

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

July 29, 1986



CONFERENCE
report
continued p. 3



at the MASTER'S FEET

The meaning of prayer

Prayer may certainly be thought of as one of the highest privileges of the Christian life. It is awesome to consider that open communication with an infinite God is actually possible for finite man. There is a sense in which we may also speak of prayer as a duty or obligation. This is because it is our Lord's will for His children to pray. But prayer is more than a mere privilege. It is much more than a duty.

Prayer Starts with God

Prayer is made possible because God sent His Son to atone for our sin. The sin-obstacle has been removed between a holy God and sinful man. In light of the work of Christ on our behalf, the writer to the Hebrews says, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

Not only has God removed the obstacle of sin so that access to God is possible, He has also given us His Holy Spirit who enables us to pray. We are helpless in terms of spiritual strength. We are ignorant in terms of spiritual insight. We desperately need the Holy Spirit's help as we pray! How encouraging to know that our Lord recognizes our need. The Apostle Paul describes the experience of every believer in this regard. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Romans 8:26).

An Anglican bishop defined prayer as follows: "True prayer is the Holy Spirit praying through us back to God." I like that! It points up this tremendous Christian distinctive. Prayer does not start with man but with God Himself. God initiates prayer as he does faith and everything else in the Christian life. He (God in Christ) is "the author and finisher of our faith" (Hebrews 12:2).

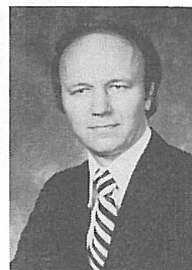
Prayer Centers in God

More than merely seeking things from God, true prayer seeks God Himself, for when we have Him we have all that we need. Prayer is simply the turning of the soul to God. David describes it as the lifting up of the soul to the living God. "Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul" (Psalm 25:1). That is a beautiful description of prayer.

Prayer at its best reveals a soul made thirsty for God, just for God alone. Count von Zinzendorf was a great man of prayer. Why? He sought the Giver rather than the gifts. He said, "I have one passion; it is He, He alone."

How can we have a prayer life that is centered not merely in petition, asking for things? Two thoughts are suggested. First of all, we need a realization of God's glory, and then a realization of God's grace. In coming before the Lord in prayer, it is well to simply reflect on who He is according to God's Word. This should help us to praise and worship Him according to His attributes: His holiness, power, wisdom, justice, mercy, and so forth. The great hymn in the *Concordia*, "My God, How Wonderful Thou Art," reflects the writer's attention to the Person of God and the subsequent worship. His spirit of worship is called forth in consideration of God's "endless wisdom, boundless power, and awful purity."

We need a fresh biblical vision of God in our day, God in His glory and God in His grace. The reason for our frequent failures is that we see people rather than God. When Luther saw God, Reformation fires began to burn. When Jonathan Edwards saw God, the "Great Awakening" began. When John Wesley saw God, the world became his parish. When George Mueller saw God, thousands of orphans were fed. O may God help us to see Him in His Word and enable us to respond in prayerful worship and willing service!



Dr. Francis
Monseth

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

USPS 588-620 ISSN 0746-3413

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

All communications concerning contents of this magazine should be addressed to: Rev. Raynard Huglen, Editor, Newfolden, Minn. 56738.

Layout design: Mrs. Wayne Hjermstad.
Editorial Board: Mr. Sheldon Mortrud, Rev. Francis Monseth, Rev. Robert Lee.

Send \$10.00 subscription to THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441. Second-class postage paid at Minneapolis, Minn.

Postmaster: Send address changes to THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441.

Volume 24 Number 14

Opening Service

Rev. Robert Lloyd Lee, Minneapolis, Minn., vice-president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, preached at the opening night service of the 24th Annual Conference. Rev. Ronald Knutson, then of Ferndale, Wash., led the service. He has since moved to Canton, S.Dak.

Pastor Lee preached on the Conference text, Acts. 12:5, and the theme "The Church Fervent in Prayer." the word "fervent" has the idea of "stretched out" in the Greek. In reference to the Christians of the Early Church, it can mean that they prayed for a long time or it can refer to intense prayer. Perhaps it means both. Our prayer ought to be like a beggar's hand stretched out to receive something.

Some people feel that if they are fervent enough, and earnest enough, Pastor Lee said, that God will answer their prayers. Then he went on to say these four things about prayer: Prayer is not powerful; God is. Prayer does not change things; Jesus does. Prayer is not a means of gaining what we want. Prayer is not the moving of a capricious God. Mr. Lee reminded his audience that: 1) God is good; 2) God knows everything; and 3) God loves to give.

A revival is a season of refreshing from the Lord. It means to stir up what is already alive. Dr. J. Edwin Orr has said that the first sign of revival is fervent prayer. The spirit of prayer, Pastor Lee asserted, is something God creates within us as He begins to bring revival. "Why do we want revival?" he asked. To grow numerically? To meet our budgets? To make a name for ourselves?

Cover photos:

Rev. Kenneth Moland preached at the morning worship service on Sunday.

Rev. Marlyn Kruse, left, Rev. Connely Dyrud, Robert Knutson and Rev. Eugene Enderlein.

Miss Judith Wold, left, and Solveig Hayes.

James Johnson, left, Todd Klemme and Jeffrey Swanson were ordained on Sunday.

CONFERENCE SERMONS

To reveal spiritual power and life? To reassure ourselves that God is on our side? Why *do* we want revival? Is it because of our helplessness?

There is a world that needs to be reached, Mr. Lee declared. Don't look to faith and fervency. *Look* to Jesus, who loves to give. Fervent prayer is not "stained-glass power" sending chills up and down the spine. Rather, it is conceived in a crushing sense of need. "Lord, stir us so to pray"

Thursday

The Women's Missionary Federation sponsored the service on Thursday night as part of their Annual Convention. Rev. Connely J. Dyrud, missionary to Brazil, was the speaker. His message is summarized in the convention report elsewhere in this issue.

Friday

Mr. Ronald Willand, Ferndale, Wash., led the Laymen's Service. The message was brought by Mr. G. V. (Kit) Kittelson, Eugene, Ore.

Mr. Kittelson used Luke 18:1-8 as his text. We are to pray persistently, like the troubled widow came continually to the unjust judge. She kept coming back and at last the judge really listened to her and helped her.

People pay dearly to talk to their psychiatrists. Why won't we talk to God?

"The way we pray shows how we live; the way we live shows the way we pray," he quoted. Mr. Kittelson said we should pray in "street language" to the Lord. Speak in your own language, He'll understand.

Mr. Kittelson talked about relationships with others. If the other person is mostly wrong in a matter, do we deal with the part wherein we are at fault? When the one least at fault apologizes for his lack of love, the other's heart will be stirred and there will be reconciliation.

A testimony meeting followed the sermon. One of those who took part told of her life as a nun and her conversion to Christ.

Saturday

Youth Night was observed on Saturday and the Luther League Federation president, Rev. Curtis Emerson, Valley City, N.Dak., led the service.

Rev. Roy B. Johnson, Fertile, Minn., was the speaker, using Philipians 4:13 as his text. He referred to the Seabees of World War II as "Can do" people. Paul was a "can do" person. The Philipians were of the same type.



The 1986 Ambassadors Gospel Team. Not pictured is Naomi Monseth at the piano.

Photos by Dee Lamb

SERMONS...

Paul said that he could do all things through or by the power of Christ. Glenn Cunningham, the runner, was injured by an explosion when he was 12, but later broke the record for the mile. His mother urged him on to healing. Helen Keller and Beethoven were also "can do" people, Pastor Johnson said.

The power of God is available to us through three means, Mr. Johnson declared. 1) Through prayer. Prayer changes things. 2) By the use of God's Word. Greater use of God's Word could help us to "turn the world upside down." 3) In worship and fellowship. Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you always."

Communion Service

Rev. Alvin Grothe, Astoria, Ore., preached at the service of Holy Communion on Sunday morning. His Scriptural reference was Luke 18:10-14. He spoke first of examining the need for grace. "Do we feel that we need it desperately?" he asked. He reminded those gathered of the catechism requirements for true faith: an earnest hatred of sin and an eager longing for grace. Do we feel we are quite sufficient in ourselves? Poverty reaches out with empty hands to receive His grace. "My soul thirsteth for God," cried David. The publican craved the grace of God.

Secondly, Mr. Grothe talked of the sufficiency of God's grace. It is boundless. The grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant to Paul. We shall be filled if we reach out for God's grace. Where sin abounded,

grace did more abound. May the Lord give us a greater sense of the cost of God's grace coming to us, he declared. Come in the spirit of the publican to the Lord's Table, the pastor invited. Come with grateful hearts.

Rev. Richard Bartholomew, Kalispell, Mont., was the liturgist for the service.

Morning Worship

"The Church and Repentance" was the theme for Rev. Kenneth Moland's sermon on Sunday morning. He is from Kirkland, Wash. Rev. Stephen Odegaard, Eugene, Ore., was liturgist. Pastor Moland's text was the Gospel text for the day, the third Sunday after Trinity, Luke 15:1-10. He said that a glimpse of heaven is given there and angels are seen rejoicing over the repentance of one sinner. "Do we at times trust in our good deeds and accomplishments?" he asked. Rather let us trust in Jesus Christ.

Then Mr. Moland went on to speak of the sins of the church. He listed five of them. 1) Complacency. It is to be satisfied where we are. Perhaps we have personal peace and affluency; our own little circle is taken care of and we have success. 2) Complaining and murmuring. The church is given all its needs and yet there is a coveting of more. We fail to rest in what God has done. 3) Lack of love for one another. We put the least charitable construction on what someone has done. 4) Prayerlessness. 5) Self-righteousness. One danger of emphasizing distinctives is that they can become a source of pride, shutting

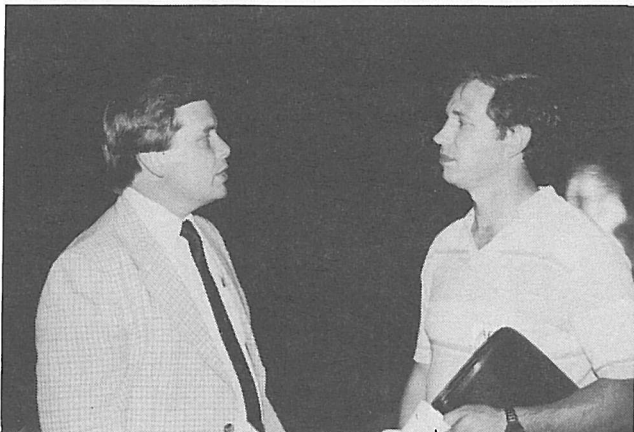
us off from the rest of the community. Our AFLC 25th anniversary must not be a time of exalting ourselves.

Why is there such great joy over the repentance of sin? Pastor Moland questioned. 1) Because it saves us from destruction. Impenitence blocks God's plan of rescue. 2) The penitent are much more easily led in God's ways than the proud. 3) Because God is then given the glory. There is no exaltation of man in repentance. Corporate repentance needs to begin with individuals, he asserted. But our congregations, corporations, boards, pastors and administration are in need of daily forgiveness. May it be true of the Association that we admit our dependence on Him alone — then heaven will be joyous, Pastor Moland declared.



Destination: Warm Beach

Photo by Fred Ogmundson



Rev. Michael Brandt, left, talks with a parishioner, Dennis Christopherson.



The "Brush Arbor Singers" from Ferndale, Wash.

Ordination Service

Rev. Richard Snipstead, president of the AFLC, led the Ordination Service on Sunday afternoon and Rev. Wendell Johnson, Stacy, Minn., brought the message to the ordinands and congregation.

"I believe you are an answer to prayer," Pastor Johnson said to the three men being ordained. He then directed attention to the two great commandments, to love God with all one's being, and then to love one's neighbor as oneself.

Pastor Johnson gave four words (Psalm 37:3-7) on love to God and one's fellowmen. 1) *Trust* in the Lord. Have a relationship with Him. And do good, first of all to your wife, who is your closest neighbor. 2) *Delight* in the Lord. Be committed to the task. Don't be a politician in the parish. Be dependable, rain or shine. Be available and be flexible. 3) *Commit* your way unto the Lord. Don't let anyone influence your preaching. You are responsible as servants of God. Don't try to escape testings. Let people help you be a servant, including the church council and committees in the congregation. 4) *Rest* in the Lord. Don't be awed by the one who is prosperous, but treat all the same. Rest in God's wisdom. Love God and love your people, Pastor Johnson challenged the three men.

Business session devotions

The following men led the devotions preceding each business session of the Annual Conference at Stanwood, Wash., June 11-15.

Thurs. a.m. — Lay Pastor Kenneth Thoreson, Beloit, Wis., Mark 11:24.

Thurs. p.m. — Rev. Ernest J. Langness, Faith, S.Dak., Jonah 3:4-10.

Fri. a.m. — Mr. Kenneth Williams, Ishpeming, Mich., I Timothy 2:1-8.

Fri. p.m. — Lay Pastor Gene Sundby, Outlook, Sask., Revelation 3:14-22.

Sat. a.m. — Dr. Peter Dyrud, Minneapolis, Minn.

Sat. p.m. — Rev. Del Palmer, Everett, Wash., I Peter 2:16.

Prayer Hours

The leader of the three Prayer Hours at the Annual Conference in June was Mr. Clifford Johnson, Esko, Minn., chairman of the Prayer and Evangelism emphasis in the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations in 1986-87.

On Thursday, he read Hosea 8:14 and 14:1-7 and II Chronicles 7:14. He asked, "Do I know what revival is? Would I desire it if I knew its cost?" He said that we boast of purity of doctrine, our low-churchliness and the freedom of the congregation, but are we dead in the things that make for revival? Sin keeps revival from coming. *Sin in me*. We must see the rottenness of sin and God's hatred toward it. Mr. Johnson named many sins, then asked if they were present in the Conference group. Is someone a troublemaker and not a peacemaker? We must honestly seek the Savior's face and He will lead.

On Friday Mr. Johnson had the audience sing from "Macedonia," found elsewhere in this issue. His Scripture text was Luke 22:44. "Will fervency (Acts 12:5) alone bring revival," he asked. Not necessarily. How do we move God to bring revival? The church must repent. "If sin is really dealt with, will not revival have begun?" he asked. Another mark of revival, in addition to repentance, is fervency of prayer in reaching out to others. Then revival spreads to others, families are united and Jesus is glorified. We in the AFLC are the Mother Church to our mission fields. "What kind of a role model are we to them?" he asked.

In his final meditation, on Saturday, Mr. Johnson first reported on the activities of the Prayer and Evangelism Committee. He said that a prayer calendar to be used in the *Ambassador* is planned. He also requested that congregations send in the names of their prayer chairmen to him. His address is 192 Heavenly Acres, Esko, Minn. 55733.

Mrs. Ivan Johnson, Duluth, Minn., sang "The Garden of Prayer" in medley form.

Mr. Johnson's text was Psalm 51:14-17. He spoke of how sometimes a



Rev. Dennis Gray, left, and John Lamb.

believer calls to God and He seems far away. Even saints can experience tragedy. Faith can move mountains, but sometimes God doesn't grant our requests. "Does it mean that one did not have enough faith?" he asked. Rather think of it this way: God is God. He knows what is best. Sometimes we ask, "Why me, Lord?" Why not as well ask, "Why not me?" God answers prayer in different ways and He is still on the throne, Mr. Johnson declared.

"But further, we are priests, which is more than kings, for priesthood makes us worthy to stand before God and to pray for others."

Martin Luther

Two Conference notes

At the 1986 Annual Conference at Warm Beach, no action was taken on the hymnbook project in the AFLC. The matter was not mentioned.

Rev. John Strand, Remer, Minn., who had been a member of the Board of Trustees of the Schools for one term and was eligible for re-election, was nominated by the Conference. At the annual meeting of the Schools Corporation he asked that his name be removed from consideration. This was so done. In a choice between two remaining candidates, Rev. Kenneth Moland, Kirkland, Wash., was elected to a five year term.

"If
my
people"



I remember revival

I was in the first year of my ministry, serving at Waubay, South Dakota. In January of 1924 I received a letter from my friend, Morris Eggen, asking me to come to his parish and have a week of special meetings. I said to myself, "Me?" and I shook my head and wanted to say, "No". Personally I was at a low ebb in my Christian life and I had been contemplating leaving the ministry. Pastor Eggen closed his letter with these words, "Now don't say no, because I know it's God's will that you come." I wept before the Lord and said, "Lord, you know I'm no good, but if you can use me, I'm willing to go."

Pastor Eggen was serving at Faith, S.Dak., and I took a train to Mobridge and transferred to the train going to Faith. All the way, I wept before the Lord and prayed that I might be a blessing. Pastor Eggen met me at the depot and took me to his home. He lived on a little farm just out of Faith. This was Saturday night. Sunday morning after breakfast I asked Mrs. Eggen where Morris was and she said he was in the barn doing chores. I went out to the barn, opened the door and there was Pastor Eggen on his knees in the hay, praying to God for this "poor stick" of a speaker that the Lord had sent him. I wasn't slow in finding my place beside him and we prayed and wept together for the meetings and for the people that would be coming.

This was in February but the weather was warm; it was a February thaw, the water was running and the roads were muddy and bad. We had three sessions a day, 10:00 a.m., 2:00 in the afternoon and 8:00 in the evening. Even though the road conditions were poor, the hearts of the people were open to the message and God gave

us a revival. People were saved daily at every session. We prayed with people seeking the Lord. People heard and saw me, but God heard and answered Brother Eggen's prayers. About 40 people accepted the Lord that week.

These meetings were mostly house meetings. A man would get up from his chair, walk across the room to his neighbor and ask for forgiveness for something he had done. A husband would find his wife and the two would kneel and pray together for salvation.

I remember especially one man and his wife who rode with us, Pastor Eggen and me. I was sitting in the back seat with them and he was chewing tobacco and spitting and he was under conviction of sin and so was his wife. We let them out of the car at their house.

The next night, at the meeting, they told of their experience. They were both under conviction of sin, when they came home from the meeting the previous night, but were too proud to tell each other. When the man went out to the barn to do the chores, his wife had knelt in the bedroom and asked God for salvation, but she didn't dare to tell him. When he came in from the barn with the milk pails, he set the milk pails down and said to his wife, "Mary, I have surrendered my heart to God". She threw her arms around him and said, "While you were in the barn, I did the same thing in the bedroom." They both wept together for joy. They rode with us to the meeting and they both told how they had experienced salvation the night before. Many more were saved at the meeting that night also.

At the end of the week, I was making plans to go back to Waubay

and Pastor Eggen asked me if I couldn't stay another week. I said "No, I have my own work and I have to go back home." He said, "If it's the Lord's will, will you stay?" I answered, "Yes, if it's the Lord's will, I will stay, but how can we know if it's His will?" Brother Eggen said, "We'll throw out the fleece before the Lord". I said, "How do you do that?" And he said, "We're going to a new place tomorrow and if the Lord gives us souls at that place, will you stay another week?" I said, "O.K."

"...and while I was speaking, a man got off his chair and on his knees and prayed for salvation."

We went out to that place, I think it was Edson, and while I was speaking, a man got off his chair and on his knees and prayed to God for salvation. At the afternoon meeting we prayed with two more people. On the way home, Pastor Eggen said, "Are you staying another week?" I said, "I don't know". He said, "You don't know? There were three souls saved today, and you don't know?" I wept and prayed and told the Lord and the brother I would stay another week.

I sent a telegram to my parish at Waubay and said, "We're having a revival; I will have to stay another week." After this experience, I lost forever the desire to leave the ministry. God proved to me that he could use that which was nothing in His service (I Corinthians 1:26-69).

We also experienced revival in our ministry in northern Minnesota. I

MACEDONIA

The vision of a dying world
Is vast before our eyes;
We feel the heartbeat of its need,
We hear its feeble cries;
Lord Jesus, revive Thy church
In this, her crucial hour!
Lord Jesus Christ, awake Thy church
With Spirit-given pow'r.

The savage hugs his god of stone
And fears descent of night;
The city dweller cringes lone
Amid the garish light;
Lord Jesus Christ, arouse Thy church
To see their mute distress!
Lord Jesus Christ, equip Thy church
With love and tenderness.

Today, as understanding's bounds
Are stretched on every hand,
O, clothe Thy Word in bright, new sounds,
And speed it o'er the land;
Lord Jesus Christ, empower us
To preach by every means!
Lord Jesus Christ, embolden us
In near and distant scenes.

The warning bell of judgment tolls,
Above us looms the cross;
Around are ever-dying souls—
How great, how great the loss!
O Lord, constrain and move Thy church
The glad news to impart!
And, Lord, as Thou dost stir Thy church,
Begin within my heart.

Ann Ortlund
(Used by permission)

especially remember a rural church out of Wannaska. I had read a book, *The Pastor: His Own Evangelist*, and I was much impressed with the message of this book and I thought, why not try it? So we scheduled a week of meetings and I was the only speaker. God was good and honored His Word and gave us revival. Whole families came to assurance of salvation as a result of those meetings.

It is God that gives revival in answer to believing prayer. The power for salvation is in His Word (Romans 1:16). The Holy Spirit is present in the proclamation of His Word, and by faithfully preaching it, we can trust God for the results as He alone will give the increase.



by Pastor
Trygve Dahle

Interview with Dr. Francis Monseth

Pastor Francis Monseth, Dean of Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary, recently was awarded the Degree of Doctor of Theology at Concordia Seminary, the School of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Pastor Monseth's earlier degree was Master of Systematic Theology, having majored in Systematic Theology and minored in Historical Theology and Practical Theology.

The topic of Pastor Monseth's thesis is, "Millennialism in American Lutheranism in Light of Augsburg Confession, Article Seventeen." Pastor Monseth explained, "This was a historical study as I looked at the pre-millennialists in American Lutheranism. I traced it back to the roots before the 19th century and saw some definite roots in Lutheran pietism, especially Philip Spener and Johann Albrecht Bengel. These two

individuals had influence upon many later Lutherans who held the pre-millennial interpretation of eschatology. However, in my dissertation I showed that the roots go back farther than that. Actually, the first four centuries were pre-millennial in terms of the interpretation of eschatology by the early church fathers. Up until Augustine, the predominant view was pre-millennialism, or millennialism, as I have used the term in my paper. All the church leaders that wrote on the subject or spoke of eschatology were pre-millennial in that time period."

Pastor Monseth's interest in the topic of eschatology goes back to his childhood. He recalls, "I remember back to my early years being stirred by that truth in preaching and teaching. My dad loved to preach about

INTERVIEW . . .

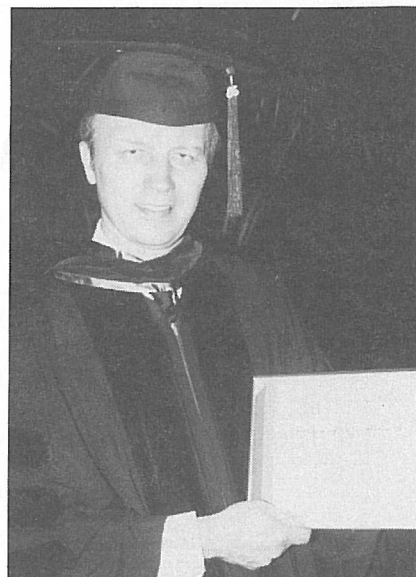
the Second Coming of Christ, and the major truths of heaven, hell, judgment, and the resurrection. I remember even at the age of nine years being challenged by the verse, 'Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.' Later, in Seminary and in my graduate studies at Seattle Pacific and Concordia my interest in the topic of the Second Coming of Christ was renewed. It is important to point out," added Pastor Monseth, "that the millennium is a secondary issue in eschatology. The major truths in eschatology are, of course, the Second Coming itself, judgment, resurrection, heaven and hell."

One of the major discoveries in Pastor Monseth's years of study would be the high incidence of pre-millennial thinking in Lutheranism. The Lutheran Bible Institute tradition and the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement today have had very close ties with pre-millennialism in their history. Other pre-millennialists in our own century and the 19th century were men like Joseph A. Seiss, who translated the beautiful hymn in the *Concordia*, "Beautiful Savior" from the German. George N.H. Peters wrote a massive amount of material on the subject of pre-millennialism in his three volume set, *The Theocratic Kingdom*. A respected pre-millennialist was Revere Weidner, president of Chicago Lutheran Seminary. Pastor Monseth's studies also included pre-millennialist George H. Gerberding, who taught at Chicago Seminary and later at Northwestern Seminary. Others were John Nathan Kildahl, who taught at Luther Seminary and was an outstanding leader in Norwegian Lutheran Church circles, and C.E. Lindberg, who taught many years at Augustana Seminary in Rock Island, and J. Michael Reu of Wartburg Seminary, who was a real student also of the Confessions. Pastor Monseth added, "This was of real interest to my topic because my topic is a confessional study as well as historical, and Reu is respected and recognized as someone who had studied deeply the documents of our Lutheran Confessions in terms of source work and has produced much scholarly material.

So, of course, it was of great interest to me to see what he thought of on eschatology. I learned that he was a thoroughgoing pre-millennialist, and probably the most recent scholar to work in the field in Lutheran circles until his death in 1943. I had to rely upon manuscripts of his lectures to his students in my studies."

Pastor Monseth's historical study of pre-millennialism brought forth investigation of early teachers at the LBI such as Samuel Miller, H.G. Randolph and many others committed to pre-millennial understanding. Other leaders were involved in the LEM as it began in the 1940s. "As I traced through their publications over the years, I saw a consistent pre-millennial outlook from Evald Conrad in the early days to Theodore Hax later on. This was true of LBI, too. I went back to 1919 with the first *Bible Banner* and traced through all of the issues up into the '50s and found a lot of pre-millennialism, although not exclusively that. At LBI there was freedom and room for other alternatives. They didn't seem to have a problem in terms of unity. I also surveyed the Church of the Lutheran Brethren and the AFLC because of their roots in Lutheran pietism and their really unique positions in Lutheranism today in the area of eschatology. The Church of the Lutheran Brethren is officially pre-millennial. They are the only Lutheran group that so identified itself as officially pre-millennial, so by definition a Lutheran Brethren person would be a pre-millennialist. In a survey of the AFLC, it is said that the majority of pastors and laity are pre-millennialist in outlook, but there is freedom in our AFLC in this matter." Pastor Monseth emphasized, "We are united in our convictions and fundamentals of eschatology and are waiting for the trumpet to see what the final outcome really will be."

Another matter to consider in the study of historic pre-millennialism is what is being condemned in Article Seventeen of the Augsburg Confession. "Actually it is certain Jewish opinions that are being condemned," pointed out Pastor Monseth. "It goes back to a concept of a worldly kingdom prior to the resurrection, a



kingdom that could be brought in perhaps by violence and characterized by materialism. These Jewish opinions matched certain anabaptists' opinions of the 16th century that were taught in the time of Luther and Melancthon. It is not all pre-millennialism that is being condemned by the Augsburg Confession, Article Seventeen, but a particular aberration or peculiar type of approach which really is not pre-millennialism, but is a false perversion of post-millennialism."

In terms of conclusions, what would Pastor Monseth say about our Lutheran Confessions? "I looked at all of the references in the area of eschatology in the Book of Concord and found that the accent is on the major tenets of eschatology, which should be true of us, too," he replied. "We should accept the major truths of eschatology and exhibit a charity and kindness to other students of eschatology even if there are differences in secondary issues. Our unity rests on the major truth of the Second Coming of Christ Himself."

God has greatly blessed Pastor Francis Monseth in these years of study. He commented that it has been a blessing to be exposed to so many Bible-believing Lutherans, students of the Scriptures, and scholars who love the Word of God and the truth of God's Word, especially the Second Coming. "It has been a great blessing to be reinforced in the Biblical teaching of eschatology, that is,

(Continued on p. 14)

editorials

PROPOSALS DEFEATED

There are a few matters pertaining to this year's Annual Conference that we will take care of now before we close our coverage of it. Readers will note that there are more pictures from the Conference and reports on the devotional sessions and services in this issue.

There were two resolutions in the report of Committee No. 1 which were defeated at Warm Beach. It is rare that resolutions are voted down by Annual Conference delegates so we should see what these were.

Resolution No. 15 read, "Whereas conflicts sometimes occur between pastor and congregations, be it resolved, that a mediator be named by the Co-ordinating Committee to seek to resolve such conflicts."

And No. 16: "Whereas the pastor's right of appeal in regard to the Co-ordinating Committee should be given proper channel, be it resolved, that a board of adjudication be established to hear such cases."

Both resolutions were unexpected, that is, their topics weren't mentioned in the President's Report or the report of the Chairman of the Co-ordinating Committee, which are usual sources of the resolutions of Committee No. 1.

But the fact that the resolutions came up at all means that these are issues being thought about and worth being discussed. Conflicts do arise between pastors and congregations even in the Association. These often become very painful situations. Even among Christians the way of reconciliation does not always fall easily into place. And where there is a lack of spiritual discernment it can be even worse. The problem is compounded in a church with a "free church policy" such as we have, because a church president and/or a co-ordinating committee does not want to step in to help uninvited since the congregation governs its own affairs. Perhaps *someone* in a congregation calls for outside help, but is it an official call and can a church officer act on one that is unofficial?

A pastor can seek assistance, but unless the congregation gets involved in a healing process nothing will really get done and no one can tell a congregation what to do.

We are just trying to raise the issues and questions. At any rate, the Association is not ready to discuss this matter. Some day it will have to, but for the present, no. That seems to be the attitude. That applies to the question of right of appeal or due process for a pastor who feels he has a grievance also.

TO CLAP OR NOT

To clap or not, that is the question. It seems an inconsequential thing, but like a tiny stone in a shoe, it could be irritating. In fact, it already is.

Of course, we refer to the practice which has come in in recent years at AFLC Annual Conferences of clapping after special musical numbers especially, but

also at other times, even after testimonies.

For many years there was no clapping at AFLC gatherings. It just wasn't done. Gradually there has been more of it. Last year at the Association Retreat Center (Annual Conference) there was quite a bit of it and again this year at Warm Beach. One wonders where it will lead.

It is obvious that some of our people are used to applauding in their services at home. Others are not. Those who do, do it to show appreciation and to recognize a job well done, or to give encouragement. Those who don't, feel that the one who sings or speaks ought not look for any "noisy" acclamation. A personal word of appreciation spoken after the service will suffice.

Without doubt the practice of clapping in church and at Christian gatherings comes from Billy Graham Crusades and TV Gospel services. The practice has had its effect on the AFLC, too, and we have gone, as we said, from no clapping to quite a bit of it, at Annual Conference, at least.

Aside from what is done locally, and congregations will have to do what they think is right, we are going to find at our conferences and other joint gatherings that some people are going to clap and some won't. We hope the matter doesn't become divisive in the fellowship.

GOOD FOR THE METHODISTS

Sometimes we fear our Methodist friends do not follow well in the footsteps of John Wesley, their "patron saint," and one of the shining lights of Christian history.

But it was good to hear that United Methodists have risen up to protest, vehemently, a hymnbook committee's plan to drop two beloved hymns from a new edition of the denomination's hymnal. The hymns are "Onward, Christian Soldiers" and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

Too militaristic, said the committee. Imagine, though, what would have to be deleted from our New Testaments and Catechisms if references to warfare had to be expunged or benignly neglected. The Christian warfare and armor of Ephesians 6. The good fight of faith, of I Timothy 6. The struggle against the devil, the world and our own flesh, of Luther's explanation of the Sixth Petition. The militant state of the church of God on earth, under the Third Article. And the list goes on.

The hymns will remain. Their language is that of war, but only the most obtuse would not see that the references are symbolic and this is no call to take up literal guns and mortars. They speak of the spiritual fight against the hosts of wickedness in the world. Methodists will continue to sing them lustily.

Of the two songs, "Onward, Christian Soldiers" is likely more used among us. It is the one of the two which is included in the *Concordia*. "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," also known as "Mine Eyes Have

THE WOMEN'S PAGE

Spring Rally review

South Dakota

Hope Lutheran, Sisseton, hosted the WMF rally with 58 registered. Mrs. Laverne Storley led in devotions. Special music was provided by Pastor and Mrs. Jon Wellumson, Mrs. Mike McCarlson and the ladies from Wallace. Rev. Connely Dyrud was the guest speaker for the afternoon. His enlightening message on the work in Brazil was challenging and encouraging.

North Central Minnesota

"Anchored in Jesus" was the theme for the rally at Sell Lake Lutheran, Shevlin. Pastor and Mrs. Connely Dyrud shared in the morning and afternoon sessions. Music was provided by ladies from Bagley and Bemidji. Mrs. Dyrud and Mrs. LuElla Karevold, Fosston, also shared in special music. There were 77 registered for the day.

Minneapolis

Medicine Lake Lutheran, Minneapolis, welcome 154 ladies and 16 pastors to the Spring Rally. The theme, "Rooted and Grounded in Love," was the basis for Missionary Connely Dyrud's morning message. In the afternoon Mrs. Connely Dyrud challenged the ladies to let the love and joy of the Lord shine through. Miss Shelly Hodne, Morgan Avenue, and Mrs. James Rasmusen were the soloists. Mrs. Richard Gilmore, LaCrosse, Wis., was elected president and Miss Kathy Hanson, Minneapolis, was re-elected treasurer. Appreciation was expressed to Mrs. Burton Boyum for her four years as president.

Eastern North Dakota

Grace Free Lutheran of Valley City, Hosted 139 guests for the rally. "Anchored in Jesus" served as the theme for the day. Special music and messages were shared by Pastor and Mrs. Connely Dyrud.

West Coast

Our Redeemer Lutheran, Kirkland, Wash., hosted the WMF Spring Rally. Mrs. Ron Knutson and Mrs. Del Palmer led the devotions with Solveig Hayes leading the prayer time. Mrs. Alvin Grothe led the Memorial Service for the 51 ladies registered. Denise Arnim, Kirkland, Carol Moe, Susan Martin and the Lake Stevens ladies shared in music. Mrs. Helen Hilmo, Lake Stevens, gave the morning Bible study. Intern Steve Snipstead, Arlington, was the afternoon speaker. Gratefulness was expressed to Mrs. Marilyn Pedersen and Bev Eikenberry for their service as president and treasurer. Lavonne Nelson and Adeline Haugen were elected as the new officers.



The Beaver Creek Free Lutheran Church, Ray, N. Dak. held their Cradle Roll program with the theme, "Build Your Life on Jesus". Pictured are: Mrs. Jeannie Sheldon and Jenna, Mrs. Cheryl Hartsoch and Eric, and Michal Jacob (not pictured). Those graduating were: Daren Hauge, Roxanne Addicott, Layne Ferguson, Micah Sheldon, Daniel Hartsoch and Rechell Hartsoch (not pictured).



Mrs. Elden Nelson, left, and Mrs. Curtis Emerson.

EDITORIAL . . .

the Glory," has a cadence which stirs the spirit and, together with the words, calls for commitment. Unfortunately, "The Battle Hymn," more so than "Onward, Christian Soldiers," has been frequently misappropriated by political rallies and used as a rallying cry for politicians or political parties which may have little relationship to the truth of Jesus Christ. What results is that it is the party or politician, or even nation, which is marching on and not the Lord Jesus.

The hymn is good, however, and we are glad that the rank and file of Methodism have prevailed and that the hymn committee was not so obdurate that it tried to resist the tide of sentiment flooding against it, but submitted in good grace. That is, in this case, wisdom and fairness.

Women's Missionary Federation

In memoriam gifts

Amelia Ekanger, Aurora, Col.
Alfred Monson, Valley City, N. Dak.

Mrs. Joseph Rice, Tioga, N. Dak.
Art Gustafson, McIntosh, Minn.
Olaus Olson, Erskine, Minn.
Bernhard Dalager, Roseau, Minn.
Olga Gragsten, Wallace, S. Dak.
John Johnson, Wallace, S. Dak.
Olga Lee, Kenyon, Minn.

*Blessed are
those who die
in the Lord*



PRAYING FOR CHILDREN

To millions of babes in the pagan world, childhood was a curse. When Jesus took little children in His arms, blessed them and prayed for them, as He was asked to do, He hallowed childhood as by His birth. He had sanctified motherhood for all ages throughout the whole world.

N.N. Ronning

WMF Convention report

One hundred fifty ladies registered for the 24th Annual Convention of the Women's Missionary Federation held at the beautiful camp overlooking the Sound, at Warm Beach, Wash. We experienced countless blessings, spiritually and otherwise, as we gathered around the theme, "Pray, Watch, Give Thanks and Proclaim". Mrs. Herbert Presteng of Grafton, N.Dak., the author of our 1986 Bible Studies, spoke on a key word from God's Word, "Grow". She stated our premise, which is "To grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." She listed many evidences of growth, all through the means of grace, God's Word and Sacraments. We will experience growth if we are abiding in the Word.

The afternoon speaker was Pastor Connely Dyrud, who is on furlough from Brazil. In his most interesting manner, he spoke on Women's Liberation in Brazil, explaining how liberation often brings bondage. He encouraged us to be "fulfilled" women by being in Christ. He also spoke on Thursday evening and stressed the fact that the Christians in Brazil reach out and thus experience church growth. The Christians visit hospitals and wherever possible witness and invite people to come to church and to come to the Lord. He stated that it is so obvious when someone becomes a Christian, be-

cause the daily life changes, as from darkness to light. Mrs. Dyrud, who sang so beautifully, spoke at the Thursday morning ladies' breakfast and shared many experiences as a missionary's wife.

The devotionals, the Memorial Service conducted by Mrs. Ronald Knutson, then of Ferndale, Wash., the various musical selections, the prayer service — all warmed our hearts and God used them to inspire us to pray, watch, give thanks and proclaim, as our theme encouraged.

Our offerings were given to Honorary Membership/In Memoriam and to Church Extension. The proposed budget was raised \$1,000 over the present budget, and we experienced the blessing of receiving more than our proposed budget last year.

The two offices that were up for election were first vice-president and secretary. The two incumbents were re-elected, so the list of officers remains the same as last year.

It was indeed a privilege to attend this conference, and sincere thanks are due the ladies from the host congregations, who prepared so diligently. Let us all continue our "growth" in our Lord Jesus Christ and keep looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith.

Esther Larson, Secretary



Rev. Bruce Dalager meets with two members of the Journal Committee.



Soaking up some sun. Left to right, now Pastor and Mrs. James Johnson, Mrs. Ernest Langness, Mrs. Robert Lofthus and Pastor Langness.

Pioneers of Lutheran Missions abroad:

by Rev. Edward A. Johnson,
LCA, Batesville, Ind.

Who was the first Protestant overseas missionary? The answer usually given is: William Carey. But this is erroneous: already, 87 years before Carey, two Lutheran missionaries had set foot on the soil of the great heathen subcontinent of India. They were two Germans, Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg from Saxony and Heinrich Pluetschau (born 1678) from Mecklenburg. Let us take a closer look at these two men who paved the way for Lutheran work overseas.

Of these two pioneers, Ziegenbalg is the more noteworthy. He was born June 24, 1683, in the little Saxon town of Pulsnitz. At an early age he lost both of his devout parents. As his mother lay on her deathbed, she gathered her children around her and said: "Dear children, I have gathered a great treasure for you, a very great treasure indeed." When the oldest daughter asked where she had stuck it away, the mother replied: "Look in my Bible, my dear children. You'll find it there, because I have moistened every page of it with my tears."

As the young Bartholomaeus grew, the decision developed and matured within him to become a preacher of the Gospel. He studied theology under the famed August Hermann Francke, founder of the orphanage in Halle. Pluetschau was one of his school chums. When illness forced him to interrupt his studies, Ziegenbalg became an instructor in a girls' school and then the assistant to a pastor who was ill. In 1705 he was assigned to a new assistantship with a pastor named von Werder, in Berlin. There he received the call to become a missionary to the heathen abroad.

It came about in this manner: Lutheran Denmark had governed in the East Indies since 1619, in the West Indies since 1672, and on the west coast of Africa in the Danish colonies. The inhabitants of these colonies were all heathen. Then

Frederik IV came to the throne. He was the one who conceived the idea of sending missionaries to these Danish subjects across the sea. He did not find it very easy to expedite his decision, however. It sounds almost incredible, but at the time most of the members of the church and the leading church figures were opposed to overseas missions. One example will suffice: In our hymnal we occasionally run into the name of Erdmann Neumeister. He wrote the comforting hymn "Jesus Sinners Doth Receive." One year on Ascension Day this same Pastor Neumeister delivered a sermon in his pulpit in St. James Church in Hamburg on the text of the Gospel for the Ascension, the words of Jesus Himself, in Mark 16:15: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." He tried to show that this commandment of Christ is no longer valid, closing with these words (a rhymed couplet in German): "In bygone times you heard: 'go into all the world.' But today: 'Stay where your God has placed you!' So it is no wonder that the king could not find one man in all of Denmark who was willing to carry out his missionary plans.

"... already, 87 years before William Carey, two Lutheran missionaries had set foot on the soil of the great subcontinent of India."

Then, in 1704, the king found a kindred spirit in a Pastor Luetkens who came from Berlin to be his senior court preacher. He commissioned Luetkens to look for consecrated people in Denmark who could be sent as missionaries. Luetkens

searched in vain. Then, briefly, he turned to his former colleagues in Berlin. These men called to his attention the 22 year-old Ziegenbalg and his friend Pluetschau. Both of these young men decided after proper consideration of the matter that they were ready to be sent out as missionaries. They went to Copenhagen where they were to be examined and ordained.

But there they ran into obstacles. Bishop Bornemann in Copenhagen was antimissionary and declared after interviewing the two candidates that they were unemployable and could not be ordained. But the king maintained that he would examine them again in the presence of witnesses. When this was done and all the witnesses declared that the young men had passed the exams with flying colors, the embarrassed bishop exclaimed: "Oh, how these fellows have changed!" They were ordained on November 11, 1705, and commissioned with much ceremony for service among the heathen.

On November 29, 1705, they sailed on the ship *Sophia Hedwiga* on the long voyage to Tranquebar on the east coast of India. At that time there were not yet any steamships, nor had the Suez Canal been dug. So their voyage took them clear around the southern tip of Africa. After some seven months at sea they reached their destination on July 7, 1706. Before their eyes lay the vast subcontinent of India. Here they would preach the saving Gospel of Christ as the first Protestant missionaries to the very dark-skinned Tamils. What emotions arose in their hearts? They said afterwards: "When we saw these benighted souls we could not keep the tears from our eyes. We called fervently upon God to let the light of the Gospel shine forth through our service for the salvation of many souls in this heathen land." But very soon they were to discover that the world and the devil are bitterly hostile to missionary work.

On the voyage Ziegenbalg had

Ziegenbalg and Pluetschau

confronted the captain about his improper conduct toward a lady who was among the passengers. The captain vowed to get revenge. The ship had been lying at anchor for two days while all of the passengers and the greater share of cargo were brought to land. Our two missionaries, however, were forced to wait and wait, finally being told that there was no room for them in the boats going to shore. But then the captain of another ship in the harbor heard of it, took pity on them, and brought them in on his boat.

The Danish king, in whose East Indian colonies Ziegenbalg and Pluetschau now found themselves, had provided them with letters of recommendation. At that time the rich and influential Danish East Indies Company held sway here. They had the exclusive rights of trade with the colony and they did not want Christian missionaries at work among the natives in their trade area. Secretly, without the king's knowledge, the company approached the Danish commander in Tranquebar, one Hassius, instructing him to trump up any kind of charges he could against the new missionaries in hopes of sending them speedily on their way home. Hassius complied: when Ziegenbalg and Pluetschau came to the east city gates they waited six hours for the commander's arrival. He finally arrived at 4:00 p.m. with his attendants and asked them harshly: "Who are you? What do you want? Who sent you?" They produced their royal credentials, but he simply made several derogatory remarks, turned from them and went back into the city with his company. The two missionaries followed. Pluetschau wrote afterward:

"When we arrived in the marketplace, everyone went home and left us standing there alone. It was getting dark, so we looked for a place to stay. Someone named Attrup came to us and was astonished that we had been left there all alone. He asked where we were staying, and we told him that we were foreigners. He

invited us to lodge at the home of his father-in-law, Hans Paulssen. We were happy to take him up on it."

Ziegenbalg tells us that "we stuck it out against all this with prayers and entreaties to God that someone would open a door to us and that He would help us go in through it by His grace, since we had little reason to hope for any human assistance."

The people of the East Indian Colony were primarily Tamils, of whom there were some 15,000,000 in India. There were also a mixed population of Indian and European origin who spoke mostly Portuguese. The Portuguese had governed this colony before the Danes. Our two missionaries quickly learned the language of this mixed population and, after three months, could begin religious instruction among several Portuguese. Already on May 12, 1707, Pluetschau baptized his first seven converts. By the end of that first year he had baptized 35. In the meantime they studied the extraordinarily difficult language of the Tamils. Remarkably, Ziegenbalg soon became proficient enough in Tamil that he

"... They produced their royal credentials, but he simply made several derogatory remarks, turned from them and went back into the city with his company."

could teach it. After three years he spoke Tamil as though it were his mother tongue. He even learned the Tamil religion better than they knew it themselves. In a book he wrote about this religion, we learn that the

Tamils worshipped 330,000,000 gods. The chief gods — Brahma, the creator; Vishna, the savior; and Siva, the destroyer — had an innumerable array of male and female gods and goddesses as helpers and servants. What was told and believed about the individual gods comprises a desert of the craziest superstition imaginable.

On August 14, 1707, the missionaries dedicated the first Lutheran Church in eastern India. On this occasion Ziegenbalg preached the first sermon in Tamil to the astonishment of his hearers. So that the little congregation might have hymns, he translated 48 of them. He also translated into Tamil the Small Catechism, the New Testament, and part of the Old. Several times he went to outlying districts to teach and preach. Wherever he had the opportunity, he spread the seed of God's Word.

The animosity of the white population, however, continued. Ziegenbalg had an illuminating experience: With zeal he took up the cause of a poor widow against an unjust official. Hassius summoned him to appear before him and had him locked up like a common criminal on trumped up charges. As Pluetschau tells it, "He was not put in an ordinary prison cell but in a sweat bath alongside the kitchen where he suffered the worst possible discomfort from the heat of both the kitchen and the sun. In this hot country such heat has been known to dehydrate a man completely." Great joy reigned in the little congregation when the beloved missionary was released after four months.

In 1711, after six years of labor, the time had elapsed which the missionaries had promised to spend in India. Pluetschau returned to Europe; Ziegenbalg did not. The misery of the heathen would not let him go. But now, after Pluetschau's departure, he was not alone. In 1709, three other missionaries had come to Tranquebar. They were presented with a congregation of 150 souls "as the first fruits of the heathen." ♦

MISSIONS . . .

In October, 1714, Ziegenbalg tore himself away from his work and went on a visit to Europe. There, through lectures and sermons, he spread the missionary cause. He also got married. In August, 1716, he returned to Tranquebar where he eagerly resumed his work. Only two significant events will be mentioned here from this period: on October 23, 1716, he and eight pupils opened a training school for native teachers and catechists, and in 1717 he dedicated the beautiful "Jerusalem Church" in Tranquebar which is still in use.

Ziegenbalg took sick at the beginning of 1719 and, after six weeks, on February 23, he entered into the rest of the people of God. On the following day his body was laid to rest with great ceremony at the entrance to the chancel in the Jerusalem Church. He was only 35. In his twelve and a half years of missionary endeavor, he and his fellow workers had baptized 450 souls.

Ziegenbalg and Pluetschau were the pioneers of Protestant missionary work. These two solitary messengers have been succeeded by hundred of missionaries. The number of Christian converts in India had risen from 450 to over 1,500,000 souls by 1920. Among the missionaries at work in India in our time are many from American and from the various Lutheran bodies here, in numerous locations. All testify to the faithfulness of Ziegenbalg and Pluetschau and the rich harvest the Savior brought forth from their sacrificial labors. In 1956 the Lutheran Church in India celebrated the 250th anniversary of the start of their work.

NECESSITY OF PRAYER

We are under obligation to pray if we would be Christians, just as we are under obligation to be obedient to father and mother and to civil authorities.

Martin Luther
(*Luther's Large Catechism*).

Special evening at Everett

The day after the Annual Conference, Calvary Lutheran Church, Everett, Wash., enjoyed a special evening of fellowship when a large gathering joined in a potluck supper. Among those present were two former pastors of the church, Dr. Francis Monseth and Rev. Leslie Galland, and their families, and the AFLBS Ambassadors. Pictured here are, left to right, Dr. Monseth, Rev. Del Palmer, present pastor, and Rev. Galland.



ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS 3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

AFLC Benevolences
February 1 - June 30

| FUND | TOTAL BUDGET | REC'D IN JUNE | TOTAL REC'D TO DATE | % OF TOTAL* |
|--------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------|-------------|
| GENERAL FUND | \$ 208,000.00 | \$ 13,646.09 | \$ 65,776.81 | 32 |
| SCHOOLS — (AFLTS) | 115,278.00 | 5,318.43 | 22,876.47 | 20 |
| — (AFLBS) | 173,200.00 | 7,907.64 | 37,399.97 | 22 |
| HOME MISSIONS | 265,000.00 | 16,225.63 | 63,308.05 | 24 |
| WORLD MISSIONS | 298,000.00 | 16,976.00 | 72,357.82 | 24 |
| CAPITAL INVESTMENT | 25,000.00 | 3,871.64 | 6,298.16 | 25 |
| TOTALS | \$1,084,478.00 | \$ 63,945.43 | \$268,017.28 | 25 |
| 1985-86 | \$1,109,382.00 | \$ 52,170.75 | \$295,565.28 | 27 |

*GOAL 42%

INTERVIEW . . .

Christ's coming again. I am convinced that I am a Confessional Lutheran, even in my understanding of eschatology." With a warm smile, he concluded, "I would like to express appreciation and gratefulness to God, to my wife Ellen and our family for their tremendous support and encouragement throughout this whole project. Pastor Amos Dyrud has been a great encouragement and help to me also. He was my proctor for all of my exams that I took here in Minneapolis and a great support all along the way. So many others on the faculty and staff here at AFLC and good friends throughout the Association have encouraged me, and the faculty and staff at Concordia have

also been very helpful. Dr. Won Yong Ji from Korea was my advisor for the last part of my dissertation and my advisor for the first part was Dr. Ralph Bohlmann, who is now president of the Missouri Synod. Both of these men were of invaluable assistance to me throughout the dissertation project. I'm also grateful to Aid Association for Lutherans for their support of our faculty continuing education program and, of course, most of all I thank God for His enabling strength and grace and power."

Congratulations to Dr. Monseth from friends and co-workers within the AFLC.

— Mrs. Eugene Enderlein

Our Hymn Study

Concordia, No. 234
Nikolaus Selnecker, 1572, et al
Tr. Matthias Loy, 1880
Tune: Passion Chorale
Hans Leo Hassler, 1601
Arr. F. Melius Christiansen, 1907



Author Nikolaus Selnecker wrote just the first stanza of this hymn. Apparently, he didn't intend it to become a hymn. He used it as a part of his daily devotion following a portion of Scripture, usually a Psalm. But publication was inevitable during a time when hymns in the native tongue were in such demand. It was entitled "Prayer," and, in one devotional publication, it was preceded by Ps. 119.

"Let my cry come before Thee, O Lord; give me understanding according to Thy word. Let my supplication come before Thee; deliver me according to Thy word. Let my lips utter praise, for Thou dost teach me Thy statutes. Let my tongue sing of Thy word, for all Thy commandments are righteousness. Let Thy hand be ready to help me, for I have chosen Thy precepts. I long for Thy salvation, O Lord, and Thy law is my delight. Let my soul live that it may praise Thee, and let Thine ordinances help me. I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek Thy servant, for I do not forget Thy commandments" (Ps. 119:169-176).

**Let me be Thine forever,
My gracious God and Lord,
May I forsake Thee never,
Nor wander from Thy word:
Preserve me from the mazes
Of error and distrust,
And I shall sing Thy praises
Forever with the just.**

Nikolaus Selnecker, a German preacher, theologian and musician who lived during the decades immediately following the Reformation, was one of the great champions of pure Lutheran doctrine. The *Formula of Concord*, the document that defined the Lutheran position on important doctrinal points, was largely the work of Selnecker. He came into the job well prepared because most of his career was spent amid this controversy with the Calvinists.

Selnecker revealed his extraordinary gifts quite early in life. He was his church's organist at age twelve. He attended the University of Wittenberg where in just four years he earned his M.A. He immediately became a lecturer at his alma mater and shortly served as tutor to a prince and also court-preacher. And it is here in the prince's court, which was bent hard toward Calvinism and hostile toward Lutheranism, that his life-long struggle began. Expelled from the prince's court and pulpit, Selnecker went outside the prince's jurisdiction to teach theology. Three years later he was reinstated in the prince's graces only to fall out again over the

same issue: The Lord's Supper. The stormy pattern continued all his life. His only earthly consolation and solace were his music and poetry. He wrote more than 150 hymns, many reflective of his distress over the controversy that surrounded him. But he remained faithful and, inwardly, peaceful and joyful, and succeeded in uniting the Lutherans in a solid doctrinal front against the Calvinist and Romanists. In addition to the monumental *Formula of Concord*, he wrote about 175 theological treatises.

Sixteen years later the text was included in a hymnbook along with these two additional anonymous stanzas. They continue the prayer Selnecker wrote, addressing the other two Heads of the Trinity, Jesus and the Holy Ghost. The three stanzas quickly became a favorite Confirmation hymn in the Lutheran Church.

For Matthias Loy, see #318.

For Hans Leo Hassler and Passion Chorale, see #167.

For F. Melius Christiansen, see #90 and #247.

— Don Rodvold

Book on Sverdrup published

George Sverdrup: Educator, Theologian, Churchman is the name of a book published this year by the Norwegian-American Historical Association. The author is Dr. James Hamre, professor of religion at Waldorf College, Forest City, Ia. He has lectured at a pastors' conference of the AFLC.

There are 193 pages of text in the book and there are some hitherto unpublished pictures of Prof. Sverdrup and his family included. The cost is \$15.00 plus tax.

Prof. Sverdrup was one of the leaders of the "Lutheran free church

movement" in America.

The book may be secured by writing to Norwegian-American Historical Association, St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn. 55057.

A review of this book will be printed at a later date.

"If modern men are frustrated and frightened, it is owing finally to having given their real devotion to an idol instead of to God."

Gerald Kennedy

DO NOT EXALT YOURSELF

Let us take care that no one exalt himself above the most insignificant sinner. If I lift myself up above my brother, even by the breadth of a finger, yes, above the worst sinner, I shall be thrown down.

Martin Luther
(*Day By Day We Magnify Thee*)

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Second-class postage
paid at Minneapolis, Minn.

MISSIONS PARTNER'S PRAYER

It's Missions Sunday. Once again
I'm thinking how I best can send
The love of Jesus Christ abroad.

I long to share the light of God
With people here and overseas.

So, Holy Spirit, guide me please.
As I pause and silently pray. . .

Just what Lord, shall I give today?

—Dale Stone
Maple Grove, Minn.

Two Lutheran Synods elect, re-elect presidents

In church conferences earlier this summer, two Lutheran bodies elected presidents, one to his first term, the other to a full-time position.

Elected new president of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren was Rev. Robert Overgaard, Director of World Missions since 1973, to replace Rev. Everald Strom, who has been president since 1968. Pastor Overgaard will assume office on Sept. 1. He will continue to live in Fergus Falls, Minn.

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod re-elected Rev. George Orvick as president and made the position full-time for the first time in the synod's history. The administrative office will be located in the church's college and seminary, Bethany, in Mankato, Minn.

Amery school gets grant

Appleton, Wis. (June 4, 1986) — Amery Free Lutheran School, Amery, Wisconsin, has been awarded two grants totaling \$3,000 for the 1986-87 school year from Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL).

The money will be used to purchase hardware and software for a computer graphics and art course and to produce a student handbook to increase public awareness of the school.

The grants are part of AAL's Lutheran High School Enrichment Program, which this year will provide nearly \$500,000 to 100 Lutheran high schools in the United States.

AFLBS Homecoming

The 20th annual Homecoming at Association Free Lutheran Bible School will be held Oct. 10-12 at the School. The theme for the occasion will be "Jesus Christ — the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

A banquet, ice cream, skits, testimonies, football and Bible study will all be a part of Homecoming 1986.

AFLC Wilderness Family Camp

Lake Park, Minnesota
August 13-17

Faculty: Rev. Connely Dyrud,
Brazil
Evening Speaker

Rev. Bruce Dalager,
Grand Forks, N.Dak.
Adult Bible Teacher

The camp begins with a 7:30 service Wednesday night and closes following a potluck dinner at noon Sunday.

There will be a class for children each morning.

Wilderness Camp is located on 77 acres of beautifully-wooded land 11 miles south of Lake Park. There are hook-ups for campers as well as drinking water available at the camp sites. A dumping station is available for recreational vehicles and there are clean outdoor toilets. *You must bring your own housing.* There is no charge, but free-will offerings will be received.

To be safe, bring mosquito repellent.

If you can't come for the entire camp, you are invited to spend a day or evening with us.