

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

March 19, 1991



The
Lord
is risen
indeed.

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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Light on the Way

The Precious Blood of Christ

Another Lenten season has passed, and now we celebrate the resurrection. Let us look into the Word of God and see some of the things that the shed blood of Christ has purchased for us.

Immediately we think of our **redemption** through Christ Jesus. I Peter 1:18, 19 reads, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Yes, Jesus was the perfect sacrifice and the only way to be redeemed.

As Christians we realize how truly precious the blood of Christ is, and yet how often do we think about His precious blood and what it purchased for us? A number of years ago at a Bible conference, time was given for testimonies and the sharing of Scripture. The pastor who led the meeting asked for Scripture verses that spoke about the blood of Christ. I recall that there were very few who could share. Not that Christians are unaware of how precious the blood is, but so few had memorized verses that spoke of it. I find myself guilty in this respect, also.

Hebrews 9:22 states, "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and **without shedding of blood is no remission.**" Revelation 5:9 also reminds us: "... Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain and has redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." Just think, all have been redeemed — every kindred, tongue, people, and nation! All who will accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour can receive this redemption. Acts 20:28 admonishes the spiritual leaders to feed the church of God which He purchased with His own precious blood.

Forgiveness was also purchased by His blood. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness

of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7). Not only do we have forgiveness of our sin in part, but the whole is forgiven. **All** the sin debt is paid in full ... the past sins, the present sins, and sins that are yet to be committed. Even the sins of which we are not aware are forgiven.

Now this does not mean that we can deliberately live in sin and expect a continual forgiveness. By no means! Paul asks the question in Romans 6:1 "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Verse 16 continues: "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness." To continue in sin would only prove that we are not truly walking in fellowship with God. For a Christian there is victory over a life of sin, as we walk close to Jesus.

Deliverance was also purchased for us. What joy and peace we experience when Jesus sets us free from a life of spiritual darkness to a life of spiritual light! We are delivered from the power of the devil and our own flesh. Temptations will still come, and at times we may fall into sin, but I John 1:9 promises, "If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." We can boldly come before God and confess our sins with repentant hearts (Hebrews 10:19).

Because Jesus washed away our sin by His blood, God no longer holds us guilty. We are fully pardoned. Praise His wonderful name!



— by Rev.
Alvin Larson



Perfect Peace

When therefore it was evening, on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be unto you." And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. His disciples therefore rejoiced when they saw their Lord. Jesus therefore said to them again, "Peace be with you, as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." (John 20:19-21 NAS).

Two artists were asked to paint a picture illustrating "peace." The first one painted a scene showing a still, quiet lake with mountains in the distance.

The second one painted a thundering waterfall with a slender branch of a tree bending over it. At the fork of the branch, which was wet with the spray of the waterfall, sat a robin on its nest undisturbed.

Now, which picture best depicts what peace is? If you said the latter, you are right. For it is a picture of resting in the storm, having perfect peace in the midst of life's storms.



— by Rev.
Rodney Johnson
Stanley, North Dakota

In John 20:19ff, Jesus appears in the midst of the disciples after His resurrection, and declares to these frightened men, "Peace be unto you." We must understand that the days and nights prior to this appearance of Christ were terrible ones for the disciples. Thursday evening their Lord was arrested and the disciples all left Him and fled. On Friday morning, judgment was passed and before sundown, Jesus had been crucified and laid in a tomb.

These were days of confusion, doubt, misunderstanding, unbelief and great fear. When Jesus comes to the disciples, John states that the doors were shut for fear of the Jews. Would they be next to lose their lives at the hands of these hostile Jews? John also says in chapter 9:22, that anyone who confessed Jesus as the Messiah would be expelled from the synagogue.

If anyone needed this declaration of peace it was the disciples. The word "peace" was often used as a greeting. But as Jesus appears to His disciples, this is not just any ordinary empty greeting. For Jesus is able to give what the word declares. The Lord Jesus Christ uses this greeting as one who has actually merited this peace for His disciples and for all who believe in Him.

"And when He had said this, He showed the disciples both His hands and His side." Luke tells us that the disciples had to be convinced of the identity of Jesus. So Jesus shows them His wounds, asked them to touch Him and ate a piece of fish. Only then were they convinced.

The very wounds of Jesus, His suffering and death were the price by which He purchased our peace, thus satisfying God's wrath against our sins. Christ's resurrection was God's loving stamp of approval on Christ's redemptive work.

By nature there is not a single person who is at peace with God. In fact the Scriptures tell us just the opposite, we are at war against God. Because of original sin, we are born spiritually dead, "Separate from Christ ... strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world" (Ephesians 2:12). The one outside of Christ is at enmity with God. *The Formula of Concord* describes the state of natural man as being an enemy of God until he is converted. The prophet Isaiah said, "the wicked are like the tossing sea, for it cannot be quiet, and its waters toss up refuse and mud. 'There is no peace,' says my God, 'for the wicked'" (57:21).

Paul says in Ephesians 2 that anyone "in Christ Jesus is brought near to God by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace ... abolishing in His flesh the enmity ... thus establish-



PEACE

ing peace and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace ... for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father."

Peace with God, right standing with God, is possible only because of what Christ has done for us at Calvary. But how can anyone obtain peace with God?

This peace, which Christ established for us through His atoning sacrifice, is the condition of peace when nothing disturbs our relationship to God.

"The disciples therefore rejoiced when they saw the Lord." These fearful disciples were filled with peace and joy within, knowing that this truly was their Lord who had been crucified.

Finally, Jesus commissions the disciples to go and proclaim this message of peace to all the world. The redemptive mission of Jesus was now completed, but the work of spreading this

good news of salvation was to continue through the disciples and all His children.

As I write this article, our nation is in the midst of the Persian Gulf War. People are afraid, most everyone wants peace; and as a church we have prayed for peace if that is God's will. But one thing I do know that is God's will and it is this, "God desires that all be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." This is the greatest peace that one could ever have and experience. When one's faith is anchored in Jesus, it does not matter what kind of storms of life come our way, they cannot affect our standing of peace with God. Peace which was purchased by the shed blood of Christ. Are you at peace with God? Is it well with your soul? Please consider the words of this song:

Have you been to the cross where the Lord Jesus suffered, have you been to Calvary? It is Christ, it is Christ who gives life more abundant as He calls from Calvary. Don't turn away, don't delay, place your faith in Christ Jesus, as He calls from Calvary.



Alleluia

The disciples did not assert merely that their Master had survived death, but that he had conquered death. They saw in the resurrection an act of God in the life of Jesus Christ which matched at every point the apparent defeat which he suffered on the cross.

—E. G. Selwyn

I Come to the Garden

At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had ever been laid.

John 19:41

As the first rays of sunlight fell upon the historic city of Jerusalem, in a manner no different than all the mornings before, the inhabitants began to stir. None of them had the slightest inclination that this day's dawning would bear witness to an event which would change forever the destiny of all mankind. Nor did they realize that they were among earth's privileged few, living within the shadow of Redemption's dramatic unfolding. That morning even the priests of the temple, as they rose to tend their prescribed duties, were unaware that their own Jewish Scriptures were fulfilled, and that God's need for their services had come to an end.

Just outside the city wall, not far from Jerusalem's horrifying place of execution, Golgotha, the first streams of light revealed the empty, once guarded, once sealed, grave that had so coldly enveloped the earthly remains of Jesus of Nazareth. As the first Easter morning skies brightened, more than the darkness of night disappeared; the darkness that had enslaved the whole human race was forever banished. The night of man's despair had ended. Piercing the stillness of Joseph's lovely garden came the cry that would be heard not only in the streets of David's Royal City, but also in the most distant places of the earth: "He is risen!"

Many journeyed to the Garden Tomb that first Easter day. Some went there out of a deep soul-wrenching sorrow; some went out of curiosity; still others went out of shocked disbelief. But go there they did! First to arrive were the three women whose only purpose was to anoint the dead body of their dearest friend. Next came two of His trusted disciples, running all the way, to see for themselves if what the women had told them was really true. Undoubtedly others came, his friends and foes alike. Perhaps the Roman army brass went there to discover personally how their subordinates could be so inept at guarding something as non-threatening as a Jewish grave. It is possible that the High Priest himself, with his co-conspirators paid a visit to Jesus' grave before they met to invent their own versions of the day's events. And surely as the day wore on, the curious of Jerusalem made their way to the tomb to stare and ponder.

As the years passed, Christians continued to assemble at this place of our Lord's Resurrection. Eventually, a small church was constructed, incorporating the entire Tomb in its altar area. But worship in Jerusalem was short-lived. Harsh and bitter persecution forced the Christians to flee repeatedly from the region, and most of the revered places from the early Christian era were either destroyed or given over to pagan purposes.

Whether the church of the Holy Sepulchre or Gordon's Calvary marks the true location of Christ's resurrection, one fact is certain, He is Risen! He is Alive! Search the whole of Israel, look into a thousand tombs, but you will not find Him. It is the fact of Christ's resurrection, not the place, that gives us our inexpressible joy and certain hope!

Still, there is no place in all the world which moves me in heart as deeply as my visits to the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem. Gazing first on the hill of Calvary, and then at the open, empty Tomb, my heart cries out with the hymn-writer, "Why should He love me so?" It is not the place that captures my soul, but the wondrous love of my blessed Redeemer. There, in the tranquil scene of Joseph's lovely garden, with its beautiful flowers and song-birds praising God's Word speaks to me afresh: "If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal body through His Spirit who lives in you."

How thrilling it is to stand in the center of the Garden as hundreds of people file quietly in to worship and praise the Lord of Life. The Garden is large enough that various groups may worship simultaneously, with some choosing to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Often one can hear, at the same time, hymns of praise in five or six different languages. The great and the small stand together, side by side, at Calvary and before the empty tomb. None dares to boast, except in the riches of Christ's infinite, matchless grace.

At last, I think I understand that great Easter hymn penned by C. Austin Miles, in which he pictures Mary Magdalene going to the Garden on that first Easter morning. She expected to find only Jesus' dead body, but instead she met Him, alive and face to face!

"And He walks with me and He talks with me,
And He tells me I am His own;
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known."



— by Rev.
David R. Barnhart
Eagan, Minnesota

A Story for Children

Jane was sitting on her bike, deep in thought. The bike had nothing to do with her thoughts. It was just a place to be by herself.

Jane was thinking about Easter. This holiday never meant much to her. Oh, she colored eggs and rabbits to decorate the classroom and to give away. But these things no longer interested her.

She became very curious one day when her friend, Rhonda, had said to her, "Aren't you glad Easter is almost here? It's such a happy time of the year!"

Jane was almost ready to ask Rhonda what there was to be so happy about at Easter, when her mother called her to her house. So Jane still didn't know the answer to this puzzle. She decided to find out for herself.

That afternoon she went shopping at a clothing store. There she heard the store keeper say, "Yes, Easter is almost here again!"

Jane wondered why the store keeper was so interested in Easter. When she approached him, she quietly asked, "Why is Easter a happy day?" "Well, that's easy to answer," he replied. "I make lots of money at Easter and that makes me happy!"

Later Jane went to the grocery store to buy some bread for her mother. There she overheard a little boy talking to his mother. "Mommy, will the Easter bunny bring me some Easter eggs this year?" "Oh, I think he will," answered his mother. "I hope it's mostly chocolate candy ones," the boy exclaimed.

Jane listened, she thought, "The little boy is happy enough, but I'm too old to believe that a bunny can bring you Easter eggs." Jane knew that wasn't enough to make big girls like Rhonda and her happy on Easter.

When Jane came to the check out counter, she overheard a lady saying to the clerk ... "We are having all the family home for the Easter Holiday!" "What a happy time for you," replied the clerk. The lady, busy writing out a check for the groceries responded, "Well, it will be nice, if I'm not too tired and broke to enjoy it!"



Luoma Photo

What Does Easter Mean to You?

By this time Jane was beginning to think that Easter was only for personal gain, bunnies, candy and lots of work!

The next day, at school, Jane watched for Rhonda. It was late afternoon before she finally had a chance to talk to her.

"Hey, Rhonda," she began, "You said the other day that Easter was such a happy time of the year. Ever since then, I've been wondering about this. I can't see any reason for people like us to be happy."

"Really!" exclaimed Rhonda. "Don't you know that is the day we especially remember that Jesus arose!"

"Arose from where?" Jane asked. "Why, from the grave. Don't you go to Sunday School or church?" answered Rhonda. "No, I never have," said Jane.

"Oh my!" Rhonda said with a smile, "I'll tell you a beautiful love story that will explain to you what Easter means to me and why it makes me so happy!"

Rhonda continued, "Let's go on a

3:16 hunt in my New Testament. In the Bible we call **John 3:16** the golden text of the Bible. It is a love story to all people! This is what it says: "For God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Puzzled, Jane responded, "Rhonda, I want to be happy like you, but how can I know those words are really true?"

"That's easy," replied Rhonda. In **II Timothy 3:16** it says: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness ..."

With a searching look, Jane quietly asked, "I know we are born with sin, but how can God take my sins away?"

Rhonda smiled and said, "Let's continue our **3:16 hunt**! In **I John 3:16** it reads: 'Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us.' We know nothing of the love of God until we see it through the cross."

"What a love story!" exclaimed Jane. "Jesus died on the cross for me!"

"Yes," replied Rhonda. "Salvation is a gift of God and all you have to do when you see your sin and need of a Saviour, is to believe in Him and you will have this happy life!"

With tears of joy, Jane said, "I believe, and I want to learn more of how I can always be happy!"

Rhonda smiled warmly and said, "Let me read from **Colossians 3:16**. It says: 'Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.'"

Smiling back, Jane added, "That tells me we need to read the Word so that we can gain wisdom from God!"

"That's right," said Rhonda. "And we need to remember Paul's wonderful prayer for us in **Ephesians 3:16**: 'That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.' God promises His strength to us in all that we do!"

Jane felt good inside. Her heart was full of love for Jesus. She couldn't wait to get home and tell her parents what Easter meant to her!

— *Mrs. Gerald (Karen) Knudsvig*
Buxton, North Dakota

Easter Morrow Stills Our Sorrow

Easter morrow stills our sorrow,
Stills our sorrow forevermore.
Light ever glowing, life overflowing,
Stream from that dawn on benighted shore.
Easter morrow stills our sorrow,
Stills our sorrow for evermore.

From His prison Christ has risen,
Christ has risen in morning glow.
Hell weeps in sadness; heavens in gladness,
Heavens in gladness their praise bestow.
From His prison Christ has risen,
Christ has risen in morning glow.

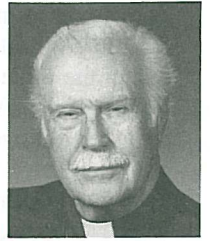
Anthems glorious, joy victorious,
Ringing to our Redeemer rise.
He, interceding, upward is leading,
Leading us home to His Paradise.
Anthems glorious, joy victorious,
Ringing to our Redeemer rise.

Angels 'biding bring the tiding,
Bring the tiding at break of day.
Sunbeams awaken; tomb is forsaken;
Heralds of heaven the news relay.
Angels 'biding bring the tiding,
Bring the tiding at break of day.

Sin confounded, grace abounded,
Grace abounded and set us free.
Tomb-dreads are ended; Jesus ascended,
Jesus ascended; the shadows flee.
Sin confounded, grace abounded,
Grace abounded and set us free.

— Nicolai F. S. Grundtvig
Translated by Oscar R. Overby
Concordia Hymnal, No. 196

The Progress of the Pilgrim



—by Dr. Howard B. Franzen
Hastings, Nebraska

Through Guilt

John Bunyan in "Pilgrim's Progress" designates his prime character by the name "Christian." This person is depicted as traveling through life, from lost to saved, experiencing all the panoply of feelings that one can feel in the process of becoming a Christian. For the theme of this article, we take a painful statement from Christian in his conversation with "Mr. Worldly Wiseman."

Christian was just told how terrible life really is. He responds by agreeing with him, and then adding, "Why, sir, this Burden upon my back is more terrible to me than are all these things which you have mentioned; and methinks I care not what I meet with the way, so be I can also meet with deliverance from my Burden."

Then "Mr. Worldly Wiseman" asks, "How camest thou by thy Burden at first?"

Christian responds, "By reading this Book in my hand." The Book was the Bible. The Burden was guilt.

Guilt has been defined as "the state of one who, by violation of law, has made himself or herself liable to or deserving of punishment."

Some years ago, Dr. Karl Menninger, one of the "greats" in the field of psychiatry and one of my teachers, wrote a book entitled, "What Became of Sin"? Today I would tell Dr. Menninger that nothing became of sin. It is still there. It is simply not recognized.

One of the problems of modern humanity is the matter of distinguishing between sin and sins. In one of the old liturgies of the Lutheran Church are the words, "... we have sinned against Thee by thought, word, and deed."

Sin is our condition. Sins are the evidence of our condition. "... All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

Guilt is the handmaiden of sin. But today we are bothered by the seeming absence of guilt. I preached in a church recently where the pastor had begun to include in the morning worship service not only the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, but also the Ten Commandments. Back to basics? Yes. We are living in a world that is reaping a whirlwind of sin, and what bothers us especially is that it is also a world without conscience. The problem is not what became of sin, but what became of guilt?

"Christian," in the second part of his dream, saw a "Man clothed in Rags" with a book in his hands. The man says, "What must I do to be saved?" It is time for the church to call our attention to the sin of, the guilt derived from, and the consequences of all sin.

Among the sins that are often overlooked in our preaching of the Law is our abuse and neglect of God's creation. Even though we may sing, "This Is My Father's World," we are often guilty of contributing to its destruction. We have become aware of the problems of polluted air, polluted ground, polluted streams, and water resources. Modern industrialization and the rapid advance of technology, with all of the derived benefits, have also brought with them the potential for mass destruction. "Christian" did not have to

worry about sins of this sort, but we do.

Thus, even as we continue to hear the Law, let us recognize also our individual and collective waste of human life and natural resources, all of which are a part of God's magnificent creation.

What must we do to be saved? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved. But this calls for contrition, repentance, and confession, regarding our sins against God and His creation.

We need forgiveness from God. We all stand guilty before God. It is time to "seek the Lord while He may be found" (Isaiah 55:6).

We have not fathomed the secret of the joy of the men of the first age until we see that the resurrection was for them the prophecy of the coming death of all sorrow, that it was the very truth 'an anticipation of immortality,' and a fragment of heaven here in the world of time. It is the real cause of the radical optimism of Christianity. Here in the resurrection a new influx from the world of spirit comes breaking in. As some gray ruin of a vanished past towers over a city, and stands there inexplicably until in thought you recreate its history, so stands the Christian life today. It is inexplicable in terms of the world of time. But it is not survival of the past; it is a fragment of the future, of the heaven that is to be.

—D. S. Cairns

from a
counselor's
study

Short-term Mission Opportunities in Brazil

My first four months in Brazil have been very busy and interesting. I have grown to love the people, the Abel family, and my ministry of teaching.

It has been rewarding to see my three students enjoy their little school. I encourage anyone who is interested in this unique teaching ministry to pursue it. There is always a need for teachers to help our missionaries and their children.

This coming fall there will be a couple vacancies to be filled to teach and help care for the children of our missionaries. Young adults in Bible School or college, please consider this work and service for the Lord. The opportunities and joy of actually working in the mission field are beyond comparison. The exchange of learning and spiritual growth are special gifts from the Lord.

Being a part of the family has involved me in their ministry of church planting. The two churches are small, but growing spiritually and numerically. I have been able to witness the conversion and spiritual growth of two young people. This, in turn, spreads the gospel to their families. A seed is planted.

The bonds of friendship and Christian love we have formed here are very strong. God has had some amazing plans for me and has many more plans for my future in His service. Praise the Lord!

— Janet Gray
Curitiba, Brazil

“...Born that man no
more may die,
Born to raise the
sons of earth,
Born to give them
second birth.”

— from “Hark The Herald
Angels Sing”
Charles Wesley

Our President Writes

The AFLC, A Spiritual Movement

The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations holds to the principle that the congregation is the right form of the Kingdom of God on earth. George Sverdrup, one of the architects of the Fundamental Principles, stressed the importance of the freedom of the congregation. He strongly opposed the methods of synods to bring the congregation under subjection. Since the congregation is the church, the body of Christ, the communion of saints, in every place where it is found, Sverdrup taught that the congregation should recognize one and only one authority over itself — the Word and the Spirit. He fought hard for the truth that no man-made organization has any right to dictate to the congregation.

There are a number of people, who, when they first become acquainted with the emphasis of the AFLC on the freedom of the congregation, wonder how it can work. To be sure, there are hazards, and an association which holds to such principles must have something else which it can hold to which complements this emphasis on freedom.

The teaching of congregational freedom must never become that of license. There is not true freedom without a corresponding consciousness of responsibility. The Fundamental Principles amply set forth these areas of responsibility.

The congregations under the leadership of Sverdrup looked upon their freedom as a freedom from ecclesiastical forms, customs and ideas inherited from the State Church of Norway. But that is only the beginning of seeking to understand the emphasis on freedom. It speaks also about a personal relationship to the Lord of the Church. It is true of an individual that he cannot be truly free until the Son has set him free. A free congregation is one that is, therefore, made up of free and living people. People who have experienced the freedom from bondage to sin, and are willing to live their lives in a manner pleasing to God and in conformity with His will. A congregation is also not free until Christ has made it free. That means there must be spiritual life, spiritual life born of true faith in Jesus Christ. A free congregation is, therefore, a living congregation.

The direct, fearless, Spirit-filled preaching of the Gospel liberates souls. Within our free congregations there will always be a strong evangelistic emphasis.

Where there are Spirit-filled Christians, there will also be the desire to be working in the Kingdom. The local congregation was pictured by Sverdrup as a living organism with many members, each having its own function to perform. Where each member allows itself to be used by God, with each gift in the service of Christ, there we have a living congregation.

A living congregation undergirds its work with prayer. A love for souls is a real evidence of a living congregation. Every believer senses a burden for the lost, and is constantly seeking to win others for Christ.

Is what we have stated here about free and living congregations the exception, rather than the rule, as we look at our AFLC? What can we do to regain that first love for Christ? We are in need of revival. How we need to repent of our selfishness, and our love of ease and pleasure. We are too prone to be satisfied with the situation as it is. We are not willing to die to self.

Our AFLC is a spiritual movement. It will work only when each of our congregations is truly a free and living one. The AFLC will become an organization that God can bless and use only as His work is accomplished within the individual heart of each member of each congregation.

Do we need a revival? I invite you to pray with me: “God send a revival in our church, and begin it with me.”

— Richard Snipstead

DAVID NELSON

Bloomington, Minnesota

Son of Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Nelson

Married to Sarah Jane Skramstad

Home congregation:

Emmaus Lutheran Church, Bloomington, Minnesota

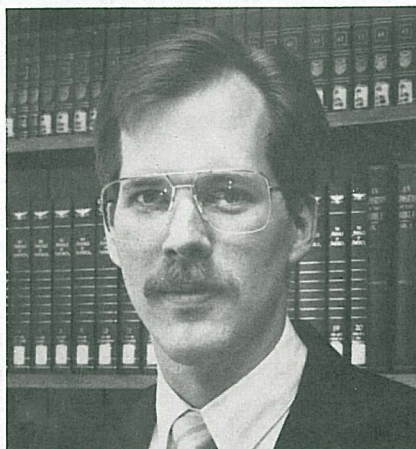
Don Richman and Jim Ritter, pastors.

Graduate of Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Special interests: guitar, reading and camping.

Personal Testimony:

Being raised in a Lutheran family, I was baptized as an infant. And as my parents promised at that time, they directly and indirectly, through church and Sunday School, brought me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. As far back as I can remember, I



have known and trusted Jesus as my Savior and have had the assurance of going to heaven when I died. There have, however, been some special times of rededication of my life to Jesus. My confirmation was one of those times. The public confession of trusting in the person and work of

Jesus Christ alone for my salvation was made in honesty and sincerity. This continues to be my confession.

Seminary Experiences:

The Lord has strengthened my faith in Him and my confidence in His Word by the examples and teaching of the AFLTS professors. My experience has gone beyond mere academic study. It has also been a time of personal challenge and growth. I have come to see how the various parts of the Bible fit together to make a beautiful unity, without contradiction or error. And the Bible's main theme of justification through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is so clear to me. How I thank God for humble, godly, Lutheran men who love the Lord and honor and teach His Scriptures at our Seminary!

*Mr. Nelson has accepted a call to Living Faith Free Lutheran Church, Tucson, Arizona.

JON BENSON

Wanamingo, Minnesota

Son of Robert and Ida Marie Benson, Wamamingo.

Married to Jeannette Hanson of Ferndale, Washington.

Children: Marie, four; Andrew, three.

Home congregation:

Emmanuel Lutheran, Kenyon, Minnesota.

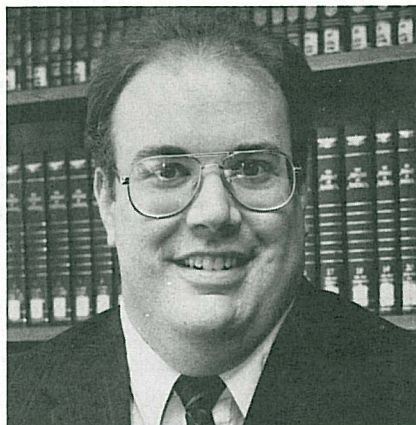
Rodney Stueland, pastor.

Graduated from: AFLBS (1981), St. Paul Bible College, St. Bonifacius, Minnesota (1986).

Special interests: sports, hunting, reading, music.

Personal Testimony:

As far back as I can remember, Jesus has been a part of my life. I praise the Lord for parents who raised me in the fear and love of the Lord Jesus. It also praise God for the conviction He gave them to seek out a new church home for our family in my early teen years. I was through the youth Bible studies at Emmanuel that I gained the assurance of my salvation



and was strengthened in my Christian faith. The leaders of our youth group also had great impact on my desire to go to Bible School. It was a real blessing to spend two years in study and fellowship around the Word of God, being "surrounded by a cloud of witnesses ... looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith," as Hebrews 12:1, 2 states.

Seminary Experience:

After two years of Bible School, the Lord still had to call me out of the construction field, and convince me that His will for me involved building eter-

nal foundations, and not with concrete. Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "For no man can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 3:11). That is the foundation that the Lord has called me to be building on. Through the studies at AFLTS, I have become convinced that what the world needs is to see Jesus, and Him alone as the foundation for living, both here and for eternity. Through my year of internship in Valley City, North Dakota, I feel the Lord really confirmed His call for me to be building souls for eternity. I look forward to leaving seminary this spring, and going forth with the words of I Corinthians 2:4, 5 as my theme: "My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power."

*Mr. Benson is available for call.

Next issue: Meet Mr. Jonathan Abel, Mr. Michael Peterson and Mr. Tonnes Pollestad.

New Faculty Member at AFLTS Schools

The Board of Trustees of AFLC Schools is pleased to announce that Dr. Craig Jennings has accepted a call to serve as full-time instructor in the seminary and Bible School. His ministry will begin on August 1 of this year.

For the past five years, Dr. Jennings has served as pastor of Word of Life Lutheran Church in LeSeuer, Minnesota, a congregation belonging to the Church of the Lutheran Brethren. During the last year, he has been a part-time instructor in our seminary and Bible School as well.

Dr. Jennings and his wife, Laurel, have three children, Karen, five, Brian, four, and David, sixteen months. His father, Rev. Clair Jennings, served as an instructor at AFLTS in its earliest moments while pastoring Faith Free Lutheran Church in south Minneapolis.



Later, his father helped organize King of Glory Lutheran Church in Eden Prairie and served it until his retirement from active ministry. Pastor and Mrs. Clair Jennings are members of Living Word Lutheran Church (AFLC) in Eagan.

Church history is the special field of interest and study of Dr. Jennings. His educational background includes a

Ph.D. in church history at Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina. His doctoral thesis focused on the work of the Holy Spirit as taught by the early church fathers.

In his acceptance letter, Dr. Jennings said, "I want to promise you and the Board that I will devote myself wholeheartedly to the ministry of the schools for the glory of God and the good of the students. I would appreciate your prayers and the prayers of others for special strength and wisdom during the days of transition that lie ahead." Let us remember Dr. Jennings and his family in prayer as they move to Minneapolis and begin ministry later this summer. Let us also praise God for His gracious provisions for our schools.

—Dr. Francis Monseth
AFLTS Dean

Bible School Couple Sent to the Other Side of the World and Back

How far can AFLBS take you? The other side of the world. Ellen Quanbeck and Ben Unseth met at AFLBS as starry-eyed juniors in the fall of 1982 and married three years later.

God took the Unseths to an anti-Christian country in Asia from 1987 to 1989. They ministered among people where death is the penalty for speaking against the national religion. Their journalist neighbor to the left was gunned down at home for publishing too much news. Their neighbor two doors to the right was a blind Christian. He was kidnapped, tortured and murdered for his faith.

Meanwhile, God gave Ellen an open door to the most hostile family in the neighborhood. The Lord used her to tell about Jesus for the first time in their lives.

Ben studied a language spoken by a group of one million people. There is not one church among these people and

they have no Scripture in their language.

A few of these people live in Chicago, so Ben and Ellen moved there after returning to the States. They've helped start a team to translate God's Word for this lost million. Ben is also training missionaries at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago where he teaches linguistics.

Ben, son of Rev. and Mrs. Einar Unseth, is a member of Calvary Lutheran in Bismarck, North Dakota, and Ellen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dale Quanbeck, belongs to New Luther Valley, McVile, North Dakota.

While the Unseths were in Asia, a secret Christian radio studio asked if they could record a tape of Ellen singing. If you would like a copy of Ellen's tape or would like to find out more about the Unseths' ministry, please contact them at 250 Duane St. #5, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137 or (708) 858-1230.

—Submitted

LB Grant to AFLC Home Missions

Lutheran Brotherhood has many fraternal programs designed to aid Lutheranism. One of its programs is the Church Extension Program Subsidy. Over the past fourteen years, the AFLC Home Mission Department has received approximately \$700,000 through this financial program.

During 1990, Home Missions received \$40,000 from Lutheran Brotherhood and divided the funds evenly between eight congregations as follows:

Atonement Free Lutheran Church — Arlington, Washington; Our Savior's Lutheran Church — Chillicothe, Illinois; Warroad Free Lutheran Church — Warroad, Minnesota; Word of Life Free Lutheran Church — Upsala, Minnesota; Abiding Savior Free Lutheran Church — Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Faith Lutheran Church — London, Minnesota; Christian Free Lutheran Church — Wheatland, Iowa; Christ the King Free Lutheran Church — East Grand Forks, Minnesota.

Luther League Federation Teams Announced

Faith On Fire

"Faith On Fire" is the name of the AFLBS Gospel Team which is being sent out this quarter. The team represents the Luther League Federation.

Team members are Neil Anderson, Patti Anderson, Jason Coyle, Angela Johnson, Mary Lofstedt, Jeff Matheson, Allison Mellgren, Janet Wagar and Wayne Welsch.

If you would like to have the team come to your church, please contact Pastor Don Greven of the Bible School or Jason Coyle, team leader. Call 612-544-9501.

Cornerstone

The 1991 Summer Luther League Gospel Team has now been selected. This team will be called "Cornerstone" and will be traveling from the first part of June until the first part of August.

While the team is mainly considered a teaching team, this team has musical ability and will be available for worship services in the AFLC.

The team will begin the summer with training at United Free Lutheran in



(Row 1) Cornerstone: Jeff Matheson, Linda Ozmun, Lori Erickson and Jason Coyle - leader. (Row 2) Faith on Fire Team: Mary Lofstedt, Angela Johnson, Neil Anderson, Wayne Welsch, Allison Mellgren, Patti Anderson, not pictured, Janet Wagner. The team also included Jeff Matheson and Jason Coyle - leader.

Greenbush. They will be going on to Rose and Spruce congregations in Roseau. Also, they will be spending two weeks at the Galilee Bible Camp, Lake Bronson, Minnesota, for the pre-teen and teen camps. Cornerstone will be sharing at the Maranatha Free Lutheran Church of Glyndon, Minnesota. At present, there are two open weeks.

If you would like the team to come to your area, please call Rev. Dennis Gray, Youth Resource Director at 218-782-2249 or 2246 or write Box 68, Greenbush, MN 56726.

The team is mainly concerned with teaching youth, grades 7-12.

Sessions will be on planning and witnessing, plus the vital topic of assurance of personal salvation. They will be teaching some Vacation Bible School, using Gospel Light materials.

— Rev. Dennis Gray

RISE UP AND BUILD

We thank and praise our wonderful God for His loving and generous provision in all His glorious Kingdom! Surely, the cattle of a thousand hills are His! We thank Him for all things, and most of all for the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ, His Son our Lord.

Currently, at this writing, total contributions to the "Rise up and Build" fund stands at \$329,878. This is most encouraging. Our total resources now are \$429,878, when we add the proceeds from the sale of the Chapel Building to the Bible School. We are also pleased to report that arrangements have been made for a loan (if a loan is needed) with very attractive terms.

We ask that you pray for the newly appointed Building Committee. Specific prayer requests are:

1. Pray earnestly for an additional outpouring of generous giving. What a blessing it would be if the building were debt free at completion!
2. Pray that the City of Plymouth will grant us the necessary building permits, and that they will not require expensive modifications in our plans.
3. Pray that many of our AFLC people will respond to our invitation to help build this new facility.
4. Pray for the on-going ministries of our AFLC. The financial needs are pressing at this time.

Finally, we thank you for your wonderful support. Our Finance Committee has been truly blessed with the loving and enthusiastic response to this project. May God bless you all!

— Clifford Johnson
Esko, Minnesota

The End of Lent

Here we are through Lent, God.
It's Easter...
But that's not how I act.
I act as if — "Well, that's over for another year!"
God, help me to rejoice and be glad;
To feel the reality and wonder of the resurrection
with my whole being;
To be able to mean "Hallelujah!!"
as I mean my shouts of joy
when I discover a truth and really understand it,
when work I've done is praised and appreciated,
May the reality of Easter awaken this depth of feeling and meaning
in all my life,
so I can look at life —
and death —
and shout
"Hooray!"

— Laura Mashrick
in Encounter for Lutheran Youth

Annual Conference Accommodations

June 12-17, 1991

Association Retreat
Center

Osceola, Wisconsin

Would You Like to Send Your Pastor Up the River?

On Friday night, June 14, the Pastor's Banquet during the Annual Conference will be held aboard the "Majestic Lady" paddle boat on the beautiful St. Croix River.

Ticket prices are \$30 per couple, \$15, single.

Congregations, encourage your pastor to enjoy this unique opportunity! Some congregations have already promised to send their pastor up the river. Reservations are needed as soon as possible. Write to the ARC, Route 1, Box 92, Osceola, WI 54020. (Sorry, no one-way tickets are available.)

— *Cliff Seldal*
Chairman, ARC Board

The 8th Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations in Canada will be held Friday, April 5 through Sunday, April 7, in Lake Alma, Saskatchewan. Faith Free Lutheran will be the host congregation and Pastor Les Johnson the host pastor. Lake Alma was the "birthplace" of the AFLC in Canada in 1983. Since that time, other congregations have been added in all three of the western provinces in Canada. Pastor Gene Sundby, president of the church body, extends an invitation to all who might be able to attend this conference.

The ARC — Route 1, Box 92, Osceola, WI 54020; phone 1-715-294-2877

Pool, sauna, lake, swimming beach, game room, football, softball, horse shoe pits, frisby, golf.

Rates —

Good News Lodge: \$12 nightly.

All other lodging (Tabitha, Covenant, Daniel, etc.): \$10 nightly.

Children (17 and under): 1/2 price.

Children (three and under): free.

R/V Parking (includes electricity and use of showers): \$7.50 daily.

R/V's using air conditioners: \$2 daily additional.

Valley Motel — P.O. Box 545, Dresser, WI 5400; phone 1-715-755-2781

1 double bed	\$35	2 double beds	\$42
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1 queen bed	\$40	2 double beds (deluxe)	\$48
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rollaway	\$5	2 double beds, 1 single bed	\$54
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Wild River Motel — Route 3, Box 590, St. Croix Falls, WI 54024;

phone 1-715-483-9343

1 couple, 2 double beds	\$35
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3-4 people, 3 double beds	\$45
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5-6 people, 3 double beds	\$75
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Springs Inn — Taylors Falls, WI 55084; phone 1-612-465-6565

Sunday — Thursday:

1 double bed, 1-2 people	\$34, plus
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2 double beds, 2 people	\$38, plus
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2 double beds, 3-4 people	\$43, plus
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king-size bed, 1-2 people	\$40, plus
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queen-size bed, 1-2 people	\$38, plus
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studio, 1-2 people	\$41, plus
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studio 3-4 people	\$46, plus
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Friday — Saturday:

1 double bed, 1-2 people	\$40, plus
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2 double beds, 2 people	\$45, plus
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2 double beds, 3-4 people	\$48, plus
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king-size bed, 1-2 people	\$45, plus
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queen-size bed, 1-2 people	\$43, plus
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studio, 1-2 people	\$45, plus
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studio, 3-4 people	\$50, plus
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American Motel — 1020 S. Knowles, New Richmond, WI 54017;

phone 1-715-246-3993

Pool, sauna, Continental breakfast.

1 double bed, 1 person	\$34
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1 double bed, 2 people	\$39.90
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2 double beds, 4 people	\$48
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Somerset Motel — Somerset, WI 54025; phone 1-715-247-5487

1 double bed, 2 people	\$36
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1 queen-size bed, 2 people	\$39
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2 double beds, 4 people	\$48
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Dalles House Motel — P.O. Box 664, St. Croix Falls, WI 54024;

phone 1-800-341-8000

Complimentary coffee, indoor pool, tanning facility, sauna.

1 double bed	\$37
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1 queen bed	\$44
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1 king bed	\$51
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1 double bed/one twin bed	\$44
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2 double beds	\$47
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2 queen beds	\$51
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2 queen beds/one duo bed	\$66
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LETTERS

Sanctity of Life

Mere words cannot express our heartfelt "thanks" to all of you for your excellent publication on the sanctity of human life. We were so very excited when we received it! Please continue to express the importance of this issue in further publishings. We feel that the AFLC does not take a firm enough stand on abortion, but are so excited since that issue came out!

— *Bill and Donna Picek
Kimball, South Dakota*

The last issue received (January 8, 1991) was absolutely the greatest publication on abortion ever read by me. The articles were very pointed and well-written.

— *John Moline
Maple Plain, Minnesota*

I am writing to thank you for the excellent issue (January 8, 1991) of *The Lutheran Ambassador* you published for this month. It was good to have so many areas of the Right to Life issues written as they were, based on the Word and the experiences of some who had been directly involved.

— *Edna Quanbeck
McVie, North Dakota*

Europe

The Eastern Europe issue (December 25, 1990) was a delight for me. I look forward to seeing what else you have up your sleeve.

— *Ben Unseth
Glen Ellyn, Illinois*

Revival

The February 5 issue of the *Ambassador* is the best one I have ever read. With the challenging articles on Revival, it was no problem in reading this issue from cover to cover the very first day.

Thank you very much for this needed emphasis in our church — repentance and revival, so individual and so personal, and so significant for the body as a whole.

O the blessing of repentance — giving up on one's self and waiting, waiting, waiting for the God of heaven to act!

Here is a Scripture which has been of much challenge and blessing for me recently. It is from Isaiah 25:8-9.

"He will swallow up death forever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces; the rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; for the Lord has spoken.

"And it will be said in that day; Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

— *Philip J. Grothe
Thief River Falls, Minnesota*

People and Places

TIOGA, NORTH DAKOTA — The Zion Choir will be presenting an Easter cantata, "Hallelujah, What a Saviour!" on March, 30, 1991. This is a special reunion concert for all present and former choir members. It was first presented at Zion in the early 1960's.

MCINTOSH, MINNESOTA — Rev. Lyle Aadahl, Upsala, Minnesota, spoke at Special Meetings at Trinity Lutheran Church, January 27-31.

THE MICHIGAN DISTRICT Mid-Winter Bible Conference was held February 15-17, at Hope Free Evangelical Lutheran Church, Ishpeming.

Pastor Philip Haugen shared in Bible study from the theme, "Justified By Faith" from the Epistle of Galatians. His presentations began on Friday evening, were held all day Saturday and he spoke at Sunday morning worship and taught Sunday morning Bible class. His ministry was very well received.

The Gospel team "Solid Rock" was also present on Saturday evening and was very well received in their witness of Christ and presentation from our Bible School.

DALTON, MINNESOTA — Zion-Sarpsborg Free Lutheran Church has voted to construct a new church building on a five-acre site located on the north edge of Dalton. The property was donated to the church by Mathilda Sageng, a lifelong Sarpsborg member.

The old Sarpsborg congregation was organized in 1872, and the rural Dalton church building has been a prominent landmark for travelers for many years. However, on Palm Sunday, 1986, the church was totally destroyed by fire.

The decision was made to merge with her sister congregation, Zion,

Parish Education

Music Resource Book Available

"The Concordia Companion" by Don Rodvold is an excellent resource book containing a hymnological study of every hymn in "The Concordia Hymnal." It has been placed in all AFLC churches "To encourage, restore and firmly establish the confessional point of view (Lutheran) as it applies to music in worship, particularly hymnody, and thus foster spiritual growth and more noble and fruitful service." This book is made possible by a grant from Aid Association for Lutherans. We encourage the use of "The Concordia Companion" for 1) Presentation of a hymn-of-the-month, 2) A Family Night hymn sing or 3) Sunday School Opening Chapel Time.

— *The Board of Parish Education*

Fourth Grade Book Fund:

The Fourth Grade Book Fund has a total of \$20,643.61 as of February 15, 1991. Goal for the fund is \$24,000 by April, 1991. Thank you for this encouraging response.

RESURRECTION REFLECTIONS

Easter morrow stills our sorrow ...

Our world is well acquainted with sorrow. There is the heartache of broken families, the hopelessness of terminal illness. There is the frustration of failure, the disappointment of success that does not satisfy. And there is death.

From His prison Christ has risen ...

Easter is God's alternative to the world's empty answers. The resurrection is God's "Amen!" to Christ's words, "It is finished." Death is a defeated foe. The Lord of Life is victorious.

Anthems glorious, joy victorious ...

Resurrection worship should be the most joyous celebration of the church year. Pastors, pray that your own hearts may be glowing with joy and excitement, as you praise God for the privilege of proclaiming such a powerful message. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

Sin confounded, grace abounded ...

Every day is resurrection day for the Christian. Because He lives, we can live. Because He lives, we can walk in the newness of life. Because He lives, the power of life is greater than the fear of death, and we can possess joy in the midst of sorrow.

May each one of our readers enjoy a joyous celebration of our Lord's resurrection!

THE DEATH TOLL MOUNTS

It was reported only in a couple of columns. No, we are not writing about the casualties from the Persian Gulf conflict or from any other war. This mounting death toll refers to the number of people who die from smoking-related illnesses.

The U.S. Center for Disease Control reported recently that 434,000 Americans died in 1988 from smoking tobacco or related causes.

One columnist noted that this is nine times the number of deaths during the Vietnam War, and greater than even the death toll from World War II. It is also four times greater than the number of people who have died from AIDS.

The frightening fact is that, in spite of all the anti-smoking campaigns and the smoke-free environments, this total is eleven percent higher than the number of deaths four years earlier.

Are we too anxious to avoid so-called pietistic legalism? Can we be silent when God's Word speaks so clearly? **Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were brought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body...** (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

The world is concerned. It is time for Christians to be concerned too.

located in the village of Dalton, thus forming the Zion-Sarpsborg Free Lutheran Church.

Because of the extensive repairs needed to make the Zion building an adequate home for the growing congregation, the decision was made to construct a new church, and the ground-breaking ceremonies were held on Palm Sunday, March 24, five years since the Sarpsborg fire.

Various fund raising plans are already under way. Merle Fagerberg is the pastor of the congregation, which has a membership of approximately 80 families, and also serves the Kvam and Tordenskjold churches.

The address for **Rev. Todd Olson** is: 8 Elbon Drive, Pipestone, Minnesota 56164. Pastor Olson, who was recently ordained, has been serving Christ the King Church in Pipestone since January. His telephone number is (507) 825-2071.

Rev. Keith Quanbeck, who serves Solid Rock Church, a Home Mission congregation in the Brooklyn Park-Osseo area of the Twin Cities, resides at the following address: 5119-84th Ct. North, Brooklyn Park, Minnesota 55443. His telephone number is (612) 425-3040.

Rev. Robert Giles, Tucson, Arizona, has resigned as pastor of Living Faith Free Lutheran Church, effective March 1. His new address is: P. O. Box 128, Laveen, Arizona 85339.

Mr. Lynn Tharaldson, Lakeville, Minnesota, has been appointed to the Stewardship Committee. He will complete the term of Dr. Wayne Sletten, Faith, South Dakota, who had resigned earlier.

Rev. Herbert Franz, Dollar, Michigan, resigned from the Home Missions Committee in December, 1990. Pastor Franz had served as chairman for most of the 16 years of his service on the committee.

Rev. Wendell Johnson, Cambridge, Minnesota, has accepted the call to serve Green Lake Lutheran Church, Spicer, Minnesota, beginning in June, 1991. He previously served congregations in Dalton and Stacy, Minnesota. Currently, Pastor and Mrs. Johnson are continuing their music ministry.

Rev. Walter Johnson, Shakopee, Minnesota, began serving First Lutheran Church, Camarillo, California, on January 15, 1991, as interim pastor. His new address is 3760 Germain Street, Camarillo, CA 92082. Pastor Johnson had recently retired from Faith Lutheran, Shakopee.

In Memoriam

Melvin Gravgaard, 91, Tioga, North Dakota, passed away on January 23, 1991. Mr. Gravgaard was a long-time member of Zion Lutheran Church, Tioga, and served on the AFLC Pension Board for several years.

Our Great Easter Hope

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

Second-Class

"Christ rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:4).

In the Easter Season we are drawn to consider anew a most profound question: Just how important is the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ to our salvation and Christian faith? The apostle Paul gives us the definitive answer in I Corinthians 15:

"If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain... If Christ had not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all men most to be pitied" (I Corinthians 15:17, 17-19).

In these powerful verses the apostle Paul reveals with clarity the crucial significance of the resurrection. If Christ had not been raised from the dead, our preaching and our faith would be in vain; we would also be lost in our sins forever with no hope of salvation! This is a most black and desperate picture — a picture of utter hopelessness and despair.

The situation for us as Christian believers, however, is not black or hopeless. It is as bright and positive as the resurrection morning, because Jesus Christ "has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (I Corinthians 15:20).

Because Jesus Christ rose from the dead our preaching is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16; I Corinthians 1:18). Because Jesus Christ rose from the dead, we have the full forgiveness of our sins through faith in His redeeming work at Calvary (Ephesians 1:7). Because Jesus Christ has risen from the dead, we experience His resurrection power by faith (Philippians 3:10). Because Jesus Christ has risen from the dead, we as Christian believers will spend eternity with our blessed Lord (John 3:10). Because Jesus Christ has risen from the dead He is always present with us to strengthen, encourage and comfort us (Matthew 28:20).

The somber truth is that if Christ had not been raised from the dead, we would have none of these blessings today. We would be lost in our sins with no hope for all eternity. But praise be to God! Jesus Christ has risen indeed. And because He has risen, we have salvation and every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places through our faith in Him.

As Easter approaches, may we take time to consider the monumental significance of the resurrection. May we thank God the Father for sending us Jesus "who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification" (Romans 4:25). And finally, may we contemplate the wonder of the empty tomb on Easter morning.

"He has risen, He is not here ..." (Mark 16:6).

—Rev. Mark Bateson
Colfax, Wisconsin

