

# The Lutheran AMBASSADOR

APRIL 11, 1995



## My Redeemer Lives!



# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

April 11, 1995  
Volume 33, Number 5



The magazine of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441. (612) 545-5631

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**The Lutheran Ambassador**  
(USPS 588-620 ISSN 0746-3413)  
is published every three weeks except  
monthly in June and July (16 issues per  
year) by the Association of Free Lutheran  
Congregations.

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**For subscription changes and information:**  
The Lutheran Ambassador, 3110 E.  
Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Min-  
nesota 55441. (612) 544-5631.

**Subscriptions rates:**  
\$15.00 a year, Group Rate, U. S.  
\$16.00 a year, Individual, U. S.  
\$18.00 a year, International

Second-class postage paid at Minneapo-  
lis, MN and additional mailing office.

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

## AN ENCOURAGING WORD

### Tonic for tough days

*They that wait upon the Lord  
shall renew their strength; they  
shall mount up with wings as  
eagles; they shall run, and not be  
weary; and they shall walk, and  
not faint.*

Isaiah 40:31

In his eagerness to occupy Russia during World War II, Hitler's army pushed on with little resistance until it was pinned down at Leningrad. The German army was defeated by a fierce Russian winter, enemy fire and ultimately they had outrun their supply lines.

#### Life's Like That

The Christian life is labeled a warfare throughout Scriptures. The term seems in direct contradiction to the promise of peace and an abundant life Jesus offered. Certainly it is that, but like many other paradoxes in the Bible, they go together.

Jesus said, "In this world you will have tribulation but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). If we question the existence of the "down" side perhaps we haven't been close enough to the main line of resistance. The Korean conflict was referred to as a "police action," probably for political reasons, but the war was real enough to those who were there.

It reminds me of the cartoon of these two grimy soldiers sitting in a muddy foxhole with shells exploding everywhere. They are reading a hometown newspaper with the bold headlines, "Limited War." Turning to his friend the one says, "Limited war is total war for them to whom it is limited."

Friend, wherever you are facing the enemy today, that battle is a real one for you and it does not go unnoticed by our Lord. If we deny the pain of our skirmish, however small it may seem, we

also deny the comfort the Lord has for us.

#### Running Out of Gas

It is easy to become distracted and confused in the chaos of battle. It all seems so crazy and hopeless. At times one is not even sure who the real enemy is. The Christian's warfare is certainly like that. We can relate to the verse in our text which says, "Even the youths shall faint and be weary and the young men shall utterly fall." At such times we just seem to run out of steam. We are ready to give up and quit. Like that powerful German army we have outrun our supply lines.

#### A Blank Check

It has been said, "Everything God does is wonderful until we get used to it." The promise of this great test is still as real and valid as the day it was given and it is open to all. Spurgeon wrote, "When He opens a well for one it is that all may drink." Like a signed check, it is waiting to be cashed.

#### On Eagle's Wings

What do you do when you have reached the end of your supplies? You wait for the one who can supply your need.

To wait on the Lord does not mean just time, but an attitude of trust. As we turn each need over to the Lord we find that He does restore our souls. As with the eagle, the storm will not destroy us, for God will carry us above the storm. Then we can fly, run, walk and not faint.



— by Pastor  
Martin Christensen  
Elbow,  
Saskatchewan





## Just as He said

**T**he Jehovah's Witnesses canvassed our neighborhood one Saturday. A team of two young women visited our house. Regina did the talking; Caroline was her silent partner.

Regina began with the usual Watchtower introduction of citing numerous examples of evil in the world, and then asking if I knew that God would someday set up His government on earth. Then evil would be nonexistent as only peace and goodness prevailed.

I responded with expressions of thanks that the Lord is active in our day, as He always has been, gathering people into His Kingdom through the good news of Jesus' perfect life for us, His substitutionary atonement for us, and His physical resurrection for us.

When I mentioned "Kingdom," Regina was off and running with questions about what I believed about the Kingdom of God. Of course she provided answers to her own questions according to Watchtower doctrine. However, regardless of her specific questions or comments, I continued to relate my responses to the good news of God's gift of salvation and righteousness in Jesus' perfect life and His sacrificial death and resurrection.

Finally she asked, "You don't think Jesus' physical body rose from the grave, do you?"

"No, of course not," I answered to her surprise. "I don't **think** Jesus' physical body rose from the grave; I **know** Jesus' physical body rose from the dead."

With that the remainder of our discussion focused on the heart and core of believing in Jesus: **His physical resurrection.** Regina answered all my resurrection proofs either by explaining that

"flesh and blood" cannot enter the Kingdom of God or with explanations of how, in His post-resurrection appearances, Jesus simply took on a physical body, like angels sometimes did in Old Testament times.


"What about the third day?" I asked, avoiding the word *Easter*, which would invite a lecture about Easter being a pagan holiday. I quoted from Matthew 28:5,6: "The women and Peter and John obviously found no body in the tomb. Remember the angel sent from Jehovah told the women, 'Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. he is not here; He has risen, just as He said. Come and see the place where He lay.'"

"I don't know," replied Regina. "I guess His bones are probably decayed by now." With that response, our discussion ended. However, I'm confident the Holy Spirit continues to carry on the discussion with Regina through the Word of God shared with her that day. And praise be to God; His Word never returns void — it either creates and/or strengthens faith in Jesus, or it hardens unbelief.

That's why the Lord through the Apostle Paul reminds us what is of first importance is Jesus's death for our sins according to the Scriptures, His burial according to the Scriptures, and His resurrection on the third day according to the Scriptures (I Corinthians 15:3ff). And that's true whether we're interacting with a Jehovah's Witness, with a so-called Christian whose faith is merely an empty profession, or with a true child of God who sincerely believes in the forgiveness of his sins in the crucified and risen Savior alone.

Admittedly, if Jesus has not been raised from the dead, faith in Him is futile, and preaching about Him is not only useless but is, in fact, a false witness about God (I Corinthians 15:12-19).

Therefore, thanks be to the Lord God for Christ has indeed been raised from the dead! Yes, just as the angel said to the women, we need not fear because Jesus, who suffered and died for our forgiveness and salvation did not decay in the grave.

**"He has risen, just as He said!"** 

— by Rev. Paul Jecklin

reprinted from *Saints Alive*, April 1993

Christ Lutheran,  
Savannah, Georgia



# A sure and solid hope

**H**ope can mean different things to different people. Often it is used to express a desire or longing: "I hope it will rain soon" or "I hope that I'll be able to pay my bills." Though not sure of the outcome, we declare that we would like all to turn out well in the end. At other times the word is used to convey trust and confidence. We say we live in hope, meaning we are sure an event or a thing will go well. We do not believe in failure but expect genuine success.

At Easter, many people speak of resurrection hope. Death is an enemy we all face, and it is good news that one person, Jesus, has overcome its terrible power. Like Him, we also crave and aspire to conquer the tomb and the grave. This is surely no idle dream, for in Romans 5:2 we are told, "We rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God." Later in the same Epistle we read, "For if we have been united with Him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like his" (Romans 6:5).

Two questions must be raised:  
"How does this happen and how can we be sure our hope is not just an empty human wish and longing but a genuine personal reality?"

## Hope is a Work of God

We need to understand hope occurs one hundred percent as a work of God alone. In Deuteronomy 32:39 God announces, "There is no God beside me; I kill and I make alive, I wound and I heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand." God does this by working in and through Word and sacrament to personally bring about death and new life in you and me. Through the prophet Isaiah He tells us, "My word that goes from my mouth shall not return to me empty but it shall accom-

plish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11).

Christ Himself is the Word who comes to us through Word and sacrament even as Revelation 19:13 tells us, "The name by which he is called is the Word of God." And we learn from Romans 6:4 that "we were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life." In reference to the Lord's Supper we are told, "As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes" (I Corinthians 11:26). Therefore since we were united to Christ's death in baptism, by partaking of Holy Communion we also proclaim our own death.

## Ending Dependence on Self

Are we then to assume this new life in Christ just automatically happens as we proclaim the Word and administer Baptism and Holy Communion? When this is done objectively, are we to declare once and for all time that all is taken care of and nothing more needs to happen? **Certainly not!**

The means of grace must create a genuine personal transformation within us individually. But what causes these means of grace to work? Is there a condition we must fulfill to activate God's work through them within us to give us genuine personal assurance? Again the answer is absolutely not.

On the one hand God's grace is never automatic; on the other it is never conditional. Rather it is dynamic in and of itself. It works through law and gospel when and where God wills and never do we control it. Rather God uses it to control us.

Through the law, God works to put us to death to ourselves. God makes utterly impossible demands on us, demands which we can never fulfill in the least, to bring us to absolute despair over every-



**Christ in you,  
the hope of glory.  
Colossians 1:27**

thing we can be and do on our own. The law says to us, "You shall be holy; for I the Lord your God am holy" (Leviticus 19:2). In the Reformation, Luther came to understand this well. God never makes a demand of us unless He is sure we can in no way fulfill it of ourselves in the tiniest little bit. Neither does God ever transfer any power from Himself to us so we can achieve the requirements He makes of us. Rather He retains all ability in Himself in order to rip us utterly from depending on ourselves so that our all must be in Him alone.

## **Trusting in Christ for Life**

This is how we are to understand the words, "He who has the Son has life, he who has not the Son of God has not life" (1 John 5:12). God calls us to personal, living, dynamic faith in Christ and declares that without such faith, we cannot please him (Hebrews 11:6). At the same time He labors by the preaching of the law to destroy all humanly generated faith: that is all faith produced by an act of the human will (the flesh, the old Adam, the old nature) so that the only faith we rest on is the faith worked by Christ within us. He alone is the author and finisher of that faith (Hebrews 12:2).

No wonder Christ said, "apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). How important it is then that God's Word be preached in purity and truth and the sacraments be rightly administered according to it.

Yes, there is resurrection hope! That hope is sure and solid! That hope is to be ours not just on the other side of the grave but also day by day in this present world. It is one hundred percent in and from Christ alone! It is zero percent of ourselves. It comes to us by the means of grace as God works dynamically in and through the Word, baptism and the Lord's Supper to ever bring us to nothingness of ourselves and to Himself in Christ as our sole all in all.

If this is ours and we have been



RNS Photo

***That hope is to be ours not just on  
the other side of the grave but also  
day by day in this present world.***

brought to total assurance about it, let us rejoice in resurrection victory as we realize that we are overcoming by the blood of the Lamb alone as we await His glorious Return! If it is not ours, may God use His law by Word and sacrament to ever crush us and all that is of us and then may He through the gospel bring us that blessed Savior so in Christ alone we may have our true hope and stay now and for all eternity.

— by Rev. Christian S. Oswood  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

# Confidence in His promises

Until a few years ago, I don't think I realized the full impact and meaning of God's promises to me. My life had always run pretty smoothly. I grew up in a loving Christian home. At a Christian college I met a wonderful man whom I admired for his love and zest in serving Jesus. We married and God blessed us with two children. All was well. Then six years into our marriage, life began to unravel.

Our happy marriage no longer existed. My husband questioned every area of his life, including his commitment to the Lord, his marriage and family. An immense struggle was warring inside of him. I responded with love and pity for him on one hand and anger and frustration on the other.

I cried out to God and wondered why this was happening to us. I questioned my own self-worth and began blaming myself for our troubles. Then in the midst of this turmoil, God began to show me His faithfulness and love. It was the beginning of a life in which I have come to know and cherish God's promises in a new way. I was lonely and frightened, yet I felt God's closeness as never before!

I daily cling to verses of Scripture. In the Living Bible I Peter 5:7 says, "Let Him have all your worries and cares, for He is always thinking about you, and watching everything that concerns you." Words cannot express the comfort and

strength this promise brings to me! God has graciously taken my burdens as I have literally handed them over to Him. I know that I am putting the situation in the best hands possible.

Yes, many times I forget that God is in control and become impatient and try to take over the situation. Every time I do this, it only make matters worse. It was not until I asked for God's forgiveness in my life and fully committed myself, my husband and our marriage to Him, that I began to see results.

Isaiah 30:15 promises, "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." As God's child, I can live with total confidence in Him and His promises! I have experienced over and over again, when I live in this manner, my husband also sees me differently and reacts to me more favorably.

God is at work in our marriage. "For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). God has increased my faith and drawn me closer to Him through this trial and for that I thank God. I know Romans 8:28 is true! In all things, God does work for the good of those who love Him.

Jesus is alive. He loves me (Romans 8:39), and I am blessed. God be praised because in every situation He has already won the victory!

— submitted

## I Know That My Redeemer Lives! ...

He lives to bless me with His love,  
He lives to plead for me above,  
He lives my hungry soul to feed,  
He lives to help in time of need.

He lives to grant me rich supply,  
He lives to guide me with His eye,  
He lives to comfort me when faint,  
He lives to hear my soul's complaint.

He lives to silence all my fears,  
He lives to wipe away my tears,  
He lives to calm my troubled heart,  
He lives all blessings to impart.

— by Samuel Medley,  
AMBASSADOR HYMNAL No. 97



# PRAYER FOR EASTER DAY

*And as they were frightened and bowed their faces to the ground, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead?"*

Luke 24:5

Lord Jesus Christ, our greatly to be praised, risen Savior, we, too, want to join the many thousands who rejoice in what took place that Easter morning when Your grieving friends came to weep at Your tomb and found it empty.

You weren't there. Death couldn't hold You back.

By divine power You had broken free from that kingdom which had never given anyone up. Then gushed forth that spring of gladness in Your disciples' hearts which has never run dry, an eternal joy in life's victory over death!

And so we also, who are gathered here this Easter morning, can in adoration greet You as our living and present Savior and Redeemer, our Lord and our God. God be praised, thus has death lost its sting and the kingdom of death its triumph! Death's gates shall not, neither can imprison us! As You arose, so shall we!

O Lord Jesus, bless this festival day for us; bless the worship service in Your house; let your congregation find itself glad and strengthened in its living hope through Your blessed presence! May it be evident every day that You live in us and that the power of Your resurrection is active in us so that we walk in newness of life after Your good and holy will.

Let us be glad, unashamed witnesses to Your resurrection in this world, which in unbelief closes itself from that glad news and in its folly seeks You among the dead, You who live to all eternity!  
Amen.

— from *Ha Tro til God*,  
Johan Lunde  
translated from the Norwegian by  
Rev. Raynard Huglen

# Because He Lives, I live

*And the Lord  
God formed  
man from the  
dust of the  
ground and  
breathed into  
his nostrils the  
breath of life,  
and man  
became a liv-  
ing being.*

Genesis 2:7

Through the study of the Bible, we find that man was created for life, not for death; hence the doctrine of the immortal soul. The fact that man's body goes through a deterioration process and finally death, does not negate this teaching.

The Bible teaches that though sin and death came into the world through one man, Adam (Romans 5:12), God's provision for forgiveness of sin through Jesus Christ makes it possible to be right with God and be participants in His gracious gift of life. Romans 5:18 announces the good news: "Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men."

We all experience life in these mortal bodies. This life, however, is a defective existence subject to all forms of disease, pain and grief. The life spoken of by Jesus in the Scriptures is life of another kind. It is an existence **without defect!**

From the resurrection of Christ we may experience life in a new way, or to be exact, in two ways:

## 1. The abundant life

In the Garden of Eden, God warned Adam that eating of the "tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil" would result in death. Immediately following their disobedience Adam and Eve died. No, it was not an immediate physical death, which did come in due time, but it was a spiritual death. They were separated from unhindered fellowship with God. Along with that separation, all of creation and all future generations of mankind were subjected to defective existence.

Jesus taught that He would provide a superabundant life. How does He do that? John 10 pictures the Good Shepherd who would lay down His life for His sheep (us). He is the gate. He calls, leads and

## A true story

— by Ida Mae Kempel  
Alameda, California

Jeremy was born with a twisted body and a slow mind. At the age of 12 he was still in the second grade, seemingly unable to learn. His teacher, Doris Miller, often became exasperated with him. He would squirm in his seat, drool and make grunting noises.

At other times, he spoke clearly and distinctly, as if a spot of light had penetrated the darkness of his brain. Most of the time, however, Jeremy irritated his teacher. One day she called his parents



bestows. Jesus calls and whoever responds to that call enters through Him Who is the gate. He leads and gives abundant and everlasting life upon all those who receive the benefits of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection.

The abundant life: He gives to all who will receive consists in: freedom from the bondage of sin, removal of guilt, boundless love, joy, peace and the working of all things for the receiver's benefit. All believers (receivers) in the gracious promises of God in Jesus are benefactors of this abundant life here on earth!

## 2. Life without defect

Though we enjoy that abundant life now, we do so in spite of our weak and mortal bodies. Life without defect is that which is yet to come for all believers. It is the culmination of abundant living here on this earth. The command of God is that all who have sinned shall die. Death (or the transformation spoken of by Paul



# What was in Jeremy's egg?

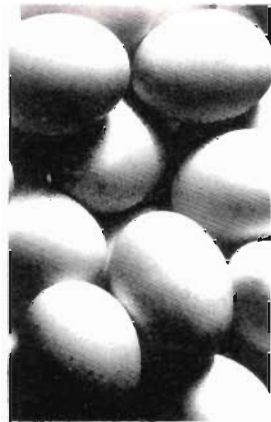
and asked them to come to St. Theresa's for a consultation.

As the Forresters sat quietly in the empty classroom, Doris said to them, "Jeremy really belongs in a special school. It isn't fair to him to be with younger children who don't have learning problems. Why, there is a five-year gap between his age and that of the other students!"

Mrs. Forrester cried softly into a tissue, while her husband spoke. "Miss Miller," he said, "there is no school of that kind nearby. It would be a terrible shock

for Jeremy if we had to take him out of this school. We know that he really likes it here."

Doris sat for a long time after they left, staring at the snow outside the window. Its coldness seemed to seep into her soul. She wanted to sympathize with the Forresters. After all, their only child had a terminal illness. But it wasn't fair to keep him in her class. She had 18 other youngsters to teach, and Jeremy was a distraction. Furthermore, he would never



He lives, all glory to His name!  
He lives, my Jesus still the same:  
O the sweet joy this sentence gives:  
I know that my Redeemer lives!

— Samuel Medley  
AMBASSADOR HYMNAL No. 97

in I Corinthians 15:51) must take place for the believer's benefit. Death is the passage into eternal life (II Timothy 2:11).

Jesus declared, "I am the resurrection and the life, He who believes in me will live, even though he dies" (John 11:25). It is clear from Scripture that anyone who puts his faith in Jesus as the source and giver of life will be given that life.

Job was a righteous man of God and had an unquenchable faith in his Lord. Resurrection life was real to him as he wrote: "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see Him with my own eyes — I, and not another" (Job 19:25-27).

Today we can possess the superabundant life to be lived while in our mortal bodies and the blessed hope of life without defect to be lived endlessly with Christ by receiving His gift through faith. Jesus Christ has given me life — not

deserved or earned; but through faith in Jesus Christ as payment for my sin. I can say with Job, "I know that in my flesh I shall see my Redeemer!"

How can I confidently proclaim this? By virtue of the fact that Jesus has risen from the dead! Other gods do not live and cannot give life. Their shrines or tombs declare their resting place in this world. But my Redeemer lives! His resurrection is proof positive that He is what He claimed to be. All of the promises of God and all of the promises of Jesus take meaning in the fact and have their validity in the fact that Jesus has risen and has the power and authority to bring to pass all that He has said.

"Because I live you also will live."  
Praise God the resurrection gives me LIFE!



— by Rev. Marlyn Kruse  
Word of Life and Hosanna Lutheran Parish  
Mankato, Minnesota

## JEREMY'S EGG

learn to read and write. Why waste any more time trying?

As she pondered the situation, guilt washed over her. "Oh God," she said aloud, "here I am complaining when my problems are nothing compared to that poor family! Please help me to be more patient with Jeremy!" From that day on, she tried hard to ignore Jeremy's blank stares and noises. Then one day, he limped to her desk, dragging his bad leg behind him.

"I love you, Miss Miller," he exclaimed, loud enough for the whole class to hear. The other students snickered, and Doris' face turned red. She stammered, "Wh-Why that's very nice Jeremy. N-Now please take your seat."

Spring came, and the children talked excitedly about the coming of Easter. Doris told them the story of Jesus, and then to emphasize the idea of new life springing forth, she gave each of the children a large plastic egg. "Now," she said to them, "I want you to take this home and bring it back tomorrow with something inside that shows new life. Do you understand?" "Yes, Miss Miller!" the children responded enthusiastically — all except for Jeremy. He just listened intently; his eyes never left her face. He did not even make his usual noises.

**"But Jeremy — your egg is empty!"  
He looked into her eyes and said softly,  
"Yes, but Jesus's tomb was empty too!"**

Had he understood what she had said about Jesus' death and resurrection? Did he understand the assignment? Perhaps she should call his parents and explain the project to them.

That evening, Doris' kitchen sink stopped up. She called the landlord and waited an hour for him to come by and unclog it. After that, she still had to shop for groceries, iron a blouse, and prepare a vocabulary test for the next day. She completely forgot about phoning Jeremy's parents.

The next morning, 19 children came to school, laughing and talking as they placed their eggs in the large wicker basket on Miss Miller's desk. After they completed their math lesson, it was time to open the eggs.

In the first egg, Doris found a flower. "Oh yes, a flower certainly is a sign of new life," she said. "When plants peek through the ground we know that spring is here." A small girl in the first row waved her arm. "That's my egg, Miss Miller," she called out.

The next egg contained a plastic butterfly, which looked very real. Doris held it up. "We all know that a caterpillar changes and grows into a beautiful butterfly. Yes, that is new life, too." Little Judy smiled proudly and said, "Miss Miller, that one is mine!"

Next, Doris found a rock with moss on it. She explained that moss, too, showed life. Billy spoke up from the back of the classroom. "My daddy helped me!" he beamed.

Then Miss Miller opened the fourth egg. She gasped. The egg was empty! Surely it must be Jeremy's, she thought, and of course, he did not understand her instructions. If only she had not forgotten to phone his parents! Because she did not want to embarrass him, she quietly set the egg aside and reached for another.

Suddenly Jeremy spoke up. "Miss Miller, aren't you going to say anything about my egg?"

Flustered, Doris replied, "But Jeremy — your egg is empty!" He looked into her eyes and said softly, "Yes, but Jesus' tomb was empty too!"

Time stopped. When she could speak again, Doris asked him, "Do you know why the tomb was empty?" "Oh yes!" Jeremy said, "Jesus was killed and put in there. Then His Father raised Him up!"

The recess bell rang. While the children excitedly ran out to the school yard, Doris cried. The cold inside of her melted completely away.

Three months later, Jeremy died. Those who paid their respects at the mortuary were surprised to see 19 eggs on top of his casket ... all of them empty.

— from *Focus on the Family*, April 1988  
reprinted with permission of the author



## 3 Enjoy Being a Woman

The first word of instruction to a wife was that she be submissive to her husband (Ephesians 5:22). Last month's lesson was a difficult one. It is understandable if you may have felt a tug of rebellion. Although a natural response, it is not a spiritual one. If you began to apply what we studied and came up against struggles and decided to abandon the whole idea, be careful, this is what the Evil One wants you to do. We are defeated if we disobey God or think that we are the exception to God's instruction. We can be assured of Satan's earnest opposition when we try to follow God's principle of submission.

Lesson 4 expounded the theory; Lesson 5 offers practical ways to live in a spirit of submissiveness. Let this be your prayer as you begin: "Now therefore, I pray Thee, if I have found favor in Thy sight (by purposefully choosing to be submissive), show me now Thy ways, that I may know Thee (and this must be our true motive in obedience) and find favor in Thy sight" (Exodus 33:13, parentheses mine).



The biblical view of submission is neither threatening or lowly. It is a most powerful position of influence protected from the heavy accountability of headship. How wise God is to instruct us in this attitude and how good He is to grant us this place.

### 3 Enjoy Being a Wife — Reverence

1. What is the second specific word to wives? Ephesians 5:33

*Let the wife see that she respects and reverences her husband — that she notices him, regards him, honors him, prefers him, venerates and esteems him; and that she defers to him, praises him, and loves and admires him exceedingly.* (Amplified Bible)

#### I. Acceptance

2. Respect first of all means that I accept my husband just as Christ accepts me. How does Christ accept me? I John 4:10-11 and Romans 5:88
3. A picture of a fault-finding woman is seen in these verses. Do you in any way resemble that picture? Proverbs 19:13b, 21:9, 19; 27:15-16.

4. No wife has a perfect husband. Every man has faults that need changing. How does God accept him? John 6:37

What happens when a wife tries to change her husband? Romans 14:4;  
I Timothy 2:12

Who works a real, internal change? John 16:8 and Psalm 127:1

5. When you are irritated by the faults of another there may be a surprising reason. Romans 2:1

6. How can a wife be an instrument of God to effect change in the man she loves?

I Timothy 2:1-2

Psalm 62:5; Luke 6:35

I Peter 3:1-2; Ephesians 4:32

Proverbs 31:11



In the secure atmosphere of unconditional acceptance and love from his wife, a man is free from human pressure. He is open to the work of internal reforming which God alone can accomplish.

## II. Praise

Look again at the Amplified Bible verse in number 1, and notice the verbs that have to do with admiring, appreciating, supporting and lifting our husband's ego. A wife is the person who has been appointed to do the morale-boosting for her husband. If each wife fulfills this position, no husband should need to look elsewhere.

7. What if your husband does not deserve reverence or respect?

I Corinthians 10:24 and Philippians 2:3-5

8. Because a husband, as leader of his household, is accountable, he desperately needs support. What attitude should a wife have towards her husband?

9. Merely recognizing qualities worthy of praise will avail little if a wife does not express her honor and admiration for her husband. What are some ways to do this? Proverbs 16:24 and I John 3:18

Perhaps you think your husband is so self-assured and confident that he does not require praise. It is not so. When his tender ego is bolstered, he will not need to do it himself. Bring out the best in your mate!



10. What do the following verses indicate about being sensitive to one's needs?  
Isaiah 50:4; Proverbs 12:25; Romans 12:15

### III. Priority

11. Read again the theme verse for this lesson from Ephesians 5:22. Where should your husband fit into your priorities? I Corinthians 7:34b; 11:2 and Proverbs 12:25



A husband and wife were meant to complete one another, this is exemplified in decision-making. A wise husband knows his judgment is incomplete without listening to his wife as though she were providing the other half of the wisdom God has made available to him. God designed us to complement one another.

12. Our theme verse tells us to “defer to him.” Deference is the courteous, respectful regard to another’s wishes, often to the extent of delaying one’s own wishes. A woman often enters marriage seeking to satisfy her needs by the man of her dreams; but Christ wants a wife to focus on giving herself to meet her husband’s needs. He also desires the husband to throw himself into meeting his wife’s needs (Ephesians 5:25-31). What does Jesus promise? Luke 6:38
13. We live in world that demands personal rights and self-assertiveness. What position does Christ hold in honor? Matthew 20:25-28 and John 13:12-17
14. Record a basic need of husbands and practical ways a wife can fulfill that need. Discuss several together.
15. How does the “sow-reap” principle apply to married life? Galatians 6:7
16. What if your husband disappoints you? Does that give you reason to ignore your responsibilities? I Peter 2:23 and Romans 12:21

Who is responsible for your happiness and fulfillment? Hebrew 12:2-3 and Psalm 25:1

Next month: 3 Enjoy Being a Homemaker

## Brazil WMF celebrates 25th anniversary

On January 13-15, 1995 the Sociedade das Senhoras (WMF) of Brazil celebrated their 25th anniversary. This was held at the same time as the 29th Brazilian Annual Conference.

Fifty-two ladies registered at the campus chapel in Campo Mourao. Each WMF group hung a banner in honor of the anniversary. Excitement was in the air as the ladies gathered to sing praise to God and to hear the guest speaker, Mrs. Helen Knapp, a former missionary and now a national WMF officer in the U.S.A. She was one of the founders and a life-long promoter of the WMF on the local and national level in Brazil. Her zeal continues in the States as the word "retirement" does not exist in the vocabulary of Christian workers.

The ladies were pleased with the lovely cross-stitch plaque received from their sister organization in the U.S.A. It is framed and hangs in the school dinning room for all to see and appreciate. The gifts of special napkins, silver balloons, numbers, ribbon strips and stars to adorn the tables for



Children from the Miriam Children's Home paying a visit to the Connely Dyrud home. One child is pretending to be Santa Claus.



The ladies attending the 25th Anniversary in Brazil.





Helen Knapp presented a gift from the U.S.A. WMF to Brazilian WMF president Dona Terezinha.

our ladies' noon banquet added much to the festivity.

God is faithful. The WMF groups have grown from small beginnings. The women have invited their neighbors into their homes for the meetings where God's Word was presented in the Bible studies. The women have invited others to worship services and special occasions. A glass of Kool-aid and a piece of cake at the close of the program provides a good time to develop a friendship and even lead to a new name in the Book of Life.

Pastor George Knapp gave a brief study in the morning on cults as had been requested. In the afternoon Helen Knapp spoke on the beginnings and growth of the WMF.

After the business meeting closed there was an informal time called Amiga Chiz or secret pal. Everyone participated by putting their name in a basket, then each drew out a name. The president began by describing the person whose name she drew without immediately identifying who it was. The game brought many laughs, hugs and kisses, and even tears as things were said and gifts received.

## OUR PRESIDENT WRITES

### The Uncertainties of Easter

Not everything about Easter is certain. This became especially clear to me in 1991 when my wife Gloria and I were guests on a Holy Land tour. Many of the cities and villages mentioned in the Scriptures were included on our itinerary, and a new dimension has been added to devotional reading as the actual sights and sounds of Israel are recalled.

The highlight of a pilgrimage for most Christians is the opportunity to visit those places associated with the death and resurrection of our Savior, but it is at this point that the uncertainties arise. In the face of conflicting claims, no one can maintain with absolute certainty that Mount Calvary has been located. The same admission must be made concerning the empty tomb, and visitors to Jerusalem are customarily escorted to a couple of possible sites for the grave that temporarily held the body of Jesus Christ.

Some Holy Land tourists are frustrated and even confused by the competing loca-

tions. Yet I am convinced there is a blessing in this uncertainty. It is not necessary for us to know the exact geographical sites where our Lord was crucified and resurrected. Faith does not look to a place but to a Person. The believer's certainty is in the gospel truth that Christ died and rose again, not in our ability to exactly pinpoint the places where these events occurred.

The great world religions have their holy places too, and usually one of them is the grave of their founder. Christianity, however, is not another religion but a personal relationship with God the Father through His Son, Jesus Christ, our crucified and risen Redeemer. We do not serve a dead teacher but a living Savior.

"But now is Christ risen ..." (I Corinthians 15:20). May the certainty of the Resurrection ring clearly in the word proclaimed and the praises sung throughout the AFLC during this joyous Easter season!

— by Rev. Robert L. Lee

## AFLC Women's Retreats

May 5-7 at the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wisconsin.

Speaker — Angie Lombardo

Cost — \$55. Registration by April 26. Call (715) 294-2877

May 5-7 at Quartz Mountain, Oklahoma

Speaker — Eunice Will

For more information call Karen Peterson (405) 946-0626

## Women's Missionary Federation Annual Convention

June 14 & 15, 1995 at the ARC, Osceola, Wisconsin

"Graceful Growth, Youth through Maturity" Proverbs 31:30

# Pastor Oseias Camara again elected president of the AFLC-Brazil



Two men were ordained at the 29th Annual Conference in Brazil. Laying hands on them were (L. to R.) Pastors Oseias Camara; James Winter, short-term missionary from AFLC-Canada; Connely Dyrud and Paul Abel, missionaries and George Knapp, retired missionary from Willmar, Minnesota.

The 29th Annual Conference of the Brazil AFLC was held on January 13-15, 1995. Pastor Oseias Camara was voted in as president with more than the two-thirds vote needed. He begins his sixth two-year term in that office.

The theme for this year was "Persevere in the Doctrine" taken from Acts 2:42. Pastor George Knapp, former missionary to Brazil, was the conference speaker. He challenged each delegate with the importance of persevering in the doctrine in one's life, church and community. The days were blessed with an extra measure of good fellowship and unity.

The representation at the con-

ference was good from all congregations. A bus started out with church members from Vitória, Espírito Santo, and passed by Curitiba, Parana, to pick up more representatives from AFLC churches there.

God is blessing the church here as the new district system is taking hold. Church planting and church subsidies are being taken care of by mother churches in each district. The national AFLC can then concentrate on planting new churches outside the districts and in new states in Brazil.

— by Rev. Connely Dyrud and Carolyn Dyrud  
Campo Mourão, Parana

*Now it came to pass afterward, that He went through every city and village, preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. Luke 8:1*

## We walked where Jesus walks ... in India

"I Walked Today Where Jesus Walked." The words of this song often echoed in my mind during a trip to Israel several years ago. It was thrilling to walk through the same cities and villages mentioned in the Bible, and especially to remember that our Lord Himself once walked there. There are many similarities between India and the Holy Land that I experienced when visiting India with Pastor Gene Enderlein this last February. It was a real New Testament experience for me — not in the sense of history, or walking where Jesus walked in days of long ago, but in the sense of walking where Jesus is walking today. Let me try to explain.



World Mission Director Gene Enderlein and AFLC President Robert Lee welcomed in India with floral garlands.

**Rev. David and Sarah Nelson and family departed on March 24, for Campo Mourão, Brazil, where they will begin language school.**



## WORLD MISSIONS

First of all, there was a sense of New Testament life for our World Mission Director and myself as we visited various cities and villages during our days in India. Perhaps it was the shepherd carrying a lamb over his shoulder, leading his flock homeward at the close of a long day. Or the farmer sowing his seed by scattering handfuls across the field. Or the women hauling water up from the deep wells with a rope and bucket. Or the children who were brought to us for a prayer of blessing.

There was also a sense of New Testament preaching. Every day we had wonderful opportunities to proclaim "the glad tidings of the kingdom of God." My preparations in the Word led again and again to the parables that Jesus taught and the miracles that He performed, which seemed to need almost no explanation among people whose daily lives included the same experiences. I recall our visit to a village along the Krishna River, for example, when my message was based on the first eleven verses of Luke chapter five. How exciting to see men and women whose livelihood depended on the sea respond so eagerly to the Bible story of Simon Peter the fisherman, who obeyed the command of Jesus even when he did not understand!

Most of all, however, we felt a sense of New Testament presence. The needs surrounding us were so overwhelming, and the schedule so strenuous, that we were constantly aware of the powerful presence of the One who called us to be His ambassadors. Day by day we walked with Jesus, and sought to show His love to the multitudes who gathered to welcome us, relying on His strength in our weakness. The great privilege was ours to witness the work that He is accomplishing through the Word in the land of India, to

see souls that have been snatched from the grip of false gods, born from above and growing in faith. It is in this powerful, personal sense that we can walk today where Jesus walks.

Pastor Enderlein and I also remembered that we were ambassadors of the AFLC, and at every service we brought greetings from Christian brothers and sisters in the United States, Canada, Brazil

and Mexico. It was always a special encouragement to know that we were upheld in prayer during these weeks, as our worldwide church family was brought closer together for a few weeks through this visit to our sister church in India. May our common prayer always be that Jesus Christ would continue to walk among us in the power of the Holy Spirit unto the salvation of souls and building up of His Body!

— by Rev. Robert L. Lee  
AFLC President



One of the many crowds of villagers who gathered close to see the strangers from America.



Pastor Enderlein prays for the sick who gathered after almost every service to ask for healing from the Lord.

## They graciously washed our feet

In John 13 it gives the account of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples and it goes on to say in verses 14-15, that we should wash one another's feet in the example that Christ gave.

In Christ's day it was a great honor to have someone invite you into their home and for the host to wash your feet upon arrival. Walking on dusty trails were the means of travel and likely the feet became tired and dirty.

The people who have been on the mission trips into Mexico with AFLC Partners in Mission Outreach can identify with these verses. We have been ministered to by many congregations who have generously given of themselves to assist us on our way. They have graciously "washed our feet."

There is one special congregation in the middle of Nebraska that has blessed us. St. Peder's Lutheran in Dannebrog requires elaborate directions for a new-comer to locate, but it indeed is



Mission bus in front of St. Peder's Lutheran Church.

well worth the search.

When our bus loaded with Mexico-bound mission workers arrived, we were served a meal fit for a king followed by a tour of their historic community and church. They gave us overnight accommodations in their homes and fed us breakfast before sending us off with prayers for God's protection. They did this not once this winter, but twice.

The unique thing about this group is that they are a very small but loving congregation. I never counted, but I think there were as many of us on the bus if not more. A thousand people could not have done a better job in hosting us.

Their size did not prevent them from reaching out to minister to another group of people passing by on a mission to serve our Lord. John 13:20 says, "He that receiveth whomever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." I am confident God will bless them for their love and kindness.

In a self-centered world, St. Peder's stands out in demonstrating true Christian love and fellowship. Good things are happening in the world and the AFLC; and for that we praise God.

— by Al Brazier  
Coordinator, AFLC Partners in Mission Outreach

## Michigan church opens a youth center

Calvary Free Lutheran in Eben Junction, Michigan has opened a Youth Center in the town of Chatham, located two miles away. Through the combined efforts of Zion Lutheran in Chatham (LCMS) and Calvary Free, a Kellogg Youth Initiative Grant of \$3,000 was received to set up the "Youth Place."

Both churches held a garage and sub sale last August and Lutheran Brotherhood matched funds to help us raise another \$1,100. Through purchases and several donations our youth center is equipped with a 31 inch TV,

a 25 inch TV, 2 nintendo players, air hockey, pool, foosball, ping-pong and darts. A refrigerator, microwave and furniture complete our equipment.

Recently in January we opened up our youth center for community "drop-in" hours on Friday and Saturday nights. We average between 30-35 teens each night. Sundays are reserved for our church youth groups to meet. Volunteers from Calvary Free and Zion supervise the Friday and Saturday evenings.

We thank God for the opportunity to have a positive drug-free

environment for our young people to enjoy.

— by Rev. John Allstaedt

**Beulah, North Dakota** — On March 31- April 1 youth from the Western North Dakota-Eastern Montana District gathered for a Retreat/Lock-in at Beulah's new church. Ask the teens who attended if it was a perfect set-up for April Fool's Day.

**South Dakota District Youth** will meet April 29-30 at the Holiday Inn in Mitchell. Pastor Wes Johanson, Pukwana, is the registrar.



## Standing for Christ

## YOUTH

# He has an alligator for a pet

Jeremy Berg is a junior at Greenbush-Middle River High School in Greenbush, Minnesota. He is a wrestler, an officer in the local and district Free Lutheran Youth and he is a born again Christian. And yes, Jeremy likes animals.

That's not too out of the ordinary. But wait till you see the list of his pets!

He is the owner of an alligator, one or two iguanas, a ferret, several unique kinds of birds and a tarantula!

The alligator is the Badger-Greenbush-Middle River school's mascot. The students will someday give the alligator a name and he may even be brought to some of the games; after all, he is a genuine "Gator".

And his parents? Well they go along with his pets as long as the cages are kept clean! His dad, Gerald is a contractor and his mother, Linda, teaches first grade.

Jeremy is straight forward about his relationship to Jesus Christ. He is a regular attendee

of the United Free Lutheran Youth Group. His mother is the sponsor along with Dr. Lyle Mattson. Dr. Mattson described Jeremy this way: "Jeremy is simply Jeremy. He is as honest and forthright as any young man I've ever met at his age. If he doesn't like something, he will let you know. But if he's in favor of an idea or plan, only the Lord's Second Coming will prevent him

from pushing the idea to reality."

When Jeremy is not cleaning the cages, he rebuilds old cars. He has a 1939 Ford pickup and a Mustang (see picture).

— based on an article in the  
*Greenbush Tribune*

(We want to read about young men and women who take a stand for the Lord! Please send your articles to AFLC Youth Ministries, P.O. Box M, Greenbush, MN 56726. And yes, as Jeremy's pastor, I am proud of him and all other youth in my congregation!

— Rev. Dennis Gray,  
*AFLC Youth Ministries Director*)



Jeremy and his Mustang.

**Hats off** to three high school students from Ruthfred Lutheran in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania. Rachael Roscoe gave a speech in Sociology Class on "Prayer in Schools." Robin Hatfield wrote a creative paper for her Sociology

**FLY Convention will be signed** — Miss Kari Lundeen will sign for the deaf at the National Free Lutheran Youth Convention at Estes Park, Colorado on July 17-22, 1995. Counselors are still needed! Contact Pastor Dennis Gray, P.O. Box M, Greenbush, MN 56726 for application forms.

Class paralleling her spiritual life as a Christian to being "employed by the perfect boss" (a Jewish carpenter). Jacky Fife recently wrote a paper for one of her classes on the ethical and moral debate behind abortion saying the issue cannot be ignored. She defended the sanctity of human life and backed it up with Scripture.

**Chester Dyrud**, a freshman at the Association Free Lutheran Bible School in Minneapolis, Minnesota has been awarded a \$500 scholarship from Aid Association for Lutheran (AAL) for this aca-

demic year. Chester is the son of AFLC missionaries Connely and Carolyn Dyrud of Brazil.

**First Lutheran Youth, Camarillo, California**, offered to donate \$1,000 to the Church Council's purchase of a used 16-passenger van.

**Congratulations to Coach Don Davidson** and the Aurora Christian School basketball team. Along with their coach, five team members are from Helmar Lutheran. They came in second in the Illinois State Class A boys basketball tournament.



## HOME MISSIONS

### It's more than just "Dial-a-Prayer"

The AFLC mission congregation in Milwaukee has a unique ministry. It is perhaps the oldest on-going "dial-a-prayer" in the United States.

GOD-LOVE as it is known today, was started in April 1957 by the Greater Milwaukee Federation of Lutheran Churches-Missouri Synod as a "tele-mission." Thirty-eight years later it is a ministry of a new AFLC mission congregation, Servant of the Savior Free Lutheran Church. The mission's pastor, Dale L. Radke, has been the voice of the "dial-a-prayer" since 1973. Four lines reach out to the community: adult GOD-LOVE; teen GOD-HELP; kids GOD-SIGN and the personal prayer request line is GOD-HEAL.

Since 1973, close to 5,000,000 phone calls have been tallied. This ministry started with one line and has grown to the four

that are now operating. At one time they also had a Spanish line.

Pastor Radke's car license reads GOD-LOVE. He says that it is not unusual to have someone honk and wave as they pass his car. Recently while shopping, the check-out lady said to Pastor Radke, "I recognize your voice, talk to me some more." She then asked, "Are you the pastor of GOD-LOVE?"

The messages are usually changed daily and all letters received are answered personally by the pastor. Radke has been instrumental in helping six congregations in the Midwest begin a dial-a-prayer.

If your congregation is interested in a phone ministry contact Pastor Radke at (414) 461-7505.

**Lake Superior District Spring WMF Rally** will be at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran in Finlayson, Minnesota, on April 22, 1995. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m.

### Attention men attending Promise Keepers in Minneapolis July 14-15.

Good Shepherd Lutheran in Cokato, Minnesota, may be able to help you with your housing needs. They are opening their church and some homes are available along with camper space. Call (612) 286-2861.

Promise Keepers conferences are filling up fast and men who are interested should get more information and send in registrations soon.

The 1995 AFLC Annual Conference will be held June 14-18, at the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wisconsin. See the next *Lutheran Ambassador* for information.

**Melbourne, Florida** — Abiding Word Lutheran has moved their worship services out of a rented college classroom to another facility which is more conducive to worship services. The congregation met in their new facility on April 2. Retired missionaries John and Ruby Abel continue to work with this new mission congregation until their return to Minnesota in May. Melbourne is one hour east of Orlando and visitors are welcome. For more information call Pastor David Barnhart at (407) 253-9387.

**Illinois and West Coast District Church Planting Committees** have announced plans to pursue advertising for interest in AFLC mission congregations in the communities of Rockford, Illinois, and Mount Vernon, Washington.

### Praise and Prayer

**Rev. Ernest Langness**, Ishpeming, Michigan experienced God's special hand of protection one day this winter. He went on his routine daily walk in the hall of the Norlight Nursing Home where he resides in Marquette.

Ten minutes later a snow plow hit his corner room demolishing furniture and one wall. Pastor Langness enjoys witnessing to the nursing home staff how His Lord and Savior protected him. If you visit Pastor Langness today, you will find his room not on the corner.

**Kayla Brandt**, Sioux Falls, South Dakota was seriously injured in a car accident on March 6, near Willmar, Minnesota. She is now hospitalized at McKinnon Hospital in Sioux Falls. She is the 17-year-old daughter of Rev. Michael and Jeannie Brandt.

**Rev. Paul and Laurie Nash**, Maple Grove, Minnesota began rebuilding their newly purchased home which had been fire damaged. While burning scrap lumber in the fireplace, a chimney fire broke out causing additional serious damage. Thankfully good insurance has given the Nashes an option in providing their housing need. The Nashes had left Wichita Falls, Texas and moved temporarily to the new home of Rev. Jerry Moan on March 1, to rebuild the house in Maple Grove until July 1, 1995 when Pastor Nash becomes AFLC Home Mission Director.



**Rev. Richard and Clara Gunderson**, missionaries to Mexico on loan from the AFLC to the World Mission Prayer League, have a new address. It is 19 Sur No. 4103 Depto. #1, Col. Nueva del Caymen, Puebla, Pue. 72000, Mexico. A further report from the Gundersons will appear in the next issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador*.



Mrs. Karen Anderson (standing) is the receptionist at the main desk at AFLC headquarters. She also is the Home and the World Missions secretary. Mrs. Charlotte Oswood (seated) is the new secretary to the president.

**Robert M. Bersheim**, 83, Winger, Minnesota, died at his home on March 20, 1995. Mr. Bersheim and his wife Meredith lived and worked at the AFLC headquarters from 1964-70, where he was the head custodian. Funeral services were held on March 24 at Dovre Free Lutheran Church in Winger.

**Michigan District Women's Retreat** was held March 17-18, at Marquette. Twenty-two ladies registered. The sessions, organized by Janet Tynner of Eben Junciton, featured Max Lucado's "Finding Rest in a Stressed World."

## PEOPLE AND PLACES

**Rev. Roy Johnson**, Ortonville, Minnesota has resigned as the pastor of Abiding Faith Lutheran where he has served for the last six years. He will give more time and energy to serving Elim Lutheran in the nearby town of Clinton. Elim recently joined the AFLC and was served part-time by the Ortonville pastor. The Johnsons expect to continue living in Ortonville.

**Orien T. Skramstad**, 80, passed away on February 16, 1995 in Valley City, North Dakota. Mr. Skramstad was active in the forming of Grace Free Lutheran and participated in many of the early meetings and conferences of the AFLC. He suffered a stroke in 1973 and had been confined to a wheelchair and unable to speak since that time. Among his six children are Rev. Gary Skramstad, Osakis, Minnesota and Chaplain Timothy Skramstad, San Antonio, Texas. Pastor Gary Skramstad's daughter, missionary to Brazil Mrs. David (Sarah) Nelson, is one of 18 grandchildren.

**Pipestone, Minnesota** — Christ the King Lutheran is hosting a Passover Seder Meal entitled "Christ in the Passover." The Maundy Thursday service will be led by Pastor Kearney Frantzen of Good News for Israel, Minneapolis, Minnesota.



Rev. Jay Eberth, Wyoming, Minnesota, is teaching "Romans and Galatians" to the AFLBS senior class during the spring quarter.

### Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

#### AFLC Benevolences - January 1 - February 28, 1995

FUND	TOTAL Subsidy	REC'D IN FEBRUARY	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% TOTAL
General Fund . . . . .	\$268,591.00	\$15,154.27	\$37,544.21	14
Seminary . . . . .	163,200.00	23,645.03	32,855.70	20
Bible School . . . . .	244,800.00	25,744.06	34,534.52	14
Home Missions. . . . .	335,040.00	45,456.52	58,708.00	18
World Missions. . . . .	359,927.00	23,085.54	51,140.14	14
Capital Investment . . . . .	35,425.00	608.75	1,647.04	5
Parish Education . . . . .	67,868.00	3,470.59	6,876.98	10
Church Extension . . . . .	10,000.00	347.60	962.44	10
<b>TOTALS . . . . .</b>	<b>\$1,484,851.00</b>	<b>\$137,509.36</b>	<b>\$224,259.03</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>TOTALS 1994 . . . . .</b>	<b>1,422,890.00</b>	<b>75,244.09</b>	<b>159,191.78</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Goal 17%</b>				



## Study finds poorest Americans most likely to acknowledge God's hand in their finances

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — Many Americans view God as the source of their financial well-being and the one to turn to for wisdom in managing their financial resources, according to a recent national survey for Lutheran Brotherhood.

Of the 1,000 heads of household interviewed, more than four in five (81 percent) have thanked God for their financial well-being. In addition, seven in 10 say they consider their own financial situation to be at least somewhat a reflection of God's regard for them, and nearly half (49 percent) have prayed for guidance in how to manage their finances.

"Many people take an active role in managing their finances but consider their ultimate success to be an article of faith," says Louise Thoreson, vice president of Lutheran Brotherhood's charitable and benevolent programs. "In the daily grind of money management, many people both seek God's guidance and thank God for their financial well-being."

The survey found that among three primary income groups (those making \$25,000 or less, those making \$25,001 to \$50,000, and those making more than \$50,000), those with incomes of \$25,000 or less are most likely to acknowledge a spiritual influence in their financial affairs. Some 86 percent of those making \$25,000 or less have thanked God for their financial well-being, compared to 77 percent of those making between \$25,000 and \$50,000, and 75 percent of those making more than \$50,000. Similarly, those in

### NEWS YOU CAN USE

the lowest income group are most likely to have prayed for financial guidance and are most likely to consider their personal financial situation a reflection of God's regard for them.

The survey also found that women tend to be more thankful than men about their financial status; 86 percent of women have thanked God for their financial well-being compared to 76 percent of men. In addition, women are 14 percent more likely to have prayed for financial guidance (56 percent) than men (42 percent).

Although the survey found that people look to a higher power for financial security and reward,

financial success is not their main value. Nearly two in three respondents (64 percent) agreed with the statement, "the love of money is the root of all evil." And six in 10 Americans (61 percent) agreed with the statement, "You cannot serve both God and money."

While money has its attractions, the vast majority of Americans believe that a good name is more valuable than riches. Overall, eight in nine respondents (88 percent) agreed that "a good reputation is more valuable than money." Among those who disagreed, however, those age 18 to 29 were five times more likely to disagree with the statement (20 percent) than those age 65 or more (four percent).

## Medical accrediting group says hospitals must teach abortion

CHICAGO, Ill. — Programs which train doctors in obstetrics must teach abortion techniques under a policy adopted by the Residency Review Committee of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, the group that regulates graduate medical education.

The council said that programs which refuse to teach abortion risk losing accreditation. Teaching hospitals need accreditation from the group to qualify for federal funds for services provided to patients by medical residents.

Under the plan, individual medical students who objected to abortion on moral or religious grounds could "opt out" of the training, but institutions which oppose abortion training would still have to provide it — possibly at an off-site facility.

The decision was sharply criticized by pro-life groups. Cardinal Roger Mahony of Los Angeles, chairman of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Commit-

tee for Pro-Life Activities, said, "Coercing people and institutions to participate in the destruction of innocent life is a great evil." Mahony's committee sent a letter to the council, noting that the new policy violates laws in roughly half of the states which allow conscientiously opposed hospitals to refuse involvement with abortion.

"The Residency Review Committee is using strong-arm tactics to force medical schools to become trainers in abortion techniques," said Wanda Franz, president of the National Right to Life Committee. It is ironic that those who want to force medical schools to train abortionists call themselves pro-choice."

The council's decision to require the teaching of abortion comes as the nation's supply of abortionists is dwindling, due to increased protests against abortion and to the low esteem in which the profession is held.

(The above stories used with the permission of the EP News Service)



## What Is It All About?

We were on our way to church one Easter morning when my father had to bring the car to a rather sudden stop. He did it to avoid hitting two "gentlemen" who came tumbling out of a house, onto the street, fighting and yelling as they went. What a way to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord!?

Sadly, it may have been just another morning to those men. It may have simply been another Sunday morning hangover; another morning of remembering a night that was suppose to satisfy but didn't; another attempt at trying to cover up and deny what had been done; another argument, another fight, another relationship on the rocks. They may have had no idea why we and others were celebrating that morning.

They may have heard about a holiday called Easter. They may have heard stories about a bunny and eggs and candy and flowers and springtime. But had they heard about Jesus? Did they know He died on the cross for their sins and then rose again from the dead? Did they know they could have life and hope because Jesus lives? Only God knows the answer for sure, but my guess is they probably didn't. They probably did not know what Easter is all about.

Much of the world is in the same condition as those two men. To them Easter is simply a day to eat candy, hide eggs and be happy spring has come. They need to hear of how that day, and every day, can mean so much more. They need to hear of history's greatest event: the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We are making a seriously mistaken and tragic assumption if we think everyone in our communities knows what happened on the first Easter morning. They don't, and until they hear the good news and believe, they are not truly alive. They will not figure it out on their own. Mere instructions in moral living is not their greatest need. They have not simply failed to understand how they are to respond to the news. Many have not even heard the news of Jesus, crucified and risen again.

Easter is a tremendous time for proclaiming the greatest story ever told and, sadly by many, never heard. We have wonderful news to declare. Jesus is alive. Death is a defeated foe. "Where, O death is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:55-57, NIV). The privilege is ours of letting the world know this good news, this message of hope and life.

## Another Chance

The phrases are rather brief but the message is powerful and lasting. When the women entered the empty tomb on the morning of Jesus' resurrection they found an angel who told them, "He (Jesus) has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples **and Peter**, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you'" (Mark 16:6,7, NIV). Elsewhere we are told that after Christ "was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ... he appeared to Peter" (I Corinthians 15:4,5, NIV).

Peter had boldly declared that he would lay down his life for Jesus (John 13:37). Only a few hours later, while Jesus was being tried and mocked and His crucifixion was being prepared, Peter denied he even knew the One to whom he had previously claimed such loyalty. He did it not just once, but three times. After he realized what he had done and how he had sinned, he went and "wept bitterly" (Luke 22:62). He must have felt like all was lost. Hope was nowhere to be found. He had his chance and he blew it.

That was on Friday, but then Sunday came. The angel at the empty tomb singles out Peter for special mention. Jesus wants Peter to know He is alive and they are going to be together again. In I Corinthians we are told that Christ did indeed appear to Peter. We are not told details of this meeting but from the way Peter was later treated by Christ and used by Him, we can assume this was a time when sin, while not being excused, was forgiven.

Jesus did not shun or ignore the one who denied Him during His greatest trial. He did not have the attitude, "You had your chance, you blew it and now it's over between us." A chief concern of His on that Resurrection morning is to see the relationship with Peter restored. He wants to give him another chance.

We all are like Peter. We have sinned. We have fallen short. We have blown it at the most crucial times. But God forgives. The Resurrection is about hope. The desire of Christ's heart was not to condemn Peter, but to restore Him. He has that same desire for each one of us today. He does not excuse our sins, but He paid for them on the cross. He does not live to only tell us the depth of our sin, although He wants that to be known. He lives to tell us the depth of His love and forgiveness. The relationship has been broken because of our sin, but restoration is possible because of Him. He lives to give us another chance. Confess your sin and receive and rejoice in His forgiveness today.

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## BUILDING THE BASE

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# Who Am I?

In my generation you often heard that someone had gone off to “find himself.” This referred to a person who was asking questions like: “Who am I? Where did I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going?” Many have searched for these answers in philosophy and religion, in experiences and adventures or by trying to look inside themselves. But the answers can come only from the One who designed us. He tells us these things in His holy Word.

The Bible tells us that God Himself formed us, and breathed into us His life. We were created to be like Him spiritually — in His image. That is to say we were perfect, holy, and lived in complete harmony and fellowship with our Creator. We were to fill the earth with our descendants, whom we would know because they too would be perfect, holy, and all would live forever in the greatest joy and harmony. We were meant to be the perfect guardians of God’s sinless universe forever.

But man chose to break harmony with the Creator; to rebel against his God. He then became imperfect, unholy, flawed in his innermost being. The life flow between God, the source of all

life, and man was cut off. The result was immediate death in the spirit of man, the eventual death of our physical bodies, and final death by eternal separation from and punishment by God.

This spiritual rift between man and God did not affect Adam and Eve only. All of creation was put under bondage to sin and death. We, their descendants, come into this world spiritually warped and separated from our Creator.

The Bible describes our spiritual condition in horrific terms. We are spiritually: 1) dead or devoid of spiritual life; 2) hostile enemies of God; 3) turned away from God; 4) incapable of loving, knowing, obeying, or even seeking God; 5) slaves of our sinful natures; 6) incapable of good and totally evil.

Luther says we have a “will under bondage.” We can choose to reject and turn away from God; but we do not in our own strength have the power or will to turn to Him or accept Him. “Total depravity” of the soul is a term often used to describe this powerlessness and utter sinfulness of our inner nature.

You may find it hard to accept the Scripture’s bleak appraisal of your spiritual condition. I am convinced, however, that we can never fully know the limitless grace of God until we have come

to know and accept the absolute depravity of our own hearts. As long as we consciously tell ourselves there is something good and worthy of God’s favor within us, our unconscious mind will keep reminding us this is not really true; and we will continuously feel nagging guilt for the unacknowledged evil within us. This will continue until we admit it, deal with it, and bring it to the throne of grace.

The miracle of miracles is that while we were yet sinners and spiritual enemies of God, He loved us. He sent Jesus to die, in our place, for the sin that separates us from Him. He sent the Spirit to work in our spirits; to change us from enemies to His children; to recreate in our hearts the “image of God,” that we might again have freedom to love and obey and walk in fellowship with Him.

“I believe that I cannot, by my own reason or strength, believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to Him: but the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the one true faith.” — Luther’s Small Catechism.

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