

**T
H
E**

Vol. 3

March 23, 1965

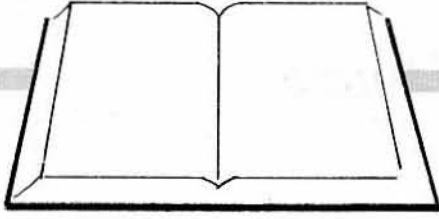
No. 6

LUTHERAN

**A
M
B
A
S
S
A
D
O
R**



—RNS Photo



According to the Word

A Fruit of Salvation

Read I Peter 1:13-16

We live in a competitive age in every field of endeavor. The one who is to serve the Lord today must be willing to make every sacrifice for the fullest development of every God-giving faculty and talent. The Christian does this in hope. So the apostle with his "wherefore" links up the divine basis of our hope in God's revelation of Christ with the added exhortation, "Gird up the loins of your mind." Getting ready is a most important part of preparing for life's task. Just as the long, loose robes of Peter's day had to be gathered up so as not to impede one's progress, so also must the mind be girded. Nothing should be allowed to impede one's thought, such as worry, fear, jealousy, hate, impurity, and an unforgiving spirit. God's Word must have free course in us (II Thess: 3:1).

The Jewish Talmud categorizes students in four classes. Some are like a sponge that sucks up everything, good and bad; others are like a funnel that receives and discharges and holds nothing; others are like a strainer that lets the wine pass through and keeps the lees,

that is, the dregs and sediment. Then there is the student who is like a sieve that discharges the chaff and keeps the corn.

Paul expresses it this way to the Philippians: "That ye may distinguish the things that differ" (Phil. 1:10). Truly, today the Christian needs the power of God's Word to distinguish the things that differ, through the girding up of the loins of our mind in a loyalty to the Word in a study thereof. This is then a call to put our hope to work. This is a fruit of salvation (Eph. 6:14 and Luke 12:35).

This hope is a purifying fire that issues in a holy life (I John 3:3). Hope is thereby strengthened (Rom. 15:13). And what is capable of strength must be made strong. This is a divine law throughout life. The tree sinks its roots to withstand the storm and it is made strong. The glory of God is to have sons and daughters who endure. We cannot live among the flowers all the time, neither on the heights. The valleys call. We learn by trusting to endure. Those who ask, "Is life worth living?" answer by living on. At 32 Beethoven wrote, "For six years I have been a hopeless case, cheated year after year by the hope of improvement. I am deaf. How can I endure an infirmity in the one sense which should have been more perfect in me than in

others? O Providence, grant me at last but one day of pure joy; it is so long since real joy echoed in my heart." That was in 1802. Twenty-four years later Beethoven was standing in a theater in Vienna. A vast audience rose to applaud him at the first performance of the Ninth Symphony. Beethoven stood silently. He couldn't hear a word. Twenty-four years after his complaint he was able to compose a symphony symbolizing the spirit of Joy. It was not because his deafness was cured. He was more cut off than ever. It was what happened within him that made the difference.

It is in the rarified air of our spiritual mountain peaks that our vision becomes clear in fellowship with Him. But the sunbeam in your room is the same as the sunbeam in the sky. So the life that flows into our spirit from Christ is the same as Christ. Let us put it to work and realize the effort. They tell us that two-thirds of the electricity which goes from the generator to the point where it is to work is lost. The deepest love can often only love and be silent. Henry Drummond put it thus: "None but the Christ-like in character know the Christ-like in career." Thus the call to hope is a call to progress in Christ-like living.

—A. L. Hokonson

The Lutheran Ambassador is published biweekly (except the first issue of August) by the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. 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. Third-class postage paid at Minneapolis, Minnesota. Publication office: 6820 Auto Club Road, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55431.

Jesus in a Strange House

by Pastor Ray S. Persson
Bethany Lutheran Church,
Astoria, Oregon

AND one shall say to him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zech. 13:6).

Night had fallen in old Jerusalem and in the darkness of the evening hour, Jesus was taken to visit the house of a friend. Jesus had never visited this house previously, although He surely did know of its location and the inhabitants of it. The residents of the house were designated by Zechariah as friends. There had been other houses that He had visited where the warmth of loving fellowship engendered by the love of God did permeate, but not so in this house. "O happy home, where Thou art loved the dearest; Thou loving Friend and Saviour of our race." For example, there was such a little home in Bethany. It was not a palace with lavish appointments, but there was warmth there, a blessedness, that will ever be remembered and revered as a sanctuary of our Lord.

However, this house of Caiaphas was different. Here was a coldness, the frigid religious formalism from which originated the consuming passion of hatred resulting in the tragedy of the ages. Let us sadly acknowledge that there are houses like that today. O Lord, Thou knowest that we have visited such houses and we have had occasion there to meet with Caiaphas! Such houses exist for the furtherance and preservation of religious order, the enslavement of the souls of men with the shackles of an orthodoxy that does not recognize Jesus as the only Way, the Truth,

and the Life. There is nothing more fierce, nothing more fanatical, more lifeless, than a cold, dead, religious formalism. Such is the house of Caiaphas. Jesus knew where this house was and they knew Him. The spirit of Caiaphas, religious formalism, will never die until the day that "every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

In reciting the Apostles' Creed the indictment is continually put forth that Jesus suffered under Pontius Pilate. However, in the most ancient form it was rather stated that He was crucified under Pilate. There is a difference. In contemplation of the Passion, the question raises itself as to where the greatest suffering of our Lord took place. We might think of Gethsemane, the scourging, the mocking, spitting, the crown of thorns, or the crucifixion. Though possibly the greatest suffering may have been in the house of a friend.

They met in the house of Caiaphas. Jesus was bound and led there. It must have been a sorrowful spectacle to see the Son of God thus arrayed. Contrast, if you will, the thought of His appearance before all the dignity and the solemnity of the high priestly function. A most natural and unfortunate attribute of the Church is to achieve impressive services. There is a great effort to impress. Here, indeed, was something that was impressive. Here was one in the position of high priest who had attained unto the highest position of sacred trust that could ever be achieved in this life. He stood at the pinnacle of the line of priests, the first among the highest type of men. He officiated in the Old Testament sacrificial

service served by five hundred assisting priests. What beautiful and preponderate vestments were his, sanctioned and fashioned by the mind of God. In his dress was symbolized the zenith of a nation, attested to by the gold plate that he wore on his forehead upon which was emblazoned, "Holiness unto Jehovah."

There stood Jesus bound and with such a gentle reminder, "Holiness unto Jehovah." It must have cruelly hurt our Lord to have stood before such a one who was to be acknowledged as God's servant, God's representative, and as such, Jesus' own subordinate and then to know also that there was no holiness in the heart of Caiaphas. There was no love, no justice, no holiness demonstrated in that hour. Jesus, we love you! Here it may be suggested that a great wounding was occasioned unto our Lord. "What more could have been done to His vineyard that He had not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth grapes?"

Wild grapes, indeed, that by the machinations of judicial decree the problem of removing such an offending One should be accomplished. O Jesus, because thy ways are not known and thy condescending, forgiving love, the courts of the land shall be prevailed upon to resolve the differences between blood-bought brethren. There is yet such a thing as the house of Caiaphas.

Now what is it that can cause a man such as Caiaphas to be so blind as to the true nature and intent of the vineyard? Having met those of his kind, we may certainly accord that such a one is sincere.

**FORMER
LUTHERAN FREE CHURCH MAN
GIVES LARGE GIFT
TO HIS CHURCH**

They are sincere! They have no greater desire seemingly than the objective that there shall be established a kingdom of God upon the face of the earth, though assuredly their concept of such a kingdom and how such shall be accomplished may differ markedly from that of Jesus. Caiaphas had a great concern for the preservation of a religious structure, which although it did not impart life, yet it had the outward appearance of that which seemed to represent an impressive instrument of almighty God. This is so even unto our own day. There is the spurious logic that through the efforts, the dignity, and the wisdom of man a religious endeavor can be established that would meet the need of a deteriorating humanity. Thus it shall be accomplished through the denial of long and established blood-bought doctrines, the removal of all that is offensive and judged as hindrances to a so-called brotherhood of men by eliminating the dominance and sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ. Such is the recourse of a lost and dying Church which if it knew its true state would not thereby crucify the Lord of glory.

Out of the morass of rationalistic, pantheistic worship and the desire for the pluralistic and popular Church, there will ever come forth the question, "Tell us plainly whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God." Subsequently there is the answer, "Thou hast said." There is such an answer to the greatest question that has ever presented itself to the hearts of men. In the heart it will have to be learned and experienced, otherwise one can be within the house, such a house as that of Caiaphas, and tragically miss the opportunity for life that is in Jesus.

Is yours the experience of a living relationship with Jesus? Has such a relationship caused you to hunger and thirst for more of His love? Beware, the house of Caiaphas is not too far distant—that cold, legalistic formalism, the sepulchre of a dead faith that finds no joy, no love, no holiness in Jesus.

Thursday was not just an ordinary day in the life of the Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church, Williston.

Ivar Randklev, Zahl farmer now living in Williston, presented \$50,000 toward the debt retirement of his church.

At a specially called meeting of the church council, in a simple ceremony in the church sanctuary, Randklev presented the gift to the congregation by placing it on the altar.

This is the second substantial gift Randklev has given to this community in recent years. In 1961 he contributed \$100,000, in securities, to the Bethel Home Corporation building program.

This stock now has an estimated value of \$209,000.

In addition, Randklev has made big contributions to church institutions in his native Norway.

A bachelor, he came from Ringebu, Gudbrandsdal, and lived in Minnesota for a short time.

In 1905 he homesteaded three and a half miles northeast of Zahl and farmed there until coming to Williston in 1945.

Randklev's wealth was accumulated through grain and livestock farming, and from this capital he began making investments in 1941.

Our Redeemer's is not the first church he helped build, although time has somewhat changed the method of building.

As a charter member of the Ruder Lutheran Church of rural Zahl, he helped haul the concrete for the original church building.

When asked to comment after the \$50,000 presentation, Pastor G. H. Brethem of Our Redeemer's said, "Mr. Randklev has throughout his life sought to be a good steward of his treasures and desires that praise be directed to the One from whom he says his blessings have come."

In December 1961, Our Redeem-

er's occupied new facilities constructed at a cost of \$223,000.

Later the church congregation inaugurated a special debt retirement program.

Applying Randklev's donation, the total debt has now been reduced to about \$61,000.

—Williston *Daily Herald*

(Mr. Randklev is known to some members of the Association. You will notice that his tenure of farming included the years of the great depression in a place where the drouth was felt in its greatest fury. But God blessed him with great means. Are there any in the Association who can share gifts of this size for God's work?—Ed.)

MISSION NOTES

A son was born to Missionary and Mrs. Alvin Grothe at the hospital in Roseau, Minn., on Feb. 22. He is being called Joel Olai and weighed in at 9 lbs. Congratulations.

The Jan. 11 meeting of the Mission Board produced the following resolution: "We recommend to prospective missionary candidates that they prepare themselves adequately by obtaining two years of Bible school training and a liberal arts college degree. For men candidates a seminary degree is also required unless other specialized training has been taken."

The same meeting also asked President John Strand to visit the Nogales mission and to get a first-hand look at the work there. The mission is in Arizona.

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11).

"But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God" (Rom. 5:8, 9).

by Charles DeVries
NLC News Bureau Staff Writer

Jackson, Minn.—(NLC)—The smallest Lutheran church body in the United States—the 119-year-old Eielsen Synod—is fading quietly from the American scene.

Known officially as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Synod now has fewer than 500 members in seven Norwegian-heritage congregations in Minnesota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Iowa.

The Rev. Thore Larson, 60, who operates a 160-acre grain and livestock farm northwest of Jackson, is the only remaining active trav-

A pioneer circuit riding minister, Eielsen represented the Lutheran low-church point of view and expressed opposition to domination of the church by university-trained clergymen, clerical garb and liturgical services. His emphasis was upon pietism, puritanism and lay preaching. Eielsen, a Norwegian immigrant, was an adherent of the philosophy expounded in Norway by Hans Nielsen Hauge (1771-1824), famed lay preacher.

The last census taken in the Eielsen Synod was in 1953. At that time the Synod reported 1,500 baptized members with 1,100 of these listed as confirmed. All three ministers in 1953—Larson, Blanness and

owned by them until 1964.

Annually the Synod members from the small clusters in the four neighboring states meet for spiritual refreshment and fellowship. The last annual conference was held the latter part of May, 1964, in the Stall church near Jackson with 77 attending.

A year earlier, President Larson called attention to the diminishing numbers of the Eielsen Synod and the difficulty of holding regular worship services even on a monthly basis. In his address at Clear Lake, Iowa, to the 1963 annual conference he issued a call for spiritual leaders among the laity:

“We are getting fewer in each

Eielsen Synod Passing From Scene

eling pastor. He has been president of the Eielsen Synod since 1958.

There are two other living pastors. The Rev. J. O. Blanness of South Haven, Minn., a former president, carried on a multiple-parish ministry until last fall. On his 85th birthday, he discontinued driving and is now limited to his home congregation unless transportation is provided. The Rev. J. H. Stensether, 83, of Minneapolis, Minn., former secretary, has been inactive for the past four years following a stroke.

In reply to a request for statistics of the Synod, Mr. Stensether wrote that “this Synod is practically died out. The old people have died, so there are very few left as the younger people join other churches.”

Throughout the small church body's history it has been characterized by rugged individualists following in the tradition of its founder, Elling Eielsen (1804-1883).

Stensether—were active in serving the nine organized congregations in the four upper midwestern states.

Today, according to President Larson, the average Eielsen Synod congregation has about 25 members with the total of all claiming membership in the church body numbering under 500 persons. Exact figures were not available and he stressed that “we don't say numbers. We just say we're a few left—a remnant.”

Three of the Synod's seven congregations are in Minnesota: rural Stall church near Jackson; Eielsen at 3019 - 17th Avenue South in Minneapolis; and rural Immanuel between South Haven and French Lake. In Wisconsin, Bethania church is at Lodi and members of the Taylor (Wis.) church meet in homes for worship. Nazareth Lutheran church continues in Centerville, South Dakota, while members of Bethlehem in Clear Lake Iowa, meet in a church building that now is rented as needed but which was

church; but I am glad we can gather yet and worship God as we think right. But we need help as it gets a long time between services many times. Isn't there someone among us that has the inner call? Someone who could hold meetings when the ministers are not present? If we are to continue, the Lord willing and we live, we must have help!”

However, the dwindling trend of the Synod has continued. There seems to be no additional leadership to assist the lone traveling minister.

As happened to churches of the Synod in previous years, which discontinued when either all the members died, moved away, or could no longer support a church structure, the Eielsen Synod church at Clear Lake was sold to another denomination in early 1964. The Bethlehem congregation there now rents its former building for occasional worship services whenever a pastor can come.

Perhaps one of the strongest remaining congregations is Pastor Larson's own church. It is named after one of its early members, Hans Stall, who donated the land for the white frame structure.

Stall church was erected in 1887. Thirty years later the building was jacked up and a basement put under it for a coal furnace that is still used to heat the 60-seat church. The building is well kept, but has no running water and up to a few months ago still was without electricity. Gas lights were used for illumination.

"We stay by the old way, simple in worship," said Pastor Larson. "An opening hymn, the collect and epistle for the day, a solo if a singer is present, and a sermon followed by benediction."

Although Norwegian was used with English in the church for many years, the last person confirmed at Stall church in the native language was in 1929. Occasional services in Norwegian are held only at the Taylor (Wis.) church.

Pastor Larson, a solidly built individual with strong, large hands and thinning gray hair, was born April 7, 1904, in Jackson County, Minn., where he still resides. He completed eight grades there at District School number 16. He began farming in 1930 and purchased a quarter section of land in 1945 which he continues to farm today with one of his sons.

In 1941, he began traveling among Eielsen Synod congregations as a lay preacher. After seven years of "trial" as a minister, he was ordained on June 6, 1948, by the then Synod president, J. O. Blanness. Ten years later, he was elected president of the Synod.

Farming is a necessity for Pastor Larson since his only pay for his ministry is what members of the congregation choose to give him. He stressed that freewill offerings are the only means of income for the church. Originally it was emphasized in the Eielsen Synod that offerings should not be taken every Sunday.

However, in addition to main-

taining their churches and making small payments to the three pastors, members of the Synod contribute to overseas mission activity through the Hauge Foreign Mission, Inc., of Norway.

Guide for the Synod is the original constitution drawn up by Elling Eielsen and adopted April 13-14, 1846, by "a part of the widely scattered believers" who met at Jefferson Prairie, Rock County, Wis. The constitution was given a second stamp of approval during a similar church conference Oct. 15-16, 1850, held at Koshkonong, Wis., at which time it was signed by Eielsen and 35 adherents.

Pastor Larson said that religious practices and rules of the church follow what is prescribed in the historic document known as the "Old Constitution," drafted 119 years ago. It was the first formal constitution of Norwegian American Lutherans.

Communion is offered in every congregation at least twice a year. The communicants are served wafers and grape juice from a common cup. When preaching, Pastor Larson does not wear vestments, as most Lutheran ministers do, but dresses in a business suit in the tradition of Eielsen.

For a number of years the church body had a monthly publication "Den Kristelige Laegmand" or The Christlike Layman. It was edited by the Rev. J. H. Stensether until ill health forced him to discontinue his ministry a few years ago.

The next annual conference for all Eielsen Synod members is tentatively scheduled for June 11-13, 1965, with one of the existing congregations to be selected as host for the meeting.

Although nearly all historical references to the small Lutheran church body spell the founder's last name "Eielsen," an "o" is substituted for the third "e" when the name is used within the Synod's membership: Elling Eielson and Eielson Synod. The printed copy of the "Old Constitution" also lists the founder's signature as Elling Eielson.

Recent mergers of other Lutheran church bodies have not interested the Eielsen Synod. When asked in the early sixties by a reporter of the Fairmont (Minn.) Sentinel about the prospects of the Synod joining with one of the merging bodies, Pastor Larson replied, "We would prefer to stay outside and keep to our old ways."

THE REDEEMED

Like the ripple of a beautiful thought
Surging into spray,
Is the sunset-side of life's ebb-tide
If Jesus is our Stay,
If Jesus is our Stay.

Like the weaned child's cry for the mother nigh,
Source of still repose,
Is the heavenly goal to the sinner's soul,
If he the Saviour knows,
If he the Saviour knows.

Like the falling hush of the sunset blush,
Stilling day to night,
Breathes the angel-call to freedom,
from thrall,
If Jesus is our Light,
If Jesus is our Light.

Thus like the tide returns to hide
Within the ocean swell,
Abides His own in the Father's home,
By His blood redeemed from hell,
By the Cross redeemed from hell.

March 1934
A. L. Hokonson

"But far be it from me to glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal. 6:14).

"Looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).

Die

IS it necessary to tell people that they can't be saved by their thinking, by their own reasoning and by trying to be good?

One minister, preaching in our mission house, put this question to us: "Have you ever read in your Bible that anyone has been saved by being good?" All saved people say no. But one young man said, in a conversation, "You don't have to tell me about the Bible because I know all about it." It is very probable that an answer like that reveals that such a man knows very little about the Bible—if anything at all. The truth and reality are that no one finds the way of salvation without the revelation from God, without the Bible.

When we here give the heading "Die to Live," many will say it sounds unreasonable. It should rather be the contrary, "Live to Die." When we speak of entering into life eternal or getting possession of spiritual life, then the revelation from God tells us that you must die to live. Let me give you just one word from the Bible, Galatians 2:19: "I through the law died to the law." Don't you think this sounds unreasonable? If you have no experience you will say this sounds ridiculous.

You will say—and many do say—"Be good and try the best you can to keep the law." You have heard some say when they are asked about their relationship to God, "I am doing the best I can." In many cases even that kind of saying is a pure lie. If God shall be able to save you, you must be honest. This talk about doing one's best and God will do the rest is leading the soul astray. It is helping the poor sinner to continue in self-righteousness which will be rejected in the judgment day. The Word says, "For all who rely on the works of the law are under a

curse" (Gal. 2:19). Sinner, don't you know the Word says, "By the law comes the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20)?

Why do people think they are good and righteous? Because they

To

don't know themselves and they do not know the law. Through the law God is helping us to know sin and to know ourselves. In II Corinthians 3:6 we read these words: "For the written code kills, but the Spirit gives life." The written code is the law. The law kills people. That's what Paul says. He had the experience. In Romans 7:13 he says, "Did that which is good bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, working death in me through what is good in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure." Anyone who has been killed by the law will sanction that this is a reality and even thank God for it. This is the conclusion an honest sinner comes to when he, under the law, has tried his uttermost to be righteous before God.

This is what Paul states in the following words: "I through the law died to the law." To this saying Paul adds, "That I might live to God." Anyone who is seeking salvation should be clear on this fact that one must die to the law to be saved. To be saved by the law is work but to be saved by the gospel is faith. This is why Isaiah says, "Hear that your soul may live." Let me give you the connection in which this sentence is stated: "Hearken diligently to me and eat what is good and delight yourselves in fatness. Incline your ear and come to me, hear that your soul may live."

You remember Israel travelling through the desert when they were bitten by poisonous snakes, and how Moses was commanded by

God to make a serpent and place it on a pole and all who had been bitten and who looked at the serpent were healed. That serpent was a type of Christ. It surely was a miracle to be healed by a look at the serpent. You know what the poet says: "There is life for a look at the crucified one." He saw the type of Christ and he saw Christ himself on the "pole."

I will tell you something that

Live

will thrill you—not I, but the Word. In Romans 7:4 you have it: "Likewise, my brethren, you have died to the law through the body of Christ." To understand this read the illustration Paul gives in the three verses previous to verse 4. There is a law between man and wife as long as they both live. But that law is no more if one of them dies. The law is not there any more. The wife is no more wife. She is dead to the law that was between the two. "Likewise, my brethren, you have died to the law through the body of Christ."

You all understand that when Christ died and was buried and rose from the dead, He was not under the law in Palestine any more. He was separated from all law in this world. But you know that Jesus in our substitute. He took our place. He died for us. In II Corinthians 5:14 we read, "For the love of Christ controls us, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died." We not only died in Him, we were also buried and rose in Him. Brother, do you really believe it? I know you do. Here is a passage directly from the Scripture: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too

might walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3, 4).

Our walk now, after we died and were buried and rose with Him, is a walk with Jesus in another world—yes, in the heavenly regions. To be in Jesus is to be free from the law of Moses. In James 1:25 this is called "the perfect law of liberty."

To be under the law of Moses is slavery. The law of Moses is written on tables of stone outside of us. The "perfect law of liberty" is written in us, in our hearts, and so it is liberty (Jer. 31:33; I Cor. 3:4-6).

Pastor Knut Gjesfeld
Thief River Falls, Minn.

SEMINARY NOTICE

Now is the time for young men whom the Lord is calling to become Lutheran pastors to apply for admittance to our seminary. Write to the Dean, Rev. John Strand, in care of the Seminary, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis 27, Minnesota.

We are humbly grateful to the Lord for the good beginning that has been made during the current year in our theological seminary. Many Christians have been praying the Lord of the harvest that He send forth laborers into His harvest. Prayers are being answered, and we praise Him for His wonderful mercy and provision until now.

I have had the privilege of auditing classes conducted by both Dr. Saarnivaara and by Pastor Clair Jennings and I have been convinced that they are gifts from God to us in the Association as well as far beyond our particular fellowship. Let us pray daily for our seminary that true servants of the Lord might go out from it, rightly dividing the Word of truth and clothed with power from on high.

Rev. Fritjof Monseth, Chm.
Seminary Committee

MODERNISTIC FALSIFIED APOSTLES' CREED

Numerous Sunday schools have used the *Bible Memory Helps*, published by the C. R. Gibson & Co., Norwalk, Conn. It has been unchanged for many years, but now Bible-believers have made the shocking observation that some modernist has falsified the Apostles' Creed in it. The words "He descended into hell" have been removed from the text to a footnote with the remark, "For Episcopal, Lutheran, and Reformed churches insert, 'He descended into hell.'" Children will hardly undertake the task of inserting these words into the text, and they are given the impression that belief in Christ's descent into hell (Hades) is just a peculiarity of the Episcopalians, Lutherans, and Reformed and that the words do not really belong in the Creed. The truth is that they belong to the original Creed but some modernists in recent times have removed them from it.

Another change in the Apostles' Creed is that the words "the holy Christian Church" have been replaced with the words "the holy catholic Church," with the footnote, "By the holy catholic Church is meant the Church of God in general." But it is doubtful if children notice it. Their thought is directed to the Roman Catholic Church. Although the word "catholic" means the same as the word "universal," the fact that the Catholic Church uses it makes its use misleading.

The Ten Commandments in the older edition were about the same as in the Small Catechism of Luther, except that the introductory words, "I am the Lord, thy God," are missing. In the new edition they are in the long form in which they are in the Bible and children can hardly learn them in that form. The numbering of the commandments has also been changed to the one used in the Reformed churches.

Do not use any Sunday school

material, not even new editions of old good material, without careful examination. The *Bible Memory Helps* is an example of how unacceptable changes may have been made in a new edition.

Uuras Saarnivaara

LUTHER LEAGUE NEWS

Reminder: At our National Lutheran League Convention we voted for a \$3,000 budget, with a third going to each of the following:

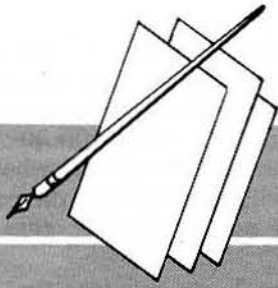
1. Our Seminary library
2. The Nogales Free Lutheran Mission
3. The Headquarters Building Organ Fund

It was certainly sweet of us to decide to give all this money to such worthy causes, wasn't it? But it's one thing to vote for a budget and it's another thing to meet one.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations will be held at the Medicine Lake Lutheran Church, and the Headquarters for the Association, at 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. The conference will begin on Wednesday, June 9, and close with the afternoon session on Sunday, June 13. It is hoped that folks from all our congregations will attend this very important meeting. Further announcements concerning this conference will be given in a succeeding issue of the "Ambassador."

John P. Strand, Pres.
Richard Snipstead, Sec'y
Association of Free
Lutheran Congregations



EDITORIALS

SOME MOTHER'S SON

He was some mother's son, that thief hanging beside Jesus—a son gone wrong. He had gotten in with the wrong crowd. He was a robber. Society was making him pay his debt.

But he could take it. After he was fastened to the cross with the spikes and after the pole had dropped into its hole with a sickening thud, he reviled Jesus (Matt. 27:44) together with the crowd and his partner in crime.

Whether he had any prior knowledge of Jesus or not we don't know, but there on the cross he became convinced that this man next to him was of God—so convinced that he placed his own destiny in his fellow victim's hands. What an act of faith this was! "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingly power."

Talk about not being able to bring anything to God, this robber exemplifies that truth. He had *nothing* to bring. His was a wasted life; now his few hours of remaining consciousness would be followed by unconsciousness. That was all. If anyone was destitute this poor fellow was. *But Christ received him.* "Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

Now listen to this. No man could have brought less than the penitent thief, but no one needs to bring more or can bring more to God. Away with the offering of your deeds to God for salvation. Just *come* to Him. Life is God's gift to give. It seems too great a gift for sinners to receive, but it is not too great a gift for Him to give.

The penitent thief is in Paradise awaiting the resurrection. He is with Jesus—that which he wanted most of all. We shall see him there and learn his name if we place our lives, our futures, as unreservedly in the Savior's hands as he did.

SOME PEOPLE WONDER

It has been called to our attention that some people in reading news reports carried in *The Lutheran Ambassador* wonder if they reflect the attitude of the *Ambassador*. That is, if the news item speaks of dialogue with Roman Catholics, for instance, does this mean that this periodical approves of such dialogue? Perhaps some readers ask the same question

about the quotations carried in "Gleanings from an Editor's Reading."

The answer is that some do and some don't. In our reading we try to cover a variety of subjects and we read papers and magazine which range from conservative to liberal. We print news reports that appear to be of some interest.

Some of the news items or quotations speak of actions or ideas which are definitely contrary to our beliefs (note the quotation on page 15 from *The Lutheran*), some give views with which we heartily agree (note the quotation on page 15 from *Christianity Today*), while the rest arouse no real feeling one way or another (note item about the *Lutheran Encyclopedia* on page 15). We do not classify each item used, telling you what you should believe about it because this would be an insult to your intelligence. Occasionally we do comment editorially on a news report or quotation.

Actually, if readers read the editorial page of a paper they should be able to decide whether such-and-such a news report or quotation is in agreement with editorial policy. Yes, it is true that on some questions we have not yet disclosed our position, but in time we will get to many of them. Would we not agree, too, that we shouldn't come to the place where we print only that with which we agree, or, oppositely, only that with which we disagree?

An editor, being human, does not agree with everything written even by his own constituents or people. But within bounds he is duty-bound to allow freedom of expression. An editorial board also exists to give counsel and guidance in this matter.

And, as we've said before, an editor who works for congregations and people holds his job only as long as he has the confidence of the majority of the people. If he ceases to do that, he's "had it." We began this task of editorship in that knowledge and are perfectly willing to continue under such an arrangement.

We work for some of the finest people on earth, Association people and other friends. It is a pleasure to be of some service to this growing fellowship. To God be the glory!

WE HESITATE TO MENTION

We hesitate to mention snow again, because we have the feeling that one of our editorials last time, "London Snow" (March 9), lost some of its effectiveness since it came into some snowy regions; people in some areas had had their fill of snow, and then "London Snow" came along!

But we aren't going to apologize for it and here is the reason why. Back in our college and seminary days the late Dr. T. O. Burntvedt told us in a chapel talk about a lesson he had learned when he was an Augsburg student.

He was serving a small mission or congregation in Minneapolis. In preparing for a particular Sunday,

he had found what seemed an exceptional illustration for his sermon. But when he came to the service that day, for some reason, there were few people in attendance (snow, maybe?). Feeling that it was a shame to waste such a good illustration on so few people, the student Burntvedt did not use the story that day but withheld it. He worked it into a later sermon and delivered it to a larger audience, but he realized that it failed then and had no impact.

From this experience Dr. Burntvedt gained the conviction that if God gives a man something for a certain occasion he had better use it then rather than wait for a more auspicious time.

We have tried to follow this advice in our ministry. "London Snow" was written with good intentions and before a lot more snow came. It could have been withdrawn later but wasn't. Maybe it brought the word that someone needed just at that time. Let it stand!

WHITHER HOME MISSIONS?

It may be too early to be thinking of such things, but one cannot help but wonder when and where the Association will enter into what is generally thought of as home missions. We understand the term to mean outreach into newly populated areas or into older ones where the church has never come or has left.

There are two compelling reasons why we must get into such mission work and the first one is the chiefest. We must do home mission work because there is a great need to reach American and Canadian urban and suburban areas. It is true that there are many new churches being established, but there is room for us, too. We would offer a Lutheran ministry with an appeal somewhat different than many other churches.

We aren't bound by any home mission regional agreements, but we must take care that we do not needlessly infringe on what might be considered the territory of theirs. We must not be a church which

lives by siphoning off the fruit of others' labors.

A second reason why we must get into this sort of home missions is the need for self-preservation and survival. We will have to be where the people are for growth and advancement. We are overwhelmingly rural at present. We will never forsake the rural congregation, but we must not put all our eggs in one basket.

Then, too, we hope that home missions for the Association will mean more than these things. We hope that it will mean Indian missions and inner city missions. Such work is tough and unglamorous. It may be that the Lord will not expect such effort from us. But then again, perhaps He will lay the burden of these causes upon some hearts. And if so, let's be ready to take action.

REALIZATION

At the close of day, I bowed my head.
 "Be merciful to me, a sinner," I said.
 (Events of the day slowly passed by—
 As if written legibly across the sky.)
 This morning far too busy was I
 To kneel and talk to God on high.
 At noon I forgot to bow my head
 And thank the Lord for daily bread.
 Yet confident I went on all the day,
 Hoping to appease the Lord in some way.
 Suddenly I could see the vision clear:
 "Self-righteous people not wanted here!"
 Shamefully I bowed my proud head.
 "God, be merciful to me, a sinner," I pled.
 "I cannot save my soul alone—
 Your grace and shed blood did atone
 For salvation, my soul to set free."
 Forgiveness and redemption, all from Thee.
 I thank Thee, God, that we can find
 Full redemption for all mankind.

Mrs. Arnold McCarlson
 Webster, S. Dak.

AT CALVARY

I climbed the hill to Calvary
 In my thoughts this very day.
 I thought I heard my Savior—
 This is what He seemed to say:
 "You've been so very busy—
 From early morn till night—
 "Tending to your daily needs;
 And this is good and right.
 Take heed, lest in your hurry
 You fail to seek My face.
 That quiet time alone with Me

Should always have first place.
 I died that you might be forgiven:
 I conquered Satan there;
 I claimed you for My own dear child
 To guard with jealous care."
 As I descended from that climb
 I felt His presence still.
 I once again took up my cross
 And sought to do His will.

Mrs. Milton Tollefson
 Leonard, Minn.

"But he was wounded for our
 transgressions,
 he was bruised for our iniquities;
 upon him was the chastisement
 that made us whole,
 and with his stripes we are
 healed.
 All we like sheep have gone
 astray;
 we have turned every one to
 his own way;
 and the Lord has laid on him the
 iniquity of us all."

(Isa. 53: 5, 6)



Letters

TO THE EDITOR

I would like to express my reaction to the article on speaking in tongues in the February 9th issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador* by the Board of Administration of the Association of the Free Lutheran Congregations. It is regrettable that they feel they must take this attitude towards a definite gift recorded in Scripture.

I am fully aware of the problem the church at Corinth had with this. Also, I am aware of the misuse and wrong emphasis certain Pentecostal groups have with this gift today. However, in my acquaintances there are many, among them Lutherans, who have this gift. And I must say that they have a radiant and powerful witness for Jesus Christ that surpasses any I have seen among those Christians who do not have the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

II Timothy 3:16 and 17 tells us, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." I don't believe we can ignore it with a perfectly clear conscience; I cannot. The apostle Paul said in I Corinthians 14:39b, "Forbid not to speak in tongues," and in verse 5 of the same chapter he said, "I would that ye all spake with tongues." What he said against speaking in tongues does not nullify this speaking when it is done decently and in order that the church may receive edification.

I truly believe that we miss out on a real blessing from God if we turn our backs on the gifts of the

Holy Spirit, of which the gift of tongues is one of the nine recorded in I Corinthians 12. I believe if we as Christians will take the Scriptural viewpoint according to Acts 8:14-17, Acts 10:44-48 and Acts 19:1-7, as these apostles did, there probably would be a revival in the Christian Church such as we have never witnessed—yes, right in the midst of the apostasy of our day.

Please accept this criticism in Christian love, with a constructive intent on the writer's part, who wants and needs every gift and power from the Lord that He sees fit to entrust him with that he might be a fit vessel for the Master's use.

James Erickson, Chairman of the Lutheran Mission Church of Beloit, Wis.

A statement on tongues in the Feb. 9th issue of the *Ambassador* was a startling edict from a group that withdrew from an entangling alliance so they could stand on the Word of God.

There are Christians wondering if there won't be an unmerger soon, if there are those in this Free Association who really stand on the Word of God. Satan is so cunning; he uses such deceiving names. Free association—free from what? The interference of God in their lives? The Word of God says, "Forbid not to speak in tongues"; also, "With stammering lips and another tongue will I speak to this people." It is so sad when a group separates and arrives at a point where they legislate against the Word and work of the Holy Spirit. We know we should love

our neighbor, but we build our fences so high we can't see them.

I am only wondering what will happen to the born-again believers who believe in Genesis and the New Testament as well as in this Free Association. If these legal, man-made decrees are going to predominate—only for a season, to be sure—I hope they get free from it soon.

An old Christian said, "There isn't much spiritual in the *Ambassador*." This is discouraging. There are enough dead groups with neo-orthodoxy and modernism without having both the prodigal and the stay-at-home away from God.

We enjoyed so much the singing and testimonies of the *Ambassador* quartette. May we stand for God and His testimony in these closing days. We are thankful for the good things you stand for and your rejection of the things that are contrary to the Word of God. May we be consistent and embrace the whole counsel of God by faith.

Arthur Knudson
Aneta, N. Dak.

LORD JESUS, BY THY PASSION

Lord Jesus, by Thy passion,
To Thee I make my prayer;
Thou who in mercy smitest,
Have mercy, Lord, and spare.

O wash me in the fountain
That floweth from Thy side!
O clothe me in the raiment
Thy blood hath purified!

O hearken to my knocking,
And open wide the door,
That I may enter freely
And never leave Thee more!

O give that last, best blessing,
That even saints can know,
To follow in Thy footsteps
Wherever Thou dost go!

Not wisdom, might, or glory,
I ask to win above;
I ask for Thee, Thee only,
O Thou eternal love.

Richard E. Littledale
(from *The Concordia Hymnal*)

The Confessional Position of a Lutheran Christian

OUR age is impatient of all authority and restraint, in spiritual as well as in temporal things. Hence adherence to a formulated confession of faith is not a marked characteristic of our age. It is rather characterized by a pronounced opposition to all religious creeds and a bold venture into the unknown in quest of something to satisfy the yearning and whims of the soul set free from its moorings, drifting about on the broad sea of religious uncertainty without a positive faith, a definite hope, and a sure and reliable guide. The great cry of the day is for more liberty, liberty to think and liberty to act in accordance with one's own sweet pleasure and changing fancies, little realizing that authority and liberty are inseparably conjoined. For without authority and a free submission to it there can be no truly stable and satisfying liberty but only bondage to the fleeting whims of self and others.

Truth may be assailed and perverted, falsehood may be substituted for it, but truth is eternal and cannot be destroyed.

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again

But error wounded writhes in pain

And dies among its worshippers."

Truth accepted brings liberty; truth rejected brings bondage. "Ye shall know the truth," said Jesus, "and the truth shall make you free."

Paul was the bondservant of Christ and yet he was his own freedman and set forth very clearly and distinctly the nature and province of Christian liberty. Bound though he was to Christ and his gospel as the sole authority and guide of his life and conduct, so that he can say, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21), he nevertheless declares that in Christ he is free, asserting, "For freedom did Christ set us free.

Stand fast, therefore, and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1).

His idea of the freedom of thought is far from being narrow but allows for the fullest possible latitude for all kinds of noble and constructive thinking, for such thinking is in harmony with the believer's relation to Christ and His gospel. This relation spells nothing less than the highest type of humanity and the utmost freedom of thought and action, consistent with a Christ-like, Spirit-filled life. Therefore Paul says: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8). He allows, however, no room or liberty for thoughts that debase and corrupt, for they are inconsistent with the very nature of Christian life, subversive of the best interests of the individual believer himself, and if persisted in will result in spiritual suicide. He declares that we are called to freedom, but not to use our freedom as an occasion to the flesh (Gal. 5:13), for if we live after the flesh, we must die (Rom. 8:13). Christian liberty is thus a liberty to promote, participate in, and enjoy all things that contribute to life and shun everything that contends to self-destruction and death.

Our church father, Martin Luther, was also a champion of Christian liberty, and he wrote a classic on the subject; yet he was definitely bound to an authority which was fixed and definite, for his conscience was bound in the Word of God. At the Diet of Worms in 1521, he stood before the young emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and many of the chief dignitaries of Church and State. Before him lay a stack of books and pamphlets which he had

written against the corruptions and false teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. pointing to these books, the spokesman for the Church of Rome demands that Luther recognize them as his and retract what he has stated therein. But Luther courageously declares before this august and powerful body, "I cannot submit my faith either to the Pope or to the councils because it is as clear as noon-day that they have often fallen into error and even into glaring inconsistency with themselves. If, then, I am not convinced by proof from Holy Scripture or by cogent reasons; if I am not satisfied by the very texts that I have cited; and if my judgment is not in this way brought into subjection unto God's Word, I neither can nor will retract anything; for it cannot be right for a Christian to speak against his own conscience. I stand here and can say no more, God help me. Amen." Bound though he is to the authority of the Word of God, he declares his freedom from every bondage, spiritual and material, maintaining the individual's right to freedom of conscience and liberty of thought and action, when that conscience is illumined by the divine Spirit and bound in the infallible Word of God. The position here taken by the bound, yet free, monk has been of the most inestimable value to the development of both the political and religious liberties which we in so large a measure enjoy today. We have here an indisputable proof of the assertion made above that authority and liberty are inseparably conjoined.

Says Carlyle, the noted English writer, in his book *Heroes and Hero Worshipers*, "The Diet of Worms, Luther's appearance there on the 17th of April, 1521, may be considered as the greatest scene in modern European history; the point, indeed, from which the whole subsequent history of civili-

[Continued on page 16]

WOMEN for Christ

WAIT FOR THE LORD

"I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His Word do I hope" (Ps. 130:5).

I wait for the Lord—it is the individual who waits for the Lord. This is the testimony of the psalmist. He waits and hopes in the Word of the Lord.

Paging through the Psalms, we find the word "wait" repeatedly. Wait, rest, trust in the Lord is the constant admonition. Why? Because by nature we are in the night. We know not the way. Our knowledge, sense and sight lie in the deepest darkness. The thoughts of man are vanity. The heart is cold and dark and dull. Our souls are dependent upon Him, for He is God. He is the Lord, the only Master. He knows the way.

"My soul, wait thou only for God," David said. "My expectation is from him." One cannot wait and go at the same time. To wait is the opposite of to go. To wait is not to give up nor is it to be doing, hoping one does right. No, to wait is to be still in expectancy. Progress is stayed for want of the Master's Word. It is not wasted time to wait for the Lord, for all labor is vain apart from Him.

"In thy word do I hope," the psalmist said. "Speak the word only and my servant shall be healed," the centurion said to Jesus. Peter had labored all night and caught no fish. Then came the word, "Cast the net on the right side of the

boat," and there were fish, great fish in the net. It was at the word of the Lord.

The Israelites experienced the meaning of the word "wait" when they were encamped near the Red Sea with the Egyptians in hot pursuit. They were frantic and accused Moses of leading them out into the wilderness to die. But Moses said, "Fear not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." Then Moses cried unto the Lord, for his hope was in the Word from God, and God gave the command which provided the way for the Israelites to go. God had everything under control! The angel of the Lord who went before them went also behind them. The pillar of cloud went from before their face and stood behind them, serving as darkness to the Egyptians but light to the Israelites. How long did they have to wait for this word from God? All night. Why? Because God was preparing them and their way of escape. In the morning, at His word, they walked across the sea on dry land. They had waited for the Lord, and what was life to them was death to the enemy.

Another illustration of the meaning of "wait" is found in the crossing of the river Jordan by the Israelites forty years later. The priests who bore the Ark of God were commanded to stand on the bottom of the river (which was now dry land while the water of

the river was held back in a heap). There they waited while the entire company passed over; forty thousand soldiers, women, children and all their possessions moved slowly by them into the promised land. The priests waited until Joshua had finished all that God had commanded him. They waited until Joshua had the command from God that they could leave their appointed post. They waited for him who waited for God who held back the waters by the word of His power.

One who truly waited upon God was Jesus. "I do nothing of myself," He said. He did always the things that pleased His Father; therefore He was without sin. Every step He took was God-guided. Thus He obeyed the voice of God and rebuked the voice of man.

At the wedding in Cana they were without wine. Mary, the mother of Jesus, said unto Him, "They have no wine." But He said, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" Mary was rebuked, but why? Perhaps Adam can explain this. "She shall be called 'woman,'" he said when God brought Eve to him as his helpmate, "because she is taken out of man." The voice of Mary was the voice of man, and Jesus waited for His Father's voice. "Mine hour is not yet come," He told His mother. Jesus loved His mother dearly, as He did all mankind, even to the degree of laying down His life for them, but had He obeyed His mother at this point He would have despised His Father. This conflict was first revealed when He was twelve years old. "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" He asked His mother when she had sought Him, thinking Him lost.

During the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus' brethren, His mother's sons, met Him in Galilee and said to Him, "Go into Judah that thy disciples may see the works that thou doest." (They did not believe in Him as the Son of God.) But Jesus said, "My time is not yet come but your time is always ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that

the works therefore are evil. Ye go, but my time is not yet fully come." He waited for His Father's appointed time and would not take orders from man.

We have seen two sides and these are opposed to one another. The one side is *man* and the other is *God*—yet in Jesus we see both. His walk here on earth was literally the walk of complete self-denial. This path was marked out for Him from eternity. He was tempted in all points like as we but without sin—and He "learned obedience" through much suffering. As the true Son of Man He subdued His will under the will of God the Father. And this by His own free will. Even so, when the death blow was before Him in the Garden of Gethsemane, He prayed to the Father with strong crying and tears, knowing that He was able to save from death, even yet. But He was resigned, praying, "Not my will but thine be done." And God's will was to put Him, the Son of Man, to death, the complete sacrifice for sin. And Jesus was willing.

So the Son of Man was crucified. The seed of the woman was put to death. Strange! God loved the world and gave His only begotten Son. But the world hated its own Son, because He testified to what was in man, and killed the very One through whom it had its only inheritance.

As a deep darkness this judgment hung over the earth, but as with the dawn of a new day so dawned a new hope. He was dead, but behold, He liveth. "He died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again" (II Cor. 5:15). "Blessed are all they that wait for Him" (Isa. 30:18).

—Mrs. O. K. Ose

National WMF President

PERSONALITIES

Rev. John DeBoer is presently serving a number of congregations in the Bagley-Fosston area until June 1. His address is Fosston, Minn.

ASSOCIATION PASTORS

MET IN FARGO

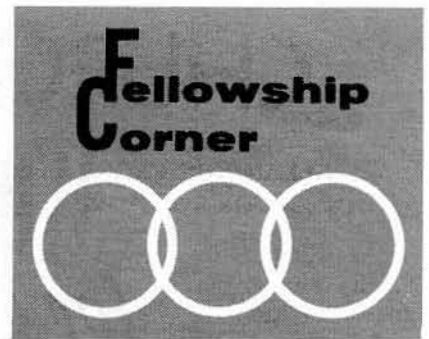
The second annual Pastoral Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations was held at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Fargo, N. Dak., March 1-3. Pastors were present from Washington, Montana, South Dakota, Iowa, Minnesota and North Dakota.

The conference marked the first opportunity that pastors of the church have had to engage in discussion in some depth with the professor of the seminary, Dr. Uuras Saarnivaara, Minneapolis, Minn. They heard him give three lectures on *Ordo Salutis* (the Latin term for "the order of salvation"). Dr. Saarnivaara presented papers on baptism and conversion, Law and Gospel, and repentance and forgiveness. In addition he discussed the most common English versions of the Bible.

The conference opened Monday night with the traditional service of Holy Communion. Host pastor, Rev. E. Edward Tornow, officiated. The sermon was preached by Pastor F. B. Monseth, Valley City, N. Dak. He used John 1:29-34 as his text, the passage in which John the Baptist pointed to the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Several Association pastors presented essays on various topics. Karl Stendal, Kalispell, Mont., considered "Church Discipline in a Free Congregation," Raynard Huglen, Roslyn, S. Dak., discussed "Pastoral Ethics," and Karl G. Berg's paper on "A Free Congregation Faces the Divorce Question" was read by Mr. Monseth in Mr. Berg's absence. Berg is from Pukwana, S. Dak. Group discussion followed all of these.

A banquet was held at the church on Tuesday evening, the meal served by the women of St. Paul's. Pastor Arvid Hokonson, Faith, S. Dak., was master of ceremonies. Association president, Rev. John P. Strand, Minneapolis, Minn., spoke on the topic, "The Association Faces the Future." He asked the



"O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name *together*" (Ps. 34:3). We rejoice that the Lord put it on the heart of our editor to have a section in our paper for, as it were, a testimony and fellowship meeting in print. What a wonderful way for us who are saved through the precious blood of Jesus to thus share the Word and our experiences in the Lord with one another and thus become better acquainted!

This *togetherness* in our blessed Savior is so important in the battle for souls in which we as Christians are engaged both at home and on the foreign field.

Let us therefore stand *together*, loving souls *together*, praying *together*; and by His marvelous grace, we shall share in the great homegoing *together*, for we read in I Thessalonians 4:17 of that blessed hope: "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up *together* with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Mr. and Mrs. T. L. Sand
Spicer, Minn.

following questions: what are we? why are we? where are we? and what of the future? He closed by saying that our biggest need is spiritual awakening, but one which comes from God, not men.

Devotional services were led by Mr. Strand, Mr. Melvin Walla, Tioga, N. Dak., and Pastor Hans Tollefson, Hatton, N. Dak.

The Pastors' Conference was followed by a Bible conference sponsored by the Eastern North Dakota District, March 3-5.

CHURCH-WORLD NEWS

GLEANINGS FROM AN EDITOR'S READING

The drumbeat for union has been heard so much that this theme has become a kind of first and great commandment. One may publicly express uncertainty about the authority of the Scriptures, the virgin birth of Jesus, and the bodily resurrection, and yet remain in full communion in his denomination. But to raise questions about union is to ask for a sentence of exile from one's fellowship. It is to give evidence that one is not aware of the fresh wind blowing through our theological corridors. It is to be out of step with the great forward march of Christendom. To be lukewarm here is to be a Samuel who has not heard the voice, a Saul who has not seen the light, a Moses who has not turned aside.—Russell L. Jaberg in *Christianity Today*, Jan. 29, 1965.

Lack of theological education is offset by the tradition that sermons must be true to the Bible. The Russian examines what the New Testament teaches about man and God, sets it in the unfolding context of the whole Bible as a unity, and proclaims it. For him the Bible as received is the revealed Word of God, to be proclaimed: and he believes unquestioningly that the Holy Spirit applies His Word to the minds and hearts of the sincere. The Bible speaks to his condition, makes sense. He seeks to live by it, but seems free of mechanical text-throwing or text-tearing; probably because to him the risen Christ, "the Lord," is his nearest Friend and "the Word" is no jumble of formulae but the means by which the Lord teaches, an inexhaustible mine of wisdom.—J. C. Pollock in *Eternity*, February, 1965.

This is rather hard going for ordinary people who aren't entirely sure whether they have heard the gospel. Protestants in the time soon

after the Reformation toned down Luther's teaching. They said the Word of God is the Bible. It's the infallible book and everything in it is most certainly true.

So Protestants also had an authority, just as the Catholics did. For Roman Catholics the authority was the church and for Protestants it was the Bible.

This was an odd development which would have greatly disturbed Luther who had been very free in his criticism of the Bible. He said that several of the books of the New Testament are of doubtful value. He admitted that the Bible makes mistakes here and there, but said it does not matter because in the Bible the gospel is preached and that's all that matters.—Editor in *The Lutheran* (LCA), Feb. 24, 1965.

LUTHERAN ENCYCLOPEDIA DUE OCTOBER 31 IN THREE VOLUMES

Los Angeles—(NLC)—The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church, a 2,500-page international reference work describing Lutheran interests, doctrine, and action, will be published in three volumes on October 31, 1965.

Publication plans for the encyclopedia, which has been in preparation for more than a decade, were announced by Dr. Fredrik A. Schiotz of Minneapolis, president of the American Lutheran Church and also president of the Lutheran World Federation, sponsor of the monumental project.

Dr. Schiotz reported to the National Lutheran Council at its 47th annual meeting here that the encyclopedia will be published by ALC at its Minneapolis plant, with a first edition of 10,000 copies. Price of the three-volume boxed set, he said, will be \$37.50.

The volumes, each containing some 800 pages, will be printed by

the offset process and will be bound in heavy-weight buckram with jackets and slip cases. Page size will be 7 inches by 10¼ inches.

More than 700 authors, chosen to represent all sections of world Lutheranism, have contributed some 3,000 articles and biographies to the encyclopedia, which, Dr. Schiotz said, will be the most comprehensive Lutheran reference work in the English language.

Included in the contents will be such subjects as doctrine, ethics, church history, church organization and government, Christian education, worship, religious art, missions, and welfare ministries. The text will be illustrated by photographs.

CHURCHMEN HIT FOR CRITICISM OF U.S. ROLE IN VIET NAM

Los Angeles—(NLC)—A Lutheran spokesman here frowned on churchmen who advise the U. S. Government either to get out of Viet Nam or to have a showdown.

Although not referring to any particular religious groups, the Rev. E. O. Midboe of Washington, D.C., gave short shrift to religious critics who ask government acceptance of their solutions to the Vietnamese problem.

Mr. Midboe, executive secretary of the National Lutheran Council's Division of Service to Military Personnel, spent six weeks of the past summer in the Far East and Southeast Asia.

In remarks preceding his formal report to the NLC's 47th annual meeting here, the Lutheran military affairs specialist said that he could not agree with the "ranks of churchmen who either condemn American participation in South Viet Nam or those who call for a showdown in South East Asia."

"I am not assuming the role of a tactician here today," he said,

For W-1
STANLEY HOLMAAS
NEWFOLDEN MINN

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Minneapolis, Minn.
Permit No. 1521

"and I shall refrain from comments on the military or political situation. These are matters far too profound to be discussed by one who has spent only a few days in a country where those who have lived there most of their lives are frankly stumped."

Mr. Midboe said that planning the strategy of the free world in this or any other area of the world is a matter which belongs to the "kingdom of the left hand" (government).

"When churchmen pontificate on such matters in which they are not experts," he asserted, "they run the danger of confusing the law and the Gospel; confounding the two kingdoms."

Of the 386 Americans reported killed in Viet Nam, Mr. Midboe said that one chaplain is numbered among them. In no other place, except perhaps Korea, are the chaplains as welcome and their ministry as much appreciated as in South Viet Nam, Mr. Midboe told the NLC councillors.

"BALAAM'S ASS" JOINS CAMPUS COFFEE HOUSES

New York—(NLC)—Two campus coffee houses, one called "Balaam's Ass" and the other "The Burning Stake," have opened at western universities under interdenominational programs involving Lutheran cooperation.

The former, named after a donkey in a Biblical account found in the Book of Numbers, is located at the University of Utah. The latter is at the University of Idaho.

Announcing Lutheran participation in the two coffee houses was the Rev. John Arthur of Palo Alto, Calif., western secretary for the Division of College and University Work of the National Lutheran Council.

The division secretary, Dr. A. Henry Hetland of Chicago, noted in a recent address in Washington that coffee houses operate as places where persons of all faiths or none can openly discuss whatever they wish.

Stressing that religious commit-

ment is not presupposed or sought, he described them as "an opportunity for faith and unbelief, for commitment and uncertainty, to meet on neutral grounds—an honest meeting of persons for its own sake."

"They are signs of the times in the academic world," he added, "as viewed from the perspective of people professionally attending to spiritual needs."

Nearly 40 coffee houses have opened on the nation's college and university campuses in the last two years, latest reports show, and approximately ten involve Lutheran participation of varying degrees.

"Balaam's Ass," the University of Utah coffee house, is open Tuesday evenings with the Rev. Stanford R. Hall, a Lutheran campus pastor, and Father James Brown, an Episcopal campus priest, in charge of the programs.

Balaam, it was noted, was a seer engaged by the King of Moab to pronounce a curse upon the Hebrews. The talking donkey on which he rode was used by God to instruct Balaam, and the prophet instead pronounced a blessing.

The coffee house features programs of music ranging from folk to jazz, drama, discussion, and conversation, and professional entertainers as well as students have donated their talents to the enterprise.

[Continued from page 12]

zation takes its rise. The world's pomp and power sat there, on this hand; on that, stands up for God's truth one man, the poor miner, Hans Luther's, son. Our petition—the petition of the whole world—to him was: 'Free us; it rests with thee; desert us not.' Luther did not desert us. It is as we say, the greatest moment in the modern history of man. English puritanism, England and its parliaments, America's vast work these two centuries, French revolution, Europe and its work everywhere at present—the germ of it all lay there. Had Luther in that moment done other, it had

all been otherwise."

The confessional position of every follower of Luther must necessarily be the same. To him liberty of conscience and freedom of action depended upon his personal relation to Christ and the infallible Word of God. Here he has a safe anchor, bound to which his vessel may ride in safety the fiercest storm. Holding firmly fast to this authority and submitting freely to it, he has the highest degree of personal liberty, earthly bliss and enjoyment, and the fullest assurance that, having fought the good fight and kept the faith unto the end, he shall receive the crown of everlasting glory.

—The Friend

(This article was written by the late Dr. G. M. Bruce, professor at Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.)