God and by the privileges of Christian love to do good and to work for the salvation of souls and the quickening of spiritual life, as far as its abilities and powers permit. Such free spiritual activity is limited neither by parish nor by synodical bounds.

The writers of this article, who have asked that their names not be used with it, wrote in response to questions from the child's maternal grandparents. The young couple, members of an AFLC congregation, coming from a Reformed background, had reached the conclusion that infant baptism was right for them and the child God had given them. Here is what they wrote.

\* \* \* \* \*

Dear:

This letter is in reply to your questions about our baby's baptism. First, we are not offended at your questions; we appreciate the love that motivates them.

To answer your first question, yes, we do believe that baptism saves, as stated in I Peter 3:21: "This water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also. . . It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (NIV). So, in baptism it is Jesus who saves.

You said several times in your letter that "baptism is an outward sign of an inward belief." In contrast, we believe that baptism is not a sign or symbol, but a "means of grace." It is an avenue, instituted by Christ (Matthew 28:19-20) through which God imparts His saving grace. Christ did not institute symbols or signs, and in the verses in Scripture concerning baptism, it is spoken of as being effective. It is called the "washing of rebirth" in Titus 3:4-5. Galatians 3:27 tells that "all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (NASB). Romans 6:3-5 says:

"Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were therefore buried with Him *through baptism* into death



# We believe in infant baptism

in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with Him in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in his resurrection" (NIV).

This tells us that through baptism we become the benefactors of His death and resurrection. The baptism is not pictured as a sign of having entered His death, it is the means by which we enter it. The benefits are freedom from the penalty of sin and spiritual life. He died that we might live.

God has given us baptism and He works in our hearts through it to save and renew us. It is not simply a public confession of our belief. Because we believe that baptism is *wholly* something that God does for us and not something that we do for Him, we also believe that He is able to use that means to impart His saving grace to infants as well as to adults.

In your letter you said that one must believe and repent to be saved and that children must reach an age of accountability before they can believe and repent. We do not think that the concept of an "age of accountability" is Scriptural, but rather is a product of human reason. The command to baptize is clear; no distinction is made in Scripture concerning the age of those to be baptized. Jesus does say, "Whoever welcomes a little child like this in My name welcomes Me" (Matthew 18:5).

It is true that belief is necessary for salvation, according to Mark 16:16. The differences in doctrine concerning baptism actually come down to different views concerning *faith*.

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"God has given us baptism and He works in our hearts through it to save and renew us."

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If faith were a product of our own will or understanding, surely infants could not be saved. However, faith is a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8-9), one that is imparted by God, even to little children. Faith is not something we "have" unless God gives it to us. If we "did it ourselves," it would be a work, and if we had to do something to deserve it, it would not be a gift, but a reward. In the words of one of our Bible School students, "We are not saved because we were smart enough to figure out on our own that we were headed for hell and needed a Savior." We are saved because God has *drawn* us to Himself (John 6:44) and has given us faith.

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"Faith is not something we 'have' unless God gives it to us."

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Following Peter's confession of faith in Matthew 16, Jesus said to him. "Blessed are you. . . for this was not revealed to you by man, but by My Father in heaven."

Hebrews 12:2 states that Christ is the Author of faith. And in John 3:6, when Jesus is talking to Nicodemus, He says, "Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit." Our flesh (our own reason or will) *cannot* produce spiritual life; that new life is only a product of God's Spirit working in us.

So, because we see faith completely as a gift of God, we believe that it can be given to our daughter as she is baptized. She cannot understand what is happening. But faith does not in any way depend on our understanding, if it did, not even the most intelligent could be saved. Who can truly comprehend the absolute sinfulness of man or the riches of God's grace? A child surely cannot, and yet Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3).

Children cannot understand and yet they *can* believe. In verse six of the same passage Jesus said "If anyone causes one of these *little ones who believe in Me* to sin. . ." Here Jesus clearly says that little children can believe.

Psalms 22:9 tells about the faith of even younger ones: "Thou didst make me trust upon my mother's breast." This verse shows that God not only causes us to believe, but that he can do this even for an infant who is yet unable to "understand" or "decide" by his own will to believe.

In your letter you also mentioned the need for repentance. We'd like to quote from a tract on the baptism of infants here because it explains this matter better than we can:

"Let us remember that it is not repentance that saves. It is Jesus who saves. But repentance opens the heart doors to Jesus. We live in a repentant state when our hearts are wide open to Jesus, and we have the right mind and attitude toward him, The Word clearly states that infants are in such a repentant state. In fact, Jesus says except we turn and become as children we will never enter the Kingdom. How wrong it is to say children have to become adults before they can be baptized, while the Word says that adults have to become like children."<sup>1</sup>

In repentance, our hearts become tender, yielded and submissive to God; we cease our willful resistance, realize our own helplessness, and let him have His way in our lives. The state of the newborn is this same helplessness. They are born with original sin and need God's grace, but have not yet begun to exercise their own willful resistance to Him. They are open, "moldable," and in a state where God can impart His saving grace. For us, it is much easier to believe that God can impart faith to the heart of a newborn than to the heart of an adult who has spent a

(continued on p. 12)

**By Merton and Irene Strommen,  
Minneapolis., Minn.  
Based on their new book,  
Five Cries of Parents**

In many of our homes, religion is almost a taboo subject. This is puzzling, because as church members we claim to treasure our Christian faith.

Several recent conversations made this clear to us. We talked, for example, with Karen and Al, whose children are now adolescents. "We did have family devotions when the kids were small," Al said, "but now I travel quite a bit during the week and Karen has her hands full..."

"You bet I have," Karen remarked. "Between cheerleaders' practice, hockey practice—they're every day, you know—we don't even eat meals together anymore."

"Frankly, I don't think it's possible to have any kind of devotional time," added Al. "I can see where it would be a good thing. I hardly know what my kids are thinking any more. But time is the problem. Time."

In looking back on her years at home, Laura, a young adult, recalled: "My father was engaged in Christian work, but I honestly do not have memories of verbal expression of faith at home. I do remember my mother saying to me once, 'Whatever you do, don't give up your faith.' I would have loved chances to talk and ask questions."

Duane spoke of this longing, too. "I thought my dad wasn't interested because he always seemed so busy and aloof. Since I've grown up, I've learned this wasn't true. But parents can't assume that kids will ask questions if they want to. Kids don't have the tools to initiate conversation like that. Often they feel that any questions they ask would seem stupid. The first time I ever discussed what I believed was with my high-school basketball coach."

A parent says, "I'm actually scared that kids might ask questions I can't answer. There's so many things I don't know. I never was much of a student in confirmation myself, and I can't explain things very well. Better to leave that to the pastor or confirmation teacher."

But Lisa remembers what helped

her parents begin to talk about their faith. "When I was growing up," she said, "we never discussed religious things at home. Things are different now. Mother and Dad became part of a small-group Bible class in our church and it's really made a difference for them. I hear my dad, who was absolutely the *silent* one when I was a kid, actually telling his grandchildren Bible stories."

#### **God at the center**

Both parents and youth in a study we recently conducted through the Search Institute gave high rank to having "God at the center of my life." But we immediately ran into a paradox. We discovered that sharing what we believe in the family, even though we say faith is an important element of family life, is practiced in only a small minority of families.

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"Forty-three percent of the parents and youth in our study ... say they never discuss God, the Bible, or spiritual things as a family."

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Forty-three percent of the parents and youth in our study—which is described in detail in our new book, *Five Cries of Parents*—say they never discuss God, the Bible, or spiritual things as a family. Thirty-two percent do so once or twice a month, and 13 percent do so once a week. That leaves us with only 12 percent who regularly discuss matters of faith at home. A 1980 study showed that for members of congregations in the American Lutheran Church, the figure is closer to 8 percent.

Think for a moment what a personal faith can mean in the life of an adolescent. Our adolescent-parent study gives clear indication that moral behavior, service activities, and fewer self-destructive practices are found among young people who say their faith is "central and important."

Adolescents with a liberating faith—that is, who understand the Gospel as a gift of salvation through Christ—not only show wholesome behavior, but also are less racially

# TEENS AND FAITH

prejudiced and less likely to be involved in such antisocial activities as fighting, vandalism, shoplifting, cheating at school, or lying to parents.

In contrast, adolescents who see God primarily as a judge and religion as a set of confining rules and regulations show more antisocial behavior, alcohol use, and racial and sexual prejudice. Youth who feel tied down by religion also have low self-esteem and less drive to achieve, and they lack internalized moral standards.



# how parents can help

—Reprinted by permission of the authors.  
Irene Strommen is a sister of the Editor.

## Compelling reasons

Parents have at least three compelling reasons to give serious attention to communicating their faith to their children: religious doubt among adolescents, a decline in religious interest among youth, and the adolescent's willingness to be part of a parent's spiritual pilgrimage.

**Religious doubt.** One reason for bringing discussion into the home relates to the emergence of religious doubt during adolescence. For both boys and girls, the percentage who are unsure what they believe about God increases with each grade in school. Accompanying this increase is a sharp decline in the percentage who claim that religion is "the most important influence in my life." These measures point to possible erosion in the faith that many parents prize for their children.

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"For both boys and girls, the percentage who are unsure what they believe about God increases with each grade in school."

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For more than twenty-five years we have had groups of youth in our home to discuss issues in the light of Scripture. Many of them have told us, often years later, what they remembered from those sessions. "I appreciated being able to speak openly of my doubts and differing ideas and not be immediately jumped on and told 'You mustn't talk like that'," said one young adult. Said another: "I was confused in my beliefs as a teenager and said some rather blasphemous things, but the group cared enough to hear me out, and

because of their acceptance and understanding, I am today a believer in Christ and his Word."

Doubt can become a plus in conversations about faith. An adolescent's doubts usually are rooted in a need for answers. Doubt can be a state of open-mindedness in which faith is asking the intellect for help. We also would argue that opportunities to probe, make distinctions, examine, and scrutinize further are functions of doubt encouraged by the New Testament.

**Decline in interest.** Our study showed that religious interest declines during adolescence, reaching its lowest point among ninth-grade boys. We also found a steady decline, until eighth grade in adolescents' desire to have God as central in their lives or be part of the church.

We should not be quick to assume that this decline in religious interest is an inevitable part of adolescence. Indeed, since adolescence is a time of unfolding that historically has been linked with religious conversion or commitment, we might instead anticipate a rise in religious interest.

Whatever the reasons for the decline, parents must initiate ways of countering this trend. We are convinced that it is all-important to nurture in children the habit of discussing faith in the family.

**Faith and discipline styles.** A third compelling reason to examine whether and how faith is shared in families is the relationship between faith and parental styles of discipline. The faith orientation of almost half the parents in our study is one of rules and regulations. For example, 52 percent agreed that "I believe that God has a lot of rules about how people should live their lives," while 41 percent agreed that "I believe God is very strict."

An important finding in the adolescent-parent study is consistent with earlier studies by the Search Institute: adolescents raised under an autocratic style of control are less likely to experience religion as a liberating power in their lives. Instead, they see it as restricting and crushing rather than releasing. And adolescents who see religion this way tend to move away from the faith of their parents.

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"... adolescents raised under an autocratic style of control are less likely to experience religion as a liberating power in their lives."

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Parents, especially, should know that in our study two factors were closely linked with a liberating, challenging, helping-oriented faith. One is a parental pattern that includes trust, spending time together as a family, and expressing love. The other is a democratic-authoritative style of control. In other words, when parents engender a caring, trusting atmosphere at home, adolescents are more likely to see Christianity as a message of grace and redemption. In such homes, both younger children and adolescents share in their parents' spiritual pilgrimage and in the fellowship of knowing that Christ is always with them. Our study made it clear that these are things most adolescents want. But parents must take the leadership.

## Sharing faith

It is a truism that faith is part of life. Yet many parents have not thought much about how they communicate their beliefs. We share our faith in everyday interaction, during structured worship, and by "doing the truth together."

**Natural flow of home life.** "You shall teach (my words) to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down and when you rise," says Deuteronomy 11:19-20. The focus of Scripture is on daily life. And in some families—although far too few—faith indeed is shared as a natural part of home life.

We interviewed scores of young adults as we prepared to write *Five Cries of Parents*. A number of them talked about the atmosphere in their parents' homes as being open to talking about God in the ordinary routines of life. Said one young man: "It happens all the time. There's no specific point when we say, 'Now let's talk about God'."

(continued on p. 13)



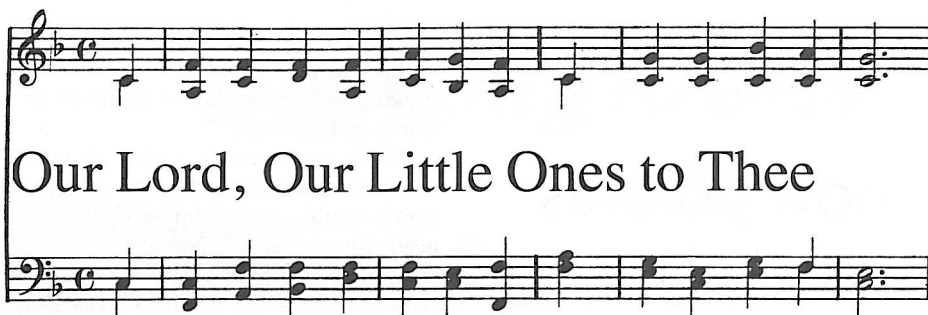
**Concordia, No. 97**  
**William Whiting, 1872**

**Ludvig van Beethoven, 1770-1827**

This is another of the fine baptism hymns included in the *Concordia*. Child-like, humble, direct, lyric and totally delightful in both words and music, it is not amply used if sung only at occasional baptisms. Since the hymn is especially appealing to the young (both in age and heart), it's a wonderful Sunday School song.

O Lord, our little ones to Thee  
In faith and hope we give;  
We know that through the mystery,  
Their new-born souls shall live.

We pour the water on their brow,  
The sacred words we say;  
Baptize them with the Spirit now,  
And keep them Thine away.



## Our Lord, Our Little Ones to Thee

Help them to go from strength to strength

Until, full-grown in Thee,  
They come before Thy face at length,  
And all Thy glory see.

And then, with all the heav'nly host,  
In everlasting songs,  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost  
To whom all praise belongs.

William Whiting was a teacher and musician in London.

Ludvig von Beethoven's life and work are much too complex and prolific to be amply portrayed here. So it must suffice to say he stands as one of the greatest figures of all musical history. A touching note: He began to lose his hearing at 28 and at 40 he could not hear the orchestra. It was during these final years, when he was totally deaf, that he composed his most magnificent music, including the monumental "Ninth Symphony" which contains "The Ode to Joy" (a part of which we know as "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee").

—Don Rodvold

## Personalities

### PERSONALITIES

Please change the address for **Rev. Paul Nash** to Star Route, Box 455-B, Warroad, Minn. 56763.

The new address for **Rev. Johan Koren** is Bldg. 1684, University Terrace #211, Ann Arbor, Mich. 48109.

### Mrs. Jergenson passes at 103 years

Mrs. George (Laura) Jergenson, formerly of Donnelly, Minn., passed away in nearby Morris the day after Christmas at 103 years of age. Her funeral service was held on Dec. 30 at her lifelong church, Kongsvinger Lutheran. Two of her sons are pastors and they both brought greetings at the service, Conrad of Minneapolis, Minn., and Arnold of Poulsbo, Wash. The latter was my seminary classmate at Augsburg.

Mrs. Jergensen, her late husband and their son Ruben visited the AFLC family camps at Alexandria, Minn. Five of Mrs. Jergenson's grandchildren, all of them children of Mr. and Mrs. Erling Johnson, Burtrum, Minn.,

attended Association Free Lutheran Bible School.

Mrs. Jergenson lived on the family farm and managed her household duties until she was 100 years. In the series "Life on the Edge of Town" I wrote of visiting her there. The last time, when she was well up in the 90s, she served me her own apple pie and coffee.

Mrs. Jergenson was a gracious Christian woman. God bless her memory.

Raynard Huglen

### CHURCH DIRECTORY CORRECTION

We regret that the cities of the Chairman and Secretary of the Board of Pensions were changed around in the Directory published in our December 31 issue. Here are the correct addresses:

#### Chairman

Mr. Norman Haugen  
Route 1, Box 229  
Murdock, Minn. 56271

#### Secretary

Mr. LaVern Thompson  
126 W. Adolphus  
Fergus Falls, Minn. 56537

## TEACHERS NEEDED

Medicine Lake Lutheran Academy, Minneapolis, Minn., is accepting applications for teaching positions for the '86-'87 school year. Interested persons should contact the Academy at 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Mpls, 55441. (612) 922-8276.

## CONCORDIAS WANTED

Scandia Lutheran Church, Sedan, Minn., would like to buy up to 30 used *Concordia Hymnals* in good condition. The music edition is preferred. If you can help, please contact Pastor Verle Dean, Rt. 1, Sedan, Minn. 56380. Telephone 612-278-3201.

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# editorials

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## WHAT WE GO BY

The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations has no constitution as such. That is, there is no document labeled "Constitution" or any called "By-Laws." This is quite a unique situation, but it is purposely so because ours is an attempt to be an association of very free congregations. Thus far the concept has worked and we want it to continue.

But then, is there anything set down as to what we believe and to guide us in functioning? Even very free congregations working together must have some guidelines.

As a matter of fact, there are a number of documents which state our beliefs and reflect agreement as to how we shall do things.

The first one is the *Fundamental Principles*, also known as the *Guiding Principles* (*Ledende Prinsipper*-Norw.). This set of 12 principles came to us through the Lutheran Free Church and it dates back to 1897. For almost 90 years, then, there have been Lutheran congregations in the United States and Canada who have held these principles in high esteem and have sought to pattern individual congregational as well as corporate congregational life by them. The *Fundamental Principles* take precedence over the other documents and any conflict between any of them and the *Fundamental Principles* must be resolved in favor of the latter.

Next comes *Rules for Work*. It is a rather brief statement of how the AFLC shall function. In this sense, it has the air of a constitution or by-laws about it, but its brevity prevents it from doing everything which we might expect from a constitution.

*Rules for Work* outlines the subscription as to belief expected of congregations affiliated with the Association. It describes the right of franchise in Annual Conferences, some of the functions of the Conference, and how a Conference is to be prepared. There is also a description in *Rules for Work* of the duties of the constitutional officers of the AFLC and of the Co-ordinating Committee. And there is more.

Then we have the *Order of Business for the Annual Conference of the AFLC*. This document, as the name suggests, deals only with the Annual Conference. It is subservient to *Rules for Work* and spells out in more detail the procedures and parts of the yearly meeting of representatives of the congregations.

In the next place there is the *Relation Between Free Lutheran Theological Seminary and the AFLC*. In ten paragraphs the government of the Seminary is delineated from the church's point of view and something is said about how faculty members are chosen and dismissed and how the dean and/or president, or both, of the school is/are selected and relieved.

The last three documents, *Rules for Work*, *Order of Business* and *The Relation*, have all been modified since

the formation of the AFLC in 1962 in order to better suit the particular Association situation.

The fifth document is one which comes from the time of the beginning of the AFLC, hence it is of much more recent origin. *Declaration of Faith* is an attempt in 35 theses to state our beliefs in regard to the areas of Doctrine, Christian Unity, Church Polity, Practical Life and Church Life. It has been included as part of the literature used to introduce people to the practical beliefs of the Association.

We propose to present these five documents in the pages of the *Ambassador* in the next five issues starting this time with the *Fundamental Principles*.

Some of you have read all of them before. Some of you have read some of them many times, especially the first one. Some of you have read one or more of them once or so. Dare we say that some of you have never read any of them? Whatever category you are in, if you are an Association member, read them all as we present them. They bear reading; become familiar or more familiar with them.

One other thing we will be doing is presenting a history of the AFLC before the Annual Conference of 1986 at Warm Beach, Wash. It is the one to be found in the 20th anniversary book *Twenty Years of Beginnings and Blessings*.

Through it all, we trust you will have a better idea of what this church to which you belong is all about.

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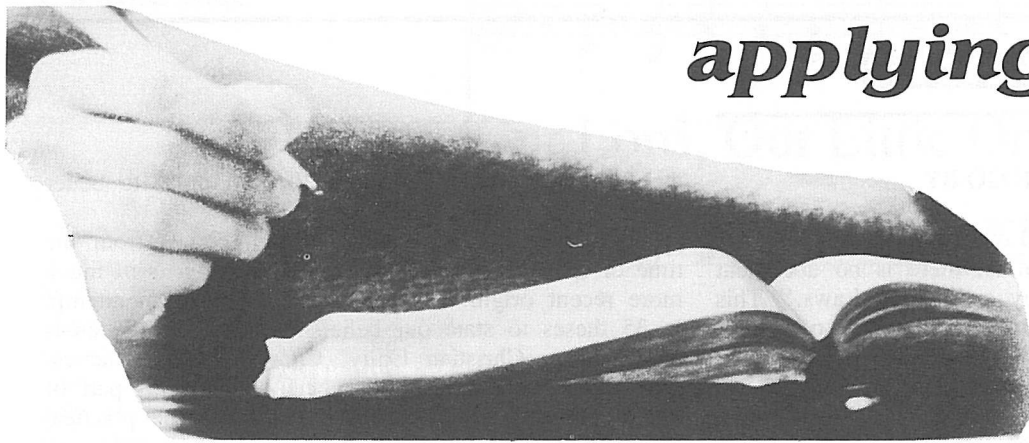
## CLARIFICATION

In the article regarding Expo '86 in Vancouver, B.C., next summer, in the Dec. 17 issue, something was not made quite clear concerning the Three-Day Tickets. Let us attempt to clarify it. 1. Adult ticket 2. Child/Senior

Price Periods	Regular	Group
Jan. 7/86-May 1/86	1. \$29.95	1. \$26.95
	2. 14.95	2. 13.45
May 2/86-Oct. 14/86	1. \$34.95	1. N/A
	2. 17.50	2. N/A

Questions may be called to 604-660-3976. Make checks payable to EXPO 86. Mail to EXPO '86, P.O. Box 24085, Seattle, Washington 98124-0085.

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# applying hearts unto wisdom

photos by  
S. Hjermstad

## The ‘I Ams of Christ’

The starting point for a look into Jesus’ statements about who He is must begin with a passage in John that comes after all of these claims are made. To understand why Jesus said these things about Himself, it is necessary to realize that the entire purpose of the Book of John is the salvation of souls. “Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name” (20:30,31). The reason that Jesus told us who He is is for the benefit of our souls, that we might come to know Him and believe in Him, trusting in Him alone for our salvation.

“I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst” (6:35). Here Jesus makes a comparison between that which we experience in the physical realm and that which we experience in the spiritual realm. Just as bread satisfies our physical hunger and water satisfies our physical thirst, so also Jesus satisfies the longing of our souls. He satisfies our search for purpose and meaning in life. Most of all, He satisfies the need for security by assuring us that when we trust in Him we will not have that need to be saved again if we stay with Him. If we eat bread and drink water we will indeed need to eat and drink

again because that with which we have fed ourselves runs out. But Jesus is an eternal supply of food for our souls.

“I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (8:12). As a student thinking of a career which will be satisfying and interesting, I can remember many times walking in darkness. Jesus is the light for the next step to take in showing Christians where He wants them to go. It is only when we surrender ourselves to Him and His will that we seem to be able to actually see that light. We need to trust God for the next step even though we can’t see any possibilities ahead. As that student thinking of what career he wanted to go into, I realized that it was not until I gave my anxiety to God and felt at peace that He actually gave me firm direction.

There is another aspect of this light, though, that gives us a more important direction for our lives. It is the light that shows us the world for what it really is and shows us who we really are. It is the light that shows us our need of a Savior. That light is indeed Jesus Christ and when we walk with Him we do not stumble and our souls do not frantically reach out to anything that offers the slightest bit of hope or refuge. Rather, the soul is secure and at rest in the light because the light gives us understanding of both ourselves

and the world in which we live and we see that which we had previously sought, namely, Jesus, and we see the power in Him.

While omnipotence is one attribute of God, another is His infinity. “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I AM” (8:58). Jesus has existed forever. He was at work in the creation and will again be at work during the end of the world. The Jews could not understand that Jesus could have lived before Abraham. This is not something to understand, though, but to receive by faith. What confidence there is in knowing that the Lord we worship goes beyond reason and has always been and will always be, and that the Lord of Abraham and Moses, of David and Paul, is the very Lord Jesus that we worship today! He truly is the Alpha and Omega. Yet, some seem to need a different picture to come to know Jesus.

“I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture” (10:9). Jesus is the entrance to a new life. In Him is salvation and freedom. He is the bridge across the river spoken of earlier. In Him is the freedom to go “in and out!” His freedom is the freedom to be in this world but able to go out of it through prayer. We need to go “out!” We need to pray. We need to feed upon the pasture which is found only when we go “out.” In Jesus we will always find the quiet pasture that

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The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge . . . If thou seekest her as silver . . . Then thou

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One of the assignments in the Gospel of John class at AFLBS is to write a paper on the "I Ams" of Christ as found in the Gospel. This gives the student an opportunity to meditate and study the claims of Christ for himself. This article is an example of one student's work.

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True wisdom is in leaning  
On Jesus Christ, our Lord;  
True Wisdom is in trusting  
His own life-giving Word;  
True wisdom is in living  
Near Jesus every day;  
True wisdom is in walking  
Where he shall lead the way.

—Anon.

we need and the strength and the will to carry on in a world of sin. But, unless we first go in through the door, we cannot go out. What a privilege for the Christian!

What a privilege, indeed, to have someone looking out for us. "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep" (10:11). We are the sheep and Jesus is committed to us with His very life. We can rest assured that we are not just a flock that will be used for the profit of its wool. Jesus loves us and guides us. Without a shepherd we are lost and when we stray He goes all-out to find us. He went all-out to bring us to Himself on the cross. He is truly the Good Shepherd.

"I am the resurrection, and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die" (11:25,26). A resurrection is a renewal of life. Until we come to know Jesus we are spiritually dead. When we open our hearts and accept Him, then we have eternal life and even if we die physically we will never die spiritually if we continue to walk with Him. The key to this eternal life? Belief in a risen Lord who offers everlasting fellowship with Himself.

"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me" (14:6). Belief or faith in Jesus, from one standpoint, consists of these three things: walking in the way, obeying His command-

ments, and acknowledging Him as truth, the only one who is true in a world full of lies and the one from whom all truth comes. It consists of acknowledging, by accepting, that Jesus is the life. In Him lies all of our fulfillment and satisfaction. Apart from Him nothing lives, but everything dries up and dies.

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing" (15:5). Jesus is the source of strength and life for the Christian. From Him we receive the spiritual nourishment and sustenance that we so desperately need. Just as a branch cannot live without being engrafted in the vine, neither can we live spiritually or eternally unless we are firmly embedded in Jesus Christ and He in us. There is no distinct line and there are no distinguishing characteristics that separate the vine from the branch. They are made up of the same material. They have the same nutrients flowing through them. The branch is simply an outgrowth or offshoot of the vine. So, too, we should simply be an outgrowth of Jesus. We should strive for His character and His likeness, so that when people look at us they see Jesus. If we were put on trial for being Christians, there should be enough evidence in our lives so that we would be convicted by a unanimous decision by the jury!

Jesus' claims were not just for the Jews to whom He was speaking,

they are the same for us. The same salvation that was offered to them is offered to us by one and same Lord Jesus Christ. He is the same yesterday, today and forever! Jesus is Lord and I am exceedingly joyful that I can say *I am His*.

—Todd Schierkolk

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the study of  
God's Word  
is pre-eminent  
at AFLBS



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shalt understand . . . For the Lord giveth wisdom . . . Proverbs 1,2

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## BAPTISM . . .

good part of his life actively resisting God's Spirit. To say that God cannot save a baby in baptism is to limit His power to our own "understanding." Surely, He is bigger than that.

Your next question was, "Is it still necessary for the baby to be born again?" To answer this, we must explain that we don't believe in "eternal security," or "once saved, always saved." In baptism, we received the gift of faith, saving faith, but she must be taught the Word of God, upheld in prayer, and given a Christian example to follow. She must be taught to pray and to bring her sins daily to Jesus in repentance, just as do all adult Christians. Undoubtedly, she will reach an age where she will have to choose for herself whether or not she will continue to obey God as she has been taught. That will be her own decision as a conscious young adult. At that point she will (we pray) make a public confession of faith (as instructed in Romans 10:9-10). In our church we call this confession "confirmation." It is preceded by two years of in-depth instruction in the Word and is a personal affirmation of the covenant entered into in baptism.

If she chooses not to continually walk with God through a life of daily repentance and faith, but falls away, *then* there would be a definite need for her to be brought (through the Spirit by the Word) to a state of repentance and faith, and to be converted, just as with someone who has reached adult years without being saved. (II Peter 2:20 tells us that those who fall away, having once known the truth, are worse off than before!)

We hope this has answered your questions about why we chose to have our daughter baptized. Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:14). There is no place that we have found where it says that children are *not* to be baptized, and, based on the Scriptures we have cited that show that they can believe, we feel that it

For us, it is much easier to believe that God can impart faith to the heart of a newborn than to the heart of an adult who has spent a good part of his life actively resisting God's Spirit."

is the right thing to do. On the back of our bulletin last Sunday was a message entitled "Let the Children Come." One paragraph said:

Let the children come to Jesus in baptism. Parents, dare to believe that you have the Scriptural right to bring them, to make spiritual decisions for your children before they are mature enough to make them. "For I have chosen him (Abraham) in order that he may command his children and his family after him to keep the ways of the Lord." (Genesis 18:19) ". . .but as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15)

In this day and age, when the popular thing is to give the children "the right to choose their own religion," it is good to know that we have the right to command our children to keep the ways of the Lord while they are young enough that it will benefit them.

It is a beautiful thing to see children who have been baptized as infants grow to young adulthood, publicly confess their faith in confirmation, and begin to make major life decisions, all without ever stepping out of the will of God. They have been saved in baptism and walk in that newness of life from the first moment they are able to. We know an evangelist who says that he cannot point to a conversion experience of which he was conscious, but that he has walked with the Lord from his earliest memories of childhood. When asked when he was born again, he must point back to baptism, the "washing of rebirth." (This is not to minimize the experience of adult conversion; the vast majority of people do not have the benefit of being raised in a home where the Word of God is taught, a truly loving Christian exam-

## THE NATURE OF

**A child that is born of devout parents and follows them in every way and is like them is called a devout child. This child by right possesses and inherits all that his parents have, their name and possessions. Thus we Christians are reborn in baptism, and are made God's children, and if we follow our Father and His ways, His Name and all that He has is made our eternal inheritance. And our Father's nature is goodness and mercy, as Christ says: 'Be ye therefore merciful as your Father also is merciful.' Again: 'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart.' Thus God is also just, pure, true, strong, simple, wise, etc., and all**

ple given, and where they are upheld in prayer by their parents.)

Certainly, children can be raised in a Christian home and grow to confess a faith of their own without the benefit of baptism, but as our daughter grows up, we can not only teach her about Jesus, but we can also point back to her baptism and give her the assurance that she belongs to Him. When we consider the loving heart of our Savior, His desire for all to come to Him, and the pain which sin must cause Him, it is hard to think that He would want the little ones to wait until they have sinned and are "old enough to know it" before coming to Him! We believe that He would have their hearts from the very start. "From birth I was cast upon You; from my mother's womb You have been my God" (Psalm 22:10).

We have heard an illustration, which, although not from the Bible, does give a good picture for comparison. In this illustration, baptism is likened to the conception of a baby: here life begins, not in a form that we recognize as a human being, but real life, nonetheless. The childhood years are likened to the gestation of a baby within the womb, where life is protected, nurtured and grows.

# THE CHILDREN OF GOD

these different names of God are included in the one little word: 'Thy Name.' For the names of all the virtues are names of God. And as we are baptized in these names and sanctified and dedicated, so that they have become our names, it follows that we are called God's children and must be merciful, good, chaste, just, true, simple, kind, peaceful, and of a sweet disposition towards every man, even towards our enemies. For the Name of God in which people are baptized works all this in them.

—Martin Luther  
(*Day by Day We Magnify Thee*)

And confirmation, or the young adult's confession of faith, is likened to the birth of a baby, life appears to us in a visible, recognizable form. Just as we believe that God is able to impart life to a few cells at the moment of conception so that those few cells become a unique, individual human soul, so we also believe that He is able to impart true spiritual life, hardly mature but undeniably alive, at the moment of baptism.

This is why we celebrated our daughter's baptism. There was nothing "symbolic" about it, but God met her there through the water and the Word and imparted faith to her. It is not a faith that we can measure or comprehend, but it is saving faith nonetheless.

There is much more that could be said on this topic, but this letter is long enough already. We wanted to go into some depth so that you could see what we believe and why. Please pray with us for God's will to be done in this precious new heart and life with which He has entrusted us.

1"Shall Children Be Baptized" tract by Evald J. Conrad, published by Colportage Press, Minneapolis, Minn.

## TEENS...

A teenager who had been a dinner guest in such a home said, "They were talking about ordinary things, and all of a sudden you realized they were involved in a theological discussion...I found it interesting to see that everyone was talking, not just the parents."

These are homes in which children "pick up" on religion as being important to their parents and in which children feel free to ask questions and venture opinions. As one young woman told us, "For my mother, there were no unaskable questions about faith."

The flow of life includes happy, tender, sad, and humorous moments. And it includes ugly times when tempers flare and words are said that can never be unsaid. The glory of shared faith lies in our stumbling words of forgiveness—words sometimes hard to come by—spoken between father and son, brother and sister, mother and daughter. These moments are when grace is most keenly understood.

**Structured times.** Since Old Testament times, devout Jews and Christians have continued various forms of family worship. Few people who have seen the stage or movie version of *Fiddler on the Roof* will forget the scenes of Sabbath worship in the home of Tevye and Golde.

Most family devotions are prosaic and not the stuff of great beauty or drama. But when done in an atmosphere of love, they will be remembered fondly. For example, Uncle Clarence Strommen, now ninety years old, clearly recalls family devotions in his farm home when he was a teenager: "I remember my father and mother gathering us for devotions after chores and supper. Pa had been a heavy drinker, and when he was drunk he had sometimes treated us pretty bad. But after he became a Christian, when I was about twelve, he really changed. No, he never preached in church, but we saw the change in our home. It was as if he had said to himself, 'From now on, we will have devotions every day'." Perhaps Uncle Clarence's father sensed that family devotions might be his most lasting witness and memorial

to his children.

In our contemporary society, Scripture should be presented in ways that make the family's creative gifts and personalities an integral part of the experience.

Encouraging children to use free prayer also can make a lifetime of difference. But prayer does not automatically or easily become an important factor in our lives. We can help our children by identifying specific people and situations about which to pray. Hearing the parents say their names in prayer regularly is likely to make an indelible impression in the memories of children. And a parent gives a child a great gift by encouraging prayer during what Frank Laubach calls "the chinks of time"—those many in-between moments in life.

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"Hearing their parents say their names in prayer is likely to make an indelible impression in the memories of their children."

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**'Doing the truth together.'** Children may learn their Bible stories well, sing the songs of faith, feel a warmth in praying for one another, and sense the kinship of believers in the family circle. But shared faith is a combination of believing and doing. Sara Little, in her book *To Set One's Heart*, calls it "doing the truth."

This third aspect of shared faith emerges in our study as a matter little thought about and seldom carried out. While 80 percent of the parents in our study agreed that religion is "the most important" or "one of the most important influences in my life," many do not see the connection between that belief and performing acts of love for others. They seem not to attach to "religion" Jesus' words: "I was hungry and you gave me food...I was a stranger and you welcomed me...I was sick and you visited me..." (Matthew 25:35-36). ♦



# BOOK REVIEW

Rev. Gerald F. Mundfrom has written a book titled, *Modern False Teachings in the Church*.

I will quote four paragraphs from it.

"The Word of God (the Bible) given to us by God should be our

norm in determining what is true doctrine. This Word of God not only states what is true but also clearly states and gives examples or illustrations of what is not true and not good.

"Hebrews 4:12 emphatically says: *For the Word of God is quick, and*

*powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*"

"In other words, the Word of God, when allowed to do so, will go deep into our innermost thoughts and beliefs, ever pointing out what is true and in harmony with God's Word and which should become a part of our life, and what is false and should be discarded from our heart and mind."

"Within the last forty or fifty years some great changes have taken place in the teachings and beliefs within the church, much of which is false and not good, and not the full truth of God's Word. In speaking of the church, I am thinking of the universal church which involves all church members and all church-going people, and not necessarily any local congregation."

Pastor Mundfrom then goes on to specifically point out eight untruths or false teachings and trends:

1. The error regarding the filling or baptism of the Holy Spirit.
2. The misteaching of love so as to undermine the importance of truth.
3. A wrong concept of prayer.
4. A wrong emphasis on praise.
5. A wrong emphasis on joy.
6. A misunderstanding of the relationship between Law and Gospel or obedience and grace.
7. An overemphasis on God as a miracle worker.
8. False prophets who claim to have the gift of healing.

He points out two great movements which had a part in bringing in these false teachings. The book also points out the importance of knowing the Bible, so we can guard against being influenced by these false teachings. The book is not long, only 21 pages. I enjoyed its message. I recommend it as good reading.

Ernest Hammar  
Victory in Christ  
Lutheran Church  
St. Paul, Minnesota

This book can be ordered directly from the author: Rev. Gerald F. Mundfrom, Rt. 1, Box 503, Osceola, Wisconsin 54020. Price \$1.25; please allow for postage.

## ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard  
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

### CHURCH SUBSIDY(11 months)

February 1-December 31, 1985

FUND	TOTAL BUDGET	REC'D IN DEC.	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% of TOTAL
General Fund	\$ 213,910.00	\$ 25,201.90	\$150,527.80	70
Schools — AFLTS	108,041.00	13,221.65	61,695.63	57
AFLBS	179,198.00	21,069.83	100,774.33	56
Home Missions	271,233.00	27,883.17	145,866.34	54
World Missions	307,000.00	27,378.24	216,456.83	71
Praise Fund	30,000.00	2,495.15	17,680.89	59
TOTALS	\$1,109,382.00	\$117,249.94	\$693,001.82	62*
1984-85	\$1,003,095.00	\$105,960.27	\$711,835.66	71

\*Goal 92%

## TEENS...

For all the emphasis on parents as models for children, the adolescents in our study outrank their parents in believing that religious responsibility includes a horizontal dimension—that is, reaching out to help people in acts of love and mercy.

Among fifth and sixth graders there is a high correlation between a concern for people and a desire to work for peace and against poverty. But such interest declines as students move toward ninth grade. A possible explanation is that parents tend to underestimate the interest and maturity of their eleven and twelve-year-old children and thus do not give them opportunities to be part of helping ministries.

Frank Ferrell, a forty-three-year-old resident of an affluent Philadelphia suburb, recognized this fact. Television news coverage of local street people prompted him one recent Christmas to take his eleven-year-old son Trevor to see firsthand how the street people live. Father and son took along a blanket and a pillow and gave them to a needy person. The son was so profoundly moved and interested that

he wanted his father to take him into town several nights a week. And thus began the regular trek of father and son in the family station wagon filled with coats, jackets, soup, coffee, and bags of sandwiches for the street people. The son connected his faith with these acts as he talked of becoming a pastor and of establishing a permanent home for street people. But equally moving was the father's sensitivity in providing an opportunity for his son to show his concern in concrete ways.

Being able to see one's acts of service as acts of faith is extremely helpful to an adolescent. Even in early childhood, families can have structured times of sharing faith that include Bible stories that tell of Jesus' caring for others. But the next step is to transform ideas of caring into actions in our daily lives.

A shared faith is a much-neglected and overlooked source of strength in the home and family. Parents who take this issue seriously will leave their children a remarkable legacy of strength. Parents *can* make a difference!

# MAKE CONFERENCE PLANS NOW

Annual Conference is not that far off. It is never too soon to begin planning, especially if those plans include a trip to the West Coast. A number of different accommodation packages have been put together to make this year's conference affordable to as many as possible. Conference dates are June 11, WMF day, to June 15. Lodging is available starting Tues., June 10. We hope that many of you will be able to attend this year's Annual Conference.

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE ACCOMMODATIONS AND RATES

The following prices are for lodging and meals at the Warm Beach convention facility. The full rate includes five (5) nights and 14 meals; the alternate rate includes four (4) nights and 11 meals.

Facility	Age bracket	Full Rate	Alternate Rate
<b>Olympic View Lodge</b>			
Each room has a private bath, one queen size bed and two single beds. There is a meeting room on each level with fireplace, sink and seating room for 50. All rooms have views of Port Susan Bay, Camano Island and the Olympic Mnts.	13 and Up	\$134.00	\$107.25
	5-12	107.00	85.60
	0-4	7.50	6.00
<b>Glacier-Whistler, Mt. Baker, Cascadian and C. L. Lower</b>			
Glacier-Whistler contains three sleeping rooms, two restrooms and a meeting room with sink and counter. Each sleeping room has one double bed and eight single beds. Mt. Baker. Each room has one double and four single beds. One bath-room for every two rooms. Cascadian. Each room has a double bed, two single beds and sink. There are two rest rooms in each wing.	13 and up	96.50	77.25
	5-12	77.00	61.50
	0-4	7.50	6.00
<b>W-Bar-B Ranch Mt. Cabins</b>			
Each cabin has 12 single beds. Path to the bath.	13 and up	86.50	69.25
	5-12	69.00	55.25
		7.50	6.00

Linens may be rented from Warm Beach Camp; the Olympic View Lodge price includes linens.

## RV AND TENT

1. Full Hookup (water, electricity, sewer) per site, per night \$5.00
2. Basic/Overflow Hook-up \$3.00
  - a. Basic: water, electricity
  - b. Overflow: no utilities
  - c. per site, per night
3. **Plus** Facility use and insurance, per person
 

5 and up	\$2.50
0-4	1.50

This fee is also charged to those who do not stay at Warm Beach and wish to register. It entitles one to the Registered Guest Meal rates. Covered cooking areas are available near the RV sites.

## Registered Guest Meals

(those who have paid the facility use and insurance fee)

Breakfast	13 and up	\$2.75
	5-12	2.00
Lunch	13 and up	3.75
	5-12	2.50
Dinner	13 and up	4.75
	5-12	3.50

## Part-time Meal Prices

(includes \$1.00 per meal for facility use and insurance)

Breakfast	13 and up	\$3.75
	5-12	3.25
Lunch	13 and up	4.75
	5-12	4.00
Dinner	13 and up	5.75
	5-12	4.75

## LODGING ONLY (one night rates)

1. Olympic View Lodge
 

13 and up	\$17.75
5-12	14.00
0-4	no charge
2. Mt. Baker, Cascadian, Mini Lodge and Cedar Lodge Lower
 

13 and up	6.50
5-12	5.20
3. W-Bar-B Ranch and Mt. Cabins
 

13 and up	6.50
5-12	5.20
4. RV and Tent (same as rates given above; no meals included)

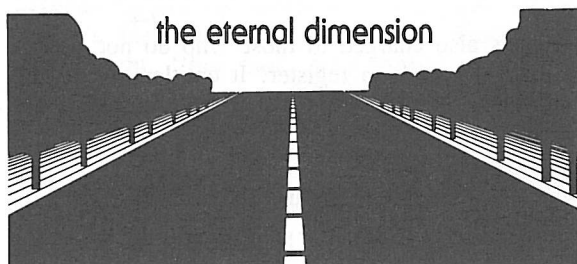
## For reservations, please contact:

Cheryl Larson  
6323-83rd Ave. S.E.  
Snohomish, Wash. 98290  
or call: 206-568-8469

### COMING BIBLE CONFERENCES

Feb. 7-9—Grace Lutheran Church,  
DeKalb, Ill., Dennis Gray, pastor.

Feb. 14-16—Redeemer Lutheran  
Church, Kirkland, Wash., Kenneth  
D. Moland, pastor.



### Discouragement or Blessedness in 1986?

Some folks tell us that this is the time of year for post-holiday blues. The psychiatrist, psychologist and counselor call this condition "depression." Is depression a significant problem in our modern world with all its devices for making life more pleasant? One psychiatrist has said that depression is "rampant" in America. Perhaps you are in the midst of mental depression right now. The question most on your mind is, "Is there any help for me?" We recognize that some cases of mental depression are of such a nature, and so severe, that they should be referred to people specially trained to deal with them. For many, however, help may fully come through a proper understanding of and response to the teachings of God found in the Bible.

Elijah was a man who came to the place of deep depression for which the cause and cure are clearly revealed in God's Word. Elijah was a prophet of God and as such he had been very successful. He had met with many of the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel and there he had demonstrated that Jehovah was the true God and that Baal was a false god. Before the watching crowd, he had called down fire from heaven on the sacrifice he had placed on

Jehovah's altar. After this he killed all the prophets of Baal who were there. For this he earned the wrath of Jezebel, the Baal-worshipping wife of Israel's King Ahab. Jezebel said she would have Elijah's life within a day. No one stood to take sides with Elijah. He felt alone and he fled.

It was in this situation that Elijah became angry with Jehovah and depressed in his spirit. You can read about this in I Kings 19:1-18. His anger toward Jehovah is shown in verses 10 and 14. His depression is shown in verse 4. There we read that he told God that he was disappointed in himself and that he wanted to die. Please note how Elijah said that he was no better than his fathers.

It is instructive to note how Jehovah dealt with Elijah to get him out of the state of depression. He asked Elijah a very simple, but pointed and helpful question. He said to Elijah, "What are you doing here?" You can read this in verses 9 and 13. It is as though God said, "Elijah, you are My servant and prophet. To be hiding here in a cave, in deep depression, is not appropriate for one of such a high position." Then notice, in verses 15 through 18, that Jehovah gave Elijah another assignment and assured him that he was not the only

one in Israel who was remaining faithful to God.

Let's make a personal application. Are you a true believer in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord? By God's forgiving and empowering grace, have you become His servant? And even considering those things, are you like Elijah in discouragement and depression? May we suggest that God would now come to you, as He did to Elijah, and ask you pointed and helpful questions, "With all the blessings and privileges which I have given you in and through Christ your Savior, what are you doing here in this gloomy place?" What are you doing here in this place of discouragement and depression?" Could we suggest that God would give you some directions and encouragements whereby you can again usefully and fruitfully, serve Him? We believe God would say to you, His beloved one, "Do not look back at what seems to you to be a failure and defeat, but look to Me and to what I have made you by saving you and forgiving you." Then your discouragement will begin to leave you and you will begin to have a sense of purpose and direction again. *May God, the Holy Spirit, be allowed to do that kind of work in your heart in this new year he has given to you!*

—Pastor Emerson Anderson