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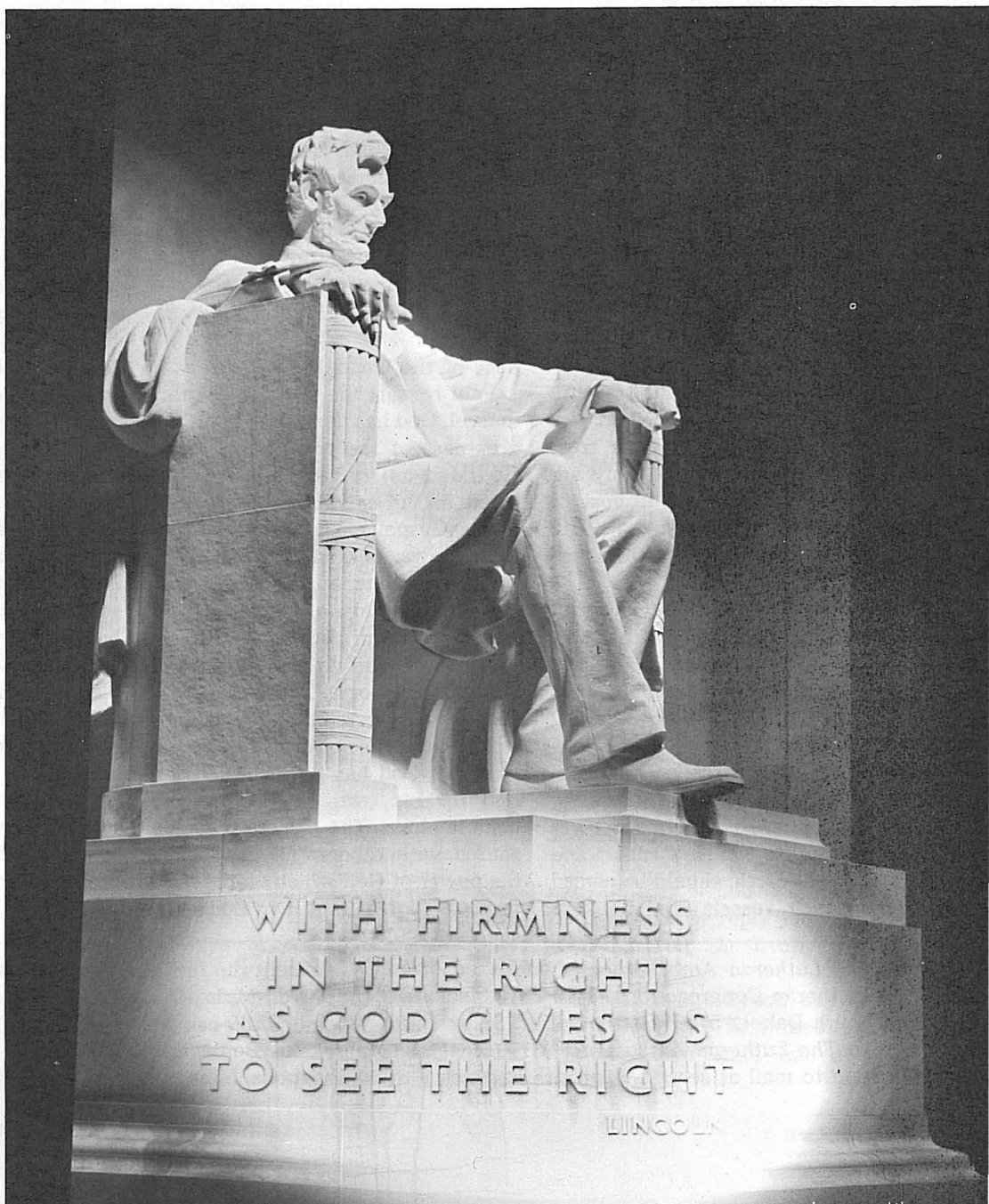
Vol. 4

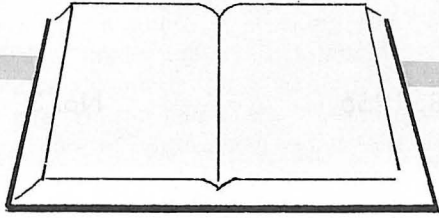
February 8, 1966

No. 3

LUTHERAN

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According to the Word

TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us” (II Cor. 4:7).

How often we are brought to the place where we must stop and marvel at God’s ways. Surely they are far beyond our comprehension. But when we find in the Word thoughts that are not reasonable to human thinking, we accept them and praise God for them.

Paul speaks about a treasure that God has placed in earthen vessels. Men usually place their treasures where they will be only admired and handled with utmost of care. But what has God done? He has placed treasure in earthen vessels.

As we read the context we find that the treasure spoken of is God’s shining into our hearts by faith and filling us with His glorious grace in Jesus Christ. The astonishing thing is that such a divine treasure, God’s own presence of grace, the ultimate of what is heavenly, that which is absolutely priceless and beyond the value of rubies and diamonds of earth, should be placed into earthen vessels, and be kept

in them so long.

You and I, dear reader, are the earthen vessels, the houses of clay in which God has chosen to dwell, and manifest His glory. Clay vessels are cheap, utterly common, the least valued, used with small care, and bound to break sooner or later.

But this is God’s way. He even sent His own Son into human flesh, permitted Him to be born in a stable, in the lowliest of surroundings, and yet in Him “dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

Paul reveals the purpose for this marvel. God has done this, that “the greatness of the power may be of God, and not of us.” God is interested in the salvation of souls. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ that is the power of God unto salvation. It is the power of His grace that renews the image of God in a man, and transforms his life. This is God’s work, and no man dare claim any of the glory. The believer is rich in the blessings of salvation which have been bestowed upon him. But God has not thus blessed him for his own enjoyment and benefit alone. The Gospel must be shared with others. The Gospel is the power of God which works “life in you” (4:12), and it is God’s de-

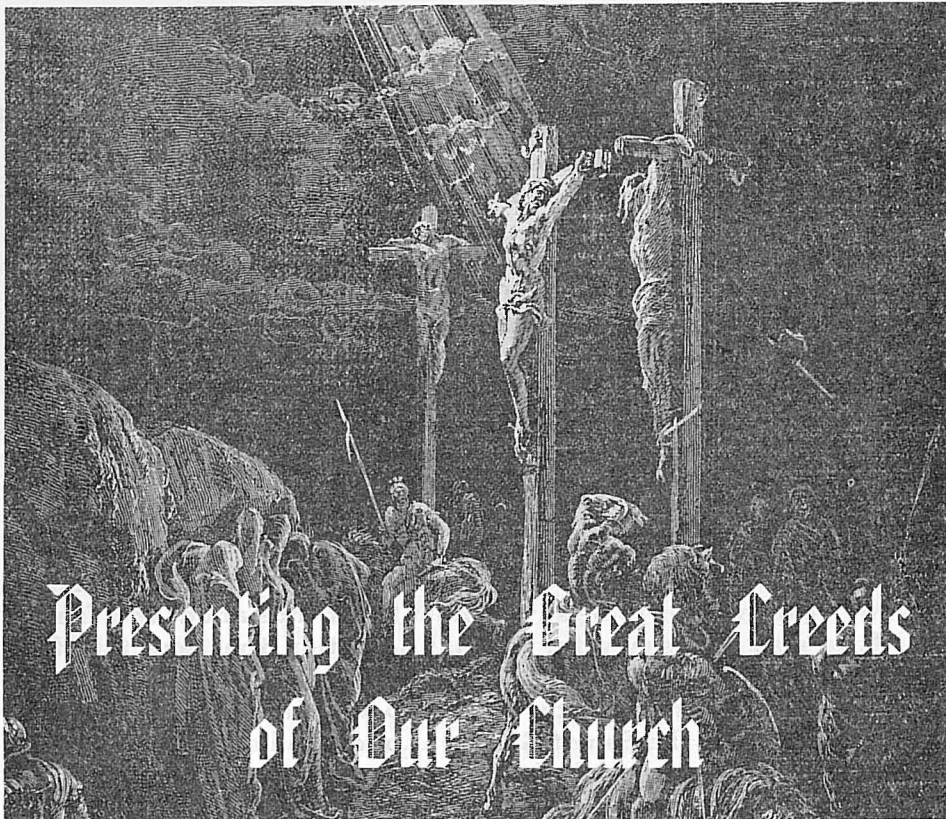
sire that the power of this gospel may be permitted to multiply “grace” in many (4:15) as we become vessels for Him to use. This is to be to the glory of His name.

For this reason He placed the great treasure into such poor earthen vessels. We are worthless and fragile in ourselves. If He did not protect us during the many shocks we receive we would soon be broken into many pieces. As it is we endure only for a time. But the treasure is in us, and God desires to use each child of His for the operation of His wondrous power.

The next time you begin to bewail your human weakness, look at this verse. Remember that God delights to use your littleness. It is made clear beyond the shadow of a doubt that the source of our power is from God and not from ourselves. We are only earthen vessels, but we were made by the all-wise Potter. Let us cease from any complaining, and marvel that He is willing to manifest the excellency of His power in us. Let us joyfully accept our limitations with an expectant faith, looking to God to transform vessels of clay into instruments for the accomplishment of His glorious purpose.

R. Snipstead

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TODAY: The Athanasian Creed

Whoever wishes to be saved must, above all else, hold the true Christian faith. Whoever does not keep it whole and undefiled will without doubt perish for eternity.

This is the true Christian faith, that we worship one God in three persons and three persons in one God without confusing the persons or dividing the divine substance.

For the Father is one person, the Son is another, and the Holy Spirit is still another,

but there is one Godhead of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, equal in glory and coequal in majesty.

What the Father is, that is the Son and that is the Holy Spirit: the Father is uncreated, the Son is uncreated, the Holy Spirit is uncreated;

the Father is unlimited, the Son is unlimited, the Holy Spirit is unlimited;

the Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Spirit is eternal;

and yet they are not three eternals but one eternal, just as there are not three who are uncreated and who are unlimited, but there is one who is uncreated and unlimited.

Likewise the Father is almighty, the Son is almighty, the Holy Spirit is almighty,

and yet there are not three who are almighty but there is one who is almighty.

So the Father is God, the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God, and yet they are not three Gods but one God.

So the Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, the Holy Spirit is Lord,

and yet they are not three Lords but one Lord.

For just as we are compelled by Christian truth to acknowledge each person by himself to be God and Lord,

so we are forbidden by the Christian religion to say that there are three Gods and three Lords.

The Father was neither made nor created nor begotten by anybody.

The Son was not made or created, but was begotten by the Father.

The Holy Spirit was not made or begotten, but proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Accordingly there is one Father and not three Fathers, one Son and not three Sons, one Holy Spirit and not three Holy Spirits.

And among these three persons none is before or after another, none is greater or less than another,

but all three persons are coequal and coeternal, and accordingly, as has been stated above, three persons are to be worshiped in one Godhead and one God is to be worshiped in three persons.

Whoever wishes to be saved must think thus about the Trinity.

It is also necessary for eternal salvation that one faithfully believe that our Lord Jesus Christ became man,

for this is the right faith, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is at once God and man:

he is God, begotten before the ages of the substance of the Father, and he is man, born in the world of the substance of his mother,

perfect God and perfect man, with reasonable soul and human flesh,

equal to the Father with respect to his Godhead and inferior to the Father in respect to his manhood.

Although he is God and man, he is not two Christs but one Christ:

one, that is to say, not by changing the Godhead into flesh but by taking on the humanity into God,

one, indeed, not by confusion of substance but by unity in one person.

For just as the reasonable soul and the flesh are one man, so God and man are one Christ,

who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose from the dead,

ascended into heaven, is seated on the right hand of the Father, whence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

At his coming all men shall rise with their bodies and give an account of their own deeds.

Those who have done good will enter eternal life, and those who have done evil will go into everlasting fire.

This is the true Christian faith. Unless a man believe this firmly and faithfully, he cannot be saved.

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HISTORY: It is not known who wrote the Athanasian Creed, but it is quite certain that it did not come from the pen of Athanasius, a theologian of the fourth century. The time of composition can quite probably be placed in the fifth or sixth centuries. The Creed is of western origin. The Athanasian Creed is sometimes called QUICUNQUE VULT, from its opening two words in Latin.

The Apathetic Christian--

His World and His Church

by Elmer C. Larson
Portland, Ore.

Rev. 3:16

THIS is by no means the last nor definitive word on stewardship. Being considered is merely one facet or aspect of this broad subject, with emphasis on the negative results of unfaithful stewardship as it affects the secular and sacred environment in which we live. If the wordage used seems harsh or tarty, may it rather be considered a needed up-dating of the language used in dealing with sin, calling evil by its true name, inherent in its birthright, instead of toning it down by the use of sugar-coated words and honeyed phrases. We are so prone to excuse, justify, cover up and sweep under the rug that which we would rather not face; so let's pull the rug out from under our stewardship feet and see if there aren't some "sleepers" that should be aired with the Monday morning wash.

The word to be emphasized is "apathy"—apathy, this indifference, this unconcern, the lack of feeling, anxiety or definite commitment about anything, good or bad, being satisfied with the status quo and unwilling to upset the apple cart.

It seems that apathy, this "do nothing about it" atmosphere, has an important bearing on the fulfillment of our secular and Christian stewardship and that the re-

lationship between apathy and the moral barometer of the world, and between apathy and the spiritual barometer of the Christian and his church, should be top-priority concern, and that we should cease, as a nation and as individuals, to white-wash the nauseating shortcomings of the human family and give this relationship an eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation.

Many new phrases have been coined to describe the era in which we live. We read and hear often the term "affluent society," which is supposed to mean that, whereas years ago we were merely up to the top of our button shoes in salt-pork and home-made syrup, we are now, supposedly, up to the top of our Beatle haircuts in whipping cream and honey. It also means that the gross national product of the United States exceeds that of any other country. The term "affluent society" has yet another connotation, meaning also that God has blessed the brain and brawn of America with a deluge of the good and necessary material things of life plus luxuries of every kind to satisfy man's hunger for material things.

This may all be to the credit side of the economic ledger of Americana. However, this affluence, this plenty, this abundance also finds its way into the debit side of the ledger. Often, prosperity fosters lukewarmness and neglect regarding the vital issues of life,

secular and sacred, on a local and national level, matters that should be the "for keeps" concern of every citizen, and certainly, all church people. Many, in all walks of life, have become victims of this lackadaisical outlook on life and thus helped to make very evident a sick and uneasy world, a world gagging on its own crud, a world, mind you, fearful and frightened of its own children. Now the tragic fact that apathy, this creeping, crippling, cancer, has helped to make a spiritual pauper of many churches throughout the world, is ample evidence of the vulnerability also of church people to this attitude of listlessness to the critical areas of life.

Being flush with the necessities, luxuries and trivia of life, we suddenly become ten-feet tall with a feeling of independence, self-sufficiency and self-righteousness, with less need, dependence and reliance upon God. The attitude toward the ensuing challenge and responsibility, therefore, becomes passive, dull and uninteresting. And what are the results?—a world of unpalatable morals and a church haunted by spiritual and financial poverty. Is the problem a lack of people or money, or is the crux of the tragedy a problem of apathetic hearts? The horn of plenty is to many people a sedative and tranquilizer clouding the ideal of clean, honest citizenship and perverting spiritual horizons. As Christians we must

shoulder some of the blame for what our indifference has done, not only to God's kingdom but also the facade America presents to the world.

There are many besetting evils in our day that are as running boils and open sores on our national complexion and all should be prayerfully concerned about the social complacency and a desire not to "rock the boat."

In mentioning a few of these abominations of which everyone is more or less aware, I'm not so sure but what they read like a Hollywood news release, where immorality is robed in elegance and sophistication, or a page from the history books of fallen Sodoms and Gomorrahs, which ceased to exist because God could no longer stomach the stench of their evil doings.

For instance, consider the emasculation of the Gospel. The Gospel is being viciously attacked by friend and foe alike. It has been amputated, added unto, scorned, ridiculed, transfused, misquoted, misinterpreted. It has been put through the most minute sieve of the twentieth century theological meat-grinder and been submerged in all sorts of man-made formulas in an effort to dilute and water-down its message of salvation. Nevertheless, the stream of royal blood inherent in it from the first of Genesis to the end of Revelation just won't fade or wash out because it is divine coloring, not a synthetic or man-made dye.

It would be fine if all the tigers were in the gas tanks of our automobiles, but, unfortunately, the most vicious ones are on the loose, prowling on society in many forms and shapes and so our list of evils continues: the enthronement of sex and its escalation to near national status, increased lewdness, unabashed immorality, apparently without apology or remorse, equating promiscuity with popularity and social acceptance, the prostitution of the home, the shattering of the marriage vow, the regression

of the home to the status of a house, substituting the family bar for the family altar, contempt for law and order, politics without principle, wealth without work, pleasure without conscience, worship without sacrifice, the infiltration of Communism into every area of life, et cetera, et cetera.

It is reasonable to believe these evils find good soil, watered and fertilized, because of a do-nothing attitude; and so we tolerate them, hoping the fellow up the street and around the corner will take care of this irritant, but he in turn looks to the man down the street and around the corner, and so nothing is done. Consider Communism with its Godless ideology. It is easy to believe that much of its success is due to the apathy of its victims and people in general, and so the advocates of this scourge, social misfits from the snake-pits of the human jungle, have access to the campuses of American colleges and universities where they vent their venom and verbal vomit on the leaders of tomorrow.

When are we, as individuals and as a nation, going to rise in righteous indignation against all this? Someone has asked, "Must we always have a 'sinking of the Maine,' or a Sunday morning Pearl Harbor, or another Hiroshima, to shake us out of our complacency or pull our heads out of the clouds?"

This sorry picture of the apathetic citizen and his world should be a taunting challenge to the Christian and his church. We can therefore ask, how does our stewardship respond to this state of affairs? As Christians, how can we possibly justify doing anything less than our best for the cause of Christ and to take a stand against that which is so patently wrong? Physical slavery and spiritual adulteration, like death, can come peacefully and quietly if there is no will to resist. All that is necessary for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing. If we don't care, who will?

Now that we have touched briefly on the apathetic citizen and his

world, how about the apathetic church member and his Christian stewardship? Is our exercise of this privilege and responsibility a true criteria, a touch-stone of the life we profess? How do we measure up? Do we stand indicted by the following questions?

As good stewards are we making spiritual progress? Are we climbing Jacob's ladder, or because of apathy are we still earth-minded only, bolted to the launching pad?

Is there a burden on our hearts and do we pray for those who live and die in unbelief; or because of unconcern and a prayer vacuum in our lives, do we simply brush them off with a "so sad, too bad" attitude?

Is our stewardship vision broad enough to include those who creep into the world and "know no reason why they're born, save to eat the corn, the flesh, the fish and leave behind an empty dish," or are they anathema to us? Even though our stewardship responsibility may not exceed that of the widow's mite, we are, even so, responsible for that much. It is better to light just one little candle than to curse the darkness.

Do our hearts and flesh cry out for the living God, or do we succumb to the flesh-pots of our own lives?

As good stewards can the world profitably read our daily lives, or are we living counterfeit lives and bequeathing to the world merely our obituary to read?

Is our testimony for the Christ sound and fresh, or because of that "sweet tooth" in our life, is our testimony without salt and therefore rancid and worm-eaten?

Does the church have to shop for its money in the common marketplace because we shirk our responsibility?

As good stewards do we walk in His footsteps, or because of apathy is our walk merely shadow-boxing, a sort of death warmed over, a spiritual sham, resurrected at 11 a.m. Sunday or as the occasion may call

[Continued on page 10]

Value of Being Old Fashioned

Bishop Michael Coleman

(Bishop Michael Coleman was Anglican Bishop of Qu'Appelle from 1950 to 1960, and is now vicar of the Pender Islands parish in the diocese of British Columbia.)

I BELIEVE that today very many church people are deeply disturbed, apprehensive and even possibly frightened by the constant stream of criticisms emanating not only from those outside but also from those within the Church of God.

Apart from the external criticisms (sometimes valid, more often the result of bias and a lack of knowledge), there seem to be two main schools of critics within the Church, both very vocal, and I am sure both honest in their attitudes.

There is the somewhat loud critic who complains that the churches no longer place their trust in Holy Writ. The Bible is no more the final authority, nor is there apparently any other form of authority he can accept. So he frequently turns to the Fundamentalists, loud in their proclamation of God's Word, refusing to countenance any textual criticisms and ignoring any scienti-

fic discoveries that might give rise to uncertainty over absolute authority of the Bible. In this camp are those who almost maintain that God wrote the Scriptures himself, and that each and every part is of equal value spiritually and historically.

This somewhat easy method of ignoring facts is no real solution, creating far more problems than it attempts to solve. Human reason and intellect have no place here, nor is there any room for a God of love, such as Jesus has portrayed. Sometimes this searcher for supreme authority turns suddenly to the Church of Rome, but in these latter days Rome herself, thank heaven, is undergoing a delayed reformation, and appears to be less authoritative than she used to be.

I come now to those critics within our own church who have fairly recently come to the fore with great ability backed by much learning. Everything is to be tested: nothing taken on faith alone. Group dynamics will unearth hidden reasons—of fear, of a lust for power—that have sent men into the Priesthood. "Vocation" as a call from Our Lord is an unrealistic attitude. The "Father-image" of God is now ta-

boo. There is and can be no certainty about Almighty God as we have hitherto accepted Him. Scientific man has written "finis" to the Creeds of certainty and faith. Philosophy is everything, theology is fading into a shadowy background.

To be an old-fashioned believer in the formal doctrines of the Church—the Trinity, the Incarnation, by the Virgin Birth, of a loving Lord so that we might be redeemed and offered salvation via the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension and the coming at Pentecost of the Holy Spirit in power—is to be painfully and pitifully outmoded.

The bodily resurrection of the Lord Jesus is "out" (albeit the Church teaches that we sinful humans will have a spiritual rising), since the experts have agreed that legend and the accretions of time have obscured any possible validity. Man, so wondrously clever and able, must sweep away the last vestiges of the supernatural as unreality. Man is to be left in an agnostic state, since there is no "proof" of God's existence in terms of personality.

All this has its good side: the eternal truths that God has seen fit to reveal to man must not be taken too easily or thoughtlessly, and the critics do good if they make us re-think our grasp upon them.

But I am proud to be old-fashioned: I do believe in the great Christian doctrines as expounded in Creed and Sacrament. I do believe the Bible to be God's Word (even tho' I am clear He did not write it himself, but lovingly allowed man to co-operate with Him in producing God's revealed truths). I do believe in the Trinity, in the utter truth of the Virgin Birth and of the Incarnation, in the Redemption of mankind through the Crucifixion and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ—even in the Resurrection of His earthly body (tho' our rising again will be with a "spiritual body," not with the body stained by sin, bodies being the "means of communication" God

has given us).

But it is not enough, I realize, just to proclaim my old-fashioned stand: there must be reasons given for faith, for faith itself is never unreasonable, but rather the next step in the same direction.

I state, I hope with humility as well as certainty, that I know God as Father. He has made himself known to me so many times, and never because of any goodness in me, that I have no fears left, no uncertainties about Him at all. He is all the Church proclaims and far more. He is the Father-Creator, He is Holy Personal Spirit of pure energy: He is God Incarnate, Jesus Christ, Saviour and Redeemer who "for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven." I know Jesus as my personal Saviour, living and loving and ever near as well as infinitely and immeasurably far beyond human comprehension.

Einstein's theory of timelessness agrees with St. Paul who said 1900 years ago, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever." God's eternity means just that: there is no such word as "ago" with Him. The Cross is now for every generation; the Presence in the Eucharist is now for every celebration; and prayer is contact with Him now, for He ever lives.

Our critics will laugh and mock: they will demand scientific proofs. But Christianity is not a philosophy, nor yet a science; Christianity is a Revelation, a revealed fact; Jesus lives and we can know Him.

So let the thousands of "normal" church people take heart, giving thanks to God for all the stirring up the critics have done; noting how easily and glibly we can accept the Gospel unless we are so disturbed; and holding fast to the glory and wonder of the Christian Church's proclamation of that Gospel.

—*Qu'Appelle Crusader*

(While *Bishop of Qu'Appelle*, Rev. Coleman conducted a broadcast over a Regina, Sask., radio station called "Sunday 6:15." I listened to it quite often when living in Montana.—Ed.)

Hauge Federation Slates Winter Conference in February

The Hauge Lutheran Innermission Federation will hold its annual winter Bible conference in Minneapolis, Feb. 20-27, at 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd. Conference theme is "Seasons of Refreshing."

The Federation is a voluntary fellowship of Lutherans interested in promoting simplicity in worship, Christian fellowship and experienced salvation. It makes great use of laymen in its conferences and work.

The conference will run from Sunday to Sunday. Evening speakers will be Pastor Harold Olson, Fergus Falls, Minn., and Pastor Morris Eggen, Spicer, Minn. The closing session of the gathering on Sunday afternoon, Feb. 27, will feature Evangelist Rodney Stueland of the Federation.

Among others participating in the conference program are laymen Walter Thompson, Otto Saukerson, James Erickson, Peter Oie, Howard Graff, Maynard Walvatne and Adolph Trooien. Mr. Trooien is president of the group's board of directors.

Meals will be served in the dining hall during the conclave. Some lodging is available.

Welcome to Pastor Hautamaki

Dear Father God—

We come to you today

Each one of us, to thank you

In a very special way—

For all the many blessings

That you gave us, thru the years.

Our church has had much happiness,

We have also shed some tears.

We have always had good leaders

As the years did come and go.

By trusting in our Savior

God has always willed it so.

Now again we have been praying
For a shepherd who would come
To this our church—at Calvary,
And make it his new home.

We knew if we were faithful,
And let our Savior lead,
God would send to us a pastor
Who would fill our every need.

So, Reverend Hautamaki,
We welcome you today,
Because we know it was God's will
That you came here to stay.

You came as God's ambassador,
In the blessing of the Lord,
To teach us and to preach to us
God's grace, His holy Word.

Tho we are a sinful people,
By God's grace we all can be
Born again new creations
Thru all eternity.

When you gave us your first sermon,
We were very much impressed.
For we felt that God was speaking
In the message you expressed.

You will help us all to live
A true, and Christian life,
And to glorify our Savior,
In this world of so much strife.

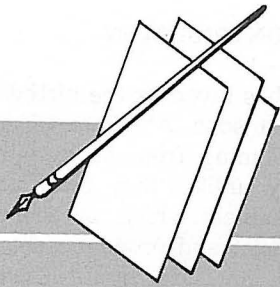
You came here as our shepherd,
We are your little flock.
We all must trust in Jesus Christ,
He is our Solid Rock.

You will like our western climate:
Mountain air and fresh sea breeze,
Our nice rain—just when we need it—
And our beautiful, green trees.

So again to you and yours,
We say WELCOME.
May God bless your stay.

Miss Marie Hampen

(In honor of Pastor Albert Hautamaki,
Calvary Lutheran Church, Everett, Wash.)



EDITORIALS

Another in a series on the Apostles' Creed.

I BELIEVE IN GOD—ALMIGHTY

God has all power in heaven and on earth. There is no limit to what He can do.

He formed the universe out of nothing. The God who could do this can accomplish anything He desires by the word of His power.

A cynically minded boy once challenged a smaller lad, "I will give you a dime if you can show me where God is." Wisely came the answer, "I will give you two dimes if you can show me where he is not."

"I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless" (Gen. 17:1).

"Whatever the Lord pleases he does,
in heaven and on earth,
in all the seas and all deeps.

He it is who makes the clouds rise
at the end of the earth,
who makes the lightnings for the rain
and brings forth the wind from his storehouse"
(Ps. 135:6, 7).

No one has seen God at any time. No one can fully understand Him. Only as He chooses to reveal Himself can we know more about Him.

Great and mighty as the Lord is, Isaiah the prophet has recorded this:

"For thus says the high and lofty One
who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy:
'I dwell in the high and holy place,
and also with him who is of a contrite and
humble spirit,
to revive the spirit of the humble,
and to revive the heart of the contrite'"
(Isa. 57:15).

How foolish it is for anyone to fight against God who is almighty, especially when He is also supremely a God who loves.

THE PASTORAL SHORTAGE

We have just returned from a week-end, a very cold week-end, by the way, in the Grafton-Grand Forks area where we had the opportunity to share

in the Sunday morning worship services of our fine congregations in those two places.

Both groups are located in thriving Red River Valley cities, the kind of places where the Association must have churches if it is to maintain itself and grow. Both congregations are meeting in temporary quarters at the present time but are considering the possibility of other, more permanent locations.

These two congregations form one parish at the present time and they are earnestly seeking permanent pastoral service. It is not easy to do this successfully in the Association, for there is a definite shortage of pastors. We marvel at the way in which congregations in such circumstances are able to keep their spirits up under these conditions. But the Lord has given strength and will continue to do so as laborers are sought out and provided.

Our seminary, of course, is the long-range solution to the problem. In several years we will have a steady, adequate supply of young, consecrated, gifted pastors coming into our parishes. Their presence will be a tremendous lift to the whole fellowship and work.

Pray for the men presently preparing for service as ministers in our church. Pray that their school days will be rich ones in spiritual growth, instruction and fellowship.

Furthermore, ask the Lord to send forth more laborers into His harvest. God desires the salvation of all men. But He cannot accomplish His purposes if His own people are not united in that purpose with Him. It is where there is a willing and free spirit that great things can be done. More young men for the ministry will be forthcoming if throughout our fellowship there is a common belief that the fields are white unto harvest and that that harvest is the most important thing in the world. Will you pray?

In the several years until the pastoral shortage lessens, we must patiently wait and beseech the Lord to make some provision. Thank God for the provisions He has made; for the laymen, students, retired pastors and others who have stepped into the breach to keep things going. They will not lose their reward.

And we are sure that our gracious Lord will continue to provide. Only trust Him.

COMPLETING THREE YEARS

With this issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador*, we complete three years of existence. How hard that is to believe! And yet the file of publications proves that it is so.

These have been extremely interesting years in which to live and be engaged in putting out a church periodical. The *Ambassador*, for all practical purposes, came to life with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. Their history has, therefore, been one. Then, too, over the whole church-world scene these

have been years of such rapid change. Few men have the breadth of knowledge to realize what it all means or toward what it is leading.

More wisely than we knew at the time, the theme for *The Lutheran Ambassador* was chosen to be "So we are *ambassadors* for Christ." Without apology we continue to stand beneath that banner and we want no other.

Our motto is from II Cor. 5, and the 20th verse continues, "God making his appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God."

The Christ for whom we are ambassadors is the Christ of the Bible. For this, too, we make no apology and do confess that apart from the Scriptures we know nothing authoritative concerning His person, life and work.

There can be no greater joy for us than to know that through the pages of this publication fugitives from a gracious God find reconciliation with Him through Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, it is our purpose to be a means through which our particular church fellowship is knit together for more effective service and a means whereby all our readers experience some individual benediction for their minds and spirits.

To those ends we continue to dedicate ourselves under God. Brethren, pray for us.

The month of February has given us the birthdays of two of America's greatest sons, Abraham Lincoln and George Washington. Coming from backgrounds which were materially very unlike, they must each have inherited an inner greatness which, on the one hand, is not surfeited by social and economic abundance, and on the other, is not emaciated by its absence.

The birthdays of these two great men in February are usually a cause for some special emphasis on patriotism. This is good because we need to be reminded every so often that many blessings have come to us through our country and we have responsibilities toward it.

Let our boys and girls remember, too, that Lincoln and Washington remind us of the truth that in the United States no person is assured success through the good station in life into which he may be born. But like Washington, good standing ought to be the springboard to service. The case of Lincoln shows us that poor physical surroundings need not doom a person to a life of obscurity nor excuse him from any responsibility.

Life is what you make it. That is an oft made statement. A more Christian philosophy is this: "I can do all things in him who strengthens me."

The Apathetic Christian

[Continued from page 6]

for? Can we say with the psalmist, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts," and can we sing with a glad heart, "This is my Father's house"? or do we consider the church sort of an added bonus, a fringe benefit built into the architecture of the Affluent Society?

Dare we say we are saved, or do we fluctuate between yes and no, between black and white? There are only two classes of people as far as God is concerned—sinners saved and sinners lost. His plan of salvation does not allow for any pastel shades in between. Does our life run the gamut colorwise, with every color of the spectrum in play?

And finally, as good stewards, are we fishers of men, or because of apathy are we merely caretakers and custodians of the aquarium?

(Mr. Larson, a member of Bethel Lutheran Church, is a retired government employee. His wife is a daughter of the late Pastor Ole Swenson.)

SAVIOR, WHEN WE CALL, O HEAR US

Savior, when we call, O hear us;
In the trying hour be near us,
Lest the foe should prove too strong:
To Thy mercy we betake us;
Never leave us, nor forsake us;
Power and grace to Thee belong.

Other help than Thine we have not;
Other help than Thine we crave not;

'Tis enough if we have this:
This from every ill secures us;
Every blessing this ensures us;
More than life Thy favor is.

Keep us on Thy strength relying,
In Thy name the foe defying;
Till Thy coming bring us peace.
O how sweet the thought, and cheering,

In the day of Thine appearing
Trouble shall forever cease.

T. Kelly
(from *The Lutheran Hymnary*)

BIBLE VERSES

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18, 19).

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh" (John 6:51).

"Jesus said to Peter, 'Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup which the Father has given me?'" (John 18:11).

"For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (II Cor. 5:21).

O dearly, dearly has He loved, and we must love Him, too,
 And trust in His redeeming blood, and try His work works to do.

The writer of the hymn, "There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood," says also, "Redeeming love has been my theme, and shall be till I die." May it be ours always.

The early church sought to follow in the footsteps of the Master as He went about doing good. Some of His works are found in these passages (you may choose to use others as well).

Acts 2: 42, 43, 46, 47 Acts 4: 29-33
 Luke 6: 27-38, 46 Luke
 17: 26-30 are words of warning

(Perhaps our generation will see them fulfilled.)

Mark 9: 17, 18 and verses 28, 29 Mark 11:
 15-17 Have we such zeal for pure doctrine
 and God's house?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble,

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

WMF Bible Study

MARCH



WMF BIBLE STUDY

Redemption's Story in a Hymn

Cecil Frances Humphreys of Ireland began writing poems and hymns at nine years of age. Encouraged by her father and a Christian writer she published her first hymnbook at twenty-five years of age in 1848. Two years later she married Pastor Wm. Alexander (later Archbishop) and ministered with him among the sick, the sorrowing, the needy and poor in Ireland. Practically all of her 400 hymns and poems were written for children, but they contain profound truths of the Christian faith. Many of us know and love the one chosen for our March Bible Study, "There Is a Green Hill Far Away." May its truths bring rejoicing and challenge to our hearts and lives. May the "suffering Savior" see the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

There is a green hill far away, without a city wall,
 Where the dear Lord was crucified, who died to save us all.
 We may not know, we cannot tell, what pains He had to bear;
 But we believe it was for us He hung and suffered there.

Redemption's story is found from Genesis to Revelation in our Bibles, too. Shall we note some of redemption's rights that were provided by our loving, compassionate God for His people in the Old Testament days?

He gave them priests and a High Priest, Ex. 28:1
 Ex. 28:36-38 He gave them a sin-offering and altar sacrifices, Ex. 29:35-46
 He promised them healing, Ex. 15:26 Ps. 105:37
 He gave them sabbaths, Ex. 31:12-18
 He provided food, Ex. 16:4, 5 verses 14, 31
 and water, Ex. 15, 27 Ps. 78:15, 16
 He gave them protection and deliverance, light and leadership, Ps. 78:13-16 Ps. 78:51-55
 also Ex. 13:21, 22,

All of these blessings, and many more, God purchased for us in Jesus Christ through His cruel death on the Cross. We, too, can claim them as *our* redemption rights, if our hearts have been made clean in the blood of the Lamb, and we walk in His way. This knowledge moves us to gratitude, praise, and worship this Lenten season, doesn't it? To a confession of sin and need, too, as well as the realization of the debt we owe to those who know not the Gospel—in our families, our neighborhoods, villages, cities, homes and institutions here at home and abroad.

There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin;
 He only could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in.
 He died that we might be forgiven, He died to make us good,
 That we might go at last to heaven, saved by His precious blood.

What truths do we find in these verses? Acts 4:10-12
 Matt. 25:31-33

Our daily newspaper (*Minneapolis Tribune*) is running a series of articles in January on "Is Theology in Revolt?" reporting the discussions of half a dozen seminarians (United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities) regarding (quote) the faddish "God is dead" theologians. What would I John 5:4-13 and Rev. 20:12-15 have to say about such speech?



NEWS

of the Churches

Hatton, N. Dak.

A stewardship and information meeting for the parish was held at Hatton on Nov. 2, with Pastors John Strand and Trygve Dahle present. They dwelt on the various phases of the work of the Association and helped to clarify the meaning of our 12 Guiding Principles, which was appreciated by all who attended.

The Annual Mission Day Festival for Ny Stavanger congregation was held in Buxton on November 7 with Pastor Arvid Larson, semi-retired pastor living at Northwood, and Missionary Alvida Salte from Winger, Minn., the speakers at the morning and afternoon services. A very fine offering of \$983 was received.

Special evangelistic meetings for the parish were held at Hatton on Nov. 7-11, with Pastor E. Edward Tornow of Fargo, the speaker. A fine spirit existed and the Lord was mightily present to speak to our hearts. We were happy to see the church practically filled every evening. Pastor Hans Tollefson of the local parish also had a series of meetings the first part of December in St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Fargo.

We also had a visit from our Mission Director, Pastor Harold Schafer of DeKalb, Ill., who gave us a little insight into the work of our missions, both home and foreign, in Brazil, and in Nogales, Ariz., and also our obligations in supporting these missions.

Sunday School Christmas pro-

grams and services were held in each of the churches, and on New Year's Eve we had wake-night services for the parish at Portland, at which time the Christmas cantata, "Carol of Christmas," was again sung by the combined choir with members from Portland, Buxton and Hatton. The choir is directed by Mrs. Henry Hanson with Mrs. Bernhard Nelson, accompanist, both from Portland. The church was filled for the occasion and most of the folks stayed for the refreshments and devotional service which followed.

Ferndale, Wash.

We often hear of individuals transferring membership from one church to another, but it is not too often that we hear of a church bell changing churches. This did happen last week.

In 1904 the Mennonite Brethren in Christ built a new church on Mountain View Road. The bell was installed at that time and for nearly sixty years has sent forth its call to worship over the countryside. Last week it was removed from that location and was placed in First Lutheran Church in Ferndale. Though its location is different it still remains in our community to remind all men by its clear tones of their opportunity to worship God. The bell will ring for the first time at First Lutheran next Sunday. There will be a dedication service during the worship service. Following the service, the ladies of the Dorcas Circle will be serving a

dinner. The proceeds will go toward defraying the cost of the bell. Use this opportunity to make a real contribution toward this worthwhile effort.

Our thanks to Alf Berg and his crew for taking care of the transfer of the bell. (It should be mentioned that the crew that removed the bell from the old church on Mt. View Rd., was made up of only two men, Alf and a friend from Bellingham. Considering that the bell weighs in the neighborhood of seven or eight hundred pounds, they must be strong men!) We might add that it took more than two men to get it in place at First Lutheran.

So a new call to worship has been added in our community. We trust and pray that it may be a reminder to all of their need of God.

—The Parish Lamplighter

Valley City, N. Dak.

Our congregation in Valley City has a new name, a new church and a new parsonage.

Formerly First Lutheran Church, the congregation is now known as Grace Lutheran Church.

The new church is the former Epworth Methodist Church building in the business loop of Valley City. It is a substantial brick structure and will serve well.

The parsonage is a recently built home purchased by the congregation and is located at 1033 SW. 5th Street.

The congregation is served by Pastor Fritjof Monseth.

(Our readers enjoy to hear news from our congregations, but little of it is ever submitted for publication. Does your parish have something it could share?—Ed.)

"Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and being made perfect he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him" (Heb. 5:8, 9).

PROGRAM LISTED FOR THIS WEEK'S ASSOCIATION WINTER BIBLE CONFERENCE

Program details for the 4th annual Winter Bible Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations being held in Willmar, Minn., this week, Feb. 10-13, have been made available and are as follows.

Pastor Oscar Laaveg, Belmond, Ia., will preach at the opening service on Thursday night at the Free Lutheran Mission Church, West 5th St. and Minnesota Ave., scene of all the conference's sessions. Mr. Laaveg, an American Lutheran Church clergyman, participated in the winter conference two years ago in Winger, Minn. He will also preach at the service on Friday night.

On Saturday night the message will be brought by Pastor Albert Hautamaki of Calvary Lutheran Church, Everett, Wash.

Friday and Saturday mornings will feature two main sessions. Rev. Marvin Undseth, Shevlin, Minn., will teach the Bible hour at 9:30 and Dr. Iver Olson, Minneapolis, Minn., professor at Free Lutheran Seminary, will discuss "Free and Living Congregations" at 11 o'clock. The Bible hour will conclude each day with a prayer session.

Each afternoon will have two parts, one at 2 and the other at 3:30. On Friday Pastor Hautamaki will consider evangelism in the congregation and Pastor Sidney Swenson, Greenbush, Minn., will discuss ministry to the alcoholic.

Saturday afternoon Pastor G. H. Spletstoesser, Pine River, Minn., will talk about ministering to the elderly and Mr. Russell Duncan, Fargo, N. Dak., businessman, will speak on Communism and the Church, based on his own visit to Russia.

There will be two services on Sunday. Divine worship will be at 10:30 a.m., and the sermon will be delivered by Pastor John P. Strand, Minneapolis, Minn., president of

the conference, at 2:30 in the afternoon.

Rev. Morris Eggen, Spicer, Minn., is the pastor of the host congregation.

SEMINARY DECISION

At the last meeting of the Seminary Board of Trustees and the Coordinating Committee, it was voted to graduate the class of 1967 on schedule rather than use the members as interns for one year to ease the pastoral shortage in the Association.

The practice of requiring a year's period of internship for graduation will be worked into the seminary program when it is possible, but for the present is being withheld.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1. Pray for Rosa, a 17-year-old Paraguayan girl who is friendly to our work. This could provide a link with our neighboring country.

2. Pray for our newly begun women's Bible studies. We meet the last Saturday of every month. Pray that the women may see their need of salvation and experience great peace and joy in Christ.

3. Pray for a teenage boy of 16 who was just recently led to the Lord by our son David. One morning on their way to school, this young German boy named Alex, said to David, "I have one problem. I do not know Christ as my Savior." David showed Alex the way of salvation. Alex is now very faithful at all church activities, takes part in prayer, and is seemingly growing much in grace.

4. Pray for the one young fellow who is staying with us and studying some Bible courses and helping John. Pray for another young man who began this activity with us, but recently returned to the big city.

5. Pray for us as a family and for the Grothes. Pray that each member of the family may be kept well in this different and in some ways, hot, difficult climate. Pray that our children may really be a witness for their Lord. Those of our family now have several good contacts among families and children here in Campo Mourao and we ask each one to get up a little earlier on Sunday morning and go over to their friends' home to invite them to Sunday school.

WARMEST GREETINGS to you all from Ruby Abel.

ATTENTION, PLEASE

A number of important proposals are to come before the Annual Conference of 1966 from committees created to study the Rules for Work and the committee structure of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations.

Other items of major importance will also be considered by this year's conference.

In order that delegates to the conference may act as intelligently as possible, we would like to list in *The Lutheran Ambassador*, well in advance, all committee proposals and important matters to be discussed.

To that end, we announce the deadline of April 15, 1966, for such material to be submitted to the editor. May we have your cooperation?

Thank you.

The Editor

CHURCH-WORLD NEWS

GLEANINGS FROM AN EDITOR'S READING

When I stand at the bedside of friends who are struggling with death, it is blessed to be able to say to them, 'Do not worry about the prayers that you cannot pray. You yourself are a prayer to God at this moment. All that is within you cries out to Him. And He hears all the pleas that your suffering soul and body are making to Him with groanings which cannot be uttered. But if you should have an occasional restful moment, thank God that you already have been reconciled to Him, and that you are now resting in the everlasting arms.'—O Hallsby in *Prayer*, Augsburg Publishing House, 1931.

One follow-up study of 240 couples married in high school showed only sixteen couples still together after five years. Another study made of a large number of marriages indicated that, when both bride and groom were under twenty, 20.2 percent of the marriages ended in divorce.—Robert A. Watts in *Home Life*, February, 1966.

No, the church has not run its course; it is the world that has about had it. During the crisis days of the sixties we are going through some vexing fads—political, theological, tonsorial. They will all pass away. Who recalls today the dispute between Pharaoh Amenhotep IV and the priests of Amon? Who even remembers what Disraeli and Gladstone argued about? Once these issues rocked the world, but no longer.

Yet ten thousand millenniums from now the church of Jesus Christ will just be starting its chorus of praise and triumph. All its fusty ways, its clumsiness, its hesitant leadership, will be caught up into the glory of God himself; and the smooth, split-second efficiency

that men worked so hard to achieve may be so many specks of dust whirling in space.—The Editor in *Decision*, February, 1966.

SWEDISH MISSION BODY URGES DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Stockholm (LWF)—Despite any popular beliefs or customs to the contrary, the Church still has the duty to support the Christian understanding of the value and dignity of man, the Swedish Missionary Council said in a statement issued here.

It was explained that the statement was prompted by recent events in the Sudan, Angola, South Africa and Mozambique which the council considered as violating religious liberty and the equal rights of all races.

The agency asked Swedes living abroad to lend whole-hearted support to young indigenous churches of their area whenever the Christian groups are subjected to political pressures.

WORST FAMINE IN 50 YEARS FACES INDIA, LWR IS TOLD

New York (NLC)—India will face "the worst famine condition she has known in half a century" during the months of spring and early summer, directors of Lutheran World Relief have been told.

The forecast, outlined in a memorandum to the nine-member board, was made by the Rev. Ove R. Nielsen, an assistant executive secretary in the overseas material aid agency, following visits in Asia and Africa.

Early in the report, he called attention to existing famine in the country, contending that "many millions of people there eat only once daily."

Similarly stressed was India's rapid population growth. After noting that the Asian republic has some 480 million inhabitants, Mr.

Nielsen pointed out that the total was 132 million more than it was less than two decades ago.

Food shortages have been further aggravated by drought, he said, and "because there has been only a little rain, it is almost certain that the harvest in January will be a failure."

"Water levels in dams have fallen so low," he continued, "that in many canal-irrigated areas there is now an hour's supply of water allowed as against seven (or) eight hours during the same periods in previous years."

As an illustration of escalating prices for "almost all essentials," he asserted that a lower middle class urban dweller with a family of five must spend as high as 75 percent of his income for "a bare subsistence diet."

"For the 'masses' the situation is far worse," he said. "They don't know yet how little food there is. For them the awful truth will come when there is virtually no crop harvested in January. . ."

MISSOURI SYNOD CALLS MEETING ON COMMON LUTHERAN HYMNAL

St. Louis (NLC)—The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has invited five other Lutheran bodies to participate in exploratory steps toward the objective of "common liturgical forms and a common hymnal."

The invitation, it was reported here, has been accepted by the American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church in American and the Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Churches; the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod is studying the matter, and no reply has yet been received from the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

The Missouri Synod has agreed to convene the first meeting, the announcement said, but no date has been set.

At its 46th regular convention last June, the Synod was authorized to "pursue a cooperative venture with other Lutheran bodies as soon as possible" in working toward a single volume that would include a common liturgical section in rite, rubric, and music; a common core of hymn texts and musical settings; and a variant selection of hymns, if necessary.

FINNISH STATE BOARD URGES ANOTHER THEOLOGICAL FACULTY

Helsinki (LWF)—The State Finance Board of the Finnish Parliament has added its voice to the growing number that are urging the establishment of an additional theological faculty in this Lutheran country.

Finland now has only two centers of Lutheran theological instruction. One is a relatively small unit for the Swedish-speaking minority, located at the Abo Academy in Turku. The other is the Faculty of Theology at the University of Helsinki, which with 1,600 students is said to be the largest Lutheran theological school in the world.

Pointing out that an insufficient number of pastors can be trained while only one of the country's state universities has a theological faculty, the Finnish Lutheran Church Assembly in 1963 called upon the national government to introduce another elsewhere in the country.

The Finance Board, in a general commentary in December on the 1966 state budget, addressed a similar plea to the government, stressing the importance of acting without further delay.

It drew attention to the serious difficulties suffered by teachers and students at the theological faculty here because of its excessive size.

The board also referred to Finland's chronic, severe shortage of Lutheran clergy. Specifically, it noted that the cathedral chapter was ready to employ 130 additional ministers for regular and special church posts, that the congrega-

tions had allotted the funds for their support, but that no men were available for engagement.

Mentioned as possible locations for the proposed theological faculty are the University of Oulu in the north and the classical College of Jyvaskyla in central Finland, but the Church has indicated no preference.

The Church Assembly—supreme legislative organ of Finnish Lutheranism which ordinarily meets every five years—pointed to the fact that pastoral vacancies in many small, remote parishes have remained unfilled for years, and said the situation was getting steadily worse.

A PASTOR'S DESK

"See how my desk is cluttered,"

A pastor said one day;
Then he was interrupted,
And had to go away.

By telephone the sick call comes,
"We need you right away";
Or, "From a distant city
Some friends came back today."

The postman brings him letters
With news and pleas each day;
Sometimes a note says, "Thank you,
For showing me the Way."

His calling-book reminds him
Of folks he wants to see;
And for them each he whispers
To God an earnest plea.

A hymnbook, too, is seen here,
With songs, the saints still sing;
And close at hand a Bible,
Whence hope eternal springs.

A visitor has come now,
To seek his pastor's word,
On how to meet a problem;
Knowing he will be heard.

Though magazines unopened
Must have a longer stay,
This desk has served its purpose
For many souls today.

Ella Rasmussen
Tucson, Ariz.