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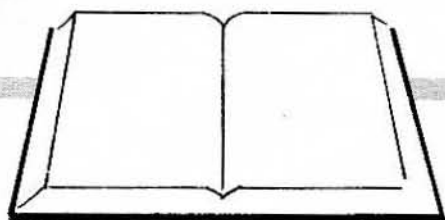
No. 16

LUTHERAN

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SUMMER
—RNS Photo



According to the Word

TO AND THROUGH INDIVIDUALS

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1).

Thus in a few words the "Hero" of our Book, the Lord Jesus Christ, is introduced. No one else has put it as simply; nor has anyone else put such a majestic depth of meaning into a few lines. Other authors lead us back to David, to the river Jordan, or to a cradle at Bethlehem. John, so to speak, places a yardstick of Time on eternity and finds it too limited. Time has a beginning, but not the Word. When Time began, *the Word was there*. Later on, in the fullness of time, the Word who was *with God and was God*, became man.

The Gospel according to John is a Gospel by an individual, about individuals, for individuals. We all like crowds for an audience—the larger the better. But in the Gospel according to John, God deals with the individual. He uses individuals; He calls individuals.

A "man sent by God" became a committee of one to lay the groundwork for Christ's coming. John's courageous call to repentance and faith echoed forth from his remote "pulpit" in the wilderness to reach

burdened hearts all over the land. He was a man with an experience and a purpose. His experience was that of meeting God in early childhood and later that of meeting Jesus in the flesh. His goal coincides with that of the author of the book—namely, "that all men might believe." Or as the writer of our Gospel puts it: "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life in his name" (John 20:31).

How about our church activities today? What is their goal? Is it reckoned in numbers added to the congregation or in souls who "believe"? What about our preaching? Does the goal coincide with that of this man "sent by God"? Is there an urgency in the message that men may have "life in His name"? Time is short and the enemies of God and freedom are on the alert and active. God uses individuals. He called a Gideon, a Moses, an Elijah and hosts of others. His call goes out today also for consecrated men and women in His service. Have you—with Isaiah—answered: "Here am I, send me"?

God also deals individually with men and women. The nation as such turned Him down; but, "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God" (John 1:12). As He walked the

dusty streets of villages in His beloved land, His presence required a decision. And decisions were made. There were those who closed their doors to Him as He passed by. The cost of discipleship, the love of sin, and the fear of men caused them to turn Him down. Others opened the doors of their homes and hearts to Him and problems were solved; burdens were lifted. Some were antagonized and others "heard him gladly."

Do we find that appeal to the individual in our message of today? If not, it must be that Christ isn't presented to our listeners as He really is, that our message is "watered down." His presence, as we view Him in John, always carried with it a challenge to faith—or rejection. Here is how one man put it: "No man can preach Christ and Him crucified without antagonizing people. No man can present Christ to an audience, whether numbering two or a multitude, without having the same reaction as our Lord experienced in His day. If the reaction is otherwise, then we are not true in our presentation of Christ. Wherever He is presented, He causes a division among people. Some say, 'He is a good man: others say Nay, but He deceiveth people.'" (*Walks Through John's Gospel*, p. 24).

—Karl G. Berg

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OUR PRESIDENT WRITES

by PASTOR JOHN STRAND

Valley City

WE have all heard of Valley City, North Dakota. That city will always bring to mind several very significant things as far as our Association is concerned.

The Conference we had in June in Valley City was outstanding. The attendance was excellent. The spirit and determination evident were wonderful. We are deeply grateful to God.

The time has now come for free congregations to consider the decisions made in Valley City. We will mention briefly three areas that demand our immediate attention.

The Hauge Lutheran Innermission Society property at Medicine Lake near Minneapolis has been purchased. This property includes 21 acres of land with a large building that will be used as a headquarters building, a home for a congregation, and classrooms for the seminary. The building is quite new and has a seating capacity of about 700. There are several rooms that can be used for offices, classrooms, or dormitory. There is a large dining hall that can seat several hundred around tables. The kitchen is well equipped.

Here we will have ample room for our offices and seminary for

the immediate future. There is plenty of room for expansion if and when needs arise.

These facilities at Medicine Lake are already in use. The treasurer's offices are now here. Other offices will shortly be moved here. The Parish Education Workshop was conducted here. This will be more and more a center for us. It will make greater efficiency possible for those who are serving all the congregations of the Association. We thank God for these developments.

While the price of \$100,000.00 is reasonable for what is received, it still is a great deal of money. We do not want to go into debt to make the purchase. Consequently, an appeal is to be made to our congregations and friends for the money needed. A committee has already been selected to conduct the appeal, but it will be some time before that will formally get underway. The goal of the appeal is \$130,000.00 which will include the cost of a house for the president and equipment for the seminary. It is hoped that this can be raised in one year. It would help greatly if a large portion could be secured this fall. This will test our devotion and loyalty to our As-

sociation and to our Lord.

The seminary will open for the first class on September 19. An excellent faculty has been secured. A large class for an association our size is ready to begin work. As we stand in need of more pastors, we are greatly encouraged by this. We are hoping to have a rally at the seminary on Sunday, September 20.

The first two missionary families will leave for Brazil in September. While more funds are needed, we are looking to the congregations to respond with generous gifts. It was truly a high point at our conference when our missionaries were commissioned for the work. As we remember their zeal and devotion it causes us to search ourselves. In obedience to our Lord's command, they go. In obedience to our Lord's command, we send. Let us be faithful in our support.

Admittedly, this is an ambitious program for our Association. It is not above our faith and means however. Today we would "contend for the faith." We can not really "contend" unless we pray, sacrifice, work, and stretch ourselves. Ours is a spiritual battle for free and living congregations. This is God's call to us today. Let us move

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Evolution and the Church

by David P. Nelson

Evolution's Scientific Validity

SOME of the scientists most involved in the fields dealing with Evolution admit that Evolution's scientific foundations are yet quite fragile and hypothetical. But seeking some plausible, naturalistic explanation for the existence of life other than the "unscientific" Creation "myth," they continue to build energetically Evolution's "proofs" upon their carefully adjusted interpretations of the evidence.

But there are much more scientifically sound interpretations and explanations than the so-called proofs of Evolution. Since the establishment last year (1963) of the Creation Research Society, thus far some 120 scientists, reputable Ph.D.'s and Masters of Science in fields such as Geology, Biology, Physics and Chemistry, have joined this Society because of this very conviction, and also the conviction that Evolution conflicts with God's revealed Word. This writer has not lost sight of Evolution's scientific challenge; it is not the objective of these limited articles to deal with the scientific dimensions of the Doctrine. It is good to remind the reader, however, of the very questionable scientific validity of Evolution.

Evolution of Man

It has been this writer's experience that many of the evangelical

Christians who have a concern about Evolution have concern only about the evolution of Man. They are relatively unconcerned about Evolution as it applies to the other forms of life, having seen no conflict between such Evolution and the Word. It has been an objective of the previous articles to show that such a belief falls far short of the spirit and message of the Word.

Having laid the firmer foundation of opposition concerning Evolution as it teaches about life and death, order and disorder, we shall now consider the Doctrine of the Evolution of Man.

Secular Teachings

The treatment of Man's evolution by the "secular" world, e.g., as usually presented in the schools, state colleges and universities, and in their textbooks, reveals a high correlation of agreement concerning the outlines of Man's evolution. That is, secular teaching says that Man came on today's scene through gradual physical, mental, cultural, and "spiritual" evolution. Furthermore, the evolutionary concepts and prehistory proposed by the secular world are not obtruse and incomprehensible. That is, we can without too much difficulty understand what they are teaching.

Liberal Teachings

But the teachings of theistic evolutionists concerning Man vary much more. For instance, those who are "liberal," theologically, almost always agree to the "findings of science" concerning Man's evolution, i.e., they follow the evolutionary teaching of the secular world. Thus, these "theists," who show the greater outward disrespect for the message and historicity of the Scriptures, freely teach a Doctrine of Man unashamedly in conflict with the Word. But, it is to be noted, we can at least understand what these theologians are trying to say.

Neo-Orthodox Teachings

This same conceptual clarity about Man and his history, however, is revealingly missing in the teachings of the Neo-Orthodox evolutionists. The more closely to the Scripture's plain message these theologians attempt to conform (the more "orthodox" they try to be), the more difficult it is to comprehend what they are trying to say! (This is the criticism of Neo-Orthodoxy that is common for the Bible-believing theologians and the Liberals as well. This characteristic Neo-Orthodoxy evasiveness, furthermore, is sensed by many Spirit-filled layfolk. Seeking and frequently failing to penetrate Neo-Orthodox thinking, failing to find tangible ideas and understandable

history, that which can be communicated to others, one is led to question the integrity of their logic, the rationality of their propositions, and even the motivations of the heart. It is as if the Neo-Orthodox want to have their cake and eat it, too!) This lack of clarity *in itself* is a good indication that the compromise between Evolution and the Scriptures the Neo-Orthodox attempt to make is not possible.

Examples: Adam, The Fall

For example, because they advocate theistic evolution, many Neo-Orthodox theologians do not believe there was a historical Adam or a historical Fall, certainly not the Fall of Genesis. For them Adam represents mankind, while frequently the Fall is made to represent the universal fact of sin.

We ask: "Has Man *evolved* sinful?" If so, God would be responsible for Man's nature! "If not, *when* in history did Man by a conscious act become responsible for sin?" But such an event would have been a historical Fall! Yet these same theologians continue to speak of "Adam" and "the Fall" with implications and in contexts that *appear* truly literal.

Again, a widely used "Lutheran" workbook proposes, as a compromise to the record of the Fall, the possibility of a Fall requiring *thousands* of years to be consummated, to become a *completed* Fall! Can you conceive of the prolonged condition of a sinless and immortal man, or men, becoming through "ages" of time, mortal and sinful?

Example: Unity of Mankind

A very important element in the message of the Scriptures is the *unity* of the human race. ("Eve... was the mother of all living." Gen. 3:20; "He made from *one* every nation of men..." Acts 17:26.) This unity has many ramifications. Of significance here is the revelation that *all* of mankind came from one man, the individual named Adam. Furthermore, consider the sin relationship as revealed in Romans

5:12: "Sin came into the world through *one* man . . . *all* men sinned." Again, "For as *in* Adam *all* die" (I Cor. 15:21-22).

Therefore we ask those who claim to be Biblical but, because of their belief in Evolution, do not believe in the existence of the person Adam, "How did all men come to possess the same physical and spiritual unity, and how did sin begin and pass on to *all* men?"

Either there was a momentary time-dated historical fall of a man into sin, or there wasn't. We must conclude: the Word teaches plainly that there was! Compromise with this fact is not possible!

Conclusion

Many more are the historical events the Neo-Orthodox fuzzily explain away, carefully putting them in the basket they call "mythological" or "theological" or "religious" history.

It should be realized now that, in considering the Doctrine of the Evolution of Man, we face a practical problem: *whose* Doctrine, the Liberal's or the Neo-Orthodox's, shall we consider? Our closest concerns, of course, are the subtler evolutionary teachings that claim to be true to the Word of God, i.e., the Neo-Orthodox. But with the space restriction, we shall analyze the Teachings of Man which are the more obviously in conflict with the Word. This analysis will still be beneficial, however, because both the Liberals and the Neo-Orthodox build on essentially the same evolutionary skeleton.

Though their premises are reversed, the *conclusion* of the Liberal's criticism of these Neo-Orthodox attempts is correct: "Evolution's a fact, and the Scriptures are not 'the inspired Word.' No rational marriage can be made between the Bible and Evolution."

But the assertion of the Word is: "The history and message of the Scriptures are true. Yes, there is a profound conflict between Evolution and the Word of God."

Valley City

[Continued from page 3]

forward in our Lord's name. Let us pray that God be permitted to do even more through us.

What will you and your congregation do about these decisions? The Conference requests your participation, but that is all it can do. Now you and your congregation must study the needs and requests. We hope you will determine to support wholeheartedly the entire program of the Association. The full cooperation of every congregation and individual who believes in free and living congregations is needed. With this cooperation, with the help of God, tremendous things will be done. We will see our seminary functioning as an agency of each congregation, training men for the ministry. We will have a fine mission program in South America. We will see our Association debt free with unlimited opportunities for advance.

Make this a matter of concerned prayer. Pray for the students and the teachers. Pray for more pastors that congregations may find the shepherds they need. Pray for our missionaries. Pray that God would show you what you should do.

Valley City also reminds us of the court case now in progress. This case would determine if a congregation that has never voted to merge, that has several times voted against the merger, can be compelled against its will into a synod. How important is a congregation's constitution? What significance do our principles have for our congregations? Are our congregations free, or aren't they? What is the moral and legal status of those who are faithful to the local congregation's constitution and principles?

These are important questions. Let us pray that God will guide to His glory. Let us rededicate ourselves to free and living congregations in our day.

Missionary Dynneson Writes



HOME MISSIONS

WE have special blessings to thank God for this summer. Knowing that the Lord is always faithful, we can depend on His care and guidance and know that He will grant special blessings and seasons of refreshing. He has done that for us this summer in giving my family and me a wonderful trip to the 2nd Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations at Valley City, N. Dak., and enabling us to visit a few of the congregations plus a host of friends and kin.

Another special blessing is to have the three young men with us this summer whom God has called out to help us. These, Larry Johnson, Jerry Thorpe and Tom Pederson, many of you have helped send out with your gifts and prayers. Thank you and please keep on remembering them. These young men are a good testimony among us. They add freshness and vigor to the work. They encourage our youth as well as the older folks and, of course, those of us who have carried the brunt of the work.

They have taken hold of many hard physical tasks around the place, too, tasks made harder because of the rocks, thorns and heat. But may this, together with the general ruggedness of the country, the tremendous greatness of it, the special beauty of the country and sunsets, and the best year-around climate in the world, all add up "to work together for good to them that are called," for these boys and many more to be rugged, strong, soldiers of Jesus Christ. May we fear nothing for His cause, desire only to be found in Him and seek

His best will for each of us.

Too many well meaning persons and institutions are advising our youth in this day and age to stay on the soft green carpets of the plains and the soft carpets of the homes, when the Lord advises that we should go out and tread scorpions underfoot; "go tell it on the mountains, that Jesus Christ is Lord."

My wife and I believed it was the Lord's will that we go to conference this year in June. Had we disobeyed, we should have missed out on a wonderful chapter of God's faithfulness to us. He provided the faith and the means step by step. God has provided a church body or group of believers to support His work here. We sensed this as we met folks at the conference and in the churches. It was made very evident as the business of the church was taken care of. We are glad for the mission interest shown among the friends in the Association. We rejoice that the Abels and Grothes were sent out. And for Jesus' promise, "Lo, I am with you always."

We drove over 5000 miles under God's gracious protection and care and came back with a better car than we started out with and countless other evidences that God really cares. He is out to encourage and prosper His work here, too. Thanks to all of you who prayed, who gave, especially the Women's Missionary Federation. And thanks to you who are sharing your youth with us this summer. To God be the glory.

Pastor L. C. Dynneson
Nogales, Arizona

Now we shall hear something from the young men whom Pastor Dynneson mentions in his letter.

If you would ask Tom Pederson of McIntosh, Minn., Jerry Thorpe of Valley City, N. Dak., or Larry Johnson, also of Valley City, "Why are you in Nogales, Arizona, working with Rev. L. Dynneson at the Lutheran Mexican Mission?" you would probably receive the simple answer found in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

It's true, the small amount of money which we receive is not sufficient to take us through school this year. However, we are continually amazed at how the Lord has provided for us both spiritually and materially.

We left the "northland" in a Ford on June 1 and arrived here in Nogales on the morning of the 4th, thankful that we had experienced little car trouble.

The three of us had only one day in which to get acquainted with the Dynneson family and to find out about the work here. Then on June 5, the Dynnesons left for the Annual Conference.

We, under the guidance of our heavenly Father and of Leonard Swanson, a Christian co-worker at the mission, found ourselves in the midst of wonderful and thrilling work—that of presenting the Gospel to the Mexican people.

For the next three weeks, until the Dynnesons returned to the mission, each of us was given several opportunities to lead the services

and to share with the mission congregation the Sunday morning message or Bible study, as the Lord led.

Since the Dynneson's return we have continued leading the Sunday evening service and the Wednesday evening Bible study. Rev. Dynneson brings the Sunday morning message each week.

We are thankful that the Lord has brought us here to the mission this summer. We are having wonderful fellowship with Leonard, as well as with the entire Dynneson family and the various other missionaries who come here from time to time.

The three of us are witnessing for our crucified and risen Lord and Savior not only by means of home visitation, but we are also working at various jobs here at the mission.

The country here is so different, with a real beauty all of its own. Because of time we will not even begin telling about the two cities of Nogales, the surrounding country or even the mission. Each of us is, however, taking numerous slide pictures which we would like to share with you at your home church, if at all possible. One of us would be more than happy to come to your church and share with you some of the work and scenery here. If you will just write to this mission in care of Rev. L. Dynneson, P. O. Box 1211, Nogales, Arizona, and suggest two dates, we will get in touch with you by mail and set a date to be with you.

In closing we would like to thank the friends who have sent gifts of money to us here in Nogales. These gifts are always received with much gratitude in our hearts as we experience how the Lord is working *all* things for good in the financial phase of our lives.

Also we would thank the many Christian friends who are praying for us. Prayer is our biggest need here. It is far greater than material needs which we have. We ask that you will continue to remember us here at the mission in your daily prayer, that the Lord

might have His will in and through us.

May the Lord watch between me and thee while we are absent one from another.

In Christ,
Tom, Jerry and Larry

(We believe the boys will be returning to the Midwest in September. Perhaps it would be best to write to the Mission Office, Box 905, Fargo, N. Dak., in order to arrange meetings with one of them.—Ed.)

NOTICE

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

Association of Free
Lutheran Congregations
Mr. Robert Bursheim, treas.
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55427

Please note change of address due to rezoning.

Please send all subscriptions to:

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

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YOUTH PARTICIPATE

In Bible School Mission

The following is an excerpt from a letter sent to this office from one of our Free Church members in McIntosh, and also a testimony of a young student who was one of the seventeen Free Lutheran youth to go on this Vacation Bible School experience among the Indians:

Greetings with John 4:25, 36

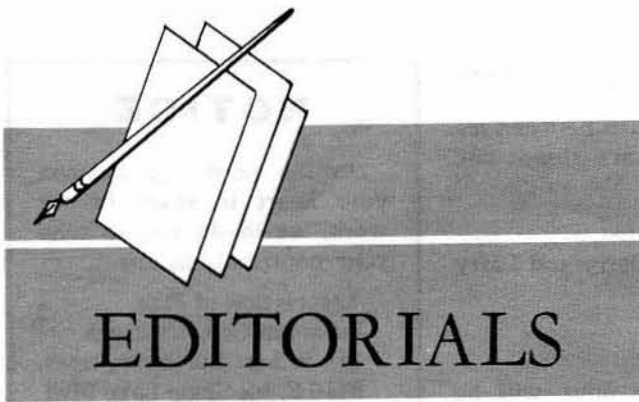
"Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already unto harvest."

It was my privilege, as a counselor, to be at the Dunseith Lutheran Mission this past week together with a very fine group of young people who went there to teach Vacation Bible School to the Indian children. This was in many ways an experiment but we believe it can be the "beginning" of an opportunity whereby each year we could encourage more and more of those young folks who love the

Lord to "live unto others." Living right at the mission with the missionaries gave us all a first hand experience of at least a little of what it is like to bring the Gospel to these Indians in the Turtle Mountains.

These days at Dunseith Lutheran Mission were a never-to-be-forgotten experience for us all and we believe that out of this group of young people will come those who will go into full time Christian service in various phases of His work. This school-camp experience worked for good two ways—we not only had the opportunity to bring the Word to the Indian children and their people but we ourselves were built up in the faith and given a vision for missions. My prayer is that each one of us who were there will go to our respective homes and churches and

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EDITORIALS

A SURPRISE VATICAN OBSERVER

While the presence of Lutheran observers at the current Vatican Council is taken for granted just as much as the presence of Lutherans in Minneapolis, we could not help but feel a twinge of regret in the announcement that the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod was sending Dr. Oswald Hoffmann, speaker on the International Lutheran Hour, to the third session of the Council as a "Guest of the Secretariat." The fact that Missouri is being "represented" at all is another sign of the great change taking place in that Lutheran synod.

Dr. Hoffmann is no Walter A. Maier but he has gained considerable stature as a radio preacher in his own right. He represents good evangelical Lutheran preaching.

We must not presume that Dr. Hoffmann is in danger of losing his grip on the evangelical message nor will he be swayed from his course. But his attendance at Vatican II adds an aura of respectability to those proceedings warranted neither by the accomplishments thus far nor the prospects for the future. You can point to the translation of parts of the liturgy into English, yes. And to a few other things.

But how often in all the writing done about the Council do you find the Roman Catholics speaking of changing their idea of salvation? And how often do you find Lutheran theologians, for instance, raising this question as one which presents a barrier which, if not overcome, will forever remain a block to a common faith between Roman Catholics and Protestants? Granted the latter is heard more often, but *not very much*.

Because some less essential matters are being changed, does this mean that the essential differences will be bridged? And remember, we have nothing to bargain away. Our position is intransigent. Are our Roman Catholic friends willing to abandon their position and the gigantic structure built upon it over the centuries? Well, that we would have to see to believe. We can hope for it and pray for it but we are not optimistic.

We do not like to be so pessimistic, but we have to speak of issues as we understand them. Our hearts are saddened when we find that the "justification by faith alone" principle is soft-pedalled or ignored in reference to Vatican II. Dr. Hoffmann will be there as a preacher of that principle. We only hope that if go he must, he will return to sound that call as never before to the nations which have no hope at all without it.

THE DEPARTING SUMMER

Autumn is a season to be looked forward to and winter has its charm, also on the "coteau" (our Sisseton hills). But few people can see summer wane and pass away without some feeling of regret. In a sense, especially in the great Midwest where most of us live, we live for summer. Then the crops are grown and harvested. And agriculture is the backbone of our economies, from peaceful country towns to sprawling cities.

Summer means a change of pace in the work of our congregations. There aren't as many meetings perhaps, but there are Bible camps, retreats, picnics and the church convention. Pastors find it easier to make some calls in the summer and perhaps to do a bit more reading.

Families enjoy more togetherness with children home from school. On the other hand, from some homes high school graduates go out to work and will never again spend more than vacations at home.

With the coming of September the pace quickens for all of us. In the churches we make new ventures, reactivating old programs and trying new ones. Ladies Aids, Luther Leagues, brotherhoods, all seem to take on new seriousness. We may plan evangelistic services. Some congregations will announce Bible studies. Sunday schools will resume if they have been in recess for the summer.

This is a good time to stop and ask ourselves what we are doing in all this and why. Is there some overriding goal or do we do things only because they have been done before? Friends, there are great reasons why we are to do our work. We are to make Christ known, among us and to others. We are to preach and teach so that both believers and unbelievers will get something that they need. In the words of *The Declaration of Faith* (Thief River Theses), "True Gospel preaching (or teaching) endeavors to meet the needs of all who hear: the believer who desires to grow in his life with God, the seeking and uncertain souls who want to see Him, the hypocrite who must be awakened from his self-righteousness, and the hardened sinner who must still be called to saving faith."

May we have a steadfast purpose in all our Association churches. Let us permit no other concerns or activities to hinder us from getting "on with the work." We do not want the Lord to have to say to us, "I know your works; you have the name of being alive, and you are dead."

WE ARE LUTHERANS

Being a Roman Catholic means that a person accepts the system of religious belief promulgated by that church over the centuries. The Roman Catholic faith is distinguished by belief in seven sacraments, the papacy, purgatory, to name just a few things.

Being a Baptist means that a person accepts the system of religious belief promulgated by that church over a few centuries. Baptist faith is distinguished by belief in baptism only for persons of age and understanding to choose it for themselves and by the belief that the Lord's Supper is a memorial feast and not a sacrament, to name only two features.

Being a Lutheran means that a person accepts the system of religious belief promulgated by that church over the centuries since the Reformation. Lutheran faith is distinguished by belief in the Bible as the sole authority in matters of faith and life, in the real presence of Christ in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and in the baptism of infants, to name just three things.

It goes without saying that all Protestant churches share some common beliefs. It goes without saying that Protestant and Roman Catholic churches share some common beliefs. Furthermore, the great proliferation (multiplication) of Protestant denominations and sects makes it possible for any American to find a system of beliefs with which he agrees, or, with the religious freedom available here, to begin a new system of beliefs which bears his own unique stamp.

These things being so we want to remind everyone that the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations is a Lutheran church. It adheres to the Lutheran Confessions as attested in the *Declaration of Faith* (Thief River Theses) and Rules for Work. Local congregations promise this same allegiance in their constitutions.

In view of these affirmations we do not appreciate the efforts or aspirations of those "hangers-on" and even members to swerve the Association from the Lutheran position on infant baptism. Such persons are hopefully not numerous but they are present and we must warn against them, well-intentioned though they be and rightly entitled to their views.

We don't have the time to defend the doctrine of infant baptism now. But we believe every Association member ought to take the time to read Dr. O. Hallesby's *Infant Baptism and Adult Conversion* (APH). This book is now available again at book stores. Of great help to us personally was *Baptism and Spiritual*

Life by Dr. Iver Olson. Unfortunately it is no longer in print. *Baptism and its Relation to Lutheran Evangelism* by Dr. Oscar A. Anderson bears careful reading. Our own Dr. Uuras Saarnivaara has also written a book on the subject. We are not familiar with it but hope to be later on.

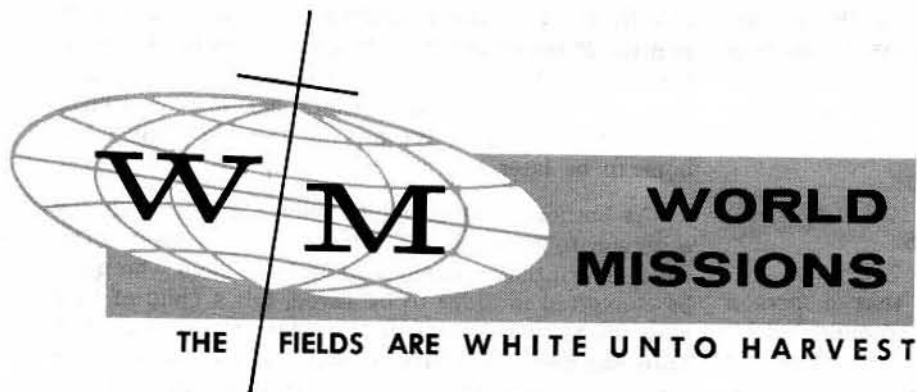
As Lutherans we ought to believe it is possible for a person to be kept in his baptismal covenant. "The child in a Christian home is not a little devil who must be converted in order to be saved, but a child of God who needs to be preserved in that relationship. The Lord has provided Christian parents and teachers for just such a purpose." So wrote Dr. Olson in his book. Nevertheless, with Hallesby, and Olson, we see the necessity of an awakening experience for such souls. And, as Lutherans, we ought to believe it is possible to fall from the baptismal covenant and that if this has happened it is necessary to repent and be converted ("raised from the dead"—Hallesby).

Dr. Hallesby, in his aforementioned book, warns against two incorrect views. One is "that there is a hidden germ of life from Baptism also in such as live in conscious sins without confessing them and struggling against them. I showed there that this view is contrary to Scripture." Such, said Hallesby, must repent in order to be made alive again.

The other false view or attitude is that which mentions baptism in preaching only as a "whipping boy," that is, to warn worldly people not to console themselves with their baptism. The Norwegian theologian concedes the merit of such a warning, but would remind us that something does indeed happen in baptism that can never be removed. Let us hear it in Hallesby's own words, "The real gift of Baptism is, as we pointed out above, to transfer to the individual the full salvation which is in Christ. And God never takes back this transference of power."

Remember, Hallesby believes it is possible to fall from the covenant. Let us hear further from him, "Now when this fallen person repents, what takes place? Nothing is changed from God's side. For He has never withdrawn the powers of salvation which He transferred to this sinner in the hour of Baptism." In other words, God abides faithful, even though we may prove unfaithful.

In all kindness and firmness we call upon those who would unsettle our people to desist, to study the whole matter prayerfully and if they cannot embrace the Lutheran understanding of baptism to seek a fellowship where they will not have to compromise their consciences. And let all who would bear the name "Lutheran" adhere to the belief that because salvation is always a free gift, the mighty God can grant it to the tiny baby, He is able to keep that one in His grace, but if there has been a defection or falling away, He is also merciful and able to receive the prodigal back, to raise him from the dead, as it were.



Sailing Forth . . . to the Regions Beyond

Rev. John H. Abel

As you pick up this issue of your *Ambassador* you will find us getting ready to pick up our bags and head for New York; from there we board a Moore-MacCormack Ship called the "Argentina" and so off to Brazil. This is the direction and plan that faith in God's call has led us to. Yet at this writing we face mountain-type needs, financially; but faithful is He who has called us, who will also perform it (1 Thess. 5:24). What can you friends who make up our fellowship of free Lutherans do?

At our Annual Conference in Valley City our Mission Committee suggested that every congregation have a special Mission Sunday early this fall to undergird and send off our missionaries. Has your congregation had such a Sunday as yet? Of course we need your constant and continued prayers of faith. Believing prayer will open the gates of heaven that will allow God's mighty power to rush forth and wash away the mountains of difficulty which face any new mission venture into the regions beyond.

How about you as an individual? We are your substitute in a sense, for all Christians are included in

the Great Commission. The world is yet waiting and dying while it waits for the message of salvation. Christians, to a large extent, have been totally disobedient to God's will of world evangelization. Now we go forth from you and for you—Christ's representatives, but on your behalf, to seek and to find those in the great regions of Brazil, whom we might reach with His salvation.

As individuals we cannot silence the call of the Holy Spirit for us to "send forth the light," by dropping something in the collection plate as it passes us on Mission Sunday. Just as the missionary's job is not concluded when he or she steps off the boat in Brazil, but rather there faces him years of consecrated service, so you at home who take up the cross of Christ's world command—each Christian in the pew or pulpit—having been called to a lifetime of consecrated sharing and service for missions. Someone once asked how long he should be expected to give and another answered, "Until God stops giving to you."

But what can you do right now? One of our pastors tells of a layman in his congregation who came up to him and said, "If the Association had a larger budget for

Missions, I would throw in five thousand dollars." "Brother," said the pastor, "We can put to work every penny we receive, so don't let the size of our budget stop you." But how true it is—we are so prone to put off to some later time what God would have us do today.

But how about you? Is not this your day of opportunity? Who knows what tomorrow will bring forth? If Jesus comes or calls you, you will have no more opportunity to be obedient to His world love and call. You will have no more opportunities to lay up treasures in heaven and you can no longer send your substitute. There is a great need today, and as for the day of salvation, so for the day of service, the Holy Spirit is saying: "Today, if you hear my voice harden not your hearts" (Heb. 3:7).

The Lord providing, on September 4, we will be sailing forth to the regions beyond. Will you go with us by earnest prayer and sacrificial giving? Jesus said unto His disciples, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matt. 9:37, 38).

What do we do? (and/or) What will the Lord do?

I John 1:9 _____

I John 1:7 _____

Ezek. 18:31 _____

Jer. 24:7 _____

Jer. 31:25 _____

Hosea 10:12 _____

A plot of land that has been cleansed of weeds, broken up, and re-seeded will produce. What kind of growth will be seen in the Christian life? II Pet. 3:18 _____ To insure growth of seed a garden needs light and moisture. On what does growth in our spiritual life depend? Ps. 67:1; Ps. 4:6 _____
John 4:14 _____

Harvest and Harvesting

Gardening requires patience—we cannot rush fruition. Gardening requires steadfastness—we cannot give up. Read the parable Jesus gives us in Mark 4:26–29. Think of the heart of each Christian as her own little kingdom. What stages of growth do you find? _____

Who gives the growth? _____ Do we understand its growth process? _____ To whom

must all credit be given for the spiritual fruit borne in each Christian's life? I Cor. 3:6 _____

List the "ever-bearing" fruits of the Spirit that are mentioned in Gal. 5:22–23. _____

Who will bear the fruits of the Spirit? Rom. 8:14 _____

Who are the sons (or daughters) of God? John 1:12 _____

In whose lives, then, should we expect to see these fruits? _____

What could be the reason for a poor harvest in our heart's garden? _____ Discussion: Are we always aware of all the fruits that may be borne in our life? Why?

Your heart is like a garden. What kind of a gardener are YOU?

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE



THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN and Her Garden

Many of you have faithfully tended your garden through the summer months. There was the careful planting last spring, the weeding throughout the summer, and now finally, the harvest. As you gather in the vegetables you may have a few regrets: perhaps you used poor seed, or planted unwisely, or the harvest is sparse because weeds took over. Harvest time speaks of finality; it is too late to garden differently. Harvest speaks of faithfulness and diligence; it reveals our efforts, or lack of them. Harvest speaks in many ways. The Christian wom-

an is reminded that her heart is like a garden. Daily, seed of the flesh or the Spirit is planted in her heart. There are weeds of sin that need plucking. The "ever-bearing" harvest reveals the spiritual condition of her heart's garden. Jesus said, "You will know them by their fruits."

As we compare our hearts to a garden, we will consider:

1. the seeds
2. the weeds
3. the harvest

The Seed and Seeding

The Christian's heart has two kinds of soil. What are they? Eph. 4:22-24 _____ According to Gal. 6:7-8, what kind of seed can be planted in our hearts? _____

_____ H. H. Halley reminds us that one of the spiritual laws of the natural world is that we reap what we sow. How reconcilable are the two natures and seeds? Gal. 5:17 _____

What responsibility do Christians have in determining which seeds will grow in her heart?

Rom. 8:4 _____ Gal. 5:16 _____
Gal. 5:24-25 _____ Col. 3:1-2 _____

It doesn't take long before observers can know what we planted in our gardens. The dill, melons, corn, or carrots are recognized early. What area of our life will reveal the kind of seed we are nurturing in our heart? Matt. 15:19a; 12:34-35 _____

Someone has emphasized this truth this way, "You are not what you think you are, but what you think—you are." What is the seed that will nourish and take root in our *new nature*? I Pet. 1:23 _____

_____ As we receive Christ and abide in Him through the Word and contemplate His goodness what effect will it have on our Christian life? Col. 2:6-7 _____ What conditions or actions will foster a good harvest?

Col. 3:16-17 _____ Eph. 5:15-20 _____
Phil. 3:12 _____ Psalm 51:1-2 _____

Weeds and Weeding

Weeds will appear in the best of gardens and for that reason gardeners must constantly be plucking them out before they damage the growth of the good seed. Cutting them off at the top is not sufficient. The roots must be rooted out and destroyed for permanent results. As long as the Christian is in the world she will be daily attacked by evil from within and without. What must be her attitude toward these "weeds" of the flesh? Matt. 26:41 _____ This admonition to be aware and alert to evil in our life is significant. Sin is like a weed. The seedlings of evil thoughts, desires, and motives can grow and take possession of us. What name would you give to these "weeds"? Gal. 5:19-21 _____

Rom. 1:29-31 _____

Rom. 13:13 _____

I Cor. 6:9-10 _____

A conscientious gardener will pluck out the weeds as quickly as she recognizes them. What does the Christian do with the "weeds" that will daily make their appearance in her heart? Ps. 32:5 _____

Jer. 25:5; Isa. 1:16 _____ What is the sincere desire of an honest Christian? Ps. 51:10-13 _____

A slothful and indifferent gardener will find her garden can quickly be over-run by weeds. The good seed is replaced by weeds if left untended. When this happens the gardener has to start over and make a new garden—plowing, cultivating, re-seeding, and again, diligent weeding. There may be some readers who need to begin their "spiritual garden." Perhaps you once started out in the Christian life but neglected sin in your life until it once again dominated you. Whatever may be the case we live in an age of grace, and it is not too late to make a new start.



Luther League Activities

One of the hidden purposes behind this Youth Page is to indoctrinate the young people of our Association. Also, to get you interested in reading your church paper. So, young people, co-operate!

News from our Leagues

On June 26-28, Ebenezer Lutheran Brethren Church, Mayville, N. Dak.; Valley Free Lutheran Church, Portland, N. Dak.; Ny Stavanger Lutheran Church, Buxton, N. Dak.; Faith Lutheran Church, Galesburg, N. Dak.; and Trinity Free Lutheran Church, Grand Forks, N. Dak., conducted a Youth Retreat at Faith Haven Lodge, Eagle Lake, Minn.

Bob Lee, Editor

The first district rally of the newly-organized West Coast District Luther League was held in Calvary Lutheran Free Church, Everett, Washington, on August 9.

Two Luther Leagues held youth picnics this summer when the Watchmen Quartet was at their congregation. One was in Dalton, Minn., on July 11, and the other was in Portland, N. Dak., on August 1.

PRAYER AND DEEDS

No answer comes to those who pray,
Then idly stand
And wait for stones to roll away
At God's command.
He will not break the binding cords
Upon us laid
If we depend on pleading words,
And do not aid.
When hands are idle, words are vain
To move the stone;
And abiding angel would disdain
To work alone;
But he who prayeth and is strong
In faith and deed,
And toiled earnestly, ere long
He will succeed.

—Author Unknown
(from *Prayer Poems*)

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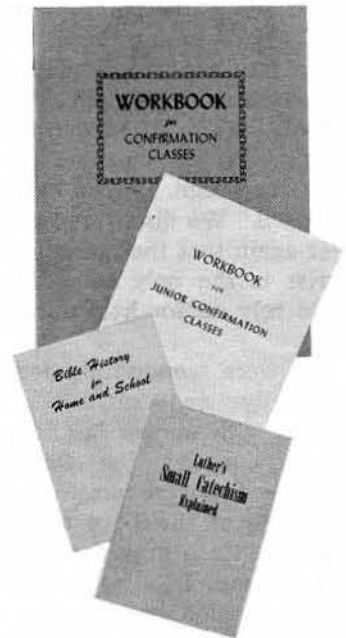
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YOUTH PARTICIPATE IN BIBLE SCHOOL MISSION

[Continued from page 7]

really get behind the task of winning souls as never before. May we be found faithful in praying, witnessing and giving that many may be won before Jesus comes soon.

Mrs. Alfred Voxland

I had the privilege of being with a group of seventeen young people and supervisors who left our home on June 1st for Dunseith, N. Dak., to teach Bible school to the Indian children at the Lutheran Mission there.

It was truly a "mountain top" experience for each of us who went. We were constantly reminded of the saving power of Jesus to take a person from the vilest sin and put a new song in his heart. It was wonderful to see souls come to Christ and one of our own young people receive assurance of salvation.

Just as the power of the Lord was evident, so were the satanic powers. We saw prayers answered as we put our complete trust in Christ and watched Him defeat the devil. One morning Harvey, one of our eighty children, from a 2-mile radius who registered in Bible school, looked up to me with his dark eyes full of meaning and said, "Jesus is tough. He can even fight the devil." We discovered over and over again that the power of Jesus Christ is the only thing that we could rely on for help during that week.

We were wonderfully fed, both spiritually and physically, and treated with utmost hospitality by the missionaries, the Danielsons. They need our prayers to continue the work of the Lord among the Indians. Please pray for them!

In the mornings we taught Bible school in nine teepees that were erected for this purpose. I learned to love my little Indian students and will never forget the expression on their faces or in their eyes as they heard that Jesus loved them.

In the afternoons and evenings we had real fellowship with the Indians, including a street meeting and visitations. We tasted some "banick," which was Indian bread. One of the Christian Indians told us some of his experiences while in the pagan religion before he accepted Christ. It was amazing to hear about them.

There was a large tent erected for meetings in the evenings. Several souls came to know Christ as a result of the work of the Holy Spirit during these meetings. Pastor Joel Pederson preached. There were special numbers in song as well as testimonies from the Indians and our group of young people.

This has been a tremendous experience and I wish to challenge your hearts to uphold this mission in your prayers and gifts.

Berniece Linder

LABOR DAY RETREAT FOR OLDER YOUTH

There will be a Labor Day weekend retreat Sept. 4-7 for young people who will be sophomores and above in high school this fall, at Moments of Meditation Bible Camp east of Moorhead, Minn. Attendance is limited. Contact Mr. Gary Skramstad, Box 95, Grand Forks, N. Dak., if you wish to attend.

GREAT GOD, WE PRAISE THY GRACIOUS CARE

Great God, we praise Thy gracious care,

Thou dost our daily bread prepare;
O bless the earthly food we take,
And feed our souls for Jesus' sake.

We thank Thee, Lord, for this our food,

For life and health, and ev'ry good:
May manna to our souls be given,
The Bread of Life, sent down from heav'n.

—John Cenick
(from *Concordia*)

PERSONALITIES

Seventy books have been given to the new seminary library by Rev. G. L. Halmrast, Mentor, Minn., ALC retired.

Rev. Waldemar F. Anderson, ALC, has moved from Portland, N. Dak., to Eagle Bend, Minn., where he serves Faith Lutheran Church.

Missionary Amos Dyrud, ALC, is back in Madagascar now and is located at Betioky-Sud, Malagasy Republic.

Rev. Quentin Goodrich, ALC, a Lutheran Welfare chaplain, is now living in Elk Grove Village, Ill.

Perley, Minn., is the new home of Rev. Philip J. Halverson, ALC. He was formerly at Pembina, N. Dak.

Mrs. Mattie Jorgensen, widow of the late Rev. C. G. Jorgensen, passed away recently. Burial was in Minneapolis. Biographical information is incomplete, but she served with her husband in Madagascar before parish work in such places as Marmon, N. Dak., and Hendricks, Minn. (We would appreciate receiving information concerning the lives of pastors and pastors' wives who pass on so that such can be shared with our readers. We are thinking especially of those of the old Lutheran Free Church fellowship.—Ed.)

Rev. E. Edward Tornow, Welch, Minn., has accepted a call to serve St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Fargo, N. Dak., and Landstad Lutheran Church, Perley, Minn. He will take up his new work shortly.

God loves a cheerful giver.

CHURCH-WORLD NEWS

GLEANINGS FROM AN EDITOR'S READING

God entrusted His power to men who had been tested and trained in His school, who had come to see their own sin and their inability to serve God in their own wisdom and power, who had been obedient to God's will in various definite steps that had been set before them, who had learned to wait upon God and who moved and acted only when God spoke. This is the story of Abraham and Joseph and Moses and Paul and all whom God chose to entrust with much knowledge of His will and much of His power. THERE IS NO SHORT-CUT TO SPIRITUAL POWER! Jesus refused Satan's temptation to get the kingdom while avoiding the cross. Jesus refused to take the way of the short-cut to power. So must we. And any teaching that professes to present a quick and easy way to real power with God, so that all we need is some experience and we are there, is contrary to God's method of working as plainly set forth in His Word.—Rev. Harvey Carlson in *Evangelize*, July-August, 1964.

The gospel of anti-Communism is also a substitute in some people's minds for the gospel of Jesus Christ. This has been more predominant in some conservative churches. Nobody feels more strongly than I that Communism is a gospel of the devil. If I wanted to wear a badge of anti-Communism, I certainly could. But the only true and effective opposition than can be raised against the hammer and sickle is the cross of Jesus Christ.

We can talk about armies, missile treaties and everything else, but we'll never match them man for man. Added together, the Chinese Communists and the Russian Com-

munists outnumber us. The only way we can outnumber them is in the power of Jesus Christ. This, not anti-Communism, should be the gospel we are preaching. Gov. Mark Hatfield in *Eternity*, August, 1964.

"In the words of Cardinal Bea: 'The Council's (Vatican II) main ecumenical task will be to prepare for *eventual union*, God willing, by bettering relations between Catholics and non-Catholics.' And Pope John XXIII, addressing those separated from Rome, said, 'May we hope with a father's love for your return.' Honesty demands that we let our separated brethren know that this is our ultimate reason for participating in the ecumenical movement, and that we manifest it in practice by seeking to convert even devout Protestants.'"—Francis J. Connell as quoted by S. P. Garver in *Christian Heritage*, June, 1964.

Christ can give you satisfying answers to such questions as, "Who am I? Why was I born? What am I doing here? Where am I going?" All of the great questions of life can be answered when you come by faith to Jesus Christ and receive him as your Lord and Master. Man wants direction, authority, someone to control him. Let that someone be Jesus Christ. Let him be your Lord. Let Him be your Pilot. He can take away the worry from your life.—Billy Graham in *Decision*, July, 1964.

VATICAN NEWSPAPER ASSAILS THE TOPLESS SUIT AS BESTIAL

New York Times News Service

Rome, Italy—The "industrial-erotic adventure" of the topless bathing suit "negates moral sense" just as modern art at the Venice

International Biennial of Art uses "reason to destroy itself," *Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican City newspaper, said Monday.

The newspaper, in an article by its editor, Raimondo Manzini, titled "The Ultimate Shame," also attacked "intellectuals" who try to defend the "desperate and senseless adventure of impudent shamelessness" with sociological or juridical arguments.

Manzini launched his attack on bathing suits and art by saying "one ought to be ashamed of giving space and attention to degrading chronicles of the industrial-erotic adventure of the 'monopiece' that, adding an unsated avidity for money to sub-feminine shamelessness, has given rise to so much clamor."

The newspaper said the problem was different when "intellectuals" defended "adventure-seeking women out to get publicity" on the grounds that the issues at stake were the "freedom and equality of women."

Visitors to the Venice Biennial, the newspaper said, were dismayed by seeing authors of excellent paintings and sculpture become "demented, accumulating broken clocks, wreckage of furniture, refuse and trinkets to construct a 'composition' that the visitor would be expected to 'finalize.'"

All in all, *Osservatore Romano* said, "reason is employed to destroy itself."

"Isn't this truly the failure of a culture?" Manzini asked.

After having smashed "every certainty of reason, one negates the moral sense, the consciousness of modesty, the progress of history, that, after all, by dressing woman, adorning her externally, hasn't degraded but elevated her, and one resorts to the bestial (at least innocent) nudity of the savage.

"Modesty will appear ever more,

among the idolaters of the instinct for nudity, the superior expression of a civilization that still believes in itself," the newspaper concluded.
Des Moines Register

PASTOR ELECTED TO HEAD EVANG. LUTHERAN SYNOD

Mankato, Minn. (NLC)—Delegates to the 47th regular convention here of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod elected the Rev. Joseph N. Petersen of St. Peter, Minn., to a two-year term as synod president.

Mr. Petersen, a former vice president, became president of the 14,600-member synod last fall when the Rev. Theodore A. Aaberg of Scarville, Iowa, resigned because of ill health.

Elected as vice president was the Rev. Eivind Unseth of Albert Lea, Minn. The Rev. Walter C. Gullixson of Princeton, Minn., and the Rev. S. E. Lee of Hawley, Minn., were re-elected secretary and treasurer, respectively.

(It was our privilege to meet Pastors Peterson, Gullixson and Aaberg at the Waterloo Conference. With great interest we learned that we had been born in the same small western North Dakota town as Theodore Aaberg, less than three years apart.—Ed.)

LUTHERANS IN NORTH AMERICA TOTAL 8,870,721; GAIN 1.6%

New York (NLC)—Membership of the Lutheran Churches in North America totaled 8,870,721 adults and children at the end of 1963.

The Lutheran bodies reported 8,580,271 baptized members in the United States and 290,450 members for their affiliated groups in Canada, according to the annual statistical summary issued here by the National Lutheran Council. The figures were compiled by Miss Helen M. Knubel, secretary of research and statistics in the Council's Division of Public Relations.

The total represents a gain of 135,987 members or 1.6 percent during 1963—131,302 in the U.S.

and 4,685 in Canada. The percentage of increase was the same as in 1962 and close to the advance of 1.8 percent in 1961 and 1.7 percent in 1960. In the 50's, the average gain was 3.1 percent, as increases in membership over the decade ranged from 2.7 to 3.6 percent.

Comprising the third largest Protestant denominational grouping in America, the Lutheran Churches are exceeded in numbers only by the Baptists and Methodists.

The NLC's summary is based on statistics supplied by ten Lutheran church bodies, six of which recorded gains in membership while three reported no change and one suffered a loss.

Largest of the Lutheran bodies is the Lutheran Church in America with 3,227,157 members. It reported a net increase of 26,843 or 0.8 percent.

For the 19th consecutive year, the highest numerical increase was made by the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, second largest Lutheran body, as it accounted for 43.8 percent of all the new members reported. Among the major bodies, it also showed, for the sixth year in a row, the greatest gain on a percentage basis.

Third largest of the bodies, the American Lutheran Church, had a gross upswing of 133,640 members or 5.5 percent to a total of 2,544,617. Included were 88,523 members of the Lutheran Free Church, who joined the ALC in February of 1963. The net increase was 45,117 or 1.8 percent over the combined 1962 memberships of the two bodies.

The Church of the Lutheran Brethren showed the greatest percentage of gain in baptized membership, 18.2 percent, or 1,266 members for a total of 8,024. Due to a calculating error, its membership in 1962 was reported as 4,006, necessitating an adjustment in last year's figures.

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod gained 527 members or 3.6 percent to 14,608 and the Wisconsin Evan-

gelical Lutheran Church increased by 4,798 members or 1.4 percent to a total of 354,840. It is the fourth largest Lutheran body. The Church of the Lutheran Confession, which was organized in 1961, reported a loss of 740 members or 9 percent, reducing its total to 8,252.

The Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches, with 20,464 members, the Apostolic Lutheran Church, with 7,203 members, and the Eielson Synod, with 1,500 members, remained unchanged as no census was taken in these bodies last year.

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