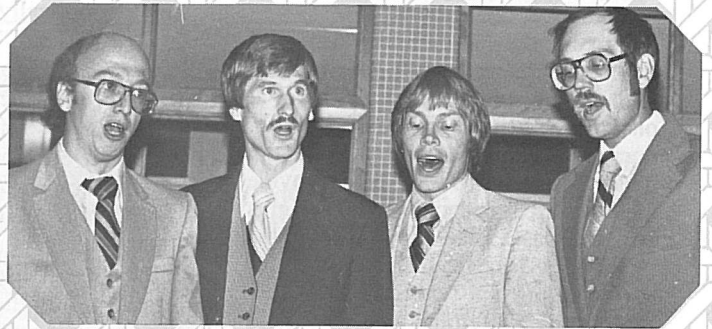
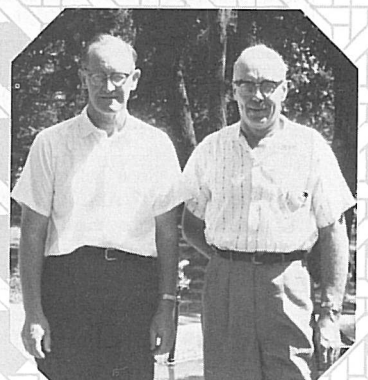
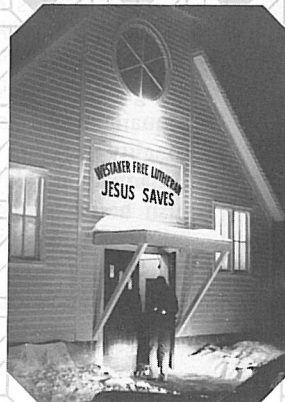


THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

January 31, 1984



SCRAPBOOK ISSUE



AT THE MASTER'S FEET



Pastor Wallace Jackson

The tale that is told

Psalm 90:9

This is the "Scrapbook" issue of the *Ambassador*. In it the reader will find poetry and articles that are at once interesting and enlightening. Scrapbooks hold a fascination for a great many people. They provide amusement, recollections and insights into the past. Like the "attic of the mind" they become the repository for accumulating the odds and ends collected over a lifetime. Many of these items, though of limited significance when placed by themselves, when put together may comprise the story of a life.

THE PROLOGUE. It may at first seem somewhat demeaning to compare the concept of a "scrapbook" with that of a life story. For the pur-

pose at hand, however, let us allow it to symbolically represent "The Tale That Is Told." A few years ago television producer Ralph Edwards aired a series which carried the title "This Is Your Life!" The program consisted of excerpts from the life of the principle character selected for that particular segment. Researchers exercised caution and good taste in the selection of materials used in order to assure that there would be little, if any, embarrassment to the individual whose life was being paraded before America. In similar fashion our life story unfolds line by line and chapter by chapter. What tale is told we must determine for ourselves.

THE PLOT UNFOLDS. The words "To Each His Own," while not originally uttered in this context, seem apt in describing the life story of the countless pilgrims who have sojourned here in body while their hearts seek and their eyes search for the better country. As each and every individual on God's earth possesses a unique and different set of finger prints, diverse enough to make positive identification possible; as the myriad of snowflakes which fall from the leaden skies on a blustery winter day differ immensely, so the life histories of individuals differ in measure. Differences run all the way from the notable diversity in physical appearance which make it possible to recognize the face and features of an acquaintance or some prominent personality on the corner of 34th and Broadway in New York City during rush hour, to those found in ethnic, religious and social backgrounds.

THE PLOT THICKENS. In biological and spiritual areas we are

most alike. Our common ancestry in Adam has provided us with both of these entities. However, it is our spiritual legacy which causes the plot to thicken and the quality of our narrative to thin. Our pride quickly becomes a casualty as the Holy Spirit ushers in the dawn of conviction. Paul's descriptive statements in Romans 3 become a format into which the entire race is fitted. It causes us shame and embarrassment.

Oddly, as with the Pharisees, our contemporaries may be mildly or greatly impressed by our tale, while God is not. He reads that part of us which man cannot see. God's will is to only find us "accepted in the Beloved."

THE TALE IS QUICKLY TOLD. How soon the contents of our life story unfold and are told. It takes but a few words to sum up the history of the longest life. Enoch becomes a case in point. The summary of his 365 years is covered in the terse statement: "Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him." Brief and simple, it becomes the greatest tribute possible to a man of God. The longest life is brief indeed when compared to the timelessness of eternity. The cradle to coffin journey passes as a dream in the night. There seems to be little more than a breath or two between a baby's first cry and the final rasp as the ancient steps into the void to meet his God. What shall be said of those whose life ends prematurely: a flower plucked in the bud; sunset in the morning hours? Truly, our "lease on life" is insecure.

THE EPILOGUE. Typically, the tale with the most appeal ends with
(continued on p. 11)

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Volume 22 Number 3

A pastor tells of

A time of visitation in and around Newfolden, Minnesota

After the cold and long winter, spring came with sunshine and life. It was a long time in coming, but it did and there is something wonderful about its arrival. There is something refreshing about spring. It brings with it new life and new spirit. But it wasn't about springtime in the world of nature that I was going to write, but about the springtime of spiritual life which has come upon Newfolden and community. The spiritual springtime of awakening has visited us in the latter days and therefore we praise our God who still is able to save sinners.

Yes, we must break forth and say, it is the Lord who has done this and it is marvellous in our eyes. In truth we have experienced that His hand is still outstretched to save and that He can do far beyond what we pray for and understand.

God's own people here in Newfolden and community have for several years prayed for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Now the answer to prayer has blessed us with rivers of grace. And we sit as those who dream and ask themselves: has it really happened? And we must break forth with Israel's people and say: The Lord has done great things among us and we are glad.

Evangelist J. M. Halvorson was invited last winter to come and hold meetings some time in March. He came and began the meetings on the 22nd in Bethlehem Congregation, Newfolden. Even at the first meeting the church was filled with eager hearers. And under the powerful and

heart-warming preaching of brother Halvorson already early in the meetings there was the heart cry both among young and old, men and women: what shall I do to be saved? And where the Holy Spirit is able to bring forth that question in the hearts of young and old there came to be both the confession of sin and the profession of faith before both God and men. And He who has begun the good work will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

Yes, it is a beautiful picture to see young people on their knees before God, but there is something which for me is even greater and that is to see elderly gray-haired men and women kneel for the first time, praying, beseeching God for mercy both for themselves and their families. Those are scenes and experiences which one never forgets and which heaven's angels rejoice to see.

When we came to the Sunday of the first week, which had been decided upon as the last day, it was decided to continue the meetings for another week. And for that we thank both God and brother Halvorson, because he was scheduled for that week and the meetings which were to begin in LaCrosse, Wis., were to be postponed for one week. And the students Hagen and Melby, who went to LaCrosse in Halvorson's place, will have a part in the harvest of souls which brother Halvorson received the grace to be used for among us.

Sunday, the last and great day of the meetings, was especially a blessed day. The communion service in Bethlehem Church on April 2, will never be forgotten, when 40-45 new Christians gathered with the other be-

lievers at the Lord's Table where God's Spirit in a special way was present and blessed both young and old. It became for me an unforgettable time and it became that for all who were there. An older man said to me before the worship service, "This is a festival day for me because I haven't been to the Lord's Supper since I was confirmed, over 50 years ago." Yes, think how unspeakably gracious and good God is—He who is merciful to sinners. And you, friends, who read this, who still live outside of fellowship with God: how long will you continue to strive against the Lord—why will you die when salvation is available?

There have been blessed times (since) that we have had together about the Word when we have gathered for prayer and singing and Bible study during the week. And we believe that the Lord shall bring still others around here into His fellowship.

Believing brother and sister, known and unknown, here and there, remember us in prayer before the throne of grace that all might be faithful until death and receive the crown from God.

Rev. G. P. Ronholm
(Translated by the Editor)

(Ed. note: Pastor Ronholm was my confirmation pastor. The very first issue of the *Ambassador* carried an editorial about his death which had occurred shortly before, in December of 1962. Blessed be his memory.)

PRAYER
by **Bernard W. Nelson**
Atlantic Mine, Mich.

(The third of ten parts)

(The Lord's Prayer)

We might break this prayer down, then, into the following three parts and cover each separately.

- (a) Praise and thanksgiving
- (b) Confession and forgiveness
- (c) Petition

(2a) Praise and Thanksgiving

When we go to God in prayer, Psalm 100:4, 5, says, "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good." In I Thessalonians 5:18, we read: "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." We are so prone to give thanks only for the good things that come into our lives, for the spiritual, physical and material blessings we receive. But God's will for us is to give thanks for everything—good things, undesirable things, pleasant things, unpleasant things, yes, everything.

If only we would practice this truth alone; it is sufficient to know

we are really pleasing God with our lives. It is such a powerful antidote for worry, pressure, burdens and problems, to give joyful thanks to God for all the things He permits to come across our pathway. You see, by praising God, God strengthens our faith.

It does not mean that everything that comes along is of God, simply that we give thanks to God even for the assurance that whatever the problem God has the solution. Ephesians 5:20 says: "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Our praise is unto the Lord Himself. True praise keeps us humble before the Lord, for humility is complete dependence upon the Lord. We know that whatever blessing we have been to others, it is all of God, and He should have the praise and glory. If we have a gift or ability, from where did it come? Yes, it proceeded from the Lord, so praise belongs to Him. It is a good thing to praise the Lord.

In Hebrews 13:15, God's Word says: "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name." In the

PRAYER

Book of Hebrews contrasts are made between the Old Testament priesthood, when blood offerings and sacrifices were required, and the New Testament, when Jesus became our blood sacrifice. But in this verse God is saying that we should be so overjoyed that the fruit of our lips would be our sacrifice. John 15:8 says: "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." There are varied ways in which we bear fruit as Christians. But here is one sure way: the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name. Every time we give thanks and praise the Lord we are bearing fruit. The more we praise Him the more fruit we bear. The more fruit we bear, the more the Father is glorified. Much praise bears much fruit; and surely this is the greatest reason we praise Him, that the Father might be glorified.

Oh, we should be praising always. It is not fanatical; it is not extreme. It is fulfilling God's expectation of us, to sacrifice praise to God continually. Not just when we are singing

GERHARDT'S "LAST WILL" TO HIS SON

Shortly before his death in 1676, the Lutheran hymn writer and pastor Paul Gerhardt wrote this letter to his 13-year-old son Andreas as a spiritual last will and testament. We translate it from the *Lutherskt Sændebrev* (Sweden).

"Since I have now reached my 70th year of life and have the joyous hope that my good and gracious God shall shortly release me from this life and carry me to a better one, far better than what I have heretofore known on earth, I thank Him first and foremost for all His goodness and faithfulness which He has shown me from my mother's arms right up until this hour, and for body and soul and all that He has given me. Furthermore, I am sure from the bottom of my heart that when my last hour shall come, He shall give me a joyous departure, take my soul into His fatherly hand, and give my body rest for a while in the earth until the last day, when I, together with all who are mine, those who have lived before me and those who shall come after me, shall reawaken and shall behold face to face my dear Lord

Jesus Christ, whom I have always trusted hitherto though without seeing Him.

"To my surviving son I shall not leave much in the way of property, but on the other hand I bequeath him an honorable name of which he shall have no cause to be ashamed. My son shall know that ever since his tenderest years I have given him to the Lord my God, that he might become a servant and preacher of His holy Word. Therefore, let him remain, and not concern himself, that he may perhaps become such, and receive a life full of good days. For the good God knows all things; in all our deepest distress He is able to give us gladness and joy from the heart.

"Study sacred theology in pure schools, at a university not given to falsehood. Beware of syncretists, for

hymns, not just in a glorious church service, not just when God has wrought a miracle for us, but continually we must offer God the sacrifice. We should feel it in our body, be joyful, exuberant; we should radiate thanksgiving and let it be on our lips ready to burst forth at every opportunity. That's what continually means.

The Bible admonishes us often to sacrifice praise to God. The reason: we are not to praise God only when all is going well. We are to praise Him continually. Often we do not feel like it. *Sacrifice praise.* Very often circumstances are dismal and gloomy. *Sacrifice praise.* When sickness strikes our bodies our will power is reduced to nil. *Sacrifice praise.*

We can take our cue also in praising the Lord from the greatest saints in the past. Praising people are the heroes of the Bible. David was one of them. He was lavish with his praise, as we read in many of his Psalms. Let us look at some Psalms, not all by David. Psalm 34:1: "I will bless the Lord at all times: His praise shall continually be in my mouth." Psalm 50:23 says: "Whoso offereth

*"Thanksgiving
and praise
are the keys
to a successful
prayer life."*

praise glorifieth Me." Psalm 66:8: "O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of His praise to be heard." Again, in Psalm 67:4, 5: "Let the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us." When we praise the Lord then increase, abundance, provisions come and God shall bless us. If you need God to undertake for you in your deficient living, begin to praise the Lord. Then you will experience increase. Isn't that precious? God promises it and God cannot lie. Practice this praising principle and your life will be God-pleasing and will

fulfill His best and highest purpose for your life. Real praise is the very language of faith; when there is strong praise there is strong faith being manifested. In Colossians 4:2, it says: "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." Luke 24:53 tells us that the early Christians "were continually praising and blessing God."

Don Gossett wrote a booklet called "Praise Power" and in it he says prayer and praise are the two wings of spiritual power. How true this is.

Thanksgiving and praise are the keys to a successful prayer life. Oh, how He desires our praise. God made and owns the whole universe, and all of us. He said, "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills" (Psalm 50:10). All silver and gold are God's. But what He doesn't own is our praise until we give it to Him.

I believe that in heaven we shall join the redeemed of all ages in praising the Lamb who was slain for us. Praise is the heavenly language. I believe I draw my heart heavenward every time I use my heart and lips to praise my Lord.

(To be continued)

they seek the contemporary and are true neither to God nor to man.

"Don't fall into bad company, but obey God's will and commands. First of all, don't do anything evil in the hope that it will go unnoticed. What is hidden under the snow is uncovered in the thaw. Secondly, don't get angry. If you detect anger boiling inside of you, keep yourself absolutely silent and say not a word before you have earnestly prayed your way through the Ten Commandments and the Creed. Thirdly, be ashamed of shameful, fleshly lusts. When one day you have become old enough to marry, marry in accordance with God's will and seek counsel from pious, faithful and sensible men. Fourth, do good to other men, even to those who cannot reward you; for the Creator of heaven and earth has long since rewarded you, having

created you and given you His dear Son and taken you unto Himself as His child and heir in baptism.

"Fifth, beware of covetousness as you would beware of hell itself. Content yourself with whatever you have gathered honorably and in good conscience, be it ever so little. But if the dear God should give you more, pray that He will keep you from misusing your earthly possessions.

"In a word: pray diligently, study what is right and true, live in peace, serve with honesty, be steadfast in your faith and your confession, and

then you shall be of ready mind and shall die in blessedness and in comfort as you are separated from this world. Amen."

—Translated and submitted by
Rev. Edward A. Johnson,
now of Dalton, Nebr.

(Ed. note: Among Gerhardt's hymns are "O How Shall I Receive Thee?," "O World, See Here Suspended," "Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me," and "If God Himself Be for Me," all in *The Concordia Hymnal*.)

It is still true that there are no financial difficulties in the kingdom of God. But there are a lot of faith difficulties.

Who will be His hands?

ACTS 4:12

(Adapted from an article by Rev.
Vernon A. Serenius in "The
Augustana Lutheran")

(Here) we see the picture of a rather strange statue of Jesus. He is minus His hands. Who could have the audacity to create such a statue? Isn't it an evidence of the lack of proper respect for the Lord of Life? No, for the fact that He has no hands is the result of an unfortunate accident. This is a picture of the statue of Christ in old Markuskirche in Frankfort, Germany. Following a bombing raid, the figure of Christ was found still standing firmly in place and undamaged, but the hands were missing.

When the church is eventually restored, no attempt will be made to restore the hands, for the statue as it is constitutes a tremendous challenge to all who see it. It emphasizes the wonderful truth: "*Christ has no hands but our hands to do His work today.*"

A Paradox

One of the strangest paradoxes imaginable is that of the living God binding himself by man in the most important thing of life: the salvation of immortal souls and the advancement of His Holy Kingdom. But that is exactly what He has done. From the day of the first disciples to this, Jesus brings the kingdom forward through the human instrumentalities that He calls, sanctifies and empowers. He has given to man the means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments, but unless man takes these things and goes to benighted souls with them, nothing is accomplished. Whole nations can lie in utter darkness generation after generation and millions go on to a Christless eternity as far as we can determine, because man fails in his stewardship. Paradoxical, but eternally true!

No One to Help

And so it is with man's need of help in the midst of his physical distress. The man lay at the pool of Bethesda for 38 years because no one through whom Christ could work

came to him. Thousands of lepers in Africa today lie rotting away because no one comes in Jesus' name. Thousands of aged and infirm eat their hearts out in loneliness and disillusionment because no one comes to lift them up and provide what they need. Helpless children go on bereft of that which should be their birthright, because no one comes in Jesus' name to enfold them in the arms of love.

A Challenge

A situation like this should challenge all of us in regard to the work of . . .

In our efforts to feed, clothe, shelter and, above all, to bring the Gospel to the men of . . . we are trying to perform the duty and the privilege of being His hands, His feet, His tongue. Some can come in person and help this work along. Many more find it impossible to come to . . . but they are just as necessary and just as effective by supporting us with prayer, gifts and contributions. The work must go forward in His strength and in His name. But He works through His children who are willing to be guided by Him. Can He count on *you*—will you offer to be His hands to minister to "one of these the least," will *you* be His feet to go where He leads, will *you* be His mouth to tell others the good news of a Saviour Who loves even the unlovely?

—The Gateway Gospel
Mission Beacon

(New Hope Center, Minneapolis,
is the successor to the Gateway Gospel Mission.)

At Thy Service

Content to speak but broken words
if souls are led to Him;
Lord, mortify my every pride,
Cast out my every whim;
Put forth Thy will instead of mine,
Thy glory, not my own, must shine,
To convict mankind of sin.

Mrs. T. Berge

Anyone may go to heaven
without health
without wealth
without honors
without learning
But no one can ever get to heaven
without Christ.



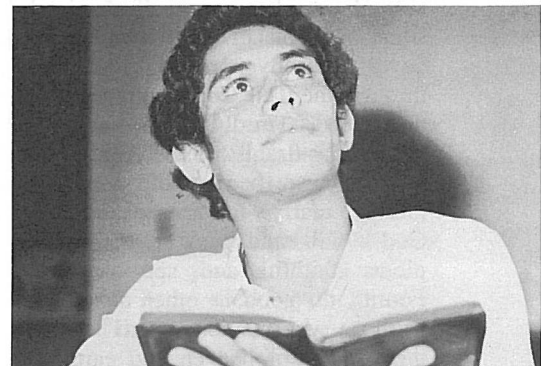
Triumph Lutheran, Ferndale, Wash.

The Church

For wherever Christ is preached there is Christ's kingdom, or the Church in the ideal sense, while the kingdom of God is not infallibly present where the external legal institution of the Church is found. (The position of Luther attributed by Heinrich Boehmer in his book *Luther in the Light of Recent Research*.)



Dr. Herman Preus, Rev. John Strand



Brazilian seminary student



1980 WMF Convention, Valley City

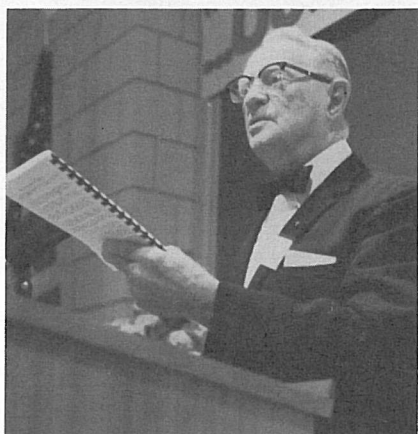
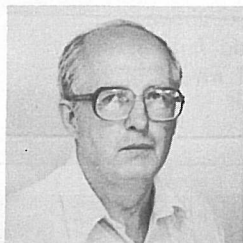


Mr. Don Hanson at Headquarters



Rev. Fritjof
Monseth

Rev. Kenneth
Anderson



Rev. T. Dahle

Long before there is any sign of growth, and while the snow still lies deep in the bush, the sugar maple trees receive a signal of the approach of spring, and sap begins to rise through the taproots far below the surface of the ground. One sunny March day farmers will know the time has come to tap the trees and the sweet, clear liquid will drip from the rough bark. "The sap's running" means, for those who take the trouble to do so, that it is time to harvest the sap and make it into delicious maple syrup and sugar.

To stand watching the shining drops spring from a tree standing bare, and to all appearance dead, is to be in the presence of a mystery so profound that no words can express it. Surely it is not fanciful to relate it to the provision God has made for the healing and renewal of man's body and soul.

Long ago in China, Hudson Taylor, the great missionary, wrote about it in this way: "Here, I feel, is the secret; not asking how I am to



The sugar maple

get sap out of the vine into myself, but remembering Jesus is the Vine—the root, stem, branches, twigs, leaves, flowers, fruit, all indeed. Aye, and far more, too! He is the soil and sunshine, air and rain—more than we can ask, think, or desire. I have not got to make myself a branch. The Lord Jesus tells me I am a branch. I am part of Him and have to believe and act upon it."

Author unknown

WHEN WEDDING BELLS RING...



Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, in May, 1943, during his term of imprisonment, a wedding sermon to a couple who were among his good friends. In this sermon it is said: The crown—and not only the will to reign—makes you a couple for God and for people. Your love does not carry your marriage, but from now on your marriage will carry your love. God makes your marriage, and it cannot be dissolved. God unites you in marriage, you do not do it

"What God has united . . ."

yourselves. He protects your marriage from all dangers which threaten it—from outside as well as from inside. He is the guarantor of the indissolubility. No power in the world, no temptation, no human weakness can dissolve what God has put together. What a wonderful certainty! The one who knows that can truly say: What God has united, no man can put asunder. Without any fear and with certainty and confidence you can say to each other: Through the will of God we belong to each other until death.

Immanuel Lutheran Church
Tel Aviv, Israel

Mother

Who is it knows just what to do
When things go wrong and life looks blue?
Who is it sings amid her care
And smiles when shadows bring despair?
Who is it through her changeless day
Unchanging goes her faithful way?
Who is it keeps the light, the home,
Still sweet howe'er her loved may roam?

Mother.

Who is it wins the crown she wears,
When love lays wreaths upon gray hairs,
And joys on wings of softest gleam
Leads home her little ships of dream?
Who is it, though she goes not down
Each day to business in the town,
Still lifts her burden, toils her share,
Fulfills her trust and meets her care?

Mother.

Author unknown



Parsonage, Grand Forks, N.Dak.



cleaning cupboards

Today while cleaning cupboards,
With neat, housewifely art,
I suddenly decided
To clean the cupboards of my heart.

I threw out *criticism*,
To the trashpile — to the fire!
I put in *appreciation*
And worthwhile thought to inspire.

I threw out *condemnation*
Which says, "You're wrong, I'm right."
I put in *consideration*
For all folks, brown, black, and white.

Yes, out, too, went *complaining*,
Grumbling about trivial things;
I put in *smiles* and *laughter*
To ease the tension each day brings.

Friends, let's all clean out our cupboards,
With help from God above,
Throw out *pride* and *hatred*, too;
Put in *humility* and *love*.

Author Unknown

Beatitudes for women

Blessed is she whose daily tasks are
a labor of love; for her willing
hands and happy heart translate
duty into privilege, and her labor
becomes a service to God and all
mankind.

Blessed is she who opens her door to
welcome both stranger and well-
loved friends; for gracious hospi-
tality is a test of brotherly love.

Blessed is she who mends stockings
and toys and broken hearts; for
her understanding is a balm to hu-
manity.

Blessed is she who scours and
scrubs; for she well knows that
cleanliness is one expression of
godliness.

Blessed is she whom children love;
for the love of a child is to be valued
more than fortune and fame.

Blessed is she who sings at her work;
for music lightens the heaviest
load and brightens the dulllest
chore.

Blessed is she who dusts away doubt
and fear and sweeps out cobwebs
of confusion; for her faith will
triumph over all adversity.

Blessed is she who serves laughter
and smiles with every meal; for
her buoyancy of spirit is an aid to
mental and physical digestion.



Mrs. Michael Brandt and daughters

Blessed is she who preserves the
sanctity of the Christian home; for
hers is a sacred trust that crowns her
with dignity.

—Selected

editorials

SCRAPBOOK ISSUE

Over the years a certain amount of accretion takes place in any kind of work. To put it more simply, things accumulate over a period of time. Take the man who goes into auto wrecking, auto parts and auto salvage. He may start out with one or two "junkers" and everything looks neat and tidy. Come back in ten or twenty years and a certain amount of sprawl will have occurred no matter how good his intentions have been and it's kind of hard to get a handle on things.

A farmer saves a bolt here, and a nut there, an iron shaft or pipe, a scrap of sheet metal. After a few years quite a few things have been gathered in the shop or the "blacksmith shop" as we used to call it.

A family lives in a house for ten years and then it comes time to move. As mother and father begin to look their possessions over and do some sorting out they are usually amazed at how much they have collected and saved.

A pastor tends to attract his share and more of reading and promotional material. He gets on some mailing lists, he tends to take more magazines than the average person. He saves intriguing articles. He lays whole issues aside for future reading. All sorts of little bits and pieces pile up.

Editors do not escape the dilemma. Maybe they escape it least of all. The dread of not having enough material, or is it part of God's provision for the future? Anyway, items are stashed away, or filed away, if one is quite orderly and methodical, against the day when they can be of use. Furthermore, for an editor, used and possible pictures accumulate. Original copies and carbon copies of material used should be kept for a reasonable length of time. Maybe there will be need to check back. Notes, background material and memorabilia from conventions attended are hard to part with, and so things grow in quantity.

Our scrapbook issue today has been prompted by just this situation. We have on hand a certain amount of material that hasn't been used before. We won't try to trace the reason for that in regard to each item or any of them, for our own satisfaction or your curiosity.

But many of the articles, pieces and poems in the *Ambassador* today come out of the category of collected material that we feel should see the light of day now without further delay. This isn't a gathering together of favorite stories and poems that we have used before. It is a presentation of material we haven't previously printed, to our knowledge.

It's a mixture we're giving you today. There's a graduation prayer, something about TV programs and drinking, stewardship, marriage, how to kill a church, and more. It's a little unusual, but we're not apologizing for it. The Holy Spirit has been known to work also through some pretty disjointed efforts. And after all,

there might be one of these items that strikes home to you on a sensitive issue in your life. That's all it often takes, you know, one little item, one thought, and perhaps there will be that here for you. We pray so.

Of course, there are a few of our regular features, too, "At the Master's Feet," on page 1, the installment in the series on prayer, and these editorials.

Oh yes, we're presenting some pictures, on our cover and here inside, from our AFLC life thus far. Maybe you'll see someone you know or once knew, or some place that holds memories for you. We hope so.

PEOPLE AND PLACES

Don't you sometimes find that one thought leads you on to another? One idea to another idea? Of course you do.

Speaking of people and places does that. Think of the people out of a 20-year history. Think of those who are no longer with us. If you have been able to attend some of our annual conferences, Bible conferences and family camps, think of those whom you saw there but who have passed on. How good it would be to greet them once more, to see their smiles, to hear their opinions. Pastors and lay people are among them.

Oh, we'd like to name some names here, but that wouldn't be fair. We'd be sure to leave someone out. In fact, there are some we really don't get to know or even meet. Even in our small "family" group.

It's good to have the assurance that all who die in the Lord shall meet again one day. But, friends, we must be in Jesus Christ. Remember that.

And the places. Places in AFLC history. Here we will dare to give some names: the Powers Hotel in Fargo, St. Paul's Church in Fargo, Lake Geneva by Alexandria, Our Saviour's Church in Thief River Falls, Medicine Lake in Minneapolis, all the annual conference and Bible conference sites, and the many other places, churches, Bible camps, cafe booths, private homes, train and bus depots and airports, yes, and on "rolling stock" itself, where the Lord's work through us has been talked about and prayed over. Yes, many, many places.

One could make quite a scrapbook of memories. Perhaps some are doing that. The anniversary book *Twenty Years of Beginnings and Blessings* is a treasury of our history.

Anyway, we thank God today for the people and the places, too.

THE CHURCH

Interesting, isn't it, the many usages we have for the word "church"? That word generally goes back to the Greek word formed from *ek* (out) and *kaleo* (called). The "called out ones." Ideally, then, to be a member of a

◇

church is something holy and special.

One use of the word church refers to that "holy Christian Church." This is the body of all true believers of all times and places. The members come from different denominations. They have one common bond, simple faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

We use the word church to denote our denomination (Lutheran), our church body (Association of Free Lutheran Congregations) and local congregation (Trinity, Zion, etc.). These, too, are our church. Unfortunately, these organizations are not "pure." That is, among the members may be found those who are not now in personal fellowship with Jesus Christ. Perhaps they haven't been since early childhood or they may have backslidden at a later period in life. The spirit of hypocrisy may be found in our "churches." So these churches are constantly in need of renewal and cleansing. Nevertheless, we honor the local congregation because where the Word of God is preached, the Sacraments are rightly administered and there are believers, there is also the church and the kingdom of God.

And we use the word church when we mean specifically the service. "We had church today," we say, or "I went to church today," obviously meaning more than the building. We will have to leave it to someone wiser than we are to trace the evolution of "ecclesia" into that use of the word, but there is something comfortable in the picture of "church" lumped together as the service, the building and the people. We trust that the Lord doesn't mind our doing that even though we are far from being exact in our usage when we do that.

Let us also be challenged by that meaning of church in the Greek, the "called out ones." Is that true of us?

THE VATICAN AMBASSADOR

As this is being written the news has come that the President of the United States is granting official recognition to the Roman Catholic Church and proposes to send an ambassador to the Vatican. We wish to join our voice with those protesting this action as a violation of the principle of separation of church and state. Further, we certainly trust that this matter will be pursued eventually to the Supreme Court if it is not defeated in the U.S. Senate.

The argument that the Vatican is a civil state is a poor one. The diplomatic relations will be with a church, a powerful one, to be sure, but a church. Should the U.S. government have diplomatic relations with the Methodist Church, with the Anglican-Episcopal communion, with the Lutheran World Federation? The question seems ridiculous, but neither is it necessary to have them with the RCC.

If the Pope and Rome have information of great value to the free world, we believe they will convey that even apart from formal diplomatic relations.

Why inject this divisiveness into American political life? We encourage you to write to your senators and to the President about this matter.

stir me

**Stir me, oh, stir me, Lord! I care not how
But stir my heart in passion for the
world.**

**Stir me to give, to go—but most to pray.
Stir till Thy blood-red banner be
unfurled**

**O'er lands that still in heathen darkness
lie,**

O'er deserts where no cross is lifted high.

**Stir me, oh, stir me, Lord, till all my heart
Is filled with strong compassion for these
souls**

**Till Thy compelling "must" drive me to
prayer;**

**Till Thy constraining love reach to the
poles,**

**Far north and south, in burning, deep
desire;**

**Till east and west are caught in love's great
fire!**

**Stir me, oh, stir me, Lord, till prayer is
pain,**

**Till prayer is joy—till prayer turns into
praise!**

**Stir me till heart and mind and will—yea,
all—**

**Is wholly Thine, to use through all the
days,**

Stir till I learn to pray "exceedingly."

Stir till I learn to wait expectantly.

**Stir me, oh stir me, Lord! Thy heart was
stirred**

**By love's intensest fire, till Thou didst
give**

Thine only Son, Thy best-loved One,

**E'en to the dreadful cross, that I might
live;**

**Stir me to give myself so back to Thee,
That Thou canst give Thyself again through
me.**

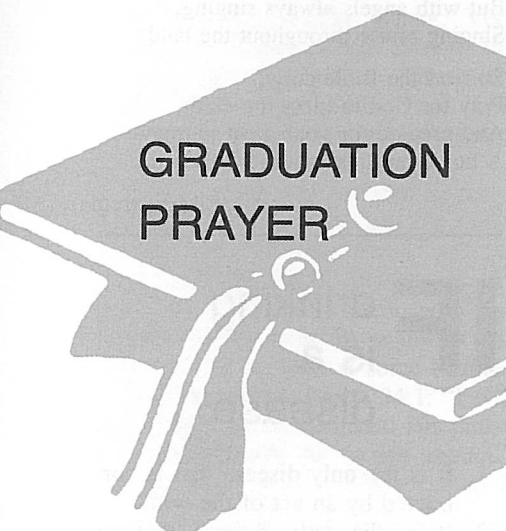
**Stir me, oh, stir me, Lord! For I can see
Thy glorious triumph day begin to
break.**

The dawn already gilds the eastern sky.

**Oh Church of Christ, arise! Awake!
Awake!**

**Oh, stir us, Lord, as heralds of that day!
The night is past—our King is on His
way!**

Bessie Porter Head



GRADUATION PRAYER

O God, as we pause briefly for prayer, we thank You that we are not doing a meaningless thing, that we are not talking into empty space, but that You are really there, and that You are a rewarder of all those that diligently seek You.

We ask, Lord, for quietness of heart, an inner calm. We ask that we might sense the need, in the midst of the hectic pace of life, to pause often enough and long enough so that Your still, small voice can be heard.

We ask also for insight so as to know what is really true, as we are bombarded with such a variety of thoughts and ideas. Not least of all, we ask that we might really see what is true about ourselves. Help us to know our immense value and worth because we have been made in the image of God. Impress deeply upon us that we do not need to have a pointless existence, because You have a plan and purpose for every life that You have created. But show us clearly also our personal guilt and need of forgiveness. Show us our basic sinfulness, the inner pollution that infects all of us, and our need of a new heart and nature.

Deliver us from smallness—the smallness of a life that has as its goal to “get” instead of to “give.” Deliver us from the smallness that considers success as attaining bodily pleasure or material gain or praise from men, rather than in being pleasing to You. Deliver us from the smallness of having horizons that reach no farther than this life. Stir our hearts with the unforgettable question of Jesus: “What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and he himself be lost?”

As we face today's world, with its immense problems, and with its many and rapid changes that are often so bewildering and so frightening, help us to see and live by those things which do not change: that there are permanent standards of right and wrong, and that there is a real God, who loves each individual, who answers prayer, who is able and willing to give a solution to any problem, and who still says: “You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your hearts.”

We ask these things, dear heavenly Father, for those in the graduation class and for all of us who are here—and we ask through the merits and in the name of Jesus Christ your Son, who died for our sins and who lives to empower and guide all those who draw near unto God through Him. Amen.

(Given by Pastor Harvey Carlson in the Saint Paul, Minn., Auditorium for his daughter Faith's graduation from High School. The then Senator Mondale gave the address.)

BE A FRIEND

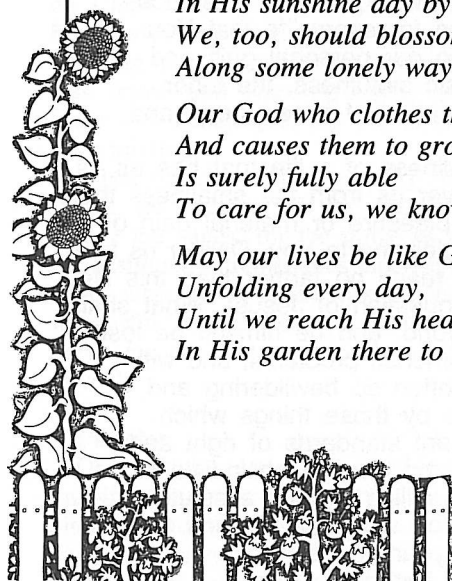
Oh, you won't be any poorer
If you smile along the way,
And your lot will not be harder
For the kindly things you say.
Don't imagine you are wasting
Time for others, that you spend,
You can rise to wealth and glory
And still pause to be a friend.

Selected

MASTER'S FEET . . .

the principle characters “living happily ever after.” To think otherwise is unthinkable. Unfortunately, we cannot skip ahead to the last chapter to “see how it turned out,” as with a novel. Fortunately, we can determine here and now that the epilogue will include for us the immortal epitaph

ascribed to the illustrious men of faith described in Hebrews 11:13: “These all died in faith!” Is there any safeguard to assure us that this will come to pass? Yes, praise God! It is simply to remain contentedly *at the Master's feet!* And so may the contents of our “scrapbook” turn into a masterpiece for our “readers” to enjoy!



*God's Word is a lovely garden
Which my Lord has given to me,
And through the beauty of it all
His eternal love I see.*

*God's promises are the blossoms
Which day by day unfold,
While the dewdrops and the sunshine
Make them sparkle bright as gold.*

*I love to watch God's flowers
In their beauty from above,
With their sweet fragrance telling
Of the wonder of His love.*

*And as the lovely lilies bloom
In His sunshine day by day,
We, too, should blossom as God's flowers
Along some lonely way.*

*Our God who clothes the lilies
And causes them to grow
Is surely fully able
To care for us, we know.*

*May our lives be like God's flowers,
Unfolding every day,
Until we reach His heavenly Home,
In His garden there to stay.*

Laura Norum

How to plant your garden

First: Plant five rows of peas . . .

Preparedness
Promptness
Perseverance
Politeness
Prayer

Next to them: Plant three rows of
squash . . .

Squash gossip
Squash criticism
Squash indifference

Then, five rows of lettuce . . .

Let us be faithful
Let us be unselfish
Let us be loyal
Let us love one another
Let us be truthful

No Garden is complete without
turnip . . .

Turn up for church
Turn up with smiles
Turn up with real determination

Author unknown

The Quiet Hour

When Martin Luther, like his divine Master, "went up into the mountain," and "sat there" alone in Wartburg Castle, that aloneness from the world brought him into a new nearness with God. In that quiet atmosphere and presence, he was enabled to translate the Bible and inspired to write "A Mighty Fortress" to stir a waiting world; but he was himself strengthened and fortified as was impossible "in the clamor of the crowded street and amidst "the shouts and plaudits of the throng." Try the Quiet Hour: it works.

The Lutheran

This BOOK

There is a book I'm reading,
And the stories told are true.
There are very many chapters,
Some are old and some are new(er).

When you read this book, believe it;
Trust its teachings and its word;
Study closely the sinless living
And the dying of the Lord.

This book is called the Bible
And it's filled with care and love;
It was written by our Father
In the heavens up above.

He's the mightiest of authors,
Mighty not with gun in hand,
But with angels always singing,
Singing praise throughout the land.

So read the Bible daily,
Pray for God to bless the earth,
And prepare for your great journey—
A home on high is what it's worth.

Lisa Eckrem

IF drinking is a disease

1. It is the only disease that is contracted by an act of the will.
2. It is the only disease that requires a license to propagate it.
3. It is the only disease that is bottled and sold.
4. It is the only disease that requires outlets to spread it.
5. It is the only disease that produces revenue for the government.
6. It is the only disease that is habit-forming.
7. It is the only disease that provokes crime.
8. It is the only disease that is permitted to be spread (sic) by advertising.
9. It is the only disease without a germ or virus cause, and for which there is no human corrective medicine.
10. It is the only disease that will condemn you to eternal separation from God in hell (Gal. 5:21).

—New Hope Center Beacon
Minneapolis, Minn.

How to kill your church



Don't come . . . When you come, come with a grouch . . . At every service ask yourself, "What do I get out of this?" . . . Never accept an office. It is better to stay outside and criticize . . . Visit other churches about half the time to show your pastor that you are not tied down to him. There is nothing like independence . . . Let the pastor earn his money; let him do all the work . . . Sit pretty well back and never sing . . . Never pay in advance, especially for religion. Wait until you get your money's worth, and then wait a bit longer . . . Never encourage the pastor; if you like a sermon, keep mum about it. Many a preacher has been ruined by flattery. Don't let his blood be on your head . . . If there happens to be a few zealous workers in the church, make a tremendous protest against the church's being run by a clique . . . If your church unfortunately happens to be harmonious, call it apathy or indifference or lack of zeal, or anything under the sun except what it is. *Selected*

Now is the day of salvation

Once I was afraid to tell the Gospel to the lost,
Though I'd claimed so many promises and counted all the cost.
I even knew the Gospel was the Holy Spirit's sword,
The power unto salvation was within the Holy Word
And He said that it would not return unto Him void.

Then I found a promise that I'd never really known
Because I hadn't really claimed it for my very own.
My little faith, my doubting faith, one day was changed anew;
I heard my Savior whisper, "Go, and I will go with you."

Who am I, Lord, that You should choose a sinner such as me
To tell to all the story of salvation full and free,
How Christ died for sin, was buried and triumphant rose again?
My Savior whispered, "Plant this seed within the hearts of men.

"Some seed will fall on hearts of stone,
These will not heed the call.
On some the seed will take its root,
On good hearts it will fall.

"Remember, too, to water well the seed that you will sow.
It takes a lot of water, child, to get some seeds to grow."

Some day soon the fields will ripen and harvest time 'twill be.
Christ will come and reap the fields, oh then, what will it be?
Have you brought the living Gospel to many, none, or few?
How many souls will say that day, I live because of you?

How many others, then, will say you knew and did not tell
And you will see them going down into the horrors of hell
To forever be tormented by the wages of their fate,
Because you did not tell them and now it is too late?

—Mrs. Alfred G. Gunderson

WHAT IS VICTORY?

To sing when the days are dreary,
And the burdens are pressing down;
To smile when the heart is weary,
And never give way to a frown,
To see your hopes torn asunder,
Then follow the Master's lead;
To rise after every blunder
Is victory indeed.

To do your duty with pleasure
Though the task is often dull,
Be content with the smallest measure
When you cannot have it full,
To rejoice in the gain of another,
To be glad when neighbors succeed,
The flames of envy to smother
Is victory indeed.

To be misunderstood and rejected
Yet prove a faithful friend,
To be slighted and neglected
Yet willing service lend,
To travel the mile that is longest
To visit a friend in need,

To prove in sorrow the strongest
Is victory indeed.

To be praised and yet be humble,
To be great and yet be small,
To be blamed and never grumble,
But meekly endure it all;
To lift up a fallen brother
Is a great and noble deed,
But to give the honor to another
Is victory indeed.

To be true when friends are failing,
To bravely lift the cross,
Always in truth prevailing,
Bearing the gain or loss,
To go "home" when earth's ties are breaking
And the soul from the clay is freed,
To the glory of heaven awaken
Is victory indeed.

—Agnes Shefveland Arhaug

(Mrs. Arhaug, a grandaunt of Pastors Ralph and Philip Rokke, passed away the day after this poem was sent to the printers. It was, however, written much earlier.)

MY HANDS

*I stood there with my hands full,
Full of many things
That glittered and shone before me
Like pearls and golden rings.
But, my hands were touched by the Savior's;
I saw the open wound—
Then scattered before His feet
I all my treasures found.
"Empty hands," said He,
"Empty hands must they have
Who would labor for Me."*

*I stood there with soiled hands,
Calloused, hard were they;
Spotted after the work became,
As I labored from day to day.
But my hands were touched by the Savior's,
Lo, His with blood were red!
With wonder I saw—the spots
From my own hands had fled.
"Clean hands," said He,
"Clean hands must they have
Who would labor for Me."*

*I stood there with restless hands,
Feverish with care,
Trembling with haste and eagerness,
Seldom folded in prayer.
But my hands were touched by the Savior's,
Oh, what wonderful peace!
Still and calm my hands became
When they were touched by His.
"Quiet hands," said He,
"Quiet hands must they have
Who would labor for Me."*

*I stood there with such strong hands,
But not with power divine,
And only for myself I lived,
Did not His work, but mine.
But my hands were touched by the Savior's,
Then faded all my bliss.
And now—I only can be strong
When my hands rest in His.
"Your hands," said He,
"Your hands—rest here,
And then labor for Me."*

(Ed. note: The above poem is by S. D. Gordon but was translated from the Norwegian to English by Mrs. Jennie Helland, McVille, N. Dak. It was likely written in English originally.)

The grain is golden

Every day must have its end
And every day, someone will send
You to a task. If you must rest,
Sit by a humming clock. It's best.
The grain is golden, swaying slow.
The looming clouds lie dark and low
And laden with large spoiling drops.
While you rest idle, God's heart stops.
A soul is brought to life and cries.
Another breathes twice more, and dies.
A Bible waits unused, unread,
And words of mercy halt, unsaid.
Fresh ironed shirt sleeves creased and clean
Arrest the eye as cufflinks gleam.
I'll roll my sleeves, 'twill do no harm.
I'll soil my hands and bare my arm.
A grainery bulges full and leaks
Plump yellow seeds.
I put them there in Jesus' care.
He hired me! I do my share.

—Dale Stone

* * * * *

The ark

Noah's ark and the ark of salvation,
Both were planned by the Father,
That unto Him men might gather.
Each had only one door;
There was no need for more.
One ark was three stories high,
One needs a Triune tie.
To glorify God was their aim,
And to save man from his own shame.
It took (takes) faith to enter each one,
Without God it could not (can't) be done.

—Mrs. Alvin Holmstrom

* * * * *

The power of thought

Great deeds from a single thought will grow,
Depending on the thought we nurture and sow.
A saint or a monster, what will it be,
When the deed from that thought we shall see?

The greatest and noblest of deeds
For man's blessings of comfort and need,
And all of the wars that ever were fought,
Each and all originated from a single thought.

The seed is the thought that is nurtured and sown;
The plant is the word that from this thought has grown.
Each word will later bring forth deed of its kind—
A curse or a blessing unto all of mankind.

—George R. Nelson, Sr.

Help for television viewers

Before a Program

1. Will watching this program represent responsible Christian stewardship for me?
2. Why am I considering watching this program?
3. What has this program been like in the past?
4. Is this a good way to be informed or entertained?
5. Would watching this program together help or hurt my family?

During a Program

1. What moral values are promoted or undermined?
2. Is God's name profaned; is vulgar language used?
3. Is violence glorified; is sex exploited?
4. Are alcohol and other drugs glamorized or taken for granted?
5. Does this program make me more trusting or more suspicious of others?

After a Program

1. Am I a better person for having watched this program?
2. Was this a program that encouraged morality or immorality?
3. Should I consider watching this program again; why or why not?
4. How can I use this experience to honor God and help others?
5. Should I communicate my convictions about this program to advertisers or television people?

"So each of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12).

—Contributed by Randy H. Nelson



AFLBS Campus Days



Camp 1964

GOD'S CHILDREN

Retarded children, God's children,
Angels sent down from above
To teach us pure humility
And the meaning of God's love.

Some may call them a burden,
But I call them a gift from on high,
For they brought me close to my Savior
On His strength I had to rely.

Don't think you are alone in your sorrow,
For God's children are everywhere;
Just ask your Savior for wisdom
And go to Him in prayer.

Retarded children, God's children,
These angels sent from above;
Just thank God for His wonderful kindness
In giving you someone to love.

—Marie E. Vanderberg

FUNNY

Funny how ten dollars looks so big when you take it to church and so small when you take it to the store.

Funny how big an hour or so serving God and His church looks and how small sixty minutes are when even twice that time is spent playing golf, fishing, etc..

Funny how laborious it is to read a chapter in the Bible and how easy it is to read two or three hundred pages of a best selling novel.

Funny how we look upon reading our church magazine as a real chore and yet pore eagerly through hundreds of pages of the newsstand magazines.

Funny how we can't think of anything to say when we pray and don't have any difficulty thinking of things to talk about on the phone to a friend or over the back fence to a neighbor.

Funny how we seem to have difficulty learning to worship God and find it easy to learn to do so many other things.

Funny how it seems we need two or more weeks to fit an event at the church into our schedule and always are able to adjust it for a social invitation at the last minute.

Funny, isn't it? Rather it merely reflects the way we are living these days with our priorities mixed up and a "shoulder shrug" for God and His church.

—The Sunny-Hope News
Stacy and Wyoming, Minn.

The way of the cross

Dark the storm clouds gather,
rolling o'er the hills.
God, I cannot find You,
terror my heart fills.

Jagged tongues of lightning
flash across the sky;
Find me in my need, Lord,
hear my desperate cry.

Thunder rumbling, growling,
echoes in the night,
While I grope in anguish,
searching for the light.

Long my footsteps wandered
in the mire of sin;
Each new day brought less hope
and no peace within.

Which path shall I take, Lord?
I can't find the way;
Jesus Christ, I need You;
Teach me how to pray.

Suddenly the clouds part;
glory fills the sky!
Wondering eyes uplifted
see the cross on high.

—Evelyn Foss

My Refuge and Comforter

In the dark hour of pain and trial,
Dear Lord, my Refuge be;
When the dread powers of hell
assail,
O Lord, remember me.

The fiery test of faith I hail,
Supported by Thy Grace;
Thou wilt not let my courage fail,
My Strength, my Hiding Place.

Be near me, O my gracious Lord,
My Comforter, my Friend:
Hold me above the swelling flood
And keep me to the end.

Then when life's struggles shall be
past,
My days of mourning o'er,
Appoint my rest with Thee at last,
My life forever more.

—Elias Newman

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Neglect

Did you ever win a soul to Christ
If so, how long ago?
Has it been a week, a month, a year
Since God used you to show
The way to the Cross to a weary soul
Weighted down with his sin,
Since you felt the joyous thrill that comes
As you see one enter in?

Perhaps you recall it was your word
That led some soul to Him
Months or years ago, but now
The memory's growing dim;
But what of days or weeks since then,
What of this very day?
Have you held forth the Word of Life
To a lost soul today?

Has your love for Him grown colder
With every passing week?
Has your ardor cooled till you seldom dare
Of your Saviour dear to speak?
Do you often a heavy-burdened heart
Lift to the Lord in prayer
For those without the Heavenly fold,
Plead their salvation there?

O Lord, convict each child of Thine
Who does not heed Thy Word.

Author Unknown
The Free Lutheran Lamplighter,
Roseau, Minn.