

# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

October 21, 1986



Martin Luther  
Religious News Service Photo

# at the MASTER'S FEET

## The prayer of supplication

In the life of our Lord, we note various kinds of prayer expressed. This teaches us that as a vital means of communication between the soul and God, our prayers may not always be the same. In his classic book on prayer, O. Hallesby lists several types of prayer. These types are all evident in the prayer-life of our Lord.

Supplication is "request prayer," the turning to God to receive something. In our earlier consideration of the meaning of prayer in this series, we noted that kind of prayer was urged by our Lord upon His followers. Repeatedly, He exhorted the disciples to ask in prayer.

In our Lord's own life, His supplication is described in vivid terms. "Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him

that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared" (Heb. 5:7). Certainly this must have reference at least in part to that agony in the Garden of Gethsemane when our Lord sweat drops of blood, crying out, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me" (Matt. 26:39) and then resigning Himself into the Father's hands, He said, "Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done" (Lk. 22:42).

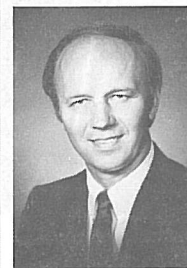
Do we see much earnest supplication in our prayer meetings and in our own lives? An example of the prayer of supplication is noted in the life of Martin Luther when he learned that his co-worker and good friend in the days of the Reformation, Philip Melancthon, was dying. Hurrying to his bedside, he bent over his friend with great sorrow. Melancthon was roused from his stupor by Luther's sobbing and sighing and he said, "O Luther, is this you? Why don't you let me depart in peace?" Luther replied, "We can't spare you yet, Philip." Turning around, Luther went down on his knees and earnestly prayed for an hour for Melancthon's recovery. Getting up from his knees, he took his friend by the hand. Again Melancthon said, "Dear Luther, why don't you let me depart in peace?" "We can't spare you yet from the field of labor," was his reply. He then ordered some soup for Melancthon but Melancthon refused it, saying, "Dear Luther, why will you not let me go home, and be at rest?" "We cannot spare you yet, Philip," was the answer. Then he added: "Philip, take this soup, or I will excommunicate you!" He took the soup and soon began to get better. He regained his health and labored for years in the Reformation. When Luther returned home he said to his wife, "God

gave me back my brother Melancthon in direct answer to prayer."

The great revivals of church history have invariably been connected with strong supplicatory prayers. Among the factors noted in the "Great Awakening" which took place under the ministry of Jonathan Edwards was earnest prayer. The night before Edwards preached the sermon that was the catalyst for revival, "Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God," there had been an all-night prayer meeting attended by many Christians in the community. It is reported that people spent the whole night in agonizing prayer.

The vital relation between supplication prayer and revivals has often been illustrated in schools. In the year 1823, a number of people united together to pray for revival in the colleges and seminaries of New England. What were the results? In the years 1824 and 1825 revivals were experienced in five different schools; in 1826, in six schools; in 1831, in 19, and so on. In our prayers for revival, let us remember our own AFLC schools as well as others across the land.

Oh, how much we have to learn from our Lord about prayer! Let us learn over again, with the teachableness of little children, what is believing, and persevering, and consistent prayer of supplication.



by Dr.  
Francis W. Monseth

### THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

USPS 588-620 ISSN 0746-3413

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

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

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

Volume 2 Number 19

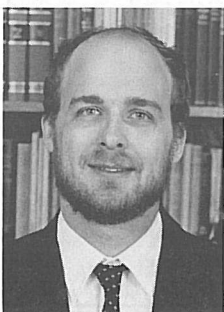
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## He can help us live the Truth

"Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth" (John 17:17). On October 31st, 1517, Martin Luther pounded his 95 Theses onto the Castle Church door in Wittenburg, Germany, in protest of the false, human-devised doctrines that Rome advocated. Luther trusted that Scripture alone stands as God's source of revelation to humanity. When we remember the time of the Reformation, let us remember the words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: "Thy Word is Truth."

Knowing that God's Word is truth holds much importance in approaching Scripture. Yet do we live and reflect the truth of God's Word in our daily lives? The question of whether or not we live in God's truth demands an answer from each of us. We pray and leave the concern of revival in our AFLC in God's will and plan. We earnestly pray that the Holy Spirit will re-awaken the congregations in our Association. Prayers concerning revival in our AFLC remain necessary. We also need to pray for a personal revival in our daily relationship with Jesus Christ.

God's Word in Psalm 119:25 expresses, "My soul cleaves to the dust; revive me according to Thy Word." (NASB). At times you may get discouraged. Temptations may arise to look to false sources for comfort, such as human wisdom, personal insight and worldliness. During times of discouragement or indifference we need to especially focus upon Scripture and cling to the written truths promised by God. Luther commented:



by Rev.  
Todd Klemme,  
Faith, S.Dak.

# GOD'S WORD IS TRUTH

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"Oh! how great and glorious a thing it is to have before one the Word of God! With that we may at all times feel joyous and secure; we need never be in want of consolation, for we see before us, in all its brightness, the pure and right way. He who loses sight of the Word of God, falls into despair; the voice of heaven no longer sustains him; he follows only the disorderly tendency of his heart, and of world vanity, which lead him on to his destruction."

(Taken from *The Table Talk of Martin Luther*, edited with an introduction by Thomas S. Kepler, (c) by The World Publishing Company, 1952; and reprinted by Baker Book House Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1979, #18, p. 15).

God can help us live the lives He has called us to through His Word. The Bible tells us, "The law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple" (Psalm 19:7 NASB). Spend-time alone with God in His Word will improve and change our lives. Martin Luther rediscovered that Scripture tells of the wondrous grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Scripture declares: "Therefore being justified by

faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:1-2 KJV).

We need to be reminded of this central truth in God's Word and that by God's grace we can live His truth. The Bible also reminds us, in Hebrews, "Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16 NASB). When you need help in your Christian life, God will help you when you call upon Him: "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5 NASB).

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*"Spending time alone  
with God in His Word  
will improve and  
change our lives."*

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"God's Word is truth" and Christ calls us to live that truth. We need to cry out in repentance like the psalmist David; "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10 NASB). We need to trust in the promises of God's forgiveness through Christ alone: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9 NASB). We can then allow Jesus Christ to live and work through us. "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes ... For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'But the righteous man shall live by faith' " (Romans 1:16-17 NASB). Let us, with the help of God, spend daily personal time in God's Word and grow from the truths of Scripture. Yes, let there be a revival, and let it begin with you and me.

While written for a secular publication, this article presents many points with which we can agree. It is presented here in response to the request in our

recent reader's survey that the *Ambassador* contain something about environmental concerns. Reaction to this article by Mr. Strohm is invited.

# Our times, too, call for greatness

Two hundred years ago, statesmen such as Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry dared to put their lives on the line for a cause.

And they rallied the common people—farmers, boot-makers and indentured servants who had been freed from a debtor's prison to serve in the colonies—and inspired them with the idea that freedom was worth fighting for.

The freezing, hungry men at Valley Forge must have had some self-doubts. But they responded to Washington's leadership, persevered against great odds, and won a precious freedom that laid the foundation for the greatest nation yet seen on this earth.

Over the years, those who inherited this dynamic new country worked hard because they were working for themselves. They took risks and prospered. A flowering of inventive genius produced the steamboat and other technological triumphs.

Americans encountered some detours along the way. My grandfather, for example, emigrated from Germany to escape military service, and was rudely surprised when he ended up carrying a musket in the Civil War. In their haste to open up the wilderness, moreover, the pioneers often laid waste to the land's precious resources and trampled on the abundant wildlife.

So much so, in fact, that over a hundred years ago, Chief Seattle of the Dunwanish tribe felt compelled to admonish President Franklin Pierce:

"The great Chief in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land. How can you buy or sell the sky—the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. Yet we do not own the freshness of the air or the sparkle of the water. How can you buy them from us? Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shiny pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people.

"We know that white man does not

understand our ways. One portion of the land is the same to him as the next, for he is a stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs. The earth is not his brother but his enemy, and when he has conquered it he moves on. He leaves his father's graves and his children's birthright is forgotten."

And so now we come to our 200th birthday, face to face with thorny problems, at home and abroad:

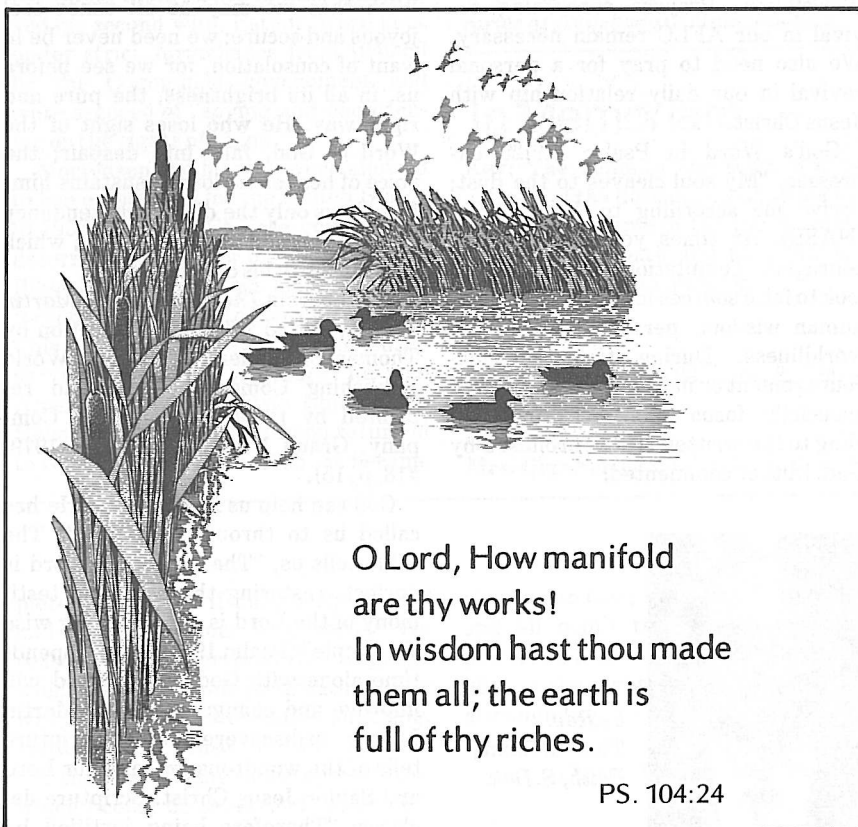
- The emerging nations of the world are beginning to demand a "fairer division" of the world's resources.
- The skyrocketing population threatens famine for many, and a steady erosion of living standards for all of us.
- At home, we find it harder to face up to tough decisions. Yes, we love clean air, clear water and wide open spaces. Still we continue to pollute our streams,

poison the air we breathe and pile our garbage higher.

• Government, our servant, is fast becoming our master—increasingly deciding "what's best" for us all.

It's somewhat contradictory, because as I travel across America, I constantly hear a general lament: "Where are the leaders of today?" We are looking for heroes to rescue us.

And so I reflect on some of the world leaders whom I've seen and met, and I wonder what it was they had that inspired their people to greatness: Churchill, the indomitable, who refused to let his people waver in the flaming battle of Britain . . . DeGaulle, who rekindled the desire for freedom in the defeated French . . . President Eisenhower, who forged diverse peoples into a victorious alliance and for whom I worked in the White House.



O Lord, How manifold  
are thy works!  
In wisdom hast thou made  
them all; the earth is  
full of thy riches.

PS. 104:24

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*"Nature's intricate web of life  
has been sadly disrupted.  
Lest we forget, we, too,  
are a part of that web."*

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I'll never forget Mahatma Gandhi. Years ago, I sat down with him for a day in his mud hut in India. He told me: "Rather than bloodshed, we will seek other ways to win our freedom from our colonial masters." And this meek, unassuming little man laid low the mighty British lion with his imaginative policy of complete passive resistance.

Revered leaders, all of them. But the general without an army, the leader without followers is a Don Quixote tilting with windmills. The unsung heroes are those who are willing to stand up and be counted.

Today, our times, too, call for greatness. In our leaders, yes. But more important, greatness in our people—you and me.

It's not difficult to stir men's passions with revolutions and holy wars, and rebellions against tyrants. The crusade for a better quality of life is far more subtle.

And I believe that the most critical challenge we Americans face as we reach our Bicentennial is developing an answer to one question: What quality of life do we want, are we willing to work for, vote for, and pay for?

Jefferson warned: "Democracy demands eternal vigilance." We should ask ourselves:

Have we grown complacent in our affluence?

Indifferent to the reckless erosion of our resources?

Arrogant with our own importance, forgetting that the achievements of America were bought by sacrifices and risk-taking of our pioneering forefathers?

Careless in observing those values that we brag about but no longer practice?

Selfish when we say, "What's in it for me?"

Clearly, these are times of unprecedented complexity, when each choice becomes a Hobson's choice, when each solution is actually a compromise, and when, too often, today's technological

breakthrough becomes tomorrow's Pyrrhic victory. There are few simple right-or-wrong, yes-or-no solutions.

We've always worshiped at the altar of bigness, and now, our scale of values must be revised, or at least re-evaluated.

Super-farming, for example: American agriculture is regarded as one of the modern wonders of the world. In the years ahead each American farmer—who now feeds himself and 53 others—will be urged to put every available acre under the plow. When famine strikes, as it already has in Bangladesh or the lower Sahara, and surely will again in some parts of our hungry world, we can expect exhortations from every pulpit to be our brothers keeper—to ship more food abroad.

So the duck pond is drained, and the prairie sod is turned, and the old fence row, home of birds and bittersweet, disappears.

What is "right" and what is "wrong"?

Or, take our super-highways: these broad ribbons of concrete dissect fertile farmlands, slice through forests and tunnel through mountains. They link every state in the Union and permit us to whiz nonstop at blazing speeds from coast to coast. They're big—each mile takes away about 80 acres of irreplaceable land; each interchange removes another 40 acres.

But how are we to compare this modern miracle of transportation with a deer path, a rabbit trail, or the charm of a winding country road in autumn?

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*"Progress?*

*How do you compare  
a superhighway with  
a deer path, a rabbit trail,  
or a winding country road?"*

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When I entertain visitors from Russia or the Far East, I usually take them to a super-market because it offers us more food, of greater variety, higher quality, for lower prices than workers of any nation can buy per hour of labor. In this respect, America is the envy of the world.

But in some instances, the shopper pays more for the package than the food  
cont. on p. 12

## Behold, By Sovereign Grace Alone

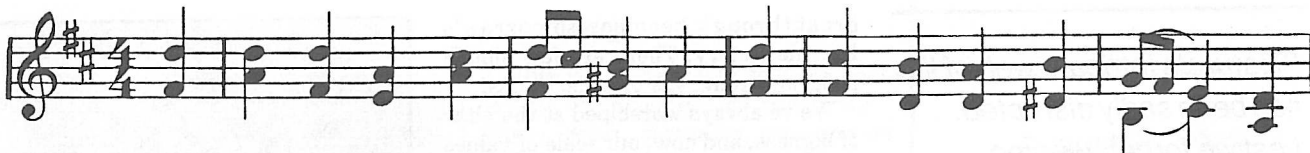
Behold, by sovereign grace alone  
Hath God the Father from His throne  
Ordained our full salvation.  
Unto the utmost ends of earth  
The Sun of mercy sendeth forth  
His light to every nation.  
The way of life is open, free,  
O mortal man, to thee, to thee.

Through love alone His Son was sent  
To bear the law's dread punishment  
For all our dire transgression.  
Our sins He bore, our guilt He owned,  
For all our deeds His death atoned—  
O bountiful possession!  
His righteousness is full and free,  
O sinful man, to thee, to thee.

For this o'erwhelming sacrifice  
The Lord will nevermore despise  
A contrite heart and spirit.  
By Jesus' death, by Jesus' blood,  
Full pleasing in the sight of God  
His mercy we inherit.  
The fount of grace flows full and free,  
O pardoned soul, for thee, for thee.

By faith alone, for Jesus' sake,  
Each ransomed sinner may partake  
Of His abounding merit.  
If in His promise ye abide.  
By faith ye shall be justified,  
And blest with His free Spirit.  
His righteousness the just shall own  
By faith alone, by faith alone.

*Ernst William Olson  
(The Hymnal)*



## our hymn study

# A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

*Concordia*, No. 239

Martin Luther, 1529

Tr. from *Book of Praise*, Canada, alt

Tune: Ein Feste Burg

A Roman Catholic priest once said, "Martin Luther condemned more souls with his singing than with his preaching."

In this negative and opaque way the priest recognized the strength of music in ministering. He was expressing his great concern that Luther had restored congregational singing to the church and the result was droves of conversions to the Lutheran Church.

Luther rescued music from its monastic monopoly and returned it to the lay men and women. He put it back in the hands of the people and this was an even greater concern for the priest than were Luther's sweeping reforms in doctrine and practice.

Just a little of what Luther did in regard to music:

1) He gave the German people, in their own tongue, the hymnbook, as well as the Catechism and Bible, so that,

in his own words, "God might speak directly to them in His Word, and that they might speak directly to Him in their songs."

2) He wrote many of those songs himself. He was the greatest hymnist of his day and *he* set his church and nation singing—singing the Lutheran teachings which kindled the Reformation fires all over northern Europe.

3) Luther's creative approach to music inspired great artists such as Schutz, Pachelbel, Bach (all Lutherans) and Mendelssohn, a converted Jew, to devote their lives to the service of Christ. They wrote hymns, chorales, cantatas, great masterworks, all for the Church.

4) Finally, the vital role of music in worship today (the entire Church) stems from Martin Luther.

I give you one example, based on Psalm 46, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble": A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD.

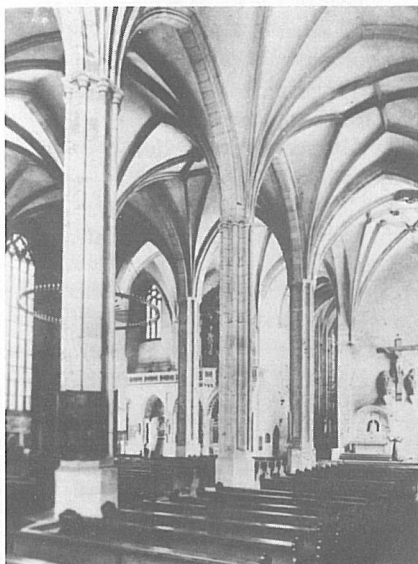
Translated into over 180 languages, this hymn has become as traditional on Reformation Sunday all over the world

as is "Silent Night" on Christmas Eve.

We can't know how many millions of people in the world will sing it Reformation Sunday, but it must please the ear of God to hear this universal declaration of hope and faith from His children. How can He not hear it? "This hymn thunders at the very gates of heaven in its magnificent affirmation of beliefs," wrote one historian. It must "seem to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals" (Revelation).

No wonder. The music is righteously strong and vigorous; the words are morally sturdy and unsubdued. Both the music and words are militantly inspiring; (it's called *The Battle Hymn of the Reformation*). For all that, it is not "macho"; it is not bellicose. It is a powerful declaration of faith, allegiance and unyielding courage, absolute certainty in God's faithfulness.

It has been called "the greatest hymn of the greatest man in the greatest period of German history." Through the



Interior of the cathedral of Erfurt where Luther was ordained in 1507 after having studied at the university there and becoming a member of the monastic community called the Black Cloister of the Hermits of Augustine. RNS Photo



The Luther house in Wittenberg, a town where he was to teach in 1508. It was here that Luther lived with Katharine von Bora, and their children. Wittenberg was "home" to Luther for the remainder of his life. The house is shown as it was about 1825 in drawing and lithograph by E. Dietrich. (Wittenberg, Luther Museum). RNS Photo

years it has given courage to people of every generation, just as it did when it was sung by the people of Halle who lined the streets as Luther's casket was carried past on its way to Wittenberg.

One very recent testimony to the power and nobility of this hymn: Virgil Fox, America's greatest organist, was the first American to play a public performance on Bach's pipe organ at St. Thomas Cantorum in Leipzig where he was organist and teacher. On that occasion, while Russian and other Communist tourists were meandering through this "museum church" in East Germany, Fox pulled all stops on that tremendous instrument and played "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." The heathen tourists stopped. They listened in awe. And when he was finished, they crowded around to see and ask, "Was spielt Sie?" (What is that you played?) Virgil Fox answered in detail. He told them about the hymn, its content and its author/composer. They heard the testimony of Luther; they heard the Word of the Lord.

The Battle Hymn of the Reformation is still doing its work on people, as it has for 450 years.

Other hymns by Martin Luther:

C. #86—Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word

C. #126—From Heaven Above to Earth I Come

—Don Rodvold



Luther's grave in the Castle Church, Wittenberg. In the background is a cast of his epitaph. At Luther's death a series of wars broke out which prohibited the original epitaph from being delivered from the city of Jena, where it remains today.

RNS Photo

**A** mighty fortress is our God,  
A trusty shield and weapon;  
Our help is He in all our need,  
Our stay, whate'er doth happen;  
For still our ancient foe  
Doth seek to work us woe:  
Strong mail of craft and power  
He weareth in this hour;  
On earth is not his equal.

Stood we alone in our own might,  
Our striving would be losing;  
For us the one true Man doth fight,  
The Man of God's own choosing.  
Who is this chosen One?  
'Tis Jesus Christ, the Son,  
The Lord of hosts, 'tis He  
Who wins the victory  
In ev'ry field of battle.

And were the world with devils filled,  
All watching to devour us,  
Our souls to fear we need not yield,  
They cannot overpower us;  
Their dreaded prince no more  
Can harm us as of yore;  
His rage we can endure;  
For lo! his doom is sure,  
A word shall overthrow him.

Still they must leave God's Word its might,  
For which no thanks they merit;  
Still He is with us in the fight,  
With His good gifts and Spirit.  
And should they, in the strife,  
Take kindred, goods and life,  
We freely let them go,  
They profit not the foe;  
With us remains the kingdom.

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live'" (Romans 1:16, 17).

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# world missions

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A read-aloud-to-children-story

## The story of Regina Garcia

Regina Garcia is a little six-year-old girl. She has five brothers and sisters. She is the only one with blond hair and blue eyes. She is holding her youngest brother, Augusto. I think Regina is a strong little girl to be able to help her mother by taking care of baby brother. Regina bounces him around and moves back and forth in one place to sooth his cries. Babies in Brazil must be handled this way because this is what they are used to.

Regina lives on a small farm with her family. She is too small to be able to help with many things yet. She isn't tall enough to do any of the cooking, because she can't reach up high enough to

stir in the kettles. Anyway, she has an older sister who can do these things.

Regina can tend to baby brother and sister. She can bring in an armful of wood when it is needed. Do you see the stove behind her in the picture?

Some of the wood she brought in is under the stove waiting its turn to cook a meal. Other sticks are burning to heat the water for the strong, sweet coffee that will soon be served to us before we leave. See the shiny kettles on the stove? Brazilians always keep a highly polished shine on their kettles. They often hang them on nails on the black, smokey walls. this makes them seem even brighter.



Behind her you also see many sacks of grain. They are stored in the family bedroom. It is their supply of grains until the next harvest time. Here are their corn, rice and bean supplies. These are their food and seed grains. Their main foods are rice and beans and maybe they'll add a bit of vegetables and meat. Pork fat is used generously in preparing foods. Regina and her family eat various fruits when they ripen on the tree. They often have bananas and also plenty of oranges for two months of the year.

Regina walks with her mother and brothers and sisters the three kilometers to our Poema church. It is a hard walk to church because it is a steep climb up the side of a high hill. Their walk home is easier. Do you know why? They arrive at church thirsty and sweaty. Their Daddy isn't interested in spiritual things. We pray for him. Won't you do so also?

Regina likes to go to Sunday School. It is held at one o'clock. She is in a class of 30 children. The Bible stories are fun to hear and there is always a coloring paper. Some Sundays she cuts and pastes, too. The best part is all the singing they do. Poema church is strong on music. They know many choruses. Regina's favorite is "My Boat is Small." What is your favorite chorus right now? Regina is small compared to many things that God has created. But she is important in God's eyes. She is a little

cont. on p. 10

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## Livingstone and prayer

He lived praying for Africa, and when he felt the coldness of death seizing upon his frame, he crept out of bed, and as he knelt upon the floor of the rude grass hut in Chitambo's village in Ilala, his soul took flight to God in prayer. He died, his sympathetic biographer informs us, "in the act of praying—prayer offered in that reverential attitude about which he was always so particular; commending his own spirit, with all his dear ones, as was his wont, into the hands of his Savior, and commending Africa—his own dear Africa—with all her woes, and sins, and wrongs, to the Avenger of the oppressed, and the Redeemer of the lost."

*D.M.M'Intyre  
(The Hidden Life of Prayer)*

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# editorials

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## AALC GOOD IDEA

One of our daily newspapers brought the news recently that some American Lutheran Church pastors intend to stay out of the merger which will create the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1988 and hope to form a group called the Association of American Lutheran Churches.

More will be known about this venture following a meeting which was to have been held yesterday (October 20) at Calvary Lutheran Church in St. Paul, Minn. The plan was to continue the doctrine and tradition of the present ALC, it was stated. In regard to the former, the proposed group would retain the words "inerrant," "infallible" and "inspired" in describing the Bible, words found in the ALC's "United Testimony on Faith and Life." The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, while it has not officially adopted United Testimony on Faith and Life, does specifically endorse United Testimony's statement on the Word (see Declaration of Faith, I, 2).

In addition to the ELCA's position on the Word, the people who would make up the AALC fear a lessening of local congregational independence in the upcoming merger of the ALC, Lutheran Church in America and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches. There are no doubt other concerns as well.

The ALC should not think it strange if her people do not move into the ELCA one hundred percent. While everything possible has been done to make the new church palatable to all, there are those who for conscience' sake cannot go along and must find some place else in which to worship and work and someone else with whom to fellowship. Some of these will come to the AFLC, others to one of the other Lutheran alternatives.

And some will form a church body in the attempt to retain as much as possible of what the ALC is. We can sympathize with them for many of us in the Association walked that same path in relationship to another merger a generation ago. It won't be an easy road but the objective can be reached.

The idea of an AALC is a good one. None of the existing alternatives among Lutheran bodies may meet the needs of those who would form the AALC. We know that the Association wouldn't be the answer for everyone. We want to remain low-churchly, pietistic, evangelical, strongly grounded on the Word, with complete autonomy for the local congregation. Some congregations, pastors and lay people might chafe too much under one or more of these points and find a more congenial church home elsewhere. The AALC could fill that need.

In fact, there might be a place for more than one offshoot from the merger which will create the ELCA. Small groups cannot permit as much diversity as larger ones. Time will tell what will happen. We wish the AALC well in the sense that it will provide a place for people uncomfortable with the proposed ELCA. The fact that it will take a strong stand on the Word is good.

## STRONG REACTION

Dr. Francis Monseth's convictions on eschatology (pre-millennial view) as reported in the interview with him by Mrs. Eugene Enderlein and published in *The Lutheran Ambassador* for July 29 drew strong reaction from Rev. Paul Burgdorf in the Sept. 15 issue of *The Christian News*. The editor of the same paper was gracious in his introduction of the matter, but certainly agrees with pastor Burgdorf's position of amillenialism.

There shouldn't be any surprise that Pastor Burgdorf reacted as he did or as any other number of LC-MS pastors might have done. They are of the strong conviction that to be Lutheran is to not be pre-millennial.

The AFLC takes the position that it is possible for students of the Bible within the AFLC to differ in their understanding of last things or eschatology. We are glad that Dr. Monseth made that clear in his *Ambassador* interview. We are not to consider one who understands last things differently than we do as less devout, less Christian, less zealous for souls, providing he holds to the basic things Dr. Monseth mentioned: the Second Coming of Christ, judgment, resurrection, heaven and hell.

Sometime this winter we will be carrying articles, in one issue, by AFLC pastors on the two positions, pre-millennialism and amillenialism. It is our hope that they will be helpful to our readers.

Pastor Burgdorf's article in *The Christian News* does remind us that doctrine in the Association is not as rigidly defined as in the Missouri Synod, the Wisconsin Evangelical Synod or the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, to name three. If we trace our history through Georg Sverdrup and Sven Oftedal, as we do, we find that they did not feel it necessary to go as far as the Missouri men did in setting forth their doctrinal belief. Prof. Sverdrup often spoke and wrote of *barnelaerdorn* (children's teaching) as being sufficient. He referred to *Luther's Small Catechism* and the *Explanation*. These, of course, and the Bible, which was simply God's Word.

Our heritage is Lutheran and we are Lutheran. Every AFLC congregation subscribes to the ancient ecumenical creeds or ought to. By these we mean the Apostolic, Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, *Luther's Small Catechism* and the unaltered *Augsburg Confession*. A few years ago we published a book on the *Augsburg Confession*. We hope that our people are studying our doctrines and our pastors are faithfully standing on them.

But we don't see all things exactly alike on last things. We all subscribe to Article XVII of the *Augsburg Confession*, but we must not let our diversity hinder fellowship.

And then we hope that the other Lutheran church bodies which are able to achieve greater unanimity on this subject will be gracious and while not accepting of our position of allowing differences of interpretation, yet find it possible to be brotherly.

# The ARC Supporters Group

Whereas, Bible Camps are mightily being used of the Lord to bring young people as well as adults to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, and to establish them in the faith; and, whereas our Bible Camp, the Association Retreat Center, has been accruing a financial deficit year by year, be it resolved that we who have been helped ourselves by Bible Camps and who want to see others helped in the same way—be it resolved that we join the ARC Supporters Group. We seek a total of 100 people to join with us to pledge \$100 a year for a total of \$10,000 per year. We

expect this example of giving to motivate many others to give other amounts so that the total budget of the ARC can be met yearly.

We need last year's supporters to renew their pledges and we need new supporters this year if our goal is to be reached.

II Cor. 8:1-5: "Now . . . the churches of Macedonia . . . beyond their ability they gave of their own accord, . . . but they first gave themselves to the Lord . . ."

(The ARC is located near Osceola, Wisconsin)

I (we), \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

\_\_\_\_\_ prayerfully pledge \$100 for year \_\_\_\_\_ as a member of the ARC Supporters Club.

(Checks to be made out to AFLC - General Fund and designated "ARC".)

Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Balance \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## Deputation schedule of Missionary Dyrud

October 12—Nov. 16

Sunday, October 12 (a.m.) - Mt. Carmel and Trinity Lutheran Churches, McIntosh, Minnesota.

Sunday, October 12 (p.m.) - Maple Bay Lutheran Church, Mentor, Minnesota.

Tuesday, October 14 - Northwestern Minnesota District WMF Rally, Oiland Lutheran Church, Greenbush, Minnesota.

Sunday, October 19—Wednesday, October 22 - Roseau, Minnesota.

Saturday, October 25 - Bethany Lutheran Ladies Aid Missions Festival. Binford, North Dakota.

Sunday, October 26 (a.m.) - Trinity Lutheran Church, Minnewaukan, North Dakota.

Sunday, October 26 (p.m.) - Zoar Lutheran Church, Hampden, North Dakota.

Tuesday, October 28 (p.m.) - Lebanon and North Prairie Lutheran Churches, Leeds, North Dakota.

Wednesday, October 29 (p.m.) - Christ Lutheran Church, Devils Lake, North Dakota.

Sunday, November 2 (a.m.) - Grace Lutheran Church, Abercrombie, North Dakota.

Friday, November 7, Sunday, November 9 - Grace Lutheran Church, Missions Conference, Valley City, North Dakota.

Sunday, November 16 (a.m.) - Faith Lutheran Church, Shakopee, Minnesota.

Sunday, November 16 (p.m.) - Morgan Avenue Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

## STORY . . .

person who can grow up and be important in God's eyes. She is a little person who can grow up and be important in telling others about Jesus.

Through the stories Regina hears in Sunday School, she can "grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18). You, too, can grow in these things. This grace and knowledge is very desirable to have. God has a plan for Regina's life and He has a plan for your life. It is Regina's and your part to learn what that holy plan is through attending to God's Word. In this way you will mature and be a blessing to others.

Zechariah 8:13b: "... so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing. Fear not, but let your hands be strong."

Zechariah 8:16: "These are the things that you shall do; speak ye every man the truth to his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates."

Zechariah 8:17: "And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord."

Or, as stated in the New International Version of the Bible:

Zechariah 8:13b: "... so will I save you, and you will be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong." (God will help you be strong.)

Zechariah 8:16, 17: "These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other; (and) render true and sound judgment in your courts, do not plot evil against your neighbor, (and) do not swear falsely. I hate all this, declares the Lord."

Did you hear God's instructions for being a blessing to others? God bless you richly as you enter this new week of grace.

*Helen Knapp*

## Personalities

The new address for Dr. and Mrs. Francis Monseth and family is 14220 Pauls Drive, Rogers, Minn. 55374. Their telephone number is 612-428-2776. Dr. Monseth is dean of Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary.

Rev. Richard Anderson, Lakeville, Minn., was guest speaker at special meetings in Green Lake Lutheran Church, Spicer, Minn., Oct. 12-15.

# THE WOMEN'S PAGE

## Women's Missionary Federation

*In memoriam gifts*

Martin T. Wilkins, Sioux Falls, S.Dak.  
Alfred Nygaard, Valley City, N. Dak.  
Valborg Bosmoe, Webster, S.DAK.  
Vernon Kofal, Drummond, Wis.  
Arthur J. Lee, Tioga, N. Dak.  
Julia Halinen, South Range, Mich.  
Florence Torson, Park River, N. Dak.  
Helen Wahl, Greenbush, Minn.  
Frieda Nelson, Shevlin, Minn.  
Sydney Ford, Valley City, N. Dak.  
Lars Lundemo, Roseau, Minn.  
Pat Hovorka, Roseau, Minn.  
David Huglen Strommen, Mpls., Minn.  
Ruth Erickson, Dalton, Minn.

*Blessed are  
those who die  
in the Lord*



### Buxton, N. Dak.

The Ny Stavanger Free Lutheran Cradle Roll enrolled Suzanne Sletto and Jennifer Tollefson. Larissa Sletto graduated. Pictured are Pastor and Mrs. Kerwin Sletto with their daughters.

## Cradle Roll



### Ishpeming, Mich.

Hope Free Evangelical Lutheran held its annual Cradle Roll Party with eight children attending with family and friends. The two graduates are pictured with Pastor Jackson and Sunday School Superintendent Vickie Kangas. They are Melissa, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Vance Maki and Mathew, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Eliason.



### Minot, N. Dak.

Bethel Free Lutheran graduated Stacy Wolla and Samantha Gunning from their Cradle Roll.

## Honorary Memberships



### Spicer, Minn.

Green Lake Lutheran WMF honored three ladies. They are: (L. to R.) Mrs. Norman Olson, Mrs. Joe Nelson, and Mrs. Juliet deCathelineau. Mrs. Earl Jones presented the ladies with their pins.



### Minot, N. Dak.

Bethel Free Lutheran WMF honored eight charter and senior members. They are: (L. to R.) Melinda Haakenson, Carrie Nelson, Edna Folden, Helen Peterson, and Clara Johnson. Not pictured are: Hildur Nordin, Vera Glasoe and Agnes Teets.

O God, help me to realize Thy boundless resources. Keep me from limiting Thee in the great work Thou hast called us to do. May I have the spirit of a little child who comes in a gay spirit of utter confidence to make his request known. Thou art my Heavenly Father, and I come to Thee.

*Frances De Vol  
Missionary to China*

## THE WMF PAGE NEEDS YOUR NEWS!

Send your pictures (color or black and white) and articles to: Mrs. Wayne Hjermstad, 1277 Ross Ave., St. Paul, Minn. 55106.

## WOMEN'S PAGE . . .



### Bismarck, N. Dak.

Calvary Lutheran Church held its first Cradle Roll program for six children. Pictured are Stephanie Johansen, (with their mothers) Brett and Polly Papka, Joshua and Dawn Pietz, and Andrew, Jonathan and Debra Tieman. Lori Kuntz and Zachary Huus are not pictured.

## Lake Superior District Fall Rally

The Fall Rally of the WMF Lake Superior District was hosted by St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Cloquet, Minn. on September 20, 1986. Our theme for the day was "Send out your Light and your Truth." Gertie Iwasco, presided over the sessions.

A warm welcome was extended by Vivian Oswald and devotions and prayer were given by Jan Stine.

Intern Jerry Moan led the Bible Study and chose "God is Light" from the Gospel of John to speak on. He brought out the fact that at the beginning and the end of the Bible God said, "Let There be Light."

The offering was taken and will go to My Missionary for a Day.

Pastor Herbert Franz was the afternoon speaker. He chose "Imitators of God" as his topic. He stated the most important thing in life is bringing people to Jesus. He concluded with the statement "Imitating Christ is receiving the Light."

Musical numbers, group singing and readings were enjoyed by all.

*June Kakowski, Secretary*

## OUR TIMES . . .

it contains. If we could cut down completely on nonessential packaging—plastic, paper, aluminum, glass and tin packages—we'd save mountains of non-renewable resources for future generations. And we'd also help solve the waste disposal problem, the monster that threatens to bury us in garbage.

Florida, the sunshine state, is a great place to live for the individual. He or she is no problem—but the thousands of immigrants are. Luxury hotels must be constructed, more land must be drained, more water must be provided. And each new skyscraper built, each virgin acre plowed, each canal gouged, diminishes the most unique habitat in the United States—home of alligators, herons and a myriad of Everglades wildlife. Again, it is a matter of conscious choices and a question of values.

The frenetic pace at which we live grows ever faster. Today, we can board a plane and fly around the world in just 40 hours. And now comes the supersonic jet which will zoom us at near rocket-speed around the earth in half that time. A marvelous engineering triumph! How important? Charles Lindbergh, famed aviation pioneer, pondering the beauty and grace of birds and their niche in the overall pattern of life, said: "I realize that if I had to choose, I would rather have birds than airplanes."

Population pressures, crime, traffic snarls and ghetto unrest are driving urbanites (those who can afford it) to their own escape retreats in the country, in the mountains or on the sea shores in a frenzy of super-sprawl. As more people demand more living space, something has to give.

It may be that "useless" swamp. Useless, that is, except for the web of life that it supports. And a disturbing thought: We, too, are part of that web.

Some years ago I sat down to a dinner of 30 roast sheep as guest of King Abdul Azziz Ibn Saud, the last of the absolute monarchs on earth, as he camped out on the Arabian desert. It occurred to me then that the average American has more electric slaves at his or her command than the mightiest monarch who ever lived. With a flicked command, you can have light, drive your lawnmower, grind garbage, spray paint, wash dishes, dry your hair, brush your teeth,

From the files of *Folkebladet*,

August 25, 1926

In one of the reports in *Folkebladet* from the annual conference were listed the names of the candidates who were ordained at the annual conference. Among them was also Trygve F. Dahle. This was not quite correct.

It is quite true that he together with the other candidates received the conference's recommendation for ordination, but Waubay and Tabor congregations, which he has served for about three years, requested that he be ordained in their midst.

That request became fact on Sunday, July 11.

Those two congregations which comprise the parish had made preparations for a festival. And that's what it was. Besides the people of the two congregations, friends from outlying congregations arranged to be in Waubay that day and "the house" was more than full.

The following pastors were also present: Ole Dahle (the ordinand's father), M. Gjerde, H. M. Hemmingson and Rudolph Hanson.

The ordainer (the undersigned) preached over the day's text in the morning. Following that the congregation was served dinner in the church parlors.

The actual ordination was held in the

massage your skin, or cool your house. And new gadgets appear daily, thought up by people to make life more comfortable.

But do you know that the electric power used by home air conditioners alone may someday require us to strip-mine thousands of acres of Wyoming wilderness each year?

Some questions I am asking myself: if I have to go some place a mile away, isn't it silly to fire up a steel-and-chrome chariot, powered by 300 mechanical horses, using fuel that it took a million years to make?

The supermarket is wonderful. But wouldn't we be better off if we grew

## Festive Day in Waubay, S. Dak.

afternoon. After the altar service Pastor Hemmingson prefaced the ceremony with a striking charge to the congregations of the parish. The aforementioned pastors took part by reading the arranged Scripture passages and the laying on of hands.

After the ordination was over Pastor M. Gjerde of Grenville, S. Dak., preached. As soon as he had finished, the tones of the bridal march sounded forth from the organ over the assembly, as the newly ordained pastor escorted his bride, Miss Agnes Hazel Tastad, to the altar. The bridegroom's father gave an uncommonly beautiful talk to the bridal couple and after the usual vows declared them to be man and wife.

.....  
Now may the Lord who in the three years that have gone by has blessed his work in Waubay and Tabor with the salvation of souls, continue to keep him and make his bride and him an even greater blessing in the days that lie ahead among people who love them both so much.

—(Pastor) T.O. Burntvedt  
(Translated from Norwegian)

Ed. note: Pastor Burntvedt would later become the president of the Lutheran Free Church, a position he held for 28 years. The first Mrs. Dahle passed away in 1963.)

more of our food in the backyard, re-learning the joy of feeling a lump of earth?

I cheer with thousands of others in arenas and stadiums, and watch the games on TV. But why don't I tune out super-sports for a walk in the woods?

I've concluded that we are really hypocrites when we set up straw villains, denounce greedy businessmen and blame politicians. Pogo spoke the truth: "We have met the enemy and he is us."

The problem of today is man's confrontation with himself.

Sure, sparkling clear water is wonderful for swimming, important to wild-

## LORD, PLEASE MAKE US ONE

*Think about the cross of Jesus,  
how, so long ago,  
He, though sinless, chose to spend  
His life blood. See love flow...*

*Dividends of peace and freedom.  
There's no greater pow'r!  
I give You all my adoration,  
Savior, in this hour.*

*Grant that I might see Your motives  
... pure and guileless love.  
Grant that I may never fail  
to see Your mercies move.*

*Shine the light of sacred Scriptures  
deep within my heart.  
Holy Spirit, guide, convict me,  
lest from You I part.*

*Then I'll align my life with Calvary,  
I'll live straight and true  
To Your blood-bought high ideals.  
Let the sky be blue,*

*Gray or stormy. It won't matter,  
Lord, I hear Your voice.  
You're my sacrificial Shepherd.  
I follow You by choice.*

*Speak Your words of faith or warning,  
I've a list'ning ear.*

*May I always live for You, Lord,  
with a rev'rent fear.*

*I don't fear death, sin or Satan.  
No, I fear lest I*

*Might bring shame on Your pure  
name, Lord.*

*Jesus, let me fly  
Always down the straight and narrow.  
I shun sin's broad path.*

*I prefer Your, "Well done, servant..."  
to Your righteous wrath.*

*So I live to love and lift You.  
Lord, I seek Your grace.*

*May my thoughts and dreams  
and deeds  
bring smiles to Your face.*

*Praise the Father, praise the Spirit,  
Praise God's only Son!*

*He left heav'n to come and free us.  
Lord, please make us one.*

Amen  
Dale Stone

life, vital to health. And we know it's bad to dump city sewage into the river. Then why do we oppose the bond issue because "our taxes are already too high"?

Wildlife is man's early warning sign, indispensable to his existence. But why do we ignore this "miner's canary," and stand indifferently as more species make the endangered list each year?

So what's the answer—have we already lost?

"Not so," says Tom Kimball, who's been in the thick of many conservation battles as head of the National Wildlife Federation. "I've got to talk to some graduating seniors, and I'm going to tell them to disregard the doom-sayers' judgment that we are already licked. With hard work and good old Yankee ingenuity, yes, and a little luck, we can solve our problems—food, population,

energy, and environmental. The technology to do it is either already in hand, or in sight. What's needed now is the commitment, and the will."

.....  
So as we do the year-end bookkeeping, let's take a fresh perspective. A look back, yes, at where we've been. An honest appraisal of where we are. But plenty of soul searching as to where we really want to go. And the gutsy kind of dedication it's going to take to get us there.

For what we do in the next 20 years may well chart America's course for the next 200.

John Strohm is editor of National Wildlife.

—Reprinted from *National Wildlife*, December, January 1976. Copyright 1975. Permission requested.



## CHALLENGE AT ARLINGTON

Aware of the struggles and ground-work involved, we wish to salute all the Home Mission congregations in the AFLC! Atonement Free Lutheran Church is blessed with a quality nucleus of members, urgently in need of a full-time pastor. The ministry of Steve Snipstead as student intern for a year was a tremendous blessing. His excellent written report on the church growth potential of Atonement is providing helpful guidelines and stimulating information. *In view of the challenging outreach*, the building committee has been working diligently on the construction plans for a suitable house of worship on the property which has been purchased in a strategic area with high visibility and easy access in a newly-developing residential area. Sincere gratitude was expressed by everyone to Steve and his capable young wife, Tracy, at a congregational farewell service and dinner on July 27, 1986. They are greatly missed!

We would deeply appreciate much earnest prayer for this young AFLC Home Mission congregation and we wish to encourage any of the pastors who would seriously consider this challenging call to submit their names to the Home Mission Director, Pastor Elden Nelson. The Lord has commanded us to "be strong and of good courage" as we seek to do our part in fulfilling The Great Commission in our generation!

Very sincerely in His service,  
The Church Council of Atonement  
Free Lutheran, Dave Sorensen,  
president.

## Former Missionary to China dies

New York—(LC)—The Rev. Dr. Ralph Mortensen, former Lutheran missionary to China who was held by the Japanese navy for six months after the start of World War II in the Pacific, died of a heart attack, according to friends, Sept. 4, near his home in Meriden, Conn. He was 92.

Shortly after Pearl Harbor was bombed on Dec. 7, 1941, Mortensen, who eventually served more than 30 years as a missionary to China, and his wife were held for six months by the Japanese navy.

At that time he was general secretary of the Lutheran board of publication for the Lutheran Church of China in Hankow and also general secretary of the International Red Cross for Central China, working to provide food, clothing, shelter, medicine to 100,000 Chinese refugees in Hankow. Mortensen and his wife, Petra, were finally released and repatriated to the United States aboard a Swedish diplomat ship. His first wife died in 1942. He returned to China in 1944 as a representative of the American Bible Society in charge of the China Bible House in Shanghai. He and his second wife, Esther, were kept under strict surveillance from 1949-53 by the Communist government and were accused of "spying and encroaching on the rights of China."

Mortensen and his wife were allowed to leave Shanghai for the United States in 1953 when the Chinese government determined that after his departure the Bible House would no longer employ foreigners. The Mortensens returned to China in 1954, where Ralph Mortensen served as roving secretary for the American Bible Society's China Bible House. When the Mortensens returned to the United States in 1958, he became

secretary in the church relations department of the American Bible Society until his retirement in 1965. He was active until his death, giving lectures and speeches as a member of various civic and religious organizations.

Mortensen came from a Lutheran Free Church background and was pastor in the American Lutheran Church.

Born in Mankato, Minn., Mortensen was graduated from Augsburg College and Seminary, Minneapolis, in 1913 and 1916, respectively. Following a year's study at Oslo University in Norway, he received a master of sacred theology degree from Hartford Seminary Foundation in Connecticut in 1918 and a doctoral degree in 1927, also at Hartford.

Mortensen was preceded in death by his first wife, Petra, and is survived by his second wife, Esther, Meriden, Conn., two daughters, Agnes Mosling and Margaret Anderson, eight grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. Services were held Sept. 8 near his home at First Lutheran Church, Southington, Conn.

(*Ed. note: Ralph Mortensen was one of the last of my father's contemporaries at Augsburg in Minneapolis.*)

## 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.

### MINNESOTA

Roseau

Mrs. Laura Austin, 83, Sept. 8, United, Greenbush.

Goodridge

Mrs. Olga Sorter, 85, Sept. 15, Reiner.

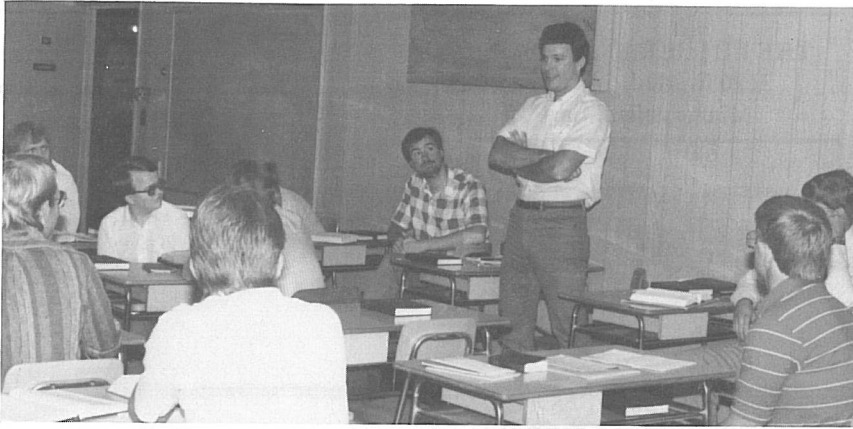
## Justified in Christ

And that is a remarkable justification, that we should be called just or possess a righteousness which is no work or thought of ours, and is nothing in us, but is completely outside of us, in Christ, and yet is truly made ours through His gracious gift and as com-

pletely our own as if it had been attained and merited by our own selves. No reason could understand this language which gives the name justification to me where I neither do or suffer anything, neither think, sense, or feel anything, and there is nothing in me by reason of which I could be saved and made well-

pleasing to God; but apart from myself and all man's thoughts, works, and powers, I hold on to Christ (seated on high at the right hand of the Father), although I cannot see Him.

Martin Luther  
(*Day By Day We Magnify Thee*)



Bud Davis tells of God's direction in leading him to AFLTS.



Mrs. Stephen (Joanne) Mundfrom, new librarian and seminary secretary.

## AFLC schools into another school year

### 7 new students at AFLTS

Seven new students were welcomed into the student body of Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary in orientation and registration exercises on September 3. The new men are Richard Barnhart, Eagan, Minnesota; Jon Benson, Wamamingo, Minnesota; Bud Davis, Yuma, Arizona; Milton Flores, Leon, Mexico; Harry Gimberg, Des Moines, Iowa; Richard Larson, Clarissa, Minnesota; and Stephen Mundfrom, Osceola, Wisconsin. Each new student was given opportunity to share personal testimony of God's gracious leading in his life. Returning students and faculty also reflected on recent blessings. All knelt to pray for God's benediction on the new school year.

### 21st year begins with 92 enrolled

The temperatures drop; leaves change and AFLBS springs to life. Ninety-two students spilling into the dorms provide a few unique glimpses into what God can accomplish.

Several students admitted to having no intention of returning, but through circumstances of the summer felt compelled to return. Said Steen Willand, senior, "I wasn't sure what I wanted. After I got home though, I really missed the people."

"The people?"

"Yes, but more than that. The opportunity to sit under the teaching of God's Word. I felt I had to return."

"I had to understand why I believe

what I do," said Chanyce Hammer. The reasons are many and as different as the people who have followed their leadings. Three international students have arrived, as well as various young men and women from across the country from Pennsylvania to Washington.

Concerning hopes for the year, the school has big expectations. "Revival in the AFLC could easily start with the school and seminary this year. So far, it's been incredible," commented Todd Schierkolk, senior.

With the spirit of enthusiasm and prayerful concern running high at our school, it truly does promise to be an outstanding year.

—Scott Knutson

## Pipestone dedication

Christ the King Lutheran Church, Pipestone, Minn., Rev. David H. Skordahl, pastor, will dedicate its new church building on Sunday, Oct. 26, at 2:00 p.m. Rev. Richard Snipstead, president of the AFLC, will give the dedication address. A welcome is extended to join in the event with either presence or prayers.

### PREACHING MISSION

Thief River Falls, Minn.

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

Nov. 2-6

Leslie Galland, pastor

Rev. David Barnhart, Eagan, Minn., speaker.

## New members at Morgan Avenue, Mpls.

Pictured with Pastor Yeddo Gottel, upper right, are new members received into the membership of Morgan Avenue Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn. Front, left: Venekeo Khambounmy\*, Airnoy Phousirith\*, Anousack Phousirith\*; second row: Vanpheng Khambounmy\*, Sue Solsten, Shelly Hodne, Ella Schumacher; third row: Jeff Solsten, W. Leroy LaRocque, Carole LaRocque, Richard Aasen; back row: Tom Housenga, Nancy Housenga, and Pastor Gottel.

\* Baptized members



## Kalispell church observes anniversary

Stillwater Lutheran Church, rural Kalispell, Mont., Rev. Jeff Swanson, pastor, observed its 75th anniversary last Sunday, Oct. 19th. At the 11 o'clock worship service Pastor Swanson, a 1986 graduate of Free Lutheran Seminary, was installed, with Rev. Richard Snipstead, president of the AFLC, officiating. A fellowship dinner followed the service.

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THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR  
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.  
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

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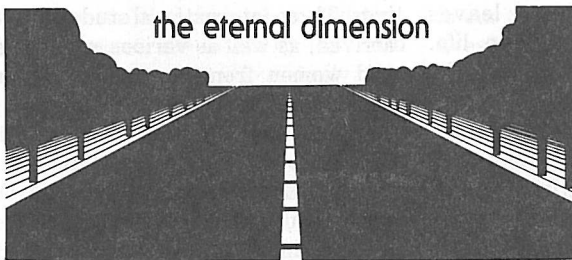
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paid at Wanamingo, Minn.

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"...In order to be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of the law, because by works of the law shall no one be justified" (Galations 2:16c).

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when  
you run  
out of  
time

Some people think history goes around in circles, that is, it keeps repeating itself. In their mind, history is going nowhere. It has no goal. Others believe history is moving in a straight line, and has a definite goal. This concept is in harmony with the Bible. The Bible picture is of the Creator God sitting above history, directing it to a goal of His good choosing. Though much room is left for people to move about doing their desires within the stream of human history, every person is moving along in that stream toward its sure goal.

The question then is, "How far along is human history in its journey toward its goal?" How soon will human history reach its goal? That is a question which we cannot answer, since God has kept the day and the hour of history's completion from us. However, the Scriptures have much to say about the trend of world conditions that will lead up to the day of completion. In other words, God has recorded some of the prominent signs which we may see that will tell us the completion is near. One of

those signs is "people preoccupied with earthly things," to the neglect of heavenly things. In Matthew 24:36-42, Jesus spoke of people so preoccupied with eating and drinking and the matter of marriage that they did not know until it was too late that God had been trying to get their attention and turn them to Himself. Thus the flood overtook them and destroyed them. Isn't it clear that human society has been turning more and more toward earthly preoccupation in recent years? Thus God and heavenly matters are being grossly neglected. Even among so-called religious people, the demand nowadays is for more temporal happiness without the cost of repentance and God-like living. Isn't the demand of those who still go to church becoming ever more insistent that whatever goes on at church must be entertaining? Surely we must say that the trend in the society of our day is toward more eating and drinking. And has there recently been a day like ours, in which matters surrounding marriage have taken up so much time and energy? If I put the pieces of the Matthew 24

text together correctly, I find Jesus teaching that it is in such a day as ours that God specially wants to break into our mad busyness with earthly affairs so He may speak to our hearts about preparation for the judgment soon to come.

Many are beginning to see and feel the need of the hour. They believe that the only hope for our world is the miraculous visitation from God, historically called "revival." Where are you in all of this? Are you among those still so preoccupied with earthly things that you have no time or heart for God? Or are you among those who are beginning to see and feel the need and are preparing themselves to call on God for help for themselves and their neighbors? Jesus is coming again and it could be very soon. Till He arrives, we are to be about His business here on earth. He told His disciples to occupy until He returned. It is a sobering matter to think of these things, but for those who are occupied with heavenly things there is also joy in contemplating the glorious goal toward which history is swiftly moving. What are you occupied with these days? Do you ever think about things which are not earth-bound? Do you ever think of the Lord and His glorious coming? It seems to me that this is the issue in the whole matter of life.

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