

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

November 14, 1989



Graduates and students of AFLTS at the Anniversary Service.



A member of the first class, Rev. Edwin Kjos and his wife, Yvonne Fergus Falls, Minn.

Twenty-fifth Anniversary Services

*Association Free
Lutheran Theological
Seminary*



LIGHT on the WAY

meditations on God's Word

COVER: Photos of
AFLTS Anniversary
by S. Hjermstad

Volume 23 Number 20

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Studies in I Peter

I Peter 2:1-3

The main thought of this portion
of Scripture is the command
given in verse 2. The Holy Spir-
it through Peter continues speaking to
the believers, "Long for the pure milk
of the Word."

It is contrary to the old nature of
man to long for the milk of the Word.
According to our own nature, we do
not want to hear what the Word says.
We are offended at the statements of
the Law, which accuse and condemn
us. We are equally offended by the
proclamation of the Gospel, which is
foolishness and a stumbling block to us
and removes from our old man any
right or opportunity to boast. The com-
mand given in verse 2, then, is obvi-
ously not a command directed to us in
our old nature, but rather to us inas-
much as we are — by the grace of God
— new creatures in Christ.

Peter indicates that he is speaking to
the new man by the way he writes. In
verses 1-3, he indicates in several dif-
ferent ways that this is a command
directed to the believer:

(1) In verse 1, Peter is speaking to
those who have put away all malice
and guile and so on. Clearly, this is a
reference to believers. A believer is
someone who has put these things
away. Peter is not giving a command
here. He is not saying, "Rid yourselves
of all malice and all deceit" (NIV).
Rather, he is declaring something that
has already taken place in the life of
the believer: "having put away all mal-
ice and deceit." This is a Gospel
proclamation and is a reference to what
God has already done in the life of the
believer through the Sacrament of
Baptism.

In Baptism, the old nature is put off
or drowned and the new man — Christ
and His righteousness — is put on by
grace through faith (Romans 6:4-7;
Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:11-14).
Peter here is acknowledging what God
has already done in the lives of his
readers and it is on the basis of that
gracious work that he instructs them to
long for the milk of the Word.

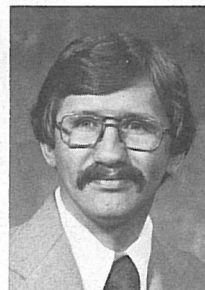
(2) Peter also says that they are to

Longing for the Word

long for the pure spiritual milk "as
newborn babes." The desire for milk is
not something the baby has to be
taught, but is a part of the very birth of
the infant. The Holy Spirit indicates
here that we are to long for the pure
milk of the Word. This longing is not
from nor according to our old nature,
but is a longing that stems from and is
the result of the new birth described in
I Peter 1:23. We — as new creatures in
Christ — are to be eagerly feeding on
the soul-satisfying Word of God.

(3) Peter also indicates he is speak-
ing to believers by the statement he
makes in verse 3, "If you have tasted
the kindness of the Lord." The state-
ment "if you have tasted" does not
here express uncertainty. Peter uses in
this verse a sentence structure that
indicates he is talking about something
that has actually occurred. In other
words, Peter is *not* saying, "If you
have tasted — and maybe you have,
maybe you haven't." Rather, Peter is
saying, "If you have tasted — and
indeed you have." Peter is writing to
believers, who have indeed tasted the
kindness of the Lord.

Peter's instruction to the Christian
is to long for the Word of God. The
object of our longing is God's Word.
We are not instructed to long for new
experiences or new revelations, nor for
the word of men, nor for that which is
easy or convenient. We are to long for
the Word of God, which is the Word of
Life and the Sword of the Spirit. It is
by that Word — and that Word alone
— that we grow unto final salvation.
Here — in the Word — is our assur-
ance of eternal life.



by Pastor
Philip Haugen

Count Your Blessings

Our Thanksgiving Message

Dou are walking out of church after the annual Thanksgiving worship service. Once again, you have been asked to practice thankfulness throughout the year. You agree that you should try, but by the following week it's back to the usual routine of dissatisfaction with what you have and who you are. If only you had the things you lack, then maybe you'd feel more thankful, but there are so many parts of your life that are less than they should be. Financially, you may be struggling, your health may not be what it should be, the relationships in your family may not be what you wish, and your relationship with our Lord may seem a little stagnant. I want to offer to you a simple principle from the Bible that will help you gain the new perspective you desire. It may not bring you more money, or improve your health, or straighten out your family relationships, but it will make you happier than you are right now. Would you like that? Read on.

In talking about happiness, I'm not referring to joy, a gift from the Holy Spirit which is deep inside us, even when there are tears on the surface. This also has nothing to do with pleasure, which is dependent upon circumstances. The biblical principle to which I am referring, let's call it the *thankfulness principle*, has rather to do with the day to day emotion of happiness. I think we all understand that there is little in God's creation that is more complex than human emotions. It seems that more often than not, we find ourselves being controlled by our emotions, rather than exercising our God-given right of dominion over them. What I am bringing before you, nevertheless, is simple. There exists in Scripture a simple principle that, if lived, will make you happier and more thankful than you are now.

I am convinced that, first of all, you really could be happier. I understand that there are days when you really feel on top of things and other days when you feel overwhelmed. What I'm talking about will eliminate one of the sources of frustration in your life. I am also convinced that our Lord wants you to be happier. Let's face it, as a child of God, our Heavenly Father loves you and doesn't want you to be miserable during your pilgrimage here on earth. I am further convinced that if you were happier, you would make those around you happier and you would be a better witness for our Lord's kingdom.

I want you to imagine for a moment that you are at home one evening when the doorbell rings. You answer it, and a young man in a suit,

carrying a briefcase, introduces himself and tells you that he has a gift for you. He hands you an envelope and leaves. Closing the door, you open the envelope to find a check for one thousand dollars! How do you feel? While you are still staring in disbelief at the check, your phone rings. You answer it and it is a friend from down the street, who tells you in an excited voice that a man came to his door with an envelope. He opened it and found a check for ten thousand dollars! Now how do you feel?

In Luke 18, Jesus tells the parable about a Pharisee and a tax collector:

"Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank Thee that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get.' But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted" Luke 18:10-14 (RSV).

The same principle is expressed by Paul in II Corinthians: "Not that we venture to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves. But when they measure themselves by one another, and compare themselves with one another, they are without understanding" (10:12 RSV).

The principle to make you a happier, more thankful person is simply this, "*Stop comparing yourself with others!*" Unfortunately, the Old Adam in each of us has a very bad habit of measuring our worth by the apparent worth of our neighbor. Such a natural tendency leads us into all manner of sins. We compare ourselves with those who have things or gifts that we lack and we find ourselves coveting. We compare ourselves with those who have less and we puff up with pride.

"I am convinced that our Lord wants you to be happier."

— By Rev.
Douglas Reitsch
Spokane, Wash.

"...before
we eat our
(Thanksgiving)
meal we take
turns telling
something for
which we are
grateful."

In Philippians 4:8-9, Paul exhorts us to focus our attention on whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious, excellent and praise-worthy. He goes on to say that he knows how to be abased, and how to abound; in any and all circumstances he has learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want. The secret he learned is to focus and depend on Jesus, rather than himself. To see the blessings in his life, rather than those things he lacks.

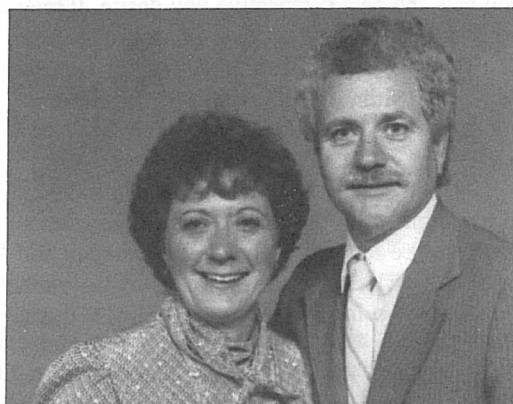
Thanksgiving is one of my favorite times of the year, simply because it is a holiday which the world celebrates that focuses on our blessings and turns to the source of those blessings, and gives thanks. Perhaps your family does as mine and many others do around the Thanksgiving table; before we eat our meal we take turns telling something for which we are thankful. This kind of thankfulness, thinking and focusing on our blessings rather than on what we lack, can bring happiness to every day of the year. What I am suggesting is that you get out of the mental and spiritual habit of focusing your attention on what you lack, and how you compare with others, and get into the mental and spiritual habit of focusing your attention on Jesus and the blessings you already have. If you are reading this, you have your eyesight and the mental capacity to comprehend these words. If someone is reading this to you because of blindness, you have your hearing. Do you have some degree of health? Do you have someone who loves you? Do you recognize your gifts our Lord has given you to use for His glory? This is just the beginning of a long list of blessings for which you can be thankful.

I have a bit of a challenge for you. Get a pad of paper and begin to write down those things for which you are grateful. When you fill up the first page, fill up another and another. As you write, allow your heart to fill with praise, thanksgiving and happiness. Save these papers

in a safe place and reread them and add to them when you are having a bad day. Put them with your Bible to use when you are having your devotional time. Have them on hand when you are tempted to compare yourself with others, or feel sorry for yourself, or are tempted to feel superior to others. Do these things and your Thanksgiving will last all year long.

The old Gospel hymn comes to mind at this point. Do you remember?

*Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your blessings, see what God hath done;
Count your blessings, name them one by one;
Count your many blessings,
see what God hath done.*



Pastor and Mrs. Reitsch

Biographical Sketch

Douglas Reitsch was born in 1945 in Brown-ing, Mont., and grew up in Ellensburg, Wash., where he graduated from high school. He was married to Cherrie Gregory in June, 1966. He received a B. S. Degree in Pharmacy from the University of Washington in 1968 and practiced pharmacy in Fairbanks, Alaska, until 1973.

Mr. Reitsch was converted to Christ in Oct., 1972, and began theological studies at Luther-Northwestern Seminary in St. Paul, Minn., in 1973. He interned in the Karlstad-Halma American Lutheran Church parish in 1976-77. He was granted a Master of Divinity Degree from the seminary in 1978 and ordained. He served Our Saviour's Lutheran, Argyle, Minn., from 1978-82 and came to Bethany Lutheran, Spokane, Wash., in Oct., 1982. Pastor Reitsch and the congregation became members of the AFLC in Dec., 1987, and he was received on the Clergy Roster of the AFLC in June of this year.

The Reitsches have five children: Jason, living in the Seattle area; Carmen, attending school in Costa Mesa, Calif.; and Heidi, Alyssa and Catherine at home.

*O Lord,
how majestic
is your name
in all the
earth.*



Former and present AFLTS faculty, (L. to R., Row 1): Rev. Raynard Huglen, Dr. Steven Lombardo, Rev. Ralph Tjelta, Rev. Laurel Udden, Rev. Harold Hosch, Mr. Don Rodvold. (Row 2): Rev. Philip Haugen, Rev. Richard Snipstead, Rev. Robert Lee, Dr. Francis Monseth, Rev. Amos Dyrud, Rev. Donald Greven and Rev. John Strand.

The 25th Anniversary of Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary was observed in two services on Sun., Oct. 15, in the chapel on the Medicine Lake campus, Minneapolis, Minn. Several hundred people were present at the 4 o'clock service and a good crowd was also in attendance at 7 o'clock.

Rev. Amos O. Dyrud, dean of the Seminary from 1971-81, was the liturgist at the first service. The Scripture lessons were read by former members of the Board of Trustees, namely, Rev. E. J. Langness, Ishpeming, Mich., Rev. J. G. Erickson, Minneapolis, Rev. Den-



Mr. Ray Jacobson, Wadena, Minn.

✠ AFLC Seminary observes 25th Anniversary

nis Gray, DeKalb, Ill., Rev. Michael Brandt, Cloquet, Minn., Mr. Orville Qualley, Brockton, Mont., and Rev. Raynard Huglen, Newfolden, Minn.

Mr. Don Rodvold, former director of music at Association Free Lutheran Bible School and instructor in the Seminary, sang the solo, "Be Thou Faithful Unto Death." It is a song he sang many times at ordination services in the AFLC.

The Seminary Chorus, under the direction of Mr. Scott Gray, sang "Rise Up, O Men of God" and "Amazing Grace."

The address was given by Rev. John P. Strand, Remer, Minn., the Seminary's first dean, 1964-66, and former president of the Association.

He preached on the text, II Timothy 2:15: "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth." He spoke of conditions at the time the

work was begun. The Seminary was started for the purpose of continuing Association principles.

Pastor Strand declared that a seminary is to be the servant of the congregations which support it. Yet, seminaries often lead their church bodies into apostasy. Early in AFLC history a Seminary and Doctrine Committee was set up to preserve and protect true doctrine. This function, and the guidance of the Seminary, was later turned over to a Board of Trustees.

"Why do seminaries go astray?" Pastor Strand asked. It usually happens



Mr. Eldor Sorkness, Sand Creek, Wisc.



Rev. Raynard Huglen and Mr. Howard Lieder are the two men living who served on the first Seminary Board.

ANNIVERSARY

first in the Practical Theology departments. Together with that there is a neglect of Biblical studies. Be in the Word, and know Jesus personally, he exhorted all who study theology. Study, apply yourself, is the word from Paul. The roots of a tree are extremely important. They aren't seen, but they are vital. So is a life in the Word for one who would be a pastor, the former dean emphasized.

"Be careful," Pastor Strand warned, "when you start asking, 'What works?'" Instead, stand on the Word of God, make it a lifetime study. He also reminded his hearers that Word and Sacraments go together.

"Who is adequate for these things?" Pastor Strand continued. No one in himself, but He says, "I chose you." He enables those whom He calls. How God needs our Seminary when it is what He wants it to be, Pastor Strand said. He closed by challenging his hearers with the truth that he who boasts should boast in the Lord.

Mr. Michael Peterson, a student, played a cello solo as the offertory. Mrs. Elden Nelson was the organist.

A fellowship supper was served at 6 o'clock and the evening service followed.

— R. H.

The evening service

An evening Fellowship Service in celebration of the Seminary's silver anniversary was held at 7:00 p.m., after the kitchen staff served a fine dinner to those in attendance.

Rev. Richard Snipstead, AFLC president, welcomed the assembled guests and led in Scripture reading and prayer.

Special music was provided by a faculty ensemble and by the Seminary Chorus.

Rev. Robert Lee, service leader, presented a history of AFLTS, and read greetings from former faculty members and students who were unable to

attend, including Dr. Uuras Saarnivaara, Rev. Clair Jennings, Rev. David Moke, Mr. Don Rodvold, Dr. A. H. Fogelquist, Jr., Chaplain D. Mark Antal, Rev. Harris Van Someren, and Rev. Joel Rolf.

Various graduates also spoke on behalf of their classes, and many memories of seminary days were recalled. These speakers were: Rev. Edwin Kjos (1967), Rev. Leslie Galland (1968), Rev. Wendell Johnson (1969), Rev. Yeddo Gottel (1971), Rev. John Reith (1973), Rev. Richard Anderson (1974), and Rev. Marlyn Kruse (1977).

Other honored guests were Rev.



Mr. Donald Rodvold, Minneapolis, and Rev. Terry Olson, Valley City, N. Dak.



Rev. Ernest J. Langness, Ishpeming, Mich., and Mr. Orville Qualley, Brockton, Mont., both former members of the Board of Trustees.

Harold Hosch, former Old Testament instructor, who brought a greeting, and Rev. Amos Dyrud, former dean of the seminary, who presented a closing devotional meditation. The service was a long one and yet many more could

have been called upon to share. One of our congregations, Amery (Wisconsin) Lutheran Church, sent flowers, and another (Emmaus, Bloomington, Minn.) sent a special word of greeting.

Other things could have been

included, but the day was a satisfying one and people departed with joy in their hearts and praise to God on their lips for the special gift that He has given us in our seminary.

—R. L.



The Seminary Chorus.

| Worship Service 4:00 p.m. Service Leader: Rev. Amos Dyrud | | Evening Service 7:00 p.m. Service Leader: Rev. Robert Lee | |
|---|--|--|---|
| Prelude | Mrs. Eldon Nelson | Prelude | |
| Opening Hymn #3 | "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" | Opening Hymn #43 | "With God and His Mercy" |
| Confession of Sin | | Scripture Reading and Prayer | Rev. Richard Snipstead AFLC President |
| Kyrie | | Faculty Ensemble | "The Solid Rock" |
| Collect | | | "Wonderful Words of Life" |
| Scripture Lessons (former Board of Trustees members) | | The History of AFLTS | |
| Hymn #87 | | The Seminary Chorus | "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" Mr. Scott Gray, Director |
| • Psalm 119:169-176 — Stanza 1 | | Greetings from former faculty members and students | |
| • Matthew 28:18-20 — Stanza 2 | | Hymn #82 | "Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow" |
| • Acts 20:17-32 — Stanza 3 | | Devotional Meditation | Rev. Amos Dyrud |
| • II Timothy 4:1-8 — Stanza 4 | | Hymn #58 | "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" |
| • I Peter 5:1-4 — Stanza 5 | | The Benediction | |
| • II Timothy 3:14-17 | | | |
| Confession of Faith | | A warm welcome to each one attending the anniversary services today. We are grateful for the special efforts made by former Board members, faculty, staff, and students, as well as other friends of the seminary to be here. We are grateful to God for the many people who have had a part in the ministry of AFLTS in its twenty-five year history. | |
| Gloria Patri | | | |
| Vocal Solo | "Be Thou Faithful Unto Death" Mr. Don Rodvold | You are invited to a fellowship supper after the 4 p.m. service as well as refreshments after the evening service. | |
| Announcements | | | |
| Offertory | Michael Peterson, Cellist | | |
| The Seminary Chorus | "Rise Up, O Men of God" "Amazing Grace" Mr. Scott Gray, Director | | |
| Pulpit Hymn #86 | "Lord Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word" | | |
| Anniversary Address | Rev. John P. Strand | | |
| Closing Hymn #239 | "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" | | |
| The Lord's Prayer | | | |
| Benediction | | | |
| Threefold Amen | | | |
| The Doxology | | | |
| Postlude | | | |

A greeting from Pastor Udden

(Due to the lengthy program at the Sunday evening service on Oct. 15, Pastor Udden yielded in giving the greeting he had prepared. It is printed here.)

Greetings to the 25th Anniversary Service of the AFLTS:

In Proverbs 16:9 we read, "A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps." I feel this has certainly been true of my life. I grew up in a home very much attached to the old Augustana Lutheran Church. My mother was a "Knock" and three of her five brothers became Augustana pastors and two of her four sisters married Augustana pastors. On my father's side, his father, my grandfather, was a

continued on p. 13

District news

The fall rally of the West Coast District Luther League was held at Bethany Lutheran, Spokane, Wash., on Oct. 20-21. Rev. Douglas Reitsch was the host pastor. The banquet on Saturday night was a costume event with each costume depicting a Bible character or someone from church history.

The Southwest Central Minnesota District Luther League met on the weekend of October 27-29 at Faith Haven Youth Lodge, located on Eagle Lake, north of Ashby.

Pastor Tony Stockman of Brandon, Minn., was the dean and Pastor Richard Bartholomew of New London, Minn., was the assistant dean. Intern Pastor Harry Gimberg was the evening speaker and Bible study leader. Pastor Bartholomew was the topical hour speaker. Counselors were from our Association Free Lutheran Bible School in Minneapolis and the cooks were Ken and Mary Nash of Abercrombie, N. Dak. The cost of the camp was \$30.00 for each person.

The camp theme was "How Can A Young Person Keep His Way Pure?", based on Psalm 119:9-11.

Other districts are encouraged to

Luther League Team news

RADIANT LIFE SUPPORT TEAM

The Luther League Gospel team for this past summer called itself the Radiant Life Support Team. The team traveled in North Dakota and Michigan, spending at least ten weeks on the road. They also served as counselors at the Luther League Convention at Vernon, B. C., Can., in July.

They served as counselors at Galilee Youth Camp and Family Camp as well as the family camp in Michigan. About six congregations or parishes had the team teach VBS. Also, they were involved in teaching Luther League program planning in a number of congregations.

Team leader was Glen Quanbeck from McVile, N. Dak. Jon Heideman of Fairmont, Minn., Sonja Dahl of Borup, Minn., and Becky Nikunen of Escanba, Mich., were the members of the Radiant Life Support Team. Our thanks to them for a great summer!

send news of their retreats, rallies and camps to Pastor Dennis Gray, our AFLC Youth Resources Director, 112 West Milner, DeKalb, Ill. 60115.

NEW TEAM PLANS

Soon arrangements will be made for the 1990 Luther League Gospel Team. While the team can come from Bible School students, others may also apply. Next year, the team will not be going to Bible camps nor will they teach Vacation Bible School.

Team members will be assigned to individual congregations or districts and will be present for four days of teaching. Team members will lead the teens in Bible Studies preparing them for work among their fellow teens, plus work in the local congregation.

Topics in next summer's series will be planning, fellowship and unity, plus outreach. Each evening will have a special event which will aid youth in serving the Lord.

It is planned that training will be under the Youth Board. Teachers will be our Youth Resources Director, plus Youth Board members. A special agreement with the Association Retreat Center is being made. The training will take place there.

It is important that our Luther Leagues be meeting together in an atmosphere of love and concern for others. The team will endeavor to help
continued on p. 13

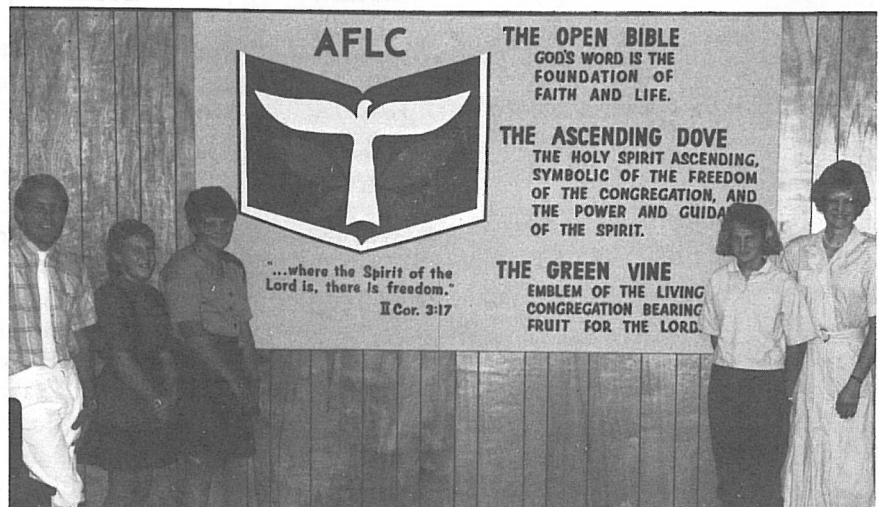
The upper classes of Vacation Bible School in Culbertson, Mont., this summer worked on a church banner which now hangs on the wall at Bethel Lutheran Church. (The picture shows the teachers and just a few of the young people who worked on it.)

There are many ways this can be done, but we cut out the lettering and AFLC symbol using material with "Wonder-Under Pellon Web" so they could be just ironed on the background fabric.

It is a good reminder to all those who enter our sanctuary of what our Association stands for. It also is a good project for a group to work on.

—Mrs. Lyndon Korhonen

An idea . . .



PRECIOUS NAME

Jesus!"

That was the first word President Bush is reported to have uttered as he stepped out of a helicopter in Oakland on Friday after the San Francisco Bay earthquake last month.

Putting aside for the moment his shock at seeing the devastation firsthand, it is disappointing to say the least that our country's leader should blurt out the precious name of Jesus in ejaculation. What first comes to mind, and mouth, in a moment of sudden feeling or exasperation can reveal what is in the heart.

Mr. Bush's unguarded profanity hurts all the more since he is a man who has courted the conservative and, more importantly, the evangelical vote. He has wanted to be known as one of us and has espoused some positions we like, and then this happens.

We hope that the President will apologize for his offense to Christians everywhere, that he has done so before this appears in print. Much more than that, he needs to confess his sin to God.

Christians are admonished to pray for kings and others in high places (I Tim. 2:1-2). We must continue to do that. The profanity of some of our recent presidents is legendary. It is often to such types of men and women that the nation's people entrust the reins of leadership. They then have fearful responsibilities to fulfill and we are to pray for them that in spite of their weaknesses they will govern for the common good. But, oh, we can long for men and women who by their words and actions show real reverence for God.

Disappointing, too, has been the recent revelation about

the "womanizing" of the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., by his close friend and confidante, Dr. Ralph David Abernathy, in his forthcoming book, *And the Walls Came Tumbling Down*.

There were rumors and insinuations before, to be sure, but Dr. Abernathy seems to have placed the stamp of veracity on the problem, the sin. It may well be debated whether Mr. Abernathy should have written what he did, what the point of his revelations is. But there seems to be no doubt but what the great civil rights leader had a "roving eye."

This is not to take anything away from Dr. King's monumental work in bringing opportunity and justice to his own people and other minorities. His "I Have a Dream" speech remains to this writer one of the most stirring and moving oratorical efforts he knows of. It helped to move a nation's conscience toward the righting of terrible wrongs.

But that Dr. King should have been engaged in dalliance with possibly three women in the last 24 hours of his life before being cut down by an assassin's bullet, that is sad. Of a minister of the Gospel, we expected better. It is all right to recognize him for his works in civil rights. His place there is deserved and secure. But if some of us cannot feel comfortable when Dr. King is named among the great saints of Christian history, we only ask that people try to understand the reason why.

OUR PRESIDENT WRITES

With this issue we bring you the first of regular articles by our president, Rev. Richard Snipstead, under, the heading "Our President Writes." It has

Our President Writes...

BEAUTY IN VARIATIONS

We have travelled extensively in recent weeks and have marvelled at the beauty of the awe-inspiring landscapes painted by the Creator. We happened upon a scene of stunning beauty in northern Minnesota recently. A glorious sunset was mirrored in the waters of a shimmering lake. Flaming oaks and maples framed a picture such as man never painted.

It makes us realize that God loves beauty. He reveals so much of it in His creation. There is variety in the color and shape of the trees. The terrain often changes quickly. Highways allow us to travel along lakes or rivers and through valleys and hill country. The variety and changes increase the beauty around us.

It is so in God's kingdom as well. I think of this as I visit the congregations of our AFLC. The variations in congregations add to the beauty and richness of the fellowship in our young and growing church body.

I want to share some of my recent experiences with you.

The oldest congregation established among Norwegian Lutherans in America is Fox River Lutheran at Sheridan, Ill. What a rich and wonderful heritage it possesses. It is a congregation fairly new in our AFLC and Mel Meyer, recently approved for a call in the AFLC, is now their pastor.

Christian Lutheran at Wheatland, Ia., and Christ Lutheran at Wichita Falls, Tex., are newly established Home Mission congregations. Each of them is now served by a recent graduate from our seminary. Tim Carlson serves at Wheatland and Mike Crowell at Wichita Falls.

Immanuel Lutheran at Centerville and Salem Lutheran at Freeman, S. Dak., both recently joined the AFLC. They were in different parishes prior to coming to the AFLC. They have formed a parish with Mike Klenner as their pastor.

The Roseau, Minn., parish has divided and Reuben Unseth now serves two of those congregations. Both were part of the AFLC from its beginning.

Donald Norr, a new lay pastor in our church body, has

EDITORIALS

long been hoped that Pastor Snipstead could take on this writing opportunity and now that seems possible. Not that his work load has lessened; he remains a very busy man. But he will try as much as possible to have something for us in each issue of the *Ambassador*.

Pastor Snipstead has written for the Christmas issue of the *Ambassador* each year and that will, of course, be the case in the future as well.

His first article probably reveals the nature of some of what he will write in these pages. It brings to mind a radio broadcast we always tried to listen to when living in north-eastern Montana. It was called "Sunday 6:15" and came over one of the Regina (Sask.) stations. In it, for 15 minutes, Anglican Bishop Coleman of the Diocese of Qu'Appelle would tell about his visits to parishes in his territory or comment on some subject that was timely, mostly things like those. Perhaps that is what Pastor Snipstead has in mind. These pages are open to him.

We are placing his articles on the Editorial pages, beginning in the lower half. As before, the editorials are by the Editor.

THANKSGIVING

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me
bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and
forget not all His benefits" (Psalm 103:1, 2).

PRESIDENT

taken over the ministry of an older congregation, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Virginia, Minn.

We could continue on and I want to mention just two more very special events. Emmanuel Lutheran at Holt, Minn., celebrated its centennial this fall. Lay Pastor Don Balmer is serving them. Bethany Lutheran, Astoria, Ore., dedicated a most beautiful new church building this summer. Alvin Grothe who serves Bethany has been with the AFLC since its beginning. Both Emmanuel and Bethany came out of the old Lutheran Free Church and were pioneer congregations in the AFLC.

What a variety we have seen in these congregations. But each adds a beauty and a radiance enriching the fellowship and witness of our AFLC.

Paul speaks about variety in the body of Christ in I Corinthians 12. He states that there are many parts to the body, but only one body. He also speaks about the need for unity within the body. He says that each part of the body should have equal concern for the other parts of the body. We want to see such concern grow within our AFLC.

We know a unity and oneness in our Church. Our unity is in our Lord Jesus Christ who loved and gave Himself for us. The more we center our thoughts on Christ, the more we will be drawn to one another as His followers. The beauty of our Church will be increased.

To be in harmony with one another we must be in tune with Christ.

—Pastor Richard Snipstead

It is unlikely that any human words exceed these in glory as the expression of thanks to the Lord God. Would that the services of thanksgiving in our churches this year could even in some small way reveal the depth of those words of David.

Has God given your congregation another year in which to hear the Gospel and share in the Sacraments? Have people been brought into fellowship with the Lord and believers been deepened in faith and service? Has something happened for spiritual good in your own life? Praise God for that.

Have your physical and material needs been supplied for yet another year? Do you enjoy a measure of health, perhaps better health than a year ago? Have you been spared misfortunes which have come to others (like hurricanes and earthquakes)? Praise God for that.

Do you have work to do that you like and that challenges your best, and the strength with which to do it? Praise God for that.

Yes, likely there are a lot of reasons to be grateful today. We are mindful of those of you who have taken hard blows this past twelvemonth. Conditions don't look as bright as they used to. It is our prayer that in spite of all you will find the things for which to be thankful in your own life and can recite with the rest of us the words with which this editorial began. May the Lord be your strength.

Imitation



The child naturally imitates the parent. The child quits saying its prayers when father or mother never prays. The child naturally becomes interested in that which interests the parents. Their pleasures, their occupations, their ways and manner of life, are naturally copied by the children.

—Conrad Svendsen

CLEANSE ME

- 1) Search me, O God,
and know my heart today;
Try me, O Savior,
know my thoughts, I pray.
See if there be
some wicked way in me;
Cleanse me from every sin, and set me free.
- 2) I praise Thee, Lord,
for cleansing me from sin;
Fulfill Thy Word and
make me pure within.
Fill me with fire,
where I once burned with shame;
Grant my desire to magnify Thy name.
- 3) Lord, take my life,
and make it wholly Thine;
Fill my poor heart
with Thy great love divine.
Take all my will,
my passion, self and pride;
I now surrender, Lord — in me abide.
- 4) O Holy Ghost,
revival comes from Thee;
Send a revival,
start the work in me.
Thy Word declares
Thou wilt supply our need;
For blessing now, O Lord, I humbly plead.

—Edwin Orr

PSALMS IN THE NIGHT

WMF BIBLE STUDY

DECEMBER 1989

PSALM 139

Memory Verse: "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139:23, 24)

Purpose of the Psalm: Praise to God for His all-seeing providence.

I. Verses 1-6

A. Define *Omniscience*.

How does this apply to God? _____

What does God know about us? _____

v. 1 _____

v. 2 _____

v. 3 _____

v. 4 _____

Can we comprehend this? _____

Does Hebrew 4:13 apply to this section of the psalm? Explain. _____

We live in a "show me" society. Would they accept this portion? _____
Why not _____

II. Verses 7 - 12

A. Define *Omnipresence*. _____

How does this apply to God? _____

Where does the psalmist say that he can't get away from God? Why?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

Apply Jeremiah 23:23-24 to this portion. _____

III. Verses 13 - 18

A. Define *Omnipotence*. _____

How wonderfully we have been formed!

How much did God know about us as expressed in verses 14-16? _____

Does this allow for legalized abortion? _____
Is it murder? _____
Verse 17 and Psalm 40:5 are similar. In what way? _____

IV. Verses 19 - 22

A. Define *Omnijudgment*. _____

Do we share the psalmist's expression that God is the supreme Judge?

Of all people? _____

List some of the ways in which the wicked grieve God.

Are these prevalent today? _____

Are we living in a day of compromise? _____

V. Verses 23-24

This should be the constant prayer of every believer; not only to be searched, but also to be led in the way of understanding.

Compare verses 1 - 3 and 23 - 24. What is the message for us? _____

What is said in Psalm 5:8? _____

Can we share the psalmist's feelings as expressed in verses 17 and 18? _____

WHAT A COMFORT!

—Mrs. Amos Stolee

GREETING

pioneer Augustana pastor in northern Minnesota, North Dakota and in Canada. Thus my family was very closely tied to Augustana Lutheran Church.

I personally struggled very much with the call into the ministry and felt when I left high school the one thing I did not want to be was a pastor. However, God led me to a very clear sensing of a call into the ministry. Because of the close ties to Augustana there was no question but I would go to Augustana Theological Seminary in Rock Island, Ill. Being that I had finished college in Electrical Engineering, been in the service in WWII, and then attended three years of graduate school at the University of Minnesota in Engineering, before going to the seminary, there was a certain maturing taking place. My loyalty to the Augustana Lutheran Church began to erode almost as soon as I got to seminary. I sensed that the leadership of the church simply was not leading the church in the proper spiritual direction. As I talked with older pastors who had attended Augustana Seminary some years before, I found that the seminary had radically changed in 1931 with a new president and three new faculty members. Prior to that time the president of the seminary spent one summer with Pastor Evald Conrad and another summer with Pastor Maynard Force in evangelistic work.

I was ordained into the ministerium of the Augustana Lutheran Church in 1953. I served two parishes in one of the most conservative areas of the

church, in the Red River Valley, from 1953-1969.

The merger talks were already going on when I was in the seminary. The only merger that I could see of any value would have been if Augustana, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Lutheran Free Church, United Evangelical Lutheran Church, and, perhaps, Suomi Synod would merge. The mergers were not going in that direction and I spoke twice on the floor of the old Red River Valley Conference voicing my strong feelings against the proposed merger. After the merger of 1962, I served for seven years in the LCA at Augustana Lutheran Church in Fergus Falls. I observed how quickly things changed after the merger even in this very conservative area of the church. I read with interest what was happening in regard to the formation of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations during this period around 1962 and following. Having had no contact with the Lutheran Free Church in the past, I did not attend any of those meetings at that time.

It was in the fall of 1968 when Pastor Herbert Franz and I were in a Lutheran Evangelistic Movement conference in Cleveland that he first talked to me about my coming into the Association. I made contact with Pastor Strand and by the spring of 1969 they had issued me a call to teach at the Bible School and Seminary. I had struggled with the call into the ministry and I struggled over both calls that I had prior to that time. When this call

came the door seemed so wide open that I really was afraid that maybe my feelings were going way ahead of God's leading. However, after much prayer and hard searching, I felt God was leading me to accept this call to teach at the Bible School and Seminary of the AFLC.

I say all this on the 25th Anniversary of the Seminary because of my rather unique perspective of what this Seminary is and its place in Lutheranism at this time. The spiritual demise of the Augustana Lutheran Church began in the seminary. I saw several cases even in my own class where the teaching of higher criticism took away the biblical moorings of some of my classmates. I feel very fortunate that God led me into the AFLC where I have truly found a church home where the authority, the inspiration and the infallibility and inerrancy of the Word of God is held high. I count it a real privilege to have had a part in AFLTS. I continue to pray that AFLTS will never leave its strong commitment to God's Word. Having seen what happened in the Augustana Lutheran Church, I want to give a strong warning that we never leave this commitment to God's Word and as a seminary as well as a church that we keep that strong commitment to God's Word continuously.

I will pray for the AFLC and especially for the Seminary as long as I have breath. I thank God for what He has done in these 25 years and pray that He will ever keep it true to His Word. —Pastor Laurel M. Udden

YOUTH

focus on Jesus and the way He did His ministry.

An older person will travel with the team. Congregations, parishes and districts should contact Pastor Dennis Gray about having the 1990 Luther League Gospel Team come to their area. Or, if you are interested in being part of the team, write Pastor Gray:

Rev. Dennis Gray, 112 W. Milner Ave., DeKalb, Ill. 60115.

In memoriam

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

ILLINOIS

Earlville

Miss Charlotte Larson, 78, Aug. 15, St. Petrie, Leland.

NORTH DAKOTA

Minot

Mrs. Alfred (Petra) Byre, 99, Aug.

24, Bethel. (Mrs. Byre is survived by her husband, who will be 100 years in February.)

Preaching Mission

Leeds, N. Dak.

Lebanon Lutheran Church

Craig Wentzel, pastor

Nov. 26-29

Speaker: Rev. Allen Monson

Dickinson, N. Dak.

home mission news

Palmdale, Calif. church gets name

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church is the name of the AFLC Home Mission Congregation at Palmdale, Calif. Rev. David Molstre, who has served there since August, reports that they are in the process of purchasing a two-acre site in an excellent location, with a building already on it that can be remodelled as a temporary home for the new congregation.

E. Grand Forks, N. Dak. church is dedicated

Christ the King Lutheran Church, East Grand Forks, Minn., will dedicate its newly constructed building in a service at 3 o'clock this Sunday, Nov. 19. The dedication will be performed by Rev. Robert L. Lee, vice-president of the AFLC, who will also be speaking at a weekend of special meetings in the congregation. The public is cordially invited. Rev. Terry Wold is the local pastor.

Larimore, N. Dak.

The Eastern North Dakota District will hold a Men's Retreat at Living Faith Lutheran Church in Larimore on Sat., Nov. 19. Three Bible studies on the church and congregation will be given by Rev. Raynard Huglen, Newfolden, Minn. The first one will be at 10 a.m. Dinner will be served at noon.

AFLC jumps 33% in California

The third Association Church was born on September 24. This new baby was 120 strong at its first day. It was more like a victory celebration. The first four weeks have seen attendance averaging over 50 people. Twenty-two months ago we didn't have an AFLC church in California and now we have three. First Lutheran, in Camarillo, joined our Association in January 1988. The new church in Palmdale was organized this year. Pastor David Molstre became the first full-time pastor in August.

"We had no nucleus in this area to begin with; we could see only a lot of people and very few churches," states

Pastor Hiepler the founder of this church and the one in Palmdale.

Mark Hiepler, an attorney-at-law in Los Angeles, has served as the song and service leader in both of these new churches and has been a Sunday School teacher.

This new church is fortunate in having a beautiful setting and a most adequate meeting place for church and Sunday School. This new church, named "The Neighborhood Bible Church of the AFLC" meets at the beautiful, prestigious Murrieta Hot Springs Resort. This resort is surrounded by palm trees and adjacent to Bobby Trent golf course. This new

church serves the Temecula, Elsinore and Hemet areas but draws heavily from Murrieta and Rancho California.

The growth there has attained 1,000 new pupils in school a year and 10,000 new residences a year. The growth in a church is primarily from the unchurched. California has a very small percentage of Lutherans and a low church population.

If any recipient of the *Ambassador* has family or friends in any of the above mentioned cities, Pastor Hiepler promises to visit them immediately. You may call him at 1-619-749-2146.

—Corr.



The temporary church location at Murrieta Hot Springs Resort



A sign welcomes visitors.

news of the churches

from here and there

Edmore, N. Dak. — Living Word Lutheran recently served a pancake breakfast to the alumni and families attending the centennial all-class reunion. The proceeds of the meal went toward the installation of a church sign which will be placed on a slab at the southwest corner of the church. Matching funds from Lutheran Brotherhood helped make this project possible.

Tioga, N. Dak. — Rev. Gary Jorgenson, Ottawa, Ill., was the speaker at special services in Zion Lutheran Nov. 5-9.

In special meetings in Beaver Creek and Norman Lutheran Churches, Oct. 22-25, Rev. Jerry Moan, Minot, N. Dak., was the speaker.

Dickinson, N. Dak. — Our Saviour's Lutheran hosted the Western North Dakota-Eastern Montana District Couples' Retreat, Oct. 27-28. There was a banquet and couples were housed at the Budget Inn.

Morris, Ill. — Pastor and Mrs. John Skeie opened their home for an evening of singing, sharing and prayer on Oct. 15. It was for members of Bethlehem Lutheran.

Mason, Wis. — The annual Children's Reformation Festival was held on Oct. 31. There were individual and group activities, followed by refreshments.

Newfolden, Minn. — Mike and Karla Palkie presented the program at the annual Harvest Festival at Bethania Lutheran on Oct. 22.

Goodridge, Minn. — Dr. E. O. Thorsgard of Thief River Falls, Minn., showed slides of Russia and Central

Asia at Family Night at Telemarken Lutheran on Oct. 22. Dr. Thorsgard is a brother of Mrs. John Strand.

Rev. and Mrs. Percy Smerek, Grygla, Minn., gave a program of music and Scripture at Reiner Lutheran's Family Night on Oct. 29.

Stanley, N. Dak. — Our Savior's Lutheran hosted special meetings Oct. 15-18 under the theme "Why Christians Who Know God's Principles Fail." Guest speaker was Rev. Stephen Odegaard, Tioga, N. Dak.

Lakeville, Minn. — A Preliminary Building Committee in Minnesota Valley Lutheran is studying the congregation's facility needs.

Minneapolis, Minn. — Rev. James Asp, Fargo, N. Dak., was the speaker at the worship service on Reformation Sunday, Oct. 29, in Faith Lutheran. A congregational dinner was served at 11:30.

"Festival of Praise" was the theme for the annual fall program of Medicine Lake Lutheran Academy held at Medicine Lake Lutheran Church on Oct. 27.

St. Paul, Minn. — Ken Sortedahl of Peniel Home in Wisconsin spoke at the men's prayer breakfast for Victory in Christ Lutheran on Oct. 7.

Camarillo, Calif. — There is a "Moms in Touch" support group for parents at First Lutheran. It began on

Oct. 24 and meets from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. on the designated days.

Canton, S. Dak. — The women of Redeemer Lutheran were invited to guest night at Salem Lutheran, Salem, S. Dak., on Oct. 4.

Dalton, Minn. — Rev. and Mrs. John Abel were at Zion-Sarpsborg Lutheran on Oct. 11 for a Parish Mission Evening. A fellowship lunch was served after the meeting.

Roseau, Minn. — The Ladies Aid served a Scandinavian smorgasbord on Oct. 28 at Rose Lutheran. The Aid is also printing a correction page for the cookbook which was produced some time ago.

At the Luther League Family Night at Spruce Lutheran on Oct. 8, Delores Andol showed slides of a recent trip to Russia.

Eben Jct., Mich. — Rev. and Mrs. Wendell Johnson, Cambridge, Minn., spent Oct. 8-11 at Calvary Lutheran speaking and singing at special meetings. They also shared in the congregation's Appreciation Banquet on the 9th.

The impelling motive for your giving is, of course, not the hope of return, but the joy that comes from serving God.

—F. Hammarsten

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

AFLC Benevolences - February 1 - September 30

| FUND | TOTAL BUDGET | REC'D IN SEPTEMBER | TOTAL REC'D TO DATE | %* TOTAL |
|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------|
| General Fund | \$ 169,600.00 | \$ 8,622.48 | \$ 86,359.18 | 51 |
| Schools - (AFLTS) . . | 128,237.00 | 5,886.74 | 54,257.39 | 42 |
| (AFLBS) . . | 187,650.00 | 10,523.68 | 69,045.32 | 37 |
| Home Missions | 397,564.00 | 21,428.70 | 142,495.47 | 36 |
| World Missions | 325,730.00 | 23,050.78 | 151,841.05 | 47 |
| Capital Investment . . | 30,000.00 | 2,091.87 | 16,561.90 | 55 |
| Parish Education | 69,500.00 | 2,655.68 | 15,391.93 | 22 |
| TOTALS | \$ 1,308,281.00 | \$ 74,259.93 | \$535,952.24 | 41 |
| 1987 - 1988 | \$ 1,057,504.00 | \$ 54,892.25 | \$487,736.73 | 46 |
| *Goal 67% | | | | |

SONGBOOKS DELAYED

The music edition of *Scripture and Chorus Songs*, edited by Pastor and Mrs. Tim Carlson, Wheatland, Ia., promised for delivery in September, is not available until January. It is hoped that orders for them can be filled at the time of the Pastors' Conference at the ARC, Jan. 23-25.

Personalities

The new address for **Rev. Wendell Johnson** is Rt. 2, Box 195A, Cambridge, Minn. 55008 (phone 612-689-2677). The Johnsons have begun a traveling ministry of exhortation and encouragement in word and song, and are open to invitations from AFLC congregations.

Dr. Leola Dyrud Furman, a member of Trinity, Grand Forks, N. Dak., and associate professor of social work at the University of North Dakota, was honored as a distinguished alumna at the 1989 Homecoming for Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minn., on October 6th. In speaking and writing, Dr. Dyrud has addressed the problems of rural America through her research of the family system, alcoholism and women's issues. She is a sister of Missionary Connely Dyrud and a niece of Rev. Amos O. Dyrud.

Rev. Alvin Larson, Omega, Minn., has been accepted as a retired pastor on the AFLC Clergy Roster by action of the Co-ordinating Committee. Pastor Larson served for many years on the White Earth, Minn., Indian Reservation and recently retired as executive director of the Hauge Foreign Mission, Inc.

Mr. David Grothe, a member of Our Saviour's, Thief River Falls, Minn., is conducting services for the Karlstad, Minn., parish (Hegland and Bethlehem) during the pastoral vacancy.

EINAR BOTTEN

Funeral services were held on September 13th for Einar N. Botten, Stanwood, Wash., at Atonement Lutheran Church, Arlington, of which he was a charter member.

Mr. Botten was a leader in Lutheran circles on the West Coast for many years, serving on the Board of Home Missions for the former Lutheran Free Church, the Lutherans Alert Board of Directors, and as Stewardship Director for the Lutheran Bible Institute, Seattle.

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Thelma, a son, Nelvin, and a daughter, Joyce, three sisters, five grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

Blessed be his memory.

Oh give
thanks
to the
LORD
for He
is good!

THANKSGIVING

I watched God make a morning
with the brightness of a sunrise.
Change the day to dark of night
scattered stars across the skies.
I have watched the rain fall gently
refreshing field and forest green.
Seen the magic of a snowflake
softly touch our earthly scene.
I have marveled at a rainbow
like a ribbon bright and gay.
'Round the gift of all creation
given lavishly each day.
Yet the beauty of all nature
in earth and heaven above
Pales in all its splendor
as I contemplate God's love.
How can any doubt His presence
with such glory everywhere.
I can only thank and praise Him.
for His goodness and His care.

Alice R. Vaus

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