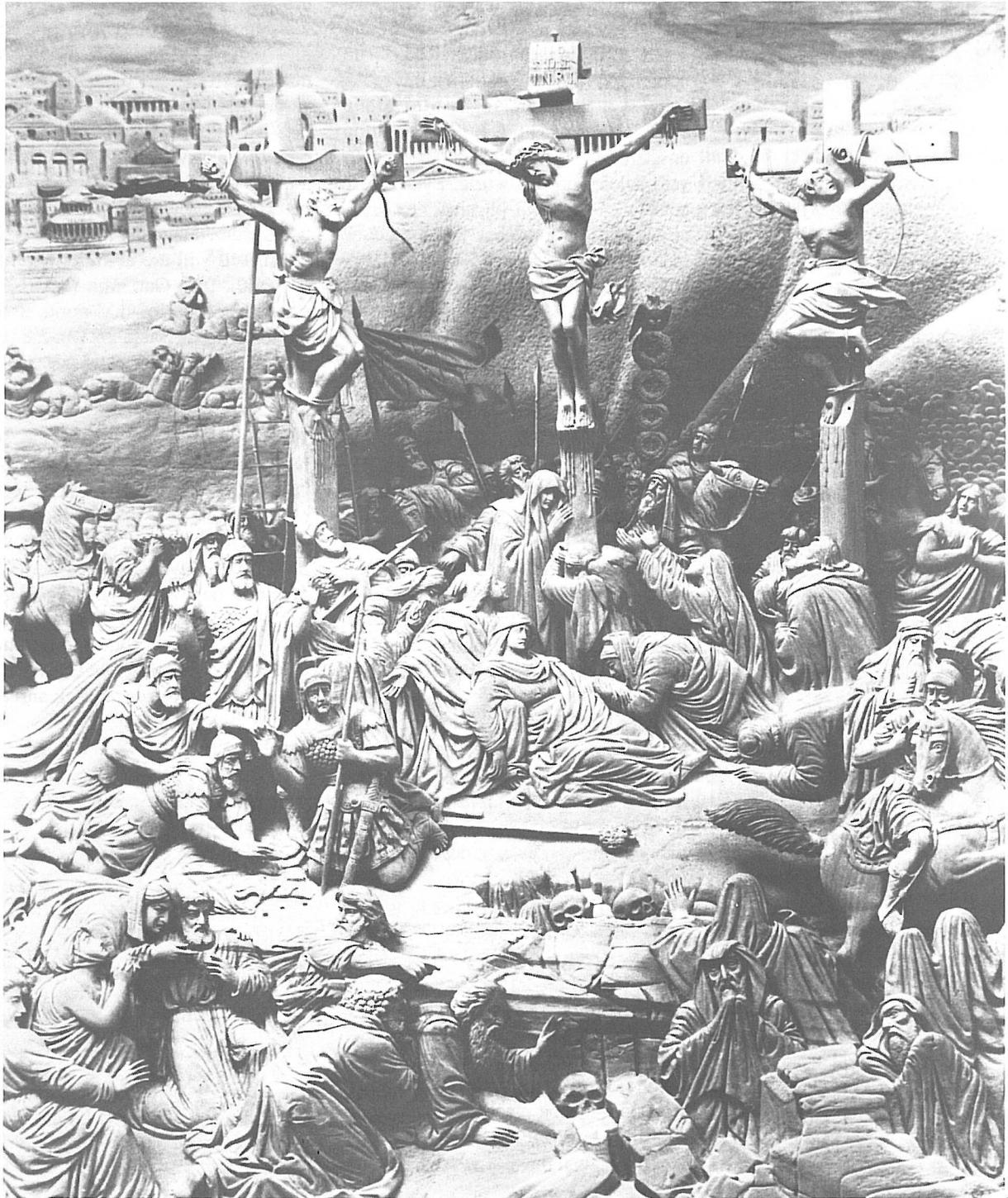


THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

March 7, 1989



LIGHT on the WAY

meditations on God's Word

COVER PHOTO

Jesus Nazarenus, Rex Iudaeorum
(Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews)

RNS Photo

Volume 27 Number 5

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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

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Subscriptions: \$10.00 per year.

Write to:

The Lutheran Ambassador

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

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

Second-class postage paid at Minneapolis, Minn., and additional mailing office.

USPS 588-620 ISSN 0746-3413

Postmaster: Send address changes to *The Lutheran Ambassador*, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441.

Jesus faced a spiritual struggle on His way to the cross. Having led His disciples to the garden of Gethsemane, He went a little farther to plead, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39b).

These words, "not as I will, but as thou wilt," are of great significance. The Father's will and never His own was always to be done in and through Jesus. Jesus Himself announced, "I do nothing on My own authority, but speak thus as the Father taught Me" (John 8:28). Never once did Jesus seek to do or exercise His own will during His 33-year sojourn in this world. Even as He confronted His own physical death, He cried, "Not My will but Yours be done in and through Me." "I seek not My own will but the will of Him who sent Me" (John 5:30) was Jesus' lifelong confession.

These words are important for us to hear. It's so different from our fallen Old Adam nature. Too often we want to cry, "God, not Your will but mine be done. Do things my way." We quickly forget the Third Petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." God's will is done when our will is defeated, crucified, abolished, overcome and replaced by His.

This truth is the very basis of salvation. Martin Luther, in his book, *The Bondage of the Will*, wrote, "First God has assuredly promised his grace to the humble (I Peter 5:5), that is, to those who lament and despair of themselves. But no man can be thoroughly humbled until he knows that his salvation is utterly beyond his own powers, endeavors, will, and works, and depends entirely on the choice, will and work of another, namely of God alone. For as long as he is persuaded that he himself can do even the least thing toward his salvation, he retains some self-confidence and does not altogether despair of himself, and therefore he is not humbled before God, but presumes that there is — or at least hopes or desires that there may be — some place, time, and work for him, by which he may at length attain to salvation. But when a man has

The core truth

no doubt that everything depends on *the will of God*, then he completely despairs of himself and chooses nothing for himself, but waits for God to work; then he has come close to grace, and can be saved" (pp. 61-62, *Luthers' Works*, vol. 33, Fortress Press). "God...take(s) my salvation out of my hands into his, making it depend on his choice and not mine, and has promised to save me, not by my own work or exertion but by his grace and mercy...by the power of free choice none at all would be saved, but all would perish together" (same, p. 289).

It is here the whole of Christian life rises or falls. We have a will, God has a will. Our will is of self, the old nature. God's will is of Himself, the new nature. The most righteous efforts of our self-will are as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). It is God who must be the source and doer of our works if they are to be right (Isaiah 26:12). He seeks to ever crucify our wills and replace them with His. When we are ripped from ourselves and cast on God by Word and Sacrament, new life occurs. No wonder we read in John 1:12-13, "to all who receive Him, who believe on His name, He gave the power to become children of God; who were born (that is, who received Him), not of blood nor of the *will of the flesh nor of the will of man*, but of (*the will of God*)." When it comes to becoming a Christian and living the Christian life this applies. This Holy Week and each day of the year, let's confess with Jesus, "Not my will but Your will, God, be done in me." This is the core truth of salvation and sanctification. By God's grace, may it be the prayer of our life and heart.



—by Pastor
Christian Oswood

King ever glorious

Over the past month, a good deal of attention was given in the press to the execution of Ted Bundy, the mass serial killer. The Christian church paid special attention to the Bundy case, not so much because of the execution, but rather due to the interview that took place with Bundy just hours before his death. We learned that Ted Bundy had requested a meeting with Christian psychologist James Dobson, who is well known in Christian circles for his daily radio program, "Focus on the Family," and the author of many helpful books. It was during that interview that Theodore Bundy explained his obsession with pornography, which had contributed to his total disregard for human life. We also were curious whether Jim Dobson could "break through" to this mass killer with the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Whether Ted Bundy had a modern day "thief on the cross" encounter with Jesus Christ, only God knows. But I find it fascinating that Jesus Christ, who has such love for all people, died on a cross for a man like Bundy who had such a low respect for mankind.

Last month a young unchurched couple sat in my office. They had come because of a need in their lives, yet the conversation quickly moved to their basic spiritual need for Jesus Christ. I showed them from Scripture the fact that we all are sinners, in need of God's salvation in Christ. They agreed that everybody falls short of God's glory. I shared with them how Christ paid the penalty of our sin through the shed blood of His beloved Son. They accepted this biblical truth. As I moved through the presentation of the Gospel, their interest in God's plan of salvation was evident on their faces. Finally, the young woman interrupted, "But how can I have eternal life?" I explained how she could have eternal life. I looked over to the husband. He had a questioning frown on his face. Finally, he said, "Yes, I would like to know, too, but I have one question." He proceeded to explain that just the night before a young woman and son had been murdered right in Bloomington, Minnesota, where we lived. "Are you trying to tell me that this murderer, if he confesses his sin and need for Jesus Christ, that he *also* receives eternal life the same way? Is that really fair?"

It was then that I explained to them the "glory of God's promise." I explained that when we sin, we are primarily offending God. When we compare how good we are to each other, it is all relative to what *we* hold true about morals and values. But when you stop to think about it, sin is a violation against God. It is true that other

the *Glory* of His *Promise* to Ted Bundy and you

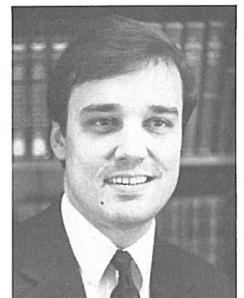
people are affected by our sinful behavior, but the transgression is a personal affront to God alone. Therefore, we cannot compare who's more or less sinful with each other. It is God to whom we must compare ourselves. Each person, individually stands before God, not his fellow man, and God determines the standard by comparing each person with Himself. Jesus explains God's standard, in Matthew 5:48, "Therefore, you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." That is the measuring stick by which we must measure ourselves, not by society as a whole. So in God's eyes, one who runs a red light or shouts an obscenity is in the same boat as Ted Bundy, the mass killer. If you are not perfect, you are not up to God's high standard. There is no in between or middle of the road. Paul reminds us that there are no perfect people, in Romans 3:10-11, 23, "Therefore is none righteous, not even one; there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

There are many places in God's Word where we can discover "the glory of His promise," but my favorite place for this discovery is found in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." We are not perfect people, but God is perfect and He gave the perfect, spotless Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, as a substitute sacrifice on the cross in place of you and me. Because of our sin, that cross was rightfully ours to bear, but "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). So by faith we come to God, looking to Him and His finished, completed work on the cross.

Later, this couple bowed their heads and prayed to God asking Christ to come and forgive them, and asking for salvation in Christ.

The glory of God's promise is that salvation and eternal life are offered to all. The loving arm of God is long enough to reach down to the

"Whether Ted Bundy had a modern-day 'thief on the cross' encounter with Jesus Christ, only God knows."



by Pastor
James Ritter
Bloomington, Minn.

the *Glory* of His *Pardon*

"If God is to forgive man it must be completely consistent with His character."

Why do we need forgiveness?

Each and every person born into this world is in need of pardon. When Rom. 3:23 states that "*all* have sinned" it doesn't exclude anyone. The heart of man by its very nature is wicked and deceitful (Jer. 17:9). Jesus hit it right on the head when He said, "For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man unclean" (Mk. 7:21-23). We have broken God's laws, fallen short of His standards, rejected His love, kept Him out of our lives, put our idols before Him, and we ask, "Why do we need forgiveness?" God is the Holy One who is the judge of all the earth; He is light and in Him is no darkness. That is why we need forgiveness.

Why cannot God simply forgive us?

Not only is God a holy being, He is also by His nature the Supreme Judge, the Lawgiver. His laws are not arbitrary, they are truth. For God to just forgive sin without any cost to anyone would be for Him to completely disregard sin, not making any distinction between right and wrong. It would say that right does not matter and that evil is a matter of indifference. How can a Holy God be indifferent over sin? He cannot, there has to be a cost, a price paid for sin. A pardon is not given out arbitrarily. So on what grounds can a pardon from God be possible?

God's holy love.

If God is to forgive man it must be completely consistent with His character. It is not only true that God is a loving and forgiving God, He is also a holy God. The way in which God chose to forgive sinners and restore them to fellowship must not conflict with His character which is holy and just. When we as humans, in our limited understanding, try to put all the attributes of God in a line and understand their interwoven function, we are very limited. Hosea 11:8, 9 is a good example: "...all my compassion is aroused. I will not carry out My fierce anger, nor devastate Ephraim again. For I am God, and not

man — the Holy One among you. I will not come in wrath." This passage gives at least four attributes of God (compassion, anger, holiness, and wrath). How do they all relate? When we think of God's attributes of holiness, justice and love, how can we come up with God pardoning a sinner? The only way we can is by providing a substitute for the sinner. This substitute must be deity so that the judgment will fall on the substitute and the sinner will receive the pardon. Jesus Christ is, of course, the divine Substitute; "...While we were still sinners, Christ died *for us*. Since we have now been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through Him" (Rom. 5:8). Christ died in our place. It was a substitutionary death in order that we might no longer be under the wrath of God. Theodore Bundy, mass murderer, without question deserved to die. We are by our very nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against God in every possible manner, but because of God's love for us, just as we are about to be strapped into the electric chair and die because of our lawlessness, Christ takes our place and we are completely free from our offenses against God. Christ has taken our place in paying the penalty for our sins.

I heard a Lutheran theologian lecture not long ago concerning the crucifixion of Christ. He stated: "If Christ is God's son and God sent Him to this world to die a brutal death on the cross, He must be a fifth-rate God." This man completely missed the significance of the death of Christ on the cross. It was because of God's love that Christ was put on the cross and if Christ had not died on the cross the theologian would have had to.

In our text, Christ is looking down at the people who put Him on that cross and I am sure He was thinking of each of us when He said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." Christ was able to make that bold request because He was making full payment for their (and our) sins.

There was a man once who had a son. As the years went by, their relationship started to deteriorate. Finally, the son moved away to a city many miles away and basically forgot about his father. Years later, the son got a notice that his father was very ill and not expected to live. Without much thought, the son got on a plane and attempted to see his father before he died. As he traveled home, a rush of thoughts and memories came to the son concerning his relationship with his father. He began to realize how



by Rev.
Keith Quanbeck
Camarillo, Calif.

much he had hurt his father by neglecting him and by completely breaking off his relationship. A deep desire came over him to apologize and restore that relationship before his father's death. After he landed, he rushed to the hospital to see his dying father, but he was too late. His father had died. He did not have the opportunity to talk to his father. His grief obviously was very great. Just before his father had died, however, he had a short letter dictated to his son, telling him that all was forgiven and that he loved him very much. The tremendous load of guilt and burden was lifted from the son, knowing that his father had forgiven him. God has allowed us to realize the load lifted from us without any effort on our part. Just by his gracious love He has sent His Son in order to pardon us. This indeed is a glorious pardon.



PROMISE

respectable, community-minded family as well as the Ted Bundys of this world. It is this glorious promise that extends over all time, to all people and in all places. Somebody put it like this to me some time ago: "Jim, if you were the only person that ever lived on the face of this earth, and you needed Christ's salvation, God would still have sent Christ and Christ would have still been the perfect substitute for your sin." The glory of God's promise is that it is a promise of salvation from God to you.

Had I been there

*Would I have joined the jeering mob
along the dusty road?*

*And in my heart rejoiced to see
the Savior's heavy load?*

*Would I have cried in bitter pain
because I loved Him so?*

*Would I have served Him even then?
Indeed, I cannot know.*

*Would I have hid myself away,
the shame I would not see,
Kept busy so I would not know
the crime of Calvary?*

*Would I have followed near my Lord,
my love I dared to show?*

*Would I have borne the cross for Him?
Indeed, I cannot know.*

*Would I have lied there by the fire —
denied my Savior's name?*

*Would I have fled in honest fright,
a coward all the same?*

*Would I have faced the soldiers then,
stayed firm against the foe?*

*Would I have trusted in Him then?
Indeed, I cannot know.*

*Would I have stood beneath the cross
And watched Him suffer there?*

*Would I have cursed and spat at Him
to prove I didn't care?*

*Would I have shared the agony —
watched in His time of woe?*

*Would He have been my Savior then?
Indeed, I cannot know.*

*I've searched my heart, I cannot say
Where I'd have stood that day.*

*Would I have loved or hated Him?
I really cannot say.*

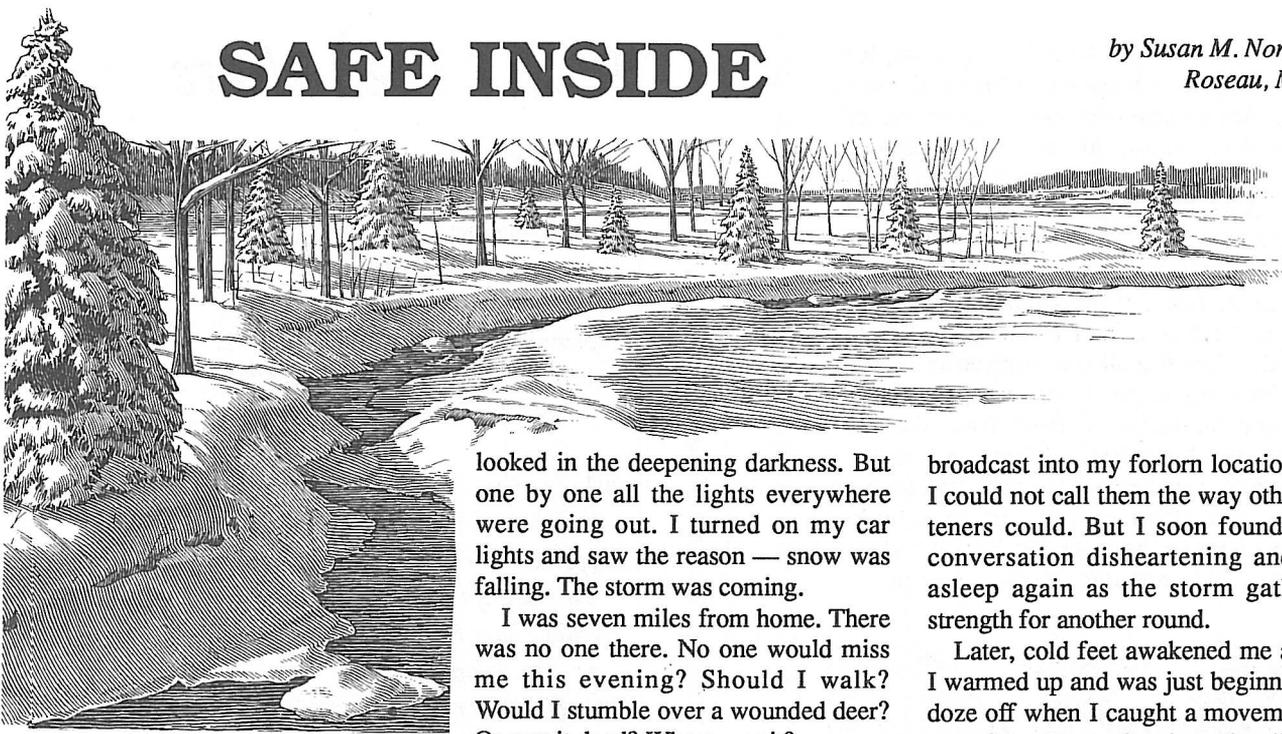
*But this I'm sure — He's still the same,
He's paid the debt I owe,*

*And will accept my wavering faith
And this I truly know.*

Mrs. Kenneth (Ruth) Tweed
McHenry, N. Dak.

SAFE INSIDE

by Susan M. Nordvall
Roseau, Minn.



It was evening, not late, and I was driving from Roseau north to my home by the Canadian border. I was on the old lake road when suddenly a deer hit my left front fender and came sliding towards me over the windshield. It disappeared and my car was out of control all over the road. I found myself facing a deep ditch, then doing a complete turn to the south and coming to an abrupt stop.

The motor was running smoothly.

I may as well get moving.

I rocked and spun, but that was all. Investigating my situation, I found that my car was hung up on something just inches from a sharp drop into the ditch. I got back inside.

There was a noise under my car. The deer! Had I dragged it with me under the car? I hadn't. There was scratching at my door. Who was it? I had to look — only frozen reeds whipping in the wind, wondering what I was doing there. My view out the window was straight into the ditch. I was hanging over it at a 45 degree angle. Above the swamp I noticed a scraggly poplar or willow twisting wildly in the night wind. I remembered the forecasted storm for the evening.

Sitting there, facing south instead of north, I could see the yard lights at the three-mile bridge. How hopeful they

looked in the deepening darkness. But one by one all the lights everywhere were going out. I turned on my car lights and saw the reason — snow was falling. The storm was coming.

I was seven miles from home. There was no one there. No one would miss me this evening? Should I walk? Would I stumble over a wounded deer? Or was it dead? Where was it?

It was dark. Earlier in the evening I'd heard a pack of timber wolves howl. Would they come for the deer?

I would wait for a car to come. It was the day after hunting season. By about 10 o'clock I decided no one at all would be coming by on the little travelled road.

I would be in my car, hanging over the ditch of the old lake road, all night.

I locked my doors. A familiar verse popped into my mind, "Fear ye not...stand still..." Also a line from a prayer in my behalf came to me, "that Susan would know the very real presence of Jesus." I had to laugh at the sudden absence of fear. I sat back to think. I had not been hurt. It was all right to be alive, even on the swamp road. The Lord was protecting me. I realized I had not valued my life much lately.

I was not dressed for winter. I wrapped myself in the odd things in the car and fell asleep, as the snow fell even faster.

I was awakened! It was lighter and my feet were cold. Not morning! The snow had stopped. I ran the car long enough to warm up. Being so hung up, I was afraid to run it long. (It turned out I had a leaking gas tank.) This night I discovered nighttime radio from far away cities. They could

broadcast into my forlorn location, but I could not call them the way other listeners could. But I soon found their conversation disheartening and fell asleep again as the storm gathered strength for another round.

Later, cold feet awakened me again. I warmed up and was just beginning to doze off when I caught a movement in my mirror. I turned and saw headlights. Could it be morning? Yes, it turned out to be an early Polaris (snowmobile manufacturer in Roseau) employee going to work. I was rescued! (And that's another story.) My car was under a large drift on the side of the ditch. There was a small drift on the road where my deer lay dead.

By 8 a.m. I was back in my familiar kitchen and was deeply moved by the many and various phone calls all that next day.

But I was mostly touched and curious about the very real Presence with me in the car all that night. It was more than a presence, more like something taking a hold of me. How it had cheered me. It was exciting and some folks give me a sad look when I say that.

If an invisible wind can bend trees and cause frozen reeds to play weird music on my car door, and make my feet cold, surely an invisible Christ can bring peace and warmth to my heart.

The last person on earth I'd expect to come looking for me on the lake road that night was Jesus Himself, but I guess He was the only one who knew I was there. Thank You.

(Mrs. Nordvall is the widow of the late Gustav Nordvall, who was lay pastor of the Badger, Minn., parish for 14 years.)

Announcing a Scripture chorus songbook

At the Luther League Federation Convention at the Association Retreat Center in 1987, it was realized that much of the materials used for Scripture and chorus singing could have been in violation of copyright laws. It was determined at that time that it would be a good idea to secure permission for a selection of songs and even to produce a songbook. Later, while conferring with Pastor Snipstead, it came to be realized that if copyright permission was secured in

the name of the Coordinating Committee the songbook produced could be used anywhere in the AFLC. The permission has been secured primarily through Maranatha! Music as well as other sources and the cost has been generously covered by three of our congregations.

This book is meant to be a supplement to the fine heritage of worship songs already found in our hymnals and will probably most often be used at youth functions, but its use is unlimited and can be used by any of our congregations in any aspect of congregational life. An effort has been made to select songs which reflect and support our doctrinal position. It is recognized that many congregations already have

a Scripture and chorus book. It is also true that some congregations do not wish to use such songs. This is a strength of our congregational emphasis and is as it should be. Yet we also know that many congregations are currently considering purchasing such a book and that others would like such a tool. This project is exciting because at a very affordable price a book is being made available to the AFLC. This book, by copyright, can't be sold for profit, can't be copied, and can be used only by our congregations.

The songbook will be 5.5" by 8.5", entitled *AFLC Scripture and Chorus Book*, and will have a glossy cover featuring the AFLC emblem. It will include about 80 songs with Scripture references and will be produced in two versions. 1. Words only. To be completed by June 1, 1989, which will be accompanied by a cassette recording of all the songs. 2. With musical arrangement to be completed by Sept. 1, 1989. The book will not be for sale but it is necessary to cover the cost of the project. At this time our figures are only approximate, but it appears that the total cost will be around 50¢ per book. 5,000 (words only) books will be printed and they, along with cassettes, will be made available at the LLF Convention, July 17-21, in Vernon, B.C., Canada. One copy of the book will be mailed to each congregation upon completion and congregations interested in using the book either in their Luther Leagues or during worship services should instruct a representative to acquire the number of books needed at the Luther League Convention. This will be helpful in eliminating much of the mailing costs. Any congregation willing to contribute to this project should send contributions payable to the Luther League Federation, clearly notated that the offering is for the songbook, and send them to the treasurer of the Luther League Federation, Mr. Randy Erickson. His address is: St. Paul Bible College, 6425 Cty. Rd. 30, St. Bonifacius, Minnesota 55375.

Editor — Seminarian Tim Carlson
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BOOK REVIEW

Two authors view Lutheran crisis

The recent publication of two critical surveys of developments in modern U. S. Lutheranism provides interesting and informative reading.

Rudy B. Skogerboe, an East Grand Forks, Minn., physician, is the author of *Who Has Stolen My Church?*, the story of his personal experiences and concerns as an active layman in the former American Lutheran Church (ALC). A love and appreciation for his rich heritage as a Lutheran Christian is quite evident in the book, as well as a deep hurt over the changes that he has encountered in church life during the past four or five decades. The author also expresses serious reservations about the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), yet does not seek to dictate to the reader what his decision should be in regard to the new church, providing rather an example of dealing with anger and disappointment.

Who has stolen my church? Watch for the answer to this question when you read the book. It is available from Abiding Word Ministries, 1483 Auburn Court, Eagan, Minn. 55122-1858, for a donation of eight dollars.

The second book, *The Death of the Lutheran Reformation*, by Craig S. Stanford, is another personal account of one man's experience within modern U.S. Lutheranism, written this time from the perspective of a college student and seminarian. The author's years in attendance at two Lutheran colleges and a seminary, as well as his service with The Fellowship of Evangelical Lutheran Laity and Pastors (FELLP), uniquely qualifies him for the task of preparing a thorough, critical appraisal of the "theological smorgasbord" that he encountered. However, the book is not only a book of theology; it is also the interesting and unusual story of one student's response to the challenges that his faith survived on Lutheran college and seminary campuses. This may be a book that some readers will want to place in the hands of a student who is in the midst of such a struggle.

The Death of the Lutheran Reformation may be ordered from the author, P.O. Box 5672, Fort Wayne, Ind. 46895. The cost per copy is \$10.95, plus \$1.00 for shipping.

— Pastor Robert Lee

firm foundation

Do you have a vision?

—by Naomi Halvorson
and Judy Mayland

Visions. Without them, Solomon tells us, the people perish (Proverbs 29:18).

A vision can take the shape of a spiritual goal — a ministry, a soul won for Christ — an aspiration for God that takes both His power and our obedience to accomplish.

Do you have a vision? If you do, are you pursuing it? If you don't, what are you going to do about it?

Those who have been entrusted with a firm foundation of biblical truth have been entrusted for a reason. The spiritual understanding that comes from a life in Christ is not to be hoarded. Jesus clearly confronted this issue when He said to His disciples, "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked" (Luke 12:48). What are you doing with what God has entrusted to you?

A Vision Overshadowed

For some of us, a vision was given years ago but somewhere along the road it fell by the wayside. We might recall a convicting sermon or challenging passage of Scripture after which we resolved to initiate a neighborhood Bible study, reach out to an unbelieving co-worker, serve on a church committee, or implement whatever else God laid on our heart. Somewhere amid our good intentions, however, our days became full, our weeks too short, and our visions were forgotten. Ashamed, we look back, realizing our neglect.

Fortunately for us, God is faithful when we are not. He is ready to restore. Be encouraged by Paul's words in Philippians 3:13-14: "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward

in Christ Jesus."

For others of us, the problem isn't that we've neglected the vision, but it seems the vision has neglected us. Perhaps our attempts to initiate that neighborhood Bible study have been greeted by a lack of interest or the co-worker we're reaching out to is cold and aloof to spiritual matters. During these times, our efforts seem to be in vain and, consequently, our zeal dwindles as our discouragement mounts.

As we look to Scripture, we see a similar scenario in the life of Abraham. God had given Abraham the vision that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars. The years went on...and on...and on...and still not even one child. Where was God taking this vision? Before it was to be fulfilled in God's perfect way and perfect time, Abraham wrestled with bouts of discouragement and disillusion. In his finite understanding he, like us, could not fully understand the magnitude of God's omnipotence. Sometimes we, too, must persevere as we wait for our visions to become reality. Let us do so with the assurance of God's faithfulness and dependence on His promise that our labor for the Lord is not in vain.

A Vision Forgotten

For some of us it's been a long time since we've been challenged or convicted. Perhaps we've fallen into a "comfortable" spiritual rut. We may have come to the point where we are not allowing God to prompt and inspire us and our apathy toward the matter keeps us stationary. Proverbs 29:18 says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Could Solomon's words be a warning to you?

If so, perhaps it's time to change all that. Seek forgiveness for your spiritual apathy, ask God to give you a willing and obedient spirit, and pray for a vision of how you can be used. And then watch to see what God will do.

Where, then, would we be without visions? Where would the church be without zealous men and women of God to implement the visions? In 1962, five men of God, Pastor Arvid Hokonson, Pastor F. B. Monseth, Pastor Julius Hermunslie, H. Morris Borstad, and William Svanoie pursued the vision God had given them and put together a proposal for a Free Lutheran Seminary to present at the 1963 Annual Conference. As a result, the decision was made to forge ahead with the necessary preparations. Thus, in the fall of 1964, the AFLC seminary classroom opened its doors.

Are you following the promptings of God as these men did? Listen for His voice. Perhaps He's calling you to begin to disciple one other person or to give of your time in a ministry at your church. Be it big or small, don't let His call go unheeded.

Schools' faculty prepare study on homosexuality

AFLC Schools' faculty members have prepared a series of studies on the general topic of *The Church and Homosexuality*. This project was a response to a request from the AFLC - Canada, where there has been a need for conservative material on this subject in light of developments within Canadian Lutheranism.

Dr. Francis Monseth's introductory paper presents a survey of the church's response to the problem throughout history. Rev. Ralph Tjelta and Rev. Philip Haugen deal with the relevant Old and New Testament passages respectively. Dr. Steve Lombardo investigates the Scriptural evidence for homosexuality being either a condition or choice, and Rev. Robert Lee concludes with an essay on counseling the homosexual.

The studies will be presented to the Canadian annual conference in April for consideration by the delegates. Copies are available from the seminary office upon request.

A MILLION GIVEN

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me
bless His holy name" (Psalm 103:1).

For the first time in her 26-year history, congregations and individuals have given a million dollars to the benevolences of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. (See the report below.) The total, to be exact, is \$1,014,732.17. The percentage of the total goal reached is 96%.

Reaching the million dollar level didn't come easily. Four previous million-dollar goals had not been achieved. A strong effort in January, coupled with a strong December, made the final total in the 1988-89 fiscal year possible. The income total for January was \$187,098.17 and that was almost twice as much as came in during January a year ago. The December income was over \$173,000.

The results will be studied inside and out by the various boards of the AFLC and we'd like to leave the final interpretation to someone else, but it goes without saying that the total amount given and the percentage of goal reached are a tremendous boost to our work together. They are a signal that it's "Forward March!" for the Association. We will be looking for new direction from our boards and agencies at the coming annual conference in Minot, N. Dak., having attained this particular high-water mark and with a growing church body.

Of course, it is disappointing that our mission income lags behind in percentage of goals reached, particularly World Missions. We know there is a deep feeling for World Missions in the AFLC, but somehow that hasn't translated into the mission dollars there should be. This is an area where we must work toward real improvement in this present fiscal year.

But for a job well done, all in all, we express our thanks first of all to the Lord and then to everyone who has shared through the giving of tithes and offerings to make this million dollars possible for God's work.

VISITING THE SICK

Raymond Calkins wrote: "It is the great privilege of the parish minister to enter freely, daily it may be, into this invalid world. He is given a right of entrance which is often denied to others."

Yes, that is certainly true and each parish pastor or minister, to use Calkins' word, knows that is so.

Today the calling on the sick is often done in the hospital, but a pastor is one who still makes house calls, too, in order to see the ill, the shut-in, the aged, as well as those who are well.

Each pastor has his own manner and style, influenced by the personality he is. And it all is tempered and warmed by the love and compassion of Christ coming out through him.

We have recently read something about how it was in 1918-19 during the Spanish influenza epidemic which spread through the U.S. and Canada at the time the World War was ending and following. One wonders how we would cope with that sort of thing. A pastor in Canada, writing in *Folkebladet*, told of one two-day stretch when he could change neither his shoes or clothes because he was busy ministering to the sick and travelling long distances to do so. More than once he and the doctor found one another in a home where there was illness, one to bring spiritual ministry, the other physical. Another pastor in Canada told of being well through the Christmas services, then he and his wife got that dreaded flu and for two weeks hung between life and death.

God be merciful to us and spare us from such epidemic in our days. But one can wonder how we would meet such times, with a number of people from our communities, even from one congregation, dying in a relatively short space of time. God would give the strength, but it would be a time of testing.

But back to the pastor as a visitor of the sick. Jesus said, "I was sick and you visited Me" (Matt. 25:36b). To be sure, it isn't only the task of a called pastor, but it most certainly is his responsibility, and opportunity. By coming to the sick-room he shows his concern and it is another situation in which the Word may be applied to the heart's need.

May the Lord bless this aspect of the visitation ministry also, the calling on the sick.

AFLC Benevolences

Preliminary Final Report for 1988-89

Grand Total\$1,014,732.17

Received in January ...\$187,098.17

Percentage of Goals Reached:

General Fund108%

Schools

ALFLTS.....96%

AFLBS.....106%

Home Missions.....94%

World Missions.....84%

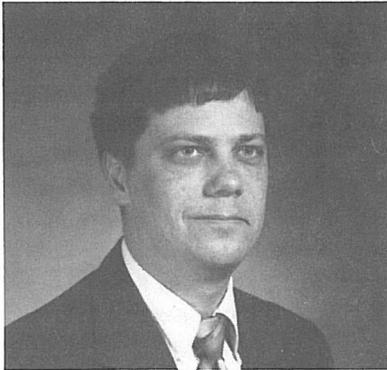
Capital Investments97%

Percentage of Total Goal96%

Last Year90%

A full report will be given next issue.

1989 AFLTS graduates



Michael Crowell

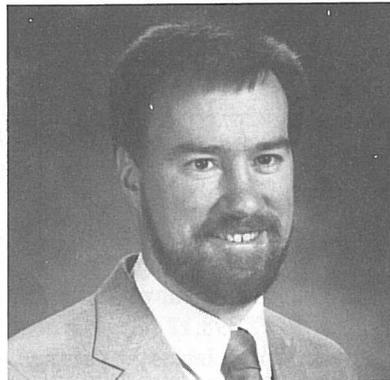
Kalispell, Montana
 Son of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Crowell, Sebeka, Minn.
 Married to Lori Ann Hamann
 Children: Jeremy, 8; Melissa, 6
 Home congregation:
 King of Glory Lutheran, Eden Prairie, Minn.

Leslie Galland, pastor.
 Graduated from Aurora College, Aurora, Ill. (1980).
 Special interests: flying, hunting and reading.

Personal Testimony: From an early age, I felt the call of God to the ministry. However, for a time I walked away from Him, and in high school, He called me back to Himself through the ministry of a home Bible study group. About the same time, I was introduced to the AFLC through the ministry of Pastor Gary Skramstad and found my "church home." I praise God for his patience toward me, His sustaining me day by day and the way He has provided for every need. I am encouraged by II Thess. 3:3, as I look to the future: "The Lord is faithful; He will strengthen you and guard you from evil." I rejoice that those words apply to me and my family by virtue of Christ's sacrifice.

Seminary Experience: The sense of calling into the ministry, which I had had from early childhood, was, of course, made clear upon my coming to know the Lord! Through several years of police work and a tour in the Army, that call was only strengthened and it was with a great deal of rejoicing that seminary began in 1985. This sense of wonder that God can use even me has been growing in these seminary years. I rejoice that I can look forward to the future knowing that it is in His hands, not mine! The good fellowship and teaching of AFLTS has been a tremendous blessing, even in the midst of the trials of "student life" for the family. Internship under Pastor Michael Brandt (Cloquet, Minn.) was the highlight of seminary — a great blessing! Lori, Jeremy, Melissa and I look forward with confidence in God's leading.

*Crowell has accepted a call to serve Christ Lutheran Church, Wichita Falls, Texas, a Home Mission congregation. He has already begun flying to Texas for services twice a month and will move there with his family after graduation and ordination.



Tim Carlson

Barron, Wisconsin
 Son of Mr. and Mrs. Fritjov Carlson
 Married to Rosemary Carlson
 Child: Hannah, 2
 Home congregation:

Christ is Lord Lutheran, LaCrosse, Wis.
 Richard Gilmore, pastor
 Graduate of the Univ. of Wisconsin - LaCrosse
 Special Interests: guitar, sports, camping.

Personal Testimony: I was raised in a loving home but came to have only an intellectual acknowledgment of God. My father died when I was ten and this left me with a lot of questions and insecurities. While attending a youth rally in Ladysmith, Wis., I heard of my sin, my need for a Savior and of God's unconditional love for me through Jesus Christ. That was in March of 1974 and Jesus continues to be my first love to this day.

Seminary Experience: God's Word declares, "Thy Word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path" (Ps. 119:105). What a joy to be studying the Word at AFLTS! To find such solid teaching and true fellowship at our seminary has been to experience the lamp and light that the psalmist speaks of. It is my desire to continue the study methods taught by AFLTS and to give to others a sure Biblical foundation to rest their faith in. My internship was spent at Zion Lutheran in Tioga, N. Dak., with Pastor Dale Mellgren. There God intensified in my heart the awareness of how much He loves people and Jesus is the demonstration of that love. It is my desire to communicate that message and to teach others to do the same.

*Carlson has accepted a call from Christian Lutheran Church, Wheatland, Iowa, a Home Mission congregation that he has been serving on weekends since last summer. The Carlsons will move to Iowa after graduation and ordination.

BE STILL MY SOUL

- 1. Be still, my soul! the Lord is on thy side;
 Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;
 Leave to thy God to order and provide;
 In every change He faithful will remain.
 Be still, my soul! thy best, thy heavenly Friend
 Through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.
- 2) Be still, my soul! thy God doth undertake
 To guide the future as He has the past.
 Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;
 All now mysterious shall be bright at last.
 Be still, my soul! the waves and winds still know
 His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below.
- 3) Be still, my soul! the hour is hastening on
 When we shall be forever with the Lord,
 When disappointment, grief, and fear are gone,
 Sorrow forgot, love's purest joys restored.
 Be still, my soul! when change and tears are past,
 All safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

PSALMS IN THE NIGHT

WMF BIBLE STUDY

APRIL 1989

PSALM 27

Memory Verse:

“Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord” (Psalm 27:14).

Purpose of the

Psalm: To show us how we may have fearless trust in God.

Verse 1 — Explain Jehovah as my light and my salvation.

light _____
 salvation _____
 Then, whom shall we fear? _____
 Explain — Jehovah is the strength of my life. _____
 Then, whom shall we fear? _____
 Apply Psalm 36:9 _____
 Psalm 43:3 _____

Verse 2 - 3 — What can happen to us?
 By evil-doers? _____
 By adversaries and foes? _____
 By a host encamped against me _____
 If war should rise against me? _____

We need not fear! We can be confident in what? _____

Apply Psalm 14:4 _____

Psalm 3:6 _____

Verse 4 — The psalmist's passionate desire is what? _____

Apply Psalm 23:6 _____

Have we asked for that "one thing"? Are we seeking after it? _____

Are you a willing guest in God's House when the opportunity presents itself? _____

Verses 5-6 — How will the Lord protect us if we trust in Him? _____

How does the Psalmist describe the Lord's protection? _____

Apply Psalm 3:3 _____

What was the Psalmist's response for the Lord's protection? _____

Is this our response? _____

Verse 7 — Note the change in mood. The first six verses expressed victorious faith and thanks for protection.

What is the Psalmist's prayer in verses 7-10? _____

Apply Psalm 69:17 _____

Verses 8-9 — What must we do? _____

Have we sought His face? _____

Verse 10 — Would our families forsake us? _____

Who will not leave us? _____

Have we cried out to the Lord? _____

What has been the result? _____

Verses 11-12 — The Psalmist prays that he should be _____, _____ and _____.

Apply Psalm 25:4 _____

Do we find ourselves in similar situations? _____

Are we confronted by false witnesses? _____

Verse 13 — This shows us how weak we are in ourselves. What gives us strength? _____

Verse 14 — What is the admonition to us from the Psalmist? _____

Is it easy to "wait on the Lord"? _____

Do we need patience? _____

From whom do we get courage and strength? _____

We need to be still and know that He is God!

Pastors' challenged with various issues at winter conference

The annual pastors' conference was held January 17-19 at the Association Retreat Center, southeast of Osceola, Wis. About 140 pastors and seminarians attended, the largest turnout ever.

Rev. James Asp, interim pastor in Thief River Falls, Minn., preached at the opening night service of Holy Communion, Tuesday, at which Rev. Emerson Anderson, Cleveland O., was the liturgist. Pastor Asp talked about the joy of communion. The one who comes to the Lord's Supper knows the forgiveness of sins through Jesus. And then he finds joy in encouragement in the Sacrament, knowing that Christ is truly present to bless.

The Bible study hours, three in all, were led by Rev. Philip Haugen of the AFLC Schools' faculty. He concentrated on Rom. 3:23, 24, with the middle session also focusing on Eph. 2:1-3, a parallel passage. He directed attention to the verb tenses in the verses and how they force us to look back to Christ and His cross where atonement for our sins was made.

"The Pastor as Worship Leader" was the topic discussed by Rev. Robert L. Lee, also of the Schools' faculty and AFLC vice-president. He stated that all that preceded the sermon in the wor-

ship service should be more than "preliminaries." While liturgy is sometimes downgraded among us in our low church tradition, it is the corporate expression of the church's faith and fellowship, its living theology. Pastor Lee saw two distinct problems or dangers: that worship become man-centered, and, two, that it lack biblical content. In a service the full spectrum of faith is or should be touched. He told the pastors that they should respect the liturgical heritage of a church they visit or serve and grow together with a congregation regarding also this area of life.

On Wednesday morning, in the third hour, Rev. Lynn Kinneberg, Wadena, Minn., went over a premarital counselling program he uses in his parish and the rationale or reasons for such a program. He advocates seven pre-marital sessions in addition to the rehearsal for the wedding and a first anniversary follow-up session.

On Wednesday afternoon Dr. Francis W. Monseth, dean of Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary, made some remarks about his paper, "Principles and Practices of Evangelism." Some changes in the document were noted. Then the pastors were divided into six groups, each led by a Schools' faculty member. A series of nine questions were under discussion as time permitted. A reporter from each group brought back a summary of what had been discussed. It seemed to be the conclusion that the statement will have ultimate status as a study guide rather than as something more binding.

A banquet was held on Wednesday evening. The address was given by Rev. Donald Richman, Emmaus Lutheran Church, Bloomington, Minn. He talked about how God is speaking to him through various experiences. He listed three main points: 1) With God's help we must keep our dreams alive; 2) We should test our traditions, keeping the good and relinquishing what may have served its purpose, but now is

only form; and 3) We must work our worship lest we become lazy and unthinking in that worship and become a bad witness to others.

Following the banquet Rev. Wesley Langaas, McVille, N. Dak., made a brief presentation on behalf of Parish Education. As chairman of the Board, he called for greater use of the AFLC's Sunday School material, for more volunteers in the revision work being undertaken and for greater prayer for the education work of the church. He also reminded those present that Parish Education becomes a separate item in the AFLC budget in 1989-90.

On Thursday morning following the Bible study, Rev. and Mrs. Paul Abel, home from Brazil, made a presentation. They sang two duets and showed slides. Pastor Abel challenged the audience to become "world Christians," having concern for the whole world. He reminded the group that every generation needs to be evangelized. Mr. Abel told of some of the work going on on our field in Brazil. He said that one U.S. church he knew of had recently spent \$25,000 on a paint job and repairs. That amount, he said, would have built two new churches in Brazil.

The closing session was a talk on preaching given by Rev. Steve Lombardo, new faculty member at the AFLC Schools. His points were four: 1) The preacher's foundation is the Word of God; 2) His function is to communicate that Word clearly; 3) The preacher must have a Holy Spirit directed fervor or passion; and 4) His friend is a warm and healthy piety. Pastor Lombardo concluded by saying that great opportunities lie before us and it is grace that God can use us in this great work of preaching.

The morning prayer times were led by Rev. Richard Thompson, Morris, Ill., (John 4:20-24), on Wednesday, and Rev. Douglas Rietsch, Spokane, Wash., on Thursday.

Women present at the conference enjoyed two separate sessions, a Bible study led by Mrs. Lyndon Korhonen, Culbertson, Mont., on Wednesday and a mission hour with Mrs. Abel on Thursday.

Personalities

Pastor Gerald Gettis, Vernon, B.C., has been placed on the regular clergy roster of the AFLC after serving one year on the fellowship roster.

Pastor Kenneth Appling, who was on the fellowship roster while serving at Salmon Arm, B.C., has accepted a call to serve an AALC congregation at Silverton, Ore.

INTERNSHIP ASSIGNMENTS for 1989-90

David Nelson, to Faith Lutheran Church, Shakopee, Minn.

Steve Olinger, to Immanuel Lutheran Church, Salmon Arm, B.C.

Tonnes Pollestad, to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Cloquet, Minn.

The conference at Fergus Falls

The first AFLC Bible Conference to be held in Fergus Falls, Minn., since 1978, was conducted there Jan. 27-29 at Calvary Lutheran Church, Rev. Rodger Olson, pastor. The conference, under the theme, "That I May Know Him," was well attended and beautiful winter weather favored the three days.

The two evening sermons and the one on Sunday morning were preached by Rev. Gary Jorgenson, Stanley, N. Dak. On Friday night, using the text of I John 1:1-2:2, he spoke on the theme "That I May Know Him and Walk in His Light." He pointed out three errors to be avoided by those who claim a relationship to God, who is light: 1) To claim that sin has no bearing on one's relationship to God; 2) To feel that we don't have a sinful nature; and 3) To say that we don't commit sin. If one says that, Pastor Jorgenson declared, he is saying that God doesn't speak truthfully in His Word.

"That I May Know Him and Live by Faith" was Mr. Jorgenson's topic on Saturday evening and the text was I John 5:1-5. He stated that faith is a gift of God. The evidences of faith in the life of a believer are these: 1) active belief; 2) love for God and others, especially God's people; and 3) obedience which is grace-motivated, not legalistic, and therefore burdensome; and 4) victory, including assurance.

On Sunday morning, II Corinthians 12:2-9 was Pastor Jorgenson's text, "That I May Know Him and His All-Sufficient Grace," his theme. He said that when we recognize God's all-sufficient grace, we 1) learn to keep a right perspective on our rights and accomplishments; 2) can accept and not be defeated by our weaknesses. In fact, God's power is most dramatically displayed through these weaknesses; and 3) we will learn to trust Christ to use all the circumstances of our lives to glorify Himself through us.

The four Bible hours were taught by Rev. Steve Lombardo of the AFLC Schools' faculty. All were based on the conference text, Phil. 3:7-14. In the first hour, he talked of how Paul came to count his background and zeal as loss compared to knowing Christ. Knowing Jesus slays self-righteousness and shows God's grace. We will never know Jesus unless we know Him first in His holiness and judgment on sin.

The second hour dealt with "The Power of His Resurrection." Only resurrection power, Pastor Lombardo declared, can raise a Christian above his enemies so that he can live to the glory of God. The world should get some idea of Jesus, who He is and what He has done, by looking at us Christians. We should bear His likeness.

In a third study, Mr. Lombardo said that following Jesus doesn't guarantee a trouble-free life. In fact, our troubles may just begin then. Suffering seems to come with the territory. He listed some Bible passages that support that truth. If one has no suffering as a disciple of Jesus, he should look at his heart, his witness. And on the other

A belated remembrance

Last year witnessed the passing of two pastors who were special friends of the AFLC. It was many months before *The Lutheran Ambassador* received word of these deaths, perhaps due to the fact that neither man was on our clergy roster. Yet, in spite of the passage of time, it is still fitting that we honor their memories.

Pastor Anders L. S. Mathre died on April 12, 1988, at Arlington, Washington, where he had lived since 1982. Pastor Mathre, 72, was a son of our Helmar congregation, rural Newark, Illinois, and served parishes in Canada, Washington and California, before his retirement in 1972. Pastor Mathre and his wife Synove have (had) been key people in the life and ministry of Atonement Lutheran Church, Arlington, Washington, one of our home mission congregations. He served as interim pastor of the congregation during its infancy before a full-time pastor was called, and Mrs. Mathre continues as organist when she is able to do

so. The Mathres attended the AFLC annual conference at Warm Beach, Wash., in 1986.

One of their special gifts to the new congregation has always been their spirit of encouragement.

Pastor Olaf Holen, Ames, Iowa, died on May 29, 1988, at the age of 99. Born in Norway, he served parishes in Washington for a brief time, followed by a 30-year ministry at Salem Lutheran Church, Roland, Iowa. Pastor Holen was a warm friend of the AFLC, especially remembering the seminary with regular gifts, including many of his books for the library and archives. St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Jewell, Iowa, will long remember him for his interim service, in spite of age and declining health, during the difficult months when the congregation was changing its affiliation to the AFLC.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints" (Psalm 116:15).

Blessed be their memory! R.L.L.

Illinois pastors meet weekly

Every Tuesday morning from 9:30 to 11, some of the pastors in the Illinois District meet for a time of Bible study and prayer fellowship. On occasion, the men eat lunch together.

The following pastors are participating: John Skeie and Richard Thompson of Morris, Robert Lewis of West Lisbon, Maynard Halvorson, Fox River, Harold Masted, Helmar, and Mark Olson, Freedom, St. Petrie; also, Jerry Holmaas, Bethel Lutheran Brethren in Ottawa, Odell Kittelson, retired in Newark, Brian York, Lisbon AALC, and Harley Johnson, Newark AALC.

from here and there

hand, Pastor Lombardo asserted, if one is suffering for Jesus, he should be encouraged. A momentary affliction brings an eternal weight of glory (II Corinthians 4:17).

An Association hour concluded the Saturday afternoon program. Pastor Richard Snipstead, president of the AFLC, led it. He said that it is hoped that as many as eight Bible conferences can be held next winter, so that even more people can share in them. He reported that 90% of the minimum goals had been attained by Jan. 26. Prospects looked hopeful for reaching 100%. Subscriptions to *The Lutheran Ambassador* are over 5,000 now. He reported on new congregations in the AFLC and new prospects. The fields are white unto harvest. Registrations for seminary next fall are ahead of the normal pace. The committee on a new hymnal has begun work. Pastor Snipstead called for cooperation from pastors and congregations in getting their parochial statistical reports in.

On Saturday noon a Women's Missionary Federation luncheon was held at the church. Mrs. Wendell Johnson, WMF president, and Mrs. Gerald Knudsvig, executive secretary, were among those present. —R. H.

Morris, Ill. — The Senior Choir of Bethlehem Lutheran presented the cantata, "He Started the Whole World Singing," by the Gaithers, at the morning services on Dec. 18.

Minneapolis, Minn. — Medicine Lake Lutheran continues to discuss building plans for a new church. The Development Committee recently conferred with a representative of "The Sowers," who have worked on the new AFLC church in Astoria, Ore.

Tioga, N. Dak. — The men's Bible breakfast group of Zion Lutheran meets each Saturday morning at the Sportsman Cafe.

Thief River Falls, Minn. — The first annual community benefit for Our Saviour's Christian Academy was held on Sun., Jan. 15, at the city auditorium. Mrs. Eugene Enderlein of Medicine Lake Lutheran Academy in Minneapolis was the speaker.

St. Paul, Minn. — About two dozen carollers from Victory in Christ visited Wilder Residence East Nursing Home on Dec. 18. Both residents and carollers were blessed. Refreshments were served at the parsonage afterward.

Amery, Wis. — "Sharing and Caring," the parish newsletter for

Amery Lutheran, contains a Bible promise for each month of 1989. For March: "I will strengthen thee" (Isaiah 41:10).

Kalispell, Mont. — Rev. Michael Brandt, Cloquet, Minn., was the preacher at evangelistic meetings in Faith Lutheran beginning on Jan. 29.

Canton, S. Dak. — Redeemer Lutheran enjoyed an outing of family sliding at Inspiration Hills on Jan. 28th. The tow rope was appreciated by the sliders.

Badger, Minn. — An adult Christian faith class has been started for the Badger Creek-Oiland Parish, taught by Pastor Martin Christensen.

Eben Jct., Mich. — The annual meeting of Calvary Lutheran followed a potluck dinner which followed the morning worship on Jan. 22.

Roseau, Minn. — From the Roseau, Minn., parish paper, "The Lamp-lighter," January issue, these words in Pastor Larry Severson's musings, "God's Word is the centerpiece of our 'Parish Program' and begins with your personal 'devotions' or quiet time each day."

DeKalb, Ill. — Grace Lutheran Mission Fellowship held a Christmas buffet on Dec. 6. The offering that evening went to the Marie Sandvik Center in Minneapolis.

Grafton, N. Dak. — Bethel Lutheran and some other churches in town are sponsoring a video series designed to help parents teach their children about human reproduction. The eight-week series is shown at Bethel on Monday nights and at other churches Wednesdays and Sundays.

Drummond, Wis. — "The Lord is King" was the theme of the Sunday School Christmas program at Our Saviour's Lutheran on Dec. 10.

Ferndale, Wash. — Triumph Lutheran has a Home Builders club. At the first meeting the gathering discussed "What is a Christian family?" and other related questions. At the second meeting, Jan. 21, a Chinese potluck meal was shared.

Northwestern Minnesota congregations install pastor



Oiland and Badger Creek Lutheran Churches recently installed Lay Pastor Martin L. Christensen. Shown in the picture are Pastors Snipstead and Christensen with members of the Badger Creek council. Front row, left to right, Floyd Carlson, Pastors Snipstead and Christensen, and Milford Lange; and, back row, Jerry Biskup, Daniel Dunrud, David Vacura, Jon Geroy and Dwight Lange.

Sarpsborg and Zion churches merge at Dalton

On Christmas Day last, Sarpsborg congregation of Dalton, Minn., held its last service as a separate congregation at Zion Lutheran Church in Dalton, where its worship services have been held since the church building was destroyed by fire on Palm Sunday, 1986. In January Sarpsborg joined with Zion as the Zion-Sarpsborg Lutheran Church of Dalton, served by Lay Pastor Merle Fagerberg.

Sarpsborg was organized in 1872 at a meeting held in the home of Nels N. Rovang. Sixteen members and their families made up the congregation at that time. The constitution adopted at that meeting, with comparatively few changes in the ensuing years, was the constitution which governed the congregation throughout the 117 years of its existence.

The first pastor was Rev. Johan Arndt Bergh, who had come to the U.S. from Sarpsborg, Norway. The affection and esteem the people held for their pastor led to the adoption in 1875 of Sarpsborg as the name of the congregation. A reflection of early pioneer times is found in this enactment of the congregation relative to the pastor's salary: "First, the congregation shall contribute \$60 to the pastor's salary. Second, the pastor shall receive from each head of a family one bushel of wheat and two bushels of oats. Those who have no oats shall give him two bushels of wheat if they have that commodity." A Ladies Aid Society and a Young People's Society were also organized in the early years of the congregation.

The first affiliation of Sarpsborg was with the Norwegian-Danish Evangelical Lutheran Conference. It followed other Conference congregations into the United Lutheran Church merger in 1890. That connection was terminated in 1896 and Sarpsborg affiliated with the Lutheran Free Church (which was actually organized in 1897—Ed.). The third annual conference of the LFC was hosted by Sarpsborg in 1899. Meetings were held in a large tent

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Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Second-class

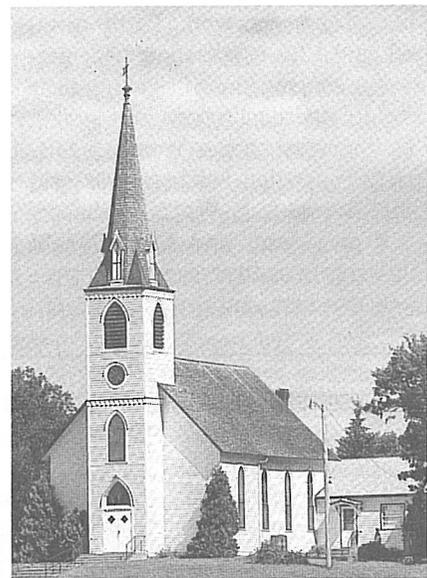
Requiem for a country church

No longer does the old church stand
Like a beacon on a hill,
Bidding all who would to come—
Her great bell now is still.

Serenely there for years she stood,
Her welcoming doors flung wide,
And everyone who entered there
Found hope and peace inside.

Buffeted she was by winter's storms
And washed by summer's rain,
Surrounded there at harvest -time
By fields of golden grain.

In her peaceful, hallowed churchyard,
Warmed by the country sun,
Sheltered by her shadow
Lay those whose race is run.



No longer does the old church stand
Like a beacon on the hill.
But in the hearts of those who loved her
Her spirit lives on still.

Ruthie Kvernstoen, Sarpsborg

erected on the Knute Brandvold farm just north of Dalton. The conference was well attended and delegates were entertained free of charge in the homes of the congregation and those of neighboring congregations which generously assisted Sarpsborg in the undertaking. Among the venerable names of pastors of Sarpsborg was that of Elias

Berlie, who served for an uninterrupted term of 45 years, 1892-1937.

In 1963, Sarpsborg, together with the other churches of the parish, Kvam, Tordenskjold and Zion, became charter members of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations.

*Mathilda Sageng
Sarpsborg*