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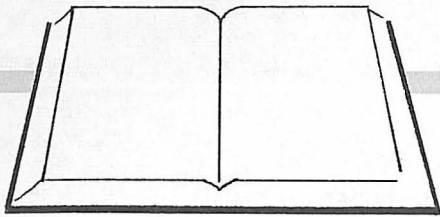
LUTHERAN

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AT PRAYER TOGETHER

"Lord, teach us to pray," Luke 11:1 (RSV)
RNS Photo



According to the Word

The Value of a Soul

“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it?” (Luke 15:4).

For a week in October, 1954, the eyes of the upper Midwest, if not the nation, were focused on Powers Lake, N. Dak., and the hilly, slough-dotted land northeast of that town where a little boy was lost.

Toward evening on Sunday, October 17, four-year-old LaVern Enget tagged along after his father as he went to get the cows in the pasture. But the father did not know that he had come behind him, and when he returned home, the boy was found to be missing.

This touched off one of the greatest search operations in the history of that part of the country. Thousands of people came at one time or another to do what they could to help in a heart-warming effort to save one boy's life. Before the search came to an unsuccessful conclusion that fall, a great variety of search equipment was used—airplanes, helicopters, horses, bloodhounds and boats. Towns and organizations sent truckloads of food for the volunteers. A National Guard captain said, “It just goes to show how valuable life is considered in the United States.”

Brave rescue attempts in burning buildings, one man drowning trying to save another, the use of a resuscitator long after it is evi-

dent that life cannot be revived, the code of the medical profession that life must be sustained as long as it is humanly possible—these are all signs of the preciousness of one life. In a sense, one life is worth more than the whole world.

Our verse for today speaks of the value of one soul—one life—in the eyes of Jesus, for He is the one who told the parable. There will be great joy in heaven, Jesus said, over every sinner who repents. Jesus was talking about the spiritual redemption of a man. This is what He died to accomplish. He gave himself up for all people of all times. But remember that He gave himself up for *individuals*, too, each one precious in His sight and desired by Him.

We know that Christ as the Good Shepherd has great compassion for every lost soul. He has gone back to the Father, having finished the work He came to do here, but He has left to His followers the great mission of bringing sinners to the place of reconciliation. He has called you to go out in search of the lost sheep whom He also desires for His fold.

The lost sheep are not few, as this parable might seem to indicate. Jesus used these terms to illustrate the value of *one* soul. Actually, the harvest field is great and it is world-wide.

The missing ones are not always far away—comfortably far. Many are near at hand—uncomfortably near. They may be related

to someone else, yes. They may seem to be someone else's responsibility, and yet you may be the one who the Lord has tapped on the shoulder to be the seeking shepherd. It is easy to find the eliminating excuse for inaction, but excuses will not do when lives for whom Christ died are at stake.

A community will go all-out to save a boy's life. This is good. But how often do Christians and churches evidence a spirit of divine urgency to evangelize and occupy until Jesus comes again? Are there many tell-tale marks about your congregation's program which indicate that at least half of her purpose for being is missionary?

We have spoken as though you are among those who have been found. Perhaps it is not so. And if it is not, then the Lord is seeking you with all of His great love. He knows you and your need. He is able to satisfy the deep longing of your soul. As the Good Shepherd calls out your name, cry out to Him from the thorns and bramble where you are held fast. He will bring you into the safety of the fold, and the angels of heaven will rejoice that you have come.

(The story of LaVern Enget ended a year later when a small search party, organized by a Williston, N. Dak., newspaper reporter, made one final search and found the boy's body in a drying slough not far from the home from which he had wandered away.)

—Raynard Huglen

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Bringing the Gospel to Iran and Iraq

The Story of

The Lutheran Orient Mission Society

BY C. C. A. JENSEN

DURING the first decade of 1900, three Armenian pastors visited the Lutheran congregations seeking help for the Armenian churches. Pastor L. D. Fossum volunteered and went to Armenia to help develop their educational system. However, he soon discovered that the Armenian church was not ready to make any changes. He therefore decided to return to America.

An Unoccupied Field

On his way home he discovered the Kurds, who are the descendants of the Medes of the Old Testament. These people, some 4,000,000 in 1900, are a minority group occupying the northern sections of Iran and Iraq, the northeastern part of Syria and some of the eastern section of Turkey. They have also pushed across the border into Russia between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea.

Pastor Fossum learned that no

mission work was being done among the Kurds. A Lutheran pastor from Germany had done some work at Soujbulagh (present Mahabad), but he had been killed.

A Challenge

The first protestant Foreign Mission Conference met at Edinburgh, Scotland, in the summer of 1910. The spiritual situation of Kurdistan (specifically the area in Iran and Iraq occupied by the Kurds) was reported to the conference. While the conference had no legislative power, some decisions were made to prevent duplication of work. By a sort of common consensus it was suggested that the Lutherans assume responsibility for bringing the Gospel to Kurdistan.

An Appeal to Synods

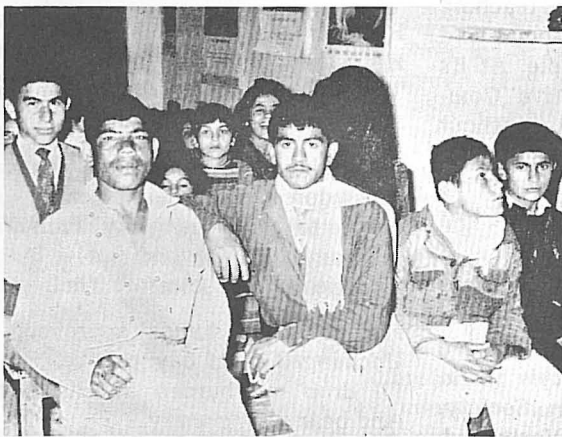
Pastor Fossum, who it seems attended the conference and talked with the leaders, brought this field to the attention of Lutheran Synod-

ical Foreign Mission Boards and pleaded with them to assume this responsibility. But the various boards felt they already had fields larger than they could take care of.

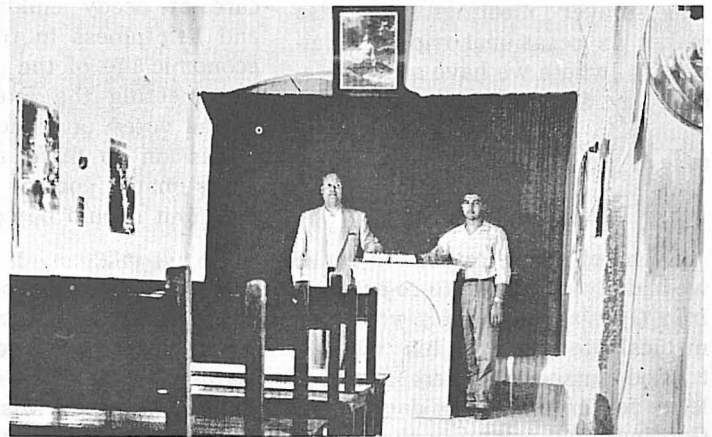
Lutheran Orient Mission Society Born

As a result, Pastor Fossum turned to a number of like-minded friends of various synods. These men of six different synods met in the First Lutheran Church, Augustana Synod, at Berwyn, Illinois, for a Mission Conference September 6-8, 1910. They made a survey of mission fields, studied the Word of God, and fellowshiped in prayer. At the last session they were agreed that mission work should be continued among the Kurds. So they organized the Lutheran Orient Mission Society. It has remained an independent intersynodical society.

This Society at once began pub-



A Bible class



Mr. Shammi and Micael by the pulpit in the church

licity work, and even by the fall of 1911 five missionaries were on the field: Pastor and Mrs. Fossum, Dr. Edman, a medical doctor, and a trained nurse.

The Society is incorporated and has a board of 21 members. It has no synodical support. Individuals, congregations, mission societies, women's organizations, Sunday schools, and Luther leagues from the various synods support the work with their prayers and free-will contributions. The Society has no field representative. It brings its needs to the Lord in prayer.

The Iraq Revolution

When the revolution broke in Iraq in September, 1958, the Lutheran Orient Mission had eight American missionaries in Iraq and one native evangelist, Mr. Sadiq Shammi. The Society had three stations. Mr. Shammi stepped into the breach, saying: "I and Mrs. Shammi will stay here and take care of the mission even if they kill us."

According to reports from various sources, this work has blossomed forth under the Holy Spirit's power. Mr. Shammi ministers to an unorganized congregation of some eighty members, with a Sunday school of about the same number. He is giving special instruction to a native volunteer, Micael, who desires to become an evangelist. In addition to concentrating on his work in Arbil, a city of 30,000, Mr. Shammi makes monthly trips to Shaqlawah and conducts cottage prayer meetings. He also makes an occasional trip to Sulaimaniya, where we have a third station. Mrs. Shammi is instructing the women in homemaking and taking care of the children.

Developments in Iran

Even before the revolution came, we had given thought to re-entering Iran (Persia). We had a volunteer medical doctor and his wife, a trained nurse, who were about to leave for Iraq. But this doctor, Mr. Gardiner, had served in the British Army in Iraq during the Second

World War. So he also could not enter Iraq. However, God made it possible for him to go to Iran under a short-term agreement with another mission society. During this time of service, Mr. Gardiner scouted for a field as opportunity was given, and he made friends with men of influence. He found several centers that needed a hospital. We made a trip to Iran in the summer of 1961 in hopes of selecting a place in which to open a medical mission.

God's Timetable

On November 1, 1962, Dr. Gardiner completed his term of service with the other mission society. He has received his certificate, giving him permission to practice medicine and surgery independently and head a medical clinic. The Lutheran Orient Mission has also been assigned a place, Gohrveh, on the eastern border of Kurdistan in Iran, where it may build a hospital and establish a medical mission.

Gohrveh is a city with a population of 6,000. It is surrounded by some 300 villages, making a total population of 10,000-12,000 people. The place is beautiful, with a mountain in the background. The climate is good and the soil is productive. Here the Lutheran Orient Mission hopes, by the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, to develop a spiritual center of wide influence to the glory of God. We look forward to seeing a complex of buildings and many activities—*h e a l i n g*, evangelism, care of needy children, teaching and helpfulness in the social and economic life of the people. At its last meeting the Executive Committee voted unanimously without discussion to build a hospital at an estimated cost of \$50,000. This first unit should be completed this year.

(This article introduces us to mission outreach in an area of the world that is quite new to us. We invite you to share in this work. Lutheran Orient Mission Society, 115 N. Madison St., Northfield, Minn.)

Materials Available Upon Request

For a better understanding of our free Association, we recommend that you write for the following items which may be had singly or in quantity for the asking. Write to Rev. Richard Snipstead, Greenbush, Minnesota.

A Statement on the Historical Situation—an eight-page pamphlet which describes in some detail our reasons for remaining apart from the larger fellowship.

Declaration of Faith—also known as the "Thief River Theses." It consists of thirty-five tenets which describe the Association's beliefs in regard to doctrine, Christian unity, church polity, practical life and church life.

Fundamental Principles of the Lutheran Free Church—fourteen statements or principles upon which the Lutheran Free Church was founded and lived.

Any person or congregation desiring to affiliate with us must be willing to subscribe to the latter two documents and agree substantially with the first.

CASTING OUR CARES ON GOD

Old Hymn

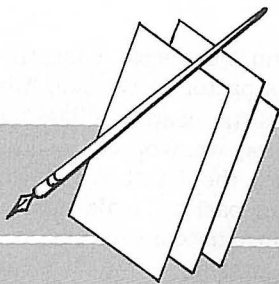
How gentle God's commands!
How kind His precepts are!
Come, cast your burdens on the
Lord,
And trust His constant care.

Beneath His watchful eye,
His saints securely dwell;
That hand which bears creation up,
Shall guard His children well.

Why should this anxious load
Press down your weary mind?
Haste to your heavenly Father's
throne,
And peace and comfort find.

His goodness stands approved,
Unchanged from day to day,
I'll drop my burden at His feet,
And bear a song away.

—from *The Friend*



EDITORIALS

THERE WAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT

The sun rose on February 1 just as it has always done since the beginning. But there was something different about the day. The Lutheran Free Church was no more. We hope that the courts may yet rule in our favor and declare a portion of the Lutheran Free Church still in existence, but that small segment of the church will be but a shadow of what we knew. After all, for one thing, Augsburg is *gone*.

Our brethren who entered the American Lutheran Church say that they have the "spirit of the Free Church" with them. We hope that they do, but that we have not been left destitute. And they have Augsburg. Nevertheless, gradually integrated into a body many times their size, it will not be like the Lutheran Free Church for them either.

Our departed brethren (we say that because we have not gone anywhere) felt that the time had come for the Lutheran Free Church, as a movement, to give up her separate existence and to find her place in what has been called the "mainstream of American Lutheranism." There was the place to bear effective witness for the Lord to a degenerating America and a tottering world. What one man called the "conscience of the Lutheran Church" wanted to be definitely attached to the body.

We did not share their conviction that this particular merger, or the one of 1960, was the best course of action. We felt that the Lutheran Free Church still had reason for separate existence, that there was room for an expression of Lutheranism a little different from that offered by the now three major bodies and the Church of the Lutheran Brethren. (For greater understanding of our position, see "A Statement of the Historical Situation" and "Declaration of Faith.") Without wanting to be "I told you so," we say that we think history will show that a merger along strict synodical lines was not the best of all possible mergers in 1960-63. But then, who would have dared work for anything different?

And it is a fact that the majority of Lutheran Free Church people voting (we're not proud of the voting total) in the three referendums favored merger. While the rights of the minority must be protected, it is intolerable for the minority to hold back the majority forever. Therefore, while we do not

rejoice in the fact of merger, we can still rejoice in the joy of those who felt merger was God's will for them.

We would not be honest if we said that we are satisfied with the way everything has been handled. We are not. But what is *done is done*. The Lutheran Free Church is *gone*. Things will not be the same for them or for us. We shall each face new doors of opportunity, and in this we shall find new blessings. Let us, in our fellowship, together with those who may join us, seek to work for free and living congregations in our time. This will challenge the best that is in us. So help us, God.

SOME THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

In our first issue of the *Lutheran Ambassador*, we discussed our purpose as a church paper. We are primarily concerned, of course, in serving our own people, but we would be pleased to reach other people interested in our cause.

We do not see it as our purpose to carry on a running battle with the American Lutheran Church, nor with any other Lutheran group. No doubt some would like this, but we must refrain from it, and it shall not be our editorial policy. Naturally, we are more interested in the American Lutheran Church than in any other Lutheran body and will want to comment on her life and program from time to time. We hope that they will feel free to do the same concerning us.

An editor is somewhat like a representative in congress. He is chosen because he represents the prevailing spirit of a majority of the people of his group. And yet he must be given freedom to be himself and to make decisions on the basis of the facts which he can gather. Ultimately, he is subject to the body which chooses him; in our case this will likely be the convention of the church.

An editor is primarily responsible for what he himself writes. In this paper all articles not credited to someone else will nearly always be his work. He should not accept for publication only material with which *he* personally agrees. This would be to manage the expression of the people and their right to differences of opinion. At the same time, he is responsible for setting the tone of the paper or periodical and thereby has rather large powers of discretion and decision. But, as we said before, he must finally be held accountable to those who hire him.

The *Lutheran Ambassador* welcomes spontaneous contributions from you, the readers. However, until the size of our paper is expanded, we will be limited in what we can use. Also, when we invite you to send material to us, we cannot *promise* that it will appear in the paper. We are referring to material you have written or an article taken from some other paper, not a news article about a congregation or an

association activity. Those we will accommodate if at all possible. We will not usually acknowledge by mail anything sent to us.

Another thing to bear in mind is that we have a time schedule. Material for one issue of the *Ambassador* must be sent to the printer over two weeks before the paper comes into your hands. If you send us something we did not specifically ask you for, you could hardly expect to see it in print until a month later at the earliest. Material which comes from one of our committees or agencies will receive precedence over what is sent in freely.

We do not mean to discourage you by saying these things. They are merely facts of life. We hope to receive news from you about your church activities, special meetings, testimonies of changed lives, etc. For announcements of any kind, please remember our time problem. Incidentally, our publication day is every other Tuesday, the first one being February 12.

Occasionally some of you may want to send clippings or articles from other papers. We caution you against being too zealous in this. For one thing, outside of brief news reports, we must get the original printer's permission to reprint an article. For another reason, we do keep in touch with a good number of publications and will use what seems good to us. But do call to our attention what you think we may not see.

We welcome letters to the editor. Here is a good way to get something off your chest in regard to the work of our Fellowship or on some other pertinent subject. Don't expect to see your letter printed in full unless it is very brief or we have had a hard time getting other material for that same issue of the *Ambassador*. Rather, we will print excerpts which bring out your main points. If you write to us but do not want anything printed, advise us of that.

Let us beware of two attitudes in all our writing, whether as editor or readers. One is that of unkind criticism. May our harshest criticism be directed against our own work. Let us refrain from becoming personal in our charges. There is such a thing as constructive criticism. Pray for the Spirit of the Lord before endeavoring to do even that.

The other attitude to resist is that of being "holier-than-thou." We have not personally met any Christian who was not saved by the grace of God alone. His salvation was a free gift which he gratefully accepted in a sense of deep need. When we realize this, it does away with all boasting. "Far be it from me to glory, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal. 6:14). Let us not think we will raise ourselves up by knocking others down.

PASTOR J. T. QUANBECK

Of all my friends among the pastors of the Lutheran Free Church, there are very few who have been

closer to me than Pastor John Quanbeck. I met him first when he was installed as pastor at Roseau, Minnesota, I being at Wannaska (a nearby village) at the time. For almost ten years, we worked together in the same district, enjoying the finest fellowship. We sang together in a district pastors' male quartet, at district meetings, Luther League conventions, pastoral conferences and other meetings. We had four district meetings a year, with three sessions daily in those days, and all district pastors were present at every session with very few exceptions. We took turns preaching, the male quartet furnishing the special music. We had many wonderful days together about God's wonderful Word. We also had the great joy of helping many seeking souls find peace with God. This was an almost continual occurrence. I will always cherish the memory of those blessed days.

John was a friend of the common man. He lived in fine fellowship with his people, never "lording it over them," but leading them. He was always concerned about the spiritual welfare of his people. He preached warm, heart-searching messages and saw many souls brought from darkness to light in his ministry. He stood squarely on the Lutheran Free Church principles, not in word only, but in practice. He was always active in community affairs, especially the public schools, seeking to improve the standards both in the schools as well as in the community as a whole.

When he was called to become the executive director and treasurer of the Board of Home Missions, his qualities as a level-headed businessman came to light. The Church Extension Fund was small when he took over, but under his administration it grew into a million dollar business, with a capital of over \$500,000 in cash, and loans of equal amount loaned out to Home Missions church projects, a revolving fund. To my knowledge, not one cent was lost because of bad judgment in loans.

At the Annual Conferences of our Lutheran Free Church, John was always present and alert. He saw the dangers more clearly than many. Although not the first to speak, when he did speak, he came up with something constructive. He was an even-tempered man. I do not recall any time when he would flare up in anger, even though he might disagree sharply at times. He had the ability of making his point clear.

In trying to think of a Scripture verse as a tribute to Pastor Quanbeck, I think of Matthew 25:21 again and again. It reads as follows: "Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Goodbye, John. By the grace of God, I hope to see you in the not-too-distant future.

Trygve F. Dahle

Certainties for Uncertain Times

BY PASTOR J. G. ERICKSON, FAITH, S. DAK.

"Consider the incredible love that the Father has shown us in allowing us to be called 'children of God'—and that is not just what we are called, but what we are" (I John 3:1, Phillips).

A panel of psychiatrists and psychologists met at a certain university recently to discuss "spiritual anxiety" among college students. The main conclusion reached by the panelists was that young people in college today are emotionally disturbed because they suffer from "spiritual rootlessness." These conclusions well describe our age. They also call to mind some words spoken long ago by St. Augustine, when he said, "Man, created for God, cannot rest until he rests in God."

Deep within man is the desire for security; he wants to "belong." The little girl who decided to run away in the night said when found by the searchers, "I feel I don't belong to nobody." You see, she had been orphaned by the accidental death of both parents and taken into the home of friends. They were generous and gave her all her little heart could wish, except the one thing she needed most—parental love. Soon a deep sense of loneliness haunted her. She felt like running away, and she did.

Modern man is like that. While he has conquered the earth and is reaching into outer space, he has failed to conquer "inner space." A sense of loneliness and "rootlessness" is in evidence—his heart is failing him for fear. He is running away from God! Natural man is such a strange contradiction that even when he believes he is in search of God, he is actually running away from Him. But though one may go AWOL

from God, he finds it difficult to live at peace with himself. There is a voice that has echoed down through the corridors of time, "Adam, Adam, where art thou?" While man insists on leaving God alone, God refuses to leave man alone. He follows fleeing man in close pursuit, well pictured in Francis Thompson's "The Hound of Heaven." Said a housewife in Birmingham to Catherine Marshall, "After ignoring God for fifty years, recently I took a new look at myself. Believe me, I did not like what I saw, so now I've been trying to change myself into what I want to be, but I find I can't." Then she asks, "How does an ordinary person like me go about gaining an 'intimacy' with God?" This is the expression of an "awakened" soul in search of God.

John, the inspired writer, has words for such a time as this. May I call your attention to a few select passages from the First Epistle of John. "That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3). Again in I John 3:1 we read, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." Further, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may KNOW that ye have eternal life. . ." (I John 5:13). Our bewildered and "rootless" age calls for a return to the time-tested Biblical certainties which characterized apostolic preaching and teaching and was such a vital part of the "awakenings" during the early years of this century. We must meet the challenge of our times

with a renewed emphasis on "experienced Christianity," rooted deeply in the Word of God. This alone can give men certainty in these uncertain times.

Among some popular misconceptions clarified in the First Epistle of John, I should like to mention two. First, the common belief in a "universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man" is clearly rejected. Fellowship with God is on a personal level and is possible only in and through the SON! The experience of "belonging," or being a child of God, can be realized only through a right relationship with Christ, the Son. "He that HATH THE SON, hath life." Jesus said it this way, "I am The Way, The Truth and The Life; no man cometh to the Father but by ME!" This is not one of several ways to God; it is THE WAY.

A second misconception commonly held and quite often expressed is this, "One cannot be really certain of salvation in this life." This mistaken conclusion has left multitudes in a state of "spiritual rootlessness." John declares with great certainty, "These are written THAT YE MAY KNOW." Again, "He that believeth on the Son of God HATH THE WITNESS IN HIMSELF" (I John 5:10). Yes, assurance of one's salvation is plainly taught in Scripture and verified by the experience of every Christian. This blessed assurance can be yours too.

There exists a problem, however, and John in no way passes over it lightly. It is the problem of man's depraved nature and his love for sin. God has never tolerated a "peaceful co-existence" with sin in one's life. A profession of fellowship with God while walking in

[Continued on page 8]

PROGRESS REPORT

FIFTY CONGREGATIONS FACE FUTURE WITH GOOD PROSPECTS

Approximately fifty congregations, most of them ones which did not enter the merger of the Lutheran Free Church and the American Lutheran Church, are taking steps to arrange a program of education and missions and to provide opportunities for fellowship among the congregations.

The group, whose greatest strength is in the upper Midwest, declared at its organizational conference in Thief River Falls, Minnesota, last October, that it would continue the principles of the Lutheran Free Church. This means a stressing of the freedom of the local congregation and an emphasis on living congregations. Her doctrinal stand is firmly Lutheran and is further spelled out in a document called the "Declaration of Faith."

This non-merging association of free congregations is currently under a temporary court injunction not to use the name Lutheran Free Church-Not Merged. It was the opinion of Judge Lyman Brink, Hallock, Minnesota, that the name would cause confusion because of its similarity to the name Lutheran Free Church. Perhaps in March the courts will decide whether the ban should be made permanent. If that should happen, the non-merging group must seek a new name.

The Thief River Falls convention elected Pastor John Strand, Tioga, N. Dak., president; Pastor Fritjof Monseth, Valley City, N. Dak., vice-president; and Pastor Richard Snipstead, Greenbush, Minn., secretary. A five-member Board of Administration was also chosen and a number of committees. All officers and committee members will be voted upon again at the association convention, June 12-16, and length of terms established.

Committees are presently working in the areas of Parish Education and Publications, Youth Work, Stewardship, Missions, and Seminary and Doctrine. The publication of the *Lutheran Ambassador* is partially the fruit of the first named

committee. The first few issues are reaching about 3500 homes.

Preliminary investigations concerning the establishing of a seminary are underway. There are few hard facts that can be revealed now. The consensus of opinion seems to be that it will be necessary to rent quarters for classrooms at first. Also the feeling is that it be located in the Twin Cities area. One man has been approached regarding the position of dean of the seminary, but his answer is not yet known. If possible, classwork will begin in 1963, otherwise in 1964.

The Association plans to develop one or more world mission fields. This action may not be possible for some time yet. For the present there are a number of established Lutheran missions which would welcome the support of association churches. Home mission work, for the time being, will consist in aiding smaller parishes to become self-supporting. Later on new congregations will be located in smaller and larger cities.

Finally, the areas of youth work and women's activities are being explored. The women will formally organize their work at the conference in June. A convention for youth will be held this summer if arrangements can be made in time. Two possible sites are under consideration.

The leaders of the association work report the opening of many doors of opportunity. Many individuals from several Lutheran synods have expressed interest in the work of the movement.

"And a leper came to Him beseeching Him, and kneeling said to Him, 'If you will, you can make me clean.' Moved with pity, He stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, 'I will; be clean.' And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean."—Mark 1:40-42

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"darkness" makes man a diabolical liar. The sinner must be exposed to the divine diagnosis of the law—"that every mouth may be stopped and all men may become guilty before God." Before this divine searchlight the inevitable confession will come forth, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son . . . make me. . . ." This agonizing plea from a repentant heart is at once interrupted by the tender embrace of a loving and merciful God. There is rejoicing, there is reinstatement, there is renewed fellowship. The lost is FOUND! This is "incredible love."