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Vol. 5

July 11, 1967

No. 14

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Reports from the Annual Conference



President John Strand
presided over the Conference.



According to the Word

MERCY FOR THE SINNER

Let us read the entire 51st Psalm and then come back and meditate especially on the second verse. David had sinned. Then God sent Nathan the prophet to talk to David. Nathan did that. He tore the mask of respectability off the face of the king. He showed David what a wicked sinner he was.

David had no excuse for his sins. He was a king with a reputation to uphold. That should have kept him from falling so low. He was a child of God who had had such marvelous experiences of God's loving care. God had highly honored him by promising him that one of his descendants should be the promised Messiah. Such convincing proof of the high esteem in which he was held by God should have made it impossible for David to commit the crimes of which he was guilty.

Wasn't this a pitiable sight? Here was a great and good man fallen so low. A king called to shepherd the people of God, and look what happened to him. When God's prophet accused David of his crimes, David acknowledged his transgressions. He admitted his guilt. He confessed that he was without excuse; and he himself declared that according to God's holy law he ought to be put to death.

Now we might wonder what right David had to ask for mercy. When man first sinned in Paradise and

was guilty of death, God did not at once condemn man forever into hell, but promised to send a Savior to save man from the consequences of his own sinning. And even though men continued to sin more and more in the thousands of years that followed, God continued to repeat His promise of a Savior from sin and to prepare His coming on the earth.

David believed that God would keep that promise. That faith in God's promise gave David the courage to ask God for mercy and cleansing from his sin. David was taking God at His own word. Already at the dawn of Israel's history He calls himself a God who shows mercy to the sinner, and after thousands of years of disobedience God has not changed His attitude toward Israel; for after they had committed the crime of crucifixion He has not changed His attitude toward Israel; for after they had committed the crime of crucifixion He invites them through the Apostles: "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins."

David was not disappointed in his prayer for mercy. God actually did have mercy upon him, spared his life, preserved him on the throne, again received him as His child, confirmed the promise He had given him before and on his death-bed sent the same Nathan to assure him that he would be received into heaven.

Now let us consider ourselves! What right have we to ask the

holy and righteous God for mercy? We have no right whatsoever as far as we ourselves are concerned. We have done that which is evil and omitted that which is good. We have sinned in thought, word and deed.

We have no excuse for our sinning either. We are children of God, conscious of His loving care. How could we do such great wickedness and also sin against Him? We and our sinning are pitiful, so as to cause angels to weep, hell to rejoice and ourselves to despair. And yet we come to ask God for mercy; and rightfully we should come. Because in coming we are only taking God at His own word and promise: "Look unto me and be ye saved"; "Come unto me, and I will give you rest"; "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out"; "I will destroy thine iniquities as a cloud."

Yes, mercy for the sinner. This is the theme that runs through the divine symphony of God's love for the sinner.

Now sin can no longer condemn us. As St. Paul tells us: "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many shall be made righteous. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." The only thing that can condemn us now is if we refuse to believe in Him.

—G. H. Spletstoesser

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.

Dormitory Construction Voted

With only one dissenting vote, delegates to the Fifth Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations in Fargo, N. Dak., voiced their approval of the plan of the Board of Trustees of the Association Schools to erect a dormitory for girls at the Bible school in Minneapolis. One hundred and thirty persons voted in favor.

While no final building plans have been adopted by the Board, the structure will likely be three stories, without a basement. The top floor may be used for classrooms at first until funds are available to complete it. The two bottom floors will house approximately 70 students. The building will be so constructed that a section of it may be used for male students for the first few years.

Lounge facilities and rooms for the dormitory housemother will also be provided in the edifice which will use brickwork to match the headquarters-seminary building and it will be situated to the east of that at a northwest to southeast angle. This will fit in with the master plan for the grounds which has already been approved.

Cost of the building and a garage-shop for the maintenance equipment of the 21-acre property in Plymouth Village, a Minneapolis suburb, is estimated at \$200,000, although the conference placed no maximum limit on the project. That figure does not include the furnishing of the building or the cost of a temporary sewage system until city sewer lines are available in the Village.

Speakers favoring the immediate start of the project cited the need for housing Bible students on school property if they are to have proper supervision. During the coming term, which will begin in Sep-

tember, rooms provided by the school will be at a premium and rental rooms in the community will have to be found for some students. If the school is to advance as it has every prospect of doing, provision must be made now for the influx of students, they said.

The dormitory is expected to be completed in time for the school year beginning in the fall of 1968.

The Board of Trustees estimates that approximately \$75,000 must be secured by means of contributions before a loan can be made to finance the remainder of the building's cost. This money will be raised from two sources, the One Grand Fellowship (contributions of one thousand dollars or more) and the Praise Program. The Praise Program budget for 1967-68 is \$30,000. A certain portion of that is earmarked for current obligations on the Minneapolis property and two residences there. Whatever is received beyond those needs can go toward the construction of the dormitory.

The structure, when completed, will be income-producing property and that income can be applied to the debt incurred in constructing it.

The conference set no time limit as to when the \$75,000 must be raised, but if construction is to be started before the winter freeze-up and a contractor secured prior to that, a deadline of September 15 would seem to be in order.

The Board of Trustees and the Stewardship Board will make further announcements as the need arises.

In another action, the conference voted to name the Bible school "Association Lutheran Bible School." This coincided with the decision of the corporation of the schools on Thursday evening.

This time I am saying a few words about a well-known verse, I John 1:9, where we read, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

I feel it is kind of risky to call what I am going to say about this verse a revelation. I have in mind what Paul calls a revelation in I Corinthians 14:30. If a revelation is made to another sitting by, let the first one be silent. What this passage means, anyone is at liberty to explain and let us all know.

When I started to seek the Lord and was looking for Scripture to rest on, I came upon this verse, I John 1:9. Read it. But I thought, this is a very easy way! Then I said to myself, "This is the Word of God." There is nothing to misunderstand. I believe it! I must be saved! I thought it over again and again. How easy it is to be saved; just to confess and believe forgiveness. Again I said to myself—again I thought. Let me read some more.

I was home alone, the Book still on the table and still open. I continued where I left off and read, "and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." What a surprise! What an encouragement! I am mistaken. There must be more to it than just to believe forgiveness! Cleansed from all unrighteousness? Ah, no, I am not cleansed from all unrighteousness! The Word states *all* unrighteousness. I could not see salvation in this verse that claims cleansing from all unrighteousness!

I put the Book away and later found consolation and the Way in other passages. But if we see it right, I John 1:9 is as clear and consoling for the sinner as any verse to be found in the whole Scripture. This is what I will now attempt to prove to you.

Forgiveness of sin is the same as to be cleansed from *all* unrighteousness. Here we must be clear on

what forgiveness of sin includes. It is a blessing that we have an authority to refer to, namely, the revealed truth from God, the Old and the New Testaments. In Jeremiah 31:34 the Lord says, "For I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more." In Psalm 103:12 we read, "As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us."

From the New Testament, there is Hebrews 8:12: "For I will be

merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more."

It is a reality that God can forget sins! It is because God has spoken. He removes sin from the sinner. He is the authority. The Word of God says He takes away sin. What He requires of you is to come and confess. That does not seem to be much. Maybe He requires so little because it is so little that we can do. But you see, when your sin is forgiven, it is

also forgotten and taken away by God. It is exactly the same as to be cleansed from all unrighteousness. When you are forgiven you are without sin in God's sight.

I must add here that confession of sin is not so little! It is the work of the Holy Spirit to convict of sin and bring forth confession before God. Through forgiveness of sin your way is open for the heavenly glory.

—Rev. Knut Gjesfeld
Thief River Falls, Minn.

From the Annual Report of the Co-ordinating Committee CONGREGATION ROSTER

Again this past year we have been encouraged by the following congregations voting to affiliate with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations:

1. Tamarak Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tamarak, Minn., Rev. Herbert Franz, Pastor.
2. Roseau Free Lutheran Church, Roseau, Minn., Pastor Edwin M. Kjos.
3. Spruce Lutheran Church, Roseau, Minn., Pastor Edwin M. Kjos.
4. Rose Lutheran Church, Roseau, Minn., Pastor Edwin M. Kjos.
5. Norland Lutheran Church, Salol, Minn., Pastor Edwin M. Kjos.
6. Salem Lutheran Church, Radcliffe, Iowa, Rev. Jay G. Erickson, Pastor.
7. Sunnyside Free Lutheran Church of Martin Lake, Stacy, Minn., Student Leslie Galland.
8. Calvary Lutheran Church, Eben Junction, Mich., Pastor Otto Saukerson.
9. Hope Lutheran Church, Ishpeming, Mich., Rev. E. Albert Hautamaki, Pastor.
10. Redeemer Lutheran Church, Juanita, Wash., Pastor Robert E. Rieth.
11. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Virginia, Minn., Student Marvin Haara.

We had expected to present a complete statistical report to this Conference. However, we failed to get a parochial report from some of our parishes, and some of the reports received were incomplete, and therefore we are unable to give a statistical report. We have, however, prepared a Congregation Roster including the congregations now affiliated, or in fellowship with, the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. But again, lack of information is somewhat of a problem and therefore the possibility of error in our listing of congregations should be kept in mind.

The Congregation Roster is prepared as a separate report. On the basis of information available, our Congregation Roster includes 91 congregations affiliated, or in fellowship, with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. In addition, there are eight other congregations that are co-operating, and/or, contributing to the AFLC. Some of these, and others as well, are in the process of coming with us and will apparently affiliate with the AFLC in the near future.

Election Results

BOARD MEMBERS ELECTED BY CORPORATIONS IN FARGO, N. DAK.

To the Board of Trustees of Association Schools by
the Corporation

5-year term

Howard Lieder, Minneapolis, Minn.

To the Mission Board by the Corporation

5-year term

Rev. A. L. Hokonson, Faith, S. Dak.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF 1968

Eastern North Dakota

Clarence Quanbeck, McVille, N. Dak.

Western North Dakota

Pastor Knute Jore, Culbertson, Mont.

West Coast

Rev. Karl Stendal, Kalispell, Mont.

South Dakota

Rev. A. L. Hokonson, Faith, S. Dak.

Northern Minnesota

Harvey Dyrud, Newfolden, Minn.

North Central Minnesota

Rev. Hubert DeBoer, Fosston, Minn.

Central Minnesota

Harry Rorvig, Dalton, Minn.

Minneapolis

Elder Sorkness, Sand Creek, Wis.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE ELECTIONS

Vice President

1-year term

Rev. Richard Snipstead
Ferndale, Wash.

Secretary

1-year term

Rev. Harry C. Molstre
Dalton, Minn.

Stewardship Board

5-year term

Even Ose
Thief River Falls, Minn.

Board of Publications and Parish Education

4-year term

Kent Quanbeck
McVille, N. Dak.

Youth Board

5-year term

Sheldon Mortrud
Thief River Falls, Minn.

Board of Pensions

5-year term

Albert Moen
Grand Forks, N. Dak.

Co-ordinating Committee

5-year term

David C. Hanson
Minneapolis, Minn.

Two new positions on the
Committee were created
when the revised *Rules
for Work* were adopted.

Named to these posts
were:

Martin Konsterlie
Willmar, Minn.

Clifford Johnson
Esko, Minn.

MISSION CORPORATION

The following were nominated by the Annual Conference for membership on the Mission Corporation and were elected by the Corporation in its annual meeting in Fargo on June 16 for the terms indicated.

Five Years

Dr. Wayne Sletten, Faith, S. Dak.

Iver Solberg, Ray, N. Dak.

Rev. Harry C. Molstre, Dalton, Minn.

Miss Judith Wold, Thief River Falls, Minn.

G. N. Arneson, Fargo, N. Dak.

Rev. G. F. Mundfrom, Pukwana, S. Dak.

Rev. Howard Kjos, Hampden, N. Dak.

Clifford Johnson, Esko, Minn.

Rev. Fritjof Monseth, Valley City, N. Dak.

Rev. Herbert Franz, Cloquet, Minn.

Four Years

Oliver Landsverk, Fosston, Minn.

Two Years

Francis Monseth, Everett, Wash.



Mayor Herschel Lashkowitz of Fargo addressed the delegates on Thursday morning.

SCHOOLS CORPORATION

The following were nominated by the Annual Conference for membership on the Schools Corporation and were elected by the Corporation at its annual meeting in Fargo on June 15.

Three Years

Howard Lieder, Minneapolis, Minn.
Martin Konsterlie, Willmar, Minn.
Rev. A. L. Hokanson, Faith, S. Dak.
Rev. Hans Tollefson, Hatton, N. Dak.
Rev. Richard Snipstead, Ferndale, Wash.
Rev. Harry C. Molstre, Dalton, Minn.
Rev. Harold R. Schafer, DeKalb, Ill.
Mrs. Robert Bursheim, Minneapolis, Minn.
Herbert Presteng, Grafton, N. Dak.
Rev. David Molstre, Grand Forks, N. Dak.

SITE NAMED FOR 1968 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Upon invitation from St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Rev. Herbert Franz, pastor, Cloquet, Minnesota, the Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lu-

theran Congregations in 1968 will be held there June 12-16.

A new church under construction by the congregation will be ready for use by the conference at that time.



Pastor Lars Stalsbroten conducted the prayer hours at the Conference and warmly urged the church to move into God's ability.

TARIRI: MY STORY

As told to Ethel Emily Wallis by Tariri, Peruvian Indian Chief (Harper & Row, Publishers)

In the history of missions there has been nothing like this magnificent story. Everybody should read it.

Into a strange, dark world of mystery and savagery shone the light of the Gospel message, and a brutal killer not only became the recipient of salvation but he also became a missionary to his own people and others also.

Tariri, the great chief, was a legendary figure among the tribes along the eastern slopes of the Andes Mountains in Peru. He was of the Shapra tribe of the Candoshi group of Indians. These people were not only head hunters, but head shrinkers, and the man who acquired the greatest number of these heads became the tribal chief. Their lives were filled with all types of evil superstitions, the worship of the boa snake, witchdoctors, and chanting. In Tariri's own words, "We really loved the devil."

Then one day into the life of Tariri and his people came two American missionary women sent by the Wycliffe Bible Translators. Alone and unprotected, Lorrie Anderson and Doris Cox were fearless because they carried the message of the Gospel. If they had been men, they would have been killed immediately. Instead Tariri undertook to protect them and called them his sisters.

It was necessary for them to begin to translate the Gospel into the language of the Shapras and this took several years. Tariri himself helped the girls with the language study and then one day Doris Cox said to him, "Brother, when are you going to receive Jesus? Receive Him right now"

"I said, 'All right.' My heart was so happy when I said, 'All right.' I received Jesus with my ragged clothes on, without even having a bath. Then we talked with God.

"When I talked with Jesus, I said, 'You cleanse me with your blood. Put good into my heart. My heart is dirty. Throw all the dirt away. I will follow only you. I want to follow in the same path

with you. I do not want to live bad any more. Take out everything that holds me back. Throw it far away. Send it away.'

"When I said that, Jesus came into my heart."

What a change took place in the heart and life of this savage. He immediately stopped killing people and instead urged them to accept Jesus as their Saviour, too. He has had many opportunities to witness of his salvation to high officials in Peru as well as the United States. The Lord tested his faith with the death of his two dear sons and several close calls with death in his own life. However, Tariri remained true to the Lord and continued to grow in grace and faith. He is now encouraging the building of schools in his country in order that his people may learn to read and write the Scriptures also. The following statement is his own personal testimony:

"Why should even a chief say, I am a chief? How can a person be greater than God? God made the earth, and put it here for us to live on. He planted food for us, like the

[Continued on page 8]

WOMEN for Christ

McINTOSH CHURCH HOST TO WMF GATHERING

The Women's Missionary Federation of the North Central Minnesota District met at Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church in McIntosh on April 18.

There were 66 registered for the morning session and others joined them in the afternoon.

The first session opened with a hymn sing, including the theme song, "Wonderful Peace." The morning Bible leader, Mrs. Melvin Walla, and the afternoon leader, Mrs. Alvilda Salte, both used Isaiah 26:3 as the basis for their studies. The verse reads: "Thou dost keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee." They both brought out the point that we all can experience a wonderful peace of heart and mind which only repentance and true faith in God can give.

For our business meeting, the constitution was adopted with a few minor changes. The offering for the day was \$128.00.

Our thanks to the Mt. Carmel ladies for a delicious dinner.

Grace Lutheran of Bagley invited us for the fall meeting, God willing.

Pastor Hubert DeBoer closed the meeting with the benediction.

Mrs. Agnes Lewis
Secretary *pro tem*

FIFTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE WMF

Our Women's Missionary Federation Convention met at Fargo, N. Dak., on June 14 and 15, with the theme: "Enlarge the place of thy tents, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes" (Isa. 54:2).

How we would like to convey the warm spirit and joyful inspiration of this meeting, but you would have had to have been there in person to experience it. The joy of meeting Christians from various states and sharing the good things of the Lord was another blessing in itself. We hope that many will begin to pray and plan to attend our meeting next June at Cloquet, Minnesota, the Lord willing.

After the opening prayer session, a singspiration was directed by Mrs. Henry Hanson. Mrs. Lee Haag led in devotions. Mrs. Russell Duncan welcomed the audience, and Mrs. Herbert Presteng gave the response. The Zion Lutheran Church of Tioga, N. Dak., furnished the music in the form of a fine ladies' trio.

Martha Kleppe of Thief River Falls, Minn., gave a challenging message based on our theme from Isaiah. "We are not merely to hear God's Word, but are to act on it. There is only one true God, and people need to realize His judgment on sin as stated in His Word. There is no escape from hell but to come as a helpless sinner to Jesus for living faith and salvation. There are some people who simply neglect salvation, others reject it, while still others go through the motions of being Christians, but do not have the living Savior in their hearts. Salvation is offered to all who will come to Jesus, and the time is NOW.

"To one who has this living faith, the Bible urges him to extend and expand God's kingdom. The world will always try to water down our faith. We need grace from the Lord to spare not—our prayers, possessions, efforts, and time—to extend God's kingdom as the time is short. Over half the world has not yet heard the Gospel and this responsibility to bring



A scene from the convention of the WMF in Fargo on June 14. Mrs. Herbert Presteng and Pastor Harold Schafer are at the rostrum.

the Gospel to every creature belongs to each Christian. Satan will always try to curtail God's work, but may trouble drive us to more earnest prayer. It is most important that Christians live the faith they profess, (1) Pray that God will send forth more laborers into the mission fields. (2) Be willing to go yourself or let God send your son or daughter into the harvest fields. (3) Do your part in the church and community where you live. God will use those who are willing and faithful in little tasks before He assigns them greater tasks. May we also pray, 'Lord, find us men with fire in their hearts and wings on their feet' for the work of God's kingdom."

During the business session, Mrs. Herbert Presteng was re-elected president and Mrs. R. M. Konsterlie treasurer. The Memorial Service was conducted by Mrs. Hans Tollefson with each district president placing flowers in a vase in remembrance of those who have passed away this last year. The Resolutions were read by Mrs. Knute Jore. The offerings for the AFLC Bible School and combined Library Fund exceeded \$2,000. Pastor Schafer read greetings from our three missionary families.

Wednesday afternoon began with devotions by Mrs. F. B. Monseth, followed by a message from Mrs. Orville Olson of the Greenbush parish. The Olson family had been farming in Iowa when the Lord tapped them on the shoulder and led them to Bible school and then to Japan as missionaries. She spoke of the need of "wholeheartedness" in God's kingdom. When the Lord called them from the farm, she at first felt rebellious, but then dared not be disobedient to the Master's call. God gave grace for one step at a time, and it is always safe to follow His leading. "The mission field is a lonesome place and our missionaries need our prayers and moral support. Satan is strong in these places, and we need to storm the gates of opposition that the Holy Spirit may be able to enter

hearts and change lives. Missionaries enjoy letters from home telling of events that have blessed our own souls. We are often like the child on the beach who spends time letting the sand sift through his fingers. How many opportunities for God we let slip through our hands every day. May we pray for grace to be like Hezekiah who served the Lord with *all his heart*."

On Thursday evening, Mrs. Melvin Walla led in devotions and music was provided by the Girls' Chorus of the AFLC Bible School. Pastor Herbert Franz gave the message from Matthew 9:35-38. He stated, "I have yet to see a compromising Christian lead a soul to Christ. It is the person who has the heart throb of Jesus who wins souls to Christ. We need to see people through the compassionate eyes of Jesus. In view of the times in which we live, we must go into the highways and byways and compel people to be saved. Many missionaries have bought the road to their fields with their blood.

"During World War II, the story is told of a battalion that had miscalculated some distance and nearly all were wiped out. One soldier dragged a wounded buddy behind the battle lines, then went back for another one. They told him to stop, but he said he could not as he heard his buddies crying, 'Help me.' He went back the third time but never returned. This is the compassion for souls we need today. Jesus was tempted to stop short of His mission, but because He came to do the Father's will, He had to go all the way. Jesus saw (1) departure from God—we were scattered as sheep, not in the fold, and it moved Him. He saw (2) depravity in sin—and how we need a new evaluation of sinsickness in preaching today. A rotten tree brings forth rotten fruit, and specific sins need to be named or people will go lost. A person without Christ is ruled by Satan and capable of the vilest crime. May we analyze people in the light of Calvary and not condemn them but have compassion. Jesus saw (3) destiny in hell.

Heaven is eternal and so is hell eternal. Jesus wept when He spoke about hell, and a sermon on hell in 1947 brought me to my knees in repentance. How is it, parents, are your children all safely in the fold? If we could only see a person thirty years from now in hell, we'd have a *real* concern. Each person we meet is a candidate for heaven or hell. Jesus saw (4) despair without a shepherd. These are fearful days—war, lust for power, the World Church, and open sin. Jesus is looking for Christians today to tell the Gospel to the lost. We will not witness until we have first experienced Christ's power in our lives. How many have heard the cry of the doomed? Remember, each Christian will give an account of how he has spent his life at the judgment seat of Christ. Have you answered God's call, first to salvation, then to service?"

Pastor John Strand closed the meeting with some comments and the benediction. We are all thankful for the privilege of being at this convention and may the Lord give us the power to act on the Word that was given out so abundantly.

Mrs. Jay Erickson

Tariri: My Story

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cocona fruit, and other things. That is why we live strong. He put the sun in the sky for us to see by. He did many things like that. We cannot live without Him. Without Him we would be like fish drunk with barbasco root, not knowing where we are going. If one knows God, he lives well. I received Jesus. Why should I leave Him?"

Your heart and soul will be touched and thrilled by this true miracle story, and with broken hearts may we pray for more missionaries to go to the ends of the earth so *all* may hear that "Jesus died for your sins and you may have eternal life in Him."

Mrs. Everett Eike
Radcliffe, Iowa



EDITORIALS

AN INTERESTING CONVENTION

The Annual Conference of 1967 is history, ending several weeks ago. But it will live on, as all conferences do, in the memories of those who attended and, more importantly, through the carrying out of the decisions arrived at in the business sessions.

In this writer's opinion, the Annual Conference of 1967 sustained a commendable pitch of interest throughout. Whereas the one a year ago began sluggishly and then seemed to recover, this convention was stimulating from start to finish.

That isn't to say that we're happy about everything at our conferences and some things in that regard will be noted in subsequent editorials. But the overall spirit of good-will, of optimism, of fellowship, of willingness to work, stand out as signs of a goodly communion given us by God.

Good-will prevailed at Fargo. There was an open spirit at the conference. Discussion was friendly.

In the deliberation prior to the vote on the building project at the Bible school, for instance, one pastor suggested that there were reasons why it might be better to delay construction of the dormitory for a year or two. All the other speaking was in favor of an immediate beginning. When the vote on the resolution was announced it revealed the result as 130-1 in favor of starting as soon as possible. Naturally, many wondered whether the pastor had cast the lone dissenting ballot. It was a rather touching moment as that pastor asked for the floor to declare that he had not voted against the measure and would be backing it all the way.

There was a spirit of optimism at Fargo. This is to be expected of a young church organization with open doors on all sides. There is something to do. There is a need to build wisely and well in all areas of the work. The feeling is present that this can be done. This is a young church and it is looking forward.

Fellowship was experienced in Fargo. Once again, the testimonies at the Friday night laymen's service were good. That service, by the way, was conducted by a South Dakota cattle rancher and the message

was delivered by another one. But not only in the services, but in all of the visiting that goes on in a conference there was much pleasant Christian fellowship. This is not to be despised. In a time when warmth has gone out of so much church activity, it is good when Christian friendship can be realized.

Finally, in Fargo there was a willingness to work evidenced. This is revealed primarily in the acceptance of the building project. This project is going to mean work. Not only must many thousands of dollars be raised within the next few months, but when the building is completed it must be furnished, no small task in itself. But the people at conference felt that the job could be done, and would be done.

In other ways also there appears to be a moving anew into the work of God. This is good. Let us pray that it is no mirage.

The conference is over. It was a good conference. We have indicated the spirit which prevailed. May the conference live on in good works become deeds in the little area of the kingdom where we are.

RESPONSIBLE FREEDOM

We are an association of free congregations. We pride ourselves in our freedom under God. Local congregations are often anxious to have the word "free" attached to their name.

Many of us were raised in the atmosphere of congregational freedom. For others it is a new experience to live under such a polity or government, but they like it.

The congregation is the right form of the kingdom of God on earth, we say. Where there are believers and the Word of God and the Sacraments, there the church is.

So far, so good. These things we believe and by them we live.

But there is another side to the coin. It was suggested in the article in the previous *Ambassador* called "Freedom Is a Two-edged Sword." The other side is responsibility. Remember the man who said, "They [our ancestors] only had to fight for freedom. We have to live with it!"

This matter of responsibility for free churches comes into focus largely in the relationship of one congregation to another. A local congregation is the church. True. But in another sense, a local congregation is not a church until it is united in Christ's commission with one or more other congregations. Why? Because only as it reaches beyond its own community does it finally fulfill Christ's purpose. And in the Association the congregations are not large and thus doubly stand in need of each other to make that outreach.

Therefore, it seems to us, in the midst of our considerations of congregational freedom we ought to give more study to this question of how we become more what we ought to be by working together. We are free congregations, but we are terribly de-

pendent upon one another. That isn't bad, but good. In this inter-relationship, what responsibilities are ours?

It is at the Annual Conference that the congregations meet and discuss the work they do together. Here they vote on resolutions, make the major decisions and elect or nominate those who will conduct the work during the year. Here they are fulfilling an important part of their life as the church.

If this is so, and we think it is, it seems middling strange that about one-third of the congregations of our fellowship were not represented at all during the business sessions of the recent conference. At no time during the convention were the other two-thirds all represented at any one session. It is our guess that when the decision to build the dormitory was made perhaps forty of the congregations had representatives on the floor.

These absences bother us.

This freedom of the congregations certainly involves the freedom to not be represented at the Annual Conference. But why does this situation exist? Is this the exercise of responsible freedom? Quite likely no one congregation made the official decision to not be represented. It just turned out that way. Well then, what can we do to help one another to fuller participation, to the fulfillment of the life of the congregation as the church?

This is a question we ought to be concerned with and of which we shall speak further in the next issue.

GOD BE WITH YOU

When this copy of *The Lutheran Ambassador* reaches you I shall be at sea (some of you will say that that is nothing new) and in the midst of my journey to Norway, the land of my forefathers.

The travel schedule had a train trip from Minneapolis starting Monday evening, July 10, and arriving in New York Wednesday morning. Our steamship, the *Oslofjord*, embarked that afternoon. The arrival in Bergen, first stop in Norway, is set for Wednesday, July 19.

This is purely a pleasure trip. It is being made primarily in order that I might visit relatives, most

of whom I have never seen. Father was the only one of his immediate family who came to America. While my mother has kept in touch with the family across the ocean, there has long been the desire for a personal contact. That is now being fulfilled.

I shall not see much of Norway. Stops will largely be confined to Bergen, my father's home on the island of Huglo, Oslo, and Hallingdal, the home of my maternal grandparents.

And armed with the greetings of the Annual Conference in Fargo, I hope to call upon several of the mission leaders of Norway. Pastor and Mrs. Monseth will have many more of these contacts as they are on quite an extensive preaching mission in that land.

Approximately two weeks will be spent in touring a few of the other countries of western Europe. The first will be England where I have two or three contacts outside of London. One is at Halifax where I shall see a man, a family friend, who taught in the high school in Govan, Saskatchewan, briefly and that was over 30 years ago. The other is near Bristol where I am to visit an elderly pastor acquaintance of our own Pastor Gerald Mundfrom, a friendship that goes back to the days of the War.

Then there will be London, France, Switzerland, Holland, Germany, Denmark and Sweden. Too much to see and too little time in which to see it. Oh, yes, if all goes well, I shall make a stop at the Meuse-Argonne American cemetery in France.

It is good to know that *The Lutheran Ambassador* will be in capable hands during my absence. Dr. Iver Olson has consented to take on this added work even though it is not coming at a very convenient time for him. I know that you will give him the same kind of cooperation which I have received.

And so, God be with you and with me in these summer months. Many of you will be laboring at regular daily tasks, but they are noble if done unto Him. For me there will be many new experiences, but it is my desire always on this trip to travel as an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ. Brethren, pray for me, and I shall uphold you also before that throne of grace which may be besieged from any corner of the earth.
—Raynard Huglen

Notice

TEMPORARY EDITORIAL OFFICE

From now until September 13, Editor Raynard Huglen is not available for editorial consultation.

He has prepared the next issue of the *Ambassador* which will be published on July 25.

Any material in the office which is designated for the next three issues after that has been forwarded to the temporary editor, Dr. Iver Olson.

Material intended for inclusion in the issues of August 22 (there is no issue on August 8), September 5 or September 19 should be sent to:

Dr. Iver Olson
3311 14th Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55407

Deadlines for these issues are given in parenthesis.

August 22 (August 5)
September 5 (August 19)
September 19 (September 2)

Those who have material for the women's page, Women for Christ, are reminded that this should be sent first to Mrs. Jay Erickson, Radcliffe, Iowa.

Contributions to the youth page, Luther League Activities, are to be mailed to the temporary editor of that section, Mr. Ken Moland, 909½ Walnut, Grand Forks, N. Dak.

An unsaved person has no spiritual sense and for that reason he cannot discern spiritual things. This can easily be illustrated. As you know, we live in Oregon, a beautiful state. We look at the trees in the spring, summer, and fall, and enjoy the different shades, colors, and varieties.

But a blind person cannot see, admire and enjoy these beautiful things in God's nature. Why? Simply because he lacks the sense that brings him in contact with these charming and delightful things.

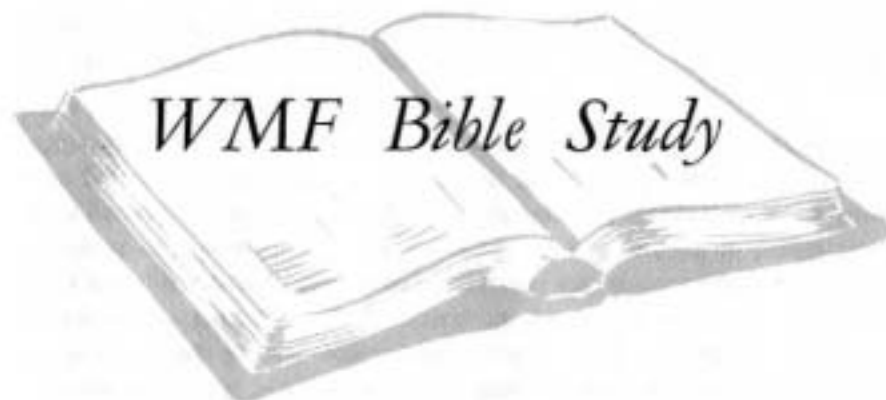
The same can be applied to music and singing. We do enjoy the wonderful melodies that God brings to our ears both through nature, musical instruments, and human voices.

But what about a deaf person? He cannot appreciate these things at all because he is deprived of the sense that brings him in actual contact with the great world of sounds and melodies.

It is identically the same way in the spiritual realm. The natural man cannot see, hear and enjoy these wonderful things in the spiritual world, because he has not received the Spirit of God and is therefore deprived of that spiritual sense which enables him to appreciate spiritual things.

But God hath revealed these things unto us by his Spirit. My, what a change! Now we start to see things in a new light. God's people have four eyes (Eph. 1:18). The Holy Spirit leads us into the Word. We are exploring and discovering things that we never saw before. And as we read the Word we hear God speaking to us about sin and grace. Through these two channels God's Word enters our hearts. Then we can say with the prophet of old: "I found your words, and I did eat them; and your word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." When your heart is full of the joy of the Lord, you will discover you have an overflow valve—your mouth (vs. 13). "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. 12:34).

What is your heart full of?
Your mouth will tell.



Lesson VIII

AUGUST 1967

Read I Corinthians 2:6-16.

The first word of this paragraph arouses attention: "Howbeit." It is true that the message of the cross does not come with excellency of speech or persuasive words of wisdom. Nevertheless, that does not mean that the Christian message is devoid of wisdom. Far from it. But it is entirely different from that of the world. It is on a higher level. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts . . . for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my thoughts higher than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8, 9).

We speak this wisdom among those who are perfect, Paul says. Is anybody perfect? No, this word perfect does not mean sinless.

It means mature, it means those who are well established and instructed in the Word so they have reached the age of maturity in the things of God. The word in Philippians 3:15 has the same meaning.

This wisdom is quite different from the wisdom of the world. How does the apostle describe it in verse 7?

1. This wisdom is a It cannot be explained. It is beyond our understanding. What did the learned Nicodemus say about it? (John 3:9).

2. It is a From whom has He hid these things? (Matt. 11:25).

3. It is a Discuss.

4. It was unknown to the princes and leaders of this world (verse 8). To whom is he referring?

He says that if they had known this wisdom they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. I love that name of my Lord—the Lord of glory. He did not look like the Lord of glory when He was standing in Pilate's hall, clothed in a mocking robe, bleeding, crowned with thorns. Only the eye of faith could see that.

The rulers could not see it so they crucified the Lord of glory. They did it in ignorance, so He pleaded with His Father as they nailed Him to the tree: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). Look up I Timothy 1:13.

5. This wisdom can be obtained in only one way: *through revelation of the Holy Spirit.*

Let us consider the 9th verse. The Apostle is quoting this from Isaiah 64:4. "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor hear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

"The things which God hath prepared. . ."

First of all, this has to do with a prepared way of salvation. But no human being could ever imagine that the way of salvation would go via Calvary's cross, where God's own Son would die for our sins. This kind of wisdom could never have originated in a human heart, but only in the heart of God.

This is the wisdom, the philosophy, the mystery of God. It is not of this age, bound and limited by a period. It is of all ages, because it is of God. The rulers of this world did not know it. And yet this mystery has its greatest marvel in the fact that that very crucifixion, which showed the darkness and blindness of the rulers of the world, became the center of light for humanity in the cross, God's wisdom unveiled and unfolded. He overruled Satan and used the very enmity

of man to realize his foreordained plan for our salvation, and thereby he slew the enmity (Eph. 2:16).

He has not only prepared a full and free salvation, but He has prepared an eternal home for His own in heaven. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people.

The rulers of this world did not know, their eyes could not see, their ears could not hear, their heart could not perceive what God had prepared; but how do we know?

God "hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (vs. 10).

"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (vs. 12).

There are two great forces in the world, and they are constantly struggling for the domination over our soul and body. These are the evil forces and the good forces. They are both powerful. In this verse they are called the spirit of the world and the spirit of God.

Is the spirit of the world possessing and dominating every unsaved person? even the nice, respectable, unsaved church members?

What does Paul say about it in Ephesians 2:2, 3?

He says the spirit of the world comes from Satan just as surely as the Spirit of God comes from God. And just as surely as the Spirit of God dwelleth in every believer, so the spirit of the world and the devil dwells in every unbeliever. He is not only dwelling there, but he is working there—he "worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2). He has nothing against people being religious. If he can use that to hinder people from getting converted, he will encourage it. But on the other hand, if a person gets under conviction and starts to seek the Lord, the spirit of this world will use every means and method to hinder him from getting saved. He worketh in the children of disobedience. As long as a person is dominated by this spirit, he will not receive the things of the Spirit of God: "for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (vs. 14).

How many senses has a normal person? A Christian has more than that. He has six senses. The sixth is the spiritual sense.



Luther League Activities

Edited by Ken Moland

SPEAKING OF PLANS

Jane Thompson, regular youth editor for the *Ambassador*, has taken a leave of absence for the summer months. Your new editor certainly has his doubts about capably stepping into the shoes of a journalism major with substantial newspaper experience. The call is sent out to Luther Leaguers throughout our church to respond by sending news of their local League activities.

Because news is scarce, the youth page this time will take the form of a column or an editorial or something of that nature. There are two areas I would like to write on: (1) plans for the summer, and (2) plans for the future. I feel that each of these is of immediate interest and affects all of us either directly or indirectly.

The occasion which enables me to be writing this article (i.e. Jane's leaving town) is what caused me to consider the first question. Jane is in full-time service to God and the church this summer. She will be taking surveys and helping the local congregations (in another Lutheran body) in their mission work. An excellent opportunity for

personal evangelism awaits the Parish Mission Builders as they go door to door asking survey questions such as "How does one become a Christian?" or "What do you think of the person of Jesus Christ?"

The question is raised to us, "What am I doing in service to God and to our church during these summer months?" With no school activities to occupy our time, we are more free to participate in service projects. Sometimes our churches go on vacation during the summer months. But this is not necessary. Nor is it good theology.

We are called to be missionaries. That is a privilege we are entitled to because of Christ's work and His command. Someone once said, "Either each of us is a missionary or we are a mission field." Maybe we as professing Christians need to meditate on this thought.

What can we do? We can't all be in full-time service, although it would be nice. I'm going to leave this question partly up to the ingenuity of you sparkling, intelligent Leaguers. You know best the needs of your particular area. And it is within you that this must

start. Suggestions or ideas from the outside may simply be shrugged off unless you get yourself involved.

Allow me to throw out a few sketchy thoughts along this line. The survey idea sounds like a good one. Canvass the area around your church. Politely invite the people to church if they don't attend regularly. You may make up a survey of your own with interesting, important questions. These things can be done individually or in teams of two or three.

Another open field is nursing homes and rest homes in the community. Get your youth group together and sing for them and visit with the residents individually. They will enjoy it and it will be a blessing to the visitor also. Read to those who can't see to read any longer, and to those who can. Pray with them. Talk with them. There are many even in these homes who are seeking for the peace of God.

I could mention more projects but these will suffice as illustrations. I encourage you that if you decide to try something in this line, and I hope you do, to get "fired up" about it. If you consider it a chore or a burden, that's what it will be. If you consider it a joy and a privilege, that, too, will carry through.

Talk to your pastor. He'll have ideas and probably could use some help, too. And then, don't forget to pray! Pray that God will use your ministry and service to His honor and glory and to the furtherance of His kingdom.

THOSE RECENT ARTICLES

In previous issues of the *Ambassador* you have read articles by youth from different schools and occupations. I hope that you have considered and compared these ac-

Kalispell, Montana in 1967

counts of different types of education. Weigh the advantages and disadvantages. Seek the guidance of your pastor and counselors. Talk it over with your parents. And, most important, bring it before God. Trust Him to lead you.

I'm sure that any of the contributors of articles would be willing to answer further questions that you may have. Check the papers for their addresses.

We urge you to give serious thought to a year or two of Bible

school. We need to be grounded in the Word of God in this accelerated age. Bible school is also a good place to help one decide what his task on earth will be. Pray earnestly about these matters.

What is your League doing to get ready for Kalispell? Are you raising money? Are you planning? Are you praying?

Send Luther League news, local or district, to Ken Moland, 909 1/2 Walnut, Grand Forks, N. Dak. 58201.

SOMETHING-TO-THINK-ABOUT DEPARTMENT

Accusation against Christians in this world which is largely without Christ: Guilty of indecent exposure!

Some of the Christian Church appear to be spiritual conscientious objectors. Are you?

Silence may be golden, but sometimes it's just plain yellow.

WELCOME TO KALISPELL!

At the youth banquet in Fargo during the conference, I sensed a great enthusiasm for the Luther League Convention in Kalispell. If this is indicative of how many other young people in the Association feel, then we have great things in store for August 17-21.

To begin with, we had anticipated using motels for lodging both young people and others who will want to come. However, motels here are expensive, and reservations for that many are hard to get in this "tourist land" where reservations are made far in advance.

But now we have solved that by using the local National Guard army cots. Don't forget your sleeping bags, though, for you will need those on the cots. This way you

need make no lodging reservations at motels or hotels. The school board has granted us the use of school facilities for lodging, which will be only fifty cents (\$.50) per

person per day.

All convention sessions will be held in the Linderman Junior High School gym. Parents and other adults who wish to attend the Convention, and would wish to have lodging reservations, please write to me as soon as you can. If you plan to bring a camper, please write to me for reservations for parking it. State also whether you would like to park it in Kalispell or at a nearby lake. Also, state the number of days you expect to stay.

Naturally, we are thrilled to have the convention in Kalispell. And we look forward to God's choicest blessing upon us.

Karl Stendal, Pastor
Stillwater Lutheran Church
Three Mile Drive
Kalispell, Montana
Phone: 756-2344, Kalispell
(Please do not call collect)



FLATHEAD LAKE, near Kalispell, Montana, is the largest body of fresh water within the boundaries of the United States, measuring over 30 miles long and 10 miles wide. This famous scenic lake is unexcelled for fishing, boating, hunting and camping. —Photo by Lucy



BEAR GRASS, blooming on the Going-to-the-Sun Highway, in Glacier National Park. Of the hundreds of varieties of flowers found in the Park, none is more spectacular than Bear Grass. Blooming profusely along the highway during June and July, it commands much attention. —Photo by D. J. Schmidt

CHURCH-WORLD NEWS

BRETHREN GROUP MAY DISCIPLINE SOME PASTORS

Fergus Falls, Minn.—(Special) The Church of the Lutheran Brethren of America, at its 67th annual convention here, took action to drop pastors who "cease to reflect the position of the church in doctrine, ethical standing or spiritual emphasis."

The church voted to maintain an official roster of pastors in good standing and agreed that clergymen may be omitted from the roster by the executive committee. An appeal provision was included.

—The Minneapolis Star

LWF TO HOLD '70 ASSEMBLY IN PORTO ALEGRE, BRAZIL

Waterloo, Ontario, Can.—(LC) —The Lutheran World Federation will hold its Fifth Assembly, originally planned for East Germany, at Porto Alegre, Brazil.

An invitation to meet in Latin America was extended by the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil and was accepted unanimously by the LWF's Executive Committee at its annual meeting here, June 12-16.

Officers of the federation were authorized to set the precise dates and select the place of meeting for the session, which is expected to last 10 days during July of 1970. Its theme will be "Sent into the World."

The federation had scheduled the next assembly for Weimar, East Germany, in 1969, but the German Democratic Republic (DDR) last year reversed its initial approval, the LWF was informed, because it was felt the meeting would serve "no useful purpose."

As a result, the federation postponed the assembly for a year to 1970 and directed its staff and officers to explore the possibilities for an alternate meeting place. Invitations were received from West Germany and Austria, in addition to Brazil.

Organized at Lund, Sweden, in 1947 as successor to the old Lutheran World Convention, which had been in existence nearly 25 years, the LWF met at Hannover, Germany, in 1952, at Minneapolis, Minn., in 1957, and at Helsinki, Finland, in 1963.

Previous assemblies have usually consisted of about 1,000 delegates, consultants and official visitors, but it is expected that representation will be reduced considerably for the Porto Alegre meeting.

MISSOURI SYNOD SHOWS 2.2 PERCENT MEMBERSHIP GAIN LAST YEAR

St. Louis, Mo., June 15—Total membership of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in North America has climbed above 2.8 million, the Synod's Department of Research and Statistics reported.

In its annual report the synodical agency listed an increase of 28,642 baptized members to bring total membership to 2,816,883 in the United States and Canada.

However, the one-percent increase in total membership was topped by the gain in communicant members, 41,013, a 2.2-percent boost. Communicant membership totals 1,860,949.

The greater increase in communicant members tends to support contentions of synodical officials who feel that a steadily declining birth rate is causing a leveling off in baptized membership.

REFORMATION MEANING TODAY DISCUSSED BY BISHOP LILJE

Waterloo, Ontario, Can.—(LC) —One of the "great concepts of the Reformation"—that the Christian has to live in the world—gave rise to the "modern phenomenon of secularization of the world," Lutheran Bishop Hanns Lilje of Hannover, Germany, said here in a lecture to the Executive Committee of the Lutheran World Federation.

Speaking on the theme, "Reformation Today," the former president of the LWF declared that "to a very large extent it was Luther's merit that he gave back to the world its dignity."

"Man, when fulfilling his earthly and human duties, is serving God," he said. "The whole modern idea of service and vocation is derived from this Lutheran concept."

At the same time, while this evaluation of the world by the Reformation has resulted in the "secular city," Bishop Lilje said, "it would be a sheer denial of the essence of Christianity if this concept of the secular world would lead us to lose sight of the church altogether.

"It is true that the world is the Lord's... It is within the framework of the order which He gave that the world exists. The meaning of the Old Testament term 'shalom' is exactly this: a world which lives within these orders and regulations that God gave to the world."

The bishop, who has published a number of scholarly works on Luther, called the Reformation of 450 years ago "one of the great turning points of history."

"There are formative periods in history in which the destiny of succeeding generations is determined. The Reformation is one of these."

**STRAIGHT IS THE GATE
TO HEAVEN ABOVE**

Straight is the gate to heaven
above,
And narrow is the way;
Yet there is room in God's great
love
For thee, for thee alway,
For thee, for thee alway.

In Paradise there still is room,
There still is room for thee;
For thee the Saviour hath a home,
Where heavenly mansions be,
Where heavenly mansions be.

Though thousand times ten thou-
sand stand
White-robed in glory there,

There is a place at God's right
hand
For thee in heaven so fair,
For thee in heaven so fair.

In Jesus' heart there still is room,
In heaven is room also,
The gospel message bids thee come,
Praise God who loves thee, too,
Praise God who loves thee, too.

Now God be praised, who even me
A glorious diadem
Will grant when I His glory see
In His Jerusalem,
In His Jerusalem.

—Lina Sandell

(from *The Lutheran Hymnary*)

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