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Vol. 4

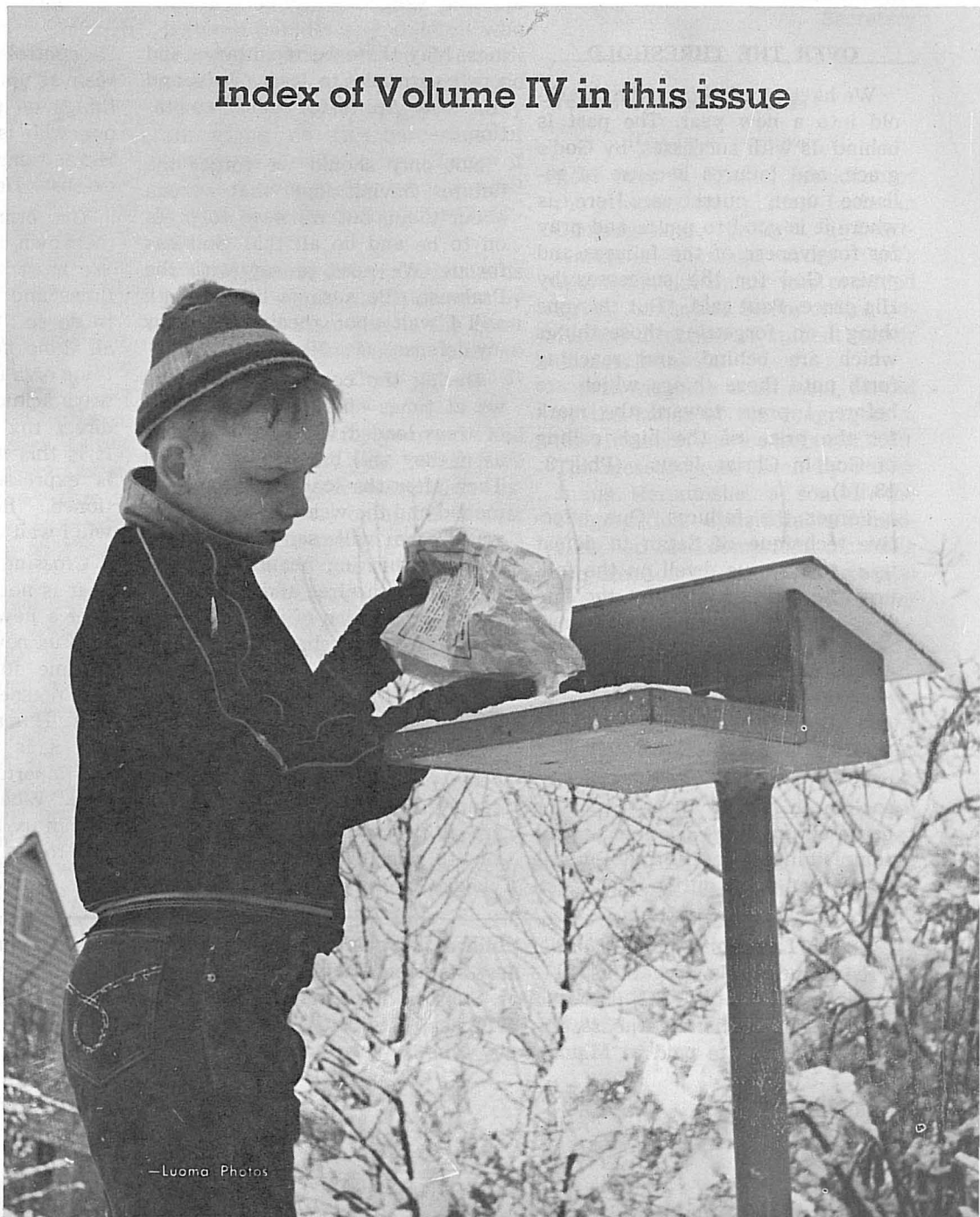
December 27, 1966

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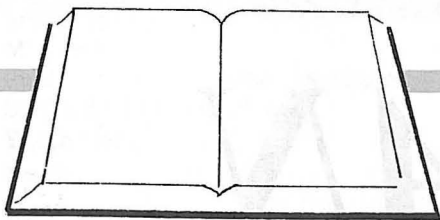
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Index of Volume IV in this issue



-Luoma Photos



According to the Word

OVER THE THRESHOLD

We have stepped over the threshold into a new year. The past is behind us with successes, by God's grace, and failures because of reliance upon ourselves. Here is where it is good to pause and pray for forgiveness of the failures and praise God for the successes by His grace. Paul said, "But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3: 13, 14).

Forget the failures. One effective technique of Satan to defeat us is to have us dwell on the failures. Sometimes it is not too late to correct the past. There may be some apologies that need to be made, borrowed items that need to be returned, promised duties that need to be carried out. Still there may be areas where the failures cannot be corrected, as words spoken in gossip that cannot be gathered up or the changing of the complaining, resentful, self-pitying spirit that ruled during great test-

ings. May there be repentance and a new surrender to Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit to resist temptation.

Not only should we forget the failures, having done what we can about them, but we need to press on to be and do all that God has for us. We need to say with the Psalmist, "Because of his strength will I wait upon thee: for God is my defense" (Ps. 59: 9).

During the cold wintry months we at times observe the branches of trees loaded with ice—it seems as if they will break at any time! Then after the ice and snow have melted and the weather has become warm, we will see those same branches bearing beautiful leaves, apparently carefree and having forgotten the burden of ice which was so heavy only a short time ago.

There are some who are reading this who are like the ice-laden branches. You are loaded with sorrows and burdens, seemingly too heavy to bear. You feel that you cannot hold on any longer—you are at the breaking point. Let me say to you: Don't give up. Don't yield. God has not forgotten you.

He controls the circumstances that seem so unbearable. Remember that things do not just happen to the one who is waiting upon God for His strength. When He is your defense, He will see you through.

The branches have no will of their own, but you and I have wills. We must will to trust Him at all times and He then gives us faith to do so. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not upon thine own understanding: in all thy ways acknowledge him and he will direct thy paths" (Prov. 3: 5, 6). It is this willingness to trust that is expressed in a passage mentioned, "Because of his strength will I wait upon thee."

Crossing the threshold into a new year is not so much a time to turn over a new leaf as it is to let God give us new life. It is not so much a time for reformation as it is for regeneration and transformation. Human effort has its place, but it is not all-important. It is so important to "let go and let God." When God is allowed to work within us, then we shall be motivated to let Him work through us.

—Harold R. Schafer

The Lutheran Ambassador is published biweekly (except the first issue of August) by the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Mpls., Minn. 55427. Rev. Raynard Huglen, Roslyn, South Dakota 57261, is the editor. Subscription price is \$2.50 per year in advance. Subscriptions should be sent to *The Lutheran Ambassador*, 3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55427. Second-class postage paid at Minneapolis, Minn.

Introducing Our Seminary Seniors



Richard and Clara Gunderson with their children, Christine, Daniel and Peder.

Today: Richard Gunderson

"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide. . ." (John 15:16). After graduation from Crosby-Ironton High School, Crosby, Minnesota, I entered the Lutheran Bible Institute, coming to grips with the matter of my personal salvation as well as a definite call to foreign mission service. Knowing this to be the will of God for my life and the necessity for preparation, I am now facing the reality of His call.

During this period of time, while attending Augsburg College, I was married to Clara Bouchard. It was also during this time that we were thankful for the ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha

Falls (Minneapolis), for its layman and foreign mission emphasis. Following our graduation from LBI, the time of preparation meant four years of service at Viroqua Lutheran Church (Wisconsin) as youth director. Returning to Minneapolis in 1962 our goal was the ministry, all the while knowing we were to serve God on the foreign mission field.

On behalf of my family, Clara, Christine, Daniel and Peder, I want to express thanks to the Association

for the opportunity to attend seminary for three meaningful years. Let us pray together that God will continue to send forth laborers in His fields, home and foreign, as we labor together.

Richard and Clara Gunderson with their children, Christine, Daniel and Peder.

Association Lutheran Bible School

The 2nd quarter begins on January 3 and continues for ten weeks.

If interested in enrolling, contact Rev. John P. Strand, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55427.

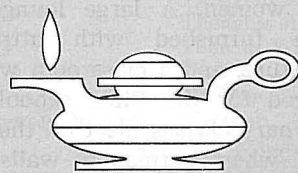
TESTIMONIES FROM OUR BIBLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

The reasons I came to Bible school are that I was seeking knowledge of our Lord and His Word. Also, I needed strengthening in my faith. I prayed often that God might open a door for me to find these things. This Bible school is the door He opened.

I enjoy it here very much. The fellowship is wonderful and living here with Christians makes it seem more like a home than a school.

The teachers and the subjects they teach are both very interesting. In only the first three weeks I've learned more than I believed possible.

It is my prayer that more people



SCHOOL NEWS

will come to Bible school to learn God's Word and be a witness for Him.

I work at the Ambassador Nursing Home and my home congregation is Beaver Creek Lutheran Church.

Bonnie L. Ferguson
White Earth, N. Dak.

I came to Bible school to get a firm foundation under my feet before I get out into the world. The reason for Bible school is so we aren't babes in Christ all our lives (Heb. 5:13) but that we grow in the Word. If we don't grow we will start to fall backward away from the grace of God. Therefore, we must grow to overflowing so we can tell others of His saving grace.

Ralph Peterson
Thief River Falls, Minn.

(Ralph is from Our Savior's Lutheran Church and works at the Golden Valley Furniture Store while attending Bible school.)



Two of the Bible School students dressed in Palestinian costumes during a visit to the Holyland Museum in Minneapolis.

Testimonies from the other students at Bible school will be given in future issues of the *Ambassador*. We will also print a picture of the entire student body in a coming issue.



Two of the students "hit the books," a part of Bible School life, too.

Reflections

As these lines are written, the evidences of the Christmas season are everywhere to be seen and not the least in the halls and rooms of our seminary and Bible school. The strains of Christmas carols ring out through the corridors from our Bible School Choir as they practice for their concerts to be held here at the Medicine Lake Lutheran Church and, also, out in several of our Association churches.

As we look back over the year of 1966 that is fast drawing to a close, we have many things for which to thank God. We are thinking especially of the last half of the year when the silence of summer days was suddenly interrupted by remodeling and preparations for the opening of school in September 1966. The Raymond Jacobsons, formerly of Sebeka, Minnesota, moved here to Minneapolis the middle of July and lived in their camper while Raymond worked at the remodeling at our Headquarters.

Many changes have been made in the building to accommodate the addition of our Bible school which opened September 26 with an enrollment of thirteen students. We will try to list a few of the things that have been done in the way of remodeling. On the lower level where we have our kitchen and dining area we have remodeled three large rooms for dormitory space for the Bible school girls, also, an apartment for the Raymond Jacobsons, as Mrs. Jacobson is dean of women. Showers were added to the rest room facilities for both men and women. A large lounge has been furnished with attractive furniture, and a classroom was arranged for the Bible school. The seminary classes meet on the main level where permanent walls were put in to divide the overflow room from the main auditorium and also

an office was provided for the treasurer. The library has now been moved to the balcony where a large room has been constructed for that purpose. Extra space is at a premium these days and we will have to start building soon in order to accommodate a growing enrollment.

For now it seems that we should say a few words in regard to present obligations. You might say that we purchased our present property more or less on a shoestring with less than \$10,000 down and later launched our Praise Program with a budget of \$130,000 to be raised over a period of several years in order to pay for the property. We are indeed grateful for the response to this undertaking. However, we still have a long way to go and we would like to remind ourselves again that having begun is good, but let us also complete or work toward the goal that has been set so that we can press on to the new horizons that arise before us. A good response from our congregations and friends before the close of this fiscal year which closes January 31, 1967, will be greatly appreciated by the Boards who have the responsibility of the present and also as they plan for the future. May God's richest blessing be yours this Christmas season and for the coming year.

(From somewhere behind the Treasurer's desk)

WINTER BIBLE CONFERENCE DATES SET

The 5th annual Winter Bible Conference will be held in the Dalton, Minnesota, parish of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, Harry C. Molstre, pastor, February 9-12, 1967. Details of the conference will be announced later.



Luther League Activities

Edited by Jane Thompson

TIRED OF LIVING?

Have you ever felt as though there was not one good reason why you should go on living? If you are a Luther Leaguer, perhaps even in the last week you have felt this way as you go through one of the difficult stages in life. If you are older, maybe there is an even stronger temptation to "throw in the towel" when debts, worries, children, old age, and fast living make you dizzy.

Maybe someone precious has been removed from you. Maybe a staggering debt is hanging over your head, or your hopes for college look very dim. Maybe you can't have that promised car until your grades improve, or you didn't get that important date when someone was home for Christmas vacation.

No matter what looks very important to you at the moment, the strange thing is, that when you have no real desire to go on living, that is when God may have a very direct blessing in store for you.

If you couldn't care less whether or not 1967 is just around the corner, maybe a new look at your situation is in order. An anonymous poet has put into words what I could not express.

EMPTIED AND FILLED

One by one He took them from me,
All the things I valued most;
Until I was empty handed—
Every glittering toy was lost.

And I walked earth's lonely high-ways
In my rags and poverty;
Till I heard His voice entreating:
"Lift your empty hands to Me."

Empty hands I lifted heavenward
And He filled them with a store
Of His own transcendent riches,
Till my hands could hold no more.

And at last I comprehended,
With my mind so slow and dull,
That God could not pour His riches
Into hands already full.

If one by one, everything worth living for has been removed, lift up your empty hands to Him who has given all in the first place. We do not realize how we are hindering ourselves from receiving so much simply by hanging on so tightly to what we now have in our hands.

Like the small boy caught with his doubled fist in the cookie jar, unable to get satisfaction out of any of the cookies, we have to learn to loosen our grasp on what we love. Only then can we experience what it is to have hands that are filled to overflowing by God.

DISTRICT NEWS

The fall rally of the Thief River Falls District Luther League was held at the AFLC church in Roseau on Oct. 9, 1966.

Student pastor Larry Severson opened the program, followed by a greeting from Byron Danielson, Roseau Luther League president.

After a hymn by the audience, Stan Holmaas, Newfolden, led in Scripture and prayer. Barbara and Louise Erickson of the Greenbush parish sang a song, followed by the secretary's and treasurer's reports.

District Luther League President Ervin Schmittke and national Luther League President Gary Skramstad urged the Luther Leaguers to attend the national convention in Kalispell in August, 1967.

Sonia Mortrud and Janell Ness sang a duet followed by an inspiring message by Pastor Gene Sundby. A group from the Hegland Church gave a number in song. The offering was sent to the Seminary Library Fund. Lunch was served by the ladies of the church.

Barbara Holm, reporter

How many from your league plan to attend the Kalispell Convention next summer? Start praying and planning now!

Remember to send in testimonies, announcements, reports of rallies, progress reports on Kalispell, and any contributions to the youth page to: Jane Thompson, 1334 2nd Ave. S., Moorhead, Minn.

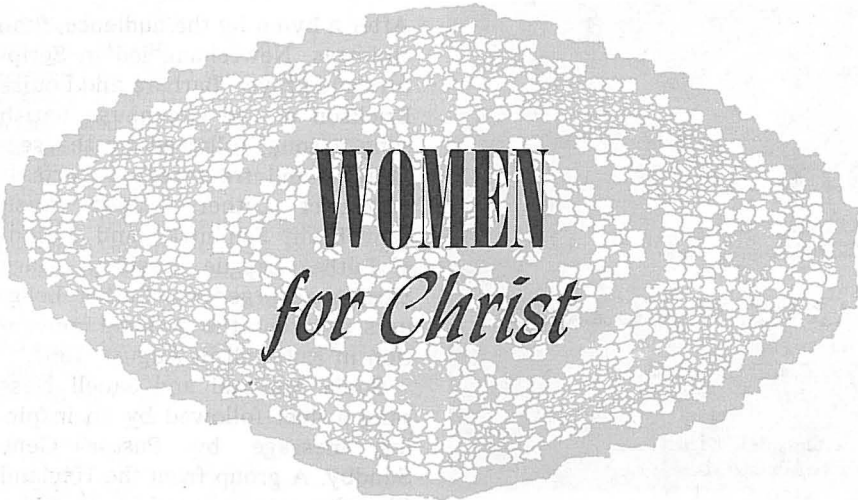
NOTICE

Occasionally, through an error in mailing, you may miss an issue or two of the *Ambassador*. When you are certain that you have missed an issue and your subscription is still in force, please write our office for the missing number and it will be furnished free of charge.

Should you continue to miss copies of the *Ambassador*, write and ask that an inquiry be made as to the reason.

Address all inquiries and requests regarding subscriptions and mailing to:

**The Lutheran Ambassador
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55427**



WOMEN *for Christ*

MINNEAPOLIS DISTRICT FALL RALLY HELD IN WISCONSIN

The annual fall rally of the Minneapolis District Women's Missionary Federation was held October 5, 1966, at Faith Lutheran Church, rural Colfax, Wisconsin. Mrs. Orval Underdahl, district president, presided.

The program centered around the theme verse, II Corinthians 5:20: "For we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." Mrs. Morris Eggen of Willmar, Minnesota, led the opening devotions and Mrs. Robert Dietsche, president of the Faith WMF, brought the welcome.

Miss Violet Anderson, Minneapolis, who has served as a missionary under the World Mission Prayer League, presented a Bible study entitled, "Give Me a Vision," based on Isaiah 6. She stated that we need to take a new look at God and a look at ourselves. The reason we don't see God is that we don't read our Bibles. In the Bible we see not only God but also ourselves. After we have seen ourselves as sinners, and God as holy, as Isaiah did, and have been cleansed as Isaiah was, THEN if we commit ourselves to God, He will indeed give us a vision and a responsibility, as He gave Isaiah.

Ladies from the Green Lake congregation of Spicer, Minnesota, pre-

sented a skit: "A New Creature in Christ," as an example of program material made available to women's groups by the WMF literature committee. Taking part in the skit, which was written by Mrs. John Abel, were Mrs. Earl Jones, Mrs. Art Hegerberg, and Mrs. Clarence Johnson.

Mrs. Ray Jacobson spoke at the afternoon session on the theme, "God's Call," basing her talk on the "great commission" verses found in Matthew 28:18-20. She emphasized that our first call is to repentance and our second call is to service. She said that God is asking us to enlist; He isn't going to draft us. In keeping with the theme verse of the rally, she spoke about the characteristics and responsibilities of the "ambassador."

Mrs. Jacobson also brought a first-person account of our mission work in Nogales, Arizona, where she and her husband visited with the Dynneson family last winter and spent several weeks helping with the work. She read a greeting to the group from Rev. Dynneson.

Special music was furnished by the Faith women's chorus, who sang "Help Me to Live for Others." Mrs. Carol James of Minneapolis gave a report on the WMF projects. Members voted to donate the rally offering to the national WMF general fund and to the Seminary library fund, and to hold the spring rally on Wednesday, April 19, at a location to be announced later. Student pastor Connely Dyrud

prayed the closing prayer and pronounced the benediction.

The ladies of Faith Lutheran congregation served dinner at noon and coffee following the afternoon session. The church and tables were attractively decorated in a fall and mission theme.

Mrs. Robert Bursheim
Mpls., District WMF secretary

PAULI CHURCH HOSTS NORTHERN MINNESOTA WMF CONVENTION

The Northern Minnesota District Women's Missionary Federation Fall Rally was held at the Pauli Lutheran Church, rural Greenbush, Oct. 11, 1966. Orville T. Olson is the pastor. Theme for the day was "How narrow is the way that leadeth unto life."

Mrs. Emmanuel Seidel was the organist and the hymn sing was led by Mrs. Daryl Haugen of Hegland Church. Mrs. Harold Arneson of Rose led the devotions, reading Matthew 7:15-19. The welcome was tendered by Mrs. Orin Green of Pauli and the response by Mrs. Ingvald Rokke of Bethania. A vocal selection was rendered by some ladies from Greenbush.

Pastor John Strand, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, brought a message based on Matthew 7:15-23. He said that the gate to life is narrow, but it is well marked by the Word of God. The broad way is easy to find and one can believe anything while traveling on it. But it is the road to damnation. "Who is on the narrow road?" he asked. Those who cast themselves unreservedly on the Lord as Savior. They, in turn, are to live the Gospel.

Mrs. Charles Jenson of Greenbush and Mrs. Clifford Holm of Badger sang a duet. Following a solo by Mrs. Gilman Stennes of Strandquist the forenoon session was closed by Pastor Olson.

A singspiration opened the afternoon meeting, and Scripture reading and prayer were given by Mrs. Joseph D. Anderson. Mrs. Vernon Langaas and Mrs. Edsel Anderson

[Continued on page 15]

The Lutheran Ambassador Schedule for 1967

1. The first date given is the date on which the *Ambassador* is printed every two weeks.
2. The second date is the deadline at which material for that issue must reach the editor.
3. Material which arrives late will not be included in the next issue unless it is of an emergency nature.
4. Unsolicited material is welcome, but will be used at the discretion of the editor and as space permits.
5. Observe that one deadline in the summer varies from the standard procedure.
6. The Christmas issue deadline is November 1.
7. In sending notices of meetings, keep in mind that subscribers receive their papers up to a week following the publication date.
8. All material must be sent to the editor for his decision.
9. Regular writers for the *Ambassador* are asked to note the special issues so that they may write concerning those topics if they desire.

<i>Publication</i>	<i>Editor's Deadline</i>	<i>Special</i>	<i>WMF Bible Study</i>
January 10 January 24	December 24 January 7	New Year	Yes
February 7 February 21	January 21 February 4	Lent	Yes
March 7 March 21	February 18 March 4	Easter	Yes
April 4 April 18	March 18 April 1		Yes
May 2 May 16 May 30	April 15 April 29 May 13	Mother's Day Pre-Convention and Memorial Day Pre-Convention	Yes
June 13 June 27	May 27 June 10	Convention Reports	Yes
July 11 July 25	June 24 July 8	Convention Reports	Yes
August 22	July 22		Yes
September 5 September 19	August 19 September 2		Yes
October 3 October 17 October 31	September 16 September 30 October 14	Reformation	Yes
November 14 November 28	October 28 November 11	Thanksgiving Advent and Universal Bible Sunday	
December 12 December 26	November 1 December 9	Christmas	Yes

PLEASE SAVE THIS SCHEDULE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE



NEWS of the Churches

KALISPELL, MONT.

The Stillwater Lutheran Free Church, because it is so far away from the Lake Geneva Bible camp, decided to sponsor its own camp last summer. In 1965 the congregation spent about \$600 on the eleven campers attending Lake Geneva from Kalispell.

Accordingly, we rented a camp at Dickey Lake, located about 50 miles from Kalispell, on Highway 93 toward Eureka, Mont. We had excellent weather. Since the camping venture was a pioneering step for our congregation, we had camp only Friday through Sunday, August 5-7. Forty people of varying ages were registered, with over 80 present on Sunday.

Pastor R. P. Haakonson of Moorhead, Minn., was the guest teacher and speaker, with Pastor Stendal of the local congregation the camp dean and assisting speaker.

Dickey Lake Bible Camp has an unusually fine lake and beach. Children need not be afraid of "drop offs," for the beach has a gradual slope where even small children may go wading. Also, the camp enjoys a beautiful setting under the hills and mountains so characteristic of the Flathead Valley environs.

On November 3-6, Stillwater Lutheran conducted evangelism meetings with Rev. Herbert Franz of Cloquet, Minn., as the guest speaker. These were wonderful days for our church. Pastor and Mrs. Franz brought several messages in song.

On Sunday, November 6, at 5 p.m., the Luther League had a youth banquet in the chapel room at the parsonage. Twenty-six were in attendance. Kristin Kjos, president of the Stillwater Luther League, was toastmistress. Leslie Olson had devotions, and Marsha Maltby gave a reading. Pastor Franz spoke on: "Why young people go away from Jesus." Nancy Olson from Powers Lake, N. Dak., sang "How Great Thou Art."

Since September 4 Pastor Stendal has conducted morning services in the First Bible Presbyterian Church of Kalispell, since that congregation lost its pastor through death last August. The two congregations are having joint midweek services.

Of course, our people are enthusiastic about the national Luther League Convention scheduled for Kalispell next August. We believe many parents and others, as well as young people, will come to enjoy the unsurpassed beauty of the Glacier National Park, the Flathead Valley at the foot of the park, as well as the Flathead Lake, nearly 40 miles long. These, together with the forested hills and ranges, cause one to borrow the words from Psalm 19: "...the firmament sheweth his handywork."

—Corr.

FARGO, N. DAK.

The work in St. Paul's is gaining momentum from week to week. Almost every Sunday we see new faces.

We took in four new families on Sunday, November 13, and had a reception for them in the church parlors following the morning service.

On November 20 we had a Stewardship Day, on which we received an offering for schools and missions which amounted to \$360.05. It was divided three ways: schools, missions and general fund. This is a beginning. We hope to do more before the year is up.

On Wednesday, November 16, after Bible study, we had a birthday party for Pastor Dahle, in honor of his 75th birthday. Mr. Gust Arneson also celebrated his birthday the same day as Pastor Dahle and got in on the party. He remarked in his jovial way, "Naar det regner paa presten, saa drypper det paa klokknern."

The children gave their Christmas program on Sunday evening, the 19th, in connection with the Ladies' Mission Society "Advent Tea."

Several more families were to be received into our congregation on Christmas Day.

—Corr.

85th ANNIVERSARY OF BETHANY CHURCH



Bethany Lutheran Church, rural Abercrombie, N. Dak., observed its 85th anniversary on Sunday, August 21, 1966. The congregation chose as its theme: "Built on the Rock the Church Doth Stand," as they gathered to thank and praise the Lord for abundant mercies and blessings received.

The church was well filled with members and friends gathered for the festival service at 10:30 a.m.

[Continued on page 15]

A year ago we foresaw several developments within the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. How well were those expectations realized? Let's take a look at them?

It was anticipated that the Annual Conference would enact some changes in the Rules for Work by which the Association is governed. The conference did indeed pass on some proposed changes, but final action will not take place until next June. Still other changes which are somewhat controversial will take longer.

The year soon over did see a second missionary couple enter the active work in Brazil after a year of language study. Work has progressed well in that nation. At Nogales, Ariz., a new church building is proving a real asset to the work.

Free Lutheran Seminary, as expected, added a third class, bringing the total full-time enrollment to 18 students. This is certainly a respectable number of men studying for the ministry. Most, if not all of them, envision serving in the Association.

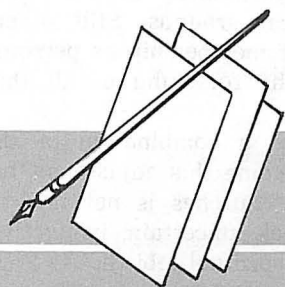
Furthermore, 1966 was seen as the year in which a Bible school ought to be started. As you know, this was done and 13 young people attended the first quarter. The second quarter begins on January 3. No one can accuse us of over-publicizing the presence of this school, as reader Even Ose correctly asserts elsewhere in this issue, but we can look for development in the areas of publicity and public relations as time goes on. A dean for the Bible school and other faculty members for our schools are presently being sought for the school year beginning in September, 1967.

One other facet of life within our fellowship was noted twelve months ago. That concerned evangelism in the congregations. We called for a year of special appeal to the uncommitted in our congregations and the unreached without. How well was that done? We have just now read where a man takes another Lutheran periodical to task for giving the impression that the church is primarily buildings. Haven't we been guilty of the same? But the church is *people*, first of all. How did we do in presenting the claims of Christ in our local communities this year? It is for each of us to answer that question. It is for us to ponder this unfinished task in our home churches and to see how we may best get into action.

These, then, were the matters of concern noted one year ago and this is how they were approached during the year.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

This is not an attempt to comprehensively review the religious news of the past year. Jotting down some of the events of note, we list these: Billy Graham



EDITORIALS

THANK YOU, PASTOR SCHAFER

Ever since the first issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador* in July, the devotional articles under the series "According to the Word" have been authored by Pastor Harold R. Schafer of DeKalb, Ill. He is the pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in that northern Illinois city and executive director of missions in the Association.

We all appreciate that he has taken the time from his busy schedule to prepare these devotional sketches. His writings can be characterized by the term "practical Christianity," and they have been of help and challenge to many, we are sure.

Thank you, Pastor Schafer, for sharing these insights with us. May God bless your two areas of service in the kingdom work.

As his successor in writing "According to the Word," we are glad to introduce Pastor Hubert F. DeBoer of Fosston, Minn. He serves no less than five congregations in northern Minnesota, and therefore is also no stranger to work. His willingness to undertake this additional assignment is commended. May the Lord use your writings, Pastor DeBoer, to His glory.

Although mention has been made before, on the WMF page, that Pastor and Mrs. Lars Stalsbroten of Eugene, Ore., are the new writers of the Bible studies for 1967, we take this occasion to welcome them to this task already begun, and to express our appreciation to Mrs. A. L. Hokonson, Faith, S. Dak., for her fine work in writing them this year. We continue to be amazed at how the Lord provides the talents needed in the church.

Finally, gratitude is expressed to Mrs. Sam Endrud, Jr., Oakes, N. Dak., for compiling the index of the *Ambassador* for 1966. She also prepared the indexes for our previous three volumes. Readers will readily see that this, too, is a valuable service and ought not to go unrecognized.

in London, the continuing aftermath of the Second Vatican Council, the spiritual meanderings of Bishop James Pike, the Evangelism Congress in Berlin, the "God is dead" stir, the formation of the Lutheran Council in the U.S.A., the Methodist-Evangelical United Brethren merger, the heart-searching in the churches over the civil rights struggle.

The "God is dead" bubble has pretty well burst. There is some measure of comfort in the knowledge that the majority of American people would not put up with the idea that God is now null and void. There is not so much comfort in knowing that most Americans and Canadians, in and out of the churches, do not want God to interfere noticeably in their lives. He exists by their will and whims, they think.

In the churches the moves toward union go on apace. There are those who see in outward amalgamations of church bodies the gentle, yet Pentecostal, breezes of the Holy Spirit. Only rarely does a church leader of the stature of Methodist Bishop Gerald Kennedy speak out to suggest that mergers do not speak to the real needs of the churches. Of the aforementioned Methodist-EUB merger, he is reported to have expressed doubt that it would "do a single thing for either one of us in spiritual rebirth." If this doubt is legitimate, it ought to be reason for some real soul-searching among those who see the union of church bodies as their one great passion.

On the other hand, the two great evangelism thrusts of the year have come and gone with less-than-hoped-for results. We refer to Billy Graham's crusade in London and the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin. While it is premature to rule out the possibility of a swelling tide of evangelistic fervor yet coming from these events, it doesn't appear likely. We pray that we will be proven wrong.

This year of 1966 draws to a close on a less than optimistic note for the churches of America. This is a time of turmoil, of struggle to find oneself. Increasingly there is talk that the churches may undergo a sifting of membership with a resultant decline as the uncommitted refuse to pay the price that will be

demanding for identification with the church. Some see this sifting as taking place solely on the social issues, others on theological grounds. Still others view the coming criterion of membership as personal dedication to Christ and the forsaking of all that is worldly.

Actually, it ought to be a combination of the three. And we ought to welcome this adjustment because the condition of the churches is not healthy today. The churches are sleek, uncertain, ineffective. The process for renewal or "spiritual rebirth," as Bishop Kennedy called it, will not be painless. It will be accompanied by pangs as of childbirth. The tears will be those of anguish before they become tears of joy. More than likely God will raise up a leader for this rebirth, someone who has not yet come to the fore of world attention.

All of this may be considered sheer improbability by our readers. And granted that much depends on where the world is in God's timetable. There may not be time enough left for this to happen.

But our task is to plan for an immediate future here. And we who pride ourselves in the belief that quickening preaching of the Law and Gospel in the congregation is our first task, should get on with that with increased vigor in the days ahead. Let us trust the power of the Holy Spirit to work through the Word. He will give the increase. Let our first concern be what happens in congregations of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, not of some other Lutheran body, the Methodists, etc. The Lord knows we have need of a great cleansing ourselves.

And let our Christianity be well-rounded. We want it to remain thoroughly pietistic, promoting the separated life—separate in the sense of shunning personal evil, but also involved with others in the sense of caring for *people*, caring what happens to them physically and spiritually. We can preach too much about love, to the neglect of other matters, it is true; but have we loved too much?

God grant, as we bid the old year good-by, that we enter the new year, by His grace, with steadfast purpose to do His will.

ASSOCIATION'S NEWEST WORK IS IN UPPER MICHIGAN

A group of people in the Eben Junction-Chatham area of Upper Michigan, Alger County, have voted to affiliate with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. Lay Pastor Otto Saukerson, who is serving the congregation, reports that on his first visit about 125 persons attended the service. Serv-

ices are held in the town hall at Chatham.

Mr. and Mrs. Saukerson are making their home in Eben Junction.

ADDITIONAL PASTORS VOLUNTEER FOR EVANGELISM

The following three names of pastors in the church are to be added to the list published on November 1. These men, with the others previously listed, are available for

evangelistic work in the Association at the times indicated. They are to be contacted personally, not through the Evangelism Committee.

Hans Tollefson, Hatton, N. Dak.
58240 Any time

Orville T. Olson, Greenbush, Minn.
56726 March or April,

1967, preferably in
northern Minnesota

Gerald F. Mundfrom, Pukwana, S.
Dak. 57370 Any time

Index for Volume IV of the Lutheran Ambassador

ACCORDING TO THE WORD

All on page 2
Numbers 1 to 13 by Rev. R. Snipstead
Numbers 14 to 25 by Rev. Harold R. Schafer

All Things New, 1
A Mind to Work, 9
Bitter Made Sweet, 6
Blessedness of Forgiveness, 4
Blood on Our Hands, 16
Danger of Compromise, 21
Glory of the Cross, 5
God's Purpose in Afflictions, 13
He Calleth His Own, 2
Important Decisions, 14
Is There Room for Christ?, 24
I Will See You Again, 7
Love in Action, 10
Neglected Art, 18
Obedience Is Essential, 19
Over the Threshold, 25
Prescription for Happiness, 12
Sin of Pride, 8
Small But Useful for God, 23
Ten Shekels and a Suit, 20
Thanksgiving, 22
The Answer, 15
Treasure in Earthen Vessels, 3
What About Secret Sin? 11
Wrong Goals, 17

ARTICLES

Another Mary, Swenson, 24, p. 21
Answered Prayer at Christmas, Sand, 24, p. 18
Answer for Skeptics, McIntyre, 2, p. 7
Antiphonies of Christmas, Hokonson, 24, p. 19
Apathetic Christian—His World and His Church, Larson, 3, p. 5
Catechism for Christmas, Rasmussen, 24, p. 15
Christ in You, the Hope of Glory, Stalsbroten, 4, p. 5
Christmas Again, Berg, 24, p. 23
Conquering the Land, Sverdrup, 23, p. 13
Demas, the Modern Man, Hokonson, 13, p. 5
Devil's Chapel by the Church, 9, p. 5
Easter Does Make a Difference, Hautamaki, 7, p. 11
Fair Housing and Foul Hearts, Olson, 19, p. 3
Father, Forgive Them, Huglen, 4, p. 3
Five C's of Confirmation (I), Hokonson, 21, p. 5
Five C's of Confirmation (II), Hokonson, 22, p. 7
God's Kingdom First, Haakenstad, 2, p. 4
Gospels Are True Testimonies Concerning Christ, Mundfrom, 15, p. 3
If I Could Become Like One of Them, 24, p. 23
Is Prayer in Public Schools an Illegal Maneuver? (I), Panoch, 21, p. 3
Is Prayer in Public Schools an Illegal Maneuver? (II), Panoch, 22, p. 13
Joy Unspeakable and Full of Glory, Kilness, 24, p. 3
Just Shall Live by Faith, Huglen, 20, p. 3
Letter from a Wycliffe Translator in the Philippines, Forsberg, 15, p. 6

Let Us Save the Home and Make It Christian, Undseth, 9, p. 15
Let's Take a Look at Bible Camping, Strommen, 13, p. 3
Most Unforgettable Person I've Met, Erickson, 13, p. 13
Our Family's Thanksgiving, Price, 22, p. 5
Our Son's Military Commitment, Thomas, 23, p. 4
Personal Work, Rydbeck, 20, p. 6
Portrait of a Pastor, Hokonson, 11, p. 5
Resurrection, Graham, 7, p. 3
Teen Drug Addiction (II), Ose, 6, p. 3
Teen Murder Trial (I), Ose, 5, p. 3
Teen Revolt (III), Ose, 7, p. 5
Ten Days a Christian, Hokonson, 1, p. 4
To Be Served—Or to Serve, Mohagen, 5, p. 5
Unexpected, McCarlson, 24, p. 10
Under the Law—The Result, Gjesfjeld, 4, p. 4
Value of Being Old-Fashioned, Coleman, 3, p. 7
Victory of Victories, Editor of *Christianity Today*, 6, p. 5
What Does "All for Jesus" Mean in 1966? Cook, 14, p. 3
What Does Christmas Mean to You? Ness, 24, p. 17
What to Do in a Crisis, Mooneyham, 18, p. 5
World Evangelism or World Revolution? Henry, 18, p. 3
(Also see "Features")

EDITORIALS

All by the Editor, Rev. Raynard Huglen

And Pentecost, 11, p. 10
And Sitteth on the Right Hand of God the Father Almighty, 14, p. 9
Annual Conference Approaches, 9, p. 9
Another New Hymnbook? 23, p. 9
Article on Fair Housing, 19, p. 10
Association Lutherans Going "Home," 11, p. 9
Bennett Defends God, 8, p. 9
Bible Conference Next Month, 2, p. 9
Bible School, 8, p. 9
Bible School to Start, 17, p. 9
Bible's Year, 23, p. 9
Big Question, 22, p. 9
Bishop's Search Fails, 5, p. 9
Born of the Virgin Mary, 7, p. 9
Call to Evangelism, 18, p. 10
Centerville Awakening, 5, p. 10
Christmas Greetings, 24, p. 9
Communion of Saints, 18, p. 9
Completing Three Years, 3, p. 9
Conceived by the Holy Ghost, 6, p. 9
Coteau in Winter, 2, p. 10
Creeds, 1, p. 9
Cross and the Switchblade, 5, p. 10
Dead and Buried, 10, p. 9
Did We Measure Up? 25, p. 9
Dissidence at St. John's, 2, p. 9
Dr. J. A. Aasgaard, 2, p. 10
Family Bible Camp, 15, p. 9
February's Contribution, 3, p. 10
Final Notes on Summer, 18, p. 10
From Thence He Shall Come to Judge the Quick and the Dead, 15, p. 9
Good Fellowship at Willmar, 5, p. 9

Good News, 24, p. 9
 Good Time Was Had, 17, p. 9
 Greetings From Thief River Falls, 12, p. 10
 He Ascended into Heaven, 13, p. 9
 He Descended into Hell, 11, p. 9
 High Cost of Living, 6, p. 9
 Holy Christian Church, 17, p. 9
 I Believe in God, 1, p. 9
 I Believe in God-Almighty, 3, p. 9
 I Believe in God the Father, 2, p. 9
 I Believe in Jesus Christ, His Only Son, Our Lord, 5, p. 9
 I Believe in the Forgiveness of Sins, 19, p. 9
 I Believe in the Holy Spirit, 16, p. 9
 I Believe in the Resurrection of the Body, 20, p. 9
 Is the Matter Covered? 12, p. 9
 Last Call for Christmas, 21, p. 10
 Lent's Meaning, 4, p. 10
 Let's Get Ballots, 14, p. 9
 Let Us Give Thanks, 22, p. 9
 Let Us Remember, 11, p. 10
 LFC Name Denied, 7, p. 10
 Life Everlasting, 21, p. 9
 Looking to Next Year, 14, p. 10
 Lord's Supper and Forgiveness, 21, p. 9
 Maker of Heaven and Earth, 4, p. 9
 Ministers and Calls, 16, p. 9
 Mixed Marriage Rules Relaxed? 7, p. 10
 New Editors for WMF, LLF, 18, p. 13
 No Hallesby Decline, 6, p. 9
 Of Unusual Interest, 13, p. 10
 One of Our Dangers, 16, p. 9
 Optimism of Steinbeck and Nichols, 18, p. 9
 Our Biggest Problems, 10, p. 9
 Pastoral Shortage, 3, p. 9
 Pastor Anker G. Dahle, 13, p. 10
 Perennial Problem, 11, p. 9
 Pray for London, 11, p. 9
 Prepare for Christmas, 1, p. 10
 Pulse Quickens, 10, p. 10
 Reason for Optimism, 13, p. 9
 Reformation Anniversary Next Year, 20, p. 9
 Resurrected Convention, 13, p. 9
 Rules for Work, 10, p. 10
 Rules for Work, 14, p. 9
 Shed No Tears, 11, p. 10
 Spring of Souls, 7, p. 9
 Suffered Under Pontius Pilate, 8, p. 9
 Sunday Schools to Start, 16, p. 10
 Support Bible Camping, 12, p. 10
 Thanks, Pastor Snipstead, 13, p. 10
 Thank You, Pastor Schafer, 25, p. 9
 That Library Offering, 16, p. 10
 That's What He Said, 19, p. 9
 Third Day He Rose Again from the Dead, 12, p. 9
 This and That, 5, p. 10
 This Is a New Year, 1, p. 9
 Tithes and Offerings Will Be Accepted, 20, p. 9
 Two Reminders, 15, p. 9
 Was Crucified, 9, p. 9
 What Differences Are Allowable? 4, p. 9
 While We Are At It, 4, p. 10
 Widened Fellowship, 15, p. 9
 Year in Review, 25, p. 9
 Year of the Bible, 9, p. 9

FEATURES

Abercrombie Congregation to Note Anniversary, 15, p. 16
 Additional Pastors Volunteer for Evangelism, 25, p. 9
 Alvin Grothes Have New Address, 14, p. 8
 Annual Conference of AFLC, 10, p. 3
 Annual Convention of WMF of AFLC, 10, p. 14

Apostles' Creed, 1, p. 3
 Arthur Engelsgaard Passes, 18, p. 7
 Association Bible School to Open in Minneapolis Next Month, 16, p. 3
 Association's Newest Work is in Upper Michigan, 25, p. 9
 Athanasian Creed, 3, p. 3
 Bible Camp Held at Lake Park, Minnesota, 16, p. 4
 Bishop Charged with Heresy, Thorkelson, 20, p. 10
 Book Review, Huglen, 5, p. 6
 Charges Denied, Co-ordinating Committee and Board of Trustees, 5, p. 14
 Chief Actions of 1966 Annual Conference, 14, p. 6
 Christmas Issue, 20, p. 13
 Church Influence on Rise in National Life, NLC Told, 4, p. 13
 Courtesy, from *The Friend*, 16, p. 14
 District Instructors' Training Session Set for September, 16, p. 13
 District Reformation Service Held in Hatton, Haugen, 1, p. 14
 Does It Make Any Difference? Stalsbroten, 11, p. 4
 Dr. J. A. Aasgaard, 2, p. 13
 Eastern N. Dak. District to Hold 2nd Annual Bible Conference, 5, p. 13
 Editor Travels to Cleveland, 23, p. 8
 Evangelism. Dahle, 19, p. 7
 Evangelism Meetings Were Held at Pukwana, Mundfrom, 22, p. 8
 Family Bible Camp at Alexandria, 16, p. 14
 Family Bible Camp Dates Set for 1967, 23, p. 13
 Fly in the Ointment, 19, p. 5
 For the Meg of Your Life, Jim, Vajda, 18, p. 6
 Fourth Annual Winter Bible Conference Held in Willmar, 5, p. 7
 Fourth Family Camp Conducted at Alexandria in August, 17, p. 3
 Fred Paulson Passed Away, 13, p. 4
 Free Lutheran Seminary and Association Bible School Schedules, 20, p. 5
 God Is Silent, Stalsbroten, 8, p. 5
 God's Spirit Moves, Schafer, 19, p. 6
 God's Word for a New Age, 23, p. 11
 Good News from Galilee Lutheran Bible Camp, Stalsbroten, 15, p. 5
 Harvest Festival Held in Thief River Falls, 23, p. 14
 Hauge Federation Slates Winter Conference in February, 3, p. 8
 Holy Day Preparation, Kallevig, 22, p. 4
 "I'll Always Love You," Vaughn, 12, p. 5
 Index for Volume IV, 25, p. 11
 In Memory of Mrs. Gene Sundby, Olson, 2, p. 11
 Introducing Our Seminary Seniors, Gunderson, 25, p. 3
 It Happened in a Coffee Shop, Sibley, 12, p. 8
 It Never Stops, Strand, 24, p. 5
 Kindness Pays Off, Schafer, 2, p. 12
 Kindness Toward God, Persson, 19, p. 10
 Kind of a Mother Ronnie Needs, Rhodes, 9, p. 3
 Jenny Lind Lived Her Christianity, Doermann, 18, p. 8
 Lame Man at the King's Table, Hoppe, 19, p. 11
 LEM Plans 30th Midwinter Conference This Month, 1, p. 10
 Lutherans Meet in South Minneapolis, 13, p. 4
 Merger Foes Denied Use of LFC Name, Thorkelson, 7, p. 16
 Missionaries' Birthdays, 6, p. 8
 Mrs. Abel Had Surgery, 1, p. 6
 Mrs. Bernt Overgaard, 8, p. 13
 Mrs. Carda Land, 2, p. 12
 Mrs. Grothe Confined to Bed, 4, p. 12
 New Camp Site Purchased, 6, p. 14
 Nicene Creed, 2, p. 3
 Northern Minnesota District to Hold Camp at Lake Bronson, 12, p. 4
 "Occupy Till I Come," Ronning, 2, p. 14
 Pastor and Mrs. Ostby Honored in Willmar, 16, p. 4
 Pastor O. I. Hustoft, 5, p. 12

Pastors Volunteer for Evangelism, Dahle, 2, p. 11
 Prayer Requests, Abel, 3, p. 14
 Program Listed for Association Winter Bible Conference, 3, p. 14
 Quotations About the Resurrection, 7, p. 15
 Reflections, 25, p. 4
 Report of Free Lutheran Conference, Olson, 18, p. 14
 Report of Special Committee on Annual Conference Committee Set-Up, 10, p. 8
 Resolutions Committees for the Annual Conference, 1967, 17, p. 13
 Revised Rules for Work, Soberg, Olson, Hanson, 9, p. 8
 Rev. Anker Dahle Passed Away, 12, p. 16
 Rev. George Mellby, 16, p. 8
 Rev. Homer M. Johnson, 23, p. 6
 Rev. J. A. Peterson, 2, p. 13
 Rev. J. Strand Re-elected Head of the Association, 13, p. 3
 Rev. Viggo S. Dahle, 17, p. 14
 Scenes from Annual Conference, 14, p. 14
 Scenes from Family Camp, 17, p. 6
 Seminary Decision, 3, p. 14
 Seminary Enrollment, 8, p. 14
 Seminary Note, 4, p. 12
 Skeptical But Still Searching, Thompson, 7, p. 8
 Some Observations Out of an Illness Experience, Huglen, 8, p. 4
 South Dakota District Sets Convention Dates, 4, p. 12
 Summary of President's Message to Annual Conference, 1966, Strand, 13, p. 8
 Tent Meetings Held in Newfolden Recently, 17, p. 13
 Testimonies From Our Bible School Students, Ferguson, Peterson, 25, p. 3
The Lutheran Ambassador Schedule for 1967, 25, p. 7
 To the Babe of Bethlehem, Newman, 24, p. 23
 Trucks and People Out of Control, Kuhnle, 21, p. 14
 Twenty Tests for Christian Leadership, 20, p. 4
 Welcomes to Thief River Falls, Haakenstad, Strand, 11, p. 3
 Youth Camp Set Near Fargo, 12, p. 6
 (Also see "Articles")

HOME MISSIONS

Pastor Dynneson Writes of the Building Project in Nogales, 19, p. 12
 Progress in Home Missions, Schafer, 4, p. 12
 Visit in Nogales, Jacobson, 6, p. 6

LUTHER LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

Numbers 1 to 18 Edited by Robert Lee
 Numbers 19 to 25 Edited by Jane Thompson

Announcement of Fourth Annual Convention, 10, p. 8
 An Open Letter to the Easter Bunny, 6, p. 14
 Christmas Spirit, 24, p. 8
 Don't Take a Year at Bible School! Nofer, 16, p. 8
 Faith Mission Accomplished, McC Carlson, 17, p. 7
 Gospel Team for Your Church, Talbot, 1, p. 13
 Have You Ever Looked at Missions Mathematically? Stone, 17, p. 7
 Hegland Church Was Scene of Northern Minnesota LL Rally, Kjersten, 11, p. 11
 Introduction, 19, p. 8
 Life's Choice (Program Suggestion), Rieth, 4, p. 11
 Looking Ahead to Kalispell, 20, p. 8
 News from Grafton, N. Dak., 10, p. 8
 North Central District Conference, 19, p. 8
 "Operation Andrew," 20, p. 8
 Quiet Time, 23, p. 6
 S. Dak Leaguers Met at Faith for Annual Conference, Dalager, 12, p. 6
 Special Announcement, Skramstad, 14, p. 8
 Tired of Living? 25, p. 5
 West Coast Leaguers Met in Astoria, Mickelsen, 11, p. 11

Would You Believe? 21, p. 8
 Youth Camp Set Near Fargo, 12, p. 6

PARISH ED

Edited by Mrs. David C. Hanson

Behold My Hands, 5, p. 8
 Central Minnesota Sunday School Workshop, Aasness, 1, p. 14
 Feast of Tabernacles, 22, p. 3
 How Shall We Know Him? 7, p. 7
 Junior Mission Bands, 8, p. 6
 Letter from David Abel, 23, p. 12
 Letter to David Abel, 23, p. 12
 Mission News, 23, p. 12
 Music in Bible School, 11, p. 8
 Parents Working with the Sunday School, Miller, 15, p. 8
 Tract Mission in Sunday School, 16, p. 6
 Where Do We Go from Here? Hanson, 4, p. 8
 Which of Them Will Love Him More? 24, p. 6

POEMS

A Pastor's Desk, Rasmussen, 3, p. 16
 As Seeing the Invisible, Ose, 24, p. 11
 Beautiful Snow, 23, p. 3
 Bible—Yet It Lives, Johnson, 18, p. 14
 Bird With a Broken Pinion, Butterworth, 19, p. 6
 Builder, Anonymous, 20, p. 7
 "But When He Saw the Wind Boisterous," Anonymous, 18, p. 6
 Christmas, Dahle, 24, p. 22
 Christmas Joy, Battleson, 24, p. 16
 First Christmas, Moline, 24, p. 16
 God Closed a Door, Moline, 21, p. 6
 God's Will for Us, Johnson, 19, p. 13
 Greatest Opportunity, Anonymous, 13, p. 14
 Hallelujah! Jesus Lives, Garve, 7, p. 13
 Harvest, Norum, 17, p. 5
 Harvest Prayer, Moline, 22, p. 8
 His Name Is at the Top, 24, p. 24
 Inasmuch, 23, p. 14
 "In Loving Memory of Ruby," Tollefson, 2, p. 11
 In the "Body of Christ," Rasmussen, 18, p. 4
 Just As You Are, Johnson, 16, p. 14
 Let Us Be Kind, Anonymous, 2, p. 14
 Morning Prayer, 2, p. 16
 Mother's Love, Anonymous, 9, p. 10
 My Daily Need, Dahle, 1, p. 6
 My Prayer, Johnson, 13, p. 12
 My Prayer, Rasmussen, 21, p. 14
 My Risen Lord, Anonymous, 7, p. 13
 New Little Girl in Heaven, 21, p. 13
 O Bread of Life from Heaven, Anonymous, 4, p. 6
 O God of Bethel, by Whose Hand, Doddridge, 5, p. 12
 One Night Before Christmas, Johnson, 24, p. 21
 One Winter Day, Moline, 24, p. 21
 Open My Eyes, Johnson, 15, p. 13
 O Thou Before Whose Presence, Stone, 5, p. 6
 Poem for Christmas, Dyrud, 24, p. 16
 Rejoice—Christ Lives, Johnson, 8, p. 5
 Savior, When We Call, O Hear Us, 3, p. 10
 She Hath Done What She Could, Norum, 19, p. 13
 These Are Not Lost, Anonymous, 13, p. 14
 This Will of Mine, Anonymous, 8, p. 10
 Thoughts of a Mother, Johnson, 24, p. 16
 Thou to Whom the Sick and Dying, Lindeman, 4, p. 7
 Time for Prayer, Anonymous, 11, p. 4
 To Thee, O Lord, Our Hearts We Raise, Dix, 22, p. 14
 'Twas on That Dark, That Doleful Night, Watts, 8, p. 16
 Way to Calvary Leadeth, Liander, 6, p. 10
 We Hail Thee, Lord, Thy Church's Rock, Zinzendorf, 20, p. 13
 Welcome to Pastor Hautamaki, Hampen, 3, p. 8
 Within the Stable Cold, Hakes, 24, p. 8

STEWARDSHIP

Real Surprise, Dahle, 16, p. 5
Thank You! Olson, 9, p. 14
The Proof Was There, Strand, 8, p. 13

WOMEN FOR CHRIST

Annual Convention of WMF, AFLC, 10, p. 14
Central Minnesota Women Met at Henning, Aasness, 13, p. 7
Christmas Lights, Presteng, 24, p. 17
Culbertson Women Were Hostesses to Spring Workshop, Gravaard, 10, p. 13
Dalton Church Hosts WMF Meeting, Aasness, 1, p. 7
From Montana to Arizona, Dynneson, 11, p. 7
Love to Our Senior Citizens, Nelson, 1, p. 7
Minneapolis District Fall Rally Held in Wisconsin, Bursheim, 25, p. 6
North Central Minnesota WMF Meeting, 6, p. 8
Northern Minnesota District WMF Met at Newfolden, Dalager, 1, p. 8
Note of Thanks, Erickson, 20, p. 13
Pastor's Wife Given Honorary Membership, 21, p. 7
Pauli Church Hosts Northern Minnesota WMF Convention, Dalager, 25, p. 6
Report—1965, Konsterlie, 8, p. 7
S. Dak. District WMF Convention, Jensen, 23, p. 7
Second of Eight Daughters, Dynneson, 11, p. 7
Thanksgiving, Thorsbakken, 22, p. 11
Thank You for Your Thoughtfulness, Grothe, 8, p. 7
West Coast District WMF Met at Blaine, Norgaard, 14, p. 13
West Coast District WMF Rally, Nelson, 22, p. 11
Winter Retreat, Enger, 6, p. 7
WMF Convention Set for Thief River Falls, 10, p. 13

WMF Held Annual Conference in Thief River Falls, 14, p. 13
WMF Rally in Tioga, N. Dak., Gravaard, 21, p. 7

WMF BIBLE STUDIES

All by Mrs. A. L. Hokonson unless designated otherwise

"A Singing Church," 16, p. 11
"Beautiful Savior," 14, p. 11
Call for Reapers, 10, p. 11
City of Corinth, Stalsbrotten, 24, p. 13
Easter Joy, 6, p. 11
God, Our Eternal Home, 20, p. 11
"I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord," 18, p. 11
"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling," 1, p. 11
"Our Stewardship of Life and Service," 12, p. 11
Redemption Story in a Hymn, 3, p. 11
Regarding Mothers, 8, p. 11

WORLD MISSIONS

Bible Camp in Brazil, Abel, 11, p. 12
Called to Follow, 17, p. 11
Christmas Greetings from Brazil, Grothe, 24, p. 12
Freed in Prison, Abel, 16, p. 7
Hope Maketh Not Ashamed, Abel, 8, p. 3
How We Spent Christmas, Grothe, 2, p. 6
"O Brasileiro" (The Brazilian), Grothe, 9, p. 12
Prayer Needs of Missionaries, Schafer, 16, p. 7
"Queimando Lata," Abel, 1, p. 5
Small Greatness, Abel, 25, p. 15
"The Place of Our Habitation," Abel, 21, p. 12
Visions of Victory in Brazil, Abel, 15, p. 12

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A few weeks ago I had the privilege of visiting at the Seminary and Bible School of our Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. I enjoyed it very much. I was very much blessed and inspired while attending classes and hearing the singing.

I thought of how privileged we are to have a place like this where our young people can come to prepare themselves for service in the kingdom of God. I would suggest to anyone who happens to be in the Cities to take time to visit our school.

This visit brought my memory back to 1926 when I saw myself as the one lost lamb in a world of darkness, without any hope. The Shepherd found me and showed me how He had paid for all my sin on the cross. I accepted Him as my personal Savior and was admitted into the fold of the redeemed.

That fall my sister suggested that I attend Bible school. I enrolled in the Bible school at Willmar, Minn.

There were about thirteen in the class. Miss (Ida) Jackson and Rev. (B. P.) Farness were the teachers. I received a great blessing, which has remained with me up to the present time. It was very important for me at that time in my life to receive nourishment for my soul.

I think it is very important that we promote the work of our seminary and Bible school throughout our congregations. It is only by sharing of our means and encouraging our young people to attend our school that it will go forward and in return become a blessing to our congregations.

I feel that the work of our school has not been promoted enough through our church paper.

Even Ose

Thief River Falls, Minn.

I have long desired to express my appreciation to the men who, so to speak, gathered up the remnants of the Lutheran Free Church and organized the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (they were denied the use of the name).

The work for free and living congregations is surely needed today, as it was in the 1890's . . . if not more so.

Through the 70 to 80 years of the Lutheran Free Church nobody, to my knowledge, tried to prove that the Principles of the Lutheran Free Church were not in accord with the Word of God.

God has in a wonderful way blessed the Association through many difficulties, and it behooves all those who have the Lutheran Free Church at heart to support the Association both with prayer and means, in order that our seminary and Bible school may have what it takes to continue and grow.

God's way is not an easy way, neither for the congregation nor for the pastor, as each one of us knows as an individual Christian. As the Norwegian songwriter states: "En smerternes vei det er, men den veien til Himlen baar," i.e., "A painful way it is, but it leads to eternal bliss."

Paul Bjornstad
Duluth, Minnesota



SMALL GREATNESS

It was only a baby's head, but it was the God-head bodily;
 It was only an infant form, but it was the Incarnate Son;
 It was only a simple manger, but it cradled the Savior;
 It was only a misty flame, but it gave light to the first Christmas.

"God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the mighty" (I Cor. 1:27). "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:17).

With these few lines and precious verses we greet you from Brazil. We oldsters of the family will miss your white Christmas, but the children have seen so few that they probably recollect Christmas as a time of hot weather or rain. So it is out here; we have your Fourth of July weather at Christmastime.

There is much to praise the Lord for as we think of our Christmas here this year and cast a glance back over the year. Last year, due to Ruby's unexpected sickness and operation, we had to largely curtail our program and Christmas activities, but this year, by His grace, we are planning programs in three churches. For many this will be the first time they have attended or participated in an evangelical Christmas program. I'm sure that many will be like wide-eyed children as they hear the pieces, songs, poems or plays presented by simple Brazilian believers and their children.

Christmas in the large cities of Brazil is pretty much commercialized as it is back home, but here in the interior of the country it is satisfying not to see much of this. Most families simply exchange presents between parents and children who are still at home. Brazil is experiencing great unemployment and an inflation crisis now, so many are living on the borderline of poverty and will be very happy if they are able to buy some needed item of personal clothing for Christmas.

The greatest gift of Christmas is free—God's great salvation won by His manger Son. This is the great gift it is our privilege to offer to this nation and these people. It is their greatest need.

We thank you for your gifts and prayers this past year which have enabled us as your Association missionaries to carry on in this harvest field. May His mercy make yours a mighty fine Christmas.

—Pastor and Mrs. Abel
 David, Jonathan, Paul,
 Deborah, Lydia, Nathaniel,
 and Priscilla

Women for Christ

[Continued from page 6]

of Greenbush favored the audience with a duet. Miss Florence Brede-son, Thief River Falls, told how much she had enjoyed having the L. C. Dynnesons at her home during the Annual Conference last June.

Mrs. Jenson and Mrs. Holm sang a duet. Mrs. O. K. Ose, past national president, spoke on the con-

vention theme. She pointed out the importance of obedience on the narrow way. The old nature will seek to prevent this and the only way to thwart the devil is by the Word of God. It is very necessary to be alone with God each day.

A double duet from Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Thief River Falls sang before an offering was received. The theme song was sung by the audience, "A Charge To Keep Have I." Pastor Melvin Walla of Thief River Falls made some closing remarks and pronounced the benediction.

Eighty-seven persons were registered for the day.

Mrs. Bernhard Dalager
 Secretary

News of the Churches

[Continued from page 8]

Rev. John P. Strand, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, brought a heart-searching message from God's Word. Special music was provided by the Junior and Senior choirs, under the direction of student pastor Francis Monseth.

Following the noon meal, served by the ladies of the congregation, the afternoon service began at 2:30. The message was given by Pastor Julius Hermunslie, a son of the congregation. Considerable remodeling had been completed, including the erection of a new steeple and paneling of the walls in the lower auditorium. A cross for the steeple, piano, and hymn books had been donated. A dedication service was conducted by President Strand. The afternoon service concluded with a recognition of former confirmands in attendance.

The closing service of the day was an evening Luther League meeting. The program began with a hymn sing. The message was given by student pastor Francis Monseth.

It was a most blessed and memorable day for all who attended the anniversary services.

—Corr.

ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS

Treasurer's Progress Report

February 1, 1966, to November 30, 1966

	Proposed Budget (for this period)	Total Received
General Fund	\$27,500.00	\$25,196.75
Seminary and Bible School	22,500.00	18,190.80
Missions	29,000.00	31,314.57
Publications and Parish Education	3,083.33*	1,755.88*
Stewardship Committee	833.33	5.00*
Youth Committee	166.66	25.00
Totals	\$83,083.32*	\$76,488.00*

Praise Program receipts for this period — \$7,233.40

Library offering receipts to date — \$2,734.44

*These figures include the subsidy to Publications and Parish Education by the Women's Missionary Federation.

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR
 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
 Minneapolis, Minn. 55427

Second-class postage
 paid at Minneapolis, Minn.

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