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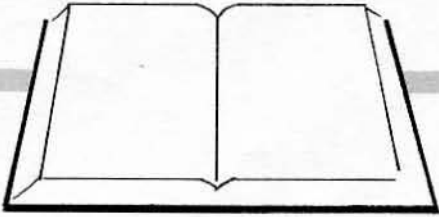
LUTHERAN

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MOTHER'S DAY PRESENT
NEW YORK—A Mother's Day
kiss for the kind of mother de-
scribed in Proverbs 31:28, "Her
children rise up and call her
blessed."

—R.N.S. Photo



According to the Word

A GOODLY HERITAGE

"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22.6).

"It has been said that the greatest word in human language is God, the deepest word is soul, the longest word is eternity, the swiftest word is time, the darkest word is sin, the tenderest word is love, the sweetest word is home, and the dearest word is mother." (*Concordia Pulpit*, 1937)

"Mother" is a precious word, bringing to mind that greatest of earthly qualities, a mother's love. The ideal mother gives love, sympathy and understanding. She believes in her child long after others have ceased to do so. We cannot speak too highly of mothers who have honored their high calling and responsibility in the tradition of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

At this time of Mother's Day, let us ask this question of all parents, "If you had your choice, and the power, what one thing would you most like to give your child?"

Would it be a great sum of money? In weaker moments you may think a legacy of \$25,000 would be just about the finest thing you could do for him. But sober reflection reminds you that while some money is needed, it cannot buy happiness and may instead corrode the soul.

What about an education? Sometimes a dad and mother say, "I'll put my daughter through high school and college and then I'll have done all I can." Education is wonderful. There is always more to learn. But education doesn't have all the answers. Not all of its products benefit mankind.

Well, then, surely no parent could do better than to bestow the gift of good health on his child. Isn't it a great blessing to be well, to be on the giving end of the cancer and heart fund drives? To wish good health is a noble wish, but is it what you really desire most of all? Some of the meanest persons have had nothing wrong with them physically. Some of God's sweetest saints have been bound by a difficult infirmity of the body. No, good health isn't everything.

Mothers and fathers, the best heritage parents can give their children is right attitudes toward themselves, toward others, and toward God. Having these they can succeed in life whether these other things come to them or not.

What an opportunity mother and father have to mold the pliable clay of young lives! The greatest schoolroom in the world is your home—your kitchen, your dining-room, your back yard. Here lives are guided in God's purposes or they lose their direction. The Lord has given you precious souls to lead. Your responsibilities are

great.

Teach your child a right attitude toward others. Children are born without prejudices toward others because of differences in race or creed or social standing. Do not teach them prejudice but the worth of every individual before God. Tell them they are not to laugh at the unfortunate in life, but to help them. I still remember that I was reprimanded by my parents when I jested about a boy who lacked some mental qualities.

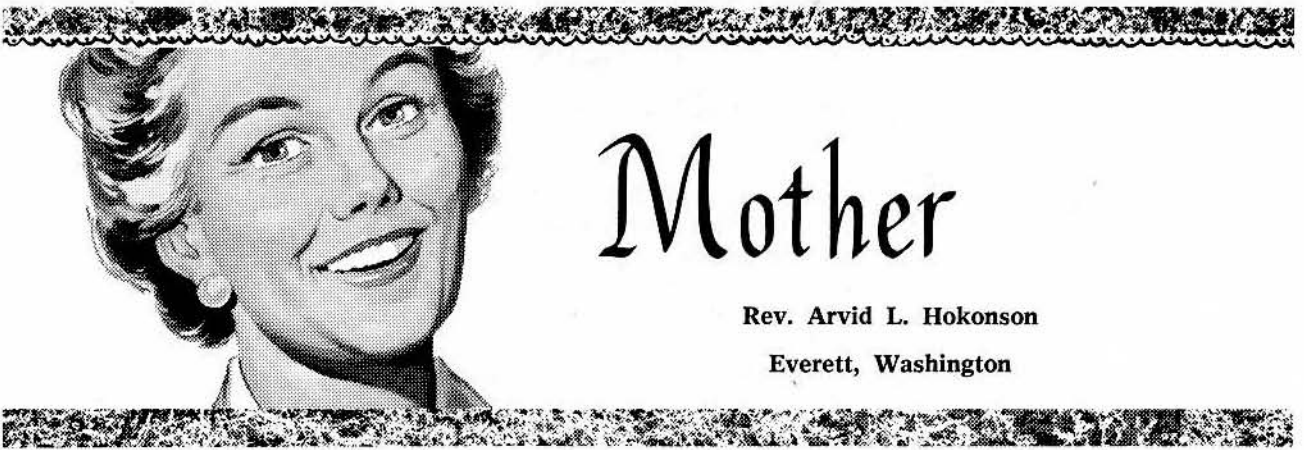
The greatest lesson you can teach is a right attitude toward God. No child is saved by his parents' faith, but a child who is taught at his mother's knee and who sees that God is real to his parents is more apt to live for the Lord than the child who doesn't have this background. Remember our text verse for today.

You must teach by example. "If mothers would have godly sons, they must be godly mothers." If you are seldom in church, your child will conclude that the church and Christ are not very important. If the Bible is a closed book in your home, it is apt to remain a mystery to your children, too. The Sunday school may make up some ground, but in most cases it will be too little and too late.

There are exceptions to the rule, but it can well be said: "Faithful training in the home without hypocrisy will bring great results."

—Raynard Huglen

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Mother

Rev. Arvid L. Hokonson

Everett, Washington

“SON, BEHOLD THY MOTHER”

John 19:27

IT was a loving Father in heaven who in His infinite wisdom placed us in families, and in each family placed one who was to know the meaning of love in suffering.

Truly Jesus' words to John, the apostle, “Behold thy mother” are pregnant with meaning. If every son and daughter today would listen to these words, they too would follow the eyes of mother and see the Saviour on the cross, and a Christian home would be in the making. In the Gospel story, Mary ever stands for the claims of home and family; her very presence at the cross was a silent call to come down from it. Yet mother-love was obedient to the greater—the divine. “A sword shall pierce through thine own soul that thoughts out of many hearts may be revealed” (Luke 2:35).

It is true that every Christian is a saint, and in the light of God's Word what a responsible position is that of mother! It has been said that when God wants a man for a special mission in this world, He first prepares a godly mother. How true! We only need to read the lives of some of the great men of God and we see a mother's influence stamped upon them. Mother is God's foothold for things she cannot dream. His most loving and most sympathetic gift to mankind outside of Jesus Christ is mother. Pause in retrospection and bring up a few men of God and see their mothers.

There is Samuel whose mother was Hannah. Her faith became God's foothold—a godly mother who consecrated her child to God before he was born. There are Luther, Wesley, and many others. Augustine is outstanding. He was a man whose mother's prayers followed him throughout his early wayward life until he was converted and became an instrument in God's hands. In contrast there is Nero, the Roman Emperor, whose cruelty and vices shocked the world. His mother was a murderer. Because of corruption in the families, the boasted civilization of Rome could not endure. And today the threads of destiny of our own civilization are being silently woven. The influence of mother is beyond estimate. That is why as we look over America today, we need to pray for mothers. Their influence spells the rise and fall of nations, for “the hand that rocks the cradle” does truly “rule the world.”

It has been said that the homes of a people are the pillars of the nation. It was President Coolidge who declared, “The destiny and the greatness of America lie around the hearthstone.” Someone else has said, “The home is the great world-fountain of health or disease, of medicine or poison. It is God's best workshop, or the devil's best forge.” If the home is then pagan, whither mankind? Give us Christian mothers.

In 1914 congress authorized the President of the United States of America to proclaim the second Sunday in May of each year as Mother's Day. It was truly a fit-

ting action for a grateful nation. On this day may every mother, every home, every church be reminded of God's estimate of mother and home.

What gracious depth God assigns to the term *mother*! In Galatians 4:26 it is applied to the true church in which true gospel believers are begotten and nourished in the faith by the dispensation of the Word and ordinances. In Matthew 12:49, 50, the term mother is applied to all true believers who are more dear and near to Christ than the nearest relations are to any person. This use of the term mother by the Saviour gives added emphasis to His command “Behold thy mother” and “Honor thy father and mother.” It prompts us to do our utmost to enable father and mother to spend their declining years in comfort and blessing, and to receive unmistakable tokens of their children's love and affection.

To mother is the priceless opportunity of molding the life of the child in the early formative years—yea, even before birth. It was she who carried the precious gift under her heart; only she and God know the fellowship and communion of those hours and days. She it was who “passed through the valley of the shadow of death” into the joy of “my cup runneth over.” She it was in whom, by her example of love, sacrifice and patience did most to mold the character of her child, together with her counsel and teachings. No power so mighty for righteousness can compare with that of a godly mother in a Christian home. No

mother knows better than she herself her need of Jesus Christ. It was she who first taught our infant feet to walk and lifted us when we fell. In her arms we found rest from play and comfort from pain. And above all, it was in Mother's arms we learned to lisp the name of Jesus, and from her lips we first learned the story of Jesus.

Oh, you mothers of today, you too may be God's foothold for things you cannot dream. There was a mother in the Old Testament—Ruth. Her child was Obed. He became the father of Jesse, who became the father of David. From the line of David was born in time, Jesus Christ. The saintship and motherhood of Ruth was in spite of difficulties. Ruth began her life in the land of Moab to become a saint in the land of Judah. Circumstances neither make nor mar, when Christ becomes the mightiest environment of a life. He is all in all.

Mother—the one to whom, next to Christ, we owe our greatest love and devotion. For the love of mother for us is exceeded only by the love Christ. May we feel and know our duty and so honor and revere her in life and in memory that our lives in the grace of Christ may heed His command, "Son, behold thy mother."

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Executive Director of Mis-
sions: Rev. John H. Abel,
Hitterdal, Minnesota

FARGO CHOSEN AS CONVENTION SITE

Fargo, North Dakota, future headquarters of the Lutheran Association, has been chosen as the location of the 1963 Annual Conference. The sessions will begin on Wednesday, June 12, and close on Sunday, the 16th.

The decision to hold the conference in Fargo was made in that city recently at a meeting of the Executive Committee and Board of Administration. Rev. John H. Abel, executive director of missions, will serve as host pastor. Actual convention headquarters in Fargo will be disclosed soon.

The program, which will follow the general pattern of the old Lutheran Free Church conventions, is being planned by the president and secretary. It will be published in the next issue of this paper. The women of the Association will hold their meetings on Wednesday morning and afternoon and on Thursday evening.

The conference is expected to bring representatives from fifty to sixty Association congregations and interested friends from many others.

Everyone planning to come and desiring room reservations in advance should write immediately to:

Missions Committee

Box 905

Fargo, N. Dak.

Indicate whether you prefer lodging in a hotel, motel, or private home. Also let the committee know how many nights you will spend in Fargo.

ARTHUR L. SKONNORD

Arthur L. Skonnord, age 72, a life-long member of First Lutheran Church of Valley City, North Dakota, departed this life to be with the Lord on March 7, after a lingering illness.

Mr. Skonnord was deeply interested in the continuing fellowship of free congregations; therefore he and his wife attended the first con-

ference at Thief River Falls, Minn., last October. He was pleased with the interest so evident at the conference.

The late Pastor Clarence Framstad told this writer one day that Arthur's father, Martin Skonnord, was the human instrument God used to preserve a Lutheran Free Congregation in Valley City during a period of real crisis more than forty years ago.

Arthur was of a quiet disposition, but he had firm convictions and a humble and generous heart. We thank God for him.

He is survived by his wife Amanda, and four daughters, Shirley (Mrs. Dean McInnes) of Marion, N. Dak., Harriet (Mrs. John Strom) of Chesterton, Indiana, Rebecca (Mrs. Donald Johnson) of Valley City, N. Dak., Dorothy (Mrs. Marlo Peterson) of Houston, Texas, and nine grandchildren.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Ps. 116:15).

Fritjof B. Monseth

(Recently Mrs. Skonnord forwarded a generous gift to the Association in her husband's memory.—Editor)

GUIDE ME

Being perplexed, I say,

"Lord, make it right!

Night is as day to Thee,

Darkness is light.

I am afraid to touch

Things that involve so much;

My trembling hand may shake—

My skillness, hand may break;

Thine can make no mistake."

Being in doubt, I say,

"Lord, make it plain!

Which is the true, safe way?

Which would be vain?

I am not wise to know,

Not sure of foot to go;

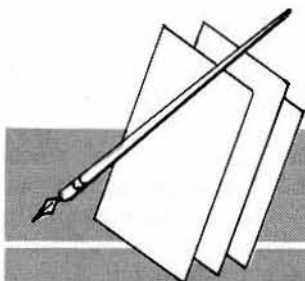
My blind eyes cannot see

What is so clear to Thee;

Lord, make it clear to me."

Author unknown

(from *Prayer Poems*)



EDITORIALS

OUR APPROACHING CONVENTION

It is with considerably increased confidence that we look toward our first annual conference since the merger. Last October we held a special convention in Thief River Falls, Minnesota, for the purpose of organizing our effort to remain as congregations and pastors under the *Guiding Principles* of the Lutheran Free Church.

We had no idea how many people would turn out for the business sessions. We would probably have gone ahead with only twenty-five or fifty. Instead, 278 persons came from 76 congregations in seven states and two Canadian provinces. A number of others came but did not register.

Since that time the Board of Administration, the Executive Committee, and various other committees have held many meetings in an attempt to solidify the work. New congregations have joined us and we have a host of friends scattered in congregations throughout the United States and Canada.

If those outside our fellowship were watching us at Thief River, that will be doubly so at Fargo, where we will meet, God willing, this June. And they have a right to watch and wonder. Will our attendance give evidence that interest is increasing? Will the same generally fine spirit of Thief River characterize our gathering in Fargo? Will we show enough maturity to make decisions which show that we have counted the cost beforehand (and we don't mean just financially) and which also will test our faith?

We hope that we will match up to the task before us with the Lord's help. By "we," we mean all our congregations and the many friends who are with us in spirit, subscribing to the *Guiding Principles* and *Declaration of Faith*.

It will be good to gather in conference again. May those be days of warm fellowship in the Lord and His work. Won't you make plans to be with us at Fargo, June 12-16?

YOUTH AND OUR HOMES

The observance of Mother's Day, a day which is genuinely worthy, always brings to mind thoughts about the home. We think about our own childhood

home and the home we live in now. Quite naturally we make judgments in our minds about homes we have known and do know about.

Are we not agreed that the home is the basic unit of society and that our nation will be as strong as our homes are? And it is quite possible that we feel that many of the youth problems of today can be traced to a deficiency in the home. Child-raising is a very delicate business at best and sometimes we must admit that young people turn out quite well, all things considered.

But if you would be so kind, permit us to lay down several points of value on the subject. First, blessed is the child who has Christian parents. By this we do not mean parents who only attend church and take some part in church work. We do mean parents who bring their religion home from church, who read the Bible and pray with their children and who live consistently with what has been read. They train up a child in the way he should go, but they walk that way, too.

Second, parents should not pretend to be God-like creatures who never sin. Most parents are quick to demand apologies and confessions from their erring children. When mother and father are caught in an obvious fault, do they hide behind parental immunity or do they ask the child's forgiveness? Parents can teach their children a much better conception of forgiveness if they make it a two-way street.

Third, the parents ought to respect each child as an individual. Maybe the son isn't going to be the athlete his father was. He shouldn't suffer for that. Perhaps a daughter will never sing in the college choir like her mother did. But she may have a contribution to make in some other area of life. Parents must also be careful not to take their own frustrated ambitions out on their children.

God has a word for children too: "Honor your father and mother." Children have their responsibility. It seems to us, though, that parents could often make obedience much easier for their children if they lived a consistent Christian life, recognized that they fail also and accepted the child for who he is.

INDIAN MISSION WORK

We had the opportunity recently to sit in on an executive committee session in Eagle Butte, S. Dak., which met to make further plans for establishing Lutheran work among the Sioux Indians of the Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota.

The mission will be independent; that is, it will not be affiliated with any Lutheran church body. The present committee is made up of members from the American Lutheran Church and our Lutheran Association. We have a congregation in Eagle Butte (Imman-

BASEBALL GAMES AND BEER

uel) which ought to make us especially concerned for the success of this work.

As we understand it, the mission will make its initial move in house-to-house visitation. No building will be erected until interest is established and a logical center for that interest is known. We aren't well enough acquainted with Indian mission work to know how often this approach is used, but it sounds good to us.

Some of us hope that when we get around to building our home mission program as an association, we will include an outreach of our own to the American Indian. There must be many opportunities for this work. We were impressed with the prayerful concern of these men that something must be done in their area to win Indian people for Jesus Christ in the name of the Lutheran church.

If any readers of *The Lutheran Ambassador* desire further information about the Cheyenne Indian Mission, they may write to Mr. Robert Sheeley, executive secretary, Midland, S. Dak. The committee chairman is Rev. Gerald Mund, from Veblen, S. Dak.

Baseball has been our favorite sport ever since we watched the games in the fairground across the street from our home in Govan, Saskatchewan. It doesn't have the speed of hockey or the physical struggle of football, but once a baseball fan, always a fan.

All of us baseball fans in the Upper Midwest were glad when major league baseball came to the Twin Cities in 1961. We thank the powers that be for making it available to us.

We noticed that during the off-season a number of fans raised their voices in protest against the practice of selling beer in the stands during the games. Although we don't expect to get much support, the frame of the public mind being what it is toward drinking today, we want to join the protest.

We don't believe that baseball and beer belong together. In fact, we don't think beer belongs at all. Later on we hope to have more to say on this subject. Suffice it to say now that we wish that this custom wasn't so firmly entrenched with this grand American game.

LUTHERAN CONVICTED, APPEALS, IN SEGREGATION PROTEST CASE

Albany, Ga.—(NLC)—The first of five Lutheran clergymen arrested with 70 other pastors, rabbis, and laymen during an anti-segregation protest here last August 28 has been convicted of violating three city ordinances.

Dr. Andrew Schulze, 68, a faculty member at Valparaiso (Ind.) University, and executive secretary of the Lutheran Human Relations Association of America, was sentenced to the maximum penalty: a \$200 fine or 60 days in jail.

He was freed pending further action after posting a \$400 appeal bond. An Albany Negro attorney, C. B. King, said the convictions arising out of the mass-arrest case would be taken to a higher court.

Dr. Schulze appeared on March 15 in the Albany court with Rabbi Israel Dresner of Springfield, N.J., and a Negro woman, Miss Annie Pearl Avery of Birmingham, Ala. They both also were convicted, received maximum sentences and

were freed under \$400 appeal bonds.

Charges of blocking the sidewalk, disorderly conduct, and failure to obey the commands of police officers were placed against the 75 who were arrested and jailed after they walked two-abreast to Albany's City Hall and started to conduct a prayer service. All later were freed on \$200 bonds after spending varying periods in jail.

It has been indicated by Albany city officials that all those charged will be called to trial. A total of 68 cases now are pending.

Dr. Schulze and the other Lutherans were among a group of 46 which was organized by the Chicago Church Federation. The prayer pilgrimage also involved participants from the Northeast and South. The venture was organized at the urging of the "Albany Movement" effort spearheaded by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Like Dr. Schulze, who participated with the endorsement of Valparaiso President O. P. Kretzmann and has received expressions of support from the Human Relations Association, the other Lutherans

plan to stand trial when they are called, it is reported.

The Rev. Lawrence W. Halvorson, a National Lutheran Council staff official in Chicago, said he "definitely" will go and that the three other Lutherans have expressed similar plans. All participated in the protest as individuals and have received some private financial assistance to cover travel and court costs.

Mr. Halvorson, an assistant to the executive secretary in the NLC's Divisions of American Missions with special responsibilities in the area of human relations, and the three Chicago-area pastors are all members of the American Lutheran Church. Dr. Schulze is a member of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The pastors are the Rev. Harvard W. Stephens, a Negro pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran church at Robbins, Ill., the Rev. Leonard E. Klippen of Lake View Lutheran Church in Chicago, and the Rev. Arvid D. Dixen, Calvary Lutheran Church, Chicago.

Mr. Halvorson said neither he nor the others have yet received

notice as to when their cases will be called to trial.

—News Bureau, NLC

OUR PRAYER

God, keep the channel clean
The channel by which words and
phrases flow
From you through me.
Let my motives be
Kept for Thy holy use.
Let naught of sin
Or pride or selfishness e'er enter
in to block the way
By which Thy Spirit seeks
To whisper to me what the Sav-
iour speaks.
God, keep the channel clear!

—from the *Bible Banner*
Mrs. Herbert W. Presteng
Grafton, N. Dak.

PRAYER FOR HELP

God bless our home and help us
To love each other true;
To make our home the kind of
place
Where everything we do
Is filled with love and kindness,
A dwelling place for Thee,
And help us, God, each moment,
To live most helpfully.

Author unknown
(from *Prayer Poems*)

NOTICE

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

Treasurer
Lutheran Association
7013 Lee Valley Circle
Minneapolis 24, Minnesota
Please send all subscrip-
tions to
The Lutheran Ambassador
Box 652, Grafton, N. Dak.

OUR PRESIDENT WRITES

by PASTOR JOHN STRAND

I WAS ENCOURAGED!

It was a busy week-end but an encouraging one.

On Friday we met with a fine congregation in Roseau, Minn., to give information and answer questions concerning our church. We met a host of people deeply concerned to do what is right. It is always encouraging when people are concerned to do what is right, not necessarily the easy or popular thing.

On Sunday we were in Winger, Minn., to install Pastor Harry C. Molstre as the pastor of that parish. Again we met a host of friends. They showed much concern and enthusiasm for their Lord and His church. They were so happy that God should again give them a pastor. Pastor Molstre, moved by convictions, came to them from another church body and is now on our clergy roster. We as a church welcome him and pray God's richest blessings on him and his family as they labor in our church.

On Sunday afternoon there was a W.M.F. rally in Winger. The women of our church are preparing an aggressive program for themselves. They will soon have a good program to suggest to the ladies' groups in our congregations.

On Monday we met with a fine group of people near Fargo. They, too, wanted information and help in their struggle to have a free congregation. The struggles to have free congregations are as real today as they have ever been.

As we meet more and more of our people we are more and more

encouraged. Christian people are the foundation of the Church. This is as it must be. We read in Ephesians 2:20, "built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets." When others but believers assume the leadership in the church, the church becomes weak and worldly. This is taking place in far too many places today.

While believers are the foundation of the Church, Christ is the cornerstone. Again we read in Ephesians 2:20, "Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone." He must be the cornerstone or it is no church, regardless of the name.

There is such a strong emphasis on methods, equipment, and programs in the church that it is possible to forget the "method" of work Christ gave His disciples. It is such a simple "method," summarized in one phrase, "abide in Christ."

Christ is the true Vine. There are other vines that some may cling to, but such vines as morality, knowledge, the church, etc., while necessary, cannot give fruit-bearing life to the branches. "Apart from me, ye can do nothing," is the warning from Christ, as recorded in John 15.

There is also a promise in John 15. "He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit." Let us as a church remember this promise. Here is our "method." Even the most weak can abide and be strong. If we abide in Christ we will see our prayers for a revived and free church answered. We will see doors of opportunity continue to open as we obediently give Him of ourselves and what we have. Abiding in Christ, we cannot fail.



WOMEN *for Christ*

WOMEN WON WILL WORK

Have you ever pondered on the blessings that we have as women in the land of the free? Because our country was founded on the teachings of the Holy Bible, think of the freedom that we have and can enjoy over against the slavery of women in a non-Christian country.

God has always had work for women to do and the first and most important task is to labor in prayer. In order to pray right we must be still and know that He is God. We need to seek His face in the morning and let His almighty power fall upon us. We must let God speak to us through His holy Word which is quick and powerful. Then as we yield to the working of the Holy Spirit, He will reveal to us the Lord Jesus Christ who is able to save to the uttermost all them that come to God by Him. Oh, it is so wonderful to put our trust in a living Saviour who has said, "I will never leave thee."

Our confidence must be in God and not in man. Therefore, we need to search the Scriptures daily and be alert to false teachings. Nothing hurts more than a broken confidence which we once had with a friend. Just think how Jesus suffered as He witnessed the falling away of the disciples one by one, leaving Him to face the trial alone. Praise God, they were restored after the resurrection as they repented and yielded to the will of God and were filled with the Holy Spirit. As they remembered all that Jesus had told them, they were

strengthened in their faith and preached with holy boldness.

Rise up, ye women; we have a job to do. We are the keepers of the homes and as the home is, so is the nation. Let us spend more time teaching our children in the way they should go. We should talk about Jesus in the morning, at noon and at night and help them to hide the Word of God in their hearts so they won't sin against God.

It seems as though God is speaking to women of our day in Isaiah 32:9, "Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear to my speech." Why would you waste your time with questionable recreation and bad habits that tend to rob you of family worship, family devotions and family unity? These are habits that never satisfy, but would only destroy the very body that God gave you. Don't you know that your body is the temple of God? It has been said that man is a trinity: body, soul, spirit. In all too many people it seems that the spirit is dead. It is only when one comes in repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ that this spirit-life becomes alive and will then bear witness with God's Spirit that he is a child of the King. This is the free gift of salvation to anyone who will have it. It is the devil, the world, and our own flesh that do not want us to have this gift; but if we resist the devil, he will flee and we must claim the blood of Jesus that cleanses from all sin.

Hear ye, then, you Christian women! There is work to do. Pray! Read! Teach! Witness! Suffer! for Christ. For if you will live godly in Christ Jesus you will suffer persecution. But listen to what Paul would say to you from Philippians 1:28-30 (from the Amplified New Testament), "And do not [for a moment] be frightened or intimidated in anything by your opponents and adversaries, for such [constancy and fearlessness] will be a clear sign (proof and seal) to them of [their impending] destruction; but [a sure token and evidence] of your deliverance and salvation, and that from God. For you have been granted [the privilege] for Christ's sake not only to believe—adhere to, rely on and trust—in Him but also to suffer in His behalf. So you are engaged in the same conflict which you saw me [wage] and which you now hear to be mine [still]."

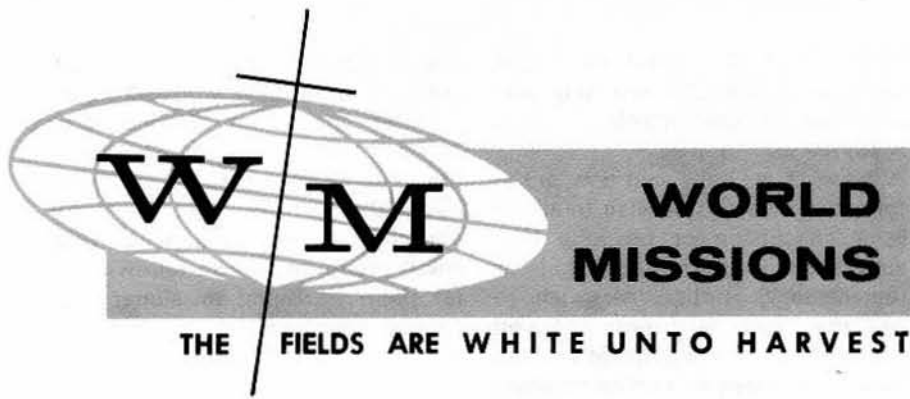
FAMILY BIBLE CAMP LAKE GENEVA

The Lutheran Association is planning a fine Family Bible Camp at Lake Geneva, near Alexandria, Minnesota, July 8-14. There will be provision made for separate care of children and special meetings for youth and adults. Other activities will be for the whole family together. The camp will serve well as a senior Bible camp experience for youth of high school age and above. Several challenging speakers and Bible teachers have been engaged for both the Adult and Teen-age Camp. Plan to attend as a family. Wonderful accommodations, also room for tents, campers, and trailers. Prices per week for those living in cabins and eating in the dining hall are as follows: adults—\$15.00, teen-agers—\$10.00, children over 2 years—\$5.00, babies—free.

Write soon for reservations. Registration fee for entire family—\$2.00. Write:

ASSOCIATION
Box 905
Fargo, North Dakota

The Lutheran Ambassador



WHAT IS A MISSIONARY?

J. H. Abel

Someone has said that a missionary is simply "God's man, in God's place, doing God's work, in God's way, for God's glory." This calling is not overcrowded since it requires men and women who will say with Paul, "Neither count I my life dear unto myself" (Acts 20: 24). Again it is said that men today are living on one of two philosophical principles: "What can I get out of life?" or "What can I give to life?" The first principle treats oneself as the captain of his fate. The second looks for a Commander who would lead on to HIS purpose. Actually, a person who lives for no cause outside himself lives in boredom and frustration, dying someday without really having lived.

There are many thrilling examples on the pages of history of those who have really accepted the divine Commander and in doing this have reaffirmed with Paul: "Neither count I my life dear unto myself. . . it is no longer I that live but Christ who liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). John Williams, often called "The Apostle of the South Sea Islands," was such a man. He had read of the missionary efforts of others who had attempted to Christianize the cannibals and make inroads into these islands; they all had been killed and eaten. In 1839 John Williams felt a strong call to go forth to these people. On telling the church about this desire, he was sorely rebuked by a friend who said, "Don't you realize you will only be food for the cannibals and your labors will

come to naught?" Williams replied, "Sir, you are an old man; soon you will die and your body will be eaten by worms in the grave. If I go forth to bring the saving gospel of Jesus Christ and end up giving my body to the cannibals, will it not have been for a better purpose than staying at home and finally giving my body to the grave worms?"

A missionary then is God's man who senses that His commander wants him to go somewhere and do some work in some way that somehow, no matter what it costs, there will be some souls saved and some more glory for Jesus Christ.

But why is it we as congregations and individuals are not getting the job done? We are given to understand that in less than one hundred years after the crucifixion the early Christians had spread the gospel over the then known civilized world. History tells us that by 311, in the face of the bitterest persecution in which the Roman Empire passed ten different criminal laws against the Christian faith, desiring to blot out the name of Christ, half the members of the Roman Empire had become secret Christians. How was such marvelous mission work accomplished? Remember they had no printing press, no schools, no church buildings, not even the complete Bible, and we today even with great churches, television, radio, and all our modern teaching aids have not even begun to duplicate their results.

A fine thought on one of the secrets of the early church's success story is pointed up by W. J. Pethybridge. He says: "While they preached the same message, yet they used a different method." "Some have said," he points out, "that revival is the answer." But study of revivals show that through a wrong emphasis or methods, the results of revivals have not been conserved nor has the blessing spread, as in the early church. He goes on to speak of the three factors noted in the early church. First, the active ministry of the Holy Spirit amongst the new congregations, giving them the gifts they needed for the carrying out of their own ministry. Second, the gathering of the believers in homes rather than in special buildings. Third, believers regarding themselves as members of the body of Christ and not merely as individual believers.

It is to the second of these points that I would like to draw the attention of we who should be present-day missionaries, even in our own Jerusalem. Summarizing Pethybridge, I would like to say that in the book of Acts and in the Epistles it is revealed that the only place where believers are said to have held their regular meetings was in the home. It was true that they used the temple in Jerusalem for public testimony, and Paul even rented a school for evangelistic meetings, but they were "breaking bread from house to house" (Acts 2:46). Over twenty times we see them carrying out their united worship in the home of a believer. Four times the "church in the house" is specifically mentioned (Rom. 16:5; I Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philem. 2). We can no doubt imagine many disadvantages and limitations in conducting services in this way, but let us remember, these people were eminently successful; their method worked and gave tremendous results. So let us take a further look and observe the several distinct advantages:

1. In a small group, meeting in the friendly environment of a

home, everyone can come to know each other and feel welcome.

2. With smaller numbers it is possible for almost everyone to take part actively in some part of the meeting, so the entire body of Christ can function.

3. The big expenses involved in the building and upkeep of a large church building are saved and can be used for missionary work.

4. Fellowship groups that grow large can divide into other homes and thus the outreach and influence of the congregation grows and expands until the local missionary outreach to the community is tremendous.

5. Holding meetings informally in the home avoids the pretentious unreality of putting on a special dress to go hear a special man in a special place. The temptation to self-importance in a large important building is overcome.

6. The "church in the home" has no dead organization or expensive building to maintain, which often become spiritual, financial and social liabilities on all connected with them.

Pethybridge states: "We are given to understand that for the first two hundred years after Christ, the church never had special buildings of their own. When at last they did own them, the art of exhortation degenerated into the issuing of commands. Believers in the early church were taught to regard themselves not merely as a collection of saved individuals but as active members of the body of Christ—missionaries (Acts 1:8)."

We must remember also that in the early church no suggestion is given of one man ministering to the whole group. The local church looked to each believer to minister to the rest in the way that he could, according to the various gifts of the Spirit. We know that research in education has shown us that we learn by doing; thus we see the wisdom and economy of God in planning the church. Not a vast congregation of listeners, but a small body sharing with each other what they learn through the Word, by the teaching of the Holy

Spirit. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another" (Col. 3:16).

By what we have said now in the foregoing, we do not wish to arrive at a conclusion or teaching that church buildings are undesirable or unnecessary. Rather, we wish to say that you need not feel you are defeated or unequipped for victory if you have no central meeting place. Just the opposite may be true. In many cases you may have passed through a cleansing experience and be freed from much that was just encumbering and obstructing the real spiritual work that God wants you to be doing. The entire emphasis of the New Testament is that you as an individual believer are the temple of God. The word *church* in the New Testament is never used of an ecclesiastical organization nor of a building but always in reference to the "called-out fellowship." The church then is the whole fellowship of believers everywhere. Some day it shall be gathered from every nation, tongue, tribe, and people to meet its Lord and Saviour, the living Commander, in the air (I Thess. 4:17), "and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

As God blesses our fellowship groups they will no doubt want to have a common meeting place to bear a united testimony to the community and a larger witness to more persons. Yet the fellowship groups should always continue, for they provide a warm missionary outreach, which is usually lacking in a formal church building and organization. We need our pastors as shepherds of the flock; we need our buildings as centers in which to teach and preach. But brethren, the essential unit is not these. When you have the Word of God and meet together for fellowship, remember that you have the secret of the early church. God will minister through you and in you. Be not discouraged; rather, re-examine your emphasis. Are you a missionary right where you are? Are you living for what you can give to life as you follow your Commander,

Jesus Christ? Is your desire summed up in these words of Paul: "Neither count I my life dear unto myself... it is no longer I who live, but Christ liveth in me"? Recover the lost secret of the early church. Go out then with your small group and warm fellowships; let them be living missionary organisms with which to win the world for Jesus Christ.

LUTHER VOLUME IN JAPANESE SELLS BETTER THAN EXPECTED

Tokyo (LWF)—Sales of the initial book of a 12-volume Japanese edition of Martin Luther's writings unexpectedly surpassed 800 copies in its first month of appearance, it was disclosed on April 2.

The figure was reported to the Board of Directors of the Japan Lutheran Literature Society at its 12th annual meeting here. The new book came out early in March.

Publication of the first Japanese version of the Reformer's works is made possible by capital funds of \$5,000 granted by the Lutheran World Federation's Department of Theology and \$7,000 by the Lutheran Brotherhood, a U.S. life insurance company.

It is the largest publication project in which the eleven-year-old society is currently engaged. Between two and four volumes are expected to be issued each year until the series is complete. Scholars and translators have been preparing the manuscript since 1958.

The Rev. Douglas Swendseid, general secretary of the society, said the collection "has been eagerly anticipated by both Christian and non-Christian groups."

Another report presented to the directors here showed that sales of Christian books through the society's four retail outlets totaled more than 70 million yen (\$200,000) in 1962. Fifteen new books were published during the year, of which nine were by Japanese authors.



HOME MISSIONS

ON THE HOME MISSION SCENE

TWO GREAT DATES

- Remember June 12-16 is the Annual Conference of Free Lutheran Congregations at Fargo, North Dakota.
- Remember July 8-14 is a Bible Camp planned for the entire family. Our official Association camp for 1963, held at beautiful Lake Geneva near Alexandria. Low prices and beautiful camp accommodations.

For your reservations at these important events, write to:
 ASSOCIATION
 Box 905
 Fargo, N. Dak.

MISSION SUNDAYS

A Sunday in May to be designated "Mission Sunday" has been recommended to all associating congregations by the Administrative Board of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. The offering received in each congregation on this chosen Sunday will go towards the carrying on of the joint mission program of the Association churches. Special mission folders and envelopes will be furnished free of charge to any congregation which has not already received them, by simply writing and requesting them. Write:

ASSOCIATION
 Box 905
 Fargo, N. Dak.

FOOT IN THE DOOR?

It has come to our attention that in Lutheran Free congregations, even those who have not voted for merger and do not consider themselves in the merger, an apparent attempt is going on to get

the W.M.F.'s to change their constitutions and adopt a model constitution of the American Lutheran Church Women. Part II of the By-laws, Article 5, states: "The education secretary shall direct the program of education in accord with the education program of the American Lutheran Church Women." Article 6 of Section I states: "The stewardship secretary shall direct the program of stewardship in accord with the stewardship program of the American Lutheran Church Women." Part V, dealing with funds, states: "The financial goal shall provide for local needs and projects of the American Lutheran Church Women." Section II of Part V states: "Special funds as Thank Offerings shall be channeled through the American Lutheran Church Women and shall be allocated as designated." This regimented form of programing and giving presents a strange picture to LFC people, and certainly any congregation that does not wish to be in the ALC will not want any of its auxiliaries to change their constitutions.

THOUGHTS CONCERNING THE FREE

It is of vital importance these days that one knows the constitution of his church and abides by it. In LFC congregations it is not just a scrap of paper, but the only legally authoritative document governing the congregation. Article 5 of the Fundamental Principles states: "The congregation directs its own affairs, subject to the authority of the Word and the Spirit of God, and acknowledges no other ecclesiastical authority or government above itself." Article 11 states: "Agencies found desirable for conducting the joint activities of the congregations, such as conferences, committees, officers, etc.,

cannot in a Lutheran Free Church impose any obligations or restrictions, exert any compulsion, or lay any burden upon the individual congregation, but have the right only to make recommendations to and requests of congregations and individuals."

In opposition to such clear principles stand the many statements of TALC. Its Synodical Constitution states: "Congregations joining the ALC 'delegate to it the authority and power essential to carrying out the purpose of the church as set forth in this constitution...' (Art. V. Sec. 1). Also in Article VI, Sec. 1, page 30, we read: Requirements for membership in the ALC shall be (3) "Participation in the program of activity approved by the Church." How free are such congregations? Suppose they should not approve the program of the synod?

Some have been told that their congregation is now a member of the ALC Synod since they have not voted to withdraw from the LFC. How can you vote to withdraw from an association of independent congregations that never had any authority over your congregation? It is our belief that it would be necessary to make a constitutional change first. Thus, no Free Church congregation that wishes to stay out should consider themselves in the ALC. Rather, they should consider themselves operating as always, under their own Constitution, a free, independent Lutheran congregation.

I will not doubt, though all my ships at sea
 Come drifting home with broken masts and sails;
 I shall believe the hand that never fails
 From seeming evil worketh good for me.
 And though I weep because the sails are tattered,
 Still will I cry, while my best hopes lie shattered,
 "I trust in Thee!"

Marvin J. Nichols
 (from *The King's Business*)

NORDAHL NELSON

Again the Lord has called home a dear husband and father and friend.

Nordahl Nelson, Pinewood, Minnesota, passed on to be with his Lord very peacefully and quietly on Saturday at the Red River Innermission meeting held at Thief River Falls, Minnesota, March 29-31, 1963.

It was a great experience for the many who were there. A wonderful spirit prevailed over the meeting. The service began with a hymn sing, after which Harry Bakken, Mentor, Minnesota, opened with Scripture and prayer. Then a mixed quartet from Clearbrook sang. Albert Hestad of Shelly brought the message of the evening. Pastor Monson of Clearbrook sang to us in his wonderful way, "When God Speaks."

At this point the chairman called Nordahl Nelson, a dear brother in Christ, to give his testimony. He spoke on Acts 3, the text for the meeting. We were reminded of Peter and John going up to the temple to pray. Nordahl said that Peter and John trusted in God. As they entered the temple the helpless cripple sat looking for alms. Peter said to him, "Silver and gold we have none, but what we have, in the name of Jesus we give unto you." Nordahl also referred to Peter with the disciples on the stormy sea (Matt. 14:25-31). Peter called out, "Is it you, Lord? Bid me come unto you." Then Jesus called Peter and he walked on the water. But as he looked down he began to sink. Nordahl said that it was not because of the storm that Peter was sinking but because he started to doubt. But now Peter was so close to Jesus that Jesus took him by the hand. These were about Nordahl Nelson's last words before he said, "My heart is failing me" and quietly sat down on a chair. It seemed as though the Lord took him home by his hand. A doctor was called. Prayers were offered and the meeting was closed reverently by praying the Lord's Prayer.

The closing session of the meeting was Sunday at 2:30 p.m. with a good attendance and a good spirit. We say thank you and God's richest blessing to the Northern Lutheran Mission for your invitation to be with you in your fellowship.

We attended the funeral of Nordahl Nelson which was held Thursday, April 4, at Zion Lutheran Church. Rev. Ingvald Norum of Shevlin conducted the service and spoke comforting words. Pastor Monson of Clearbrook sang "When God Speaks," and Mr. and Mrs. O. Westrum sang "Saved by Grace." On behalf of the Red River Innermission, we want to express our thanks to Rev. Norum and those who sang so beautifully.

Nelson will be greatly missed as our secretary and treasurer, a position he held for the many past years, and also his warm testimonies and writings in the mission papers. Blessed be his memory.

Kruger Hviding
Mentor, Minnesota

LUTHERANS TO COOPERATE IN WORLD'S FAIR EXHIBIT

New York (NLC)—An all-Lutheran exhibit at the 1964-65 New York World's Fair was assured here with the signing of an agreement for space in the \$1,500,000 Protestant Center soon to rise above Flushing Meadows.

Affixing signatures on behalf of the New York Synod of the Lutheran Church in America and the Atlantic District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod were Dr. Alfred L. Beck and the Rev. Karl Graesser.

The agreement calls for payment of \$60,000 for a 24-month rental of 800-square feet of floor space in the Protestant Center along the Fair's Avenue of the Americas.

Representatives of LCA, Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church's Eastern District have been appointed to three planning committees: (1) exhibit, chaired by Howard Sandum (ALC); (2) finance, Herbert A.

Tichenor (Mo. Synod); and (3) publicity-promotion, Raymond Kismam (LCA).

Policy decisions will be made by a steering committee of six to include Dr. Beck and Mr. Graesser, augmented by Dr. Gordon S. Huffman, Washington, D.C., president of the Eastern District of the American Lutheran Church, and a layman from each of the cooperating church bodies.

Although the larger shares of support for the project will be underwritten by the LCA and Missouri constituencies, representatives of the American Lutheran Church pledged interest and cooperation and expressed hope that some financial contribution toward the all-Lutheran exhibition would be forthcoming after ALC conventions late this spring.

Specific plans for design and content of the exhibit space will await committee study.

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