

# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

June 27, 1989



# LIGHT on the WAY

## meditations on God's Word

### COVER PHOTO

**A Gal and Her Horse**

Joel Strasser

Volume 27 Number 13

### THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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**H**onor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you" (Exodus 20:12).

Of all the Ten Commandments, the fourth contains a very special blessing for those who keep and do it, a promise of long life in the land God provides. Many have taken this to mean that if one is obedient and kind to those in authority over them, that person will live to a ripe and wonderful old age. If, however, one is rebellious and ungovernable, he will die before his time.

While this is often true, I'm sure we can think of many exceptions. We perhaps personally know of very kind, helpful people who have died long before their parents, and we know of grouchy, self-centered, rebellious souls who have lived to be 100 or more, though they seemingly were a blessing to no one.

When rightly understood, this is a promise made more to the nation than to the individual. A nation where law and order prevails, where each individual citizen shows respect for others, especially those in authority, be they parents, government officials or church leaders, that nation can look forward to a long and wonderful future in the land where God has placed it. On the other hand, a nation where honor, honesty and truth are scorned and pushed to the side, that people and their government are soon doomed to collapse, their days in the land are numbered. This is exactly what happened more than once to the children of Israel. Whenever they turned their backs on God to live for self, terrible times came. Foreign nations drove them from their homeland and their government fell. But when in humility they confessed their sins and looked to God alone to control and rule them, the nation was restored and blessed.

This same truth can be observed in other nations, too. Where morality has collapsed, where people have mocked honesty and practiced deceit, that nation has weakened and its government has often fallen. But where respect for truth and caring prevailed, such a nation has become strong.

This should speak to us in the United States and Canada. The kind of morality that prevails in our countries determines our national destiny. If good rules are flaunted, if parents are mocked and officials are ridiculed, our future as countries is bleak. Like all God's rules, this commandment is to be kept lest tribulation rather than blessing come upon us.

Does this mean then that we are to just make up our minds and start to obey it as best we are able? No! There are two kinds of obedience, two types of righteousness, civil and divine. Civil righteousness is done in human power and might. Divine righteousness is done in God's power and might. Outwardly they may look the same, but their source is utterly different. The unbeliever will often obey God's commandments, but in his or her own ability. The true Christian will cry out to Christ, "You call me to fulfill Your commands. Of myself I can't do it rightly. You enter into me, take control of me, and do it in and through me, in my place, as my new life." Civil righteousness is indeed better than rebellion. It will pass the world's test but not God's. Only as we are united with Christ as our inner life can we be whole. All our works are to be wrought in Him (John 3:21).

Let's be those who take this commandment to heart. As nations, only then can we truly prosper and our days as countries be long in the land the Lord our God has granted us. Let us build our national destinies in the strength, in the grace God provides us in Himself.



—by Pastor  
Christian Oswood

## INTRODUCING OUR TOPIC

The majority of the members of Association churches do not have a tradition of involvement in parochial or church schools for elementary or secondary education, with some exceptions, but rather have been strong supporters of the public school system in the U. S. and Canada.

In recent years, however, there has been a significant growth in interest in the parochial or church-sponsored school.

We are glad to present two viewpoints today in this issue, both by parents, both writers having teaching experience, both members of the AFLC. We thank them for taking the time to share their convictions with us.

Mr. Crowell's article came in at less than the word limit allowed. Mr. Dyrud's was above the limit. We have pared his down somewhat without, we hope, having sacrificed his position in any way.

The Editor

# Why *Christian* education?

A few years ago, I considered Christian Education to be only a nice "option"...but more and more I have come to believe that having my children in a Christian school is one of my spiritual priorities. Not so much because of problems in the public schools, though there are some issues which need to be addressed, but because Christian Education can offer so much more!

In writing this article, I pray that I am not misunderstood. I am fully supportive of Christian *teachers* who have chosen to work in public schools; we need more of them, their influence and their witness. We need to pray for them. But because we live in a pluralistic society, where "separation of the church and state" seems to be moving beyond mere religious neutrality to the blatant espousal of the religion of secular humanism, I am unwilling to subject my children to the rigors of the public school system. In Christian Education, my children can be taught true history, Bible-based history; they can be taught traditional values and family orientations, and a Biblical morality

which sees the difference between right and wrong; they can have, as an *integral part* of their education, teaching concerning the Scriptures as the infallible and inerrant Word of God. Because I have become convinced that we are, indeed, as Scripture says, in a spiritual warfare, I desire that my children be fed on a diet of God's Word, rather than to have to spend five days a week, six hours a day, under teaching that at best is neutral, and at its worst attacks what we as a family believe.

Beyond our society as a whole, it has been observed that we face a shortage of Christian workers, that many in the church have an appalling lack of biblical knowledge. God's Word is so clear, "Train up a child in the way in which he should go, and when he is old, he shall not depart from it." Have we failed to "train up" our young people in God's Word? I desire that ◇



By Pastor  
Michael Crowell  
Wichita Falls, Texas



# In defense of the public schools

By Loiell Dyrud  
Thief River Falls,  
Minn.

I have taught in the Minnesota public schools for 25 years and have become increasingly saddened by many Christians' perception of them. I graduated from public elementary and secondary schools and received my B. A. from Augsburg College, a private school. Augsburg was the choice because it was the college of our synod (the old Lutheran Free Church) and a family school. The choice was made for those reasons, not that there was something unsuitable in the public institutions. I was raised with a positive attitude towards public schools and that is why it has been so alarming to watch the rise of sentiment against them.

Though some of the hostility may be legitimate, much of it seems politically-motivated or caused by an ignorance of the role of the public

school in America. What I would like to do in this article is examine some of the concerns and misconceptions about the public schools and try to allay fears some Christian parents may have about sending their children to them.

One common misconception is that public schools are controlled by atheists, secular humanists or non-Christians. This is the approach taken by some television evangelists and some conservative periodicals; unfortunately, many people believe these opinions without ever looking into the situation in their local schools.

The truth of the matter is that there are thousands of professing Christians in the ranks of public school teachers and administrators.

Our children have gone through the public schools and have been profoundly affected by Christian teachers. I am reminded of some of their elementary teachers who had Bibles on their desks and often referred to Christian values in their class discussion. A ninth grade social studies teacher my son had spends the first part of the school year comparing and contrasting "The Laws of God" and "The Laws of Man." When a biology teacher I work with teaches a

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## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

my children will have an education which will build upon the foundation they receive at home. For those who point to failures of Christian schools, and there are those, unfortunately, I wonder if these do not occur when parents have not laid the foundation and expect the school to do it for them.

Some object to Christian schools because they "shelter" children. They do, to an extent. They shelter them from wrong teaching at a young and impressionable age (I wouldn't send my children to a Mormon Sunday School, would you?), and hopefully they shelter them from at least some of the unwanted peer pressure which moves some to drugs, etc. But it is naive to think that children in a Christian school are "sheltered" from the real world." In any group of people you have the old nature, you have sin, you have temptation...only in a Christian school you have something else: Christian discipline. As a product of public education myself (and a good system, too), I cannot remember ever having a teacher or administrator pray with me or counsel me from God's Word. I want that for my children.

Some object to Christian schools because they lack the extra-curriculars which a larger

public school can offer. This may be true, though, again, where are our priorities? In a Christian school, the extra-curriculars are most often oriented to *ministry* within a local congregation. The sad fact is that every extra-curricular within a public school means time that is no longer available for ministry activities, fellowship and church involvement. I would love for my son to have opportunity to develop his enjoyment of baseball...but even more, I want him to grow as a Christian, with a desire to serve Christ, that others might come to know Him.

Others object to Christian schools because they remove the witness of Christian kids from the arena of the school ground. But realistically, that witness is severely limited. We can have our children be witnesses in many ways without subjecting them to pressures and situations beyond what they are prepared to handle. Again, Scripture tells us that we are at war...and I am no longer willing to send my "green troops," my children, to a training camp which is neutral and at times hostile. No army trains its troops on the battlefield; it equips them and makes sure that they are ready before sending them into the fight!

After briefly teaching at both a public school and a Christian school, I finally have come to



unit on evolution, he allows students to bring in a clergyman of their choice to present the creationist view, thus presenting both sides of the issue.

In my own area of English, I am constantly amazed at the amount of Christian values present in the literature used in our public schools. In Shakespear's *Macbeth* we see the horror of a man who has sold his soul to the devil in order to gain success in this life. Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* teaches the basic Christian message of forgiveness found in Matthew 18:21-22. It is man's duty to forgive his brother; it is for God to seek revenge. Far from being controlled by atheism, then, the public schools I am familiar with have had an enormous amount of Christian values inherent in their curriculum.

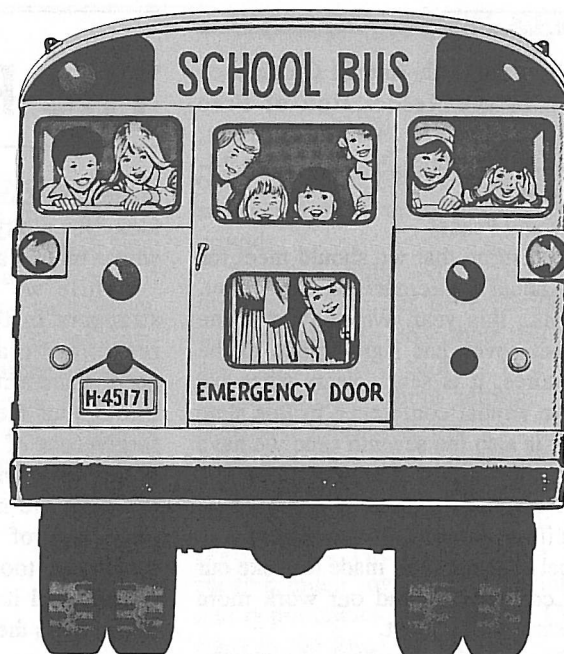
Nevertheless, since public schools are supported by taxes and America is made up of a myriad of cultures and religions, the schools must respect the various views of its taxpayers. Thus one specific religion can not be presented over another.

About a hundred years ago, Georg Sverdrup, one of the founders of the Lutheran Free Church and the framer of the basic principles on which

believe that I am accountable to God for what my children learn. If it is sex education, I want them taught according to God's principles, not humanistic principles which do not recognize biblical morality. If it is concerning religion (which is taught even in public schools, so long as it is secular humanism, TM, Eastern mysticism, and New Age philosophy, and not Christianity), I want my children taught according to God's Word. I cannot shelter my children from all undue influence, but I can resist putting them under an authority system which no longer, by and large, reflects Christian values and traditional family values. I can send my children to a Christian school.

Martin Luther said it so clearly, over 400 years ago: "I would advise no one to send his child where the Holy Scriptures are not supreme. Every institution that does not unceasingly pursue the study of God's Word becomes corrupt...I greatly fear that the universities, unless they teach the Holy Scriptures diligently and impress them upon the young students, are wide gates to hell."

In this article, we have only touched the surface of a few of the many issues involved. I close with the simple prayer that when making educational decisions concerning our children, that *their* spiritual welfare is our *first* priority!



our Association is built, published some articles regarding the American public schools which have been collected in a book called *The Heritage of Faith* (Augsburg Publishing House, 1969). During Sverdrup's day, many churchmen were suspicious of the public schools because they did not include religion in their curriculum. Many church leaders called the public schools "religionless," "Godless," and "pagan" and felt their children would be subverted. Sverdrup, however, disagreed: "The state has no right to carry on religious instruction, because the state cannot determine which church body has the pure doctrine and consequently has no right to stipulate which doctrine shall be taught in the public school. Wherever there is a question of conscience or conviction, the state has neither the right nor the power to prescribe. The state has authority to make laws in all matters that concern life and property, but it has no authority, and less right to legislate in matters that concern the soul's salvation. This is the proper domain of religion. It is, therefore, eminently right that America has decreed that religion shall not be taught in state-supported schools" (89). Though a specific religion must not be taught, this does not, however, mean that Christian values are not present.

It is interesting to note that some church men in Sverdrup's time were attacking the public schools by calling them "pagan." When I was in high school in the 1950s, the catch-phrase was the "Communist threat." Communists were, supposedly, taking over our schools. (It was an accusation my parents didn't accept and I'm continued on p. 16

**T**o the 27th Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, assembled at Minot, N. Dak., June 14-18, 1989.

Grace and Peace!

It is fitting that we should meet for our Annual Conference here in Minot, N. Dak., this year. We know that the number seven has significance in the Scriptures. It is seven years since we had an annual conference in this state and it is also the seventh time we have gathered for our conference in the State of North Dakota. We appreciate the efforts that our host congregation, Bethel Lutheran, has made to make our stay comfortable and our work more pleasant and efficient.

This gathering together of representatives from various congregations is an occasion of tremendous importance to our AFLC. It is the most important event to take place in the AFLC. No pastor or congregation can afford not to attend. We are here to review another year of Kingdom work. To be sure, it has been a year that has had its usual sorrows and joys, defeats and victories. As we gather for this Annual Conference we pray for the guidance of the Spirit of God as we study reports of our work in the past and consider measures for continuing growth and expansion of God's Kingdom at home and abroad. We would confess that our need is for a larger vision, greater zeal, nobler passion and a more genuine consecration to the Head of the Church and to the cause of the Kingdom on earth.

### **World Conditions**

There is one word which adequately describes the condition that prevails in our world. It is the word *uncertainty*. General conditions in our world are not encouraging. Dark threatening clouds of fear, distrust, jealousy and rumors of war are still hovering over many nations. Famine and disease continue to take their toll of human lives. The world still watches to see if glasnost (openness) will really make a difference in world tensions. How good it is to know that this world is not our

## **The President's message**

home. Like Abraham of old, we, too, look "for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

While we remain pilgrims and strangers in this world we need to remember that man's fundamental need is the same today as it has been throughout the ages. Man needs the forgiveness of sin. Christ's atonement on the cross and His resurrection from the dead are and ever will be man's only hope of salvation. We need to remember, too, that the nature of the church, and its God-given mission in the world is the same.

### **Our Nation**

A critical issue facing America today is the abortion issue. There is a strong feeling that it may now be possible that we will see the Supreme Court overturn the 1973 ruling on Roe V. Wade, which granted abortion on demand. Christians need to be much in prayer on this matter. There are indications that it may take a series of decisions by the Court, thus gradually eroding the original doctrine.

Present moral conditions in our country are in a sad state. There are many indicators that our nation is fast becoming paganized. The ever increasing divorce rate, the alarming spread of AIDS, the devastating effect of alcoholism on millions are all straws in the wind showing the direction we are travelling. There is no substitute for the Gospel. It alone can transform lives and meet the deepest need in human life individually and collectively. The main task of the Christian Church is to preach the Law and Gospel in word and deed to our own people and to the nations of the world. This is a time when we need to be faithful in calling our people to repentance and prayer, and to preach the Gospel of forgiveness and reconciliation.

### **Our Church**

I believe that this has been a year when the work has been carried on faithfully in most of our congregations.

There are signs here and there which clearly indicate that God is honoring the preaching of His Word with visible fruit. Most of our pastors and lay people have a passion for souls, a concern for the unsaved and unchurched. There are congregations where there seems to be a woeful lack of understanding of what constitutes a Christian congregation and the purpose for which it exists. Some of our people are satisfied when the organizational machinery runs without too much friction and where local finances are in good shape.

As we would look at our Association of Free Lutheran Congregations and then at the task which our Lord has set before us, we can hardly escape the feeling that we are unequal and unqualified for the task. There is no comfort in comparing ourselves to some other church body where spiritual powerlessness is equally great. We need to face our own sinfulness, unbelief, indifference and disobedience, so that our hearts could be humbled in sincere penitence.

We need a spiritual awakening over our land and among our people. The theme of our 25th Anniversary in the AFLC was "A Year for Revival." Many prayed earnestly for that renewal of God's Spirit among us. We need to continue that prayer. Do we here at this Conference dare to pray that it might begin with us?

The need for a revival is not only that we as a nation might meet the great national problems of our people, but also that we in the AFLC might be able to meet the increasing challenge of the mission that is before us as a Church.

Our AFLC has continued to see numerical growth as new congregations are received into our fellowship. Our growth this past year has not been nearly as great as that of a year ago, but is still most encouraging. We now number 200 congregations and new missions.

We had been hopeful that we would have been able to provide you with an accurate, up-to-date statistical report for this Conference. Some reports are still not in, and we have not been able to compile a complete statistical report. In the remaining weeks before conference it may be that it will be possible to get the last reports in and that this material can be added to the packet for conference.

#### **Shepherds — Shortages — Salaries**

Our church still suffers from a shortage of pastors who at least somewhat nearly meet the general requirements for a fruitful ministry. We are thankful for the new workers joining the ranks of workers in the harvest. This includes the four graduates from our seminary, as well as other men who have been received into the fellowship roster this year. However, the shortage is still there, primarily because of the increase in number of new congregations in our fellowship. There is, however, another reason clearly stated for us in the Word. "Then saith He unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest" (Matt. 6:37-38). Have we failed to pray? Pray that God will call out gifted, consecrated young men to be trained in our seminary that we might have an adequate supply of pastors.

We would rather not give too much thought to the question of whether or not there might be a relation between

the shortage of pastors and the salary question. The matter of pastors' salaries has been addressed for a number of years. Many of our pastors are now being paid a fairly good, living wage. It is still true that the majority of our pastors and teachers in our schools are still underpaid. A salary survey is done every two years in the AFLC. Though the last figures we have were taken in January of 1988, we share a summary of them with you here.

#### **General Information:**

a) The average cash salary for all pastors was \$21,766.00.

b) The average cash salary for pastors living in a parsonage was \$19,084.00.

c) The average cash salary for pastors receiving a housing allowance was \$25,687.00.

We would like to encourage all congregations to annually review their pastor's salary, and seek to provide for him so that temporal anxieties will not hinder his ministry.

#### **Medical Plan for Pastors and Church Workers**

In concern for the rising medical costs and premiums for medical coverage, the Board of Pensions this past year voted to pay 10% of the medical premium from the "H.I.S." fund. They come to this conference asking that the AFLC will make this a "church project." This will do much to strengthen the sense of this truly being our AFLC plan and I believe that it will contribute greatly to participation in the plan and loyalty to the plan. We encourage Conference adoption of this request.

#### **Finances**

The 1988-89 fiscal year was the best year that the AFLC has had for several years, from the financial standpoint. We reached 96% of the subsidy goal. We had not done that since 1981-82. We are most encouraged by this fine support from our congregations and people. Our current budget is 19% higher than last year's so we will need

to do quite a bit better this year than last year. It is a joy to see the AFLC grow. It is a joy to see the young men coming to study at our Seminary to become pastors in our church. It is a joy to see new congregations born, grow and develop into strong congregations under our Home Missions program. It is a joy to be able to have a share in the spreading of the Gospel under our World Mission program. It is a joy to follow the work among the youth of the AFLC and to know that the concern is there that these young people are walking in fellowship with Jesus Christ. It is a joy to see the devotion of members of the Board of Publications and Parish Education as they work on the revision of our Sunday School materials. We trust that it will be your joy to have a share in continuing to make all this possible.

#### **AFLC Facilities**

As our church body has grown, so have the demands for personnel in the various departments of the church. Office space at "headquarters" is at a premium. An example of this is that we have three people sharing an office that should normally be occupied by one person. You will hear more of the plans for a future administration building at 3110.

As we begin to give thought to the possibility of this facility, I would remind the Conference that we still have a debt remaining on the ARC. We can prove ourselves good stewards by taking the necessary steps to clear off this debt before we launch another building project.

#### **Evangelism**

In one of the widely used orders for the dedication service for a new church building, we have this statement:

Pastor: Because we believe Scriptural Evangelism to be the supreme task of the Church,

Congregation: We dedicate this House of Worship.

On many other occasions we make the statement that we believe that  
continued on p. 10

#### **CHILDREN'S SERMONS**

The sermon with its presentation must be childlike, but in striving for this quality, let the preacher be on his guard lest he become childish in his presentation.

*P. W. Nesper*



## In conclusion

**A**s a summary, to repeat all the definitions, biblical references and illustrations of the past five articles on the perception senses would be redundant. Not to praise and thank God for these gifts, however, would be ungrateful.

In the past articles I have avoided talking about the many unfortunate people who lack any of the abilities to see, to hear, to smell, to touch and to taste. Much has been studied and written about the decline with aging from the peak of the senses. Today's scientists are exploring the brain, with its receptors and systems, in order to increase the potential of man's receiving help or cures to keep the perception senses without faults until death.

For most of us, we can see the warm colors of a sunrise or sunset, our children's faces and auto traffic patterns. We can hear the robin singing to its mate before daybreak. Autumn apples, chocolate ice cream, and pizza can all be tasted. By their perfumes we smell and know the rose, wood moss and gasoline. With touching we experience the feel of wool, the richness of planting soil and the ocean spray as it falls upon our faces. God gave us these gifts (Genesis 1:26, 27).

As we have studied each of the five perception senses as separate units, we should also keep in mind that they are interrelated. The whole body is affected when one part becomes dysfunctional. "The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the Lord has made them both" (Proverbs 20:12). Children should be encouraged to recognize and to appreciate the gifts that God has given us in order to help them live in our troubled present-day world.

In the previous presentations we have learned how intricate the body's perception ability is. Briefly, we touched upon the mechanism of the brain and that organization, which consists of receiving messages from the world by the receptors, travels through

## the perception senses in God's wondrous design

the nerve network to the translator portion of the brain interpreter that tells the body what to do about the messages. The intensity signal must be strong and the duration long enough in order to stimulate the systematic orderliness. The switchboards and relays of our brains maintain quality control.

Neil McAber, in his book *The Body Almanac*, states that one percent of all sensory data which our five senses constantly receive is processed by the brain. The other ninety-nine percent is screened out as irrelevant.

Guy Murchie, in his book *The Seven Mysteries of Life*, believes we should be talking and exploring thirty-two (32) perception senses and not the five (5) we usually know. He suggests five senses we learned about in our high school science classes are not adequate to define the sophistication of our new world with its air-space travel, computer science and advanced electronics, to name a few.

Among his defined 32, I will brief only a few of them: *radiation sense* — includes sensing the sun's warmth, awareness of cold, and others; *feeling sense* — awareness of pressure, sense of weight and balance; *coriolis sense* — sense of awareness of the rotation of the earth; *chemical sense* — the use of appetite and hunger, causing the urge to hunt and kill; *mental sense* — the ability to perceive pain, procreative urge, sense of play, time of the biological clock, navigation, colonizing, reasoning, relaxation and sleep; *spiritual sense* — the capacity for sublime love, ecstasy, sense of sin, profound sorrow...

Whether the gifts by God to man of the perception senses be defined by the five headings or the 32 is not as important as we Christians being grateful

and praising God that He gave them to us to use. To select which perception sense is the greatest would be inconsiderate and difficult, for in Proverbs 20:12, we know, "The hearing ear and the seeing eye, the Lord has made them both."

I trust this series on the perception senses, sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell, has heightened your awareness of God's marvelous gifts and that we have received them and their use, because "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him" (Genesis 1:27). With God's provisions we have the actualities to study, to praise and to bless His work. We know the wonderful story of how the people used their senses while Jesus was on earth. They saw Him heal men, women and children. They heard His word, touched His garments, smelled the nard and tasted communion.

With His design He intends for us to use these gifts to further His kingdom through writing, word of mouth, teaching and ministering to others. "If we don't use them, we lose them."

(End of a series.)

## The Trinity season

The idea of the festival half of the Church Year (Trinity) is to emphasize what God has done and is still doing for us and in us. Something of the wealth of the divine gifts ought to be brought to the hearers, so that they may rejoice in their salvation and praise God for His wonderful works.

P. W. Nesper

## PASTOR KARL STENDAL

One thing that can be said about Pastor Karl Stendal, who passed away on May 25, was that he didn't favor the merger of the Lutheran Free Church with the American Lutheran Church, which union took place Feb. 1, 1963.

More than that, he made his opposition known in the annual conferences of the LFC, one of relatively few who did so in such public forums and one of even fewer who actually didn't enter the merged church. He was willing to stand alone, willing to be unpopular for what he believed. One must hold a certain admiration for such people.

Karl Stendal entered the ministry later on in life, leaving the life of a lumberjack (and tree-topper, up to 175 feet) in his adopted Washington. Without fear of heights obviously, he later put that trait to good use as a steeplejack, repairing and painting steeples in or near Leland, Forest City, Thompson and Fertile, Ia., and Winger, Minn., and perhaps other places. The Picture section of the Minneapolis *Sunday Tribune*, Nov. 27, 1955, carried photos and story about Pastor Stendal's work.

While all pastors are theologians, Pastor Stendal was one of those who was even more so. He seemed to have a solid grasp of biblical truth, allowing for the fact that not all would agree with him on every interpretation. I'm sure that he had a good deal of satisfaction in translating Dr. Carl Fr. Wisløff's book *I Know In Whom I Believe* from Norwegian to English. It is a book which will serve the AFLC for many years.

Pastor Stendal taught at our seminary for one year. That, too, was a stimulating experience for him, he who had taught so many children the Explanation and Bible History in confirmation classes.

I had Karl and Christine Stendal as guests in my home one time. It was during a district Luther League convention in South Dakota. Their stay and our convention was a time of good fellowship.

Pastor Stendal attended the annual conference of the AFLC last year in DeKalb. He was there that recently. He had a great love for the Association. He felt her growth in numbers and spiritual power was a vindication of his own effort and struggle for her beginning.

May we remember with affection and gratitude to God this brother and father in the faith.

Blessed be his memory.

—Raynard Huglen

## THANK YOU, PASTOR OSWOOD

Today's *Ambassador* contains Pastor Christian Oswood's final article in his series for "Light on the Way" found on page two of each issue. We thank him for his thoughtful and Christ-centered devotional messages these past six months.

We think one word which will linger in the minds of those who have read what he has written is "wholeness." And he has driven home the truth that the wholeness of the believer is from God through Christ. Perhaps this sentence from one of his devotionals (Apr. 18) summarizes this as well as any: "Let us be those who continually turn away from our selves *and all that is of us* (emphasis is ours) to Jesus, that He in us may alone be our salvation, redemption and sanctification forever."

Pastor Oswood has completed his ministry at Hampden and Edmore, N. Dak. His future plans are uncertain at last report, but we know he will be devoting some time to translation work, which is a vast, challenging task and a great service can be rendered through it. May the Lord lead and guide in your life and ministry, Pastor Oswood.

The new writer for "Light on the Way" will be Pastor Philip Haugen, Minneapolis, Minn., who is one of the teachers in our Association Schools. He is well-known among us as a biblical textual scholar, who with his knowledge of Greek extracts fresh insights from the inspired texts. We've no doubt this ability will come out in the devotional articles he will be writing.

We remember him as a young teenager in his native Portland, N. Dak., area. We didn't know then of his theological interest, but he has certainly proved a gift to our church. After a pastorate in St. Paul's Lutheran, Fargo, N. Dak., he took up the work we believe is his first love, teaching.

May the Lord bless you, Pastor Haugen, as you write for the *Ambassador* these last six months of this year.

Today we also carry the last of a series of six articles by Miss Betty J. Sorrels of Seattle under the heading "In His Image: the perception senses in God's wondrous design." The articles have been intriguing and Betty Sorrels is someone who likes to write about topics others haven't done much with. We hope that she will submit other articles from time to time. Thank you, Betty Sorrels.

In place of her writing, we will be having once-a-month articles by Mrs. Kenneth (Ruth Jesness) Tweed, McHenry, N. Dak. In 1982 she published a paperback of her own stories and poems called *The Crazy Quilt*. Some of our readers are familiar with it. Lately she completed work with a booklet of stories and family histories from her community called *Your Neighbor's Story*.

Ruth Jesness Tweed hales from the Cyrus-Morris area of Minnesota. She attended Moorhead State College in Minnesota, was a teacher, worked at the Children's Home in Poulso, Wash., and now is a rural dweller in North Dakota. She and her husband have five children and belong to Bethany Lutheran Church in Binford.

We look forward to her articles, beginning next time.

# Keeping the water out

*By Pastor Henry A. E. Johansen*

My dad used to tell the story about a Savolainen (i.e., a person from the Finnish province of Savo, whose people are known for their wit as well as their tendency to play on words), who was caulking and tarring on his row-boat. A passer-by inquired, "Does your boat leak?" "Ah, my friend," the Savolainen replied, "if it would but leak! The problem is that it lets the water in!" And that is usually the problem, be it an old Lone Star aluminum craft like ours, which has tended to allow water to enter in since day one of our ownership, bought used, from Goldfine's in Duluth years ago, to the largest vessel to ply the seven seas. All vessels, sooner or later, need a bailing system. Some are after market bilge pumps, others are installed by the manufacturer. Ours is a Hilex jug with the bottom cut out. Egress of water must be maintained.

When the dampness gets unbearable, or dangerous, time must be spent in repairs. Holes and cracks are stopped up, rivets are tightened. It is a spring ritual oft repeated as the age of the craft mounts up. Preventive maintenance left undone at best results in water sloshing around where it should be dry. At worst, a swamped and even

sunken vessel with its passengers facing the prospect of a watery grave.

Nothing lets stuff in like the human mind. God told the prophet that knowledge would increase (Daniel 12:4). Of course, much knowledge is good and useful. There is much that is pure poison, too; some is just plain worthless. The obvious poison and the worthless, contrary to our moral and spiritual integrity, is easily rejected. But we are usually sunk by cupfuls; it's the pailfuls that we get excited about. We are, at times, more gullible than we care to admit and we are soon "filled to the gunnels," in danger of spiritual shipwreck. The Apostle Paul teaches, in Philippians 4:8, "Finally, brethren, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy — meditate on these things."

The Chapel of The Air founder, Dr. John D. Jess, commented on that passage, saying, "Read this daily and ponder on its truth 'till it becomes the way of life.'" All Scripture meets the criteria of Philippians 4:8. Our best defense against the bilge water of this fallen world is the "bailing system" of God's unchanging Word. However, we cannot utilize this defense unless we are born anew into God's family through saving faith in God's Son, Jesus Christ (John 1:12, 13). Then, and then only, does the Holy Spirit take up residence in us and avail us of His power (Ephesians 1:13-20; I Corinthians 2:12-14).

Jesus' promise to the Christian is "...when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you" (John 16:13, 14). This promise began its fulfillment at Pentecost nearly 2,000 years ago and it is still being fulfilled today.

—West Central Tribune, Willmar, Minn.



## MESSAGE

evangelism should have priority in the work and life of the congregation.

We have reasons to be thankful for the Scriptural evangelism that is taking place within our AFLC. We have, however, not had our own full-time evangelist since God saw fit to take Ken Pentti home almost four years ago. The Evangelism Commission feels led of God to pursue the calling of a full-time evangelist this coming year. It will be a test of faith for us in our AFLC. It will mean an increased subsidy to General Fund to make it possible to call this person. We are already facing a shortage of pastors. Is God putting us to the test? Do we believe that our congregations are fulfilling one of the basic purposes for which they exist when they reach out to those outside of fellowship with Christ? If we do, then the step of faith before us is one that we must take.

The Evangelism Commission presented the pamphlet written by Dr. Monseth, "Principles and Practices of Evangelism" to the last annual conference. It was tabled last year. The Commission is bringing it back this year, asking that the resolution drawn up by the seminary faculty be adopted by this conference. I have given this pamphlet my whole-hearted support. Some have asked why I have so strongly urged the adoption of this statement. Perhaps it is time that I share my concerns with you.

A young person on a school team should not need to have his or her testimony questioned as he shares how he came to faith in Christ. No pastor speaking at a camp or convention should need to fear opposition when he extends an invitation for young people to receive Christ. No counselor for youth should need to fear rebuke because he has led a young person to faith in Christ. The question should not need to be asked at a Youth Board meeting. "Should we have altar calls?" The Board of Parish Education should not have to spend time debating whether or not there is to be an evangelical challenge in our Sunday School materials. These are some of the reasons why the request was made for



## Teachers for Brazil

Have you been trained to teach? Do you have a love for children? Are you interested in a new challenge in your life? Has God tugged at your heart about being involved in missions? A wonderful opportunity can be yours! Short-term teachers are urgently needed in Brazil at two of the AFLC's key cities of ministry: Curitiba and Vitoria.

The Brazilian school system trains

excellent professional people, but on the elementary level it is imperative for children of missionary families to have what is often termed "American schooling." During these early years, American children need a strong foundation in the English language, along with phonics training in order to become good readers and to master their mother tongue. The actual cost of formal American schooling in Brazil

costs approximately \$250 per month, a sum which missionary families cannot provide.

In both Curitiba and Vitoria, several missionary families have decided to work together to pool their resources and combine their children in a small American-type school setting. These families, including our own David Abel and Paul Abel households, are praying for teachers. They promise a good, warm welcome for their new instructors! The new teacher will receive much love and appreciation, and opportunities with national Christians in the local congregations, plus living expenses and lodging.

One of the greatest areas of need in a missionary's life is the welfare of his children. Oh, how discouraging it can be if the children do not receive adequate training and education! Let us each agree to pray about this urgent need for at least two teachers and to share this wonderful opportunity with others. Are you interested? Please contact Missions Office at AFLC Headquarters in Minneapolis: Telephone (612) 545-5631.

—Mrs. Eugene Enderlein

## A new door to India? clarification and apology

The April 4, 1989, issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador* featured a report entitled "A New Door to India?" The author of said article acknowledges that it was prepared without requiring proof of the allegations therein. Apologies are offered to Rev. B. Rao Dasari and the Indian ministry for implying any wrong-doing by Rev. Dasari.

The author of the April 4th article has seen copies of deeds wherein church properties are titled in the name of the Indian church with its director, Rev. Dasari, in a representative capacity. This verification is contrary to the charges reported in the article that Rev. Dasari had registered much of the church property under his personal

ownership.

The AFLC was under the impression that the love-gifts to India through V. Beneji Raju and D. Satyanadam were being sent to leaders of the Indian church. Rev. Dasari has informed the AFLC that these individuals were removed from leadership positions of the Bible Faith Lutheran Ministry by the general membership on January 27, 1989. No further love-gifts will be sent to India until this matter can be considered by the Annual Conference this month.

Readers of *The Lutheran Ambassador* are urged to continue to pray for the furtherance of the gospel in the land of India.

"Principles and Practices of Evangelism." This is the time when we as an AFLC need to make it clear where we stand on the vital issue of evangelism.

### In Memoriam

Lay-pastor Knute Jore was called home to his reward on August 9, 1988. Blessed be the memory of this faithful Kingdom worker.

(The section "Events of Special Interest" is omitted here. It will be found in the 1989 Annual Report of the AFLC available later this summer.)

### In Conclusion

Let me in conclusion express my

gratitude to God for the continuing riches of His grace, sufficient for each day and each need. I also want to express my appreciation to our congregations, my fellow officers, to all the staff at headquarters, and to each board for the fine cooperation that I have experienced in the discharge of my duties. May the Spirit of God continue to guide us that we may be wise and loving in all our deliberations.

Yours in Christ,  
Richard Snipstead  
President, AFLC

## ORGANIZATIONS

This principle (No. 1, *Fundamental Principles*) implies further that organizations within a congregation or societies made up of people belonging to a number of congregations are also secondary in importance to the congregation and should not in any way usurp the place of the congregation or adversely affect it. Such organizations are permissible only in so far as they serve the congregation.

C. J. Carlsen  
*The Years of Our Church*

## WOMEN'S PAGE

### Eastern North Dakota Holds Retreat

The Eastern North Dakota District WMF held its Annual Retreat at Red Willow Bible Camp in March with approximately 70 ladies attending. The theme was "Let the Son Shine." The Bethel Free Lutheran Church of Grafton Handbell Choir provided special music for the Friday evening session.

Away in foreign lands they wondered  
how their feeble words had power?  
At home the Christians, two or three  
had met to pray an hour.

*Author Unknown*

## Spring Rally review

### Minneapolis District

Hauge Lutheran WMF, Kenyon, Minn., hosted the Spring Rally on April 15. Missionaries Paul and Becky Abel spoke to the large group of ladies. Emmanuel and Our Saviour of Wanamingo and Zumbrota assisted the host WMF.

### Eastern N. Dak.

The Eastern North Dakota District WMF held its Spring Rally at Trinity Free Lutheran Church, Grand Forks, N. Dak., on May 6. The theme was "Lord, Guide My Ways," based on Psalm 25:5.

Pastor and Mrs. Becky Abel were the speakers for the day. They presented musical selections, a slide presentation of work in Brazil and then Becky took us on an imaginary trip to visit one of the families in Brazil.

There were 137 in attendance.

### S. W. Central Minnesota

The Southwest Central Minn. District WMF had their Spring Rally May 2, at Zion Free Lutheran Church at Wadena, Minn. The theme for the day was "Praise to the Lord." Pastor and Mrs. Paul Abel were the speakers. There were 140 registered.



### Lap robes made in Tucson

WMF ladies of Living Faith Lutheran Church, Tucson, Ariz., have made 23 lap robes in the past four months, which have been given to area nursing homes. They also made a baby quilt for Matthew Westlake, son of Eric and Wendy Westlake, youth workers. A large quilt was also made, to be given to Milton Flores, seminary student intern at Nogales, Ariz.

Pictured working on the large quilt, are (left to right) Muriel Giles, Connie Grothe, Debbie Giles, Lucy Johnson and Mary Hamann.

While Rev. Dan Giles and family visited his parents in Tucson in April, Mrs. Robert Giles entertained at a luncheon for 12 ladies of Living Faith, at which time Mrs. Dan Giles told many interesting facts about their ministry in Aguascalientes, Mexico.

Pastor and Mrs. Robert Giles are now serving Living Faith Church.

— Mrs. Orville Myron

## Guidelines of prayer for missionaries

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| Monday:    | Missionary's personal relationship to God. That he'd take time for personal Bible study and prayer. Needs victory over Satan.   |
| Tuesday:   | Physical health and safety, emotional life of the missionary and his family. Adaptation to climate, health amid disease, victory over loneliness and depression.                                  |
| Wednesday: | Missionary family, husband and wife relationship, relations as a family to others; family to be an example, model.  |
| Thursday:  | Ability to communicate: Through language study, understand/comprehend Portuguese to be effective in the ministry. Pray for fluency.   |
| Friday:    | Cultural adaptation and understanding; must adjust as not to alienate people. Give sensitivity to needs of people.  |
| Saturday:  | Missionary's relationship with fellow workers. Despite differences and varied gifts should be able to meld together, to work together as a team. Don't let personality conflicts hinder the work. |
| Sunday:    | Pray for country of Brazil. Economic conditions: price freezes, food shortages, inflation, etc. Political situation: threat of communism, socialism. Not stable right now. Pray for Mexico, too.  |

**Sample prayers: Eph. 1:15-19; 3:14-21**



(Left) AMBASSADORS: Mark Dahl, Borup, Minn.; Jeff Nikunen, Escanaba, Mich.; Jamie Hedlund, Roseau, Minn.; Karla Jameson, Harding, Ill., and Jackie Holwell, Greenbush, Minn.

(Below) MAJESTY: (L. to R.) Mary Mod-ean, Scandia, Minn.; Clark Landguth, Kirk-land, Wash.; Lisa Carr, Astoria, Ore., Nathan Monseth, Rogers, Minn., and Tamara Dyrud, Middle River, Minn.

## AFLTTS announces Summer Institute of Theology

July 24-28

Selected Psalms -

Rev. Ralph Tjelta

The Doctrine of God

Dr. Francis Monseth

July 31 - August 4

Pastoral Theology

Rev. R. L. Lee

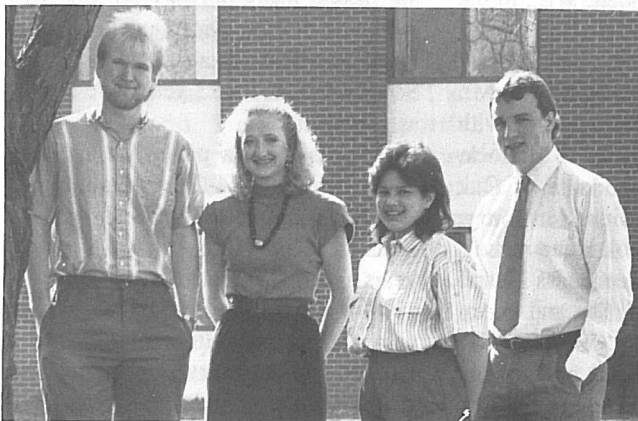
Sermon Preparation

Dr. S. Lombardo

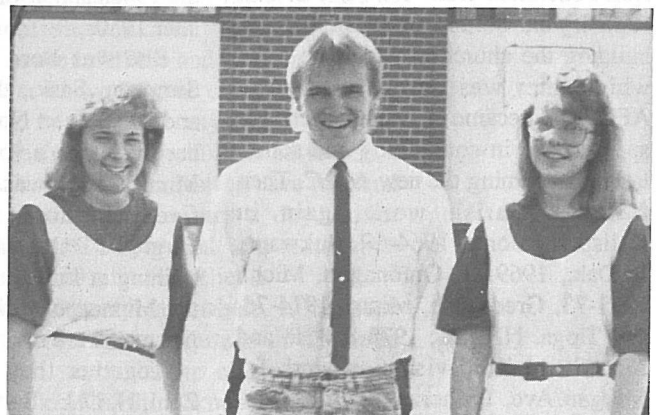
Studies in Ephesians

Rev. P. Haugen

**WELCOME!**



BARNABAS XV: (L. to R.) Aaron Quanbeck, McVile, N. Dak.; Vicki Hoseth, Williston, N. Dak.; Marissa Stitzell, Pemberton, N. Jersey, and John Nelson, Balsam Lake, Wisc.



RADIANT LIFE SUPPORT TEAM sponsored by Luther League Federation: Becky Nikunen, Escanaba, Mich., Glen Quanbeck, McVile, N. Dak., Sonja Dahl, Felton, Minn., and (not pictured) Jon Heidmann, Fairmont, Minn.



# Rev. Karl Stendal dies

Rev. Karl I. Stendal, 82, one of the founders of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, passed away on May 25 at North Ridge Care Center, New Hope, Minn.



He was born Mar. 9, 1907, in Stendal, Sunnfjord, Norway, to Andreas and Marie (Ramsdal) Stendal, the oldest of 12 children. He emigrated to the U. S. at age 19 and worked as a lumberjack in the Cascade Mountains of Washington for ten years, headquartering at Kent.

Sensing the call to the Christian ministry, he studied at the academy of Pacific Lutheran College, Tacoma, Wash., and completed his B. A. degree at Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minn. He was also a graduate of Augsburg Seminary, Minneapolis. Karl Stendal was ordained a pastor in the LFC in 1944 and took his first call at Barton, N. Dak., serving until 1946. He had been united in marriage to Christine Johnson in 1940.

The Stendals served other parishes, at Winger, Minn., 1946-51, and Forest City, Ia., 1951-58. He was in the service of the Hauge Lutheran Innermission Federation from 1958-63. In that capacity he helped raise money for building the church at Medicine Lake which later was purchased by the AFLC and became its headquarters. He spent a year in counselling and solicitation concerning the new AFLC. Then followed parish work again in Kalispell, Mont., 1964-69, Pukwana, S. Dak., 1969-71, Ontonagon, Mich., 1971-73, Greenbush, Minn., 1974-76, and Tioga, N. Dak., 1978-80. He and Mrs. Stendal did visitation work for Morgan Ave. Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, when his health permitted. Pastor Stendal was an instructor at the Association Seminary, 1976-77.

He was the translator of Carl Fr.

Wisløff's *I Know in Whom I Believe* from Norwegian to English.

He is survived by his wife; three sons, Dean, Minneapolis, David, Minnetonka, Minn., and Paul, Los Angeles; five grandsons; a brother, Torfin, Kent; and seven brothers and sisters in Norway. The service for Pastor Stendal was held on Tues., May 30, at Morgan Ave. Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, with Rev. Yeddo Gottel officiating. Also participating were Dr. Francis Monseth and Rev. Richard Snipstead, AFLC president. Dr. Monseth sang "My God! How Wonderful Thou Art" and "Children of the Heavenly Father." The organist was Steve Woimanen.

Pallbearers were Chris Stendal, Lance Stendal, Brandon Stendal, Rev. Martin Horn, Mr. Reuben Unseth and Rev. Wayne Hjermstad. Interment was in Lakewood Cemetery, Minneapolis.

Blessed be his memory.

(Ed. note: See the editorial "Pastor Karl Stendal" on page 9.)

## FORMER PASTOR'S WIFE AT GREENBUSH AND BARRONETT DIES

Mrs. Selma Nystuen, 82, widow of Rev. Joseph I. Nystuen, passed away on Apr. 23, at North Ridge Care Center, New Hope, Minn. She and her husband served at Greenbush, Minn., in the 1940s and at Barronett, Wis., in the later 1950s.

She was born May 29, 1906, at Simpson, Sask., the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sivert Norum. She came with her parents at a young age to Hallock, Minn. Selma was a graduate of Oak Grove Lutheran Ladies Seminary, Fargo, N. Dak., and took some nurses' training at Lutheran Deaconess Hospital, Minneapolis, Minn. She and Pastor Nystuen were married in 1927.

Together they served parishes at Zahl, N. Dak., Barton, N. Dak., Greenbush, Erickson, Man., and Barronett. Following his death in 1959 she moved to Northfield, Minn.

She is survived by one son, Rev.

## Personalities

Rev. Ralph Rokke, pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn., received his Master's degree in Sacred Theology in graduation ceremonies at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., on May 19. Congratulations to Pastor Rokke.

## IN MEMORIAM

Key: The name of the town was the address of the deceased. Following that is listed the name of the deceased, age, date of death and the church in which she held membership

### NORTH DAKOTA

#### Wyndmere

Mrs. Ragna J. Breden, 93, May 8, United, McLeod, N. Dak.

Joseph Nystuen, Cumberland, Wis.; five daughters, Eunice, Mrs. Rev. Allan Sortland, Golden Valley, Minn., Beverly, Mrs. Rev. Erlin Carlsen, Rockford, Ill., Winifred, Mrs. Rev. Edward Nyhus, Indonesia, Miriam, Mrs. Rev. Delmar Gusdal, Montgomery, Ala., and Grace, Mrs. Dennis Watkins, Seattle; 25 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and one sister, Hilda, Mrs. Torkel Forland, Newfolden, Minn. Four sisters and a brother preceded her in death.

The funeral was held at Calvary Lutheran, Golden Valley, and interment was in Prairie Creek Cemetery, Northfield.

Mrs. Hilda L. (Ostlie) Quanbeck, 88, passed away on May 25. She was the widow of Dr. Thor Quanbeck, who worked at Oak Grove Lutheran High School, Fargo, for 23 years, the last 12 as president.

They served a parish at L'Anse, Mich., from 1924-26. In later years they lived in Forest City, Ia., and Sioux Falls, S. Dak. He passed away some years ago.

Mrs. Quanbeck is survived by two sons, David and Alton; one daughter, Dorothy, Mrs. Marvin Johnson; ten grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; one brother and four sisters.

Her funeral was held in North Branch, Minn., and burial was in Sunset Memorial Park, Minneapolis.

## I remember Myrtle Olson

—By Rev. Roger Ose  
Minneapolis, Minn.

She was born March 22, 1906, to Jerome and Jeanette Langness. She grew up on a farm at Grygla, Minnesota. She died April 15 at Augustana Home in Minneapolis. Now she rests beside her husband in the cemetery of Faith Lutheran Church of Running Valley, near Colfax, Wisconsin.

I learned to know Myrtle and Iver Olson when I came to Augsburg College in 1952. They knew I was one of the Oses from Thief River Falls, Minnesota. Two of Myrtle's brothers had been hired men for my dad on our farm when I was a small boy.

Myrtle was baptized as an infant in the Lutheran Brethren Church. Bible study, prayer and devotional reading were daily practices in her home. She was confirmed at age 15, in the days when confirmation was memorizing "word for word" Luther's Catechism and the Explanation. She delighted in telling her grandchildren that the pastor had questioned her for two hours without catching her in a mistake in her Catechism or Bible History.

At age 19 Myrtle entered the Lutheran Brethren Bible School and High School in Grand Forks, North Dakota. Going on to school, as she did, was very difficult financially. Those were the days of the "Great Depression," and money was just not available. But she had high ideals, determination and an earnest desire to know God's Will.

It was there that she met Iver B. Olson of Saskatchewan, Canada. He also shared her idealism and dedication. They were married eight years



Dr. and Mrs. Olson in Norway on one of the AFLBS Choir tours.

## from here and there

**Abiding Savior Free Lutheran Church**, the new home mission congregation in Sioux Falls, S. Dak., will be served during the summer months by Seminarian Lloyd Quanbeck. Services are held in the Cleveland Elementary School, located on Edwards Avenue (west of 18th and Bahnson), at 9:30 a.m., Sundays.

**Calvary Free Lutheran Church, Bismarck, N. Dak.**, has a different home, effective June 1st. The congregation purchased the facility formerly occupied by House of Prayer Lutheran Church, located at 417 South Anderson. A dedication service is planned for later this summer. Calvary Church is served by Pastor Kerwin Sletto.

later, on October 7, 1933, while he was a student at Augsburg Seminary in Minneapolis.

During the years he taught at Augsburg, there was economic hardship for the family. I remember Dr. Olson telling how sometimes even paying the water bill was nearly impossible. All four of their children got through college and at times that meant great sacrifice for the parents.

Myrtle shared whatever was on their table. Drop-in guests were a normal part of their home. Over the years, 25 friends or relatives from four continents lived with the Olsons for extended periods of time. Being a servant in the home was a joy for her.

At the time of her husband's death, Myrtle was not able to attend the funeral. She suffered a major stroke that same day. The following days for her were at times frustrating and sad as she struggled to communicate, but the words just did not come. When I visited her, I would sometimes share a bit of information about the Free Church and that brightened her smile. Her great longing was to go home to the Lord and now her dream is realized. She and Dr. Olson are home with the Lord.

## NEWS OF THE CHURCHES

### DEKALB, ILL.

Pastor Dennis Gray, the pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, 1121 South First Street in DeKalb, announces that Eric Froeming, son of Wayne and Diane Froeming of Malta graduated recently from the congregation's two year course for membership.

The summer schedule for Grace Lutheran Church, 1121 South First Street in DeKalb, Ill., was changed on June 4. The Sunday School hour takes place just prior to the worship service at 9:00 a.m. Worship will take place at 10. The Sunday evening service schedule will remain at 7. Bible study and prayer times will continue on Wednesdays at 7.

The congregation announces its Sunday service schedule in the *Ambassador* because of the number of AFLC people who visit us during the summer months. You are cordially invited to come to DeKalb.

## Improvements at Galilee Camp

Among improvements which have taken place at Galilee Lutheran Bible Camp, Lake Bronson, Minn., recently are the following: purchase of new hymnals, an upright freezer has been bought, a ping pong table was donated in memory of Mrs. Sheldon (Delores) Mortrud, an organ was given by Bethel Lutheran Church, Grafton, N. Dak., which participates in the camping program, trees have been planted, smoke alarms have been installed.

Work which has been done this spring includes: siding of Vagle Chapel and the girls' dorm, updating the plumbing in the girls' dorm and caretaker's house, replacement of 16 windows, vapor lights on the south side of the chapel and the east of the dining hall.

In addition to the two camp weeks of the Northwestern Minnesota District, Galilee will be the site of the annual Family Camp of the AFLC for that area, July 10-16.

# Plan to attend

**July 10-16**

Family Camp at Lake Bronson, Minn.

Evening speaker: Rev. Bruce Dalager

Adult Bible teacher: Rev. Richard

Snipstead.

**July 19-23**

Wilderness Camp, Lake Park, Minn.

Evening speaker: Lay Pastor Verle

Dean

Bible Teacher: Rev. John P. Strand

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THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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Second-class

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## PUBLIC EDUCATION

glad they had the common sense to see through the hoax.) Regardless of the hysteria of the time, I don't ever recall being taught by one Communist teacher. Today the catch-phrase is "secular humanism," I suspect that in about 25 years or so a new phrase will be used in an attempt to discredit the public schools.

A second concern some Christian parents have is that their children attending public schools will be drawn away from Christ by their worldly classmates. Again Sverdrup addresses this fear: "Many parents believe they must shield their children from all dangers, physical and spiritual. They have no confidence that God can protect their children. They would build a fence around the ocean itself were it possible, lest their children drown. I do not believe there is much genuine Christianity in such an attitude, but rather doubt and cowardice. It is simply lack of faith to be so afraid of the public school that one wishes to build a fence around one's congregation" (99).

If a child is raised in a Christian home, his foundation should be strong. Furthermore, Christians are the light of the world. Young Christians should let their lights shine among their classmates. We send missionaries around the world; why willfully pull our Christian children off the mission field? A young Christian can be "in the world but not of the world" as well as the adult Christian. If parents feel their children are not strong enough to face the non-Christians of their own age in school, do they feel their children will grow up and survive any better as adults in the work place with non-Christian colleagues? God will not abandon his children who put their trust in him.

A third concern is that the public schools are somehow responsible for the spiritual decline of the nation. This is a slant many television evangelists would have us believe. Because of the separation of church and state laws, the public schools never were supposed to be the spiritual nurturer of the child; that was the domain of the home and the church.

A more obvious contributor to the decline of spirituality in our nation might well be the breakdown of the family and America's obsession with material pursuits. With over forty percent of school-age children living in single parent families and the majority of children living in homes where both parents are employed outside of the home, it is little wonder the child's spiritual needs are not met. In spite of all the conveniences our extra wealth affords, parents just don't have the time they once had to spend with their children.

I am not trying to dissuade parents from sending their children to Christian schools. There are many good Christian schools supported by our Association churches.

On the other hand, for those parents who are worried by what they hear from some television evangelists and conservative papers, don't be in a hurry to assume the worst.

Check out your public schools. Visit your school's open houses and meet your children's teachers. Talk to them about your concerns. The more you become familiar with your local school chances are the more you will discover the truly unique position of the American public school system. It is an institution that a hundred years ago was charged with a responsibility from molding thousands of immigrant children from various religious and ethnic backgrounds into free, productive American citizens. Today we are charged with preparing these third, fourth and fifth generation children of immigrant families for the future as well as teaching them the values and heritage that made this country great. Through this whole process, however, we must never assume that the public school should take over the role of the church. For as Sverdrup says: "A free people needs two things, a strong public school and vital religious instruction. We get the one through the state and the other through the church" (99).