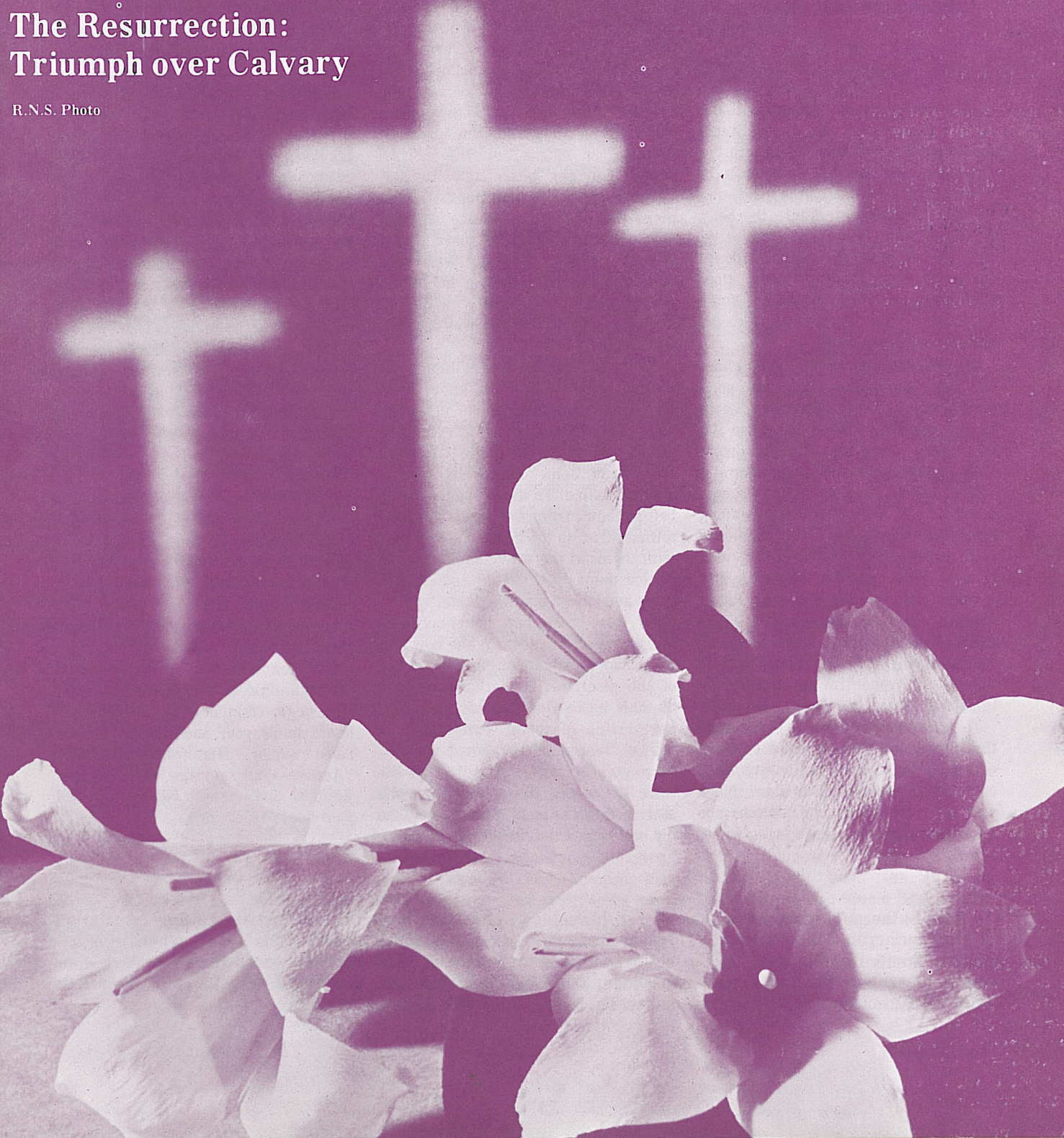


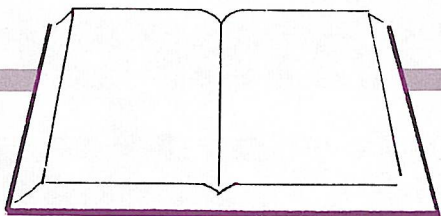
March 30, 1971

The Lutheran Ambassador

The Resurrection:
Triumph over Calvary

R.N.S. Photo





According to the Word

THE OCCUPYING SEARCH

Text: John 20:11-14

"But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they said unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him... and she saw Jesus standing..."

We are told previously in the chapter that Peter and John had gone back home. Mary Magdalene continued standing there. In verse 10, we read: "Then the disciples went away again unto their own home." "BUT MARY." That "But Mary" intrigues me. Why didn't she go along home like the others? The sepulchre was empty. They had seen the linen clothes inside and the napkin neatly wrapped and placed apart by itself. Someone had lain these grave clothes aside and was gone. Had someone taken away their dead Lord, or was there some wonderful explanation for this?

The disciples evidently concluded that there was nothing more to learn or see at the spot of the empty tomb and so had returned. But Mary, her's was not just a physical search, nor a mental search. Her's was heart

search and it occupied her every waking moment. Why should she go away, to whom should she go? Where could she be nearer her beloved Lord, than in the place she had helped lay Him to rest? She was not a theologian. Her mind was not theorizing on resurrections or spirits, or life beyond death, but her heart said to her, "Linger on," or perhaps, "Your memories of His person are stronger here than in any other place, tarry a while." There certainly was some sort of a search going on in Mary's great desire to identify with her Master, and right now it was a heart-occupying search.

Vs. 11—As Mary stood without, her aching heart wanted to know what disposition had been made of Jesus' body. An ancient church father, Chrysostom, says, "The going away of Peter and John commends Mary's staying behind. To the grave she came before them, from the grave she went telling them, to the grave she returned with them, at the grave she remained behind them." We read, "She stooped down and looked into the grave."

At this point her heart-occupied search was rewarded, for she now saw what had escaped the cursory glance of the disciples, or perhaps because of their haste God had not chosen to reveal this to them: two angels in white. They said unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" Hardly had she time to answer the angels than she saw a third person, Jesus. Yet she did not immediately recognize Him,

not even when He repeated the angel's question. Then her heart-occupied search was fully rewarded, for she heard her name and she recognized her Savior. "Mary." She turned, and I can imagine it was almost a startled jump as she realized it was the voice of Jesus. She saw Him. "Master!" "Touch me not," He said, restraining her joy, "for I am not yet ascended to my Father." And then He was gone! And now Mary could also go on her way rejoicing, her heart-search was over. "HE LIVES, Hallelujah! He Arose! My Savior goes before me! Hallelujah, He Lives!"

Did you notice that there was no outcry of fear or alarm when Mary saw the angels? Gaebelien says, "Mary's heart was so fully occupied with the Lord and the absence of His Holy body, that she was delivered from all fear." How about your "search to find, to follow and to serve the Lord"? Is it the one great occupying search of your life? Jesus promises, "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matt. 7:7). When you have taken Him as your risen, personal Savior, make your life's occupation an every occupying "Search to Serve." Perhaps you could best begin right now by bowing your heart in prayer, and talking to this risen Savior. His word promises: "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jer. 29:13).

John H. Abel

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. Volume 9, Number 7

IF YOU ONLY KNEW WHAT I KNOW

by Rev. Roy Bredholt
Grand Forks, N. Dak.

John 20:11-15

Why are you weeping? This was the question Mary Magdalene was asked that first resurrection morning.

And notice that the question was asked, not just once, but twice. The first time by the angels whom she saw sitting where the body of Jesus had been. The second time by the risen Lord Jesus Himself.

In one way, this question might seem very strange coming from Jesus and His messengers. They should have known why Mary was crying. And, of course, they did. Yet, the question seems to have had the one specific purpose of trying to lead Mary to a realization of a tremendous fact, the fact that her reason for weeping no longer existed. She had no reason for despair.

Possibly you have heard the story of the young boy who was found awake late at night long after he normally should have been asleep. His father wondered, as he saw the light coming from under the door of his son's room, what the boy might be doing at that time of night. Listening at the door for a moment, he heard his son chuckling and saying something like this, "If you only knew what I know." Then he'd chuckle and repeat the phrase again, "If you only knew what I know."

When the father entered the room, he learned this. His son was reading a Wild West thriller and he'd gotten to the middle of the book where the plot was getting thicker and thicker, where the hero was being outrageously wronged and persecuted, abused and disgraced. The villain of the story was winning at every point and gloating in his triumph. When the boy couldn't stand it any longer, he did what many are prone to do. He turned to the last chapter to see the end of

the story. And there he saw the hero gloriously vindicated and the villain suitably punished. Then returning to the middle of the story, instead of agonizing, he began rejoicing in the middle of the dark plot because he knew that without a doubt everything would end well.

This is the intent of the question asked of Mary, the same question that can be asked of each one of us, too. Why are you weeping? Aren't you aware that the victory has been won and that you have every reason in the world for rejoicing even in the middle of frustrations, despair and gloom? Don't you know that like that small boy in the middle of his book, those who trust in Jesus Christ as personal Savior and Lord can chuckle, "If you only knew what I know," to the skeptical world? That's because we know what the ending will be.

Think for a moment of what a radical claim this is. We who trust in Jesus have no real reason for weeping. We who trust in the death and resurrection of Christ no longer have any reason for being sad or gloomy or discouraged in the face of what often seems to be such a frustrating existence.

This doesn't mean that we become people without emotions or feelings. It doesn't mean that we aren't going to weep when death or tragedy in some form may hit home. But even though we may weep, and even though we become sorrowful, allowing our emotions to have an outlet, the reason for prolonged grief, the reason for bemoaning as the world often does, a cruel and heartless fate, just does not exist for the child of God, the person who has placed his full trust in Christ Jesus.

Paul expressed it better in his first letter to the Church at Thessalonica, when he said, "But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no

hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep."

Notice that Paul doesn't say we aren't to grieve. Feeling a deep sense of loss at the death of a loved one is a natural outpouring of human emotion. But Paul is telling us not to despair. Despair marks the life of those who have no hope.

It has been rightly said that very few people can take death in as a friend. There is always something foreboding and treacherous about death. It is really like walking into a dark canyon without being able to see the opening ahead. Death can never be a pleasant thing. And as a nation we are trying to do all kinds of things to postpone death. We pour millions into research and follow every clue that might possibly help us say no to death. There are even those who speak seriously about freezing the body at the instant of death and preserving it in cold storage until some future date when the cure for the particular disease has been found. The body will then be thawed out and the cure applied. But this is still a "far out" hope for those who continue to die all around us. And so when death does come we put it in a fancy package in a sweet-smelling room because we can't stand what it really means. And what does it really mean?

It means finally coming to grips with our sins and our alienation from the Person who created us for Himself. There is now no more running away. No more dodging the issue. There are no more appeals. The final judgment is in and tragically that judgment for the person without hope in Jesus is sure and final separation from God forever.

It's true, of course, that we've heard of some who refuse to trust in Jesus who say they don't fear death. They say they are not afraid to die. But down deep in their hearts they are be-

wildered and concerned. They can't possibly deny that our world is in the grip of death. They can't permanently close their eyes to the fact that our lives are constantly being threatened by death, whether violent or natural. Death you see is really our next door neighbor. We feel its presence and it makes us nervous. And it has greater influence on our character and on our attitudes than we care to admit. This applies to entire nations as well as individuals.

Today the fear of destruction has become the single most powerful force in world statesmanship and politics. Reflecting the concerns of their people, leaders throughout the world continue to speak wistfully about peace, yet with despair in their hearts because peace never comes. And the reason it never comes is because the vast majority insist on trying to find the answer without Jesus, with the inevitable result that millions continue to laugh on the outside while weeping on the inside. The temptation for Christians in this day and age is to weep and wring their hands along with the world. And, while in one sense we must be aware of the needs of those all around us, we must also constantly be asked the question, "Why are you weeping?" lest we fall into the trap of looking only at the present and failing to remember that we already know the ending.

The wonderful news of Easter is that the resurrection of Jesus Christ has torn a hole in the fog of despair and gloom that enshrouds the world we live in. It is no longer true that it is only a world of death, a world of despair. It is just not true that there is no point or purpose to life, as many young people in our country have been led to believe. Some of you may recall the story Billy Graham told during his last crusade in Madison Square Garden. It was about a policeman in New York who saw a young man standing on a bridge getting set to jump and "end it all." The officer went up to try and talk him out of it. The young man said, "No, my problems are so great that I'm just going to commit suicide." The policeman said, "All right, I'll make a deal with you. I'll give you five minutes to tell me why life is not worth living and you give me five minutes to tell you

why it is." So they talked for ten minutes. Then they both jumped in.

And you know, that's probably about as accurate a picture as there is of how many people feel these days. They feel their problems can't be solved. There's no answer. There's no way out.

In 1969, a Pennsylvania State University Junior jumped to his death. A minister went with his parents to get his belongings out of his dormitory and there they found scrawled across the wall of his room these words, "Life is hell." And for all too many people that is true. In fact, sometimes when the subject of hell is discussed, someone may offer the opinion that it can't possibly be worse than life on this earth. Sadly, they are often serious when they say it, showing clearly that they are living in the despair and gloom that haunts those whose lives have no purpose and no meaning. Should we really wonder then why many, especially young people, are turning in alarming numbers to the use of alcohol and drugs? At the recent Association Pastors' Conference in Minneapolis, we heard of the increase of drug abuse and violations from a member of the Minnesota House of Representatives who was discussing the present and future problem of drugs. Especially alarming was the report that drug habits being established in the armed services are already cropping up to plague our society. Equally of concern is the seeming hopelessness and lack of care reflected in the many lives affected.

The tragedy is that such have failed to receive the wonderful truth that there is no reason for weeping any longer, that when Jesus rose from the dead it was God's way of saying that sin, death and the devil have been defeated for all time. When this fact is received as truth by us, then come newness of life and a real purpose for living. No longer do we try desperately to find reason and purpose within ourselves, and by serving and pampering ourselves. Instead, our purpose is to exalt and serve our Creator, who not only made us but "re-makes" us as we receive and trust in Jesus.

Most of us have heard of the many attempts down through the years to

discredit the resurrection of Jesus. Suffice it to say that all of these are completely out of line when compared with the details of the resurrection stories and the eye-witness accounts of those who lived at the time. And probably the best proofs we have of the truth of the resurrection of our Lord are the changed lives of those who belonged to the primitive Christian church. Instead of hiding behind closed doors and weeping as they had begun to do, these men and women went forth boldly to proclaim the death of Jesus and His miraculous resurrection. And over and over again they subjected themselves to the possibility of persecution and martyrdom, to physical, mental and emotional anguish and suffering. Why? Because they knew that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead and like that small boy who had read the ending of his book, these Christians had been given the privilege of seeing the Risen Lord as He will appear again in all of His glory.

No wonder, then, that their lives not only were testimonies to "what they knew" but to the willingness they had to share this "good news" with all who would listen. Nothing could stop them as they turned the world upside down in behalf of Jesus, because they knew there was no longer any reason for weeping.

Thanks be to God that we to this day have the same power to be renewed and to share new life in Christ because of the Spirit's work through His Word. And that we can share the power of Christ's resurrection if we will only accept it in faith and confidence that God so loved us that He did indeed give His only begotten Son. As we do, no longer is there any reason for weeping. How about you, dear friend? Have you personally discovered the wonderful truth that in the resurrected Christ there is no longer any reason for weeping? Regardless of the past, you can make that discovery right now, if you are only willing to admit that you've been living as though Christ was never raised from the dead. Once this confession is made and you receive the Risen Lord Jesus as personal Savior and Master, then you, too, can share the glorious ending that all true Christians are privileged to know in Him.



Luther League Activities

LET'S PLAN A YOUTH RETREAT by Wayne Pederson

The spiritual fellowship within the AFLC is indicated by the fact that our youth love to get together for rallies and weekend retreats. Right now, to my knowledge, there are five weekend retreats being planned.

Young people in the Eastern North Dakota District remember the Thanks Retreat over the Thanksgiving weekend. The retreat centered on our responsibility and privilege of sharing Christ with those whose lives touch ours...and how to witness effectively. Even now we hear how God touched lives through this retreat.

A retreat is a good spiritual pick-up in the spring or fall between summer Bible camps. We'd like to encourage districts to get together to plan a time of spiritual renewal. Even a one day retreat or rally can be very spiritually profitable. I'd be happy to advise you or be at your retreat to help with Bible studies and discussions.

While on the subject of retreats, I'd like to tell you about the youth retreat in the Minneapolis District on the weekend of April 16-18, at the new Northwestern College in Roseville. The theme is "The Future Tense." There are unmistakable signs on the world scene which point to the soon return of Christ. Some of our seminarians will be alerting us to some of the Bible's teaching about the end of time. There will be mes-

sages, Bible studies, rap sessions and a film.

I'm sure this will be an involving and challenging weekend for every young person living for Christ in this world. Inviting an unsaved friend along would be a tremendous way to introduce him to Christ.

This campus has excellent gym facilities for volleyball and basketball. Cost for the weekend is \$14.00. We encourage the congregation to make an investment in young lives by underwriting part of this cost.

If you're interested in attending this retreat, write:

Retreat

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55427

We must hear from you by April 9.

As young people get together to share honestly with one another what Christ means in their lives, they will come away with their faith strengthened and with some real answers about life.

BOOK REVIEWS FROM THE BOOK NOOK

THE DELUGE STORY IN STONE by Bryon C. Nelson

Price \$3.50 (on sale for \$1.95
at the Bible Book Nook)

This book tells of the effect the deluge had upon the earth, and shows the geological importance of the flood.

The Biblical account of the flood was believed by many geologists of

earlier times. Many things led to this belief. Large spiral shells are found on mountain tops. Animal fossils are found in countries where they are not native. In the cold land of Siberia, elephants are found frozen as if they were caught suddenly. They show no sign of struggle.

Today the theory of evolution is taught and believed by modern geologists. Modern geologists teach that it took millions of years to form the strata and accomplish what the Flood could do in a brief time.

God's Word is true and if we but search, we will find the answer.

Reviewed by Mrs. Delbert Jones
Wyndmere, North Dakota

GOD'S SMUGGLER

by Brother Andrew

Price \$.75 (paperback)

This is a true story of one Andrew, of Dutch descent. He lived through the war with the Nazis. At seventeen he went off to war in Indonesia where he was wounded. He came upon a tent meeting and there God spoke to him. He attended a seminary for laymen and began seeking some way he could serve God. At a Communist-sponsored youth rally in Poland he discovered Bibles were banned in Communist Europe. Brother Andrew became "God's Smuggler," carrying the Bible to the hungry Christians behind the Iron Curtain. He would fill his car with Bibles and have them concealed under disguises. He managed to bring the Word to many who had no Bible but who knew the Savior.

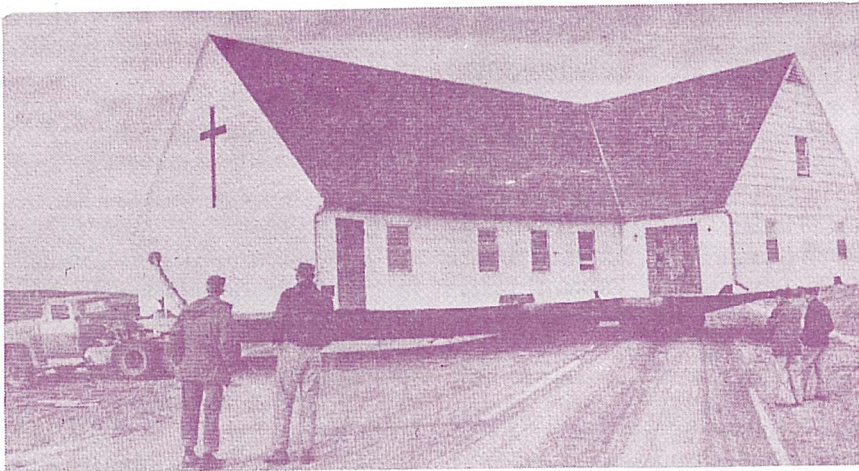
Reviewed by Mrs. Reuben Gunderson
Strandquist, Minnesota

Both these books may be purchased from the Bible Book Nook, 809 McHugh Avenue, Grafton, N.Dak., 58237.

"But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (I Corinthians 15:20).

"Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36).

NEWS of the Churches

Scandia Lutheran Church

—Newspaper photo

CHURCH MOVED IN FOR NEW AFLC CONGREGATION

A new AFLC congregation has been formed near Swift Falls, Minnesota. It is called Scandia Lutheran Church. The church rests on a corner of land near Scandinavian Lake, about 13 miles from Brooten, Minnesota. It consists of about 36 families.

Many families of the newly formed church worshipped at the Sunburg Lutheran Church of rural Sunburg, Minnesota, before deciding to form this present congregation.

The building is a former Presbyterian Church moved in from nearby Sedan. A complete basement has been built under it.

Rev. Hubert DeBoer delivered the first sermon, on Christmas Day of 1970. Pastor Leslie Galland and Student Pastor Dennis Gray have also preached at Scandia. Mr. Gray is presently teaching the confirmation classes. The building will be dedicated

to the glory of Christ in June or July.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW RADIO BROADCAST

A new radio broadcast, THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR, has been on the air since February 1, 1971, in some areas of the midwest. This new broadcast is professionally prepared at the studios of KTIS-AM and FM in Minneapolis. The radio speaker is Pastor Herbert Franz of St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Cloquet, Minnesota. Special music each week is by the AFLC Concert Choir, Chorale and Quartets. The work of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations is promoted in each broadcast, with various special information given about the AFLC Bible School, Seminary, Home Missions, Foreign Missions, etc. At the close of each broadcast tape, time is given for local announcements by the parish sponsoring the broadcast. It is hoped that

many other Association churches will elect to sponsor this broadcast in their areas. These parishes have begun airing THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR:

Station KRWB in Roseau, Minn.—Every Sunday morning 8:30 A.M., sponsored by the Roseau, Greenbush, and Salem Free Lutheran Parish. 1410 on the radio dial.

Station KWAD in Wadena, Minn.—Sundays at 7:00 P.M., sponsored by Bethany Lutheran Church of Blue Grass, Minnesota. 920 on the AM dial.

Station WATW in Ashland, Wisconsin—Sundays, 12:30 P.M., sponsored by the Drummond, Faith and Moland Lutheran Parish. 1400 on the AM dial.

Anyone interested in sponsoring this broadcast over their local station should write for information or an audition tape to either:

Mr. Wayne Pederson or Mr. Eugene Enderlein, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55427.

PUKWANA-ST. OLAF NEWS NOTES

St. Olaf Lutheran Church, located in farming country fourteen miles southwest of Pukwana, S. Dak., conducted six special Gospel services November 1-5.


Preaching at the morning service on Sunday, Pastor R. P. Haakonson of Moorhead, Minn., brought the Gospel message also at the Annual Harvest Festival in the evening. Both services enjoyed a splendid attendance. Pastor Haakonson is a veteran Lutheran pastor and evangelist whose ministry God has honored.

Because of rain the roads were muddy a couple of evenings, but the turnout increased nevertheless, so that at the closing service chairs were used to supplement the pews.

God was very near to us during those days and Tuesday evening Bible study fellowships have been a weekly feature since. They are held in homes. The attendance has been gratifying.

On Nov. 8, at the Annual Harvest Festival in the Pukwana Lutheran Church, Pastor Herbert Franz of Cloquet, Minn., brought the first in

[Continued on page 12]



WOMEN
for Christ

EASTER

by Mrs. Irene G. Torgerson
Fergus Falls, Minn.

E—"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" Jn. 3:5.

A—"All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" Isa. 53:6.

S—"Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near" Isa. 55:6.

T—"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" Matt. 11:29, 30.

E—"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name" Psalm 100:4.

R—"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" John 11:25, 26.

Redeemed, redeemed,
Redeemed by the blood of the
Lamb.

Redeemed, redeemed,
His child and forever I am.

Easter seems to usher in spring;
does it usher the eternal spring in
your heart?

In the spring, all things in nature
are renewed; they are "born again"
—the trees, the grass, the shrubs, the
flowers. A truly "born again" Chris-
tian has an Easter experience in her

heart—whereas she was dead, she be-
comes alive in Christ. She receives
a new heart, a new life. In Ezekiel
36:26, we read: "A new heart also
will I give you, and a new spirit will
I put within you: and I will take away
the stony heart out of your flesh, and
I will give you an heart of flesh."

A new heart, cleansed from all our
sins and iniquities—praise God!

And then, when she has received
the new heart, she wants to fill it
with good things. What could be bet-
ter than to fill it with God's Word,
hiding it, as David says in Psalm
119:11, "Thy Word have I hid in my
heart that I might not sin against
Thee."

Recently there has been an earth-
quake of large dimensions in the Los
Angeles area. There was a great
earthquake on Easter morning, too.
"And behold, there was a great
earthquake: for the angel of the Lord
descended from heaven, and came
and rolled back the stone from the
door and sat upon it. His countenance
was like lightning, and his raiment
white as snow. And for fear of him
the keepers did shake, and became
as dead men. And the angel answered
and said unto the women, 'Fear not
ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus,
which was crucified. He is not here:
for He is risen, as He said. Come,
see the place where the Lord lay. And
go quickly, and tell His disciples that
He is risen from the dead: and, be-
hold, He goeth before you into Galilee;
there shall ye see Him: lo, I have
told you'" (Matt. 28:2-7).

Are we, as women and members
of the Association of Free Lutheran
congregations, ready and willing to
"go quickly and tell"?

O God above,
Who gives us all, in love
Has sent His Son
To bless, that we might give,
To die, that we might live;
We thank Thee for these blessings,
and
Thy praises now we sing!
O may they ever ring
In hearts of those, who,
Loving and adoring,
Bow before Thee now!

Mrs. Irene G. Torgerson
Fergus Falls, Minn.

WELCOME, HAPPY MORNING!

Welcome, happy morning! age to age
shall say,

Hell to-day is vanquished, heaven is
won to-day.

Lo, the Dead is living, God forever-
more!

Him their true Creator, all His works
adore.

Welcome, happy morning! age to age
shall say.

Maker and Redeemer, Life and
Health of all,

Thou from heaven beholding human
nature's fall,

Thou of God the Father true and only
Son,

Manhood to deliver, manhood didst
put on.

Hell to-day is vanquished; heaven is
won to-day!

Thou of life the Author, death didst
undergo.

Tread the path of darkness, saving
strength to show;

Come, then, true and faithful, now
fulfill Thy word:

'Tis Thine own third morning: rise,
O buried Lord!

Welcome, happy morning! age to age
shall say.

Loose the souls long prisoned, bound
with Satan's chain:

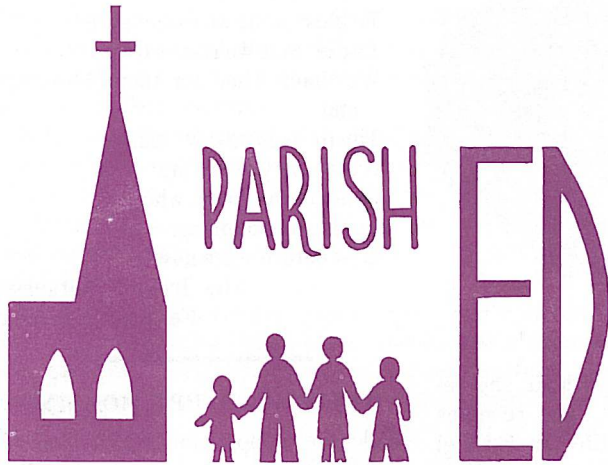
All that now is fallen raise to life
again:

Show Thy face in brightness, bid the
nations see:

Bring again our daylight; day returns
with Thee!

Welcome, happy morning! Heaven is
won to-day!

V. Fortunatus
(from **The Hymnal**)



CHILDISH WAYS

by Eula Mae Swenson, Fargo, N. Dak.

Paul introduced some of his thoughts on growth and maturity by saying, "When I was a child I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man I gave up childish ways" (I Cor. 13:11).

A child's behavior reveals many things to us about ourselves. If you're interested in some self-evaluation, join me in a primary classroom filled with industrious, active children. Though it may not be entirely possible, find a quiet corner where you'll be unnoticed and yet in a position permitting observation.

A reading class is in session. Individuals enthusiastically participate; some try to improve the story by omitting words and inserting their own rendition! You may smile at the childish procedure until you hear the teacher's words, "Read the words just as they are! Is that really what the book says?" And then you may miss out on the rest of the reading lesson as you recall times when you have childishly read God's Word in a similar manner. We may have neglected portions or interpreted it to our own convenience until He has called us back with "What does the Word say? Read (and do) as it says!"

The attention shifts to another area as words of direction in simple terms are printed on the blackboard. You wait for a response, and you see several! There are those who read it and carry out directions (with a nod of approval from the teacher). There are those who aren't quite sure about the written message, so they follow the leaders of the class and hope they're right! Finally, you notice that the pre-occupied ones are totally unaware that they are supposed to be involved. They are playing games, coloring, or day-dreaming, etc. To them the directions must be given orally. Again, reactions vary as individuals respond in their own time and own way.

The class pursues its new activity as you ponder the visual demonstration you have seen. How similarly we react in our congregational and community activities. The message is expounded, a plea extended, a call directed. What happens? A few respond, a few wait and follow the leader's example, a few wait to be prodded, and a few are totally unresponsive. What is my reaction when God's directive guidance is given? Could it be that my preoccupation with "games" is hindering progress in God's Kingdom?

In the corner you notice a round table equipped with tape recorder, earphones and books. The label "Listening Corner" denotes its purpose. Six children volunteer to be good listeners. They are attentive for a while. Then you notice signs of diverted attention: looking out the window, hand signals, wiggles, twisting and turning. The material presented is child-oriented. He volunteered to assume the listening position. But he's not listening! Typical child behavior, but does it not remind us of some of our own "quiet times" with the Lord. We go to the Listening Corner, armed with the Word and other devotional literature. But alas! before long our minds wander to less relevant things and we too quickly become anxious to leave the Listening Corner before we've really listened. How often have we ignored Jesus' admonition in Matt. 11:15, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

The day is nearing completion and the children prepare to go home. We, too, are on our way Home, and we continue to ponder, "When I was child I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man I gave up childish ways" (I Cor. 13:11).

Letters TO THE EDITOR

AFLC AFFILIATION

In regard to the write-up on Lebanon Lutheran Church in Meet the Churches in the March 2 issue of the *Ambassador*, it says that Lebanon became affiliated with the AFLC in 1968. We feel that we have been with the AFLC since 1963. We have been supporting the AFLC every

year from 1963 up to this time. Also sent delegates to Conference in 1963, 1964 and 1967.

Marius Holm, Secretary
Lebanon Lutheran Church
Leeds, N. Dak.

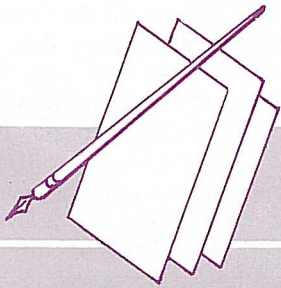
CHURCH AND SOCIETY FORUM RE-ELECTS THREE OFFICERS

Zion, Ill. (LC) — The Rev. Charles V. Bergstrom, pastor of Trinity Lutheran church in Worchester, Mass., has been named to a second, one-year term as chairman of the Continuing Forum on Church and Society.

Mr. Bergstrom, a clergyman of the Lutheran Church in America, is also the president of the LCA Board of Social Ministry.

Established a year ago by the Lutheran Council in the USA, the forum has as its mandate the identification of critical social issues and the correlation of the responses of the three major Lutheran churches in America.

Renamed to one-year terms as vice chairman and secretary, respectively, were the Rev. Aoton F. Wedel, a minister of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, and Dr. Carl F. Reuss, a staff executive in the American Lutheran Church.



EDITORIALS

INTO THE GARDEN OF LIFE

A member of the Greek Orthodox Church related an Easter custom practised to this very day. A church service is held on Easter Eve. Just before midnight the officiating priests leave the church, walk around it several times and return at the stroke of the new day to announce to the congregation, "Christ is risen!"

Some churches ring the bells at midnight to signal the day of resurrection. Yes, there is pageantry in these things, but we really need to emphasize that Jesus Christ arose.

"Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb where no one had ever been laid. So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, as the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there" (Jn. 19:41, 42).

That garden of death became the Garden of Life when Jesus broke the bands of death.

Into that first paradise, the Garden of Eden, sin and death came through Adam's disobedience. In another garden, Gethsemane, Jesus bowed in submission to the Father's will. In the third garden new hope and life sprang forth as the Son of God emerged from Joseph's tomb. Three flowers bloom in this Garden of Life.

First, there is **release from past guilt**. Jesus was "raised for our justification" (Rev. 4:25). The resurrection sealed the victory of Christ. His sacrifice was acceptable to God. The wages of sin had been paid. There is forgiveness for past sins. What the ancient sacrifices in themselves could never do, Jesus accomplished through His death and His resurrection.

But before the release truly becomes ours we must consciously surrender our past to Christ. The Lord knows what has been wrong even more than we do, but it is in the conscious act of naming our sins and releasing them that the resurrection of Jesus will make it possible for us to rise from their bondage.

The second flower in the Garden of Life is **power for the present**. A great deal of attention is being paid the future today. And we often linger over past events. Between these poles lie the tremendously important present, the "now" moment.

The disciples of Jesus, cowed and despairing because of the crucifixion of their Master, were transformed into powerful Gospel witnesses by that which gave the Gospel its final validity, the resurrection.

Jesus Christ brings resurrection power to those committed to Him. Of course, there must be a continual willingness to go forward and upward. "Seek the things that are above"—Paul exhorted the Colossian Christians. Where there is that desire there will be the power to live a God-pleasing life **today**.

The Garden of Life is graced by a third blossom, **hope for the future**. The Apostle spoke of "the hope to which he has called you" and the "riches of His glorious inheritance" (Eph. 1). Peter wrote of "an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading" (I Pet. 1).

Hope is terribly important. It would be easy enough for anyone to be discouraged over personal and world problems. Where it is possible, something should be done about problems, but above that it is good to know that Christ is triumphant and His people won't be overcome.

Eternity with God, this is one of the flowers in God's Garden of Life. Heaven is all the truly good things we can think of—joy, contentment, health and wholeness. These are reserved in Heaven for those set free by the resurrection of Jesus.

It is the **prayer and desire of The Lutheran Ambassador** that all our readers share in the glorious benefits of Christ's resurrection and walk in the Garden of Life where they may enjoy the beautiful flowers of release from past guilt, power for the present and hope for the future.

THE BIBLE IS BASIC

"We reject any affiliations or associations which do not accept the Bible alone as definitive for the life and practice of man and the church."

Declaration of Faith, I:4

The Protestant Reformation was a movement to establish the primacy of the Bible in determining matters of faith and life. In discussing the third article of **Declaration of Faith**, reference was made to Martin Luther's classic stand at Worms in 1521. Here, in fuller form, is the historic quotation: "Unless I am proved to be wrong by the testimony of Scripture and by evident reasoning—for I cannot trust the decisions of either popes or councils, since it is plain that they have frequently erred and contradicted one another—I am bound in conscience and held fast by the Word of God by those passages which I have quoted. Therefore, I cannot and will not retract anything, for it is neither safe nor salutary to act against one's conscience. God help me! Amen."

Earlier, in writing against the papal Bull **Exsurge**, Luther, in his reply, **Grund und Ursach**, said, "If I am not a prophet, I am at least sure of this, that the Word of God is with me, and not with them, for I have Scriptures on my side while they have their own teachings. This is what gives me courage; the more they despise and persecute me, the less I fear them."

We say and believe that our beliefs must be determined by the Holy Scriptures. The Bible is the fixed point of reference. Unless there is such it is possible to come into all sorts of error. What one man proposes is as good as what another decides. There would be no absolute truth. The Roman Catholic Church has attempted to decide Bible interpretation through councils and popes. Through

this means some truth has been preserved and defended, but much error has also resulted as strict adherence to the Bible record was neglected. To the authority of the Bible they added the teaching of the Church as binding on the consciences of the faithful. This might have succeeded but for the fact that man did not bow in full subservience to the Scriptures.

It is this attitude toward the authority of the Scriptures which makes relationships with Roman Catholics difficult. It is a case of the Bible alone (the Word alone) vs. the Bible and the councils of man. Until there is agreement on the Bible **alone** as definitive true fellowship is impossible.

Even among Protestants today there are great problems regarding fellowship. While synods and denominations officially profess adherence to Bible-honoring confessions, some individuals within the groups, also in teaching and administrative posts, no longer hold to Biblical authority in the traditional sense. In dialogue then, denominations or individuals often find that there is no common meeting ground.

This is one of the troubles with the National Council

of Churches of Christ in the U.S. and the World Council of Churches. Both are infiltrated with a good deal of modernism. Evangelical voices there are, to be sure, but they have a difficult time and are not the dominant ones, not the ones reported most often in the news media. The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations will not participate in these councils. Individual congregations and members may associate with counterparts in the NCC and the WCC, but they do so where they find mutuality of faith and concern in spite of the memberships in the ecumenical organizations.

It is very clear that even among those who have every intention of giving all authority to the Bible there will be differences of opinion and understanding. But even there some degree of fellowship can be maintained, something that cannot exist where one or more of the parties begins by saying that the Bible alone is not enough to decide matters of faith and life for the practice of the individual or the Church.

The Bible alone is definitive in these areas. We reject participation in any organizations or associations which do not protect this basic belief.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

The Board of Trustees of Free Lutheran Theological Seminary Corporation hereby calls for nominations to the position of dean of Free Lutheran Theological Seminary and Association Free Lutheran Bible School, one person to be named for each position.

This call for nominations does not imply that vacancies exist in said offices, but is offered for the purpose of meeting all requirements of the By-Laws of said Corporation.

Nominations for one or both positions may be sent to either of the undersigned and must be received by May 1, 1971, in order to be on hand for the next meeting of the Board, on May 3, 1971. The Board, together with the Seminary faculty, will submit one or more nominations for each position to the Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, meeting in Cloquet, Minn., June 9-13, 1971, the Conference to make the election.

Respectfully submitted,

Ernest J. Langness, Chairman
McVille, N. Dak.

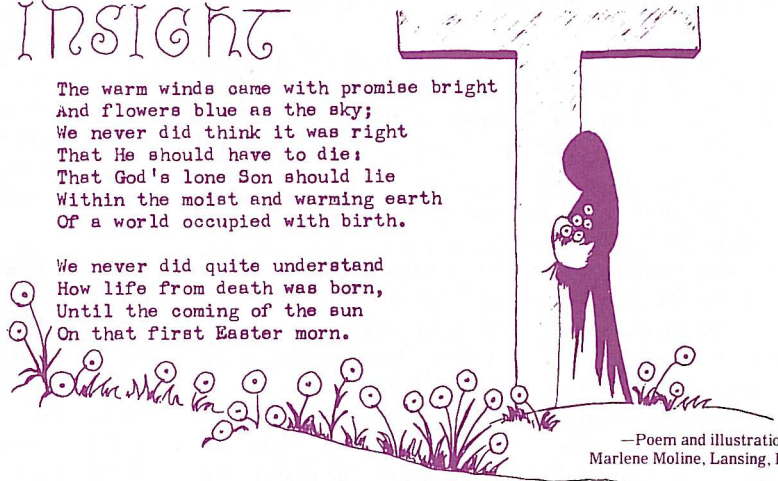
Raynard O. J. Huglen, Sec.
Roslyn, S. Dak.

Note: Dr. Iver B. Olson has been serving as Acting Dean of the Seminary. Rev. R. Snipstead has been serving as Acting Dean of the Bible School.

INSIGHT

The warm winds came with promise bright
And flowers blue as the sky;
We never did think it was right
That He should have to die;
That God's lone Son should lie
Within the moist and warming earth
Of a world occupied with birth.

We never did quite understand
How life from death was born,
Until the coming of the sun
On that first Easter morn.



—Poem and illustration by
Marlene Moline, Lansing, Iowa

THE ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55427

February 1-February 28, 1971

BUDGET RECEIPTS

	Proposed Yearly Budget	Current Budget	Total Received
General Fund	\$ 38,250.00	\$ 3,187.50	\$ 1,139.57
Schools	61,424.00	5,118.66	1,032.40
Foreign Missions	36,000.00	3,000.00	1,451.06
Home Missions	34,245.00	2,853.75	802.60
Praise Program	<u>30,000.00</u>	<u>2,500.00</u>	<u>351.25</u>
Praise Program	\$199,919.00	\$ 16,659.91	\$ 4,776.88

Received last year same time—\$5,291.72



WORLD MISSIONS

THE FIELDS ARE WHITE UNTO HARVEST

PRISCILLA WOLD TELLS OF HER ARRIVAL IN UMUARAMA

Finally I was able to meet the missionaries whom I had waited to see for nine months. I was planning to come to Brazil much sooner but it took half a year just to get my visa! But I finally arrived at the Viracopos Airport of Sao Paulo on Jan. 16. And was it ever good to see three American missionaries waiting for me in a strange land with a strange language. Bill and Eileen Blake and Jackelyn Ummel, whose children I'll be teaching in the American School of Umuarama, gave me a warm welcome to this fascinating country. Another warm welcome was the beautiful temperature of 85 degrees. When I left my home in Abercrombie, N. Dak., it was 25 below zero!

Besides receiving the warm welcome, I was also welcomed to Brazil with a bang! The day after my arrival we were driving around in Campinas, a city near the airport. All of a sudden, we were in a car accident with a man who had been drinking. I just thank the Lord that no one in either car was injured. It

could have been very serious if we had been just one second earlier, but God spared our lives. Please pray for the man who was in the other car. How he needs the Savior!

Shortly after this accident, a Volkswagen van which was carrying many people and my luggage was in another accident. However, again no one was killed; only one man was thrown from the van and bruised, but no bones were broken. I'm just thankful that I was not riding in the same car that my luggage was in. Satan was really trying to take our lives. But instead of discouraging me this had just the opposite effect. It encouraged me to realize that Satan went to so much bother to try to hinder us because he knows how much the Lord wants us here. I know we're safer here in Brazil in God's will than anywhere else out of His will.

Now I am working under the Brazil Inland Mission in Umuarama, Parana, a city only 104 kilometers (67 miles) northwest of Campo Mourao, the headquarters of our AFLC mission in Brazil. It was Rev. John Abel who told me about BIM and its great need for a full-time Christian teacher

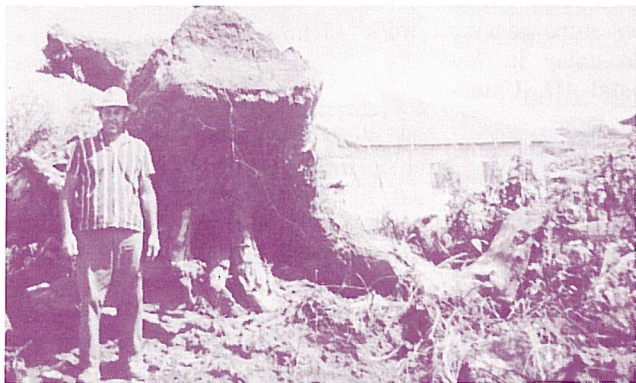


Pastor and Mrs. Victor Faverani, left, with Priscilla Wold, center, and others in front of the former AFLC church building in Umuarama.

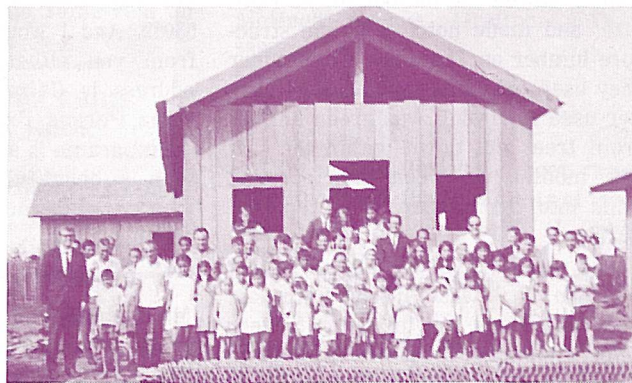
for its missionary children.

The BIM is a small, independent, evangelical and conservative mission. It is a faith mission, so it is not supported by any one church or denomination. I'll be teaching school under the BIM in Umuarama for the next two years and then see where God leads.

Right now I'm staying in the home of Bob Thompson, whose children I'll also be teaching. Bob Thompson and John Abel are good friends and Bob's name was mentioned in the February 2 issue of our *Ambassador*. (That issue told about the BIM Seminary of Umuarama going to Campo Mourao for a retreat with the students of our Free Lutheran Bible Institute.)



Missionary George Knapp by one of the huge tree stumps pulled out from the lot for the new church in Umuarama.



People at the dedication of the church in Umuarama on Feb. 14.

Soon, however, I will be moving to my own house. I'll have my home in the back rooms of the house and the three front rooms will be used as the school rooms. Our summer vacation in Brazil is coming to an end and we will start school again on Feb. 25. I will have ten students in all, in both elementary and high school. I had always planned on getting some teaching experience in the U.S. before teaching in a foreign country, but our Father had different plans. This will be an added challenge, as so far there has not been an American school here. Instead, each mother has been teaching her own children in her own home at her own speed. So please pray that God will give me wisdom in planning, organizing and teaching. Pray for the students also and that the needs of the school and my home will be met.

And now we have a Free Lutheran Church here in Umuarama also. In fact, right when I came to this city, on Jan. 20, George Knapp, the Connely Dyruds and Mrs. Myrtle Hove (Carolyn's mother) were at the Thompson home and welcomed me. They were here at the time because they were conducting Daily Vacation Bible School. About 200 children attended. The school was held in the BIM grade school.

When I first came to Umuarama we just used a small building for our church. But on Wed., Feb. 10, Mr. Knapp and some other men from Campo started to build our new church. That day they finished clearing the land. About two years ago the site was jungle. The jungle had been burned off but there were still some huge stumps and brush which had to be removed. They laid the foundation, sawed the lumber to the right size, and made notches in the structure lumber on Thursday. The lumber they used, which is true of most lumber used in Brazil, was green lumber from trees cut down within the last few months. So when they pounded nails into the lumber, water spurted out!

The walls were put up on Friday and the roof was laid on Saturday. Brazilian roofs are made in a very interesting way. Most are made from blocks of red tile. The tile is thrown up block by block to someone on the roof. It is done very gracefully and

they hardly ever miss. (Look out below if they do—Ed.) Then these tiles are cemented together.

We had the dedication of the church on Sun., Feb. 14, at 2:00 p.m. Only the walls and roof were up but they were dedicated to the glory and service of our Lord. The service was well attended. The Knapps contributed many numbers, Bible stories were given and Mr. Knapp gave the main message. An evening service was held at 7:30.

Please pray for this church that God will provide the rest of the material to finish it. It is the only church in the northern part of town where many poor people live—poor materially and poverty-stricken spiritually. So please pray that God will bless the ministry of this church, make it a lighthouse and give it strength to witness effectively in spreading the Gospel. And pray for the pastors and students from Campo who come to speak every Sunday afternoon and evening.

That Sunday night the Knapps invited me to come back to Campo Mourao with them. So for the next two days the Knapps and Dyruds showed me all around our mission headquarters. Our bookstore, central church and Bible Institute are beautiful. The fifth annual General Conference of the Church in Brazil was held in Campo from Feb. 18-20. Our Bible Camp will be held at our Institute from Feb. 22-28. The Institute begins again on March 1. So please continue to pray for our work here also. Now we are all looking forward to the return of the Abel family to Brazil next summer.

And pray also for the BIM. My home secretary is my brother, Jim Wold, 313 West Churchill, Stillwater, Minn. 55082. And I would not mind hearing from you either. I'd enjoy it. My address is Caixa Postal 447, Umuarama, Parana, Brazil.

Umuarama is a strange Indian name with a beautiful meaning: the city where friends meet. So come and visit me sometime.

[Continued from page 6]

a series of five Gospel sermons. The attendance was good throughout.

Beginning Sunday evening and continuing through Thursday evening

Pastor Franz applied the clearly spoken Bible truths to our present day conditions. Our hearts rejoiced as the Savior was being lifted up.

A Gospel broadcast titled The Association Free Lutheran Hour, was aired initially on KLOH, Pipestone, Minn., on May 24, 1970. These broadcasts cover areas where fifteen Association congregations are located in South Dakota and Minnesota. Each broadcast carries announcements for these congregations. The program is heard at 1:30 p.m. each Sunday on 1050 KC.

Another Association Free Lutheran Hour had its first run on KBEW, Blue Earth, Minn., on Feb. 7. These broadcasts cover much of southern Minnesota and northern Iowa. That program is heard each Sunday at 2 p.m. on 1560 KC. KLOH and KBEW, combined, cover an area of ca. 365 continuous miles from Chamberlain, S. Dak. to Spring Valley, Minn. Featured speaker on both broadcasts is Pastor Herbert Franz, of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Cloquet, Minn.

The final mechanical preparation of the recordings is made by Pastor Karl Stendal, Pukwana.

These broadcasts are not sponsored by any congregation or organization, but are supported solely by persons wishing to keep these programs on the air.

From time to time the Pukwana-St. Olaf Congregations have visiting Gospel teams from our Association Bible School in Minneapolis. And once a youth team from the "Young Adult" group in the Medicine Lake Lutheran Church visited our parish.

Jesus said, "I must work the works of him that sent me; while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work" (John 9:4).

—Corr.

BIBLE VERSES

"For I know that my Redeemer lives" (Job 19:25a).

"Through him you have confidence in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God" (I Peter 1:21).

Winter Bible Conference Held in February at Spicer

The ninth annual Winter Bible Conference was held at Green Lake Lutheran Church, Spicer, Minn., Feb. 18-21. Rev. Leslie Galland is the pastor of the congregation and he presided at the evening services and the Sunday morning worship hour.

Rev. Wendell Johnson, pastor of the Dalton, Minn., parish, preached at the evening sessions. He used "Life at the Crossroads" as his overall theme, with texts from Jeremiah (2:9ff; 5:1-4 and 6:13-14; 6:16a, b and 8:20).

On Thursday night Pastor Johnson discussed what life is all about. It is not, he said, about such material things as money, but it is being sold out in totality to God. On Friday evening, Mr. Johnson posed the question, what is standing in the way of this complete commitment to Christ? He discussed false prophets and unbelief. If anything stands in the way, it is important what is done with that, Pastor Johnson declared. When we cast off unrighteousness, we can come to Jesus.

In his last message to the conference, Rev. Johnson considered the question, where do we go from here? There is a need for Christians to make their mark on society now. There can be no secret discipleship, he said, for secrecy will destroy discipleship. On the other hand, true discipleship will destroy secrecy. Is Jesus able to shine through us? he asked. Before making

his final remarks, Pastor Johnson effectively sang the song "Follow Me."

The Bible hours were taught by Rev. Roy Bredholt of Trinity Lutheran Church, Grand Forks, N. Dak. Because Rev. C. M. Hansen of Minneapolis couldn't be present to bring his scheduled lecture, Pastor Bredholt conducted five hours in a study of I John instead of four.

The North Dakota pastor, by way of introduction to the book, listed the contrasts given in it between the true Christian and the sham Christian. He also set forth three characteristics of God as taught in I John: He is Light, He is Righteous and He is Love (agape). Mr. Bredholt emphasized that there is no sinless perfection in the Epistle but that the Christian does not sin deliberately.

Rev. Bredholt closed the studies by asking five questions which come out of the message of the Letter: Do I have a deep desire in my heart to love Christ and my fellow men more?; Do I enjoy the fellowship of Christians more than the world?; Do I truly believe that Jesus Christ is true God and true Man?; Is Christ abiding in me?; and Do I pray for the sinning brother?

The Friday afternoon session of the conference was moved to the lounge at Green Lake Lutheran Bible Camp, where most of the out-of-town delegates were housed and meals were

served, because of the icy roads and the smaller attendance which had resulted.

The Board of Publications and Parish Education conducted the first hour that afternoon. After some preliminary remarks by the chairman, Rev. Raynard Huglen, Roslyn, S. Dak., the executive secretary of parish education, Miss Judith Wold, Thief River Falls, Minn., told of the progress in the development of a full curriculum for Sunday Schools. A question and answer period followed.

Pastor Arnold Stone, Fridley, Minn., an LCA pastor and a teacher at the Association Bible School, brought a report on the program of Campus Crusade. He told how William Bright, the founder, used Communist techniques to organized cell groups on college campuses. Pastor Stone described Campus Crusade's program of personal evangelism through the booklet "Four Spiritual Laws."

The other major presentation at the conference was given by Pastor Wendell Johnson and Mr. Robert Dietsche, Sand Creek, Wis., chairman and secretary of the Stewardship Board, respectively. Mr. Dietsche made a number of suggestions for the congregations: 1) encourage every-member subscriptions for the *Ambassador*; 2) hold a stewardship Sunday once a year; 3) work for a balanced pro-



Rev. Roy Bredholt, Bible teacher at the conference



The evening speaker at the conference, Rev. Wendell Johnson



Rev. and Mrs. Leslie Galland, who hosted a reception for pastors and their wives at their home on Friday evening.



Rev. Arnold Stone discussed Campus Crusade on Friday afternoon in the lounge of Green Lake Bible Camp



Mrs. Carsten Stulen, left, and Mrs. Art Hegreberg at the book display provided by the Bible Book Nook.

gram of giving for Association causes; 4) provide an adequate salary for the pastor; and 5) encourage private loans for AFLC work (also by cemetery funds, building funds, etc.). Mr. Dietsche reported that stewardship teams in every district are being set up. An open discussion of stewardship took place in the second half of the hour on Saturday afternoon.

Mr. T. L. Sand of the local congregation led the adult Bible study on Sunday morning.

At the morning worship on Sunday, Dr. Iver Olson, Minneapolis, dean of the Association Seminary, brought the message. Using the text for the day, Luke 18:31-43, he entitled the sermon, "My Blindness is My Sight." He contrasted the disciples with the blind man by the roadside. The disciples understood poorly, were drunk with success and were eminently self-fish. The blind man "saw" Jesus out of his darkness and was set free.



Meals were served conference-goers in the dining hall of Green Lake Bible Camp.

In the afternoon on Sunday, the choir from Association Free Lutheran Bible School, under the direction of Mr. Donald Rodvold, sang a group of numbers. Rev. R. Snipstead, dean of the school, spoke.

Morning devotions at the conference were led by Rev. Rueben Wee, Granite Falls, Minn., and Rev. Marvin Haara, Virginia, Minn.

COUNCIL COMMITTEES ELECT NEW OFFICERS

New York (LC) — Five of the six division committees of the Lutheran Council in the USA met here during late February and early March and, in the course of their sessions, held annual elections.

The only standing committee still scheduled to meet is that of the Division of Educational Services. Its meeting has been scheduled for mid-April.

The standing committee of the Division of Mission Services named as its new chairman Dr. Edgar C. Rakow, former president of the Indiana District of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod and now pastor of Redeemer church in Evansville, Ind.

The Rev. James R. Long, pastor of Park Place church in Houston, Texas, was named vice chairman, and Dr. Ralph W. Loew, pastor of Holy Trinity church in Buffalo, N.Y., was elected secretary.

The standing committee of the Division of Theological Studies elected

OUR LORD, ON WINGS OUR HEARTS PREPARE

Oh, Jesus Christ, Thou knowest our need,
And followest daily with our deed.
As given to men, Thy life begin,
The souls which now upon us plead.

To men Thou exercisest Thy call,
And dwellest from smallest flesh to all.

Earth's joys are given, surpassed by heaven,

Now help us, Lord, Thy will recall.

Today Thou wilt our life prepare,
Forgetting past and all despair.

Thy Word we read, and know and heed,

To rid all question, doubt and care.

Heav'n is the vision of high desire,
From all escape, the soul on fire.

Be near and guard, no life is marred,
So we from Satan's ruin expire.

The victory gained, and sound of brass,

Relied on Thee, Thou canst surpass.

Gained from Thee strength, as given at length,

So to eternity all pass.

Jane McCarlson
(Jane is a 1970 graduate of the Bible School. She is presently engaged in a two-year course in radiology through the St. Luke's School of Nursing, Fargo, N. Dak.)

as its chairman Dr. John H. P. Reumann, professor of New Testament at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

Named vice chairman and secretary, respectively, were Dr. Theodore F. Nickel of Chicago, second vice president of the LCMS, and Dr. Charles S. Anderson, professor of church history at Luther Theological Seminary at St. Paul.

The standing committee of the Division of Service to Military Personnel re-elected its chairman, Mr. Robert M. Strieter of Bethesda, Md., a retired Naval officer who heads a land development company.

Elected vice chairman and secretary, respectively, were the Rev. Jan C. Walker of Wescosville, Pa., assistant to the president of the North-eastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Lutheran Church in America, and the

[Continued on page 16]

CHURCH-WORLD NEWS

LCMS TO RECEIVE 2 PROPOSALS ON CHANGE IN CONFIRMATION

St. Louis (LC) — Delegates to the next Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod general convention will be faced with conflicting recommendations over proposed changes in the present practice of confirmation and first communion.

The Board of Parish Education of the LCMS has recommended that the changes be adopted, and the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the LCMS has recommended that the changes be rejected.

The proposals grew out of a six-year study which was carried out by a joint commission of representatives of the LCMS, the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America.

Under the new concept, confirmation would encompass the entire period from infant baptism to mid-adolescence, introducing first communion to students in the fifth grade and concluding with students in the tenth grade.

Since the Reformation, many Protestant denominations, including Lutherans, have withheld the eligibility for first communion until the end of confirmation instruction, usually in the eighth or ninth grade.

Both the ALC and the LCA have adopted the proposed changes.

The LCMS Board of Parish Education approved a resolution recommending that the report of the joint commission and its proposals be adopted by the LCMS "as a guide for the confirmation ministry to children and youth."

In its action, taken at a two-day meeting here late in February, it also urged that the LCMS request the appropriate boards and departments to help congregations implement "the recommended emphases and practices" by September 1973.

Earlier, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the LCMS voted to recommend to the general convention that no changes

be made. The convention will be held in Milwaukee, July 9-16.

NORWAY CHURCH DEFECTIONS NOTED IN BISHOP REPORTS

Oslo (LWF) — Defections from the state Church of Norway increased from some 4,000 in 1969 to 8,000 in 1970 but the figures still were below the total increase through new memberships and infant baptisms, it was noted here.

An organized drive by a small group of non-church members and some Free Church adherents to encourage defection from the state church was mentioned in nearly all annual reports of bishops of the 10 Church of Norway dioceses.

It was pointed out that the rate of defection was only some 1.4 per thousand of the total church constituency—some 96 percent of the country's population of 3.8 million.

While expressing surprise that the organized drive did not result in more withdrawals, the bishops said there was cause for concern in the fact that a majority of the defectors were in the 15-to-20-year-old bracket.

At the same time, the leader of the group urging withdrawals, Levi Fragell, formerly an active Pentecostalist, hailed the results of the effort and charged that the bishops were intentionally minimizing the signs of unrest in the state church.

DR. CONRAD THOMPSON TO DEVOTE FULL TIME TO RADIO MINISTRY

Minneapolis (LC) — Dr. Conrad M. Thompson, evangelism director for the American Lutheran Church and the former Evangelical Lutheran Church for nearly 20 years, has submitted his resignation to the church's Evangelism Commission in order to devote full time to a radio ministry.

Since May, 1970, Dr. Thompson has been the radio preacher on the program "Lutheran Vespers," sponsored by the evangelism department of the ALC on nearly 60 radio stations throughout the country. In this position he succeeded the Rev. Harry

R. Gregerson, founder, who has retired.

Dr. Thompson said the increasing mail response which he has received from the radio audience, and other responsibilities which are related, have made it difficult for him to carry out the administrative work which the directorship of the department entails.

As the Lutheran Vespers pastor and preacher he will continue as a member of the ALC's evangelism staff.

Dr. Thompson, graduate of St. Olaf College and Luther Seminary, served pastorates in St. Paul, Minn., and Watertown, S. Dak. He was a pioneer in the development of preaching-teaching-reaching (PTR) missions which swept the country during the 1950's in what has been described as a period of religious revival in the United States. PTR missions, and variations of the plan, have continued in the Church until the present.

Evangelism work under Dr. Thompson's direction has embraced a wide range of activities including innovative ministries, a ministry to Jewish people, tracts and other publications, and participation with inter-denominational thrusts in Christian outreach.

BLIND STREET MERCHANT HAILED FOR PHILANTHROPY

Hong Kong (LWF) — Wai Chung-choi, a 67-year-old blind street merchant, is being described here as one of the community's greatest philanthropists.

Though his income is barely sufficient for himself and his daughter, 17, Mr. Wai recently gave KH\$64.60 (US\$10.80)—a full day's earnings—to the Community Chest.

Arriving in Hong Kong in 1962, Mr. Wai was able to start a small business selling Chinese medicine with a HK\$200 grant from the Lutheran World Federation World Service program. He now sells pencils and ball-point pens.

Mr. Wai said a radio campaign publicizing the Community Chest prompted him to make the donation.

MISSION DIRECTOR SAYS PROCLAMATION MAIN TASK

Oslo (LWF) — Social and humanitarian assistance has a high priority for mission organizations but proclamation of the Gospel remains their prime task, the general secretary of the Norwegian Lutheran Mission (NLM) said here.

Mr. Birger Breivik, in an interview in the Christian newspaper, *Dagen*, recently stressed that social assistance is properly performed by mission groups when it is integrated with proclamation of the Christian message.

The NLM leader was optimistic about the future of the organization, noting that mission schools have more applications than they can accept.

He reported that the NLM now has 316 missionaries in foreign countries and 43 more are now in the last phase of training.

[Continued from page 14]

Rev. Thomas S. Johnson, associate pastor of Calvary church in Golden Valley, Minn.

The standing committee of the Division of Welfare Services elected as its new chairman Mr. Alfred F. Angster of Chicago, executive director of the Lutheran Social Welfare Services of Illinois.

The Rev. Benjamin A. Gjenvick of Milwaukee, executive director of Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan, was named vice chairman, and Dr. Robert H. Muge of the National Center for Health Statistics at Rockville, Md., was named secretary.

The Rev. Hoover T. Grimsby, pastor of St. Olaf church in Austin, Minn., was elected vice chairman, and Mr. Ricahrd Hanneman of Chicago, an LCMS layman, was re-elected secretary.

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