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# *LUTHERAN*

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Students  
and Harvest

—Looma Photos



## According to the Word

### THE CURSE OF USELESSNESS

James 4:17 and Judges 5:23

It is always a good practice to seek somehow to institute a discipline into a person's life. Not from the standpoint of showing off, but as a reminder of the suffering of our precious Savior for us.

In Judges, the 5th chapter, Deborah sings a song of praise to God for His marvelous protection and care of His people, the Israelites, through another siege and victory. But there's one verse which denotes a blight on that beautiful song of thanksgiving: verse 23. Here a CURSE is pronounced or called down upon them of the Lord. And what was the cause for such drastic measure? Because the people of Meroz knew what it was to do good and did it not (James 4:17). The people of Meroz did not actively aid the enemy, nor did they permit them to find refuge within their gates. Their sin was the sin of USELESSNESS. They had simply not come to the battle when their country's call rang in their ears. The people of Meroz would feel right at home with those today who are judging the Vietnam situation and saying, "I'll fight in any war, except this one, I don't believe in this war."

There are not a few people today who imagine they are good because, as they think, they do no harm. They forget how great a sin

the sin of uselessness is. They forget that just to do nothing is to do evil terribly, and that just to be nothing is to be terribly evil.

Every good cause is God's cause; the struggle between right and wrong continues on. The call is issued and men are summoned to come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Every true reform undertaken, every attempt to restrain evil, every effort to bring those in the world under the loving sway of Christ, is a summons to us for active enlistment. We are obligated, to the limit of our powers, to render aid.

Many of the greatest and most serious sins of men are sins of *not doing*.

Doing nothing usually exerts positive influence for evil. What if a person, in a given situation, did nothing at all... would he then be free from judgment? Which one of us would not consider it our duty, even to give our lives, if we beheld a neighborhood child darting out into traffic—if we didn't do our utmost both by word and action to turn him back to safety?

The people of Meroz were cursed because they simply did nothing; sins of omission are great sins, as well as the sins of commission. The priest and the Levite of the Gospel did no injury to the wounded one, yet they did him a terrible wrong by refusing to help him in his need. In the Lord's picture of the last judgment those who are set on the

left hand are condemned not for the wicked deeds committed, but for the sin of uselessness: in not coming to the aid of the Lord in feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, visiting the sick and going to those in prison.

There are many ways that men can bring upon themselves the curse of the sin of uselessness. Sometimes it is by cowardice: physical or moral. There are multitudes of people who are useless to the cause of Christ for no other reason than that they are moral cowards.

Another possible reason is a false sense of modesty. How many Christians fall for this line of Satan—they have "no gifts," so they stay in the background and never put God or His Word to the test.

A more common reason is indolence and self-indulgence. The people of Meroz were content and occupied with their homes and affairs. Of course, they were interested in their country's welfare—but, someone else would take care of it. Thousands of people, yes, even thousands of Christians, have this idea today. Thus they bring down upon themselves the curse of God against Meroz—the curse of uselessness.

In summary, this is not a curse against the enemies of God, but against those professing to be His friends, but who fail through inactivity. "Not failure, but low aim, is the crime" (Mal. 3; James 4:17).

—Hubert F. DeBoer

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# What Tenement Living Did To Us

**AUTHOR'S PREFACE:** *This article must remain unsigned to protect my career and to shield my family. For they endured six years of tenement-like living with all its accompanying stresses, motivated by a totally unselfish love for me as a father and husband and sustained by a deep respect for my profession.*

*Prior to those six years of enforced slumlike living, we had lived as do most middle-class families—comfortably and adequately. We had the goals and standards of most families with an income above the level of poverty. Then suddenly, without any loss in income or preparation for our new way of life, we were dropped into tenement-like conditions, trapped by the profession I had chosen.*

*Perhaps this is what made the contrasts so stark, the impressions so vivid, the scars so deep, and the memories so acutely painful.*

*I hope a recounting of our experiences will do for others what it has done for us. Those six years have etched an indelible and overwhelming compassion in our hearts for those who are still living under similar conditions without the hope that sustained us—the knowledge we would ultimately escape our tenement "ghetto" and return to a normal, wholesome family life. And we knew what family life could and should be from our previous experiences.*

**W**HAT is it like for a family of seven and a dog (the children's one tie with their former life) to live in a house with less than 700 square feet of floor space including halls and closets? Or to have a postage-stamp-size yard, devoid of grass and trees, composed of crushed gravel, dirt, and mud?

Or to live with neighbors whose houses come within arm's reach of your own, having a community of dozens of children wanting to play with yours and finding no place to be creative or constructive? This is tenement-like living, and my family just barely endured it for six years.

We joked at first about bedrooms with wall-to-wall beds and made a game of pretending it saved us the expense of buying rugs. Yet at night we carefully removed our shoes before walking over the children's bed to reach their cubicle closets.

The paper-thin walls made every activity in the house a community affair, and the sounds emanating from the various rooms became a dissonant jumble of barely tolerable noise. For us privacy became nothing more than a word.

This is where we were forced to reexamine the building blocks of wholesome, constructive family living. Tenement conditions convinced us that family togetherness is a luxury which only those who individually enjoy some measure of privacy can afford. There is nothing more devastating to the development of a normal human personality, more stunting to Christian growth, more divisive of the love relationship within the corporate family, or destructive to family cohesiveness than enforced togetherness. When togetherness is no longer a free act, voluntarily engaged in by each member of the family and motivated by a sense of close personal love, it becomes an unsubtle intrusion on the dignity of each person in the family.

We found ourselves drifting into a defensive selfishness, not toward material possessions but more fundamentally toward the integrity of personality. Our basic family struggle concerned itself with preventing the development of an unhealthy

"self-preservation selfishness."

For the first time we could begin to understand how people living under similar conditions could absolutely refuse to be concerned with or involved in the lives of their neighbors or anyone in trouble. Tenement living does make dissociation one of the primary desires in life, and perhaps a means of self-preservation. Frankly, what I at one time ascribed to apathy, indifference, and an absence of Christian love I now recognize to be the evil by-product of this kind of enforced togetherness, which stunts the growth of love.

The extreme limitations of privacy in our family, or rather the total absence of it, completely reversed the emphases in our family living. We were almost propelled into searching for our own means of escape from a total and stifling togetherness.

One of our functions as parents was to assist our children in finding creative ways of enjoying hours when they could be free from the smothering confines of our slumlike existence. Retreat even into one of the bedrooms was no answer, for the sounds from the other rooms permeated the thin walls to destroy the very peace and quiet and introspection the individual was seeking. Fortunately, even though we were living under poverty-like conditions, we were not poor. And so money, liberally given to our children, became a vital means of offering them a few precious hours of personal freedom. But I often wonder what the additional handicap of poverty would have done to my family.

I can sympathize with the children, especially the teen-agers, who are trapped by such all-engulfing circumstances. Study under these conditions is almost impossible in the accelerated pace of modern

schooling. My children's work suffered, and it was not until we escaped our tenement environment that they blossomed into the kind of students we knew they could be.

But most tragically, the awkward change from childhood to adulthood which we call adolescence took place in our oldest child under the constant scrutiny of the entire family. She had no place to go where she could meet herself and wrestle with her newly evolving emotions. Fortunately, a strong Christian conscience, a faith that somehow clung to a belief in the presence of a loving God kept our daughter from turning to the streets for companionship with fellow teenage sufferers rebelling against a society which refuses to allow them to be themselves during their most crucial years. We regretted that her early teen-age years were more tumultuous than they need have been, spurred on as she was by her desire to develop into a complete individual yet unable to find the privacy to evolve her own unique personality.

I believe I can also understand why fathers so often desert their families or become part-time fathers at best under these harassing conditions. Few men are constitutionally capable of being smothered by family living that allows them little or no relaxation.

We made a second, equally startling discovery. When space is limited, walls paper-thin, privacy nil, and neighbors an unavoidable part of your own living, family discipline can go in one of two directions.

It can become overly concerned with neighbors and with the family itself. Emotions then become subdued shadows of reality, stunting the growth of the children and adversely reflecting on the parents. In tenement living unrestrained joy is a luxury that either offends the neighbors or imposes on the other members of the family who must share in it no matter what may be occupying their mind or time. Anger under these conditions becomes a strained, unreleased, seething, harassing volcano, frequently ex-

ploding at the wrong time for the wrong reason.

Even normal children's play can become irritating both to the family and to the neighbors. And the great temptation for a respectable, considerate family is to suppress even this necessity of a child's life.

The alternative is clear. Emotions can run rampant, discipline become a matter of shouting, and all responsibility for teaching a child normal responses be given up as hopeless. Such results are inevitable, once you determine to "live your own life and let the family do the same."

In tenement life, noise often becomes a means of salvation, delivering the family from the unwelcome intrusions of neighbors and absolving the family from the struggle with a conscience which says, "be considerate of others, particularly of those who live next to you."

I made the surprising discovery that neighbors could become millstones and that it isn't difficult to dislike those whose lives become a part of your very own existence. Often nothing more than the too-thin walls transmitting the neighbors' quarrels produced tensions in our own family, and we were constantly faced with the struggle between subduing our own emotions and the alternative—exploding in reaction to the noise with some of our own.

I can now sympathize with the children who create bedlam on the city's streets, for they are the tragic by-product of parents who have chosen the second alternative—to ignore neighbors and to abandon family discipline because it is too difficult to walk the slender rope of orderliness without destroying all normal outlets for human emotions.

Still another aspect of tenement living surprised us. Standards we had long accepted as an integral part of our family life now became constant sources of irritation, frustration, and struggle.

If cleanliness is next to godliness, then slum living is a long way from the kingdom of God. A few weeks of life amid the dirt and

gravel of our confined yard soon presented us with some rather unpleasant alternatives. We could either close our eyes to the grime that clung to our children from their play, or we could forbid them to move outdoors even in the middle of a hot summer.

Grass is a luxury that comes with a normal-size yard and paved driveway. We made three vain attempts at planting some, but this automatically meant that the children had nowhere to play except the street. The minute dimensions of our yard made the entire area a necessary outlet for the energy of five healthy children.

We were not accustomed to seeing our children spend a day in dirty, dusty clothes. But to attempt to keep them reasonably clean meant three or four changes a day. No woman could begin to keep up with the mountains of clothing which accumulated in our clothes hamper those first few harrowing weeks. After that, we resigned ourselves to dusty, grubby children who constantly looked as if no one loved or cared for them.

Even the simple routine of bathing became a major problem during the winter months. No one wants to bathe in a bathroom where the thermometer stands at a constant 48 degrees. So we began to fudge on standards of cleanliness for the sake of comfort and health. Three winters of this have given us a profound compassion for parents who must attempt to teach their children some habits of cleanliness under these conditions.

More startling, however, was the impact of our chicken-coop-size house on what we considered minimum standards of cleanliness for our home. We discovered it is almost impossible to keep a house clean when children bring in dirt from their play and when everyone uses the same area to walk through and live in.

It did things to family relationships. A toy left out meant hazardous navigation for the rest of the family; one coat, flung over a chair rather than hung in a cubicle closet

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# LIVING OR DEAD?

"I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead" (Rev. 3:1).

Dear Friends and Members of our AFLC:

Is it possible that there are any hypocrites in our AFLC?

Is it possible that there are any self-deceived in our group?

Nobody feels sorry for a hypocrite; but the self-deceived, I do feel very sorry for.

Is it possible that there are people who belong to our Association churches and are deceived as to their real spiritual status?

What is a hypocrite?

According to Webster: "A person who pretends to be what he is not, or pretends to believe what he does not believe."

In other words, a person who tries to make other people believe

he is a Christian, but knows in his own heart that he has never been saved, never had an experience of seeing himself as a sinner and accepting Jesus as his personal Savior.

We should all know that we are not saved because we stayed out of the merged Church and belong to the AFLC and are enthusiastic supporters of her program of schools and missions. We are not saved because we give much to the local church and to the church at large. Paul says in I Corinthians 13:3; "If I give all my goods to feed the poor but have not love, it profiteth me nothing."

We are not saved because we do many good deeds toward others—we are not saved because we go to communion—no, not even if we hold some office in the local church or the AFLC. We are not even saved because we are pastors and can preach good sermons and pray long and wonderful prayers. Paul says further in I Corinthians 13:3, "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am become sounding brass, or a clanging cymbal."

It would do us all good to read and re-read I Corinthians 13 and apply it to ourselves. It is a good measuring stick. We all, even the best of us, need to take an inventory of our spiritual status before God whose eye sees everything. "Nothing is hid before the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

Martin Luther tells us that there is such a thing as a dead faith. The dead faith seems to be stronger than the living faith. I have had unsaved people brag to me about their strong faith. The living faith is often weak and trembling, scarcely able to avail itself of the forgiveness of sin. However, the true and living faith is known by its earnest hatred of sin and an eager longing for grace. (See Luther's Catechism explained, questions 212-215, and also 232.)

God wants us all, both pastors and lay-folk, to have a true and living faith in Jesus Christ, and that is absolutely essential if we are to be His witnesses.

Is it possible that within our little group there are some who have a name that they are living and still are dead? Jesus warns us in our text that He knows whether we have the true and living faith or a dead faith. He says also in John 8:44, to the Pharisees, "Ye are of your father the devil and the lusts of your father it is your will to do." And in John 10:27, "My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life." And in II Timothy 2:19, "The Lord knoweth them that are his: and, let everyone that nameth the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness."

He also says in Revelation 3:3, "Repent—or else." In other words, come to God in absolute honesty, confess every known sin and be willing to forsake it also (Prov. 28:13). "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble" (I Pet. 5:5). If we come to Him in deep humility and acknowledge our sins, our coldness and lukewarmness, our pride, our jealousies, our fears and our doubts, or whatever our besetting sin is, He will warm our cold heart, give faith to the fearful and doubting and restore to us the "Joy of His Salvation," and give us a peace that passeth all understanding.

What a difference between the "works of the flesh" and "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:19-22). James advises us to "confess your sins one to another, and pray one for another that ye may be healed" (James 5:16).

God has been good to us in our AFLC. He has blessed us in spite of our lack of faith and our unworthiness and supplied our financial needs also this year. For this we ought to be filled with thanks and praise and to give ourselves fully unto Him.

Our greatest need at present is a God-sent revival and awakening throughout our whole church. Let us continue to pray earnestly for that and may we all say, "Let it begin with me."

Trygve F. Dahle, Chairman  
Commission on Evangelism



## I HAVE A QUESTION

We deal with the subject of baptism today, since several questions have been submitted on this point. It is a broad subject which really requires a far lengthier discussion than there is room for in this column. There are differences of opinion on this subject; they arise when people use reason and common sense rather than Scripture to form their opinions, and when they are highly selective of the Scripture passages to support their views. We shall give only brief answers to the following questions.

**Question:** When did baptism start?

**Answer:** There were several kinds of baptisms in the Old Testament. Sometimes they are spoken of as "washings." Mark 7:4 speaks of some of these washings which had been observed for generations and were called "baptisms" in Greek. Naaman, the Syrian, washed himself in the river seven times; certain utensils were washed for ceremonial purposes—as were also people. So the Jews washed themselves when they came from the markets—for ceremonial rather than sanitary purposes. Some of the heathen nations had similar ordinances.

John's baptism was the last of the Old Testament baptisms. Jesus requested it "to fulfil all righteousness." John's baptism is not the Christian baptism, as is clearly indicated in Acts 19:1-7. None of the disciples—including those who had formerly been followers of John—practiced it after the Christian baptism had been instituted.

The Christian baptism was instituted by Christ just before He ascended into heaven (Matt. 28:19). It was not one which He practiced, for He went to heaven within a few

minutes; it was one which He gave His followers to use. This was the one that was used on Pentecost Day when about three thousand were baptized; and this is the one used in the Christian Church today.

**Question:** Were the New Testament baptisms by immersion?

**Answer:** The word "immersion" is not found in the New Testament—partly because it is a Latin word, and the New Testament was written in Greek. The question then is if baptism means exactly the same as immersion. Many insist that it does, and that baptism means nothing else than immersion. However, Paul tells us that the Israelites were "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (I Cor. 10:2). They were not immersed in the cloud; it was before, behind and above them. Yet Paul says they were baptized in it. Moses tells us that the Israelites walked on the dry bottom of the Red Sea, with the water standing as a wall on either side. Yet Paul says they were baptized in the sea. A most significant use of the word baptism is connected with the events of Pentecost Day. Jesus had predicted that the believers would be "baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:5). Ten days later it happened; cloven tongues of fire lit on the heads of each one in that upper room. By no stretch of the imagination can one call this immersion; but it is called baptism. Baptism is not necessarily immersion.

Some of the New Testament baptisms may have been by immersion; but there is absolutely no proof that any were. People went down into the water because they could not go up into the water. John the Baptist transferred his baptismal ac-

tivity to Aenon "because there was much water there" (John 3:23). But there was more water for baptismal purposes at the Jordan. Why the move? The Greek, well rendered in the footnote of the American Standard Version, has "many waters" instead of "much water"; undoubtedly they were springs issuing from the rocks. Could this have been for drinking—and baptism as well—for not much was required for the latter? John now seems to have been using affusion rather than immersion—if he ever used the latter at the Jordan.

While it cannot be proved that New Testament baptisms were either by pouring or by immersion, we do have definite indications from the early post-Apostolic era that both forms were used, and both forms were considered valid by the early followers of the Apostles.

**Question:** Were children baptized in New Testament times?

**Answer:** There is no clear record in the New Testament of children being baptized—any more than of women receiving the Lord's Supper. Valiant efforts have been put forth to prove that the households recorded as being baptized must have contained children; they may have, but there is no absolute proof.

We shall give very briefly just two reasons why most of the Christian Churches baptize children. Christ's words of commission when He instituted baptism definitely include children: "Go ye therefore and disciple-ize [the Greek word] all nations" by baptizing and teaching. This disciple-making process is not completed until every member of every nation is a disciple. Here children are definitely included insofar as they are parts of the nation, too. Secondly, Paul tells us in Colossians 2:11-12 that there is a spiritual circumcision not made with hands, one which is superior to the old rite. The old covenant of circumcision was abrogated right early in the New Testament Church. The old rite was applied to Christ, and thus He fulfilled that part of the law for us, too. But the new

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# WOMEN for Christ

Edited by Mrs. Jay G. Erickson

## THE SECURITY OF SURRENDER

by Lon Woodrum

Jesus has always assured us of great rewards for following Him. But this fact does not lessen the force of His demands on us. Jesus knew how difficult it is for a person to make the final, utter surrender to Him and His kingdom, so He never startled people away by sudden demands. He gave them time to get caught in the trap of love, to be betrayed by their own faith into being "fools for His sake." After they followed Him a while and saw Him as He really was, and realized there would be no music in them if they drew back from Him, then He made His relentless demands of complete commitment.

*Still, nothing is safe if we keep it for ourselves.* Banks will fail. Markets will drop. Houses will burn, or fall before the wind. Friends may forsake us. Pleasures will become ashes in our mouth. Fame is a reedy prop. Ultimately we keep only what we give to God.

Once, during some special meetings, a beautiful girl came to me and said, "I have to die!" For a moment I could only stare at her. "Die?" I said. She was young, lovely, educated. She was married to a young man with initiative who was headed for the top in the business world. She said, "The doctors say I can't live. I have to die. But I don't want to die. What can you

say to me?"

I told her I would have to think about it. That night I lay thinking on my bed, and I rose up and wrote a sonnet. I gave it to her the next day, knowing it was a poor enough answer to her great question, but it was all I had.

After the meetings closed, I received a letter from her in which she said, "Whatever happens, I am dedicated without reservation to the will of Christ."

Some time later I was in her town and went to visit her. She was beautiful, even there on her deathbed. I prayed with her, then on leaving asked if there was anything I could do for her.

"Read me that poem again," she said. So I stood there, with death in the room, and read it—a poem called *Surrender*.

I am the clay upon the whirling wheel,  
Beneath the fingers of the Potter, God,  
And I, who might have been a bit of mud,  
Am given shape and meaning by the feel  
Of master hands that mold this destiny.  
These are the fingers that have shaped and whirled  
The constellations down the cosmic world,  
Titanic, ancient work of mystery.  
I should not shrink from hands so sure and strong,

Not even when I know the sudden knife  
Of pain from unexpected wrench;  
my life  
In such good hands could not be fashioned wrong.  
I must remember in my agony  
These same brave hands once built a Calvary.

And sometime after that I received a letter from a heartbroken young man, the girl's husband. He said, "I remember the poem you wrote for my wife. At the time she committed herself wholly to Christ I was a materialist, out to get what I could from life. But so wonderfully did she live for God, even in her months of suffering, that my hard heart cracked, and I wanted to tell you that her Christ has become mine; and I shall rejoice her sometime in a world far better than this where she suffered. Now I find my greatest joy in leading other souls to Jesus."

And I knew as I stood with that letter in my hand that it does matter what kind of Christians we are in this kind of world; whether we are half-hearted disciples or utterly yielded Christians.


—Reprint permission granted

## I Have A Question

[Continued from page 6]

one continues. How is this one applied to us? Paul answers confidently; "Having been buried with him in baptism." Baptism replaced circumcision both in the teaching and practice of the New Testament Church.

Circumcision was essentially an infant rite. Yet there is no record of any infant circumcision on the day that God made the covenant with Abraham. "Every male of Abraham's house" was circumcised that day. Were there children? There must have been; and we are sure that every male child was circumcised, too. But there is no record. Circumcision was essentially an infant rite, and was applied to adults only in instances of a former neglect. So baptism is essentially an infant ordinance, and is applied only to adults who have not been previously baptized.



**W M** **WORLD MISSIONS**

THE FIELDS ARE WHITE UNTO HARVEST

## *"Nida"*

It was October 23, 1966, when little Nida came to stay with us. Her thin little body and sad expressionless face went straight to our hearts.

Nida is the two-year-old daughter of Senhor Pedro and Senhora Olivina. They are members of our church here in Lar Parana. You have already met Pedro if you have read other articles in the *Ambassador* written by Pastor Abel and Alvin.

Nida had been a poor, sickly child ever since she was a few months old. She had surgery ten months before coming to us and yet her cut had not healed. Instead it had turned into a big festering sore which was getting bigger and bigger. Her parents informed us that they had given her little medical care and had very little food. They held little hope for her if God didn't find it in His will to work a miracle.

The day she arrived she was starry-eyed and just lay on her bed. Had we gotten her too late? Were we not getting a chance to help her? Was God claiming one of his little ones? The first day and night is one which will always be remembered as a wakeful night of mixed emotions and prayer. She had a cough which racked her frail body and nothing we could do seemed to relieve her of it.

The next day brought a visit to the doctor where she received an examination, some medicine and much sympathy. Every day we dressed her sore and used the pre-

scribed medicine. She had been so hungry that now she had a difficult time eating and so thirsty that she was very dehydrated. It wasn't until she had been with us eight days that we noticed a change for the better. Even though she was two years old she wasn't able to walk yet and she weighed exactly 12 pounds.

On November 20 her physician said she was now strong enough for penicillin intravenous feedings to rid her of the infection. This was a very difficult time for her and very tiring; but she was a brave little mite and took it in great stride. Every day we traveled to the hospital, once each day for six days, and stayed the three hours that each feeding took. On November 23, after being with us one month she weighed 16 pounds and had learned how to smile. She was beginning to make progress and the Lord was blessing richly.

I had kept a small progress chart as she went from week to week with us and I thought you might enjoy reading the last month's notes.

December 18—Nida is 18½ pounds. Started walking. Very afraid of falling and cries all the time she walks.

December 25—Christmas. Nida is walking and not crying. Calls Alvin Daddy and me Mama.

January 1—Lost a little weight after learning to walk. She is doing well. Trying to run.

January 8—Laughs now, talks a few words in English and is happy and content.

January 16—Is getting into mischief and runs all over.

January 22—Today Nida went home. She was glad to be back with her parents.

We are so thankful to God for giving this child new and better health. We are thankful to each one who has remembered us in prayer and who has supported us, for by doing this, YOU have helped give life to Nida.

Matthew 25:40b, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

In HIS love,  
Frances Grothe



Nida and her father, who has only one-eighth vision in one eye. This was taken one day when he was here to visit her.





## EDITORIALS

### THOSE BACKYARD SCHOOLS

Two weeks ago the *Ambassador* carried a story about Vacation Bible Schools that have been held in backyards in various cities. The point of the article is that every effort should be made to reach out to unchurched children to bring them under the influence of God's Word. The only way in which some of them will be reached is through an informal backyard setting, on a patio, under a carport or on a veranda.

The idea is a very good one. In this day and age a congregation, particularly in the urban and suburban areas, that is not willing to try new methods of evangelizing the community is just not going to make the witness it should. We hope that Association churches will not lag behind in consecrated effort which is always thoroughly evangelical.

But a danger is suggested by these backyard Bible schools, too. What if someone in your neighborhood begins such a school, gathers a group of children, including your own, and then you discover that the sponsoring group is one of the so-called sects? Or perhaps the school represents a denomination whose doctrinal approach to children is completely opposite the Lutheran position? You would not want your children to continue under such influence.

Therefore, if you live in an area where these informal schools may spring up, investigate before you allow your children to join one. A polite inquiry at the start can save some real unpleasantness later on, not to speak of damage to a child's faith.

And if you sponsor a school of your own be open with the parents as to the faith you represent. The teaching doesn't have to be geared to proselytizing, but don't try to keep anyone in the dark as to what denomination you are from. We know of sects which attempt to cover or camouflage their identity while they do their work and we don't appreciate it. Therefore, we shouldn't operate that way either.

The summer of 1967 could be a great one for children. In areas where there are unreached children, and in most every community there must be at least a few, let a special effort be made to bring them under the influence of God's Word through a Vacation Bible

School, whether of the traditional type or one that goes where the people are.

### MORE THAN A WIDOW'S MITE

We happen to sit in on the board meetings where the current talk is about a building program for our Bible School. A master plan for the grounds by Medicine Lake has been adopted by the Board of Trustees and the Co-ordinating Committee as a necessary first step. By annual conference time, and preferably in *The Lutheran Ambassador* before, a definite proposal for the construction of a classroom-dormitory building will be made public.

There is a question whether construction could be started this year or would have to wait until 1968 even if convention action is favorable toward the plan. One determining factor will be our ability to raise a sufficient sum of money to indicate to a lending agency that we have adequate backing for them to aid us.

Two possible courses are open for a special appeal although we favor action being directed through the Praise Program. If every baptized member and friend of the Association, for instance, gave five dollars toward the building this year, we could in all likelihood begin construction before the summer wanes. That course sounds extremely simple, but it is also next to impossible, because churches just don't get that 100 percent response. Therefore, we dismiss the idea as unreasonable.

The other avenue of action is to appeal to friends who have gifts of one thousand dollars or more to give in an appeal that will have to be carried out in a hurry if building were to start this year. If enough such persons could be found to contribute toward the fund which would assure the necessary loan, and smaller gifts were added, the beginning of this project could be commenced before the leaves carry their autumnal hues. Then, in the months and years that follow there would be ample opportunity for all, those who can give much and those who have little to give, to donate toward the payment in full of the project's cost.

But it seems to us that for an immediate start of this construction we are going to need more than the widow's mite. We are going to need more than she gave in cold cash, but we cannot hope to better the spirit in which she gave, for she literally hazarded her own livelihood at the collection box. We are going to need this spirit from people who can think in terms of thousands of dollars as well as in terms of hundreds and tens.

We have purposely refrained from mentioning project costs. It is not our business at this time to get into that. But before long we trust that some idea of figures can be given for your consideration prior to the conference. The conference will make the final decisions as to when and how our first building shall be built, as it judges the spirit and temper of the congregations.



# Luther League Activities

Edited by Jane Thompson

## CHRISTIAN LIFE AT THE UNIVERSITY

*Kathy Ross, the writer of this article in the series on opportunities open to AFLC youth, is a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Cloquet, Minn., and is secretary of the Luther League Federation.*

As a senior at the University of Minnesota, I often find myself contemplating the last four years of my life. The first few years after high school graduation are very important as they pretty well determine the pattern of life for the future. One of the biggest decisions of life has to be made at this time—what one will do with his or her life. Each person has to realize his identity and see himself in relation to the whole world he lives in. He has to determine where he fits in, what he wants to do, and how this will be accomplished. This decision is based on all aspects of life: culture, economy, society, and family. They have all helped to make him what he is.

Because our society is becoming more complex, education is becoming more and more important. There's a difference between working to earn a living and doing work that is personally challenging and satisfying.

Education is, of course, not to be our main goal in life, and neither is the way we earn our living. But education is becoming more important in order to get any type of job

because our society is becoming more technical and industrialized. Improved modes of transportation and mass communication are drawing all parts of the world closer together. With these changes, it becomes necessary for us to learn more about the world in which we live.

For this reason, I feel that schooling at a university is desirable. A university is, in effect, a combination of several colleges and can therefore offer a great number of courses in all different fields. Because there are so many courses the instructors are those who specialize in one particular field. They have studied one area in depth rather than skimmed the top of several. There is also much research done at a university, and this in itself creates an atmosphere compatible to pursuing the unknown.

I chose to come to the U because, of the schools in the area, it offered the best program in my major—home economics education. For anyone in a specialized field, it's almost necessary to attend a large school in order to get specialized training.

In deciding which school to attend I talked to professional people in my field. High school counselors are also helpful, but they usually can't give personal insight. Talking to any friends who have attended a school under consideration would be beneficial because you often like and dislike the same things your friends do. They would

also be able to help with any specific or personal questions about the school.

There are often complaints that a university is large and impersonal and you are known only by a number. This is true to some extent. With 15 Robert Johnsons, it's much shorter and easier to differentiate between #632079 and #658219 than to decide if Robert E. Johnson is Robert Erick, Erwin, or Earl. Some of the classes are very large. I was in a psychology class of over 2,000 students. Yet this is only to save time and money. It's more practical to lecture once to a large group than to repeat the same things 17 times. In a large group and in a quarter's time, the instructor doesn't get a chance to personally know the students. If a student desires help, it's up to him to ask for it. Most professors have set aside office hours which they devote to students as individuals and many classes have teaching assistants who offer help. However, it must be stressed that the individual must seek help—the professors aren't going to come to him. When they give an assignment, they don't keep reminding you to work on it. Students need to take the responsibility for their own learning. This same idea stands in all aspects of life. A doctor doesn't call all his former patients to see how they're feeling. They are responsible for themselves. Yet help is available when they need it.

This isn't to say that all the classes are large. I have one class this quarter with seven girls, and I've gone through a series of education courses over the last 1½ years with the same fourteen girls.

In the course work, a student grows intellectually. Yet social, physical, emotional, spiritual, and cultural growth also take place. Some of this is incorporated in coursework, but the education one gets outside of class is significant. A university is more like a city than a school. It has its own newspaper, hospital, bus service, maintenance service, and government.

[Continued on page 13]

worthless and in vain? *The world by its wisdom knew not God.* That was the main reason. In all their philosophical search and re-search they had failed to discover God. They were worldly-wise but bankrupt. Without God and without hope.

Then in the midst of this bankruptcy God sent His Son, and by the cross He sent a message, the preaching, "the foolishness of the preaching," which has proven to be much wiser than all the wisdom of the world.

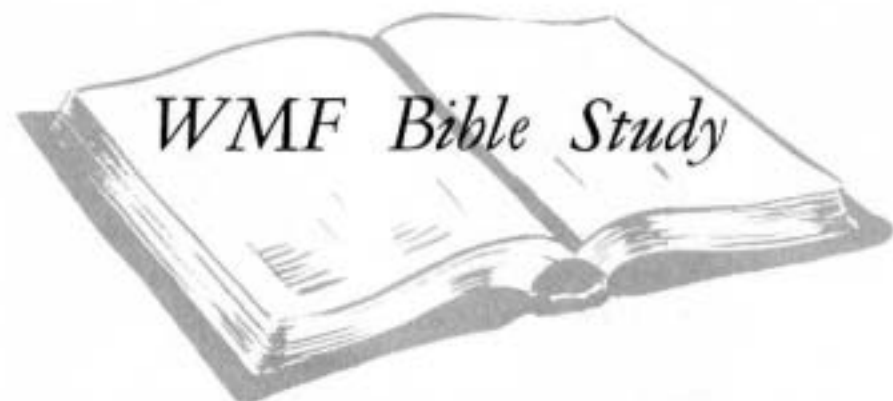
How do we know? Because it saves, it works, it transforms them that believe. Name some examples from scripture and history. ....

..... The Jews were looking for signs. The Greeks were looking for wisdom. Without faith the Jews did not see any sign of God's love in the cross, so the cross became a stumbling-block. And to the Greeks it was foolishness. But to the Jews and Greeks who believed, Christ became the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. The weakness of God refers to the cross. Christ was crucified through weakness (II Cor. 13:4). What marvel of grace and love! He, the omnipotent One, chose in infinite grace to take the place of a helpless prisoner in the hands of sinful men. At any moment He might have destroyed them by His power, or, if He was still to be in the place of weakness, He could have prayed for help from above and twelve legions of angels would have been sent to rescue Him, but He did neither of these (Matt. 26:53). He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Yes, the Jews saw the cross as the proof of weakness. The cross is the symbol of defeat, they said. But you, Paul, say that the cross is the way of victory and of life. We do not understand it. We stumble over it. We cannot follow.

Yes, says the apostle, but the weakness of God is mightier in love than all the strength of men.

The only antidote for this bankrupt wisdom of the world is the word of the cross.



MAY, 1967

#### Lesson V

Read I Corinthians 18-25.

In this passage there are three things to be considered: (1) The effect of the word of the cross, v. 18. (2) The futility of earthly wisdom, vs. 19-20. (3) God's provision for a world bankrupt in its own wisdom, vs. 21-25.

#### *The Word of the Cross*

It is the glory of Christianity that we have a living God who speaks to us. In what ways does He speak? ..... He has spoken many times, and in many different ways, but in the last days He has spoken to us by His Son (Heb. 1:1, 2).

He speaks to us in four various ways: (1) In the voice of nature. How? The heavens declare His glory; and the firmament showeth His handiwork. There is no place in the whole wide world where this voice is not heard (Ps. 19:1-4). (2) He speaks to us in the still small voice

He has implanted in our souls, which we call "conscience." Where is this mentioned? ..... (4) He speaks to us through His Word.

However, the word of the cross is beyond all comparison His mightiest speech. The word of the cross is first of all His supreme word about our sin and condemnation. No man knows what sin is until he has stood at the cross of Calvary.

The word of the cross does not only tell us that we are sinners, but that we are the worst criminals, we are murderers. We are guilty of the shed blood of Christ, of the murder of the Son of God. Discuss further. ....

Dr. Hallesby says, "The cross of Christ tells us that sin is so terrible that not even our all-mighty and all-loving God can forgive it without atonement."

The cross speaks not only of sin, but of the penalty and condemnation of sin. He that sinneth shall die. We have all sinned, hence all are under this death sentence—lost and condemned to an eternal death. Calvary is an exclamation point to this truth. Written, as it were, across the bruised, torn, bleeding body of the Man of Galilee, is the unchangeable decree, that the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23).

But thanks be to God, His word of the cross does not stop here. It tells us of God's supreme work of redemption. Peter says we are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot (I Pet. 1:18, 19). We have been redeemed. Redemption is a living reality. Any guilty, repentant sinner can now be saved and justified by a holy and righteous God.

How is it possible for God to be just, and yet justify the guilty, the ungodly? From the standpoint of human wisdom, that is an insurmountable problem. It is utterly impossible for any earthly judge or jury to justify the guilty without violating justice. How then can God do it? Paul's answer is: *through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus* (Rom. 3:24).

The redemption in Jesus Christ covers everything: *Every obstacle* has been removed. *Every barrier* is broken down. *Every demand* has been met. *Every claim* of divine justice satisfied. *Every objection* of hell overruled. *Every penny* of our ransom paid. *Every stain* of guilt washed away. *Every sin* atoned for. Nothing has been overlooked. (You can verify every one of these statements with Scripture.)

So on the basis of this finished redemption, surely God can be just, and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus (Rom. 3:26).

This was the word of the cross that Paul preached to the Corinthians. What are the twofold effects or results of hearing the word of the cross? Some looked upon this message as sheer foolishness. This was something outside, or contrary, to their own thinking. They couldn't understand it, so they just turned up their noses and said, this is silly and absurd; and the result of taking this attitude was that they would perish. The Norwegian translation is more in harmony with the original text. It says: "The word of the cross is to them that are lost foolishness." To them that are lost! If our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost (II Cor. 4:3). What an awful thing to be lost! If the Christ who died on that cross for you is not your Savior, you are lost. Hear it, my friend, you are lost!

But here is the great contrast: "Unto us which are saved it is the power of God." There are only two classes of people. Can you name them? .....

Christ and Him crucified is the great divide. He hung between two criminals. One was just as close to Him as the other. One believed and went to Paradise; the other would not believe and went to hell.

It is the same way today. The preaching of the cross separates people. Some are saved because they hear and believe it; others are lost because they neglect or refuse to believe it. Where is the dividing line in our churches today? .....

After showing the effectiveness of the word of the cross, he points out the utter futility of man's wisdom. Why was this wisdom so entirely

## Luther League

*(Continued from page 10)*

Because of the number of people, you never get to know everyone. As in a city, your friends are those with whom you have contact and this involves smaller groups. There are all sorts of activities offered, but again it's up to the individual to go to the organization.

Since a university is so large, it is comprised of people with many varied backgrounds, each with their own ideas and beliefs. Getting to know these different people is an experience in itself. With so many differences prevalent, there is a tendency to let people think whatever they wish.

The biggest challenge that I have found is that of supporting my beliefs. I have been met with challenges in the classroom and in contacts with people, but I feel that really thinking about what one believes only affirms them, unless they can't be supported and are thrown out. In relating this to my Christian life, I have come to rely more on the Word of God than on what I remembered I had been taught. With the Bible as reference for beliefs, they are based on the authority of God.

There are people who don't believe in God or the authority of the Bible, but this type of person is usually trying to find a meaning to life with an intellectual approach. I have found this type of person to be liberal and logical in his thinking, and tending to feel that people should be able to believe as they wish. I think a carnal Christian can have a more harmful influence on a person than an atheist can because the atheist doesn't claim God at all and a carnal Christian very often gives the wrong impression of what Christianity is like.

On the other hand, atheists have definite reasons for believing the way they do, and a carnal Christian is somewhat a hypocrite of what he believes. Because college students want proof and want to know WHY, it's important for a committed Christian to have a faith based on the Bible so that he can definitely know himself why he

believes as he does, and so he can be an effective witness to those who are searching.

Many people have the idea that a university is immoral. A university can't be immoral—only people are. Going to a university won't make you immoral, but contacts with immoral people can influence you unless you are strong in your own beliefs. This is true of all situations in life where you are with other people. In any sampling of the U.S. population there will be immoral people, but situations can be set up where people of similar beliefs are grouped together. In this situation, a person who is living for Christ doesn't conform to his environment because he has already been drawn into a new one.

I think it is easier to be a Christian at the University than it was in high school. High school students are very concerned about the opinion of their peers and don't like to do anything that might be too different. College students aren't as influenced by the pressures of society, and many rebel against it. That's why there are so many "weird" students. Pressures of society are both good and bad. Too much pressure can cause individuals to conform and lose their identity. Yet it is needed to enforce our moral and ethical codes.

I have found wonderful Christian fellowship here at the University. Campus Crusade for Christ and Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship have been good experiences in sharing and learning more about God's Word. I also feel fortunate

that many of my sorority sisters are strong Christians. Fellowship with other Christians of varied backgrounds has made me realize that we all share similar problems. I have been drawn a lot closer to God during college because of my problems—the times of fear, frustration, and despair. My favorite Bible verse has been Philippians 4: 13: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Though there have been rough days, God has always carried me through, and I'm now a stronger Christian because of it.

It has been exciting for me to see how my profession will fit into my Christian life, because my Christianity comes first. A Christian can be a testimony to God in ways other than preaching, and can do so in any walk of life.

I may be biased to the university because I have spent four years here and it is presently my home. But I feel that a Christian who is strong in the faith can live anywhere, though some situations will be more difficult, and it's wrong to deliberately tempt yourself. Only I can know myself and how I would react in various situations.

In considering where to go to school, I would first of all consider what I want to get out of school, and how I stand in relation to the Lord Jesus Christ. And above all, pray that in all things the Lord's will might be done. In education, you'll get out only that which you're willing to put in.

Kathy Ross  
Cloquet, Minn.

### ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS TREASURER'S PROGRESS REPORT

February 1, 1967, to March 31, 1967

	Fiscal Year Budget	Current Budget	Total Received
General Fund .....	\$ 39,980.00	\$ 6,664.00	\$ 3,086.93
Missions .....	41,000.00	6,834.00	10,768.36
Seminary and Bible School	29,000.00	4,834.00	3,073.73
Praise Program .....	30,000.00	5,000.00	3,235.55
TOTALS .....	<u>\$139,980.00</u>	<u>\$23,332.00</u>	<u>\$20,164.57</u>

Received for Seminary Library Fund: \$35.00

# NEWS

## of the Churches

GRAFTON, N. DAK.

### THE CHURCH WE BUILT

At the time of the merger, we did not feel that we could enter it and so we had to leave our local church and all that we had worked for. For many months we had our fellowship in homes, in a school, in another church. We had no church of our own.

'Tis no longer so as in His mercy, God has blessed us with all that we needed. Yea, and even more so because now we have one of the most beautiful churches in Grafton.



It has been my privilege and joy to plan along with my husband on some of the details of our church. Before the ground work started, we had the faith that we could have a nice new church, but did not think God would supply our needs as quickly as He did. I do not believe that we were running ahead of Him but rather believe that we had His promise and proof that He was with us and did supply every need.

Our people took hold and helped when we needed it. There were those who went beyond the call of duty in prayers, gifts, and labors of love. And God has blessed us.

Our church is of simple Gothic-type architecture with open wood beams. The chancel is unique because the furnishings were designed to follow the style of the church, which is "In the cross of Christ there is victory." The large wooden cross against the stone wall is made in a "v" shape and has indirect lighting behind it. This symbolizes the light of the world. The cross has sunburst pointing in each direction, and the sun's rays during the day reflect the different colors of the glass on the stone wall back of the altar. The altar, pulpit and baptismal font were designed with the same "V" as the cross and chancel. The stone facing was used on the furnishings and the planters. This stone was mined in Tennessee and was a real answer to prayer. After receiving a \$200.00 gift from a friend for this stone, we went to Grand Forks to look into the matter and found a firm that would sell us this particular stone at a very reasonable price.

Everything is in the natural form. Woodwork and furnishings are fruitwood, walls have oak paneling,



the oak pews are stained pecan, the red carpet in the chancel and down the aisle is a warm welcome and reminds us of the blood that cleanses us from all sin. The brick trimming of the outside wall is called Heritage and we think of our "great heritage" in the Lutheran faith. So as the brick goes up to the peak of the church, our Lutheran heritage goes on, too. A large brown and white cross extends above the peak of the roof, as a call to all to come and hear the Gospel truth. The cross on the heritage brick in the front of the church tells us that we have a living Savior. He is calling us all to serve Him as we have done in the building of our church. We can say that the men, women, and children who helped to build our church did it with sweat and blood. This is the first unit of this project and we were able to keep the cost to about \$30,000 but we all know that the actual value is far greater than this. Now that we are almost done with this part, we know that we cannot stop here as we will soon need

[Continued on page 16]



# Drug Addict Tells of His Experience

"I had a friend rope me to a bed. I twisted and turned for days, vomited green bile and felt the roots of my hair ache. With the help of God, I was determined to transform my life."

Thus Wray Edwardson, 34, of Vancouver told how he ended 17 long drug-addicted years.

In a recent interview with *The Lender-Post*, he said that at the age of 17 he was attending a college in Moose Jaw and was introduced to marijuana cigarettes by a friend.

From that point drugs began to control him physically, mentally, morally, emotionally, financially—totally.

One thing led to another. Heroin replaced "pot" (marijuana). Edwardson was a main-line heroin addict for eight of his 17 years of drug addiction. He was using up to 15 cups of heroin per day while in San Francisco at a cost of \$15 per cup. He bears the scars on his arms, hands and ankles to this day.

Arrested 30 times for various crimes, Mr. Edwardson spent five years in jail and had an aggregate of charges amounting to prison terms up to 20 years.

While behind bars, he and other convicts waited for smuggled dope which was sometimes taped to the warden's car. Payments were made from profits on outside businesses which were merely fronts for the racket.

"I started taking the biggest 'fix' in my life when I looked to God for help," he said.

Edwardson believes a good deal of the credit should go to his wife Isabel, who prayed 13 years for his reformation.

He said it was through her prayers and his children that he was liberated from his weakness.

"I hadn't been living at home for some time since I knew I was making a mess of not only my life, but that of my family as well.

"One day I came home for a visit and my daughter Charmagne, 9, met me outside and said 'Daddy, Mommy's crying. She's been asking God to help you get better. And Chris and Jimmy and I want a daddy at home like the other kids'."

That was the beginning of Mr. Edwardson's new life. He wanted to reform his life, to repay his wrong-doings, to accept God.

He declined to rid himself of his binding habit by means of the medicine, methadon or doctors. He chose "cold turkey withdrawal"—a method of leaving drugs without means of medication.

By leaving drugs and accepting the power of God, Mr. Edwardson said he was prepared to face up to criminal charges and jail terms. He thought his life could be fruitful even if his fate was helping addicts in prison.

However, all charges were dropped and since that time he has been speaking to university and high school groups and those who wish his help.

"The power of God is far stronger than the science of man," he said.

"It's real. It works. I'm a living testimony."

—Regina *Lender-Post*

## What Tenement Living

### Did To Us

(Continued from page 1)  
reached by taking off one's shoes before walking over the beds, became a source of irritation to the other members of the family. I found myself resenting normal children's play indoors because it upset the standards we had maintained in

our previous living.

Frankly, until every child was in bed and I had carefully picked up everything left out, the house had the look of an unloved, neglected child. This more than anything else caused me to literally bellow at bewildered children who finally, in desperation, retreated to the dirt-filled yard to find peace from an angry, upset father.

Closet and drawer space was at a premium, and until a person has lived without them their indispensability is seldom realized. Orderliness comes with space. Today I am a relaxed, normal father because my children have room to play and to store their treasured bits of whatever makes a child's world what it is.

Most tragic of all was the discovery that tenements are an assault on human dignity. This more than anything else is what we remember of those six years and where our scars run deepest. Such crowded conditions were an affront to us as parents as we struggled to maintain healthy interfamily relationships, Christian ideals, and some semblance of standards. For our children it was a time of degradation. No child should ever be denied the privilege of having the kind of childhood God intended him to have—to have the time to develop normal human relationships and to find himself. Most important of all, no child should have to live with the constant fear that his normal childhood activities will harm, upset, or divide the family.

A child should never be cast into the role of an intruder into the peace, dignity, and privacy of a family simply because he is reacting as a child. Neither should a child be resented rather than loved because he expresses a childlike enthusiasm for life.

Families who do maintain a semblance of standards and values while living under these conditions are the real heroes of our modern affluent society. Perhaps that's why I wrote this—as a tribute to them.

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[Continued from page 14]

the fellowship room and additional Sunday school rooms. Will you pray that God will bless us and help us have a unity of spirit so we may also be a blessing in our community.

We are thankful to God and the AFLC for the \$100.00 each month to help us carry on. Also we are thankful for the families who gave as much as \$1,000.00 each to raise the \$10,000.00 that we needed for our down payment. Without it we could not have had our church today. We are looking forward to our dedication of this first unit on May 21, 1967.

—Mrs. Herbert Presteng

### SEMINARY, BIBLE SCHOOL GRADUATIONS SET

Joint commencement exercises will be held on Friday, May 19, for the first graduates of Free Lutheran Seminary and Association Lutheran Bible School. The service will begin at 8 o'clock p.m. in the headquarters building of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn.

Program details will be announced at a future date.

### FAMILY BIBLE CAMP DATES ANNOUNCED

The fifth annual Family Bible Camp will be held August 7-13 at Lake Geneva Bible Camp, Alexandria, Minn. Accommodations are available for all ages. Contact the dean, Rev. A. L. Hokonson, Faith, S. Dak., for further information.

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR  
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Minneapolis, Minn. 55427

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