

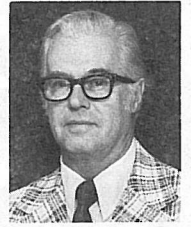


THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

March 13, 1984

Harbinger of Spring
Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.

AT THE MASTER'S FEET



Pastor Wallace Jackson

"And He began to be sorrowful"

Matthew 26:36-37

Our last devotional dealt with Daniel's "Open Windows." Let us permit a little more "light" to enter through the windows of the soul. The President of the United States coined the phrase "Window of Vulnerability" to convey the idea of a nuclear armament disparity existing between the United States and the Soviet Union. It is not the purpose of this piece to ascertain how America compares with the "Bear of the North" in either deterrent or strike capability. We pay the experts to solve such riddles. We only borrow the theme.

The window of human vulnerability. It is disconcerting to discover that America has a "weak spot" in her military hardware. It is also dis-

treassing to discover that as human beings we have an inherent biological and spiritual vulnerability. Vulnerability crosses the entire spectrum of human life. We are biologically susceptible to all manner of disease. We are prone to injury and death has its mark on us from the day of birth. The human mind is also plagued with stress, worry and the threat of breakdown. Spiritually, our "window" is very large. The enemy comes in "like a flood" with an assault force with a capability rating adequate to not only intimidate us but to render us defenseless. We frequently find our defenses down and our deterrent capabilities flagging. Satan's heavy footfall causes our spiritual house to tremble to its very foundation. Fortunately, the "Foundation standeth sure."

Ephesians 6 is a "Call to Arms" for God's people everywhere and at all times. While it is not militarily oriented, it is a reminder that Christians are engaged in a desperate spiritual conflict. The call is to spiritual militancy. Our vulnerability in things spiritual appears directly proportioned to our under-utilization of the defensive and offensive armament available to us in Christ.

Christ enters the arena. The Lenten season reminds us of the suffering Savior. We wish to trace His steps as He enters the final phase of His Mission of Mercy. It is the night of the betrayal. Dastardly deeds have been commonplace since Cain slew his brother. On this night Judas will outdo all comers in treachery as he betrays the Lamb of God. We wish to see how Christ faces His God-assigned confrontation with the "king of terrors." Also how other men compare under the stress attendant to death. We wonder what trauma un-

derlies the mingling of sweat and blood, or the plaintive cry: "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me. . . ." The question: To what in His humanity does Christ appear vulnerable? We only introduce it in this issue.

We see Him in the room of the Passover: sharing, blessing and bequeathing. We note the calmness of His voice as He breaks the bread; shares the future glories and promises eternal mansions; tells of the coming Comforter and then reveals His priestly concern for the flock.

As He enters Gethsemane, the sea of tranquility suddenly turns restless and the billows break fiercely over Him. Matthew informs us: "When they had sung a hymn, they went out. . . ." The concept of the "singing Christ en route to the place of slaughter" strikes us a blow of incredulity. As the nightingale hangs in the blackness of night, impaled on a thorn, giving forth its song of sorrow, so the Man of Sorrows, who is utterly "acquainted with grief" issues forth His song while waiting for His thorn. For He, too, will soon be impaled. Thus we plunge into the murky waters of the enigma, which is Christ in His descent down the lonely stairs of His humiliation. When at last the Garden has yielded its "peaceable fruit of righteousness" there will yet be three of the longest possible strides remaining: crucifixion, death and burial. We must leave Him now to resume our watch from the vantage point of history. The mystery remains. We only know that He was quickly becoming the "propitiation for our sins." In this we take comfort. God looked on the "travail of His soul and was satisfied." "He began to be sorrowful!"

(To be continued)

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

USPS 588-620 ISSN 0746-3413

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

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

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

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

Volume 22 Number 6

While serving as a missionary in Japan I assisted for a year in a neighboring city where there was then a lady missionary serving alone. One evening when I arrived at that church, a Japanese girl asked me to go immediately to the home of this missionary because she was extremely ill. That lady's sickness was so serious that she even gave me instructions as to how to dispose of her earthly possessions if she should die that night. I read God's Word to her and prayed for her. Then she shared with me her favorite Bible verse, II Corinthians 5:15, "And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again." I was deeply moved by her sharing this wonderful verse with me, for it told me how much Christ and His death meant to her. The humbling submission of Christ even unto death was a strength to her spirit as she thought of facing death.

During this Lenten season we all should express our adoration to Christ for His humbling submission. The text which so beautifully speaks of Christ's humbling submission is *Philippians 2:5-8*. The word submission means "the act of yielding or surrendering without resistance." This is precisely what Christ did when He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death of the cross. A twofold role of Christ's humbling submission is revealed in *Philippians 2*.

The first role is that of Christ's humbling submission to servanthood. Verse 7 says that He "took upon Him the form of a servant." The Greek word translated "servant" actually means "slave." This was a most humbling act. Our word "servant" does not convey to us the degree of degradation which it meant centuries ago. The laws for Jewish slaves of 2,000 years ago help us to better understand the humiliation of Christ. No slave could have any right as a citizen. If injured he had no rights. When Christ was on trial, no arm of the law reached out to defend Him. A slave could hold no property. The Servant of servants had nowhere to lay His weary head and no money to

for Thy humbling submission

Philippians 2:5-8

by Rev. Einar
Unseth
Bismarck, N. Dak.



pay His taxes. The slave was mere chattel in the eye of the law and could be bought and sold. Our Lord was sold by Judas for 30 pieces of silver. At death the slave might be scourged and tortured as none other might. The bitterest and vilest death was assigned to our Savior. Christ humbly submitted to this degrading servanthood. The prophet Isaiah had expressly prophesied that Christ was to come as a servant, for he wrote, "Behold, my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my Spirit upon Him, He will bring forth justice to the nations."

In order for Christ to submit to servanthood, He who was God had to become a man. This meant that He had to make Himself of no reputation. He had to empty Himself of His glory. He gave up for 33 years His heavenly glory. He, through

"Our word 'servant' does not convey to us the degree of degradation which it meant centuries ago."

whom the world was created, left the glory of heaven in order to come to earth to save us. He submitted to being made in the likeness of men.

From eternity there was the idea and image of a man in the mind of God. In *Genesis 1:26*, God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." So God created man in His own image. That man, Adam, was perfect. But by his sin of disobedience he lost that likeness. And God's great plan was to restore it. In order to accomplish this, Christ had to take upon Himself our human nature. When Christ submitted to becoming man, His human nature was perfect.

Living as a man was a humbling experience for Christ. His Incarnation was without any pomp, but was in poverty instead. Had not His birth been announced by the angels few people would have realized that God had come to earth in humble human flesh. Growing up in the town of Nazareth added to His humiliation, for it fastened a stigma and a prejudice upon Him all His days. His temptation by Satan must have surely left a feeling of debasement. Being mistaken for a mere human being was a humbling experience for the Son of God. Even on the cross Christ had to listen to the railing of the thieves crucified beside Him as one said, "If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." In His humble human form Christ was not recognized as God.

During World War II the city of London was bombed severely by German bombers time after time. After one of those bombings there was a picture in a newspaper of a group of men inspecting the damage. Those men were all dressed about the same; however, among them was the King. So hidden was his royalty that beside the picture was printed "The King," with an arrow pointing to him to identify him. In much the same way Christ's glory was hidden when He dwelt on earth as a man. Though in Him dwelt all the fullness of the godhead bodily, most people didn't recognize Him as God. Even when He came to His own home, His own people did not receive Him. Thus it

◇

SUBMISSION . . .

was truly a humbling submission for Christ when He took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men.

The second role of Christ's humbling submission mentioned in Philipians 2 is that of sacrifice. Verse 8 says, "And became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He submitted to the Father's will by offering Himself up as a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

This was an obedient submission. Christ proclaimed that He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life as a ransom (sacrifice) for many. He knew that the animal sacrifices were insufficient, that they could never take away sin. He knew that He was the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. Because Christ was willing to be the sacrifice for our sins, therefore He was obedient unto death.

Becoming that sacrifice was a most shameful experience, for Christ had to submit to the Roman punishment that was reserved for slaves, having His body hung on a tree. "Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." Christ suffered the shame of actually dying as a criminal. The Bible says, "He was numbered among the transgressors."

"Someone has said that the easiest death is painful, no matter how soft the bed."

Becoming that sacrifice for sin was also a most painful experience. Christ died not a natural death, but a painful death. Someone has said that the easiest death is painful, no matter how soft the bed. But Christ's death is spoken of as a bruising. "Yet it was not the will of God to bruise Him." So painful was it that Christ shrank from it, and it caused Him to pray, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Christ was obedient unto death, humbly submitting Himself to sacrifice—to becoming the sacrifice for the world's sins.

What a wonderful message this is



The Lord's Table

Do not stay away from the Lord's Table because you are *weak*—the very purpose of the sacrament is to give you spiritual strength. The Lord seeks the meek and lowly and crowns them with blessing, for "the meek shall eat and be satisfied" (Psalm 22:63).
Dean L. M. Engstrom

for all people of the world! A missionary in Mali, Africa, tells about "the path of blood." When a national there does something wrong, the village leader may punish him by excommunicating him from village life. This is a severe punishment, for the man is left without family, home or crops. But mercy is available. If the man is willing to ask forgiveness, he brings an appropriate sacrifice, like a goat or a sheep. He admits his wrong to the village leaders and he requests reinstatement. The village leaders take the animal, sacrifice it and make a trail of blood from that spot through the village to his old home. He walks on that trail of blood back to his old home and thereby gains full acceptance within the community once more.

Christ, the perfect Sacrifice, became obedient unto death. He suffered and died outside the city wall to make us holy through His own blood. By His shed blood He has made a path to heaven for us so that we can be accepted there. Because Christ humbly submitted to servanthood and sacrifice, therefore we can have hope for all eternity. If you by His grace possess His great gift of eternal life, then together with other Christians, sing, "Christ, We Do All Adore Thee." If you are still separated from God, then won't you admit your sin and ask Him to give you eternal life through Christ so that you, too, can adore Him?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Even though the blood of the Passover Lamb should be shed, it had no efficacy until it was applied to the door of the individual's dwelling. There was opened from the veins of Calvary's Lamb a fountain of blood that shall flow forever; but though that blood should equal ten thousand times the volume of the mighty Mississippi, it cannot save from sin until it is personally applied to our heart and life by acceptance of His offering.

—Harry Rimmer

Curse? . . . Curse?? Such a word is a little hard to understand, Lord. Were we under a curse, that You should find it necessary to bear it for us? And why should You have found it in Your heart to do such a deed for our sakes, Lord? Is there a passage in Your Word that deals with this point, that could explain this for us?

There is, in Your servant Paul's letter to the Galatians. We find there that You directed Paul to write: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse for us" (Gal. 3:13, NIV). Oh Lord, what a statement! What an incredible thought to think that You, the Son of the Most High God, through Whom all things were made and in Whom all things hold together, became a curse for our sakes, to ransom us from "the curse of the Law!" So we were under a curse, Lord, and You paid the price to remove that curse from us! Truly we should adore You, if we really understood what You went through for us!

The word "curse" suggests anger, even wrath, and at least threatened punishment, and it is true, Lord, if we consider it, that the human race has been under the threat of punishment from the Father, all the way back to our human father Adam. In fact, cursing is mentioned in God's judgment upon Adam: "To Adam He said, Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life . . . until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return" (Gen. 3:17, 19).

Oh Lord Jesus, now we begin dimly to understand! For none of us has escaped that terrible judgment! There is not one of us who does not know the "painful toil" of the daily battle for existence, and we are all of us all too aware of its final outcome. Our TV screens and our newspapers remind us daily of our situation, and death and sickness and divorce and quarreling bring the malady into our very homes. There are times, Lord,

for bearing our curse

**by Rev. Johan Koren
Our Savior Lutheran Church
Bessemer, Mich.**

when we wish that we had never been born! Is that what You mean by the curse?

We try—oh, how we try!—to blame our own misery on factors outside of ourselves: temptation, the devil, our fellow men, even You, Lord. But no amount of blame can remove that nagging feeling inside each one of us that we, personally, are, somehow or other, guilty of wrongdoing. That sense of guilt has sent many a one to an institution, Lord, although, or perhaps in some cases, because we try to suppress it and not listen to the persistent, strident voice of our conscience. And yet, You have set that voice there for a purpose, Lord, as Paul has written of us as Gentiles: ". . . they show that the requirements of the Law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them" (Rom. 2:15).

There is that word "Law" again, Lord. Paul spoke in Gal. 3:13 of the "curse of the Law" from which You redeemed us, not a general curse. What is "the Law"? Apparently we as Gentiles have its requirements written upon our hearts, while the

"There are times, Lord, when we wish that we had never been born! Is that what you mean by the curse?"

Jews have the Law as their divinely revealed responsibilities in their Covenant with their God. And You Yourself speak of the commandments of the Law, Lord Jesus, particularly the greatest, to "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind," and the one that is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." But, O Lord, we know only too well that we cannot keep those commandments, even though we do try! And then Paul brings an Old Testament verse to our attention: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything that is written in the Book of the Law (Gal. 3:10, from Deut. 27:27).

When the full force of that statement really hits us, Lord, by the persuasion of Your Spirit—ah, then we truly realize what You mean by the "curse of the Law"! Then the real misery of our unfortunate situation overwhelms us, and then, Lord, and not until then, can we begin to comprehend why it was necessary for You to redeem us from the curse.

For only the One who first uttered the curse can remove it and remove its sting, and He would only remove it if and when His wrath was satisfied. That meant, as He is a just God, and justice must be done, that the curse and its consequences must fall upon another who was willing to endure it in our stead—if we were not to perish. And, Lord Jesus, that Other was You. As Paul put it, You "redeemed us from the curse of the Law," You paid the price for our freedom "by becoming a curse for us." You allowed Yourself to be hung as a common criminal upon the Cross, to endure not only the pain and agony of that method of execution, but also to suffer the far greater, and for us unimaginable, pain of reproach from the Father, in accordance with the promise Paul cites in our main verse, Gal. 3:13: "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree" (from Deut. 21:23).

That reproach was so great, Lord, that You became a curse in the flesh; Your whole existence was, in the

PRAYER

by Bernard W. Nelson
Atlantic Mine, Mich.

(The sixth of ten parts)

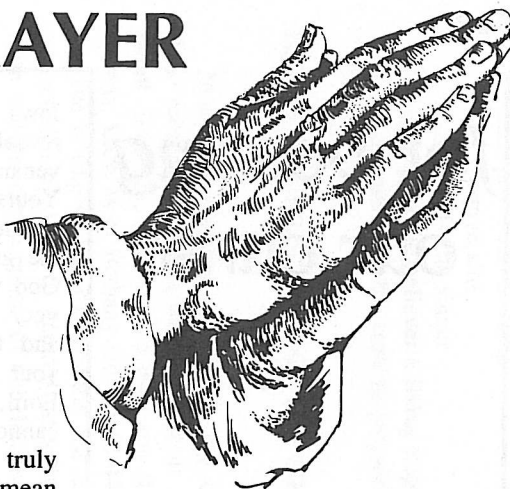
(IV, *How Should We Pray?*)

(5.) In God's Will

Let us suppose a person is a truly born again Christian. Will this mean that now he may tap the resources of God for anything his heart desires? The answer is "yes" if the petition is in the will of God. Over and over again the most amazing promises are held out to the Christian. Nothing in this world is beyond the reach of our prayers—if we pray in God's will.

When we pray we should try to pray as Jesus would. Let our requests be for that which would glorify God. Pray according to His will, asking for nothing except those things which are in harmony with His plan and purpose.

We pray in the Lord's Prayer the petition "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." In I John 5:14, the Bible says, "If we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us." First of all, let us understand fully that God has a will, a purpose, a plan. This universe is not just staggering along. There is wisdom behind it all. God has a complete,



overall, master plan and He is working out this plan day by day. It is not a minute behind schedule and nothing that God intended to do will ever fail of fulfillment. Nothing is more sure in life than the completion of the purpose of God.

The plan of God extends down into our individual lives, for after we're saved and born into God's family, He whispers into our ears that He already has a blueprint for our lives. This blueprint calls for our highest success. It outlines the method by which this highest success should be attained. It shows a day by day working out of details which will beautifully fit into the whole of life. Our lives may be gloriously successful as we follow the plan. But God does not reveal the entire plan at once. Rather, in His wisdom He makes it known to us day by day. Ofttimes we cannot see ahead; this is

a test of our faith. But as we trust Him, He never fails to bring about the daily completion of the plan. Here's where prayer comes in. We know not what we should pray for as we ought. So, our prayers ought always to be offered according to His plan. This is infinitely wise, for God delights to answer according to His will.

The fact is, God cannot answer prayer that is not in His will. It would be contrary to His omniscience and of real harm to our lives. So it is of the very greatest importance to fashion our prayers to conform to His will and purpose.

You may be always sure that God's plan will always be consonant with His Word, the Bible. Therein God has set forth the underlying principles which are inherent in His character. So a thorough knowledge of what the Scriptures teach will be of value in shaping our prayers.

God's will does not only extend to the large issues. Unbelievable as it may seem, God's purpose includes even the smallest details of life. Frequently the so-called small issues turn out to be matters of great importance. Therefore, our prayers should take in the entire realm of daily living. Only so will our will avail.

It is true that oftentimes we must pray blindly. We must ask God to make for us the decisions we are not capable of making. But we must not forget that God is not blind and with our hand clasped tightly in His, there will be no errors made.

(To be continued)

CURSE . . .

Father's eyes, complete and utter de-filement. It was so complete that He averted His eyes from You and you were forced to cry out in Your agony: "My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?" The desolation of that cry is beyond our understanding, Lord. We can only cry in return, "Forgive us that we forced You to such depths for our sakes!"

But, Lord, we can also praise You for undergoing such suffering! For we learn from Paul also why you did what You did: "He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith

we might receive the promise of the Spirit" (Gal. 3:14).

O Lord Jesus, grant that that faith might be ours and continue to be ours, that we can know that blessing in our own hearts. So many of us

free from the debilitating effects of the curse. The guilt feelings cripple us, Lord! Let faith and trust in that Word that You "redeemed us from the curse of the Law by becoming a curse for us" fully sink in on us, Lord! We need the comfort it brings—we need the assurance. Yes, Lord, we certainly do all adore You, for bearing our curse!

Sufferings of others

If one form of suffering after another comes upon your brother, do not say too quickly: "He must have committed some great wrong." You perhaps cannot yet bear sufferings; therefore God must shield you from them.

G. Steinberger



Tune: To Us Is Born
(Concordia, No. 165)

German, 14th Century
Paul Gerhardt, 1648
Tr. H. Brueckner, 1925

Reverend Paul Gerhardt, the Prince of Lutheran hymn-writers, wrote this hymn, founded on John 1:29, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" and Isaiah 53:4-7, "Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that made us whole, and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth."

That is a brief Scriptural portrait of the Lamb of God and how He redeemed us. Gerhardt magnificently paraphrases this portrait into poetry. So well does he succeed that "A Lamb Goes Forth" is regarded as "the masterpiece of all Passion hymns."

*A Lamb goes forth our griefs to
share,
In spirit meek and lowly;*

Jesus was not defiant, arrogant, boasting, "Samsonite," macho, tough, egotistic, as some pseudo-religious songs imply. He was meek, gentle, longsuffering.

*He deigns our sin and guilt to
bear,
This Lamb of God most holy.*

The incarnate Son of God, the King of Heaven, has stooped down, has become incarnate.

*He goes His way, grows weak and
faint,
To death is led without complaint,
His precious life to offer.*

A Lamb Goes Forth Our Griefs to Share

He is a man subject to all the indigenous characteristics, including weaknesses, of a human being. Yet, unflinching

*He gladly suffers pain and death,
And tells us with His dying breath:
For you all this I proffer.*

He is persecuted and crucified, without complaint, without bitterness, without vengeance. He died for us all to free us from death and hell.

This is an excellent portrayal of the incarnate Son of God as He is revealed in Scripture. It is not merely a lament, a sad song, a wandering fantasy of Christ, a little glorious and a little macabre. It is rather a thoughtful and noble reproduction of the truth.

*Suspended on the tree of shame,
He suffers mortal anguish;
For all our sins He takes the
blame,
In grief His soul must languish.
His sighs are proof of mortal pain,
And open'd up is every vein,
His blood in mercy flowing.
O gentle Lamb, what shall it be
That I in turn may offer Thee,
My grateful spirit showing?*

*As long as I my breath retain,
Thy tender love beholding,
I faithful shall to Thee remain
And rest in Thine enfolding.
Thy love within my heart shall
shine,*

*And I shall prize that light divine
Till death mine eyelids closeth;
Thou shalt my very being own,
And I shall live to Thee alone;
My all in Thee reposes.*

*When I at last Thy kingdom see,
With all its boundless treasure,
Thy blood my purple robe shall
be,*

*My source of joy and pleasure,
It shall become my royal crown
When I before God's throne kneel
down,
In deepest homage bending.
Then He will place me at Thy
side,
Bedecked and jeweled as a bride,
With angel hosts attending.*

Stanza two continues to view Christ on the cross, His suffering and agony, His blood outpouring from His veins, a graphic but not grisly picture of the price of our salvation. In the final couplet, Gerhardt asks, "What have I to give in return?"

Stanza three is his reply: His entity.

Stanza four begins as though in anticipation of reward; it sounds a little eager and a bit voracious until Gerhardt shows us the proper priorities: "Thy blood my purple robe shall be, my source of joy and pleasure. It shall become my royal crown when I before God's throne kneel down in deepest homage bending." Eternal gratitude for God's unspeakable gift is the proper response of a humble sinner and a natural response of a properly grateful child of grace.

This masterpiece sharply contrasts the concept of Christ as portrayed in the pop and Gospel music of "media Christianity" where He is represented in shallower dimensions, a mere caricature of the incarnate Son of God.

Thoughtful, meaningful texts which purely convey God's truth are characteristic and essential to a Lutheran hymn so as to communicate the tender and compassionate love of Jesus and the means by which all can fully perceive His grace and have His gift of perfect peace.

—Don Rodvold
Director of music, AFLBS

"... but by His own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."
Heb. 9:12

CONFIRMATION

The Scriptures command parents to train their children (Proverbs 22:6). This training seems a *must* in view of today's trying times. There are so many different forces which are destroying the family, the church and the Christian way of life. All this makes it absolutely necessary to train our children in eternal values. It also makes it necessary for us to continue to study God's Word.

Many families leave the training of their children up to the Sunday School, and later, up to the pastor. They neglect their own spiritual lives as well. Yet, they bring their children to the Lord in Holy Baptism, bring them to Sunday School and see to it they are "confirmed." After confirmation instruction is over, they breathe some kind of a sigh of relief and the church hardly ever sees the parents or their children again. Training a child begins in the cradle, however, and it continues until the young adult leaves home.

Such breathing of relief is a grave sin. While there are many fine Christians interested in the spiritual welfare of the child, the parents must take care of their own spiritual needs and also take care of the primary responsibility for the spiritual training of their children. The local congregation and its pastor should be a helper to the family. In no way should the local congregation and the pastor carry the entire responsibility of training in eternal matters.

The Bible teaches us that spiritual life is given through Baptism. Baptism is a means of grace. An individual enters into a covenant relationship with Jesus in Baptism. This life must be fed the Word of God and parents should give their children an example to follow.

While it is possible for a child to remain in the covenant of Baptism, it is necessary for him to make a decision for Christ on his own. He must come to a vital, personal, conscious relationship with Jesus. This is the primary purpose of confirmation instruction. We could call this "renewing" the Baptismal covenant.

Confirmation is not a means of grace. It is an intense two- or three-year period of study. In confirmation

the Word of God and the doctrines of the church are carefully studied.

Baptism linked with confirmation instruction or the rite of confirmation does not save, nor does it guarantee heaven. Only a right personal relationship with Jesus can do these things.

The service of confirmation is intended to be a witness of a personal commitment to Jesus Christ. Baptismal renewal must precede this day. A witness of faith cannot be given by an unsaved confirmand. Any youth giving a false account of faith should know the seriousness of the matter. The person should be warned about taking Holy Communion (I Corinthians 11:27).

A Few Helpful Suggestions

1. Set aside lesson and memorization times. Help your confirmand as much as possible. Fathers, your help is especially needed. Where fathers are active in the things of

the Lord there is a greater number who receive the Lord Jesus Christ!

2. Know the assignments and be certain your son or daughter carries them out. Make confirmation instruction just as important, if not more important, than school work or athletics! Be certain you review the memory work and that all assignments are in on time!
3. *Do not use confirmation instruction as a form of punishment.* Rebellion can be taught by doing this! Such stifles the purpose of the instruction.
4. Pray for your confirmand. Strive to see that you and he are in church and in Sunday School. Attend Bible study and prayer times in your church.

Confirmation is a wonderful opportunity! Yes, there will be extra trips in the car and a crowded schedule to meet. These years will soon be over with, however. It will be worth it all to see your children grow up to love the Lord and to work for Him!

Pastor Dennis Gray
Spicer, Minn.

"Training a child begins in the cradle, however, and it continues until the young adult leaves home."



editorials

GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS

The final report for budget receipts for the fiscal year 1983-84 is in and readers may peruse it in this issue. It's always an exciting time when the final tally is in for a year's work. We hope you will take a good look at it.

There is good news and bad news in it. First of all, the good news. Income for the total budget was up \$21,859.13. While all funds showed deficits, as last year, the shortfalls were less this year for General Fund (\$9,684.06 to \$12,028.96), the Bible School (\$12,140.77 to \$27,065.09) and Home Missions (\$56,403.31 to \$58,461.08). Additionally, \$170,813.02 was received during January, which pared off what would have been larger deficits. This was a great outpouring of love and concern, some of it in last minute love offerings on the last Sunday of January.

Then the bad news. Only 83% of the minimum goal was reached, compared to 86% a year ago. While we can't say positively, this is likely the lowest percentage of goal we've had as an Association. For instance, in 1981 it was 99%, in 1982, 96%. It should also be noted that the World Missions shortfall of over \$64,000 (76% of goal) is the largest ever in our history. Conversely, the percentage of goal reached is the lowest. More bad news, Home Missions has had its second shortfall in a row of over \$55,000. This is hard news to hear in a church which has a history of being mission-minded.

Friends, we must take a good look at what we are doing and not doing. Can we blame our failure on the economy? Now the economy is on the upswing. Perhaps that will show in the giving for this year. It should. Surely, our current fiscal problems can't mean that we are attempting to do too much. But at the same time it looks as though our budgets have to be brought in line with what can be expected from our congregations. Otherwise we will find that our minimum goals will bear little relation to actual income. That is what happened in the Lutheran Free Church. And a church body can learn to live with that but the situation becomes a little unreal.

Now we find it hard to fault the giving in the AFLC. When we look at the contributions of many of our congregations we are amazed. We have big goals for a church our size. Many of our congregations carry local expenses comparable to sister Lutheran congregations five to ten times larger. So no one is getting a free ride, or shouldn't be.

But what is the point of realism in all of this? That's what we have to find as a fellowship. In no Lutheran church body is there a closer contact between the schools and the congregations, and the missions and the congregations, then in the AFLC. It isn't that people don't know about the work. We've already indicated in this editorial that we aren't attempting too much for God as a church. That's our conviction. But perhaps there are other opinions. We must discuss these things on every level.

May the Lord lead us as a fellowship of congregations. We want to do a Christ-honoring work together.

A BLESSED LENT

Lent, from the Old English word *lencten*, meaning spring. That may be, but to us it is that period of weeks from Ash Wednesday to Palm Sunday.

It is a holy time of the year. In reality all seasons are holy but Lent has a special aura. To some it is a season to be endured and this is partly made possible by an ungodly observance of Mardi gras (Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday). But for the Christian there should be none of that spirit.

Rather, Lent is a time of introspection, participation and expectation. Now when we say *introspection* we mean that there is a place in Lent for a look at oneself. We speak of daily renewal. There must be a daily coming to the Lord, daily confession, daily faith. But let us use this example. In regard to our physical health, all of us take stock of our health each day. We note how we feel, how any sore or indisposition we have had is coming along. But we also go now and then, maybe once a year, for a physical checkup by a doctor. Or we could think of examination time for the students. So also spiritually, during Lent we should spend more time in considering our lives and be even more open to the prompting of God's Spirit. Lent is a time of introspection.

It is also a time for *participation*. It is a time to walk with Jesus on those old familiar paths that lead eventually to Calvary, a place of terror and of glory. But before that place is reached there is the Upper Room of the Lord's Supper, the Garden of Gethsemane, where prayer reached its sublimest height, Pilate's hall, where Jesus felt such a terrible loneliness, the Via Dolorosa or Way of Sorrows, where the Savior resisted the temptation to feel sorry for Himself when women wailed in pity.

How do we participate in these things? Oh, it is only in thought, in spirit, but the journey with Jesus to Calvary renews and builds one's faith. But to take part in this way it is necessary to attend the Lenten services in one's church, if at all possible, as well as the Sunday services, of course. And time should be given to additional devotional reading and contemplation at home. Follow along with Jesus.

Finally, in Lent we live in a spirit of *expectation*. We look forward to Easter, which outwardly speaks even more to us of spring than Lent (*lencten*) does. Easter is what one man called "the spring of souls." At any rate, in Lent we are thinking about Easter and the resurrection. Christ is risen. We know that. But it is good for us to consider it in a special way each year. Expectation, anticipation. It's good to have that in our lives. We are meant to be creatures of hope. Truly pathetic are those who only see the grave ahead or hope that the grave is the end. Christianity is a religion of hope and glory because of the resurrection of Jesus.

May yours be a blessed Lent in home and congregation. Don't waste the days of Lent. Make them count.

Angel Espinoza, another believer

Yesterday Angel Espinoza came to the office. Last time we saw him, he had come in from the jungle to return Bible study materials and to receive new studies. His wife had died in a hospital here in La Paz and in order to pay hospital and funeral expenses, he was trying to sell rice. Sonja gave him money for half of the rice while I tried calling around to see where he could sell some more. While dialing, I heard him telling how his children were alone at home and that the youngest one cried without ceasing for his mother.

We had known Angel for quite some time, Sonja (another mission worker) more than I. She told me how he had studied all the courses available in our office, and now he was leading other people into Bible studies. He faithfully took and brought them back. One of the times he came to La Paz to our office, he had picked up another believer who had been injured by a fallen tree; another time he had helped in a similar situation. Angel left the office, telling us he would deliver the rice the same night. Then he went back to the hospital.

We didn't see him that night, nor for the next three months. Yesterday Angel told us that his in-laws had accused him of killing his wife. They had paid to have him put into prison. We had known all along he was being persecuted for believing in Jesus, most severely by his in-laws. His wife had studied the Bible with him as long as she could. Angel was put into prison for three nights. The floor was covered with water, so he could neither sit, nor lie down. He tried to sleep standing up. Then they transferred him to another prison where he lived in isolation the entire three months. He was allowed no phone calls or visitors. The guards mistreated him daily and Christmas Eve he was nearly killed by them. But the Lord had mercy on Angel and sent a deep sleep over his drunk persecutors. When they awoke they couldn't remember anything.

While in prison, his enemies took

his children, sold his land, and robbed his house. Now they are trying to get his cattle. Another believer suspected Angel's problem and bought his freedom. Of course, they couldn't accuse him of murder; the hospital proved that his wife had died as a result of an operation.

Angel is free, but the lawsuit against him still is going on. He has no money and no lawyer to defend him. He would like to get his children back. "I will be glad," said Angel as he left, "to suffer for Jesus. How he has suffered for us! I don't know of any particular sin in my life, but that doesn't mean there isn't any. Who knows, perhaps my Lord will want to purify me!"—Both Sonja and I knew that we had been in the presence of a saint.

Mrs. Edmundo (Heide) Hassenteufel
La Paz, Bolivia

Opportunity for mission work with the HFM

The Hauge Foreign Mission has an opening for a mission worker. If you feel that the Lord is calling you into some type of mission work, please contact the following for details:

Hauge Foreign Mission Director
Rev. Alvin Larson
R.R. East Box 119A
Ogema, Minn. 56569

(The Hauge Foreign Mission is a Lutheran faith mission. Despite the mutual use of the name Hauge, the HFM has no connection with the Hauge Innermission Federation. Each organization has its own board.)

AFLC Missions Conference



Linda Jackson, Alden, Minn., at the Third World banquet. Rev. Douglas brought the message.
Photos by S. Hjermstad

"NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION" was the theme of the recent annual AFLC Missions Conference held at the campus of AFLC Schools. Pastor Albin Douglas, former missionary to China and presently missions professor at Prairie Bible Institute, Three Hills, Alberta, Canada, challenged students nightly. Morning mission seminars were conducted by several leaders. Mission films and a Third World meal also enriched the conference.



13. When does this take place? (Jn. 5:24) _____

14. When we have received and claimed this life, we are risen with Christ.

- a) What are we to do, according to Col. 3:1? _____
b) What goals are found in Phil. 4:8 _____

15. John points out three great aspects of the spiritual life. Choose the correct answer for each statement (well, river, gift).

Life *for* us as a _____ Jn. 4:10

Life *in* us as a _____ Jn. 4:14

Life *from* us as a _____ Jn. 7:38

16. This life is the resurrection of the believer. We are risen *with* Him! According to Matt. 28:67, we are given four specific commands. What are they?

- 1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____

These could be called Easter commands!

Are you risen with Him?

Are you responding to the above commands?

“JESUS WENT ALL THE WAY TO CALVARY FOR YOU —
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE FOR HIM?”

Suggested Hymn: “Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross” (#182 in the *Concordia*).

April 1984

WMF

BIBLE STUDY



Lesson IV The “I Ams” of Jesus

I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE (John 11:25)

Easter, the return of spring! “For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come” (Song of Sol. 2:11-12).

Spring is a hidden force. In wintertime it’s hard to believe that nature can live again. In the soul there is a hidden life that does not, cannot, perish.

Spring reveals the life-giving power of God. There is no other way to explain springtime aside from the miraculous power of God. The same is true of the resurrection of the soul.

Spring is a type of our resurrection. The same Lord who promises the return of the flowers and birds and summer blessings, also promises the resurrection and life of those who live and die in Him. “*I am the resurrection and the life!*”

I. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

1. God shows us numerous features concerning the resurrection. Match them with the verses given:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| _____ foretold by David | a) Mark 9:9-10 |
| _____ presented in prophecy | b) Acts 2:32 |
| _____ announced by Jesus | c) Ps. 16:10-11 |
| _____ proclaimed by the Apostles | d) Is. 53:10-12 |

2. By whose power was the resurrection of our Lord accomplished?

(Acts 2:24) _____

(John 10:18) _____

(Rom. 8:11) _____

3. According to the following verses, what proof do we have of the resurrection of Christ?

- a) Jn. 20:1-9 _____
- b) Matt. 28:5-7 _____
- c) Jn. 20:15-18 _____
- d) Jn. 20:19-20 _____
- e) Jn. 20:27-29 _____

4. In Luke 24:45-46 we have the fulfillment of Scripture, which is one of the purposes of the resurrection of our Lord. Match other purposes given with the following verses.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| _____ prove His Sonship | a) I Cor. 15:17 |
| _____ forgive sins | b) Rom. 4:25 |
| _____ justify the sinner | c) Rom. 1:4 |
| _____ give the believer a living hope | d) Acts 17:31 |
| _____ guarantee the coming judgment | d) I Pet. 1:3 |

II. THE RESURRECTIONS OF THE BIBLE

Many miracles are reported in the Gospels of the Bible. According to these records, as far as we know, Jesus raised three people: Jairus' daughter (Matt. 9:23-25); the widow's only son (Lk. 7:11-15); and one of His closest friends, Lazarus of Bethany (Jn. 11:43-44).

The raising of Lazarus was the last and greatest of Jesus' public miracles, as recorded by John. It demonstrates the culmination of the development of faith and the development of unbelief which leads directly up to the crucifixion of Jesus.

5. What descriptions are given of the family with which this account concerns itself, in Jn. 11:1-3? What is said about each individual? _____

6. What does Jesus say about:

- a) Lazarus' sickness? (v. 4) _____
- b) Lazarus' death? (v. 11) _____
- c) About the danger of going back into Judea? (vs. 9-10) _____

7. Who comes first to meet Jesus? (v. 20) _____

How does this compare with her character as revealed in Lk. 10:38-42? _____

8. Before this experience with her brother, Lazarus, what did Martha believe about the resurrection? (v. 24) _____

9. What new truth did Martha come to understand about the resurrection as a result of this experience. (vs. 25-26) _____

10. To whom does Jesus give the resurrection promise? Memorize Jn. 11:25-26a. _____

III. THE RESURRECTION OF THE BELIEVER

11. The resurrection of the believer is accomplished by whom according to the following verses?

- a) Eph. 1:19 _____
- b) Eph. 5:14 _____
- c) Ezek. 11:19 _____

Jesus says: "I am the resurrection and the life." Note, He doesn't just say "I am the resurrection" but adds "and the life!" The word life means more than physical life; it means life in relationship with God. John speaks of this life as being "abundant" and "eternal." This life is a gift, a present possession and a future inheritance all at the same time.

12. How can we receive or enter into this life? There is no single answer. Look up the following passages in John and list how we can receive or enter life?

- a) 3:36 _____
- b) 5:24 _____
- c) 6:58 _____
- d) 8:12 _____
- e) 12:26 _____
- f) 14:23 _____



Letters to the editor

TEACHING THE YOUNG

For some time now I have been concerned about the ungodly teaching our children are getting, but until yesterday I hadn't really understood my concern. I'd like to share these thoughts with you, if I may. I noticed our public school system is teaching the very, very young about life and their interpretation of how it got here on our earth. And even for the pre-schooler it's evolution, I feel.

Just look at this E.T. people give to children in all forms, even as a decoration on a birthday cake. What is this creature? Man or beast? You say it is harmless, but is it?

Just recently I started babysitting for a dear, dear Christian friend a couple of days per week. Our Mary isn't two years old yet, yet she loves books of all kinds be read to her. When I realized this I started to find a book small enough to teach her God's creation, not man's (or the devil's) teaching of evolution.

I was showing and telling her about all God's animals. As I showed and named the animal, I said, "Who made the cat, Mary?"

Then I answered, "God did." Before I finished one book she was saying, "Cat-God." This was her way of giving God the credit for creation.

That's when I realized why I dislike any creature that isn't real man or real beast. Thank God for opening my eyes.

I know mothers and teachers of Sunday School and Bible classes are teaching what Genesis 1-3 says about God's creation at least once a year. But is this enough? When our precious children even in day care are being taught evolution?

Twenty-six years ago or so, when I was a nursery school teacher in a day nursery, I wasn't this conscious of this early brainwashing. Maybe it was there, I don't know. What am I trying to say? Isn't it time we as Christian adults try to get the jump on our public schools by teaching all children, not just our own, the truths of the Bible *before* school begins and what they will run into there? By God's grace I plan on doing this any way I can.

Mrs. Arnold Jodock
Hatton, N. Dak.

GOD'S TERMS

Vendors in the business world who sell goods or services state terms on their invoices. Terms like "Net 30 days" means payment is expected within the 30 day period of time. "1% 10 days, net 30 days" means 1% discount will be allowed if the invoice is paid within ten days. If discount is not taken in the ten day period the full amount is due in 30 days.

God also has terms. We receive everlasting life on His terms, not ours. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36, KJV).

Our evangelism team once visited a man who had ruined his health by drinking. We had visited him before and explained how Jesus died for our sins, wants us to confess our sins and accept him as our Savior. Each time the man said, "I'm here, He can take me or leave me." We tried to explain Jesus is very willing to accept us but the choice is ours. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9, KJV).

May each of us realize we are sinners, repent and be forgiven. Then only can we be received into the fullness of the blessings of God's Kingdom.

Stella Olson
Minneapolis, Minn.

ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS 3110 EAST MEDICINE LAKE BOULEVARD MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55441

FINAL Budget Receipts (12 months) Feb. 1, 1983-Jan. 31, 1984

FUND	TOTAL BUDGET	CONGREGATIONAL RECEIPTS, Jan. 84	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% TOTAL	AMOUNT SHORT*
General Fund	\$187,180.00	\$ 44,900.52	\$177,495.94	95	(\$ 9,684.06)
Schools-AFLTS	97,246.00	17,735.34	83,556.80	86	(13,689.20)
AFLBS	164,839.00	29,187.84	152,698.23	93	(12,140.77)
Home Missions	219,796.00	34,114.10	163,392.69	74	(56,403.31)
World Missions	265,975.00	42,021.29	201,789.23	76	(64,185.77)
Praise Fund	28,880.00	2,853.93	25,243.32	87	(3,636.68)
TOTAL	\$963,916.00	\$170,813.02	\$804,176.21	83	\$159,736.79
1982-83	\$914,003.00	\$124,764.17	\$782,317.08	86	\$131,685.92

*All figures in parentheses indicate minus balances.

IN MEMORIAM

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

MINNESOTA

Newfolden

Mr. James Jarshaw, 58, Oct. 8, 1983, Our Saviour's, Thief River Falls, Minn.

Mr. Ray Holmstrom, 62, Jan. 23, Our Saviour's, Thief River Falls, Minn.

Thief River Falls

Mr. Leighton Hamre, 43, Feb. 11, Our Saviour's.

Luther scholar Bainton dies at 89

New York-(LC)—The Rev. Dr. Roland H. Bainton, whose biography of Martin Luther, *Here I Stand*, has sold more than one million copies, died Feb. 13 in his New Haven, Conn., apartment. He was 89 years old.

Bainton, who in 1962 retired as Titus Street Professor of Ecclesiastical History, wrote more than 30 books and his autobiography is scheduled for publication this spring.

Until recently, Bainton has kept an

active writing and lecturing career. Illness prevented him from appearing at the Lutheran Council-sponsored Martin Luther Jubilee in Washington, and from performing his annual recitation of Martin Luther's Christmas sermon at Yale.

The energetic and slim Bainton was a familiar figure around the Yale campus. Even at an advanced age, he continued to ride his 10-speed bicycle around the Yale campus until he was injured in a minor accident last

fall.

Bainton recently appeared in the short film "Where Luther Walked," produced by the Aid Association for Lutherans. During the 1950's, Bainton was a consultant to the movie "Martin Luther," produced by Lutheran Film Associates, and he filmed introductions to each of three parts of the teaching version of the film.

Bainton was an ordained Congregational minister, but was affiliated with the Society of Friends (Quakers). He joined the faculty of Yale Divinity School in 1920.

New members in the Roseau parish

The following persons have been received into membership in the Roseau, Minn., parish congregations during the past year. Rev. Larry Severson is the pastor.

Roseau—Elma Olson; Mr. and Mrs. James McDonald, Kay Somerly and Michelle; Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Swanson and Sarah; Glen Kloempken; Mr. and Mrs. Maynard Erickson; Mr. and Mrs. Rodney Kjersten, Nichole, Terry and Laura. **Spruce**—Lilly Ann Tobin; Mr. and

Mrs. Curtis Kjaer, Kristie and Andrew. **Norland**—Frank Homme. **Rose**—Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Starren; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Starren, Lynne, Shelly and Jason; Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Dalen and Ashlie; Mr. and Mrs. Randy Sandstrom, Kopen and Katie; Mrs. Steve Erickson, Heather, Holly and Emily; Mrs. Dennis Starren and Brandy; Miss Kathy Knutson; Miss Barbara Jean Grindahl; and Aaron Grindahl.

The Eastern North Dakota District Women's Missionary Federation of the AFLC will be having their Spring Rally on Saturday, April 28, 1984, at Trinity Free Lutheran Church, Minnewaukan, N. Dak. at 9:30 a.m.

The theme is "IN HIS STEPS" taken from I Peter 2:21.

Our Bible study leader and speaker will be Pastor LeRoy Flickinger and we look forward to having him share with us.

We urge all WMF members to come and expect a blessing.

The Minneapolis District WMF Spring Rally will be at Morgan Avenue Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, on Tuesday, April 10. Registration begins at 9 a.m. Speakers are Rev. Yeddo Gottel and Miss Evelyn Stensland.

HONORARY MEMBERSHIPS



Wadena, Minn.

Zion Lutheran honored Linda Sarkela for years of service. Mrs. Tebben presented the pin.

Fergus Falls, Minn.

Calvary-Stiklestad WMF has had a busy year. They enjoyed the lessons on "The Fruit of the Spirit." The ladies hosted a recognition dinner for Sunday School teachers, organists, confirmands and graduates. A Mother-Daughter Tea and the Cradle Roll program were special events.

The WMF organized a successful clothing drive for our Mexico Mission and for the White Earth Indian Mission.

In Memoriam was given for Gwen Olson. Honorary memberships were given to Lillian Christenson, Martha Bunes and Mabel Van Sickle.

Preaching Missions

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

Rosedale Lutheran Church

Rev. Ralph Rokke, pastor

March 25-27

Lay Pastor Gene Sunday, Outlook, Sask., speaker

Miss Wold not on active status

The World Missions Committee of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations has announced that Miss Priscilla Wold, missionary to Brazil, has for the present time been removed from the roster of active workers. The action was taken upon her decision to remain at home with her father, whose health has not been good. Her mother passed away in November of 1983. The Committee had asked her to resume her duties in Brazil by March 1 of this year.

Miss Wold came back to the U.S. in June, 1982, because of her father's health condition, on a short term furlough. That was later extended by seven months. Since January of 1983 she has been on leave of absence.

Miss Carol Knapp, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. George Knapp of Brazil, is being sent to Brazil as a replacement for at least one year. She speaks Portuguese, the language of Brazil, and has a permanent visa for that country.

Miss Wold and her father, Olaf Wold, as well as Miss Knapp should be remembered in prayer, that the Lord will meet all needs and guide in all ways.

Conservative Lutheran churches may defect

New York (LC) — At least three congregations have left the American Lutheran Church (ALC) in recent months and Lutheran pastors who call themselves “conservative evangelicals” say more churches will defect if the Commission for a New Lutheran Church (CNLC) does not take into account the concerns of conservative Lutherans.

The actions of some conservative groups have upset ALC bishops who say the conservatives are misrepresenting the ALC while encouraging churches to leave the denomination.

Two churches in Iowa and Minnesota have left the ALC to join the 17,000-member Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, based in Minneapolis, Minn., and another Minnesota church which left the ALC is currently independent.

A fourth ALC church in Pittsburgh has attempted to leave the ALC, but officially is still in the ALC. Eastern District Bishop E. Harold Jansen said the St. Paul Lutheran Church has not followed constitutional procedures for leaving.

The number of churches that have actually left do not represent an “unusual amount” of churches doing so, according to ALC general secretary Kathryn Baerwald, who said about 10 to 15 churches annually leave for one reason or another.

Yet there appears to be a growing number of conservatives in the ALC and Lutheran Church in America (LCA) who have expressed concern about the theological direction of the new church commission.

Three recently organized national groups of Lutheran pastors and laypeople—with various concerns and goals—offered written statements on theology at the Feb. 18-22 CNLC meeting. The ALC, LCA and Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC) are planning to form a new Lutheran church by 1988.

“The leadership has got to recognize that the evangelical conservative wing of the church is here and our concerns must be addressed,” said the Rev. David R. Barnhart, a leader of the Fellowship of Evangelical Lutheran Laity and Pastors (FELLP), the largest and most vocal of the groups.

“To some degree we’ve gotten the impression they’re going around us. But I think they’re going to discover in the long run that’s not going to be as easy as they think,” said the 44-year-old Barnhart, pastor of the 2,500 member Trinity Lutheran Church (LCA) in Minneapolis.

A fourth group, Lutherans Alert National, with headquarters in Tacoma, Wash., is sending speakers to congregations around the country

to discuss possible withdrawal from the ALC. Lutherans Alert and FELLP are not related.

The 125-member St. Paul Lutheran Church in Jewell, Iowa, a town of 1,200, recently left the ALC.

The conservative evangelical groups are most concerned with the theological statements of the CNLC and want the commission to use the words “infallible” and “inerrant” to describe the Bible. The commission’s theological statement said that scripture is “the divinely inspired Word of God,” but that the words “infallible” and “inerrant” can lead to a misunderstanding of the nature of scripture.

The conservative groups say the ALC is departing from its 1960 constitution which describes the Bible as the “inerrant Word of God” and “the only infallible authority in all matters of faith and life.”

Arnold R. Mickelson, CNLC coordinator, said the commission has already discussed the possibility that some congregations may not wish to be a part of the new church. He said he hoped that people will recognize the “the new Lutheran church is not abandoning anyone.”

The emergence of yet another group, Friends for Biblical Lutheranism, demonstrates the variety of evangelical voices that have sounded in recent months.

Friends for Biblical Lutheranism is a moderate group which supports the formation of a new church although that is not its immediate concern. The group, which has sent its own theological statement to the CNLC, wants to promote a greater use and understanding of the Bible within Lutheranism.

“Our purpose in coming together is to promote, undergird, and support a Biblical style of belief within the church,” said the Rev. Dr. Benjamin Johnson, 46, of St. Cloud, Minn. “We’re positively not interested in fighting theories of inspiration,” he said, referring to the debate whether the CNLC should describe Scripture as “inerrant” and “infallible.”

Pastors of the three congregations which left the ALC agreed with FELLP that the church had become too political and had departed from

With our evangelist-youth worker

Paul wrote to Timothy: “But the Word of God is not fettered” (II Tim. 2:9b). And so the Word of God, Law and Gospel, produces its fruit of changed lives, also through the ministry of evangelism. Pray for the work of our evangelist, Rev. Kenneth Pentti, in these appointments.

Bemidji, Minn.

Bethany Lutheran Church
Mar. 25-29

Rev. Mark Antal, pastor

McVie, N. Dak.

New Luther Valley Lutheran Church
Apr. 1-5

Rev. Wesley Langaas, pastor

Amery, Wis.

Apr. 8-12

Rev. Michael W. Brandt, pastor

Eben Jct., Mich.

Calvary Lutheran Church
Apr. 14-18

Rev. Norman S. Tenneboe, pastor

Colfax, Wis.

Faith Lutheran Church
Apr. 29-May 3

Rev. Hubert DeBoer, pastor

Ontonagon, Mich.

Redeemer Lutheran Church
May 6-9

Rev. James Fugleberg, pastor

Sunburg, Minn.

Community Evangelistic meetings
May 12-16

Dennis D. Gray, Carl Hort, Verle Dean, pastors

DEFECT . . .

its conservative theology of Biblical inerrancy.

"There's an intolerance of evangelicals within the church," said the Rev. David H. Skordahl, 48, who led a group of members in forming the new 175-member Christ the King Lutheran Church in Pipestone, Minn. The church's members formerly belonged to the 1,100-member St. John's Lutheran Church, but has not affiliated with another denomination.

Some of the evangelical groups formed to work within the church have gotten started on a regional level and then hooked up with national groups. Recently, an "evangelical alliance" of ALC clergy and laypeople in the Southwest joined the Friends for Biblical Lutheranism.

"I think it's interesting that these groups seem to be popping up around the country," said the Rev. Paul L. Spaulding, pastor at the 1,000-member Community Church of Joy (ALC), Glendale, Ariz.

He organized his group to give a "positive expression of the evangelical perspective," and "to head off" the possibility that some congregations may leave the merging churches.

The presence of FELLP, with about 40,000 people on its mailing list, is a sign that conservatives intend to make their voices heard as the planning for the new church continues.

Barnhart said FELLP wants the new church to be founded solidly on Scripture and the Lutheran confessions, and if some churches think it is not they may choose to leave.

"The stakes are very high," said Barnhart.

—Martin Klammer

(Ed. note: The AFLC was formed in October of 1962 and became fully operational in 1963 when the majority of the Lutheran Free Church joined the American Lutheran Church on February 1.)

Only such as well know that their merits count for nothing in winning God's forgiveness will heed the message that there is forgiveness in Christ's blood.

Otto C. A. Boecler

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR
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Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Second-class postage
paid at Minneapolis, Minn.

Gethsemane

Gethsemane . . . Gethsemane . . .

We shall not soon forget.

For once we had the privilege

Of walking where Jesus wept.

He agonized for you and me,

That we through Him might
ransomed be;

So we'd at last be brought to

Him . . .

Be freed from every strife and sin.

He asked Peter, James, and John

To watch and pray while He was
gone

A stone's throw further, so that He,

In silence, with His Father'd be.

He prayed for strength to drink the
cup

His Father had prepared for Him.

But, not My will, but Thine be
done,

A choice He made for every one.

He took our place upon the Tree,

That we from sin might ransomed
be.

And now He sits upon the Throne

And intercedeth for His own.

His three disciples fell far short

Of doing things He asked of them;
They'd willing minds, but flesh was
weak,

Hence, Jesus found them all

asleep.

Today we think how sad to know

They failed the Lord so long ago,

But, hearken, are we any better

In serving Him unto the letter?

We oft' grow slothful 'long the way,

In doing His work, from day to
day.

Determined, as we've sometimes
been,

We've fallen short in serving Him.

We've fallen short, we've looked
within,

Instead of looking up to Him.

We've toiled along in our own way,
Neglecting unto Him to pray.

But listen, let us not forget,

Our blessed Lord, He ruleth yet;
He always will remember us,
That we were fashioned out of
dust.

He knows we're weak apart from
Him;

He knows how easy 'tis to sin.
His redemption covers all,
So don't neglect on Him to call.

He'll strength supply along the way;

He'll go before from day to day.
Our many sins He's cast aside,
So let us in His Word abide.

Until at last the day will dawn,

When from this earth we'll all be
gone

To be with Him in heaven above,
And share in His Eternal Love.

Oscar A. Olson
Outlook, Sask,