

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

June 28, 1988

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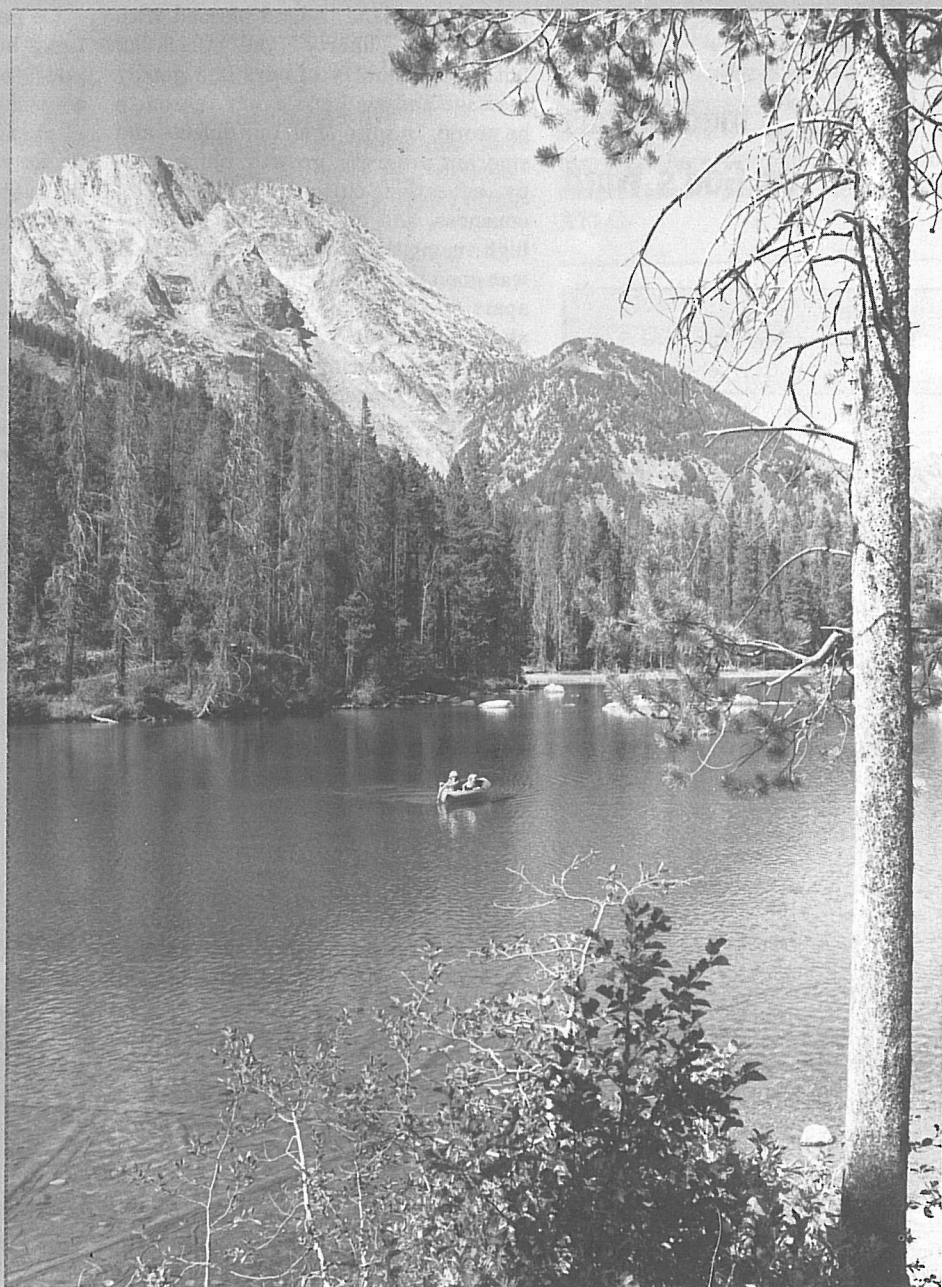
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meditations on God's Word

cover photo:

String Lake in the Grand Tetons
Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.

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THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom He has chosen for His own inheritance. . . Behold the eye of the Lord is on those who fear Him, on those who hope for His lovingkindness, to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help and our shield. For our heart rejoices in Him, because we trust in His holy name. Let Thy lovingkindness, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in Thee" (Psalm 33:12, 18-22 NASB).

God has given us a pleasant land, a very fruitful land, a land blessed with intelligence, liberty and Christian faith. This country of ours is a goodly heritage and we have every reason to be proud. In spite of all our defects and sins, our progress, growth, philanthropy, education, citizenship, civic righteousness, and love of liberty place us high among the nations of this earth. It was good that our country's fathers set apart an Independence Day when the attention of our people is turned toward remembering our history and considering questions relating to our future national interests and welfare.

One of the facts we should remember is that the founders of our Republic recognized God. The last sentence of the Declaration of Independence reads: "And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge," etc. When the Continental Congress was organized, Benjamin Franklin, even though he himself was not a church member, suggested that the sessions be opened with prayer. At Valley Forge, Washington was found in the stillness of the night on his knees praying to God to save his country, which lay bleeding. In that struggle for independence the colonies put their trust in Him who had guided another nation with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Heaven forbid that we should ever abandon the faith of our fathers!

We should also learn the necessity for putting one's heart into one's work. The signers of the Declaration pledged their lives, fortunes and sacred honor. All they had they threw into that movement for independence. The hearts of the people were in the strug-

The land we love

gle and this is always the secret of effective work. Let us keep "heart-enlisted" for our nation's welfare and all that will promote righteousness, justice and godliness in our midst.

Let us also learn the importance of committing one's self publicly to the support of right principles. Fifty-six men put their names to the Declaration of Independence. If they had not made this public commitment, they would have been more likely to waver before the war was over. But after their names were down, there was no turning back.

Do not try to be a secret Christian. Let it be plain to the whole world that you intend to be a Christian. Cut off all connection with your sinful past; cut off all chance of retreat and then go steadily forward until you behold that eternal city whose builder and maker is God. And may God hasten the day when our whole nation shall be made up of openly-confessing and consecrated Christians — when we shall indeed be a people whose God is the Lord!

O God, beneath Thy guiding hand
Our exiled fathers crossed the sea;
And when they trod the wintry strand,
With pray'r and psalm they
worshipped Thee

Thou heard, well-pleased, the song,
the pray'r;

Thy blessing came, and still its pow'r
Shall onward thro' all ages bear
The mem'ry of that holy hour.

Laws, freedom, truth, and faith in God
Came with those exiles o'er the waves;
And where their pilgrim feet have trod,
The God they trusted
guards their graves.

And here Thy name, O God of love,
Their children's children shall adore,
Till these eternal hills remove,
And spring adorns the earth no more.

— Leonard Bacon



by Rev.
Jerome C. Nikunen

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

To the 26th Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations in session at DeKalb, Ill., June 15-19, 1988. Grace and Peace!

Our appreciation is expressed to Grace Lutheran Church of DeKalb for their invitation to us to hold our 26th Annual Conference here. Our appreciation is also expressed to Northern Illinois University for allowing us the use of these fine facilities.

It is most fitting that our conference is in the State of Illinois this year. It is here that the AFLC has seen its greatest growth in just over a year. Where we had only one congregation in this state for many years, we now have nine.

In choosing a theme for the conference, the Co-ordinating Committee decided to go back to the theme of the first annual conference of the AFLC in 1963. The theme is "An Open Door." Surely it was God who opened the door for the AFLC to come into being. God's promise 25 years ago was that no man could shut the door when God has opened it. We would claim that promise again for the AFLC as we move on into the future.

So we meet again under this theme, "An Open Door." There is a compelling urgency in these words. May all of us in the AFLC awaken to the urgency of the day in which we live.

Many of you are here at an AFLC conference for the first time. Your presence gives evidence that God has set an open door before the AFLC. It would surely seem that God is setting the entire nation, yes, even this entire continent before us as an open door.

Not only does the AFLC have many new members and congregations in Illinois, but we have seen our fellowship grow to include new congregations in Texas, California, Washington, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Arkansas and Canada.

Pastor Huglen, editor of *The Lutheran Ambassador*, said it well in an editorial in the January 26th edition, "Surely, this is a moment of great importance in the life of our fellowship. Some thousands of new members have joined the Association in the past year. We stand on the threshold of a new era."

We look forward to the rich fellowship we shall have at this conference. May it be a time of getting to know each other better. God will knit us together in a tremendous bond as we pray and work together in this conference for the advancement of the kingdom of God in our AFLC.

May God give us the grace to trust Him as He leads us. May He give us the vision to dream and the courage to step out with faith in response to the challenges that open before us. May He grant us the humility to do all only to the glory of His Name.

The AFLC is a fellowship of independent Lutheran congregations bound together by the bonds of loyalty to a common cause and common tasks.

In the framework of our polity, the congregation is the right form of the kingdom of God on earth. We are a congregation-centered church. All activities within our AFLC must be carried on with the purpose of strengthening our congregations. From "Our Fellowship" we quote: "Our Fundamental Principles further give expression to the inherent right of self-determination of the individual congregations on the one hand, and the need and blessing of true spiritual co-operation between the congregations on the other hand, both for the strengthening of their own spiritual life and for the furtherance of the kingdom of God to the uttermost part of the earth."

The open door before us must never be cause for us to forget our heritage and our reason for being. This is a time to re-affirm some of the convictions that brought us into being.

The Authority of Scripture

From the beginning the AFLC has set forth its stand on the inerrancy and authority of Scripture. That was done at the organizational conference in the "Declaration of Faith." We must continue to maintain a strong position on the authority and inerrancy of Scripture. We must not be satisfied with lip-service and the passing of resolutions declaring our stand on Scripture. It is possible to spend a good deal of time and to expend a great deal of energy asserting the infallibility of the Word, and then fail to allow Scripture to be the only authority in all matters of faith and life. We must be students of the Word. Here alone we find the foundation for the truth that will guide our decisions and help us to detect error.

A great segment of the Lutheran Church has tragically taken a position denying the inerrancy of Scripture. The Historical-critical method of interpreting Scripture makes man's mind the judge over the written Word and reduces the Scriptures to myths, history and stories.

The Task of the Church

We need to ask ourselves the question, "What is the basic task of the church in this world?" If we were to judge the answer by what we observe in the larger denominations, we would say that the church's main task is the social gospel. We hear so much about programs for world disarmament, for feeding and housing the poor, for implementation of justice and the end of apartheid. We acknowledge that these are concerns which should not be ignored. But are they the main task of the church? The Bible says that God would have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. This is



"When God's Spirit comes upon a congregation, the first and more profound effect will be a living zeal for the salvation of souls . . ."

consistent with the Great Commission which Jesus gave to the apostles and to the Church - "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

This is the main task Christ would have His Church engaged in today. It was also the burden Paul expressed as he admonished Timothy - "Preach the Word."

We are surrounded by hundreds and thousands of unchurched people. The percentage of Christians in the world is shrinking. As we are challenged with open doors, may we dedicate ourselves as never before to the task of bringing Christ to our neighbors at home, and even to lands abroad.

Undoubtedly the greatest door that is open to the AFLC is our own land of America. We have a fine Home Mission program. But a great deal more could be done if we as a church would provide the funds to enable more new congregations to be planted where the Gospel can be preached and souls reached.

This is not only our opportunity. It is our responsibility. Oh, that the Spirit of God would grip our hearts with the burden for the lost that Paul felt for his brethren. "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."

Evangelism

The AFLC has stood for evangelism. We need to define our terms carefully when we make a reference to being evangelical today. Some who lay claim to being evangelical have an entirely different concept of evangelism than what we have known in the AFLC. Concerning evangelism, Georg Sverdrup, founder of the Lutheran Free Church, said, "Our congregations need to be set free, which essentially is the same as saying that they need to be awakened or revived. When God's Spirit comes upon a congregation, the first and more profound effect will be a living zeal for the salvation of souls . . . When such as have themselves been set free from the bonds of death arise in the power through which Christ rose from the dead, and begin to labor for the awakening of others, then freedom has dawned in truth. Then bonds are broken, considerations are brushed aside, and only one thing matters: 'How can we get those who sleep awakened, how can we get those who are dying saved, how can we get those who are bound free, how can we get someone along with us on the way to eternal life?'"

If today indeed we share this burden with Sverdrup, we can dare to call ourselves evangelical.

To many in the Lutheran Church baptism has become an eternal security. There is no empha-

sis on the need of personal assurance, or a commitment to the Lordship of Christ.

There are questions that arise from time to time about practices in evangelism. In order to clarify some of these questions the Evangelism Committee asked Dr. Monseth, dean of our seminary, to prepare a paper on the "Principles and Practices of Evangelism." The seminary faculty and the Commission on Evangelism have endorsed this paper. It is found in pamphlet form in your conference packet. The Evangelism Commission under the report of Committee No. 3 will be asking the Conference to endorse this pamphlet as the position of the AFLC on evangelism. We add our strong encouragement to conference adoption of this document. Please read this pamphlet before you are asked to endorse it on Friday afternoon.

This year the Conference is being asked to set up two new departments of benevolence. Both have previously been under the General Fund.

Parish Education is presenting a request to be permitted to set up a separate budget. The task being done by Parish Education is of such significance that their request merits the approval of the Conference when it is presented under Committee No. 4.

The recommendation of the Co-ordinating Committee is that a separate board be set up for the operation of the Association Retreat Center and that its budget also be separated from the General Fund. This, too, is a very positive step. The election of the ARC Board with foresight and vision will be an important step in helping to develop the ARC into a first-class retreat center.

We would like to encourage the people of our AFLC to use the investment opportunities available to them in the AFLC, in the Church Extension Fund and Capital Investments. Put your money to work in the Church, and receive a good return. Our business administrator, Mr. Ernest Miedema, will be glad to hear from individuals and congregations.

We are glad to see some new life being generated into the hymnal project for the AFLC. Our special thanks to Seminarian Tom Olson for accomplishing this. Tom has a report to the Conference, and we believe that this is the right time for us as a church to move ahead on the hymnal project.

The Budget Request

This year the Conference finds itself approving the first sizeable budget increase in several years. We actually had decreases in 1986-87 and 1987-88. I believe that it will be helpful to us to see what the budget request has been for the last five years. It gives us a better perspective.

1985-86 — \$1,191,678
1986-87 — \$1,120,704
1987-88 — \$1,014,894
1988-89 — \$1,044,504
1989-90 — \$1,318,281

The budget request this year is 26% above last year's request. It is however, only 10.6% above the request of 1985-86. We have been marking time for several years.

The budget increase this year comes partially from expanded ministries such as Parish Ed and Youth, as well as a much needed addition to the seminary faculty. Increases are also reflected in our Home Mission and World Mission outreach.

The time is now that we in the AFLC need to take a good look at what we have. God has blessed us in a tremendous way. Let us not take our church for granted. Let us not take our schools and missions for granted. Let us join hands in support of what God has entrusted to us. Let us each one do our part as good stewards of what God has entrusted to us. Let's resolve to keep our AFLC strong.

The Canadian Scene

The break has come in Canada. As one who grew up in the Lutheran Free Church in Canada, I have longed for the day when we could see a strong AFLC presence in Canada. It has come to be, not among former Lutheran Free Church people, but rather among those of the former ELC. We are excited about the four congregations in Canada at this time. There are good prospects for others to follow.

The Canadian government strictly regulates the organization and operation of churches. We have had a fear that our Canadian churches would not be permitted to participate in the ministries of the AFLC, USA. This does not appear to be the case. However, we are awaiting final word on how much representation will be required by Canadians on our Corporations and Boards if there is to be support for these from Canada.

Ordination

The Ordination-Worship Service on Sunday morning will close our Annual Conference. Seven men will be ordained to the ministry. It will make a great highlight of our conference. We trust that you will make an effort to stay with us through the Conference for this service.

In Memorium

Three of our co-workers who have served their Lord in the ministry of the AFLC were called home since the last annual conference.

Rev. Lars Stalsbrotten went home to his eternal reward on August 19. He had just celebrated his 100th birthday on July 21. Pastor Stalsbrotten had served as evangelist and pastor in

the Church of the Lutheran Brethren, in the Lutheran Free Church and in the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations.

Rev. Norman Tenneboe's ministry was cut short in an accident that claimed his life on September 24. He was 64 years of age. He had served pastorates at Cumberland, Wis., Eben Junction, Mich., and at Park River, N. Dak.

Rev. Trygve F. Dahle passed away on December 30 at the age of 96. He served parishes in the Lutheran Free Church at Waubay, S. Dak., Hallock, Minn., McVile, N. Dak., Spicer, Minn., Elbow, Sask., and LaPorte, Minn. He served as an interim pastor in the AFLC, including Pukwana, S. Dak., Kalispell, Mont., Everett, Wash., Grafton and Grand Forks, N. Dak., Boscobel, Wis., and Tioga, N. Dak.

Blessed be the memory of these pioneers and laborers in the AFLC

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

In Conclusion

I sense a deep urgency within my soul as I look out at our troubled nation and world. Surely, the shadows are lengthening across the world's landscape. As individuals and as a Church I pray that we can be gripped by the truth that the coming of our Lord Jesus is drawing nigh. We have so little time to work. We need to be about our Father's business. May our priorities be set in order. "May our weak faith be strengthened for the last weariness, the final strife."

Thank you for the partnership in the Gospel again this year. Thank you for your support and prayers.

*Respectfully submitted,
Richard Snipstead*

“... gripped
by the truth
that the
coming of
our Lord
Jesus is
drawing nigh.”

The company of evil men

The children of God do not flee the company of evil men, rather do they seek it that they may help them. They do not want to go to heaven alone, they want to bring with them the greatest sinner, if they can.

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

What is the role of the father in the home today?

The God-ordained role



"The first observation I note in Scripture are the numerous accounts of fathers who failed in their homes."

The first observation I note in Scripture are the numerous accounts of fathers who failed in their homes. Eli is such an example. Eli was not able to control his sons. They made a mockery of the things of God by not allowing the people the freedom to carry out their offerings to the Lord according to the almighty plan of our God. We also note that because this behavior was not chastened, the behavior of Eli's sons became even more gross. Eli had lost complete control of his sons. All he did was talk, talk, talk. "Why do you do such evil things?" Eli knew why they did such evil things, because they were not converted. He heard about all their evil doings, but continued to allow them access to the temple. His disobedience brought God's judgment upon his sons.

The fathers of Israel didn't do much better. In Deuteronomy 4:9, God instructs the fathers to teach their children and their grandchildren. This same command is made in Deuteronomy 6:3-7. Fathers were to teach their children diligently in the way of the Lord. Not pastors, not Sunday School teachers, but fathers.

The Passover was initiated by our Lord to help the fathers in carrying out their responsibilities. Exodus 12:26: "And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, 'What mean ye by this service?' That ye shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when He smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses.'" This service could become a teaching tool for the Israelite father. He would be able to tell the whole story of how the Hebrews ended up in Egypt and how God had miraculously delivered them. Exodus 13:8 bears this out, too. The Feast of the Unleavened Bread was to be used as a tool for instruction.

by Rev.
Gerald Gettis
Vernon, B. C.

Exodus 13:11-13 states that the first-born males of man and beast were the Lord's. This truth was to be used for a teaching illustration of how the Lord passed over all the first-born in Egypt. During the Feast of Tabernacles the children were to hear all the works of the Law.

In Joshua 24:24, the people said unto Joshua, "The Lord our God will we serve, and His voice will we obey."

Did the fathers carry out their responsibility? Did the fathers carry out God's will? Read Judges 2:7-10. The generation of Joshua knew the Lord, but verse 10 states that the generation after Joshua did not know the Lord or the works of the Lord.

What does that say to us? The fathers who said they would teach their children the ways and works of the Lord did neither. The generation after Joshua was helpless before the enemy. They had no protection. They didn't know they were God's heritage.

Judges 2:11-13 says, "(The children) forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt. That makes perfect sense. If these children were not taught who the Lord God is and were not taught His works, they certainly would forsake the Lord God. When people forsake the Lord, they make new cisterns.

What happens when children do not know the Lord? They make false gods. Jeremiah 2:13: "For my people have committed two evils, they have forsaken Me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." The generation after Joshua hewed broken cisterns. Judges 2:13: "And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth," the gods of the Canaanites. They were conformed to the gods of their age.

The same thing will happen today, and is happening today. Our children are chasing the gods of this age, little gods such as rebellion and stubbornness, and one can read the commentary on the future of such behavior (Romans 1:18-32). They are being conformed to this world. Why? One of the reasons is the lack of training by fathers.

Proverbs 22:6: "Train a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Bring up, catechize, diligently train a child in the way, in the well trodden path of God's Holy Word, and when he is old he will continue to walk that path. I have heard this verse interpreted in this way. Train a child in the way he should go and when he is departed from the ways of the Lord, gets to be old, he will return to the Lord. This is *not* what that verse is saying. It is saying, if you train him to walk the path of our Lord Jesus Christ, he will continue to walk that path even when he is old.

I thank the Lord that we have become a part

of a church that totally trusts our Lord's Word, a church that believes that God's Word is completely trustworthy in all that it speaks. II Timothy 3:16: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," that we may walk that well trodden path of our Lord Jesus Christ. "For the prophecy came not in old times by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Yes, we fathers must instruct our children in the ways of our Lord. When we have a church that honors God's Word in all that it speaks, it makes our job a lot easier. Colossians 3:21 says: "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." Fathers, do not stir up anger within your children to the point of excited vengeance. If you do, they will become spiritless and moody children. Dads, it is so easy for our old nature to teach our children, instead of our new nature, but not one of us wants a spiritless, moody child without sense of direction. Ephesians 6:4 helps us even more on this subject: "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath." Do not enrage your children.

One of the areas where we as fathers fail to adequately carry out our responsibilities is in the area of giving instructions on a specific chore. We may say to one of our children, "Mow the lawn." That's it! Just the command, "Mow the lawn!" When we get home, we look at the job. "Why didn't you pull the weeds next to the lawn? Why didn't you empty the garbage can in the yard?" And our dear child who had set out to do a good job soon looks very sad. "But, Dad, what do you mean? But, Dad?" says the child. "You know that when I mow the lawn, I pull weeds and empty the garbage can," says Dad. "But, Dad," says the child. Dad responds.

Thank God for the Holy Spirit who nudges us at this point. Dad says, "Oh! I see, Son; I guess I really only asked you to mow the lawn."

If we don't allow God's Holy Spirit the freedom to urge and change us, we cause our children to become angry. We did not give them clear instructions. Ephesians 6:4 tells us to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Instead of barking out orders with an angry attitude, let us train our children in the ways of our Lord, lest we forget they are God's property. *Train them up* in the nurture — this means they are to have a steady course of nourishing where they know what is expected of them and what will happen if they fail to meet that standard. *Bring them up in the admonition of the Lord* — means that we train our children to react to our word of encouragement or whatever is necessary with a soft hand; we bring them up as one of God's children.

Maybe you are one of those fathers who is carrying out his role according to our Lord's plan. Praise God for you. Maybe you are one who needs to ask God for His forgiveness for the way you are bringing up your children. Admit it to Jesus. "Jesus, please forgive me for not raising our children according to your plan." I John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Maybe you need to ask your children to forgive you.

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for paying for all my sins, even my sins of neglect and unwillingness to raise godly sons and daughters. Please teach me how to carry out Your will in this area for the rest of my life. Amen.

(Ed. note: We hope to have a brief word of introduction to Pastor Gettis, one of the newer pastors in the AFLC, later.)

"Our children are chasing the gods of this age."

Missionary David Abel's schedule

July

7-9 — Family Bible Camp at the Association Retreat Center.

12-16 — Family Bible Camp at Lake Bronson, Minn.

Sunday, 17 — 9:00 a.m. Worship Service - St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Cloquet, Minn.

7:00 p.m. Family Night Service - Sunnyside Lutheran Church, Stacy, Minn.

Sunday, 24 — 9:00 a.m. Worship Service - Faith Lutheran Church, Shakopee, Minn.

25-26 — Luther League Leadership Conference, AFLBS Campus.

August

Sunday, 7 — 10:00 a.m. Worship Service - West Lisbon Ev. Lutheran Church, Newark, Ill.

9-13 — Family Bible Camp at the ARC.

Sunday, 14 — 10:30 a.m. - Worship Service - Faith Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn.

2:00 p.m. — Mini-Mission Conference - Victory in Christ Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Minn.

Sunday, 21 — 9:00 a.m. Sunday School, 10:00 a.m. Worship Service - Grace Lutheran Church, DeKalb, Ill.

September 4 — Return to Brazil.

Remember the AFLC Family Camps

July 3-9 — At the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis.

July 11-17 — At Galilee Bible Camp, Lake Bronson, Minn.

July 20-24 — At Wilderness Camp, Lake Park, Minn.

Aug. 8-14 — At the ARC, Osceola, Wis.

Serving the Lord

by Mrs. Dennis (Ceta) Rude
Lake Alma, Sask.

A disciple named Ina

Over 50 years ago, Paul and Ina Bartel, the children of American missionaries, pledged their lives to God, to each other, and to serve on the mission field in China. After some years in a difficult area, the death by dysentery of their five-month-old baby girl, the power of God came upon their mission field bringing many to Christ. The work grew and spread into the country and to other towns.

Later, during the Communist take over, the family was forced to leave China, taking up work in Hong Kong among the Chinese refugees.

In the sixties, Paul, who had earned a number of degrees in education, was invited to Canadian Bible College in Regina, Saskatchewan, where he served for five years as academic dean, vice-president and teacher. Ina became the dean of women.

Here at Lake Alma, I had been searching for God and had prayed this simple prayer, "God, I want to be a Christian, but I don't know how. Please show me how." And God, who knows perfectly how to answer prayer, placed me in a hospital room in Regina beside Missionary Ina Bartel.

In this hospital room I watched Christianity in action and longed for it greatly. Ina had a positive, gracious manner, a ready wit and a calmness which came from a total peace with God and with her circumstances. Here I first saw a husband and wife praying and praising God together, committing each other confidently into His care at the end of each visiting hour.

After I arrived home, Ina's notes and Christian books followed. "I miss you and am praying for you," she would remind me. In these books (one of them was *Prayer* by Ole Hallesby) I found that Jesus had made the way for me by His death on the cross and I offered my life to God.

Over the years my friendship with the Bartels continued by correspondence. Ina never preached to me in her letters, but always reminded me that I was in her thoughts and prayers.

One winter I was privileged to visit them in their retirement home in Colorado Springs. I sat with them as they prayed and read the Word together during their evening devotions and again after breakfast when they took a photo album which contained pictures of the families they had ministered to through the years and prayed aloud for each one.

When the present regime was established in China, Paul and Ina were allowed to return to visit their converts. Thirty-five years had passed, their Bibles and hymnbooks had long since been taken from them, yet these Chinese people remained believers in Christ, their faith protected through the prayers of the missionaries who had not forgotten them.

This reminds me of Paul of the New Testament, who never forgot or neglected the churches he established on his missionary journeys, but sent messengers to strengthen them and encourage them, as well as letters of love and exhortation.

"In this hospital room
I watched Christianity
in action and longed
for it greatly."

To the Romans, he wrote, "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world." And he added, "Unceasingly I make mention of you" in my prayers (Romans 1:8, 9 NAS).

To the Corinthians, "I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus." Later he added, "I have been informed concerning you, my brethren, by Chloe's people, that there are quarrels among you" (I Corinthians 1:4, 11 NAS). And he reminded them again of the centrality of Christ.

Much is said about discipleship these days. Through the years, perhaps I have been, in a sense, a disciple of Ina Bartel's. If so, it has been a natural and spontaneous discipleship. She has led me not by teaching or preaching, but by example in all that she says, does and is. And even more, by loving me. Her letters have often come when I most needed encouragement.

Recently I received a letter from Ina, now in her eighties, her health failing. "Sometimes it seems," she wrote, "that I can see the lights of the Celestial City. I want to use my remaining time on earth in prayer for the world and for friends like you." I was struck by sorrow and with the question, "Who will pray for me when my dear friend is gone?"

I realize that God has shown His mercy and love toward me by first sending His Son to die for my sins and also through the love of His precious servant Ina.

Doctrine is the basis of practice,
and practice is the fruitage of doctrine.
L. S. Keyser

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 he or she held membership.

MINNESOTA

Bemidji

Ida Moe, 91, Jan. 14, Bethany.

Leah Moe, 55, Mar. 21, Bethany.

SASKATCHEWAN

Lake Alma

Herbert Hagen, 77, Apr. 30, Faith.

NORTH DAKOTA

Fargo

Mrs. Sheldon (Delores) Mortrud, 56, June 7, St. Paul's (Delores Mortrud's husband is a member of the AFLC Co-ordinating Committee.)

EDITORIALS

THE MINNEAPOLIS THESES

The Bible is our basic source book. All else must flow from it as to our understanding of faith and life.

Then beyond that foundation it is interesting to read the statements of belief which people, under the direction of God's Spirit, too, have drawn up to meet the various historical situations that have existed. As examples, we mention the three ecumenical creeds, Luther's Small Catechism (and the Large one) and the Unaltered Augsburg Confession. We learn from them when we read them.

Out of the history of many believers of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations comes a document known as "The Minneapolis Theses." Although the Theses were written a few years before, they became the basis for the American Lutheran Conference which was formed in 1930. The Conference was a federation of five Lutheran bodies, namely, Augustana Synod (Swedish), the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Norwegian), the American Lutheran Church (German), the United Evangelical Lutheran Church (Danish), and the Lutheran Free Church (Norwegian). The names of the ELC and the UELC were different in 1930, but we use the names most familiar to us now.

Notably absent from Conference membership was the Suomi Synod. While a member of the National Lutheran Council, it did not participate in the American Lutheran Conference. However, there is no reason to believe that it was not in harmony with the doctrinal stand of the Conference.

The publication of the American Lutheran Conference, which discontinued in 1954, was *The Lutheran Outlook*.

But to get back to the Theses, they are a very short statement of belief which the signatory churches found necessary as a testimony to the world. They have been labelled as Fundamentalist-inspired by some, and orthodox, representing "old Lutheranism" in opposition to new and more liberal trends.

The Theses seem relevant to us in the AFLC today. The statement on the Word is strong and up-to-date. The explanation under Article 2, 1, concerning the ELC could as well have been written about the LFC because the same situation existed in reference to it. She did not officially subscribe to any other symbols than the five mentioned either, if she did to those. (The LFC certainly held to the five symbols, but one might be hard pressed to find an official certification of that fact.) In fact, we are surprised the LFC even joined the American Lutheran Conference when it involved subscription to the Minneapolis Theses. We say that not because the Theses aren't good, but simply because the LFC was reluctant to join other groups, even Lutheran ones.

The Minneapolis Theses are perhaps best known for the statement or reiteration of the thesis that Lutheran pulpits are for Lutheran pastors only, and Lutheran altars are for Lutherans only. We submit that this "rule" hasn't been followed religiously, but it is a good general principle. It makes sense that those who preach in our pulpits share the doctrinal convictions we do and also that they share common

faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. As to communicants, if not Lutheran, they should believe in Jesus as their Savior and believe in the real presence of Christ in the elements of the Sacrament. It would be rare if anyone who possessed these two qualifications were denied participation in one of our churches.

The article on the Lodge Question is good and a reminder to us all of the conflict which there is in simultaneous memberships in lodges "as are either avowedly religious or practice the forms of religion, etc.," and in a Christian congregation. We hope that persons caught in this contradiction will choose the way of Christ and leave the other.

As we said at the outset, it's interesting to read formulations of the faith from the past. The Minneapolis Theses are brief, but they give us a glimpse of the time in which they were written and offer us today a set of principles that are valid for our day also.

THANK YOU, PASTOR NIKUNEN

Pastor Jerome Nikunen was one of the AFLC pastors on a recent trip to the Holy Land (see the picture elsewhere in this issue). It might have been an added blessing for *Ambassador* readers if more of his writings were to follow such a trip rather than precede it. We have an idea that a pastor's ministry is unavoidably colored forever by a journey to the lands of the Bible.

The devotional articles by Pastor Nikunen this past half year have been a real blessing as they have stood. His style is vigorous even as his preaching is. He has written in a down-to-earth manner. He attracts attention and keeps it.

Thank you, Pastor Nikunen, for being our writer these past months and working around the trip to Israel so that there was no problem in the flow of articles to us. May the Lord continue to bless your ministry in the two congregations of your parish at Minnewaukan, N. Dak.

Our new writer, beginning next time, and whom we are happy to introduce, will be Rev. Ralph Tjelta, a faculty member of our Schools. Teachers are also very busy people and we appreciate his willingness to take the assignment of writing "Light for the Way" at this time. He plans to write exclusively on Old Testament texts and we don't know that any one previous writer has done that. Look for his first article next time.

Pastor Tjelta served a congregation (Calvary) in Chicago, Grace Lutheran in DeKalb, Ill., and Minnesota Valley, Burnsville, Minn., before coming to the Association Schools in 1981. God's blessings on your writing for the *Ambassador* now, Pastor Tjelta.

CONFERENCE NEWS

This is the awkward time of the year. This *Ambassador* is dated over a week after the Annual Conference, yet the copy for it was prepared over a week before the Conference began. It becomes sort of a "limbo" issue. That doesn't mean that what is presented in these pages today

◇

The following is presented as an historical document revealing the background which many of us have.

Adopted in 1930

I The Scriptures

The synods signatory to these Articles of Agreement accept without exception all the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments as a whole and in all their parts, as the divinely inspired, revealed, and inerrant Word of God, and submit to this as the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life.

II The Lutheran Symbols

1. These synods also, without reservation, accept the symbolical books of the evangelical Lutheran Church, not insofar as but because they are the presentation and explanation of the pure doctrine of the Word of God and a summary of the faith of the Lutheran Church, as this has found expression in response to the exigencies arising from time to time.

(The Evangelical Lutheran Church, in agreement with the position of the Lutheran Church in Norway and Denmark, has officially accepted only the three Ecumenical Creeds, the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, and Luther's Small Catechism. This position does not imply that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in any way whatsoever rejects the remaining symbolical books of the Lutheran Church, as the constant reference to them in her theological literature amply testifies, but since the other symbolical books are not known to her constituency generally, it has not been deemed necessary to require formal subscription to the entire Book of Concord.)

2. Adherence to our confessions pertains only to their doctrinal content

(i.e., the doctrines declared to be the divine truth and the rejection of opposite doctrines), but to these without exception or limitation in all articles and parts, no matter whether a doctrine is specifically cited as a confession or incidentally introduced for the purpose of elucidating or proving some other doctrine. All that pertains to the form of presentation (historical comments, questions purely exegetical, etc.) is not binding.

III Church Fellowship

1. These synods agree that true Christians are found in every denomination which has so much of divine truth revealed in Holy Scripture that children can be born in it; that according to the Word of God and our Confessions, church fellowship, that it, mutual recognition, altar and pulpit fellowship, and eventually co-operation in the strictly essential work of the Church, presupposes unanimity in the pure doctrine of the Gospel and in the confession of the same in word and deed.

Where the establishment and maintenance of church fellowship ignores present doctrinal differences or declares them a matter of indifference, there is unionism, pretense of union which does not exist.

2. They agree that the rule, "Lutheran pulpits for Lutheran pastors only, and Lutheran altars for Lutheran communicants only," is not only in full accord with, but necessarily implied in, the teachings of the divine Word and the Confessions of the evangelical Lu-

theran Church. This rule, implying the rejection of all unionism and syncretism, must be observed as setting forth a principle elementary to sound and conservative Lutheranism.

IV Points of Doctrine

In 1920 all synods with the exception of the Buffalo Synod (to which they had not been submitted) adopted theses on:

1. The Work of Christ
2. The Gospel
3. Absolution
4. Holy Baptism
5. Justification
6. Faith
7. Conversion
8. Election

After discussion of these theses the representatives present came to the conclusion that we are in full agreement in all essentials pertaining to these doctrines. (*The reference is to the Chicago Theses, which follow.*)

1. *In regard to the work of Christ, Redemption, and Reconciliation:* Jesus Christ, God and Man, has not only for the benefit of, but in the place of, the human race taken upon Himself the sins of the world with the just penalties for them. In the place of the world and for its benefit, He has by His holy life fulfilled the Law, and by His suffering and death, by His blood, paid the penalty for the whole world, truly and completely satisfied the divine justice; redeemed the world from guilt and punishment of sin, and brought about the reconciliation of God, whose wrath had come upon mankind on account of sin and whose justice required satisfaction.

EDITORIAL

isn't good, only that we aren't what we might be expected to be, a post-Conference report.

But we are making a change in our schedule this year so that we can bring you coverage of the Annual Conference more quickly than last year. With the co-operation of our printer, Roscoe Printers of Wanamingo, Minn., we will publish on July 12 instead of July 26 and in order to do that will compress our normal three-week process for an issue into something less than that. This means that you will be

reading about the Annual Conference two weeks earlier than you might have been. We hope you will appreciate this effort on our part.

Working in a shorter time frame than usual may present some problems for us, but we hope that our final product will be satisfactory and relatively error free.

There won't be any issue printed on July 26 (we only put one out in July). The next one will be that of August 9, the only one for that month.

MINNEAPOLIS THESES

2. *In regard to the Gospel:* The Gospel is not only a story, a narrative of what Jesus Christ has done, but at the same time it offers and gives the result of the work of Christ — above all, forgiveness of sin. Yea, it even at the same time gives the power to accept what it offers.

3. *In regard to Absolution:* Absolution does not essentially differ from the forgiveness of sin offered by the Gospel. The only difference is that absolution is the direct application of forgiveness of sin to the individual desiring the consolation of the Gospel. Absolution is not a judgment passed by the pastor on those being absolved, declaring that they now have forgiveness.

4. *In regard to Holy Baptism and the Gospel:* The Holy Ghost works regeneration of the sinner both through Baptism and the Gospel. Both are therefore justly called the means of regeneration.

5. *In regard to justification:* Justification is not an act in man but an act by God in heaven, declaring the repentant and believing just, or stating that he is regarded as such on account of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ by faith.

6. *In regard to Faith:* Faith is not in any measure a human effort. Faith is an act of man in so far as it is man who believes. But both the power to believe and the act of believing are God's work and gift in the human soul or heart.

7. *In regard to Conversion:* Conversion as the word is commonly used in our Lutheran confession comprises contrition and faith produced by the

Law and the Gospel. If man is not converted, the responsibility and guilt fall on him because he in spite of God's all-sufficient grace through the call "Would not," according to the Word of Christ, Matt. 23:37: "How often would I have gathered thy children even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."

If a man is converted the glory belongs to God alone, whose work it is throughout. Before conversion or in conversion, there is no co-operation of man, but at the very moment man is converted, co-operation begins through the new powers given in conversion; though this co-operation is never independent of the Holy Spirit, but always "to such an extent and so long as God by His Holy Spirit rules, guides, and leads him" (Formula of Concord).

8. *In regard to Election:* The causes of election to salvation are the mercy of God and the most holy merit of Christ; nothing in us on account of which God has elected us to eternal life.

On the one hand, we reject all forms of synergism which in any way would deprive God of His glory as the only Savior. On the other hand, we reject all forms of Calvinism which directly or indirectly would conflict with the order of salvation, and would not give to all a full and equally great opportunity of salvation, or which in any manner would violate the Word of God which says that God would have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth (I Tim. 2:4).

V The Lodge Question

1. These synods agree that all such organizations or societies, secret or open, as are either avowedly religious or practice the forms of religion without confessing as a matter of principle the Triune God or Jesus Christ as the Son of God, come into the flesh, and our Savior from sin, or teach, instead of the Gospel, salvation by human works or morality, are anti-Christian and destructive of the best interests of the Church and the individual soul, and that, therefore, the Church of Christ and its congregations can have no fellowship with them.

2. They agree that a Lutheran synod should not tolerate pastors who have affiliated themselves with any anti-Christian society. And they admonish their pastors and congregations to testify against the sin of lodgery and to put forth earnest efforts publicly and privately to enlighten and persuade persons who are members of anti-Christian societies to sever their connection with such organizations.

VI Recognition

The representatives of the synods here present agree that the synods accepting these articles are one in doctrine and practice, recognize each other as truly Lutheran, and may enter into pulpit and altar fellowship.

Augustana Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church
American Lutheran Church
United Evangelical Lutheran Church
Lutheran Free Church

THINK
OF IT!

Think of a man saying, "I pray thee have me excused," when God invites him to come to the feast of eternal salvation, joy, and peace! Yet myriads of people do that very thing every day.

WMF news

First Lutheran Church, Camarillo, California — "The Challenge of the Cross," a lenten drama, was presented to the church on Palm Sunday. This was done by the WMF ladies. A love offering was given to the AFLC through the WMF.



Triumph Lutheran Church, Ferndale, Washington — A Cradle Roll Party was held in April. Spiritual candles were lit for Alexander Wittmer, Ray Lynn Egerdal, twins Jeff and Jamie Watson, and Chelsea Paddock. Mrs. Linda Fugleberg presented the program, assisted by her family.



Faith Free Lutheran Church, Lake Alma, Sask. — A Cradle Roll Graduation Program was recently held in honor of three three-year-old boys. Pictured from left to right are: Matthew Hagen with his mother, Grace Hagen and Matthew Johnson with his mother, Dawn Johnson. Not present for the picture was Travis Fossum. Matthew Hagen was the first child to be baptized in the congregation, in December of 1984.

Eastern N. Dak.

Bethany Free Lutheran Church, Binford, hosted the Spring Rally on April 30. The theme was "The Fountains Within," from John 4:14. Seminarian Craig Johnson was the speaker for the day. He spoke on the theme and shared

his internship experience in Brazil, a land where God is at work. One hundred fifty ladies attended the rally.

Women's Missionary Federation

In memoriam gifts

Robert Taylor, Brodhead, Wis.
Glenn Breckey, Tioga, N. Dak.
Swen Helgeson, Wallace, S. Dak.
Gunda Vigasaa, Binford, N. Dak.
Effie Gilstad, Ray, N. Dak.
Amelia Aasved, Roseau, Minn.
Selma Gravgaard, Spicer, Minn.
Margaret Sharping, Pukwana, S. Dak.
Lars Johnson, Wallace, S. Dak.
August Millim, Webster, S. Dak.
Oliver Stenbak, White Earth, N. Dak.
Gladys Turmo, Fargo, N. Dak.
Olaf Wold, Abercrombie, N. Dak.
Hermer Knudson, Valley City, N. Dak.
Anton Engebretson, Valley City, N. Dak.
Dorothy Nordahl, Valley City, N. Dak.
Esther Decker
James Faust

*Blessed are
those who die
in the Lord*



Chippewa Lutheran Church, Brandon, Minnesota — The Chippewa Lutheran WMF celebrated 100 years of service on Sunday, April 10. Mrs. Roy Strom read the history of the WMF at the worship service. The afternoon program featured Dorothy and Rollie Durkee's collection of outfits from every decade since 1868. The Durkee's are members of Chippewa Lutheran.

South Dakota

Tabor Free Lutheran, Webster, hosted the Spring Rally on April 23. Nine parishes in northeastern S. Dakota were represented in the seventy-two ladies attending. The theme was from II Tim. 2:15a, "Do your utmost to present yourself to God approved, a workman who has no cause to be ashamed." Mrs. Lois Oscarson, Abercrombie, N. Dak., was the special speaker. She displayed many of her quilts and used each one in a unique object lesson from Scripture.

Western N. Dak., E. Mont., Canada

One hundred twenty-two ladies attended the Spring Rally at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Stanley, N. Dak. They heard Pastor Stephen Odegard, Tioga, N. Dak., and Pastor Leslie Johnson, Lake Alma, Sask., speak on the theme, "Our Caring Father," from I Peter 3:12.

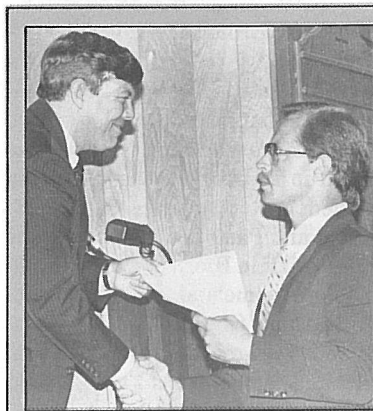


The rally filled Minnesota Valley's new sanctuary.

Minneapolis

"We Are The Aroma of Christ," from II Cor. 2:15, was the focus for one hundred eighty-three ladies on April 16, at Minnesota Valley Free Lutheran Church, Lakeville, Minn. Mrs. Mavis Miller, Lakeville, was the guest speak-

er. Mrs. Walter Johnson, Shakopee, Minn., gave a brief report on contemporary issues and how Satan works to deceive even in the church. Mrs. Magdalene Stolee, Kenyon, was elected president and Mary Rasmussen, Lakeville, treasurer. *cont. on p. 16*



Dean Greven gives John Dahl, Bagley, Minn. his diploma.

This could be you!

There is still time. Fall quarter begins Sept. 11.

For more information write: AFLBS
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

New faculty member at AFLC Schools



Rev. Steven Lombardo, Newark, Illinois, has accepted the call from the Board of Trustees to become a member of the faculty at the AFLC Schools. Rev. Lombardo and his wife Angela (daughter of Rev. and Mrs. James Asp), and their five children, ages 5-16, expect to move to Maple Grove, Minnesota, in July.

Pastor Lombardo received his D. Min. degree from Trinity Evangelical School, Deerfield, Illinois, while serving West Lisbon Evangelical Lutheran Church for the past ten years. Previously, he was an evangelist for the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement and an associate pastor at Thousand Oaks, California. Lombardo graduated from Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa, and Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Pastor Lombardo is a needed addition to the Schools' faculty. His specialty is Practical Theology. "Over a period of time, God has given me an interest and burden for the local church and the building up of its ministry. I believe seminary and Bible school play important roles in doing just that." Pastor Lombardo added, "I have great anticipation and thanksgiving to the Lord for opening this opportunity. I rejoice to teach in an environment where the Bible is lifted high, without apology for the inerrant and infallible Word of God." *—S. Hjermstad*

Introducing new AFLC congregations

Alma Lutheran Church, Argyle, Minn.

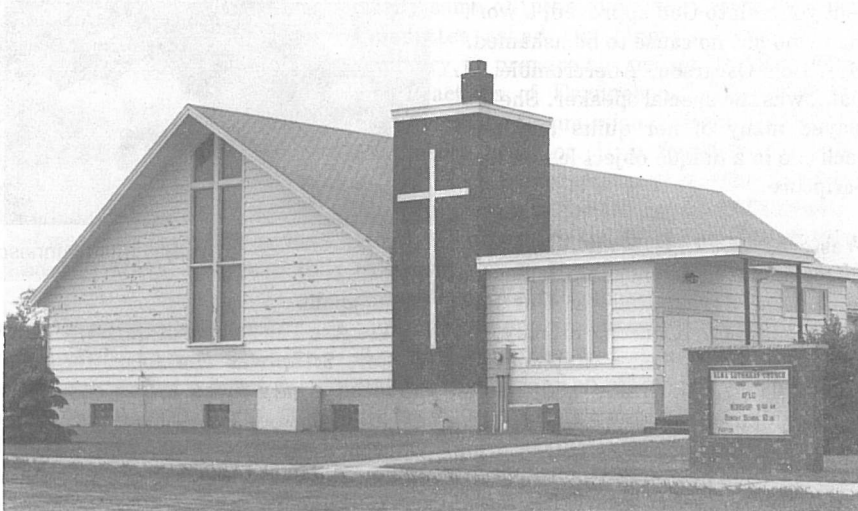
Alma Lutheran Church, rural Argyle, Minn., has the distinction of being the second congregation organized in Marshall County. That organization took place on Oct. 12, 1880, and the name taken was Middle River Norwegian-Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Congregation. Eighteen single men and heads of households were listed in the charter membership. The Ladies Aid came into being three years later.

The name of the church was changed to Alma Lutheran (township location) in 1959.

The first pastor at Alma was the venerable home mission pastor, Christian Saugstad, who served until 1885. He lived over 40 miles away, at Crookston.

Little is known about where the early services of the congregation were held, but they were likely in the homes of members and schoolhouses. A frame church 26 x 40 was erected in 1893 although not fully completed for several years. A new church was dedicated in 1962 and the old church has since been removed to the pioneer village in the county seat, Warren, where it may be seen.

For many years Alma was in a five-



point Lutheran Free Church parish with Bethlehem, Bethania, Folden and Westaker, all of Newfolden. In 1963 it entered the American Lutheran Church, associated with Bethlehem. Having been accepted in the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations this year, Alma has formed a parish arrangement with Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Argyle and the churches are served by Rev. Milo Gudim, who resides in Argyle.

Alma Lutheran gave strong support to the establishing of Galilee Bible

Camp at Lake Bronson, Minn., in 1953-54. In entering the AFLC's Northwestern Minnesota District the members resume that interest and support.

Other pastors who have served Alma Lutheran in addition to those already mentioned are: Student pastor K.B. Birkeland and Pastors Elias Aas, Hans Ostgulen, Martin Bjornson, Albert Gilseth, John Hjelmeland, G.P. Ronholm, E. J. Raaum, Gordon N. Berntson, Elder W. Oscarson, Loren Nielsen, Clifford L. Kalmoe, Hans Floan, David Liefeld and Stephen Estrem.

A trip into the dawn

It was almost dawn and the sky was slowly getting brighter. We had never watched a sunrise from 32,000 feet. We never had gone to sleep in one culture and then awakened in another. What would it be like? What do missionaries really do 'way down in Brazil? Will we have a safe trip? These and many others were the questions that we were asking up until that new dawn.

The Dyrud family visited our church one Sunday during their 1986 furlough,

Their stop made my wife, Pam, and me think, question and pray. "O Lord, what would You have us to do?" His desire was soon made known. Brazil kept coming up over and over wherever we turned. The money for the trip was made available and time off work was granted. It became clear that the Lord wanted us to take a trip into a new understanding.

Priscilla Abel met us as we landed in Curitiba, the capital of the state of Parana. She called out greetings to us

by name even though we had never met her. She said we looked like Americans. We were fascinated at first by differences in the culture. One of the most notable things about Brazil is its many contrasts. The skyline of Curitiba would look like the skyline of any large metropolitan area of the United States. However, the poverty-stricken areas of Brazil would not compare to the poverty-stricken areas of the States. One sight that we saw was a horse-drawn cart going down one side

NEWS OF THE CHURCHES

from here and there . . .

Vernon, B.C. — The 6th annual Youth Festival sponsored by Living Word Lutheran will be held Aug. 25-28. Rev. Jim Fugleberg, Ferndale, Wash., will be the main speaker. Music ministry will be headed by Arlene Kroeger of Vancouver, B.C. Cost is \$60 Canadian, after July 15, \$72. Write Vernon Youth Festival, 2106 45th Ave., Vernon, B.C. V1T 3M8 for further information. Call (604) 545-1514.

CONGREGATIONS NOTING ANNIVERSARIES

Zion Lutheran Church of Green Twp., Valley City, N. Dak., Terry Olson, pastor, will observe its centennial of founding on July 9-10.

Rose Lutheran Church, Roseau, Minn., Larry Severson, pastor will celebrate its centennial on July 15-17.

The 125th anniversary of Faith Lutheran Church of Running Valley, Colfax, Wis., will be noted Aug. 12-14. Rev. Mark Bateson is the pastor.

These congregations will be featured with cover photos and stories later.

Greenbush, Minn. — Student Pastor Tom Olson conducted a confirmation service for five young people on June 12 at Oiland Lutheran. He has served Oiland and Badger Creek Churches during the past year, but now becomes pastor of Section Ten Lutheran, Cumberland, Wis., after ordination.

Greenbush, Minn. — The singing Espe Brothers put on the program at United Lutheran's Family Night last Sunday.

NEW CONGREGATIONS

The following congregations have recently been received into membership in the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations:

St. Matthew Lutheran Church
Mountain Home, Ark.

Bethesda Lutheran Church
Mizpah, Minn.

Hope Lutheran Church
Northome, Minn.

Ferndale, Minn. — Triumph Lutheran operates a van for Sunday morning bus service for children going to Sunday School. The annual picnic was held on June 5 at Mobil Park.

Brodhead, Wis. — Worship at Bethany Lutheran during the summer is at 10:30. Three Sundays are designated as "Fellowship Sundays" and the service is preceded by fellowship, coffee and doughnuts. The remaining Sundays will be July 31 and August 28.

Roseau, Minn. — The four-congregation Roseau parish has divided in two. Roseau and Norland are being served by Pastor Forrest Swenson and Rose and Spruce are served by Pastor Larry Severson. Once common among Lutherans, there are only a couple four-congregation parishes left in the AFLC.

Personalities

Rev. Richard Bartholomew has accepted the call to serve Gausdal Lutheran Church, New London, Minn. and Scandia Lutheran Church, Sedan. The Bartholomews' address is: R.R.1, Sedan, Minn. 56380.

Rev. Leslie Galland has resigned as pastor of the Thief River Falls, Minn., parish (Our Saviour's, Reiner and Emmanuel) and has accepted the call to serve King of Glory Lutheran Church, Eden Prairie, Minn. That work will begin Sept. 1. Pastor Galland has been at Thief River since 1981.

Rev. Steven Kneeland, who has served the Kenyon, Minn., parish since 1984, has resigned in order to accept the call to serve St. John's Lutheran Church, Duluth, Minn. He will begin his work there sometime this summer and will be the first regular pastor of the Home Mission congregation.

Rev. Steven Lombardo, pastor of West Lisbon Lutheran Church, New-ark, Ill., for ten years, has resigned to accept a call to become a member of the faculty of the Association Schools in Minneapolis, Minn. He will begin his work there this fall.



Missionary David Abel and Kevin in front of the construction of the new church in Vitoria.

of a road, while modern road equipment was being used on the other. The contrasts are many and large but they can be overcome by a change in the people.

Paul and Becky Abel are stationed in Curitiba; their work there is one of church-planting. We were met with a

warmth that would be more akin to friends of many years. Although we had never met them, they opened their home to us as if it were ours. Becky had just returned from the hospital the week before, after the birth of their new son, Andrew.

cont. on p. 16

Lake Superior

The Spring Rally was hosted by St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Cloquet, Minn., on April 16. The theme for the day was "Caring and Sharing." Mrs. Jane Emerson, St. Cloud, Minn., was the guest speaker. She also sang and shared her personal testimony.

BRAZIL

The congregation in Curitiba is looking toward building a church. They have just recently purchased the land. One struggle that their church is having is that Paul and Becky are the only traditional family unit. If you can, picture what our churches would be like if we did not have the traditional family units to hold the church together. After our short stay in Curitiba they saw us off on a bus to Campo Mourao.

Campo Mourao is the center of the mission work in Brazil. This is where the AFLC Bible School and Seminary are located. Connelly Dyrud is the dean of the Seminary and pastor of Central Church. Campo Mourao would be similar to a large city that serves a farming community. Again, we were met with great warmth. The Dyruds were the only ones we had talked to in person before the trip.

The contrasts of Brazil are most strongly seen in the great separation between the rich and the poor. One man owned his own trucking company. He had worked hard to achieve the upper middle class status of Brazil. Yet he had a great void. This man had found that Christ could fill that void, but more than that he had learned to love those who could never repay him, those of the lower class. He is now the lay leader of Central Church. Many people think that only the poor can find hope in Christ. Christ also fills the emptiness in the rich and He can fill your void and fill you with love that runs over.

Our next stop was the border of Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay. It is at this corner where the Iguacu Falls are located, providing the largest amount of water falling in the world. This area reminded us of a traditional tourist stop. Even at this border area the AFLC in Brazil is active. The church there is being served by one of the Brazilian pastors who had graduated from the AFLC seminary in Cam-

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Second-class

po Mourao. The hope of this outreach is to eventually spread into Paraguay and Argentina with Brazilian pastors.

Last on our tour of mission stations was the church in Vitoria in the state of Espirito Santo. Stationed there are David and Janet Abel. They serve two parishes with a Brazilian national pastor, Eduardo Fiergo. One parish, Vila Velha, is a young church that had started meeting the week before we came. They meet on top of one of the member's homes. The other church in Vitoria, about 200 in size, had been meeting in a school and were in the construction process of their own building. Now they have finished phase one of the project and are meeting there. David Abel estimated that both phase one and two would cost them \$10,000. You can see how a small donation from the United States can go a long way in Brazil.

The two churches in Vitoria spring from the German Lutheran background. They are very excited about their faith and living it in their lives. One woman had been a leader in the occult and spirit worship. She knew that her life was empty and that the spirits were not giving her energy or joy. She came to know Jesus and you would be amazed at the change in her life. She has become a strong witness to the others in the spirit group and some of them are also experiencing the power of Jesus Christ.

The missionary's daily schedule would keep most of us running to keep up. It included Sunday morning and evening worships, Sunday afternoon evangelism, home Bible studies, helping the family that was in need, and

taxi service for those who didn't own cars. (Only the wealthy Brazilians own their own cars.)

We saw many lives being changed in Brazil. It may be more evident there because of the corruption with which it is contrasted, but any life that comes to know the power that God offers through His Son Jesus Christ will be changed. We were asked often whether we would be going into missions. We know that God is calling and will always be calling us to follow and serve Him. He is calling all of us to serve Him. Our mission work is at the gas station, at work, at the store, across the street, and across the world. Our service is support and prayer for the missionaries in Brazil and the family across town. Jesus Christ *does* change lives, wherever we are.

Pam and Kevin Olson

(Ed. note: The Olsons are from Faith Lutheran, Shakopee, Minn.)

ACADEMY OPENINGS LISTED

Mustard Seed Faith Academy is presently taking applications for elementary and jr. high teachers. Please contact the administrator, Pastor Brian L. Davidson, R.R. 2, Box 359A, Amery, Wis. 54001. Call (715) 268-9218 for an application. MSFA is a ministry of Amery Lutheran Church, AFLC.

Applications for elementary teaching positions are being accepted by Our Saviour's Christian Academy, Thief River Falls, Minn. Inquiries may be sent to Box 269, Thief River Falls, Minn. 56701 or call Pastor Leslie Galland, (218) 681-1910.