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Vol. 1

October 22, 1963

No. 19

LUTHERAN

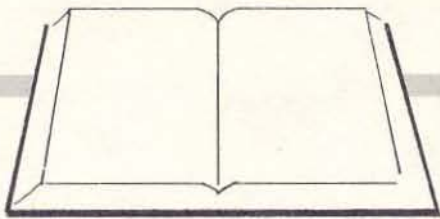
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LUTHER BURNS PAPAL BULL

A Papal Bull threatening Luther with excommunication only fanned the Reformer's spirit. With a copy of the canon law and other documents, he consigned it to flames.

—RNS Photo



According to the Word

SAVED BY GRACE

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8, 9).

Even though he lived several days longer, some of the last words I was able to catch as the elderly man spoke from his hospital bed were, "Saved by grace." Well could we wish to leave among our parting words to loved ones and friends the testimony that we are trusting in the sufficient merit of Jesus.

What a difference there is between Paul's "I know whom I have believed" and the "I hope so" response of many when they are asked about their relationship to the Savior. Can you speak with any degree of confidence about yourself and Christ? Martin Luther, the great reformer, finally found peace with God when he realized the fact that being a Christian is not the product of man's strivings but is the result of trusting only in Christ's atonement for one's sins. We must all believe as Luther did if we are to have the peace which passes understanding and the hope which does not disappoint but ends in vision.

We have two inborn ideas. The first is that sin must be paid for.

The second is that we must do something about paying for that sin. But just as surely as we feel that we must do something to expiate our sins or atone for them, we are haunted by the fear that whatever we do will not be enough. No wonder that under such a policy God is more an object of fear than love.

The inborn conviction which we have that sin must be paid for is absolutely correct. But we err in two ways. First, we are wrong in thinking that we can do anything to take away the guilt of our own sin, and, in the next place, we are wrong in not accepting the Word of the Lord that He has taken the guilt upon himself for us through Jesus. We shall know the Lord's gracious deliverance only as we fully and finally accept all that Christ in His great love has done for us.

Dr. Paul Tournier, Swiss physician, writes in his book *Guilt and Grace* that his wife made a study of all the passages in the Bible which deal with atonement through Christ's blood. The list, he says, is impressive. And, he states, "All the passages where the blood of Christ is mentioned mean that we are saved by His life, by the gift of His own person." And, "Salvation is not an idea; it is a person. It is Jesus himself—God himself—who yields himself up."

Dear reader, it is vain and sense-

less to seek to appease God with our puny acts. Our sins are too great. And if by some means we should think that we had covered our transgressions by our own efforts, we would not only be badly deceived but guilty of boasting as well.

What would heaven be like if it were populated by some who would say, "I did thus and so, and therefore the Lord has taken me in" and others who would proclaim, "My good deeds did reach unto the Lord, and He has rewarded me"? Then would heaven no longer be heaven, for the very same sin would be present that caused Adam and Eve to bring a curse upon a bright new paradise. That sin was pride.

Rather, heaven will consist of all people who during life on earth took refuge from their wrongness in the grace (unmerited favor) and love of God which sought them out and called them to turn from the broad way that leads to destruction. There they shall sing forever the praises of the Lamb who took away the sins of the world.

Blessed or happy are you who are living in the conviction by which the man whom we mentioned died. And may those of you who cannot now say "saved by grace" join that company by receiving God's love and forgiveness through Jesus.

—Raynard Huglen

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR is published bi-weekly (except the first issue of August) by an association of Lutheran congregations and interested friends. Rev. Raynard Huglen, Hatton, North Dakota, is the editor. Subscription price is \$2.50 per year in advance. Subscriptions should be sent to **THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR**, Box 652, Grafton, North Dakota. Third-class postage paid at Minneapolis, Minnesota. Publication office: 6820 Auto Club Road, Minneapolis, Minn. 55431.

Hammer Blows Heard Around the Earth

by Pastor Karl Stendal, Minneapolis, Minn.



—RNS Photo

SALE OF INDULGENCES

The brisk sale of indulgences—purchased pardons from sin—by John Tetzel and other preachers spurred Luther to write and post his famed 95 Theses.

A LITTLE band of Christians had been jailed because they had displeased the religious hierarchy. But heaven's angels were pleased, and one of them opened the prison doors. This enraged the persecutors who now called these men before their court and forbade them to teach the Christian gospel. The little group of witnesses, sensing their Savior's nearness, answered, "We ought to obey God rather than men." And, "they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

Why were these men so different? Why did they not cringe in the prison corner? Why did they not beggily promise to forget all about Jesus of Nazareth? Why were these men so changed from what they had been? These disciples were different because they had become participators in a tremendous event; it took place on Pentecost. Jesus had sent the Holy Spirit, and three thousand of those present had become members of a new race. They were twice-born men and women—strangers on the earth and pilgrims pressing on toward their homeland.

Their hearts aflame with love for

God and man, with the promise of their Lord to be with them always, and with a few scrolls of Scripture in their possession, they started out, aiming at nothing less than to "turn the world upside down." Transported on the "apostles' horses," which had only two feet, they covered country after country; and during the first one hundred years, Christian churches encircled the Roman Lake (Mediterranean). But all the while, the followers of Jesus were looked upon as a sect. The "wise," the "mighty," and the "noble" generally avoided too close contact with the gospel because it came with an absolute judgment upon sin and sinners, with an absolute promise of salvation to penitents, and with an absolute challenge to the ransomed to yield body, soul and spirit in happy, victorious, spiritual service for Jesus Christ. But many common people joined the ranks, and the church grew rapidly.

By the end of the third century A.D., the church had become a power with which even the Emperor had to reckon. The blood of the

martyrs had often flowed, but their testimony had been an irresistible appeal to multitudes of pagans. In 313 A.D., the Edict of Milan recognized Christianity as a lawful religion in the Empire.

Contrary to reason, these three centuries of poverty, persecution and martyrdom marked the golden age of the gospel. Stupendous achievements had transpired. But what now happened, after due recognition and a favorable attitude by the emperors, should be a lesson also to our day. Christianity gradually yielded to "churchianity"; the universal priesthood of believers gave way to a special priesthood; the simplicity of the gospel proclamation was supplanted by an ever-increasing amount of liturgy; humility on the part of the clergy was replaced by "men of the cloth" who gloried in their garb and in their office; mighty cathedrals were erected, whether the subjects of the church could afford them or not. The Dark Ages settled upon church and nations.

However, a few protesting voices were heard. Even though the head

bishop in the Roman Empire claimed, in the thirteenth century, that he was the vicar of Christ, superior to all men, though inferior to God, a few here and there maintained that the church must return to the true gospel. These were persecuted and excommunicated. Some paid with their lives. Criticism against the church increased during the last two centuries before the Reformation. Any attempt to reform the church as to its abuse of power, its superstition, its corruption, was met with unyielding refusal.

Martin Luther was born November 1, 1483, at Eisleben in Saxony, Germany. He was baptized the next day and named Martin after that day's saint. Born of strict Roman Catholics, Martin was brought up in a rigid religious climate. The boy had a good mind, and at the age of eighteen entered the University of Erfurt, where he became known as "the learned philosopher." Previous to this he had attended the village school at Mansfeld and, later, schools at Magdeburg and Eisenach.

Luther's father, Hans, wanted his son to become a lawyer, but several tragic experiences led him to choose the monastery. He became a consecrated monk in 1506 and was consecrated priest in 1507. In 1508 he became a teacher at the University of Wittenberg. After further study, he received a degree of Doctor of Theology in 1512. The same year he became Professor of Theology in the University of Wittenberg.

But although Luther was now a Doctor of Theology, he had no assurance of salvation. This experience he received later as he studied Romans 1:17: "The just shall live by faith." Little wonder, then, that the main Reformation principle is that man is justified by faith alone and not by works. A second principle followed—namely, that every Christian can come to God without the mediation of a priest or of the church, for the forgiveness of sins depends on faith in Christ only.

Providentially, Luther had gained these spiritual insights before the monk John Tetzel came to Wittenberg to sell indulgences, which in practical language means that a person could buy an indulgence and thereby receive forgiveness of sin. This traffic in selling indulgences was related to a huge project in Rome—the construction of the St. Peter's Cathedral.

After repeated protests by Luther against this traffic in men's souls, the hammer blows were heard when on October 31, 1517, he nailed to the Castle Church in Wittenberg 95 theses setting forth his views and inviting a debate on these theses. The Reformation had begun!

At once the ecclesiastical machinery was set in motion in an attempt to crush Luther and the young movement he headed. As in the time of Jesus, there was a "fulness of time." Criticism of the church during several centuries has been mentioned. The Renaissance—the rebirth of learning—had made the masses more aware of the church's proper function. Influential princes chose to take Luther's side in the fight against a power-hungry hierarchy which wanted to run both church and state.

Probably the high point in the controversy between Luther and the church was reached at the Diet at Worms April 18, 1521. Frederick the Wise, a friend of Luther, had persuaded the emperor to have Luther appear in person before the assembly, so that he might have a chance to defend himself and his teachings. He was bluntly ordered to recant; his answer included his famous "Here I stand—Unless I am refuted and convicted by testimonies of the Scriptures or by clear arguments—I cannot and will not recant anything." He was excommunicated by the Pope and banned by the emperor. Anyone could legally murder him.

We note a remarkable similarity in the Apostles' stand before the religious hierarchy in their day and the stand Luther made at

Worms. In both places, we find a case of religious tyranny and dictatorship. In both situations, the "defendants" declared their allegiance to God rather than men.

In both cases, hammer blows were dealt against a system developed by man instead of the Spirit of God. And the bitterest battles within the confines of so-called Christendom have been fought between religionists and twice-born men.

What Luther now lived for and risked his life for bore abundant fruit. The Reformation spread over large areas of Germany as well as other northern European countries. The Scandinavian lands are nominally 97-78 percent Lutheran. "The Word Alone," "Grace Alone," and "Faith Alone" were the pillars on which the New Testament church was built.

The Reformation was soon to feel the wrathful counter-blows of its antagonists. But not even the Thirty Years' War could undo the work of God.

What Luther by the grace of God accomplished is well known. The pulpit, not the altar, became again the most important place in church. People heard the Word proclaimed in their native tongue. The Bible, once again an "open Bible," became now a *personal* possession, not the possession of the

[Continued on page 8]

NOTICE

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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Please send all subscriptions to

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Box 652, Grafton, N. Dak.

How shall we evaluate the past year? To put it in one sentence, there have been more encouragements than discouragements. Let us make note of some of the encouraging features of our work.

1) The Association fellowship is being welded nicely into a cohesive group. True, most of our congregations came out of the pre-merger Lutheran Free Church, but in a sense our task has been to "pick up the pieces." The fellowship is being re-formed, and this is progressing well. Our small group lends itself to a closeness that a large group finds it difficult to match. The Annual Conference and Family Bible Camp are good indicators of our unity in spirit and factors in progress toward that unity.

2) We have good leadership and apparently enough talents to carry on our work. President John Strand has taken command of the work and yet has indicated no desire to dictate to the congregations or pastors. Let us not force him into the position of having to take more authority than he wants to by acting irresponsibly in our local situations.

We are amazed at the abilities which are evident in a fellowship as small as ours is. We shall not be put to shame in the quality of our efforts in the several areas—if we are obedient to the Lord.

3) There are young people who are interested in our work. We do expect that out of our homes will come young people who will take their places in our task and who will share our visions. But it has been inspiring to see young people from outside of our congregations evidence an interest in our type of church association. As we have said before, we hope that we will not disillusion them, but rather show them a program to which they can give and continue to give themselves.

The women of the church give evidence of being our strongest auxiliary. Even now, before more than getting started, it appears that they will oversubscribe their "faith" budget for the year. Through the Women's Missionary Federation they will prove the great blessing that that organization was to the old Lutheran Free Church.

4) We are on schedule in plans for opening a mission field of our own. We believe that this work will be in Brazil and are fortunate to have a mission director who is personally acquainted with that South American country. For some people, world mission work couldn't end soon enough, but we think most of our people believe that mission outreach is essential for a church and they are anxious to be at the task.

It is much too early for us to begin home mission congregations from scratch, but we look toward that day. In the meantime we are giving assistance to groups who form congregations where there is a nucleus of Lutheran Free Church people or those similarly inclined.

5) Many people from outside the Association have expressed good-will toward us. Some of these folks



ONE YEAR AGO

When this copy of *The Lutheran Ambassador* reaches you, it will be anniversary time for the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. For it was a year ago that we met in conference in Thief River Falls (Oct. 25-28) to affirm our desire to maintain an association of congregations which were not entering merger and to provide a fellowship with which other Lutheran congregations could affiliate if it seemed good to them to do so.

As we look backward, we realize again that our action took a considerable measure of faith. Opposition to the merger of the Lutheran Free Church with the American Lutheran Church, never really an organized affair (and we say this with all due respect for those who were involved), lacked leadership in the final years which could galvanize it into an effective force. That there would be a portion of the church which would not enter the union was always known, but it wasn't clear what the extent or power of the protest group would be.

As it turned out, the dissenting group was not as large as we had hoped or as it might have been. Various factors well known to some of you contributed to this. On the other hand, the number of congregations which chose not to be a part of the larger organization was much greater than some of our "friends" were predicting—not large congregations, to be sure, but then while numbers are nice to have, we were pretty well agreed that our course would be governed more by what seemed right for us than by the size of our group.

Someone may sometime write a history of what happened in the Lutheran Free Church in the years prior to merger. We'd like to read it. It's a pretty involved story and even though we lived through it, we aren't quite sure how the end was achieved through the ingredients that were available.

Suffice it to say that we are a fact today. From our viewpoint, we are here to stay. Whether we shall always be in the form we are now is hard to say. This will depend on what the future brings for Lutheranism in America. But we do intend to always champion the freedom of the local congregation, simple orders of service, a wholesome pietism, and avoidance of affiliations which in our thinking compromise the supremacy and integrity of the Scriptures.

hope to eventually be in our fellowship so that their expressions of fellowship are to be expected. A good many others, however, have no intention of ever leaving their present alignments but still extend the hand of brotherhood and wish us well. This spirit is greatly appreciated and we trust that we may show as fine a spirit toward others.

These, then, are *some* of the encouraging features of a year's work, and we give thanks to the Lord. As to those things with which we must yet wrestle, we shall consider them in the next editorial.

HURDLES FOR THE FUTURE

"The future is as bright as the promises of God." We believe that holds true even for the Association. We are doing the Lord's work, and He will supply our every need.

This being so, it is nevertheless good for us to be aware of a number of hurdles or problems with which we must cope in the days ahead. Some of them we may face once for all and others will come as recurring challenges.

1) We have in mind the matter of a seminary. Yes, we were told at the beginning that this would be a difficulty for us. Yet we have every confidence that we shall be able to establish a training school for pastors by next fall. To do so will not admit for any great delays, however. The real problem is not students or buildings at this time but faculty. Has there been any real prayer made in this regard? Let us pray that qualified teachers will cast their lot with us even as prospective students are doing.

2) A second concern is the tendency of some of our people to linger in the past and find more satisfaction in retracing old steps than going forward in a program which calls for the best in everyone. Related to this is our need to guard against false doctrine while at the same time not being overcome by a suspicious and harping spirit. In other words, we must be as positive as possible even when forced to take what seems a negative position. And there still is no substitute for showing forth the love of Jesus in all of life's situations.

3) There are certain areas in which differing view-

points are held and where we will have to move with caution and understanding. For instance, there is the question of how much young people's work should be carried on apart from the whole family group in the congregation or the church body. Many of us have grown up in the atmosphere of the "separate" youth fellowships and camps. Then there are those among us who feel that really effective youth work will be carried out in situations where youth are integrated into activities that involve the family. This is a subject which bears watching and discussion and is not peculiar to us.

Another situation which we share with most churches is the current manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, notably "speaking in tongues." This is something that can be counterfeited and misused and we are anxious to have a wholesome attitude toward it. In regard to the work of the Holy Spirit in general we must stand on the articles written by Pastor Julius Hermunslie (*May 21 and June 4*) as Biblical and Lutheran.

Whatever the issues may be in which there is difference of opinion, let us not permit them to become issues that divide us but seek to arrive at some understandings under which we can work.

4) As yet we do not know whether finances will be a particular problem for us. That is, up to this time we have received what we have needed without making any definite appeal for contributions. This has been a real source of joy to us.

We must be aware, however, that our expenses are increasing almost daily, and with the beginning of our first real fiscal year since merger, on February 1, we will be striving to reach a budget of approximately \$60,000.00. How well we respond to this challenge will be a real indication of what kind of a church we intend to be. We think that we will accept the challenge.

In conclusion, with Samuel let us raise an Ebenezer and say, "Hitherto the Lord has helped us." Having done that, let us then advance for Christ, assured that there is a great work to do for Him and that we are privileged to have as large a part as we have the faith and will to assume.

NOTICE

The times for the meetings of the Free Lutheran Theological Conference are as follows:

Tuesday, October 29

10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, October 30

Thursday, October 31

9:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m.

For further details see page 8.

"For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

"The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, 'Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!'" (John 1:29).

"Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot

enter the kingdom of God'" (John 3:5).

"With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And you will say in that day: 'Give thanks to the Lord, call upon his name; make known his deeds among the nations, proclaim that his name is exalted'" (Isa. 12:3, 4).

The Birth of the Augsburg Confession

The first of two articles

Pastor A. L. Hokanson, Everett, Washington

ALMOST 450 years ago, a young professor from Germany went to Rome. He was a man of considerable learning and of a versatile mind. He didn't go to Rome to survey its treasures of art. He went to Rome because of a conflict in his mind and heart about sin. Having been educated to regard Rome as the center of the Christian world, he thought he would go to the heart of things and see what he could find. He went as a Christian pilgrim; He returned as a soldier of the Word; a pilgrim true, but mighty in battle. For as he climbed the stairs on his knees, seeking peace for his soul, Romans 1:17 loomed before him: "The just shall live by faith." He left his dead works to become alive unto the Word. Out of this Martin Luther was used of God to present to the church the three cardinal doctrinal truths of the Reformation: "The just shall live by faith"; "The Bible, the whole Bible and nothing but the Bible"; and "the royal priesthood of believers." In the present day, when we view with astonishment that Lutheran leaders and theologians cannot come to agreement on the "justification by faith" principles at Helsinki and we note with grief the drift toward Rome and the awful implications of neo-orthodoxy enveloping the Lutheran Church from leaders to laymen, it is well that we bring to remembrance the birth-pangs of the Augsburg Confession and the fight to sustain it down through the years.

In the crisis of the Reformation, Charles V was emperor of Germany. Of him Luther said, "He is pious and kind, but surrounded by many devils." Charles was 21 at

the time of the Diet of Augsburg. May we briefly review the situation in Germany.

Ecclesiastical background: Papal power was absolute. The king was subject to the pope as was also every soul. There was the doctrine of two swords: material and spiritual. All power proceeded from pope to bishops. They had power over all church property.

Political background. The Turks were threatening. Monarchies were arising. Outside of Scandinavia, five nations were prominent: England, France, Spain, Germany and Italy. In Germany there was great desire for unity, but it was hopelessly divided into large and small cities, provinces and republics. Larger states like the two Saxonys and Brandenburg were kingdoms in themselves. Three years after Luther's birth, Maximilian became emperor. He was greatly deficient in practical power and died in 1519. Charles was elected to succeed him.

Intellectual and social background: The period of the Renaissance brought a revival of learning. All science and knowledge has its roots in this era. It saw the growth of exploration, trade, inventions and the rise of democracy. There were crop failures in Germany in 1500, 1502, and 1503. A bitter note of discontent was prevalent on the eve of the Reformation.

Religious background: Outwardly, Germany was most loyal and devoted to Rome. Family life showed simple, evangelical, religious faith and yet there was an enthusiasm for pilgrimages to holy places and even to the graves of the saints in Germany and France.

Coupled with this was an overpowering fear over the land, a fear of the Turks and plagues. The gathering of relics became a passion. Jesus Christ was pictured as a stern and fearful judge. The more they feared Jesus, the more they worshipped Mary. The cultus of St. Ann, the mother of Mary, came into being. There was a revival of the Augustinian order of Monks. Feelings arose against the clergy. There were efforts to reform the clergy by laymen and princes and towns with associations formed by laymen.

We usually give October 31, 1517, when Luther nailed his 95 Theses to the church door at Wittenberg, as the beginning of the Reformation. Luther had given special study to the Scriptures as a professor at the University at Wittenberg. Luther contended that the pope could err. This was in 1519. Luther had presented the material principle, "The just shall live by faith," and the formal principle, "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible." Luther became a Protestant inside of the Catholic Church long before he nailed his 95 Theses on the church door at Wittenberg.

The Catholic Church taught that in God's court every sinner is guilty, but how guilty nobody knew because God was never seen. They taught that in the court of conscience this would be dangerous because it tends to subjectivism and so the sinner must stand before the court of the Church where the priest is the judge. Therefore, if you want forgiveness you must take the word of the priest. Luther would not take the salvation promise from the Church but from God himself. *Grace is what God thinks and says about me.* Luther says, "Bring your sins directly through the Lord Jesus Christ to

God and on the merits of Christ you are forgiven."

Against this background of fear and unrest, with the Turks threatening and states divided and at sword-points, Germany could not cope with the pope. The Emperor hoped to establish harmony by gentle means between the evangelical states and the pope, so he therefore proclaimed a diet on Jan. 21, 1530, at Augsburg for April 8, 1530. This was an opportunity for the Protestants, though Augsburg was in hostile territory.

[To be continued]

[Continued from page 4]

official church. Men and women were told that Christ is the only mediator between God and man.

But the Reformation made impacts upon education, economics, and political life. Once the ecclesiastical yoke had been broken, men surged ahead in their newfound freedom.

And the hammer blows of the fifteenth century can still be recorded on our twentieth-century spiritual seismographs, notwithstanding the inertia prevailing in much of Protestantism. The emphasis for the need of a twentieth-century reformation is a healthy note.

Luther said, "Here I stand." A goodly proportion of current Lutheran leadership might as well say, "Here we sit." In Minneapolis at the 1957 Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation, the president stated, "We want relations with the Roman Catholic Church." In Toledo, Ohio, the traditional Reformation festival was scrapped in favor of an institute which heard an address by a "noted Jesuit theologian." The former president of Poland's National Council of Churches preached at a Roman Catholic mass. In a Minneapolis daily, December 5, 1960, headlines told us, "Historic Meeting: 10 Protestant and Catholic Leaders Join in Colloquy." The same publication for September 26, 1963, carried a report by a Twin Cities Lutheran theologian who hailed the "ecumen-

ical drive" and suggested that the reunion of Catholics and Protestants could lead to "religious revivals," etc. From Germany come demands by Lutheran clergymen for recognition of the Pope as the head of the Church. Possibly a new low was reached in Helsinki, Finland, this fall when leading Lutheran theologians could not agree on a draft setting forth the main New Testament and Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith alone. The alleged difficulty Helsinki gave is that we need an up-to-date statement of the doctrine. Well, Luther has been dead since February 18, 1546, but could he be present where Lutherans now "sit," he would surely declare again, "Here I stand!" And he would hasten to show that his teaching on justification is much up-to-date, while Lutheran theologians currently have their theological gears jammed in reverse!

Do we need a reformation? What is the remedy? We thank God that very many Lutherans are saying "Here I stand"! For they are twice-born, "redeemed by the blood of the Lamb." We must pray for faith, courage, vision, truth and love. The Lord will not fail us.

"A Mighty Fortress Is Our God."

FREE LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE

October 29-31, 1963

Wheaton, Ill.—A Free Lutheran Theological Conference will be held in Minneapolis, Minn., Oct. 29-31, sponsored by The Word Alone, Inc. Its purpose is to promote confessional Lutheranism after the pattern of Martin Luther and the early Reformers. Convinced that a great deal of today's Lutheranism has departed from the Augsburg Confession and from the basic truth about the inspiration of the Scriptures, this organization has for several years published a paper called *The Word Alone* which refutes modern liberalism and neo-orthodoxy.

Chairman of The Word Alone Committee is the Rev. R. L. Larson of Mentor, Minnesota. The Ex-

ecutive Director is the Rev. Allen R. Blegen of Wheaton, Ill.

Dr. Wm. Oesch, professor at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Oberursel, Germany, will speak on the theology of the Word of God.

Dr. Henry Morris, chairman of the Department of Civil Engineering at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, will speak on the theory of evolution.

John Noble, who was in Russian prisons and slave labor camps for nine years, will lecture on Communism and the Churches.

Also speaking will be the Rev. A. H. Mjorud, an official evangelist for the American Lutheran Church; the Rev. R. L. Larson of Mentor, Minn.; the Rev. Oscar Laaveg of Belmont, Iowa; the Rev. G. L. Halmrast of Mentor, Minn.; and the Rev. Allen R. Blegen of Wheaton, Ill.

The Conference will be held in centrally located First Baptist Church in Minneapolis which seats 2000 people.

NEWS FROM COLFAX, WISCONSIN

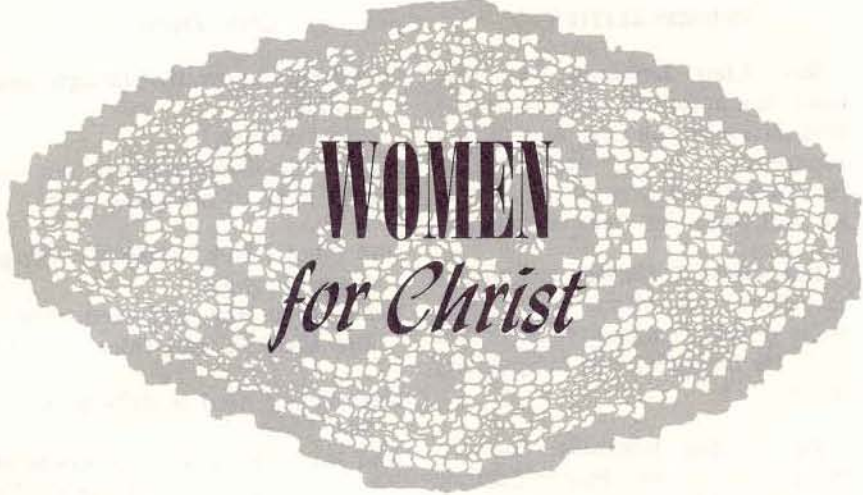
A warm spirit of Christian fellowship prevailed as a new church was dedicated and the 100th anniversary of Faith Lutheran Congregation of Running Valley was observed on September 29. A capacity crowd heard the dedication sermon preached by the Rev. John Strand, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, with which the church at Colfax is affiliated.

Pastor Strand also performed the act of dedication for the new church building which replaces one destroyed by fire.

Several former pastors were present for the occasion. They were Dr. Iver Olson, P. A. Strommen and G. A. Almquist. Other ministers in attendance were Pastors Vettrus, Norheim, Dachen, Carlson, Korsrud and Dr. Wm. Krueger.

Mr. Alan Hendrickson, student at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, is serving the congregation.

Phillip Peterson



WOMEN for Christ

ONE of our W.M.F. projects is the Mission Scholarship. At our convention we accepted a budget of \$1000 for this project, granting two \$500 scholarships each year. Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Grothe of Badger have applied for the one. They are now at the Lutheran Bible School in Fergus Falls, Minn., to prepare themselves for full-time service in His vineyard. The following is Mr. Grothe's testimony. In the next issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador* Mrs. Grothe will give her testimony.

To the Women's Missionary Federation:

Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who has promised, "And lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

I consider this a real privilege and an honor to be able to give my testimony to you of the W.M.F. of our Association. It is sheer joy to give a testimony for Him who loved me enough to lift me up, to cleanse me from sin and set me free.

As a boy I lived in a wonderful Christian home where I heard my parents pray, where we heard the Word of God read morning and evening. We were taken to Sunday school and church services regularly. This left an indelible impression on my life. And I always believed in Jesus and His shedding His blood on the cross, not in general, but for me and for

each individual. It was a personal thing to me.

Well, I left home in 1946 and joined the armed services. I landed in Korea, to my dismay, but which I later saw was a real blessing to me. I saw the people of Korea living in a terrible lost state, dirty, starving, and giving what they had many times to the Buddhas—idols of cold stone.

To see the shores of America once more was like coming to Paradise and at once I realized the complacency in which we live, the "take-it-for-granted spirit." From this time on God spoke to me off and on. "What about these lost, wretched people throughout the world? Are you going to do anything about it?" He asked. My answers then were an array of excuses. Of course, I had strayed somewhat while in the service so this was understandable.

Then one evening at an evangelistic service in our home church, God really spoke to me. I then realized how great a sinner I really was and how I had been grieving Him. That night I surrendered myself to Him and rededicated my life to Him. But then the flesh still rebelled against the idea of foreign missions. I just wasn't the man, I said. How could God use me? We have five wonderful children whom God has given us. How could I take them off to some far-away land?

Well, God moves in a wonderful

way. The merger went through, our new association was formed, and God put the door right in front of me. This time I had to face it. Frances and I prayed much about it. I lost nights of sleep over it. Then one day I said, "Lord, Thou art the potter; I am the clay. Mold me and make me after Thy will, while I am waiting, yielded and still. Thy will be done!"

We then, together, stepped out in faith, knowing that our God is a mighty God and will overcome all obstacles if we are in His will. And He has truly blessed us and led us by the hand. I truly believe that God wants us to go and that the least we can do is to trust Him and obey Him.

It is with these convictions that I hereby make application for the scholarship that you, the W.M.F., plan to give. And it is in humbleness that we pray for God's guidance and grace that whatever help we receive might be used to His honor and glory and that souls might be won for Him.

May He richly bless you for your efforts, and lead and guide you (Eph. 3: 17-21).

Sincerely in Christ,
Alvin J. Grothe

DOLLARS AND GREETINGS ARE COMING IN

Here at the treasurer's office we continue to get regular gifts and words of greeting which warm our hearts and give us great hope for the future. Let me share some of the greetings with you.

I saw your address in *The Lutheran Ambassador* and am enclosing a personal check for \$100.00 to be used in mission work where most needed. It is given in memory of my husband whom the Lord called home in April. I thank the Lord for giving me this opportunity to share in the work with this gift and may His blessings be upon it.

Woodburn, Oregon

I am enclosing a check to use for our Missionary-for-a-day project. I am so happy that we have a "Missionary for a Day" again as that was always one of my pet projects in the Lutheran Free Church and I felt bad when I thought we wouldn't have it any more.

Wayzata, Minn.

I am enclosing a check for \$50.00 from the W.M.F. of the Central (Minn.) District. We had a meeting August 26 and had a good attendance, and we were all blessed. We had as our speaker Rev. Abel. It was so good to know we can still have a W.M.F. May we all be happy to share in the work of the Master.

Dalton, Minn.

Enclosed please find check for \$78.40. This is to pay for the Honorary membership certificates and pins that have been ordered for the Norman Ladies Aid, Tioga parish.

White Earth, N. Dak.

The enclosed check is for the work of W.M.F. I will explain what it is about. In July the women of our group served a wedding supper for the daughter of a member. She wanted the money to go to the Association, so it was decided to send it to W.M.F.

Grafton, N. Dak.

Young People!

Remember the
**National Association
Youth Rally**

November 8-10

Missions Center,
1603 5th St. N.
Fargo, N. Dak.

Friday evening through
Sunday afternoon
Lodging at two Fargo hotels
at \$1.50 per night
Registration—\$3.00
Conference theme

"Christ has set us free"
(Gal. 5:1)

We hope to see you there.

PERSONALITIES

Rev. Clair Jennings, Radcliffe, Iowa, has accepted a call to be the first pastor of the first Association congregation to be organized in the Twin Cities area of Minnesota. He will begin his new work soon.

Rev. Glenn T. Carlsen has moved to Albert Lea, Minn., to begin a home mission congregation for the ALC. He formerly lived in Spokane, Wash.

Rev. Arthur Reesness, Fosston, Minn., will succeed Pastor Carlsen in Calvary Lutheran Church, Spokane.

Rev. Elder Oscarson will conduct his last services in the Newfolden, Minn., parish on November 10, before leaving to become pastor of University Lutheran Church, Long Beach, California.

Rev. Raynard Huglen, editor of *The Lutheran Ambassador*, will move to Roslyn, S. Dak., in November and will serve Tabor, Saron and Hope churches. He has been serving at Hatton, Buxton and Portland, N. Dak., on a temporary basis since last May.

Rev. Fred Ditmanson, veteran missionary to China and later a worker in the world mission office of the Lutheran Free Church, is now residing in Des Moines, Iowa.

Rev. Rennard Svano, who served his first parish at Eagle Bend, Minn., has become assistant pastor at St. Olaf Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. Rev. Howard Sortland is head pastor.

EVANGELISTIC SERVICES IN VALLEY CITY

Pastor Jay E. Erickson, Faith, S. Dak., will preach at a series of special meetings in Valley City, N. Dak., Nov. 10-15, evenings only. The services will be conducted by First Lutheran Church (non-merged), Rev. F. B. Monseth, pastor. The place of meeting will be announced. Everyone is welcome.

ONE THING

One thing I know, that though once blind,
I now can see,
Since Jesus came and gave new life
And light to me (John 2:25).

One thing I lack, if earthly things
Are still my all:
Yield all to Him, and then obey
The Master's call (Mark 10:21).

One thing I need is daily to sit at
Jesus' feet
And learn the wondrous words of
Life His lips repeat (Luke 10:42).

One thing I ask, that I may
Always see my Lord
In all His beauty, in the temple
Of His Word (Ps. 27:4).

One thing I do, forgetting that
Which now is past,
Onward I press, to reach the goal
Of heaven at last (Phil. 3:13, 14).

—Mrs. I. M. Norum
Shevlin, Minn.

NOTICE

Our business office is located at:

**The Lutheran Ambassador
Box 652
Grafton, N. Dak.**

Please send all subscriptions and inquiries concerning mailing lists to that office.

All comments and questions concerning material published in the paper should be addressed to:

**Rev. Raynard Huglen, Ed.
The Lutheran Ambassador
Hatton, N. Dak.**

All subscriptions will be handled as promptly as possible. Please allow 2-3 weeks for the filling of your subscription. The price is \$2.50 per year (25 issues).



Edited by Mrs. David C. Hanson

GOALS

A GROUP of men and women interested in Christian education were using their lunch hour to discuss problems and share ideas. Much had been said about using new methods, promotional ideas had been shared, discipline problems had been hashed over; and the group had returned to the question that plagues their work.

"Why aren't we seeing more visible results from our teaching in the lives of our students?"

In answer, one of the men raised this question: "Is it possible that Sunday school is sometimes ineffective because it is God's second best plan for teaching?" He went on to say that his reasoning was based on the fact that some of the earliest instructions for teaching were given to *parents*. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise" (Deut. 6:5-7).

God instructed His people to love Him so completely that His Word would have a place of honor in their homes. It would be natural for His name to be a part of their family conversations and even the everyday happenings of their lives would be seen in the light of His goodness and mercy.

In God's perfect plan, no doubt Adam was given the wisdom to teach the offspring that would fol-

low him; but when man fell into sin, child training, too, was blighted, with the result that man has struggled with the problem ever since.

When Sunday school was originated in the last century, it was intended to be merely a supplement to the Christian training children received in their homes. In our time, when so few homes offer instruction in the Word of God, Sunday school has been forced into a position of responsibility for the complete Christian education of many children and has developed into a year-round program of parish education that must serve every age group within the sphere of influence of the congregation.

What a monumental task to be accomplished in the short hours that are allotted to the church!

To man's small mind it seems impossible until he remembers that when our risen Lord gave the command "Go . . . and teach," He also said, "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me" and "I am with you always." The remainder of the verse, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you," might well be chosen as the goal for the program of parish education within the church.

"*Making disciples of all nations*" (bringing others to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ) and "*teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you*" (helping others to grow in their Christian life) are inseparable phases of the work and include every member of the congregation. For what Christian can say that he has completed his Christian growth, or that he has successfully carried out the Lord's command in regard to making disciples?

So it becomes necessary for the local congregation to establish a program in agreement with the goals our Lord has given us—with every member of every department

within the program working together toward this common purpose.

To carry out this aim, the Bible must be taught in such a way that spiritual truths are clarified and applied to daily living. The consequences of sin and God's loving attitude toward sinners must be interpreted so that all will understand their need of a Savior. Teaching will be more than a process of transmitting facts. As the individual needs and abilities of pupils are recognized, the Word of God will be used to bring people to Christ, to teach them how God deals with men and to teach man his place in relation to his God and his fellow man.

When this kind of program is undergirded by the faithful prayers of a concerned congregation, the Holy Spirit, working through the Word, will create faith and strengthen and equip the believers for service. There will be visible results in the changed lives of our students.

BASIC RECIPE FOR A HALLOWEEN STORY INGREDIENTS

Take one large pumpkin. (As perfect as you can find.)



On one side carve an ugly face.



Have a candle and matches ready for use.

METHOD

1. With the carved side toward you and the smooth side of the pumpkin facing the children, tell the story of creation. Emphasize the fact that God made the world even more perfect than the golden pumpkin.

2. Tell the story of man's fall into sin as you show the children the ugly face of the jack o' lantern. Explain that just as the carved face spoiled the smooth surface of the perfect pumpkin, so sin left its mark on the perfect world. Call attention to the lack of light in the pumpkin. Without light man wasn't able (isn't able) to see sin clearly.

3. God sent light into the world in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ. (As you speak, add the candle and light it.) Of course Jesus, the Light of the World, is much greater than the small candle within the pumpkin. The candle enables us to see the face of the jack o' lantern even in the dark of night; Jesus Christ reveals sin to us and also shows us the remedy for sin. Man cannot look at the light that God provided and remain the same.

4. Remind the children of their responsibility to be lights.

5. Season the basic recipe to your own taste by writing the story in your own words and adding Bible verses that are appropriate.

6. Serve to the children with the warmth of Christian love.

LET ME GUIDE A LITTLE CHILD

Dear Lord, I do not ask
That Thou should'st give me some
high work of Thine,
Some noble calling, or some wondrous task.

Give me a little hand to hold in
mine;
Give me a little child to point the
way
Over the strange, sweet path that
leads to Thee;

Give me a little voice to teach to
pray;
Give me two shining eyes Thy face
to see.

The only crown I ask, dear Lord,
to wear
Is this: That I may teach a little
child.

I do not ask that I may ever stand
Among the wise, the worthy, or
the great;
I only ask that softly, hand in
hand,
A child and I may enter the gate.

—Author Unknown
(from *Prayer Poems*)

NOTICE

The Luther League convention at Fargo, Nov. 8-10, is intended for adults as well as youth. Therefore, anyone who can come is welcome to attend.

PRAYER

In this hour of worship
Grant Thy presence, Lord!
Here, the world forgotten,
Feed us on Thy Word.

From our sins and sorrows
Here we seek release;
Of Thy love persuaded,
Find the path of peace.

—Author Unknown
(from *Prayer Poems*)

“He [Jesus] must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).

“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God rests upon him” (John 3:36).

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

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