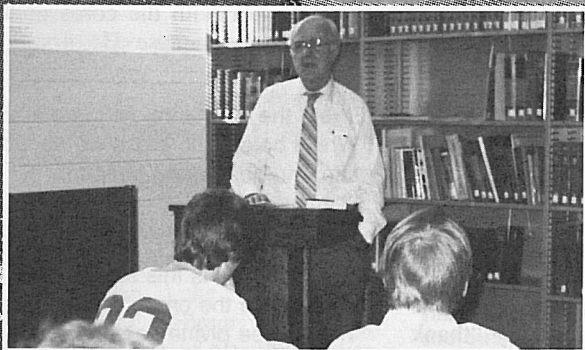


# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

March 29, 1983

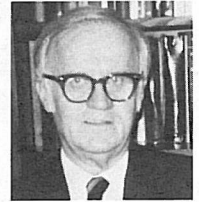
**Whom  
shall  
I send?**

*Isaiah 6:8*



AFLC MISSIONS CONFERENCE

# AT THE MASTER'S FEET



Pastor Emerson Anderson

## Worshipping at the cross

We have been considering our private worship. True worship comes from deep impressions made on our hearts regarding God. Those deep impressions come to them who spend time alone with Him. The cross is one of the choice places where we may spend quiet time watching our Lord. It is one of those places where God clearly reveals Himself in ways that move the heart. Let us take our place at the cross and watch.

At the cross I am impressed with *love*. There is one word which answers the question, "Why do I find Jesus Christ at a certain time in human history at a place called Calvary?" It is *love*. Why is Jesus hanging on that cross? He loves me.

There is something within His being that cannot be satisfied without embracing me. He has said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me" (John 12:32). His love for me drove Him to Calvary. Be quiet, O my soul, and ponder that love. You will be sure to worship.

At the cross I am also impressed by *mercy*. God loves me but He is a just God and I am unworthy of His love. Justice says, "You are worthy only of judgment," and my conscience agrees. I am worthy only of death and damnation. I have no good thing to hold up to the One Who is dying on the cross. I cannot say to Him, "I am worthy of your love." I have no hope before such a perfect One. My first father sold the treasure of life which was given to him at creation; therefore, there is nothing but sin and death for me. How can I expect anything from God but wrath? But mercy says, "I will act in your behalf. I will rescue you. I will save you from your deserved damnation. I will satisfy justice and let you go free." And here they are at the cross. Justice and mercy both appear to do their special work with regard to me.

"Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other" (Psalm 85:10). I consider that mercy and my heart is at peace, for justice is now satisfied through mercy which appears at Calvary in the person of the One hanging on the cross for me. I can only say "thank you" for such a Savior, and worship.

Then I am impressed with the *pre-*

*ciousness* of Him Who is on the cross. Most people worship the treasure of things. But here is the One Who made all things. Surely He is of infinitely more value than all that He made. The fountain is more precious than one small stream flowing from it. It is that preciousness that makes my redemption so sure. I am redeemed not with things but by His precious blood which has paid my whole debt. I now belong to Him. This is the one Whose goings forth have been from everlasting and now I find Him hanging on a cross for me. How can my heart take it in? It is greatly moved. I find myself without words which can express my feelings. I can only sit in quietness and worship.

Space does not allow more. There are many more things at the cross which will move the heart to worship. The Lord would draw us there to show us those marvels. Dear friend, I urge you, if you are not already so, become a worshiper at Calvary. The Lord is worthy of it. Such worship comes from the heart bound to the Savior with the cords of love. I love Him, because He first loved me.

"Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,  
Which before the cross we spend;  
Life and health and peace  
possessing  
From the sinner's dying friend.

Truly blessed is this station,  
Low before the cross to lie;  
While I see divine compassion  
Beaming from His languid eye."

Walter Shirley

### THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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# BE RECONCILED TO GOD

by Mr. Theodore Manean, Associate  
Director, World Mission Prayer  
League, at the Missions Conference,  
Sunday, February 6.

I praise God and thank Him for the privilege we have this morning of worshipping Jesus. I'm sure that prior to this Missions Conference many of you spent time on your knees praying. I spent time praying, too, and my prayers these days have been that we would together lift up the name of Jesus. And this morning, it is my prayer that I might be hidden behind the cross and our eyes, all our eyes, will be fixed on Jesus.

The theme for my message this morning is "We Beseech You, Be Reconciled to God." My text is II Corinthians 5:18-20, and I would like to read that from the Revised Standard Version. "All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to Himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."

I could talk to you this morning about how the Lord is working in different parts of the world, and tell you exciting stories of the experiences of our missionaries. Reporting can always be a very exhilarating thing, and it can also be edifying. It can build us up, and our hearts will warm up when we will hear about the church growth around the world and when we hear the revival stories of different churches in the world. One can wax eloquent talking about the missionary exploits with a little embellishment here and a little innocuous exaggeration there.

I have heard people say there are three different kinds of lies. One is a black lie, another is a white lie and there is also such a thing as a missionary lie. We can tell a few inno-

cent jokes and try to create an atmosphere of relaxation and ease and everybody will feel comfortable. Perhaps everyone will put an extra dollar in the offering plate.

This approach may be alright, but the Lord has led me this morning to share with you the very heart of missionary concern and make a right beginning at this Conference. It might be a little bit uncomfortable and perhaps challenging. After all, we have called this conference a Missions Conference to transact, to do a very serious business. We know this is not an occasion for festivities. It is not a picnic. Our holy Lord is present here this morning.

I take the word of the Bible literally. When Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, I will be there in their midst," I take it to be true, and it is my belief that my Lord is present this morning in this sanctuary, walking up and down the aisles, standing by my side, talking to you and talking to me.

As I said, I would like to share with you the very heart of the missionary movement. The heart of missions is the great act of reconciliation that God accomplished and completed in Jesus Christ. Then He entrusted the task to us, gave the task to us, to those of us who are redeemed by the blood of Jesus.

Therefore, we see two significant things, two very important things. One, God took the initiative to reconcile us to Himself through Christ. Two, He gave us a job to do, the job of being tools in God's hands to bring about reconciliation of people to God. This is the heart of missions.

If we want to be involved in missions, we have to be absolutely sure that we are reconciled to God. We have to remind ourselves over and over again that unless we are ourselves reconciled with God and unless we are experiencing the reality of salvation deeply in our lives, friends, we would be grossly remiss in talking about missions for others.

If we talk about missionary involvement without truly experiencing salvation in our own lives, our missionary efforts will be, pardon my saying so, an exercise in hypocrisy. If we haven't grasped the true meaning of our salvation and our reconciliation with God, we cannot truthfully be concerned about the lost souls. We have to, first of all, have that experience that we are reconciled with God. Personally we should know that. Without having that experience, we may try to talk about missions, we may call missionary conferences, we may make different kinds of efforts, but all those efforts will be, as I said, an exercise in hypocrisy.

One reason why we see a measure of lukewarmness about missions in many churches today, perhaps, is due to the fact that churches as a whole, corporately, jointly as a fellowship, have not experienced the joy of salvation, the vitality of the truth of reconciliation. I am sorry to say that some churches have almost become a kind of social club. Some preachers will spend a lot of time garnering cute little jokes rather than searching for gems in the Scripture. More money is spent for enlarging or beautifying the sanctuaries, or making the pews more comfortable or in

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"I am sorry to say that some churches have almost become a kind of social club."

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trying to acquire more modern organs. The worship service tends to become some kind of a device to make people feel positive so that men and women in the pews or, these days, in their couches in the living room, as the electronic churches are becoming more popular, so that all of them may feel positive about the whole thing and have a better self-image. ♢

## "God has designed missions in such a way that it moves,

I do believe in better self-image. That is needed, but it is my firm belief that we cannot have better self-image by positive thinking. We can have better self-image by being reconciled to God, by the blood of Jesus Christ. Time has come, friends, to face facts. It is no use glossing over issues or sweeping the dirt under the carpet. If as individuals we experience the true joy of salvation, and as a congregation, as a fellowship, accept the mandate of Jesus seriously, a great surge of concern for the lost souls of the world would break forth in our lives in a very dramatic way, and it is my prayer that this Missions Conference would unleash tremendous revival in our midst and spark a great missionary concern in every single heart.

As I was pondering these issues, certain questions came to my mind and these questions continued to pursue me. One, we hear so much about missionary consultations around the world today. So many missionary conferences are held on national levels and international levels. Thousands of people are going all over the world as missionaries. The current estimate is that there are 55,000 Protestant missionaries in the world. The number might even be more. Millions of dollars are spent for missionary work every year. The question is, what is the result of all these activities? To our visual eyes, the result in terms of numbers is really very small, very meager.

The world population, as we know, has crossed the four billion mark. It is about 4.5 billion today. Do you know that every five days one million people are added to the world. In India alone, one million babies are born every month. That is to say, half the population of Canada is added to India every year. Out of this four-plus billion people, only about one billion people, or a little more, are Christians. More than three billion people are outside the Light of the Gospel. What is worse, two and one-half billion people have not even heard the Name of Jesus. They don't even know that God has a plan for their salvation.

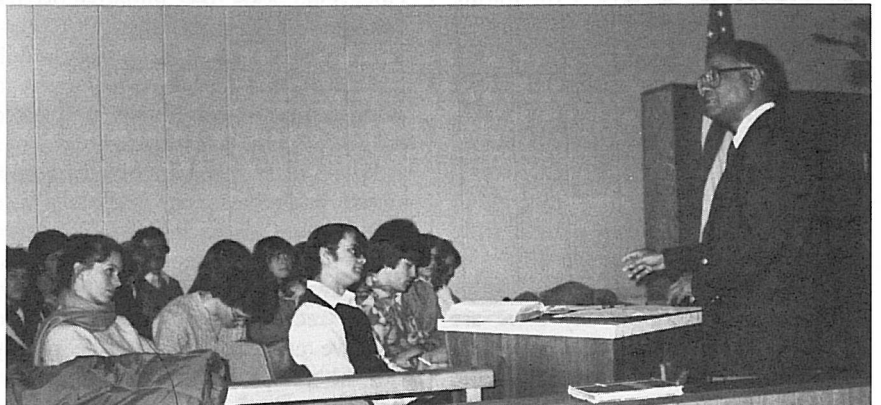
Why should such a large number of people be ignorant, unaware of such tremendous plans that God has made for their salvation? Why should the result be so poor, the response so meager? Where has the church gone wrong? Could the reason for such a sad state of affairs be the lack of real experience of salvation personally, or as the congregation, as a fellowship, we have not really grasped the meaning, the depth of the meaning of reconciliation. Can that be the reason? If every Christian in the world, and when I say world, I mean the United States of America, India, China, Africa, wherever. If every Christian should be vitally aware of what Jesus has done on Calvary's Cross and come to know all dimensions of God's plan of salvation, I'm sure things would certainly be different. There would be action. There would be a great revolution in the world.

We don't see a real burning zeal for missions in our churches today, do we? Mission Sundays and mission festivals are becoming things of the past today. Could such lukewarmness be the reason for such poor response in the world? I would like to lay the blame at Satan's door. I look upon Satan always as a vanquished enemy, as a defeated enemy.

You know, if something sensational happens in the world, let us say a major earthquake, or a political upheaval, or the blowup of Mt. St. Helens, or the election of the President of the United States of America, the news will immediately travel, and it will travel fast. The media will

pick up the news and through television, radio and newspapers they will spread the news all over and everyone who hears the news will tell the next man he will meet on the street, did you hear so and so was elected President of the United States of America? Did you hear there has been a tremendous, disastrous earthquake? We talk to each other, we tell others and the news travels by word of mouth.

The most sensational, the greatest thing, the most exciting thing that happened was the moment Christ was hanging on that rugged cross on Calvary. Television is too busy today telling us the stupid story about Archie Bunker. Newspapers are busy telling us about how to buy things, stories, sports, different things. Radio is constantly blaring out pop music. They're all busy. The only medium, only channel, through which this great news could be disseminated, spread across the face of the earth is churches and Christian people. Jesus accomplished this great act of salvation on the hill of Calvary, on that rugged cross, and you are the only channel, you are the only medium, you are the only instrument, the only tool through which this great news can be broadcast. If we are convinced, deep down in our souls, that our sins are forgiven, if we really know for a fact, for reality, that we are reconciled with God, and if we really have a genuine hope of eternal life with God, we can't hide it. We just cannot keep it within ourselves. When we have this



Mr. Theodore Manaen



it does not remain static, . . ."

knowledge and when we have this assurance we like to share this with others. This will be a real experience for us.

You know, if genuine conversion takes place, then a kind of chain reaction takes place. God has designed missions in such a way that it moves, it does not remain static, if one person has a real encounter with Jesus as Paul had on the Damascus road. You read in the chapter in Acts where it talks about Paul's conversion, how for three days he had fasted and his eyes were opened right away. He had fellowship and he proclaimed that Jesus was the Son of God. If we have a true experience of salvation, and we become a disciple of Jesus, immediately we will go and share the Gospel with another person. That person becomes a disciple and if he becomes a true disciple, he will make another person a disciple. It is kind of like I said, a kind of chain reaction takes place. God has designed missions in this way.

Many of us might be reconciled with God, but maybe we don't realize the true meaning of reconciliation and the tremendous blessing that goes with this fact of reconciliation. It is like a man who bought a plot of land and he didn't realize that

there was a deep reservoir of gasoline, petroleum. He didn't know that. You and I have a tremendous inheritance. Do we know that?

The apostle talks about the dynamics of reconciliation in his letter to the Romans in Chapter 5, verses 6-11. Paul talks there about the fact that we were in enmity with God when we were in rebellion against God. Christ died for us. When we were still in rebellion, when we were still enemies, Christ died for us on Calvary's cross to free us from the bondage of sin and to make us friends with God. If we grasp the truth that God took the initiative to reconcile us to Himself, true thankfulness and gratitude will spring forth in our hearts, but then again, I repeat, there has to be a reality. The urge to bring others to the Lord will automatically, naturally, take hold of us. As individual members begin to take hold of the truth then the congregation will be mission-minded, then the lukewarmness that is afflicting our congregations today will disappear. There will be life in the church.

Do you see the dynamics of missions? I don't wish to minimize the need for foreign missions, but at the same time it is my firm conviction,

the more I've thought about it, the more I've prayed about it, the more I've meditated about it, it is my firm belief that home missions cannot be sacrificed at the expense of foreign missions. To do this would be un-Biblical. Jesus said, "You shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem," and then follows all of Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth.

Mission work in our own neighborhood is absolutely necessary. Everyone in our neighborhood has to be invited to be the disciple of Jesus. They have to be the target of our evangelistic activities. We are concerned about the lost souls in Africa, the lost souls in India, China and different parts of the world, but what about the souls who are dying at our doorsteps without knowing that Jesus is offering salvation freely and abundantly. You see, if there is no strong missionary commitment and involvement within the neighborhood, in the community itself, there cannot be a strong base for missions. There cannot be a strong prayer support for missions. There cannot be a strong base from which to draw missionaries to go across the world. Let us grasp the truth, that the ministry of reconciliation that Jesus has given

*Continued on p. 8*

## Reach Out

Christian, do you see the lost ones  
Searching for some ray of hope?  
Hasten then to pray and witness  
That through Christ they learn to cope.

### CHORUS:

Won't you let God's love shine through?  
Won't you be His servant true?  
It will be worth every effort  
When He says, "Well done," to you!

Help them to get off the broad way  
And their sins to Jesus bring;  
That they may then walk with Jesus  
And His praises learn to sing.

Angels then will be rejoicing  
As new souls now give God praise  
And in turn seek out more lost ones  
Who still do not know God's ways.

Jesus still will welcome sinners  
As they hear His gentle call—  
As they gladly bow before Him  
And to Him surrender all.



Mrs. Alvin Holmstrom  
Strandquist, Minn.

*Tune: I Must Have the Saviour With Me*

# Students respond to God's call during Missions Conference

"Whom Shall I Send?" (Isaiah 6:8) was the theme for the recent four-day Missions Conference at the campus of the AFLC Schools in suburban Minneapolis, Minn. The Conference emphasized both Home and World Missions and was sponsored by those departments of the AFLC together with Association Free Lutheran Bible School and Seminary.

Many students testified of personal blessings and challenges in their lives as a result of the Conference, which was an essential part of their regular curriculum of study. An impressive number of students responded with willing hearts to the call of God to serve Him as a missionary wherever He would lead: "Here am I, Lord, send me." Testimonies of several AFLBS students follow this article.

Small group seminars during the morning hours were a strong feature of the Conference. Students selected areas of personal interest. Seminar topics and leaders were:

- #1 How can I know I am called to full-time service? Mr. Theodore Manean
- #2 How do I prepare for mission service? Mr. Ken Stack
- #3 How can I encourage a mission program in my congregation? Rev. Carroll O. Satre
- #4 How can I pray for missions? Mr. Paul Abel
- #5 How do I fit into AFLC Home Missions? Rev. Elden Nelson
- #6 How do I fit into AFLC World Missions? Rev. Eugene Enderlein
- #7 What are my short-term mission opportunities? Mr. Ted Berkas
- #8 What can I expect from missionary service? Rev. Amos Dyrud

Mr. Theodore Manean, Associate Director of the World Mission Prayer League, was the evening speaker. Mr. Manean, a native of India and once a party leader in the Parliament, spoke earnestly and enthusiastically on behalf of the great need in men's hearts around the world and the clear call of God to "go and tell" the good news of Jesus Christ.

An interesting aspect of the Missions Conference was a third-world meal, consisting of rice, beans, ugali (corn meal mixed with a little water) and only water to drink. Many students and guests alike expressed personally being convicted of their wealth and, in fact, pampered state, here in the U.S.A. Mr. Manean quoted many staggering statistics about world hunger and then gave specific suggestions as to what we can do about these crying needs.

The Missions Conference was rich musically. The AFLBS Choir and Choral Club praised God in song and international students also participated.

"Surprise guests" included AFLC missionary Priscilla Wold, home on leave of absence during her father's illness; and Karen Hasskamp, short-term missionary teacher to Liberia, Africa, with the Lutheran Bible Translators. Brightly colored mission banners and interesting displays by AFLC World Missions, Home Missions, Lutheran Bible Translators, World Mission Prayer League and Good News for Israel (the latter are independent Lutheran missions) combined to enhance the Missions Conference.



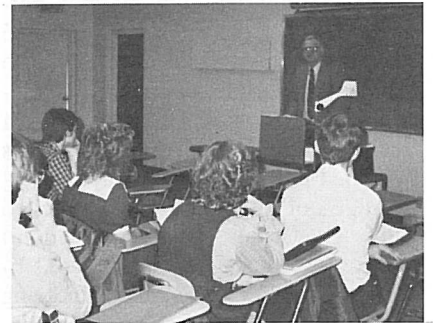
Seminarian Paul Abel leading a seminar on praying for missions.

testimonies . . .

*Ed Hoseth, Tioga, North Dakota*

The Missions Week went really well from what I could see. The evening speaker was really challenging in his sermons. When he asked if I was a blessing, it made me stop to think. Am I really a blessing or do I think I am? That night challenged me to see if I was a blessing to my church, my family and my friends. I guess my goal now is to be the blessing that the Lord wants me to be. I have always been interested in the Home Missions work, especially since our church is that. I went forward the last night to just say, "Lord, I am willing, send me." I have no idea if He will send me, but I'm ready and willing.

*continued on p. 8*



Mr. Ted Berkas, Seminarian, who was a missionary teacher in Madagascar.

Cover Photos: Left: Rev. Amos Dyrud, missionary to Madagascar for many years, later dean of Free Lutheran Seminary.

Right: Three international students at AFLBS left to right, Jefferson Romais, Brazil; Vidar Byberg, Norway; and Floyd Campbell, Guyana.



## Three old saws

Text: "Ye are not your own" (I Corinthians 6:19). "All Mine are Thine" (John 17:10). "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:20).

I am going to talk about three "old saws." Do you know what an "old saw" is? I am not talking about the old rusted hand-saw that may be hanging on a nail down in the cellar nor of the bucksaw out in the woodshed at home. Neither am I talking about saws like that old circular saw which I noticed a short time ago when I was walking along a stream and came upon an old mill, all dilapidated and ready to fall to pieces. There were the great rafters and beams decayed and broken down and there was an old saw which one day had cut great logs into planks and timber. But now it stood still, all rusted and forlorn. I am not talking of these kinds of saws.

What I am going to talk about are three old sayings—maxims—for you know, people sometimes call maxims "old saws." You have heard some of these "old saws" very often, like "Never put off till tomorrow what can be done today," and "Well begun is half done." Do you remember any others?

The first of the three that I want to talk about is "Finding's Keepings."

Three boys were walking along together when suddenly one came across a knife in the road. He snatched it up quickly and said, "Finding's Keepings." Do you believe this "old saw"—"Finding's Keepings"? Did that knife belong to the boy just because he found it, or was there an owner somewhere to whom the knife really belonged?

Sometimes we think that because we have things they are ours; but merely because we have things in our possession is no sign that we own them. The other day a friend of mine left town to be gone for two or three months. This friend had a beautiful

collie dog that he wanted to leave in my care, so he brought the dog over to my house. Every day that dog and I would go out to walk together. How proud I was of him when people turned to admire him. He was in my possession, but he didn't belong to me. I was simply keeping him for the friend to whom he really belonged.

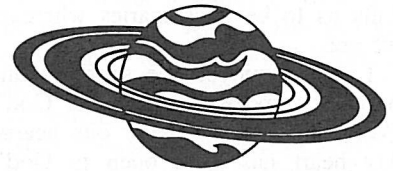
And so it is with our time and our strength and our money, our talents, our life. God is the real owner of all these and we are simply His stewards managing for Him. To possess is not to own but to owe. *Finding's not keepings.* What we have we owe and must use in ways which are pleasing to God, the real Owner.

The second "old saw" that I wanted to speak about is "What's Mine's Mine." Do you ever say that, thinking that whatever you could accumulate or get together and keep belongs to you? If the "old saw"—"Finding's Keepings" is not true, is this one true, "What's Mine's Mine?" We, too, must learn to say not "What's mine's mine," but "Mine is Thine" for we belong to God and all we have belongs to God even if we didn't find it, even if we worked ever so hard and earned it. No one can say, "What's mine's mine," for what's our's is others, God having entrusted it to us to use in helping Him, to help others.

The third "old saw" is "Riches Have Wings." This old saw has been used to mean that riches fly away and are very hard to keep. Some men, however, know how to put riches in cages and keep them even if they do have wings and they accumulate great sums. Sometimes they become very selfish and miserly.

But this "old saw"—"Riches Have Wings"—is quite true in a very good sense. Riches do have wings. Indeed, they may soar so high as to become riches in heaven. And do you know, boys and girls, we can, if we will, give our riches wings. Not those that enable them to fly away through careless spending or wings that have

to be clipped to keep our money in the cage of miserly purposes, but the wings which take our money and carry it to heaven before us, laying up there treasure awaiting our coming.



## HYMN

*Sing and memorize*—"This Is My Father's World."

(Call particular attention to all stewardship implications in the hymn.)

This is my Father's world;  
And to my listening ears,  
All nature sings and round her  
rings,  
The music of the spheres.  
This is my Father's world;  
I rest me in the thought  
Of rocks, and trees, of skies and  
seas,  
His hand the wonders wrought.

This is my Father's world,  
The birds their carols raise  
The morning light, the lily white,  
Declare their maker's praise.  
This is my Father's world,  
He shines in all that's fair  
In the rustling grass I hear Him  
pass,  
He speaks to me everywhere.

**TO TEACH**—The distinction between *possession* and *ownership*. To have is not to own but to owe. God owns the earth and all things in it. We are not to "grab" things just for ourselves. The things God lets us *possess* are tools God has given us to do the work He wants us to do in the world.

—Guy L. Morrill,  
*Stewardship Stories*, Harper  
and Brothers Publishers.

## TESTIMONIES . . .

*Karen Christopherson, Amery Wisconsin*

The time spent at the seminars and evening services really awakened my interest for missions. Before, I never thought too much about it and didn't realize what a great need there is for missionaries.

My eyes were opened and so was my heart. I recognized my self-centered attitude and realized that God calls us to be missionaries wherever we are.

I really enjoyed the speakers and how they spoke the truths of God's Word in order to reach our hearts. My heart has been open to God's will for the past couple years concerning my future plans and where He leads me I will follow, whether it be going to the mission field or serving Him here at home. I am open to His calling.

*Mark Schmitke, Thief River Falls, Minnesota*

I feel the missions Conference was a good conference. I was encouraged to tell the Gospel and even be a witness right here.

Also the seminars were helpful and interesting. I also liked that the

Home and World Missions worked together and how it was stated that they both needed each other to grow.

I enjoyed this conference and was glad I attended.

*Jane Johnson, Chatham, Michigan*

The Missions Conference meant a lot to me. For a few years God has really been speaking to me about being a missionary. I've been confused as to some aspects of my call, but God really spoke to me, especially through the morning sessions. It seems that God wants to do a lot of work on me before He'll specifically call me to a foreign mission. I was convicted of many areas of my life during those few days. But I mainly feel that I am called right now and always am called, wherever it may be, to serve God as a missionary. We're all called to spread God's Word. I am thankful that God has given me a vision for those who are lost. I just pray that God will daily remind me of my purpose and responsibility.

I appreciated the chance at the last service to commit my life to God's plan publicly. It was a step that was necessary to seal my surrender to God. Thank you.

*Sherri Melvie, Viking, Minnesota*

To be honest, I had never given a great deal of thought to missions. Sure, I knew our church sponsored missionaries, and once a year we'd hold a missions rally when we'd set up booths and see slides and have a guest speaker, but as far as getting more involved in the missions program, I just let it slide by me and thought it wasn't my idea of a future.

Here at Bible school, with a Missions class and a real emphasis on evangelism, and lately the Missions Conference, I've been forced to change my "I-don't-care" attitude. I attended the seminars on how we know if we are called and what short-term mission work is like, and I'd certainly now be interested and available to the Lord if He wishes me to go. I've got a long way to go to prepare myself, but I'm trusting the Lord to lead and guide my life!

I'm really thankful for the Conference and Mr. Manean. He opened my eyes and with the Holy Spirit's nudging, brought me to an awareness of the world's needs.

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## RECONCILED . . .

us is first of all for our congregations, for our fellowships, and for our community.

I thank God for this occasion, the Mission Conference, that you called for this weekend, these 4-5 days and believe you me, this is not the design of your friends or leaders or the faculty members of the Bible school or seminary. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is really precious in the sight of God, the Missions Conference, and when I prepare, when I spend time in meditation, you know, I kind of have a vision of heaven and I wonder whether when we're having Missions Conference there is some kind of an expectancy in heaven. Whether there is some kind of expectancy that Jesus will entertain. There will be wonderment there about what will come out of this Missions Con-

ference. Will there be people who will say, "Here am I, send me"? or will this again be a repeat performance of our older missionary conferences in which nothing happened. I believe that this conference is going to be used by the Lord in a very, very special way, that this conference will be the beginning of a movement, a big movement. As you continue your commitment and involvement, the Lord will shower His blessings upon you, upon your congregation, upon the Bible school, upon the Seminary, and lead you and guide you, how to be part of God's cognate, redemptive plan for the world.

In a missions conference, or a missions Sunday, our prime efforts should be to understand the uniqueness of missions in a fresh way and make a more firm and meaningful

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commitment to missions. To my understanding, the first thing that we should wrestle with is not the theology of missions, or the methodology, or the academics of missions; you know, philosophy, and those high-sounding words. They are good, but I believe that the most important thing for us should be to see whether or not we are genuinely reconciled to God. Whether or not the matter of salvation has become a personal matter for us, whether I have invited Jesus into my heart and whether He sits on the throne of my heart. Without being absolutely sure about our salvation, we can *never, never, never* be involved in missions. This is a simple formula.

Are you reconciled with God? Do we have the assurance that if we should die tonight that we will go to heaven to be with our Father for eternity? If our answer is in the affirmative, I will say, "Praise the Lord!"

*Continued on p. 14*



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# editorials

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## "O MY GOD!"

Among the negative influences, and they are not few, which we receive through the marvel of television is the popularization of a certain restricted profanity. Some years ago now some barriers to cursing and profanity in TV were lowered. Some censorship still exists, to be sure, in the regular run of programming, but things aren't as they once were.

Today one is hard put to find any programs, certainly of comedy nature, in which the expressions "God," "O God," or "O my God" do not appear, perhaps a number of times. It almost seems as if there is a move to trivialize or make the name of God of no consequence. If this persists we will have the same situation which exists in France, where, we understand, the expression "mon dieu" (my God) is used with regularity, but with no meaning.

But if we haven't come that far yet, and maybe we have, it is interesting, isn't it, that some people almost involuntarily call out "O God" or "My God" as a reaction to something. Certainly in times of great emotion they do, even though they never pray to Him. Is it a trace of the inborn conviction that there is a God, even though life is lived with little evidence of paying any attention to Him otherwise?

Of course, what God desires is that we acknowledge Him each day, that we raise our voices and hearts in prayer to Him. "Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy steadfast love" (Psalm 51:1a). "Praise is due to Thee, O God, in Zion; and to Thee shall vows be performed, O Thou who hearest prayer" (Psalm 65:1, 2a). "We give thanks to Thee, O God; we give thanks; we call on Thy name and recount Thy wondrous deeds" (Psalm 75:1). These are the ways in which man ought to call on the Lord.

But many people do not so call upon Him. Oh, they may mouth the words of church liturgies in which the name of God appears but their hearts are not in it. In everyday life the name of God escapes their lips only as the meaningless, frivolous "O God," "O my God," or simply "God."

Some will argue that these and other expressions after a period of time become culturally acceptable and become a form of speech, slang, to be sure, that should not be taken seriously as to meaning. They are merely fillers and colorful additions to speech.

We will have to concede that many people are not aware any longer when they say, "God" or "My God" in their talking. But things have come to a sorry pass when a person has come to that place for then he has to admit that he has lost regard for the name of deity. It is a nothing to him.

And that is something totally different from what the Lord God requires. God is jealous of His name. "You

shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain" (Exodus 20:7). Beyond doubt, we don't realize the importance of the first three Commandments as we should. They assert the lordship of God. And as to the second Commandment, Gerhard E. Frost (*The Law Perfect*, Augsburg Publishing House) has this to say: "Nothing is so fundamental to our relationship with God as our attitude toward His name." Also, "The profane person is committing spiritual suicide. Why? Because profanity is fatally inconsistent with prayer. The most fearful consequence of profanity is that it snuffs out all sense of reality in worship." Think about that for a while.

To get back to television. It is too bad that standards have been lowered and that the name of the Lord God is fair game for the comedians, newsmen and assorted actors and actresses. (Profanity may also be found in some of the "comics" in our newspapers.) So the spirit of worldliness is closing in on us. As society becomes more immoral, profane and irreverent, the world becomes a little less pleasant for the Christian. He becomes more aware of the pilgrim nature of his sojourn.

And what should he do? Stay close to the Lord. He should resist the pressures to "loosen up" his own speech, to "fit in" with those around him. He will use the Lord's name and all holy things in reverence. When he says, "O God" and "O my God" it will not be as a careless piece of slang but as a prayer in reverence to His Creator and Lord. This will not be a profanation of that great name but a right and true use of it.

## HE WHO SERVES

In one of his books Oswald C. J. Hoffmann reminds us that the one who serves is the greatest in the kingdom of Christ. And that is what Jesus taught and of which He was the great example. Mark 10:45 has been called the key verse of that Gospel: "For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." It could well be called the key verse of the Gospels because it also contains the atonement.

Jesus came to serve, to minister. Another Bible verse which comes to mind is this: "And He died for all, that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for Him who for their sake died and was raised" (II Corinthians 5:15). And we never need to fear that the life lived for Christ will turn inward or become "other worldly," at least not if it is *really* lived for Christ. For He was the "man for others." Notice again Mark 10:45. He came to serve. Those who live for Christ will be servants in this world, caring as no one else can for the "whole person." Psychiatrists who aren't Christian can't do that, neither can doctors or teachers or policemen. But

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# 1983 AFLBS Choir tour

Sat., Apr. 2—Emmanuel Lutheran Church  
Kenyon, Minn.  
Sun., Apr. 3—Salem Lutheran Church  
Radcliffe, Ia.  
Mon., Apr. 4—Chicago, area  
Tues., Apr. 5—St. Mark's Lutheran Church  
Delaware, O  
Wed., Apr. 6—North Zion Lutheran Church  
Pittsburgh, Pa.  
Thurs., Apr. 7—St. Andrew Lutheran Church  
Perkasie, Pa.  
Fri., Apr. 8—Galilee Lutheran Church  
Pasadena, Md.  
Sat., Apr. 9—Washington, D.C.  
Sun., Apr. 10—Lutheran Church of the Reformation  
Washington, D.C.  
Mon., Apr. 11—Philadelphia area

Tues., Apr. 12—Word of Life Lutheran Church  
Cleveland, O.  
Wed., Apr. 13—Grace Lutheran Church  
DeKalb, Ill.  
Thurs., Apr. 14—Ottawa, Ill.  
Fri., Apr. 15—Bethany Lutheran Church  
Brodhead, Wis.  
Sat., Apr. 16—Westby H.S. Auditorium  
Westby, Wis.  
Sun., Apr. 17—Christ Is Lord Lutheran Church  
Onalaska, Wis. (a.m.)  
Amery Lutheran Church  
Amery, Wis. (p.m.)  
Sun., May 8—Home Concert  
Medicine Lake Lutheran Church  
Minneapolis, Minn. (4:00 p.m.)

The Choir is directed by Mr. Donald Rodvold. Representing the school with a devotional message and greeting at each concert will be the dean, Rev. Kenneth Moland.

He wouldn't die  
for a falsehood



by Raynard Huglen,  
Editor

Text: Matthew 28:9-15

Isaac Watts, who gave to the world the immortal hymns "Joy to the World" and "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," has given also this one which we quote in part:

Blest morning whose first dawning  
rays  
Beheld the son of God  
Arise triumphant from the grave,  
And leave His dark abode.

Wrapt in the silence of the tomb  
The great Redeemer lay,  
Till the revolving skies had brought  
The third, the appointed day.

To thy great Name, Almighty Lord,  
We sacred honors pay,  
And loud hosannas shall proclaim  
The triumphs of the day.

## EDITORIALS . . .

the Christian can and must do so, if he is following in the Master's footsteps.

So this world is a place of service. Dr. Alvin Rogness, in his book *The Word for Every Day*, quotes something from the writing of Dr. Martin L. Kretzmann. The latter mentions that in one urban church, as one left the church, he would see above the door out the sign "Servants' Entrance." What a parting word to the truly committed. Much like the more familiar slogan, "Enter to Worship, Depart to Serve."

But do we think of that the way we should? If we leave our churches as God's children, as Christ's disciples, we are to go out to serve in our Greenbushes, our Abercrombies, our Astorias. Now we shan't think about all the ways to serve today, but you know what some of them are. We are to be God's people in our world—light, salt, an aroma, binders up of wounds, soothers of broken hearts, aiders of the oppressed.

You will know what you should do if you are open to God. Think Jesus and think people. Then you will know the way.

God help us to be servants in the spirit of Jesus. We have gone through the Servants' Entrance and we are here.

## What is the cross to us?

Friends, today we are again standing under the cross and looking into the face of Him who laid down His life upon it. What does Christ's cross mean to us? Are we glorying in the cross? Is the Christ who died upon the cross more precious unto us than all else? Do we sincerely sing and pray: "Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling?" May God help us to experience the cross of Jesus as our salvation from sin, as our power to live, and our inspiration to sacrifice. And in view of that day when we shall be called upon to leave the scenes of our toils and labors to go into the presence of Him who has seen all, and heard all, and knows all, may our prayer and plea ever be:

While I draw this fleeting breath,  
When my eyelids close in death,  
When I soar to worlds unknown,  
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.

Wm. F. Mehl



# He burst the bonds of death

## A Meeting With Jesus

Two women had been at the tomb of Jesus and had found it empty. They were told of the resurrection, whereupon they ran to tell the disciples. And in the running they were met by Jesus Himself and He said to them, "Hail!" or "All Hail!" It really means "Rejoice!" Jesus also said, "Do not be afraid." How many times He said that to people.

Fear is a disabling thing and many times fears are ungrounded. Franklin D. Roosevelt once gave the American people this piece of wisdom: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Yes, fear can get a person down. Jesus was the victorious One. He could see beyond what we can see. Perhaps it is as with a parent and a small child. The parent can see the larger picture and realize that the child's fears are unfounded, that everything will work out all right. And so she calms her little troubled one.

"Do not be afraid" and "Go and tell My brethren." Did Jesus really say that, call them *brethren*, after their failures? Yes, He did and again the Lord sees beyond. But who are the brethren? Some think He meant His own family, but surely we may also think in terms of His disciples then and the disciples who were to be. If we are His followers, then Jesus' word comes to us also, in different ways in different times.

## The Reason They Gave

The scene shifts completely, to the dilemma of the Jews. How should they explain the empty tomb, because that it was empty no one could deny. It was so hard to just say, "We don't know where the body of Jesus is." That would admit the possibility of a miracle.

Then some of the soldiers went to the chief priests and told them all they knew about what had happened. It is remarkable that they did this, unless compelled to do so, for they were responsible and might face death themselves. Apparently they

were honest in what they told.

This is what the chief priests and elders came up with as their reason for the empty grave: tell people that the man's disciples took the body away while we slept. How condemning, even though they received money for broadcasting the lie! What a disgrace to proud Roman soldiers, to admit that they were derelict in their duty.

And what a compliment to the disciples who would thus be portrayed as more faithful to a dead body than they had been to a living leader. Remember they had been cowards and not a one of them had helped to bury the battered body of Jesus. Under this story the disciples' courage had increased at the death of Jesus, but we know that the opposite was the case.

Here is another interesting thing. In telling such a story, the soldiers would be claiming to know what had happened while they slept. Very odd, but this is the reason given by Jewish leaders for the disappearance of the body of Jesus.

The chief priests and elders further promised to defend the soldiers should the alibi be challenged. They would pay Pilate off if he became a problem. Could that be possible? Apparently so, for Felix, a later governor would have accepted money from Paul and set him free (see Acts 24:26-27). So bribery is not new. The chief priests paid 30 pieces of silver for the betrayal of Jesus. They were willing to pay much more to silence the word of resurrection.

But Christ had risen. The disciples wouldn't have died for a lie, but because He was alive again they went

forth and the telling goes on. Last spring I saw the dramatic film, "The Book That Wouldn't Burn." It is the story of the persecution of Christians in Madagascar in the 1800s. In that time Christians were thrown over cliffs to their death, poisoned, thrust through by spears, burned and stoned. They didn't die for belief in a dead man, but in a living Lord. Would we do the same? Is our faith living and real?

## The Meaning of the Resurrection

What is the meaning of the resurrection of Jesus? First, it removes all doubt that He is God's son. Second, it tells us that His death atoned for all sin. The grave, representing sin's power, could not hold Him. He had burst the bonds of sin. Third, there is hope for people, for you and me. But we must bring our guilt to Him. We must release our sins. Have you done so? This is the way to life.

Jesus was raised for our justification; as declared in Romans 4:25: "Who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification." This sealed it. That settles it. Believe it.

Once more, Isaac Watts:

Salvation and immortal  
praise  
to our victorious King!  
Let heaven and earth,  
and rocks and seas,  
With glad hosannas  
sing.

To Father, Son, and  
Holy Ghost,  
The God whom we  
adore,  
Be glory, as it was,  
and is,  
And shall be evermore.

## Tribute to a friend

I write as a friend because that's how I knew her—a dear friend, a sister in Christ, a kindred spirit.

I miss her ready smile and her little laugh that was often heard in the face of great physical difficulty and mental frustration.

I write in tribute of her courage; the courage to meet not only the challenge of living, but of dying. Seven years she battled cancer and now she's gone home to Glory.

At 49, the years of her life were comparatively few but the quality of her life is seldom equalled.

What an inspiration to see her standing before our choir and directing far beyond a time that seemed reasonable. When she finally admitted to the need to sit down, every Sunday would still find her and Clifford, with their son Steven, in the pew for worship.

Her physical beauty may have been marred by disease and its treatment but her inner beauty only increased. I watched her grow in Christ as we shared many times of joy,

many tears of sorrow, and many prayers for family and friends.

Yes, in the last few years of Arlene's life there was an ever-deepening commitment to the Savior she loved. She *believed* Romans 8:28, "that all things work together for good to those who love God," and now she can say with Paul, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."

Blessed be her memory to those of us who loved her.

Mrs. LeVern (Joanne) Jorgenson

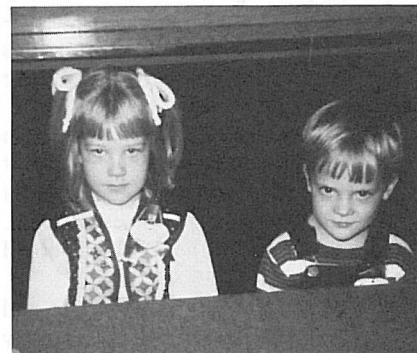


Mrs. Clifford Iverson  
1933-1983

## CRADLE ROLL Sedan, Minn.



Scandia Lutheran Church Cradle Roll added two and graduated two at a recent meeting. Pictured are Joshua Ward and Ryan Stockman with their mothers, Mrs. Kyle Ward and Mrs. Tony Stockman. Pictured below are graduates Megan TeBrake and Kevin Wholman.



## Zion Trio record now available

In the last year before Arlene Iverson's death, the Zion Trio, of which she was a part, made a record entitled "Then Sings My Soul." It contains many beautiful Gospel songs and hymns that you may have heard them sing in concert. It will be a cherished keepsake. The record is available by contacting Zion Lutheran Church, Tioga, N. Dak. 58852. The price is ten dollars (\$10.00) and anything over and above actual cost will be given to the American Cancer Society and/or work of the church.

## Wadena church to host rally

On May 3 the SW Central Minn. WMF will gather at Zion Free Lutheran Church. Rev. John Strand will speak. A Dalton group will give a presentation in the afternoon. Sessions start at 10 a.m..

Behold the host arrayed in white,  
Like thousand snowclad mountains bright,  
With palms they stand—  
Who are this band before the throne of light?  
These are the ransomed throng, the same  
That from the tribulation came  
And in the flood of Jesus blood  
Are cleansed from guilt and shame,  
And now arrayed in robes made white  
They God are serving day and night,  
And anthems swell where God doth dwell  
'Mid angels in the height.

O happy saints forever blest!  
Hail, ye who have attained your rest!  
Faithful to death ye kept the faith  
Though ye were sore opprest;  
The world ye did renounce of yore,  
The precious seed ye weeping bore,  
Now reap the joy without alloy  
In bliss forevermore;  
Lift up your voice, wave palms again,  
And swell the everlasting song:  
All glory be, O God, to Thee,  
And to the Lamb belong.

—Hans Adolf Brorson



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# THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

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## Should a Christian belong to a lodge?

*(Continued from last time)*

Contrast with the above quotations these words of Jesus: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me" (John 14:6). "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32-33).

And this statement of Peter: "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:10-12).

Also this declaration of Paul: "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).

To bring out clearly the differences between the religion of evangelical Christianity and of the lodges there is included herewith a somewhat lengthy quotation from a sermon delivered by Elijah Alfred Coil on the subject: "The Relation of the Liberal Churches and the Fraternal Orders," published for free distribution by the American Unitarian Association, of Boston. "The more I learn of the origin, history and liturgies of the great fraternities of today, the more amazed I become that the kinship between them and the liberal

churches was not clearly discerned a half century ago. Also, the more I learn of the fundamental principles of the great fraternities, the more interested do I become in the fact that many people who denounce the churches called liberal enthusiastically endorse, as fraternity men, the very principles for which those churches stand. I have often thought, in recent years, that I should like to organize a Sunday School class, and use as a text book the monitors of our leading fraternal orders, and show the members of those organizations the logic of those principles to which they, in their lodges, are pledged. Nearly all of those monitors have, as their very heart, the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, immortality, and salvation by character, principles very familiar to every Unitarian Sunday School scholar who has been properly taught the fundamentals of our faith.

"That the fundamental differences in the principles embodied in the historic creeds of Christendom and those of our modern secret orders has not been clearly thought out is indicated by the fact that many pledge themselves to both. There are lodge men who, in the churches, subscribe to the doctrine that 'We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, by faith and not for our own works or deservings,' and enthusiastically join in the singing of hymns in which that idea is embodied. Then in their lodge meetings they just as enthusiastically assent to the following declaration: 'Although our thoughts, words and actions may be hidden from the eyes of men, yet that all-seeing eye whom the sun, moon and stars obey, and under whose watchful care even comets perform their stupendous revolutions, pervades the inmost recesses of the human heart, and will reward us according to our merits.'

A little child, once its attention is called to the matter, ought to be able to see that it is impossible to harmonize the creed statement here quoted, with the declaration taken from the monitor of one of our greatest and most effective secret orders, and found, in substance, in the liturgies of nearly all the others. If 'We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith and not for our own works or deservings,' then it cannot possibly be true that the All-Seeing Eye 'Pervades the inmost recesses of the human heart, and will reward us according to our merits.' One of these declarations excludes the other. Men cannot consistently subscribe to both. They do, however, subscribe to both, and are thereby led into inconsistencies which they do not discern. Although the Rev. W. A. Sunday denounces the principle of salvation by character, and declares: 'The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man are the worst rot ever dug out of hell,' it nevertheless often happens that the lodges, pledged to the very things he thus characterizes and condemns, go in bodies to hear him and seem to approve his utterances. The fact that they do this does not indicate that they are deliberately inconsistent, but rather that they subordinate reason to sentiment and emotion on such occasions. That confusion and weakness are resulting from the course many are now pursuing in thus pledging themselves to one set of principles in their churches, and to another set in their lodges, is so apparent that all who see conditions as they really are should count it a privilege to help clear the atmosphere and bring about a more consistent course."

The results of the inconsistency of belonging to an evangelical Christian church and a lodge with a Christless

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## RECONCILED . . .

But if you have any doubt or question about your salvation, if you have not experienced this joy of reconciliation in a meaningful, wonderful, real way, then I have this word for you from the Word of God, Hebrews 3:7-8: "Today, when you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." Again in Hebrews, we read chapter 2, verse 3, "How shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?" If any of you have uncertainty about your salvation, or about your personal relationship with God, after the service meet with us, the pastors and the leaders of the church and some of us will spend time in prayer with you.

Having said this, let me ask a question. How do we get involved in missions? How do we make our missionary commitment? Tonight and

the next three evenings, we will be endeavoring to answer some of these questions. Let us pray that the Lord will reveal answers to these questions in a meaningful way because He alone is our teacher. The teaching that has come from Him alone will be meaningful. Jesus has nowhere said—I have read my Bible a couple of times, several times, a number of times, and I haven't found anywhere Jesus saying, "Give money for missions." In our missionary efforts and endeavor we seem to lay so much emphasis on the giving of money.

Recently, I was in a missions conference, a very serious, good kind of missions conference. All we talked about was money, annuities, designated gifts, this is what we should do, how we should project, how we should talk, how we should tell the members. I said, "Brothers, what about prayer?" Don't we pray? Are

we so much concerned about money, do we not remember that we have a Master, Lord and King who owns the cattle on a thousand hills? Hasn't He promised that He will provide all our needs out of His riches and glory in Christ Jesus?

We do see that Jesus did receive money. I'm not saying we don't need money; we do need money, but the question is the mixing up of our priorities. When we talk about missions we want to move and we put the cart before the horse and we go in an opposite direction.

As we search our Scriptures we find there are two commandments that Jesus has given: "Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers" and "Pray God and make disciples of nations." These are the two basic vital words, *go* and *pray*. These words are the bedrock of missions.

*Continued on p. 16*

## LIFE . . .

religion are forcibly brought out by Mr. Coil in the following passage: "I have already shown that, as it is now, many people are, unthinkingly and unconsciously, in most cases, I think, pledging themselves to principles as irreconcilable as fire and water. The result is loss of interest and strength on the part of many without their being able to explain why. As an illustration of what I mean, here is an actual experience which, in one form or another, is duplicated many times a year. A member of an 'Orthodox' church said to me: 'Although I go to church regularly, I cannot enthuse over church work as I once did, and I regret the fact very much.' Noting that he wore the emblem of a great fraternity, I asked: 'Do you attend lodge regularly?' Upon his answering in the affirmative, I said, 'Let me diagnose your case.' He assented and I proceeded thus: 'You go to lodge where you are taught the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and salvation by character, and it all seems so reasonable to you that you heartily approve the teaching. You then go to church on Sunday where you are taught that we are not

children of God, except as we become such through the process of adoption; that only those men who have had a kindred religious experience and subscribe to specified dogmas and conform to certain ritualistic requirements are brothers in the religious sense; that salvation is not by character, but through "the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith and not for our works or deservings," and that teaching does not satisfy your sense of reason and justice; therefore, deep down in your heart you do not believe it, hence your waning interest in church work.' He looked at me steadily for a moment, and then said: 'I did not realize my difficulty, but I think you have diagnosed my case exactly.' "

It is no doubt true that many people in the lodges are sincerely believing, evangelical Christians. They interpret the religion of the lodge in terms of their own faith and convictions, but when their attention is called to it, they should be able to see the inconsistency of belonging at the same time to an organization that teaches a way of salvation through Christ and another organization that teaches a way of salvation without Christ, and as a matter of principle

omits His name from its religious ritual.

While there are notable exceptions, the general statement no doubt holds true, that a man sincere and intelligent in his relation to an evangelical Christian church is a poor lodge man, and a man sincere and intelligent in his relation to a lodge with a typically lodge religion is a poor church man.

It is freely granted that many lodges do a great deal of good particularly for their own members. It is difficult to see, however, that they do any good which cannot be done equally well, or perhaps better, by Christian congregations properly functioning individually and jointly..

Granting all the good lodges may do for fellowship, for character development, and for benevolence, it is still contended that membership in a typical modern lodge is objectionable from the standpoint of evangelical Christianity by reason of its secrecy, its oath and its Christless religion.

—From *Problems of Young Christians* by Martin Hegland, Augsburg Publishing House



## Pension Board recommendations

The Pension Board of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations has been studying the status of the pension fund and the medical insurance that is being provided at the present time. We feel that some changes should be made. The Board feels that the pension fund and the medical insurance should be separated as most of the funds being paid in at the present time are going for medical insurance. In some cases very little, if any, is going into retirement. The Board also feels that in the future the congregations should take a more active part in the funds and familiarize themselves with the working of these funds. Pastors as well as other professional people are feeling the pinch of inflation and should receive some assistance from the congregations in these matters.

The Board is working on plans to make some recommendations at the Annual Conference in June as to the separating of the funds. We are recommending that 6% of the salary be designated for the pension fund only. This would be paid on a one-third, two-thirds basis as before. The Board is open to any suggestions from both laymen and pastors that may help us in our decisions.

Walter L. Lien  
Chairman, Pension Board

## IN MEMORIAM

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

### MINNESOTA

Willmar

**Mrs. Oliver (Gertrude) Floren,**  
72, Feb. 7, Zion

Spicer

**Clarence W. Johnson,** 77, Feb. 20,  
Green Lake

We also note the death of **Mrs. Arthur Johnson (Ethel)**, wife of the pastor of Our Savior's Lutheran Church, French Lake, Minn. She passed away in Willmar, Minn., on Feb. 26 at the age of 69. Burial was in Granite Falls, Minn.

## news of the churches

### Rural congregation sees bright future

Touched at times, but not defeated, by today's trend of abandonment of rural churches, Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Ringbo has held membership fast to fellowship in a religious organization established by their forefathers at the turn of the century. Ringbo is a small community nine miles southeast of Middle River in the area of a once operating Ringbo post office and school.

#### from here and there . . .

**Goodridge, Minn.** — Reiner Lutheran Church, southeast of Goodridge, has voted to build an addition which will include a kitchen, dining area and bathroom. Work is expected to begin this spring. The church is served by Pastor Leslie Galland of Thief River Falls, Minn.

**Stacy, Minn.** — The Robert Dietsche family of Osceola, Wis. (the ARC), presented the program at the parish family night service at Sunnyside Lutheran last Sunday night (Mar. 27). The program included singing and a chalk talk.

**Dalton, Minn.** — New members at Sarpsborg Lutheran Church since Christmas are Mr. John Christianson and Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Soland.

**Greenbush, Minn.** — The Bible study group at Oiland Lutheran Church has been studying the Gospel of Luke and meetings have been held in homes.

### HELP WANTED:

The 21st AFLC Annual Conference will be held at the ARC, June 15-19. There are many things that should be done at the ARC before conference. We need volunteer help and suggest that each congregation set up a day when they can work. Please notify us in advance. We can use help for both inside and outside work. Lodging and food will be provided. "Thank you" for whatever you can do for the ARC.—Bob Dietsche.

There is, in fact, a new burst of enthusiasm among the church family of Emmanuel Lutheran. Worship services have gone to a regular "every Sunday morning" schedule with the exception of the first Sunday of each month which is given to the 7:30 p.m. Family Night program. Sunday School adult Bible study and confirmation classes are in compliance to the new schedule. An active youth program has been launched and, for the first time in the history of the church Wednesday evening Lenten services, a Maundy Thursday worship service and a sunrise Easter service are being planned.

Credit for the stimulation that has come to Emmanuel is given to Irvin Schmitke and Don Balmer, two licensed lay pastors who came from Thief River Falls in September of the past year to take up the ministerial duties of the parish. Both have personal occupations. Mr. Schmitke is the manager of Republic Airlines; Mr. Balmer works for the Soo Line Railroad. Both feel called by the Spirit to serve Emmanuel.

Emmanuel Lutheran Church is affiliated with the Association of Free Lutherans, a synod headquartered in Minneapolis. About 20 families make up the congregation.

The present church board consists of Eunice Severts, chairman; Marlene Lund, secretary; Myron Sorter, treasurer; Robert Olson, deacon; Ione Fillmore and Julie Erickson, deaconesses; George Severts, trustees. Mabel Sorter serves as the cradle roll secretary. Oscar Swenson is the sexton, principally responsible for matters relating to the church yard cemetery. Sue Olson is the organist.

—From the *Middle River*  
(Minn.) *Record*

(Ed. note — Sue Olson, a high school senior at nearby Newfolden is a 1,000-point plus scorer in her basketball career.)

# Personalities

**Mr. J. A. (Art) Grimstad** of Wadena, Minn., has been called as assistant pastor in Our Saviour's Lutheran Church in Thief River Falls, Minn. An uncle of the pastor, Rev. Leslie Galland, Mr. Grimstad will have duties in visitation, confirmation teaching and occasional preaching. He is a retired school teacher.

**Rev. Donald Greven** has resigned as pastor of Salem Lutheran Church, rural Radcliffe, Ia., where he has served since 1978, to accept the call to the Kenyon, Minn. parish (Emmanuel and Hauge), and will begin work there on May 1. He is presently serving on the Co-ordinating Committee by appointment, in the vacancy caused by the death of Rev. Kenneth L. Anderson last summer. The position will be voted on at this year's annual conference.

## Preaching Missions

### Roseau, Minn.

Rose Lutheran Church

Larry V. Severson, pastor

April 10-14

Rev. James Fugleberg, Ontonagon, Mich., speaker

### Minneapolis, Minn.

Rosedale Lutheran Church

Ralph Rokke, pastor

April 24-27

Rev. Philip Haugen, AFLC Schools' faculty, speaker

## RECONCILED . . .

Another thing that we are to remember is we can pray in our rooms, behind the closed door, in our closets, in the sanctuaries. We can pray, but if we want to go, and go we have to, we have to open the door and go out. We have to come out of the closets, come out of our doors, go out of the churches, the sanctuaries. Maybe we'll go out across the street or go out across the ocean, but go we must. The whole dynamics of missions revolves around these two words: *pray* and *go*.

In our text, we read we are ambassadors for Christ. We are ambassadors for Christ. Have you ever thought about it, that you are an ambassador for Christ? Have you thought about your prerogatives,

## THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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about your rights, about your privileges? The first thing that is required of an ambassador of any country is that he owes allegiance, he declares his allegiance to the constitution under the flag of his country.

In order to be ambassadors for Christ, we'll have to accept the kingship of Jesus as our Lord. We have to owe to Him complete, undivided, unconditional allegiance and the first thing that allegiance demands is obedience. Jesus says, in Luke 7:46, "Why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you?" Strong words, aren't they? Let me repeat once again the primary thing that you and I have to do is be reconciled with Christ. The apostle considers this of such importance that he uses the words, "I beseech you." The word "beseech" is a pretty strong word and in verse 20 (II Corinthians 5) strengthens the word by saying "On behalf of Christ." It says "on behalf of Christ I beseech you," be reconciled to God.

A plea cannot be made stronger and Paul does this because he knows that if this is accomplished, if this is done, if we are reconciled with God, then the rest will follow automatically. Missions really flows out of that reconciliation, the realization of the fact that God reconciles simple men and women like you and me *through Christ* and He wants to make us His tools, His channels, His instruments, to bring others into reconciliation with Him. Reconciliation means restoration and renewal of broken relationships. It means we are enemies of God and God took the initiative and made us His friends.

You know, when we are reconciled we don't go into a kind of ecs-

tatic immobility. But you know Christian faith is such which brings you into *action*. Many religions in India will tell you to be in a meditative state, of quietness. You will be lost in God, lost in communion with God and just be lost. You won't do anything. You'll spend all your time in meditation. But in Christian faith when we have an encounter with Jesus, we go where the action is. Another thing, a wonderful thing, is we don't work alone. It is God who works and we are merely His tools. We are His hands; He works. We are His feet; He walks. We are His mouth with which He speaks.

I'm not saying all of us must go out to the mission fields, distant lands. That is not feasible. That is not humanly possible, nor is it necessary, but one thing we can do, we can certainly agonize for the lost souls. The apostle Paul agonized for the lost souls. He says, "Woe to me if I don't preach the Gospel." If we pray for every member of our congregation and make sure that everyone is saved, a force will begin to generate within that congregation and out of that force will come out a great missionary movement.

It is my prayer, as I said before, that this Missions Conference will be the beginning of a movement that will bring showers of blessings to your fellowship, to the community, and to the four corners of the earth. I'd like to suggest that you would, by God's grace, pray fervently, that in the coming months, and in the coming years, many from your midst will be called forth as missionaries.

Let me close with these words of the apostle Paul, "We beseech you, on behalf of Christ, be reconciled." Amen.