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Vol. 1

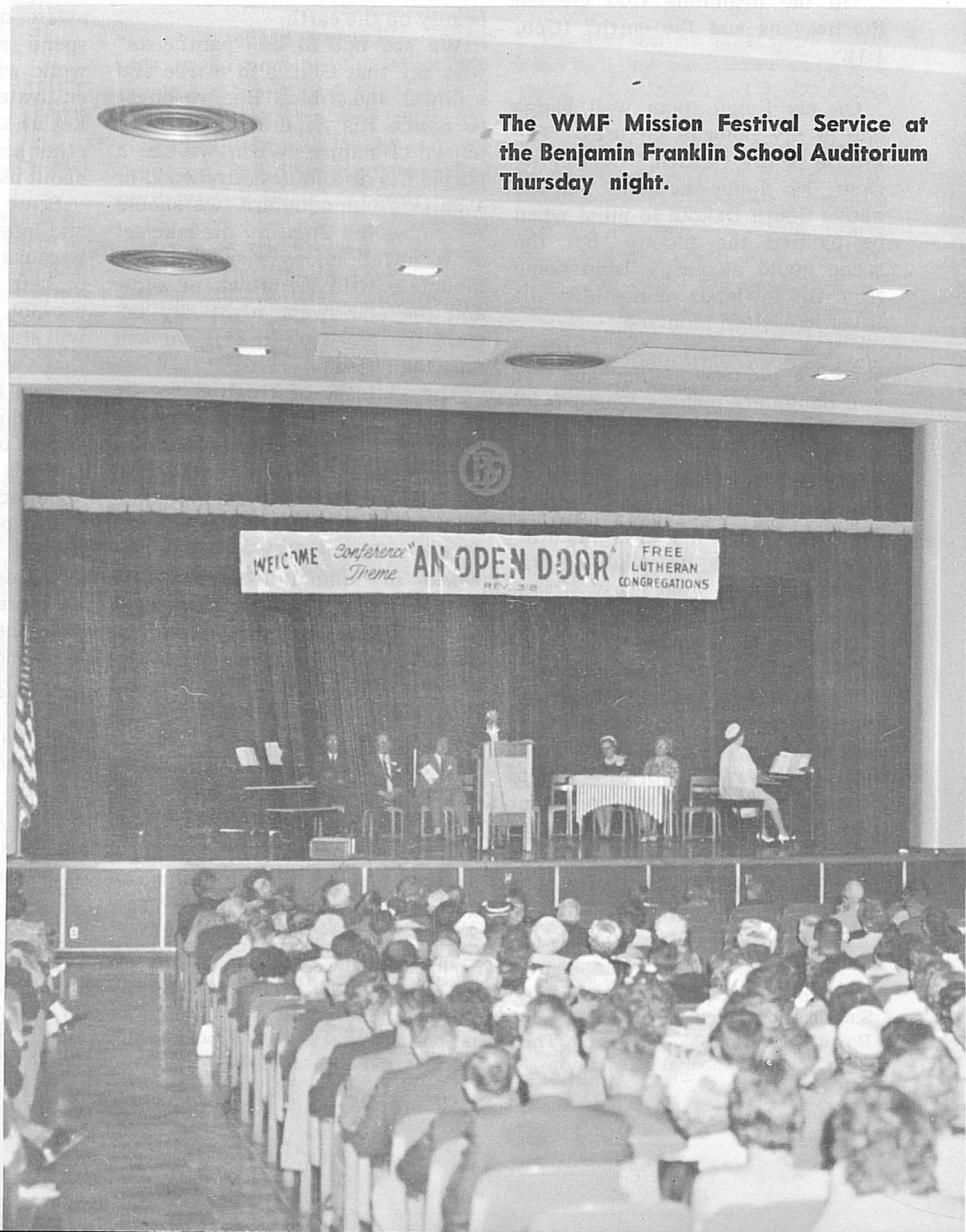
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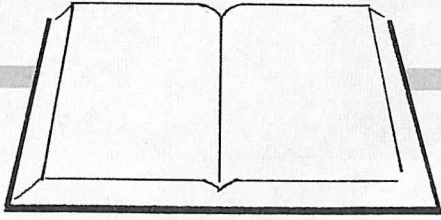
No. 11

LUTHERAN

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The WMF Mission Festival Service at the Benjamin Franklin School Auditorium Thursday night.





According to the Word

The Earth Is the Lord's

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1).

On my living room wall hangs one of my favorite pictures, "The Prairie Is My Garden," by Harvey Dunn. No doubt the artist had his native South Dakota in mind when he painted the picture, but the scene could as easily have come from the lowlands of the Missouri River in eastern Montana.

"The Prairie Is My Garden" shows a pioneer mother and her two daughters picking bouquets of wild flowers for their humble home a few rods away. A small creek winds its way nearby and the blue sky is flecked with little clouds. The mother and her girls make interesting studies, but what we will notice now is that they found something near at hand to beautify their hard and simple life.

"In the beginning God created." In those brief words the Bible begins its message. By the word of His power the Lord God brought forth a beautiful world. In spite of sin's coming and the resultant curse which has brought the cankerworm, the corn borer, wild oats, and rust; in spite of man's carelessness in littering the roadways,

parcs and beaches; in spite of the groaning in travail of creation in anticipation of the day of final deliverance, we see the mark of beauty on the earth.

We are not to be "pantheists" who say that God is in a tree and a flower and a bird. But we ought to notice His handiwork in every object of nature. When we see a purple iris or a lofty cottonwood or a darting hummingbird, we should remember the Creator. The lake set as a jewel among the hills, the mountain with its crown of snow and the star-swept night sky declare the glory of God, if we will only take heed.

The vastness of creation speaks of God. Our astronauts have reminded us of that. The complexity of our natural world speaks of that, too. Who understands the unfolding of the flower and the sweet odor of the wild rose? Or consider the world of animal life. The late Alan Devoe, naturalist (with whom we will not agree on all points), made this significant statement after years of study: "There is no time, ever, when we can say: 'Now I know about animals.' There is only a time when we can say: 'Now I know a *little* about animals.'" And a bit further on he says, "There isn't nearly time enough in a life span to get to know all about one mouse." (from *This*

Fascinating Animal World). That speaks to me about God's greatness.

Summer seems to make us more aware of the physical world. We spend more time outdoors. We work with the soil. We plant and cultivate and hope for a harvest. Let us keep our eyes open and our other senses keen for the mysteries about us.

Some of us will travel to new and interesting places this summer. Because we see a new mountain or lake, we may be especially observant. I hope we are. Some of us will stay closer to home with things that are familiar. If we think there's nothing new for us, it will be a dull summer indeed. Let me quote one more thing from Mr. Devoe's book: "A hundred-and-some acres is a plenty big enough world of animals [by the way, he means all non-plant life]. It's a great deal too big for me ever to do more than touch the edge of it, take the first small steps into understanding of it, even if I should live to be a very old man."

The Lord might ask us as He did Job, "Is it by your wisdom that the hawk soars, and spreads his wings toward the south?" We must answer, "No, Lord, it isn't. The earth is Thine. But we pray for open minds to know it better."

—Raynard Huglen

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OUR PRESIDENT WRITES

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF
THE ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS

Fargo, North Dakota, June 12-16, 1963

To the Conference of Free Lutheran Congregations gathered in Fargo, North Dakota, June 12-16, 1963.

Grace and peace!

Last year when the Lutheran Free Church gathered in Annual Conference in Minneapolis, it was to have been the last conference. According to plans formulated by others, we should have been for some months now "an integral part of the new church." But here we are in another annual conference in the friendly city of Fargo which has known many Lutheran Free Church conferences. We are meeting, thank God, and continuing to work under the Fundamental Principles of the Lutheran Free Church.

It is necessary that we meet to take a good look at our world, a good look at our Church, and a good look at our Lord.

Our World

Communism continues to spread with its atheistic dogma possessing more and more people. How good it would be if all would remember that communism is not just an economic system but a religion that denies the existence of God. And this system is exerting an ever-increasing influence in America. Coupled with a corresponding weakening of old-fashioned patriotism with pride in and love of country, it causes many to fear and tremble. Nothing can effectively combat this ideology but the Word of God taught in truth and purity. This alone is the weapon that can succeed.

Yet our people are getting more

and more materialistic. More concern is expressed over the body and the needs of the body than the soul and the needs of the soul. Our homes are engaged in a desperate struggle for life, with the demands of the community, and sometimes the church, militating against a healthy family situation. The liquor traffic continues to be a protected plague in our communities, with law enforcement getting to be an even harder task.

Our nation is experiencing a tremendous upheaval between the people of differing races. The church must through its membership lead to find a solution in a day that sees God's judgment coming on us for "race" sins of the past. Crime and delinquency are on the increase. Distrust among nations makes negotiation on the international scene all but impossible. Is judgment around the corner?

The Church

In this world stands the church. What is the strength of the church today?

Surely in these last few years we have seen signs of a resurgence of so-called strength in the Roman Catholic Church. While this strength may be more in the political and public relations fields, she is making an impressive impact on life today. Would that it were all good! Her image has a strong attraction for many. The "back-to-Rome" movement isn't just a figment of a frightened imagination. To ignore it is to be guilty of unrealism. The fundamental difference between evangelical Protes-

tantism and Catholicism is being forgotten or, worse still, being ignored. Clever propaganda, in the guise of tolerance, may be rapidly setting the stage for the betrayal of Biblical truth. So-called "tolerance" is used as a weapon against truth in all walks of life.

The Protestant church presents a confused image to the world. While the church is not to please or to be understood by the world, she must be the church, the "Body of Christ." Trying to make herself understood by and unoffensive to the world, the church often loses that which should be her true character. Doing this she may resort to human methods and means to do her tasks and become just another institution. Is not that the sin of much of the church today? Is that the reason the church is on a desperate holding action instead of on the march?

Although many things ought to be pointed out, we will mention three things that engage much attention in the church today.

1. Ecumenicity

Ecumenicity is in the air. The drive for mergers has just begun. The reasons often given for one merger impell another merger, and it is hard to stop even if one would want to. It is difficult to determine where the present drives toward organic union will end. Some well-founded fears are often expressed.

Although we have disassociated ourselves with much of this stream, we still would want some associations with our brothers in Christ in other churches. The National

Association of Evangelicals may be a means of doing this.

2. Neo-orthodoxy

Theological thought is in a turmoil in America today. Neo-orthodoxy, which hit the European churches years ago, is gripping most of the American churches now. It would make man's mind a judge over the written Word and reduce much of the Bible to myths, history, and stories. It causes confusion, for, claiming to be scientific and scholarly, it is extremely subjective and leaves truth in the hands of man's opinions, which seldom agree. The Bible thus does not speak with authority, and man is set adrift without a firm foundation of "thus saith the Lord" to stand on. To defend this doctrine, these theologians must take from Christ much of His uniqueness. He can no longer be born of a virgin; He can no longer be omniscient, etc. Certainly the central doctrine of the atonement stands in grave danger. We must search the Scriptures for strength to stand in our day.

3. Gifts of the Spirit

Much attention is being given to the gifts of the Spirit in our day. This is good and is needed, but there are some dangers. This interest seems to center around the gift of tongues.

There is such a thing as speaking in tongues. While this gift was used to glorify Christ and to bring the Gospel to the multitudes in Jerusalem that first Pentecost Sunday, it did later become a problem in the church in Corinth. The same is taking place today. While it is one of the lesser gifts, and a gift not to be sought, it seems to be over-emphasized in some quarters. All the gifts of the Spirit are to glorify Christ and to build the church. When anything else takes place we must question. While we do not have a problem here, we must pray that if any in our fellowship have this gift that they will carefully follow the teachings of the Bible in its use.

Christ is the cornerstone of the

church. He is the one we must glorify, not any gift or any recipient of a gift. The gifts of the Spirit are the means the church must use to evangelize. Let no abuse of any gift cause harm to Christ and His church.

OUR CHURCH

Last fall we met in convention that we might continue as an association of congregations loyal to the Fundamental Principles of the Lutheran Free Church. Officers and committees were elected to serve until this conference. We have tried to serve loyally and to the best of our ability. Much has been done, but there was so much to do. We had to start practically from scratch. To God belongs the glory for what has been accomplished.

You people have supported your church in a wonderful fashion. With such loyalty and faith, the future looks bright.

1. Accomplishments

Among the accomplishments are: The publishing of our fine organ, *The Lutheran Ambassador*, with Pastor Raynard Huglen as the editor.

The beginning of a mission outreach, with Pastor John Abel as the executive director.

The purchase of a headquarters building. The committee did not have a mandate from the conference, so two men purchased the building, trusting that this conference would make the necessary decisions. Our people responded in a wonderful way, making the necessary loans to the Mission Committee, which is incorporated.

The women of our Church have begun a work to encourage mission and Bible study interest among our congregations. We hope they can soon have their own Bible studies prepared for our faithful women's organizations.

A fine Bible conference was held in McVile, North Dakota.

Some work has been done, looking forward to the establishing of a theological seminary. A family camp has been planned for July 8-14. This will be a wonderful opportunity to relax and to study God's Word. It could also be a time for our pastors to grapple with some of the social and theological issues of the day.

2. Handicaps

We have had our handicaps. Our convention in October passed a resolution that we were to continue using the name The Lutheran Free Church, adding the two words Not Merged. The Board of Administration of the old Lutheran Free Church secured a temporary injunction, to be in effect until the matter can be argued in court, forbidding us to use that name. This has complicated things for us. The matter will be argued in court June 18, and a decision should be forthcoming soon. While we anticipate victory, some authority should be given the Board of Administration to make necessary decisions if we should lose.

There was so much to do, and little time to do it. We had no one who could spend all his time working in our congregations on our behalf. Some things have been neglected that should not have been.

3. Our Congregations

We are a congregation-centered church. There are some real struggles taking place in many of our congregations. Some have been split over the merger question. We are sorry, but we must report that often the constitutions of the congregations and the principles of our Church have been forgotten or ignored. This naturally causes confusion. Advice has often been given by church leaders that has also added to the confusion. Some congregations have been treated as pawns to be manipulated instead of as a part of Christ's Body. Some pastors have assumed authority over congregations instead of being servants of the congregations.

Our laymen have been very long-suffering, too long-suffering in many places. Perhaps they should have insisted on their rights provided by their constitutions and the Principles of the Lutheran Free Church. Each congregation must make these decisions, of course.

The Fundamental Principles of the Lutheran Free Church is a precious document. Our congregations must get better acquainted with these principles and compare them with synodical constitutions. They will then have a greater appreciation for the Principles of our Church.

There is need for an evangelistic thrust in our congregations. The church's main task is evangelism and fellowship. It would be well if means could be found soon to provide the gifts of an evangelist for our congregations.

The congregations need to get better acquainted with the other

congregations in the Church. Area Bible conferences and/or stewardship meetings will help in this. Youth rallies must be encouraged. The Family Bible Camp planned for July is a good beginning.

4. Pastors' Supply

The supply of pastors seems to be adequate. Some parish lines are not definitely drawn as yet; but as time goes by, these things ought to be cleared up. We feared a shortage of pastors for a while; but because of pastors coming to us from other church bodies, and more perhaps on the way, things look good at present.

There are some real challenging home mission opportunities that face us. We should have two congregations in Minneapolis soon, and perhaps some others. Also we want to begin work real soon on some foreign field. This will take some men and means.

We will need to get our seminary functioning as soon as possible. There are young men waiting to enter it. A faculty is the big need. Also the decision must be made if we are to have a seminary of our own, or work co-operatively supporting an independent seminary with other Lutherans. We can't afford to wait too long before making this decision.

A committee has been giving some study to a pastors' pension plan. Our conference in Thief River Falls tabled a motion until this conference concerning giving our retired pastors and pastors' widows \$30 per month minimum. Perhaps a report will come to this conference on this entire matter.

5. The Future

We are a growing church. We have come further in a short time

[Continued on page 11]

WHAT THE CONFERENCE DID

We begin today a summary of important decisions made by the Annual Conference of the Association. Not all shall be mentioned here, but you may read of the remainder of them in the printed annual report which will be available in about two months.

President's Message and Administration

—urged dissemination of sound Christian literature and faithful instruction in the Word of God to counteract the Communist menace.

—called for old-fashioned discipline in the home and the erection of a family altar to resist the inroads of materialism, the liquor traffic, and immorality.

—expressed thankfulness to God for sending Rev. John Abel into our fellowship and the prospect of a good mission program.

—rejoiced in the purchase of the mission headquarters and okayed the acquisition.

—recommended the study of the Fundamental Principles of the Lutheran Free Church.

—suggested that every congregation have at least one week of evangelistic meetings a year.

—recommended a budget of \$9,000 for administration (including subsidies for *The Lutheran Ambassador* and youth work).

Missions

—recommended that we seek to send out three missionary couples in the coming year (that is, 1964).

—proposed that the country of Brazil be considered the field of operation.

—urged the Mission Committee to assist in the realignment of parishes and the establishment of new congregations.

—recommended a mission budget of \$30,700.

Seminary and Doctrine

—authorized the Association to

establish a theological seminary in 1964 at a place to be determined and to consider beginning a Bible school at the same location when possible.

—asked the Board of Administration to submit resolutions to the next annual conference which would provide for a seminary corporation and board of directors.

—accepted the "Declaration of Faith" which was presented at Thief River Falls last October, but called for the review of the theses at the next conference by the committee on administration.

—recommended a budget of \$13,500 for 1964.

Race Relations

—expressed its willingness to join "in prayer and work with all men of good will toward the day when equal opportunity for all American citizens will not only be the law of the land, but reality."

CONFERENCE PHOTOS



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1. Our Missions Center in Fargo where all business sessions of the Annual Conference were held.



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2. The Ambassadors trumpet trio played at the opening conference service. From left to right: Dave Johnson, Roger Strom and Francis Monseth.

3. Part of the audience which attended the convention of the Women's Missionary Federation.

4. Rev. Arthur S. Olson, veteran missionary to China and Hong Kong, who brought a greeting to the WMF convention.



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5. Pastor Raynard Huglen, editor of *The Lutheran Ambassador*, preached the sermon at the opening service of the conference.

6. The women's trio from Valley City, N. Dak., which sang at the mission service. From left to right: Mrs. Frank Johnson, Mrs. Bjornson and Mrs. Ernest Miedema.

7. Pastor John H. Abel, Missions Director, spoke at the mission festival service of the WMF.

8. The newly elected officers of the Women's Missionary Federation. From left to right: Mrs. O. K. Ose, Thief River Falls, Minn., president; Mrs. Herbert Presteng, Grafton, N. Dak., vice-president; Mrs. Julius Hermunsle, Spicer, Minn., advisor; Mrs. Raymond Jacobson, Sebeka, Minn., secretary; and Mrs. Albert Moen, Grand Forks, N. Dak., treasurer.



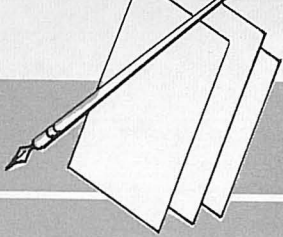
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EDITORIALS

ANNUAL CONFERENCE NOW HISTORY

The first Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations since merger ended yesterday (as this is being written) and has now entered the records of history. We trust that the decisions made at Fargo will be carried out in such a way that many thrilling chapters may be added in days to come.

The close of the conference is so recent that it may be difficult to evaluate the conference yet, but first impressions have a value that later reflections cannot have. Here are one person's thoughts about the recently concluded convention.

There was a good spirit of Christian fellowship evident. People had come not only to conduct business, even if the Lord's business, but to meet for spiritual refreshing. There was a spontaneity in the prayer sessions. The presence of the Ambassadors youth caravan with their simple testimonies of Christ was a good influence. Over and over again one heard people say that they rejoiced in being able to be present.

Many people came to the conference. There were 378 pastors and lay people who registered for the business sessions. They came from 96 congregations. You will realize that being a "free" conference, people came from a good number of unaffiliated churches. Registration through Sunday brought the total well over 400. In addition, there were many visitors. People were known to be present from at least nine states. We were very happy about the turnout.

When we notice that as recently as 1954 the Annual Conference of the Lutheran Free Church had 342 lay delegates registered, our figure looks very respectable. The great majority of our registrants were of necessity lay people. There was a good mixture of age and youth, with everything in between. It is good to see that the elders of the congregations maintain their interest and will yet give their counsel. Our attention was called to an 83-year-old lady from Binford, N. Dak., who made the effort to be present. The presence of strong young men and women gave promise that our hopes and beliefs will not die in a generation. When the elders lay down the work in the vineyard, eager and stronger hands will grasp the challenge.

We saw many familiar faces at Fargo, faces of people who attended many a Lutheran Free Church conference in the past. This was good because it gave a feeling of continuity with days that are gone. Of

course we missed many familiar persons, both of the pastors and laity. It was not the same as before, in that respect. Some of the new faces belonged to people who are entering the fellowship from other Lutheran churches. The fact of their presence indicates that the fellowship is growing and will be enriched by the coming of these like-minded brethren. We welcome them.

One discouraging thing about the attendance was that some of our congregations were not represented at all. It will be a while before the report is in which will show who the missing were. It is not easy to understand how out of a specific congregation no one person is able to attend conference. In a group of our size we are going to need as nearly one hundred percent interest as possible to make our program go. The absence of these friends may not hurt us so much this time, but their presence would have encouraged us all greatly. One final word on attendance—we missed not having anyone with us from Canada. We hope that doesn't happen again.

WE CONDUCTED BUSINESS

There will be some report of the business transacted at Conference in this issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador*. Other business results will come in the next number or two.

The business sessions were carried out well. President John Strand ruled with a fair and firm hand, yet with no sense of domination. Pastors and lay people participated in the deliberations. Some items could have been discussed considerably more; but if everything were considered as fully as it could be, we might still be in Fargo and the Lord's open doors would have to be shut by default. Occasional interjection of humor into the proceedings (such as Pastor Harold Schafer's policing of the grammar and wording of the *Ambassador* resolutions) kept everyone in good spirits. Instead of the traditional "all-session" coffee hours, there were coffee-breaks for everyone at the same time morning and afternoon. More time than usual is lost that way, but at least a person knows that while he is eating he isn't missing out on the business session.

A budget of over \$50,000 was voted by the delegates. This may sound high to some, but actually it is based on a lower per-confirmed-member basis than many of us were used to before merger. Nevertheless, we think it will be a challenge, and how we meet it will give an indication as to whether we are serious about bearing a gospel witness to our age or whether we bequeath the task to others who may have more vision. It is certain that some congregations will have to do better for our benevolences than they did for those of the old Lutheran Free Church if we are to survive, let alone make an impact on the world. As President Strand said in his closing message to the conference on Sunday, we aren't in a position to say, "Let George do it." We must

do it or it will not be done.

Having said this, we want to add that we expect to see some very excellent stewardship on the part of many people. There is a sense on the part of many of having a program in which they can believe strongly. And when people believe in something strongly, they usually respond even to the point where sacrifice is approached. All of our people aren't at this point, by any means, but a good number are.

Pastor John Strand, also in his Sunday address which, by the way, was a ringing challenge, listed our smallness as an advantage. He meant that our size makes our work very personal. We feel responsible for it. When we send out our first missionaries it will be a much, much greater thrill to us than the average American Lutheran Church member can feel when his church sends out fifty in one year. We don't say this derogatorily, but we feel it is true. In a small association, when one member suffers, truly all suffer; and when one rejoices, the others share in his triumph.

The business session revealed a forward-looking spirit. We needed that because we have no place to go but up. The people sensed that we have to get off home base. The conference set the tone of our future work. We want to do the things a church should do. Particularly we are beginning in the areas of missions and training of pastors.

A year from now we hope to have definite plans for the sending of two or three couples to our first mission field, possibly Brazil. The conference heard and saw one young couple who may be in that first contingent. It was a gripping experience to hear their testimonies and also that of a college girl who has the Lord's call to mission work and would consider working for us. Over half of the money voted at the conference will be for home and world missions.

It was a humbling experience to see the young men at our conference who desire seminary training from us. They are young, good-looking men and they are willing to cast their lot with us. They want training in theology in an atmosphere of a warm-hearted approach to the Scriptures in a Lutheran setting. They are not interested in knowing every last textual criticism of the Bible but in learning how to apply the authoritative message of God's Word to souls who will die forever unless they know and appropriate the love of Jesus for them. They want to believe that God the Father and God the Son could perform miracles which cannot be explained by finite minds.

We must not disillusion these young men. Their quest may be more spiritual than ours. Some of them are not from the Lutheran Free Church. They do not know the grievances some of us may have had in our merger struggles. They will not be edified if they sense a narrow, provincial attitude among us as they travel in our congregations, as in the case of the caravan, or work in our congregations, as in the case of the interns. They are coming to us for

spiritual reasons, and we want them to see in us a plan for God's kingdom that transcends even loyalty to church buildings and parsonages. We would ask them to try to understand what we have gone through. We must not ask them to understand bitterness, self-righteousness, or even hatred.

We shall continue our observations next time. But we conclude now by saying that we had a very fine conference at our Missions Center in Fargo. Our work is more encouraging than ever. God has given us an open door and there is every indication that we are going to enter it and do the task before us to the glory and honor of the Lord.

IN PREPARATION FOR LAKE GENEVA

One of the reasons we are looking forward to our Family Bible Camp, July 8-14, is the opportunity it will give us, we hope, to engage in some informal and unhurried dialogue among ourselves.

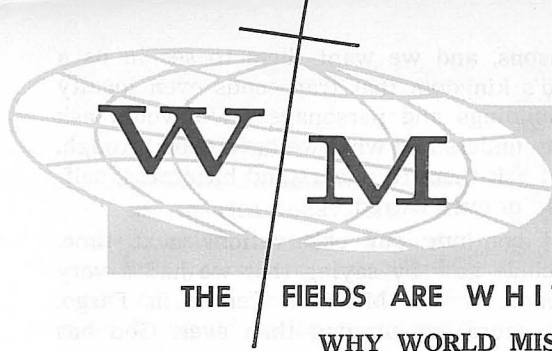
Some of us have met many, many times since last fall and have had countless hours of discussion. But in the presence of essential business matters which had to be dispatched, we have not been able to discuss in depth any one single theological or practical problem together. We don't suppose we will be able to do that at Geneva either, but perhaps we can go further than at any time before.

For instance, it would be helpful to come to a little better understanding of the term "neo-orthodoxy." We are against it, but sometimes we think the term is used rather loosely and asked to cover a multitude of sins. Another area is science. We do not believe in the theory of evolution. Personally, we think more faith is required to believe evolution than a more instantaneous creation by the Word of God. But having said that, what is our attitude toward science? Does it have something to say to us? If so, what? Or ought we pay no attention to it at all?

Our position on the person and work of the Holy Spirit has been stated recently in this paper by Pastor Julius Hermunslie. Yet there may be some matters regarding the Spirit which could be profitably pursued. One more area of interest which we shall mention now is the relationship between baptism and adult faith. Are we in danger of regarding baptism too lightly or have we given it too much prominence?

As the editor, we would like to have a little better understanding of our thinking on these and other matters. In the nature of a suggestion, it would be worth while if anyone has any material in quantity on one of these or another subject that they would bring such with them for distribution to the adult group. It could then, perhaps, be the basis for a discussion. And then we will judge all conclusions by the Word of God.

Now all of this may not work out. There may not be time, but think about it anyway. We hope that something can be done along these lines.



WORLD MISSIONS

THE FIELDS ARE WHITE UNTO HARVEST

WHY WORLD MISSIONS?

“Why world missions?” This is a question some of the church members ask. Some feel it is like putting money in a rat hole. They reason thus: Once it is out of our hands we shall never see it again. There is such a great need here in our church and certainly so much in the community that it is foolish to send money elsewhere. We must take care of ourselves first.

Why world missions? Because it is God’s desire that all people be saved. He very plainly tells us this in His Word. For instance, I Timothy 2:3, 4 says, “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God and our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” II Peter 3:9 says, “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” In many places in the Scriptures we see this is the desire of God. Certainly God desires that the Gospel reach everyone. That means world missions.

World missions are not only God’s desire, but they are His command to His followers. The very last command of Jesus Christ to His disciples was to go forth with the Gospel to evangelize the world. This is recorded in different words in the closing chapter of each of the first three Gospels and in the first chapter of the Book of Acts. The Great Commission which is for all the followers of Jesus Christ, including those living today, says, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them

in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matt. 28:18-20). When one claims Christ as Savior and Lord, he is under obligation to carry out His commands.

World missions are important because every soul, regardless of his habitat, not living in fellowship with Jesus Christ, is lost and on the way to an eternal doom. There is no salvation outside of Jesus Christ. Unless people have been introduced to the Savior and have claimed the forgiveness offered because He died on the cross for their sins, they are lost. Jesus himself has said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). I cannot agree with those who say there is a possibility the heathen will be saved without a knowledge of Jesus Christ. The Scriptures tell us that the heathen have not lived up to the knowledge of God which they do have. “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened” (Rom. 1:20, 21).

As a preacher was bringing a message on the broad way that leads to destruction and the narrow way that leads to eternal life, he mentioned for illustration’s sake,

there are two sides to the broad way. There is the good side and the bad side. Those on the bad side of the broad way are living deep in sin. They are known for their sin. There is no doubt in the minds of others that they are sinners. Those on the good side of the broad way may well be members of the church. They are morally good as far as the community sees them. They are not living in what others think of as outward sin. They are respectable, perhaps even pride themselves on their goodness, but have never seen themselves as lost sinners and claimed God’s forgiveness through Jesus Christ. All are sinners and on the way to eternal destruction who have not been saved by repentance and faith in the blood of Jesus Christ. We have people on both sides of the broad way living near us and in all parts of the world. They need the Gospel. That is why we need world missions.

The saving Gospel must be shared for our own sake. Those who have a message to share and do not say anything will find that it is as a fire within their bones and as Jeremiah of old will become weary with keeping quiet. To say nothing about the blessings experienced and what God is able to do for others is to begin to deny the Savior. He has promised, “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 10:32, 33). If we refuse to share the Good News, then we begin to lose the blessings we have received from the Lord. It is imperative that one share the blessings experienced for his own sake.

Too often the reason why there is no vision or desire for world missions is that the person himself may not have experienced God’s blessings. Then it is not strange that he is not concerned that others might come to know the bless-

ings available through Jesus Christ. Sometimes even those who are saved have little interest in world missions because they have little or no contact with the missionaries they are helping to support. This can be remedied by bringing the missionaries into the congregations that support them to tell of the work.

In our new association of Lutheran congregations there is an interest in world missions. We want this to continue and to grow. There will be home mission congregations which will need support, too. It is either evangelize or fossilize. It is either missions or deterioration.

Pastor Harold Schafer
DeKalb, Illinois

President Writes

[Continued from page 5]

than we had hoped. We thank and glorify God for this.

We are being misunderstood by some. We are being maligned by others. We are being called radical by some. Others say we are spiritually dead. Yet others may think we aren't doctrinally sound. We must expect this. Some of those who speak the loudest about ecumenicity and Christian brotherliness show the least of it.

Our statement "Declaration of Faith" is a fine statement of our basic position. Perhaps it won't be necessary or of value to spend much time discussing it. We must prove ourselves by what we do. That is our immediate task.

We would thank the committees and officers who have served us to this hour. We would thank the congregations for allowing them the time to spend in the service of our Church. This conference must elect permanent officers and committees. May God lead and guide for His glory.

Let us take what God would give us. Let us be faithful in prayer. Let us love one another. Our future is in the hand of God.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor John Strand

WOMEN for Christ

WE LIKED OUR CONVENTION

It was indeed a privilege to be able to be present, for which we praise and thank God. What a thrill it was to see our new property. How beautiful it looked as we drove up, and even more beautiful as it was all lit up at night.

The program was very inspirational and led by our president, Mrs. Ole Ose. The Bible study on Ephesians 4:11-16 was very ably presented by Mrs. Albert Moen of Grand Forks, N. Dak. The church was filled to capacity. Dinner was catered to all present.

Many areas of missions were presented, and we are thankful to God for directing Rev. and Mrs. John Abel and family to us. One of our projects is to support a secretary for Rev. Abel at the Missions Center. Truly the theme of our WMF convention, II Peter 3:18, "Grow in grace, and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," as well as the theme of our conference, "An Open Door," should be much for us to meditate on.

Mrs. Ernest Hegre
Northwood, North Dakota

We rejoice and praise our God who gave us these WMF meetings. They were truly inspiring, and our vision for His work was brought forth in full measure.

Mrs. Elmer Aanstad
Hampden, North Dakota

Read Psalm 92. How good it has been to be in this fellowship to give thanks unto the Lord and to sing praises unto His name!

It was an inspiration to see so many women turn out to our WMF convention. The goals were set high and we are happy for this. Praise God, and we count it a privilege and a joy to do His work! We are thankful to God for these people who are ready to go out in the field. We must help them immediately as time is short! How great are the works of the Lord!

Mrs. Henry Hanson
Portland, North Dakota

"For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods" (Ps. 95:3). This song of praise permeated the whole WMF program.

It was a thrilling and humbling experience to witness the enthusiastic planning for the continuation of WMF projects, being reminded constantly throughout the day of our thankfulness to God that He had brought us thus far in our work, and complete reliance on Him for our future planning.

I'm thankful to God that He made it possible for me to be a part of WMF day, as well as the entire conference.

Mrs. James C. Eletson
Duluth, Minnesota



THE AMBASSADORS YOUTH CARAVAN

In the picture, left to right: Fran Monseth, Valley City, North Dakota; Alan Hendrickson, Neogaunee, Mich.; Terry Simonson, Minneapolis, Minn.; Roger Strom, Elbow Lake, Minn.; Dave Johnson, Bloomington, Minn.

These fellows, all in college, are spending the summer in evangelistic work, travelling to various churches affiliated with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations.

They present a program which includes instrumental music, vocal music, testimonies, and a gospel message.

There are many miles to travel, many people to talk with concern-

ing the gospel of Jesus Christ, and possibly many subtle diversions which could keep them from completely fulfilling their ministry. For these reasons these young men request the prayer support of the people of the Lutheran Free Church.

"We are AMBASSADORS for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5:20).

(Editor's Note: We regret that it has been impossible to arrange an itinerary far enough in advance to be published in *The Lutheran Ambassador*. Perhaps later we can tell you where they have been.)

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As the Lord lays it upon your heart to share in our work, we invite you to send your contributions to

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WMF FELLOWSHIP AT GENEVA

There will be a WMF fellowship at Lake Geneva Bible Camp on July 10, beginning at 2:00 p.m. This is during the Association Bible Camp. Pastor John Abel will present a mission challenge.

All interested women who are within driving distance of the camp are invited to come to this fellowship meeting. The session will close at approximately 4 o'clock.