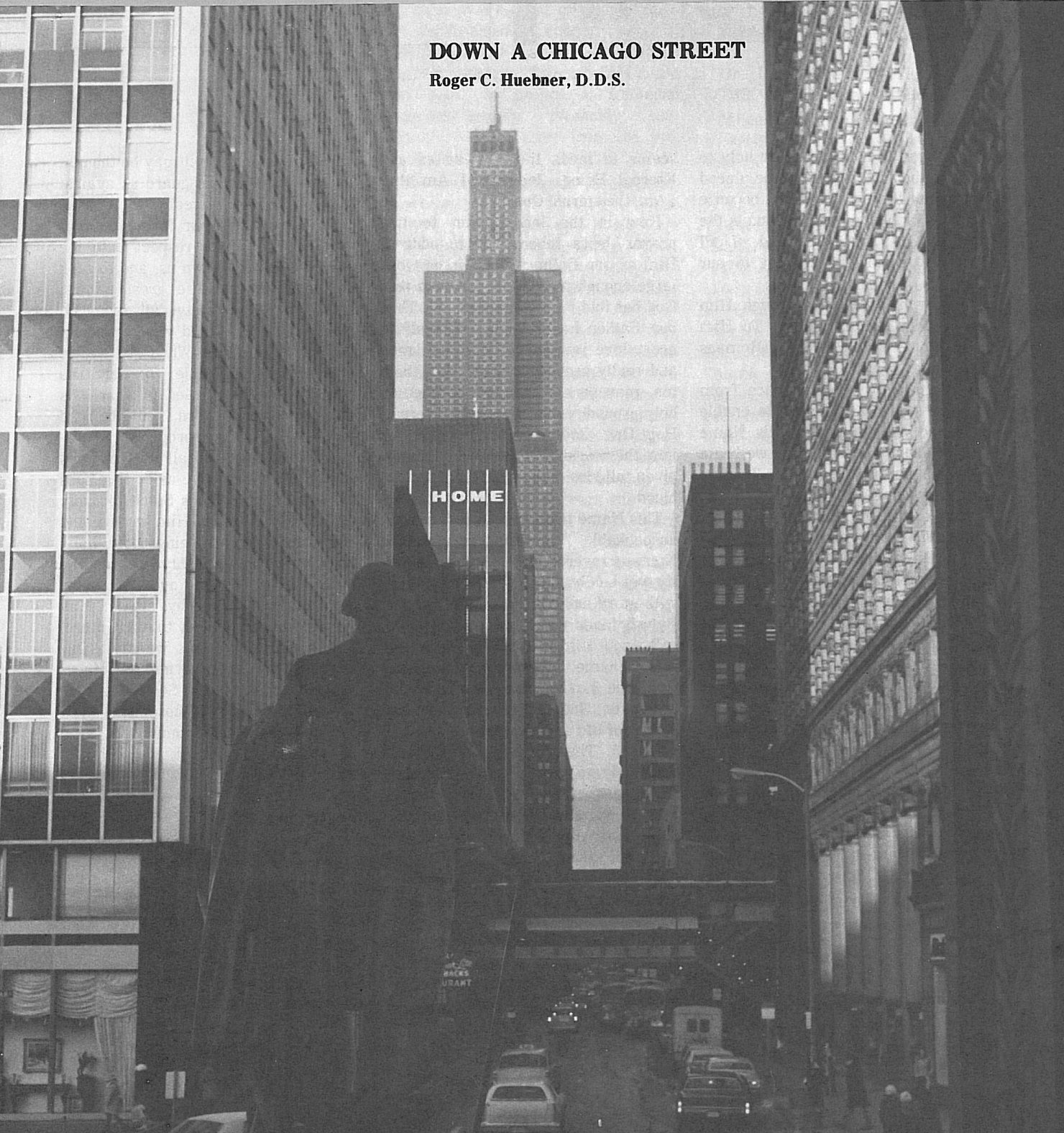


November 4, 1975

The Lutheran Ambassador

DOWN A CHICAGO STREET

Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.



MEDITATION MOMENTS

HALLOWED BE THY NAME

His Name is holy; let it be holy to us. Why should this petition be placed first by our Savior? No doubt, because the glory or honor of His Name is the chief end of our being and of all others. It should be nearest to our hearts.

“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen” (Romans 11:36).

It is good to ask assistance from God, the aid of His Spirit, to enable us to see and know that His Name is indeed sacred even before we begin to ask of Him other petitions. To pray that everything we might ask or do be turned into the glory of that Holy Name. The name or names revealed by God Himself are a short but meaningful revelation of himself. God was first known or revealed as “Elakin,” the God of nature, the Creator, a name to which in the early Scriptures no moral attributes were attached. He was known also to the Patriarchs as El-Shaddai—the almighty God. He was known also as the Holy One of Israel, and as the Lord of Hosts, above all.

He declared Himself by the name which in our version is rendered Jehovah—or for which the word “Lord” in small letters is substituted, which

seems to mean the Self-existed and Eternal Being. Jehovah—I Am that I Am, the eternal One.

Now in the introduction to this prayer Jesus teaches us to address Him as our Father. There is no word large enough to hold all the truth that God has told men about Himself. Thus our Father has revealed Himself in great love toward sinful, fallen men and really seeks them out, that they, too, may seek Him out and meet on holy ground, even before the Eternal, Holy One. God sent Christ the Savior into the world that we could be forgiven, all sins covered in His precious blood.

This Name takes on wonderful, new, unspeakable dimensions; and the Name is revered and spoken in humility, yet boldly, by sons and joint heirs, with glory and praise to Him forever. By whatever name we would use to call upon Him in the Spirit, that is a holy name. The eternal, Almighty God, the Loving Father, the Living Jesus, or God, the source and dispenser of life and all good to both body and soul. The name we may choose especially to use at any given time may be according to a given need or trial or occasion to praise. Whatever, it is holy and generally under the name of Father.

This petition at first may be thought to be asking God to guard us against cursing, but it is really more than that. It is, may your Name be kept holy. It is to have respect unto the names God has shown us, and to seek the meaning of these great names, taking in all eternity, all men, all power, all love. Could we not respect the name of God? When we do we also respect the Bible, for here His Name is foremost. God is what it is all about and the Word should be read properly, preached properly, be listened to properly in all its truth and purity. He would have us be true sons of God, reborn of His Spirit, on holy ground ourselves. In Him we live and move and have our being. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty. Heaven and earth are full of Thee and Thy Glory. Fill my soul with Thy praise. May His name become Holy to many more. For in this prayer, as we say, “Our Father,” we are praying for others as well as ourselves. So, fellowmen, join in the train of those who know the holy Name. He knows you as a redeemed one from all unholy things, self, the world, the devil and that we are on the way to heaven. “Hallowed be Thy Name.”

—Lawrence C. Dynneson

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The Second Coming of Christ

by Rev. Ronald E. Hoehne, Fergus Falls, Minnesota



Rev. Ronald E. Hoehne

When one mentions the Second Coming of Christ there are many issues which come to mind. Some are controversial and even divisive of fellowship in Christian circles. We have several differing views within our Association regarding aspects of the Return of Christ. We are living in a day when discussions and books abound on the theme of the Return of Christ. Many are good and edifying and many are solely dealing with sensationalism. The "signs of the times" call the believer to the awareness that Jesus could come at any moment and he is to be ready and watching.

As I ponder the soon-to-come return of Christ, I find three basic questions coming to mind. These are: 1) Do I believe that Jesus is coming again? 2) Do I love His appearing? 3) Am I prepared and working for that glorious day? In this article I would seek the Biblical answers to these questions.

In a day when Bibles abound and are the "best sellers" on the market, these questions may seem quite elemental and to have obvious answers. Yet, we find in Christian circles many who would have to say no to them. There are many who believe the Bible to be the Word of God but they don't know the truths of God's Word by personal experience. Hosea, speaking for God, accused the Israelites of not having "knowledge of God" for they had forsaken "the law (Word) of God" (Hosea 4:6). Sadly enough, many are

people after the hearts of the Israelites today and are walking in their paths of spiritual ignorance.

1) **Do I believe that Jesus is coming again?** As one studies both the Old and New Testaments one cannot help but note that there are promises concerning the Messiah that were not fulfilled in His first coming. We note the restoration of the Children of Israel, the rebuilding of the Temple, and the beating of swords into plowshares. Their fulfillment is yet to come. There are also very definite, unmistakable promises regarding the physical return of Christ to this earth.

To me, one of the most beautiful passages in Scripture is found in John 14, where Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (verses 2,3).

Christ spoke here of His departure from this world, His preparation to receive the believer into heaven to be with Himself, and His coming again to receive the believer personally. This is a precious promise from the lips of the Savior. Do you believe Him?

The parable of the Ten Virgins and the coming of the Bridegroom to meet them indicates a time when Christ shall come again. Also in Matthew 24, Jesus gave to His disciples certain signs of His Second Coming. In verses 27, 30, 37, 39, 42, 44, and 46, he speaks of "the coming of the Son of Man," "the Son of Man coming," "the Son of Man will appear," "the Son of Man is coming." These are terms used to indicate to His followers, with whom He was physically present, the promise of His future return to this world.

In Acts 1:11 we read the question and statement of the angels to the dis-

ciples regarding the certainty of the return of Christ. "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven." How did Jesus go into heaven? He was taken bodily alive upon the clouds. How will He come again? Bodily alive, descending upon the clouds.

This truth of the return of Christ became a central teaching of the early Christian Church as all the New Testament testifies. In 1 Corinthians 4:5, we find the charge of Paul to the stewards of God not to be judges of other men "until the Lord come." Judgment is for the Lord, not man, and Jesus shall come to exercise it.

Paul speaks, in 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, of what will happen when Christ comes again. "The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." Chapter 5 warns of the suddenness of our Lord's return and encourages us to expectant living for that day.

II Thessalonians 1:10 says, "When He shall come to be glorified in His saints." The 2nd chapter relates the events which will precede His coming. Jude 14 states, "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, 'Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints.'" The Book of Revelation is replete with the prophecies of the Return of Christ. To me the most treasured words are those of our Savior, "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11), and again, "Surely I come quickly" (Rev. 22:20). The response of the Apostle John is truly the prayer of every watching and waiting Christian, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Yes, Jesus is com-

ing again. God has proclaimed it in His word and "God is not a man that He should lie" (Num. 23:19).

2) **Do I love His appearing?** As we see the emphasis of the early Christian Church upon the Lord's return, we might rightly ask ourselves, "Do we love His appearing?" Do we, though?

The New Testament Church evangelized the world because they loved His appearing. They lived for the moment of His return and encouraged one another to faithful living for Jesus. During the past year, living in Fergus Falls, a city with 17 "Christian Churches," I have been visited twice by the Mormons, at least six times by the Jehovah's Witnesses, but not once by a Christian. My experience in other cities has been the same. If we, as Christian people, love the appearing of the Lord, should we not be busy telling others about it? Why don't we live in the expectation of His return?

We read in Acts 8:4 that the New Testament Church, under persecution, "went every where preaching the Word." The results are shown when Philip went to Samaria, "there was great joy in that city" (Acts 8:8). People "loving the appearing of the Lord" were busy speaking about the Lord to their neighbors, their friends, families, strangers and even enemies. If I love the appearing of the Lord I will be obedient unto His commands. Jesus said, "If a man love Me, he will keep My Words" (Jn. 14:23). The Lord left us with the command to "go and teach all nations." Do we love Him enough to accept this responsibility?

True love for Jesus and belief in His return, will lead to a burden for the lost and unsaved. The Apostle Paul had a burning compassion to reach men with the Gospel. Jail cell or certain death, shipwreck or stoning, none of these were able to keep Him from preaching the "Good News" to all people. Magistrates, rulers, jailers, slaves or freemen were receivers of His message because he wanted them to receive the Crown of Life in Jesus which is laid up for those who love His appearing (II Tim. 4:8). Such an attitude is an expression of joyful expectation as we read in Titus 2:13.

3) **Am I prepared and working for**

that glorious day? Believing that Jesus will come, and loving His appearing, results in one actively working for the glory of the Heavenly Father and Savior. To work, you must be prepared.

One is not prepared for the coming of Christ unless he has first come by the way of Calvary. He must have first experienced the joy of having his sins washed in the blood of the Lamb. There is no other condition for being ready than to have Jesus say, "Thy faith hath made thee whole, go in peace." The prepared one is a truly born-again person, saved by the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ. He is prepared and has taken up his cross to follow Jesus.

In following Jesus, he watches and prays lest he enters into temptation (Matt. 26:40). To this end he has hidden the word of God in his heart for it offers a sure defense against yielding to sin (Ps. 119:11). He walks in obedience to the Lord until His appearing (I Tim. 6:14). All the while, he trusts not his own merits or achievements, but he trusts the Lord who died for him.

The prepared one seeks to remain in that condition because of the uncertainty of that day's coming. Jesus said, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels in heaven, but my Father only" (Matt. 24:36). Again we are told that it will come as a thief in the night (I Thess. 5:2), at a time when you least expect it. The parable of the Ten Virgins demonstrates the fact that either you are ready or you will be lost. There will be no time to run out to seek the Lord for we are to seek Him while He may yet be found (Is. 55:6). "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:2). There is no "convenient season" as Felix sought of Paul (Acts 24:25).

We in the Christian Church hold the "Good News of Salvation which shall be unto all people." We have the key to eternal life in Christ Jesus. Our Lord has promised to come again and He has charged us to be faithful stewards of His Word until He comes (Lk. 19:13). We are to labor in the vineyard that others might be prepared and waiting when He comes. There are the scoffers who ask "Where is the promise of His coming? for since the

fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (II Pet. 3:4). They scoff and sleep, often in hidden ways. Satisfaction with the size of one's church to the point that we fail to bring others in; fear to be a witness. These are ways in which we scoff at the return of Christ. The pious attitude of being a Bible student and a man or woman of prayer, yet failing to share the "good news" with others is a good case in point. To be watchful is to be alert in all things. Yes, it includes diligence in studying the Word. We need to be in the Word in order to be equipped unto every good work (II Tim. 3:16,17). Yes, it includes watchfulness in prayer. It also includes being watchful as a living witness in thought, word and deed. We cannot hide the talents that God has given but must employ them in the world where we live, work and play, lest we lose them.

I am reminded of the dream of a man who saw a church by a bluff. Thousands of people were rushing past the church and leaping to their death. This man tried to stop them but they pushed on by. The task was too much for one man. He went into the church. There people were gathered in prayer. He cried, "Help me! People are rushing to their death over this bluff! Help me stop them!" The people in the church replied, "Don't bother us now, we are praying."

Friends, Jesus Christ is coming soon. We may decry the condition of the world around us, but unless we become actively involved in reaching the lost for Christ we cannot say that we truly believe in His return, or love His appearing, and are not then truly prepared for His return. The nearness of our Lord's return, the suddenness of it, and the condition of the world summon us to faithful service as Stewards of God's Word. Hebrews 10:22-25 exhorts us to hold fast the profession of our faith, provoke one another to love and good works, and to exhort one another, "so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Jesus has proclaimed, "Behold, I come quickly!" Are you prepared to say, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus.?" Let us ever be waiting, watching and working for His coming to receive His own unto Himself.

AROUND THE HUMP AND UP THE AMAZON

By Pastor John H. Abel,
Missionary to Brazil

"Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving" (Col. 4:2).

For a few years we had been thinking and praying about an opportunity to know a little about this big Brazil to the north of us. Years ago this was a very difficult goal to achieve, but in the past three years Brazil has completed the hard-surfacing of new roads all the way along the coast from Rio de Janeiro and the industrial city of Sao Paulo up to Belem at the mouth of the Amazon, approximately 3,300 miles of asphalt road. Our furlough time was now at hand, so using some of our vacation time from the field, we made our plans to proceed home by way of the coastal roads.

On Aug. 5th we arrived in Sao Paulo from Campo Mourao and while running around arranging for our vaccinations and final travel papers, we also had a blessed scheduled meeting with Miss Priscilla Wold, our missionary in language training. Shortly after suppertime we bid goodbye to Priscilla and the six of us boarded a bus for the overnight trip to Belo Horizonte, capital of the state of Minas Gerais. Besides our two girls still with us in Brazil, Lydia and Priscilla, we had sons Nathanael and Paul. Paul had saved enough from his book-selling job in California to come out to Brazil and spend a month with us, helping in Bible Camp and in the general field work. Now he was looking forward to the trip home via the Amazon.

The approximately 300 miles to Belo was done by 7 a.m., and we took a taxi out to the Bethany Fellowship Grounds where we met several of the missionary couples and saw their large printing establishment. We had dinner with these folks and in the afternoon looked up old friends who had attended language school with us in Brazil, now some 23 years ago. These friends are the Paul Overholts, Youth For Christ Missionaries. They have a large Bible camp program going

and also Bible clubs in a number of schools. After a good night's rest at the Bethany Center, Missionary Larry Swenson, from Rollag, Minn., took us, bright and early, to the bus station and we were on our way around the rugged hill country to a city called Governador Valdares, six hours up the road. Our trip took us past a number of strip-mining operations where iron and copper are being mined and smelted in big, modern operations.

We had a layover of two hours before we could get a bus to Salvador, capital of the state of Bahia. Our trip continued all night long, for the distance from Belo to Salvador is about 800 miles, but the buses were quite new and as large as our Greyhounds in the U.S., with a bathroom on board. We arrived a little tired, but rather excited to be in the first capital of Brazil and considered to be one of its oldest cities. Bahia has its own native dress for its women, dating from the time of the slaves, long, flowing white dresses with handmade lace, sometimes colored, and peasant blouses, then the colorful turbans wound around the head, atop of which is often carried large baskets and, of course, plenty of native jewelery on the arm and neck. We saw many of these colorful black ladies on the streets, selling their little cakes and wares. Our stay here was only a matter of hours but we visited the evangelical bookstore, operated and staffed by English missionaries who have a number of such works in various cities of north Brazil. We visited the famous markets on the waterfront, where hundreds of little coastal boats bring in the produce from many little towns along Brazil's Atlantic coast.

By 8:30 p.m., we were back out at the huge new bus terminal and even had an opportunity to take a refreshing showerbath before we boarded a new bus that would carry us all night to the city of Recife, capital of the state of Rio Grande do Norte. It is a little over 500 miles from Salvador to Recife, but it was a 15-hour bus trip. We arrived at 11 a.m., and im-

mediately directed our taxi to the evangelical bookstore, whose address we had been given in Sao Paulo. It was a Saturday and we were fortunate to catch the manager in, for all stores close at noon in Brazil. We soon found that we were to be the guests of the Presbyterian Seminary of North Brazil and our new friends, Senhor Agostinho and his wife Dona Ildalci, were more than full of the usual Brazilian hospitality. They took us in their bookstore van to the seminary and helped us get settled in a small apartment, while directing our two sons to the boys' dorm. That evening we attended evangelism services being conducted by a Scottish missionary in one of the city's Presbyterian churches. Sunday, August 10th, was an even busier day.

Agostinho and his wife insisted on looking after us and taking us around the city on Sunday after church to see the sights. Recife had suffered from the worst flood in its recorded history, only a couple months previously. Signs of the flood were everywhere. Recife, of course, is often referred to as the Venice of South America, for it is a city built over and around several canals. Its first founders and colonizers were the Dutch and, of course, they knew how to drain land and build near the sea. But this year, with unprecedented heavy rains, combining with a high tide, the waters had no place to go, so they just backed up all over the city. At the Presbyterian Seminary, a school about 90 years old, right in the heart of the city, the waters rose nine feet high inside the buildings. Much tragic loss of life and property occurred in the few days that the water remained at flood stage in the city. The seminary lost most of its large library and several pianos were ruined. Stone walls around the many old homes were often toppled and a few houses had also sagged or toppled. Many automobiles had been swept away to the sea or river and ruined. Well, this was all tragic, but the people had by the time of our arrival pretty well cleaned up the whole mess, and with that happy Brazilian optimism were carrying on as usual.

Agostinho and his wife took us on a tour of the city, both the old and new Recife. We saw the oldest Protes-

tant church still standing in Brazil, built by the Dutch in 1520. We visited old Dutch and Portuguese forts and saw the site where the Dutch lost the battle to the Portuguese. The young people enjoyed drinking cold coconut juice with straws, sucking it out of big green coconuts that had just had their tops knocked off with a big machete knife. They swam in the warm Atlantic and examined the log sailing rafts called "gangadas," that the fishermen have been sailing out into the ocean on for hundreds of years.

That evening we attended special meetings in the largest of the Presbyterian churches in the city, one belonging to a group associated with Dr. Carl McIntire's conservative group in the U.S. In all, it was a very full day. We had visited various places and groups. After a good night's rest at the seminary, Agostinho showed up again to take us with all our baggage down to the bus terminal and then we were on our way to the city furthest out on the hump of Brazil, Natal (Christmas).

What can we say about Natal? Well, many U.S. airmen remember it, for it was there, during World War II that the U.S. maintained a large airbase, to refuel and service its big bombers and supply planes before they took off for Africa. But Natal is still pretty much of a sleepy little Brazilian city, nestled in among the dry hills and sand dunes of northeast Brazil. We found no big modern bus terminal there. Civilization and industrialization are just beginning to catch up with this little, almost forgotten, city. We directed ourselves to the address of the Instituto Batista, and Rev. Othaniel, its director. We were cordially received by Rev. Othaniel and his wife Ruth. They don't have many visitors up there, being pretty well off the beaten track, and they invited us to put up our hammocks, as is the custom in this part of Brazil, and stay with them. The next morning we had a tour of the large Christian school run by the Brazilian Baptists. From kindergarden through senior high school, there are some 500 students, a real witness for Christ in this poor economic area of Brazil, where there are few evangelicals. We also had a short tour of the town and the old Portuguese fort that is reached

only by walking a narrow causeway that runs about a half-mile out into the ocean.

Leaving the next morning, Tues., Aug. 12th, we now breathed a certain prayer of thankfulness. We had rounded the hump of Brazil and were now headed toward the mouth of the Amazon. It was only 200 miles to our next stop, Fortealeza, capital of the big, dry, northeastern state of Para, and I personally was breathing another prayer in a more fervent manner than before. "Lord, help me to encounter Peter." Who is he? An old buddy and brother in Christ from pre-marriage days. Back in 1946 and 1947, Pete was pastor of a small Mission Covenant Church near my hometown in northern Minnesota and I was student pastor of the Lutheran Church there during an interim between pastors. We were both students and had some good fellowship together at the local swimming pool and various youth meetings. Pete had gone to Brazil several years before we had felt any call that way and over the past 25 years we had met only once, briefly, in the States. It would be great to see him and his family again, and talk over the work. The problem was that we hadn't heard from them for a long time, but at one time we knew that they were in this general area and working out of this city of Fortealeza.

(To be continued)

GOSSIP

Gossip is the tool of the coward. Christian courage never resorts to the baseness of gossip to achieve its end.

Gossip is the product of shallow minds. They try to impress others with what they pretend to know.

Gossip is the diversion of the fool. Wisdom is gainfully employed in the application of knowledge.

Gossip is like a muddy stream that seeks to find its own level. Sincerity and love will have no part of it.

Gossip is really lower than a viper; only it strikes without warning.

Gossip associates itself with lying; and thrives on half truths.

—Author Unknown

Letters TO THE EDITOR

ANNUAL REPORT CORRECTION

On page 69 (1975 Annual Report of the AFLC), paragraph 11, the third item is erroneous in its wording. Just prior to that session I conversed with Pastor George Knapp and among other things he stated that some of the native students in Brazil, after they have been nurtured and trained in the Word of God, then lured by promise of greater material remuneration by some other religious group, abandon the AFLC people and join Pentecostals, Baptists, etc. The gist of my comments was that we ought to find some way to counteract this type of negation of our missionaries' activities, to find out if the natives involved have a sense of loyalty to the AFLC or not.

I was NOT questioning the loyalty of our missionaries as the report book implies.

—Wm. J. Kangas
Minneapolis, Minn.

(Ed. Note: The item which Reader Kangas refers to says that he "suggested that we note where the missionaries are going, and urged that we have men who are loyal to the AFLC.")

"Contrition without faith is despair; and faith without contrition is arrogance and carnal security."

—Martin Luther

PERSONALITIES

Rev. Timothy K. Skramstad has accepted a call to serve the Minnewaukan, N. Dak., parish (Trinity, Lebanon, Antiochia and Tunbridge) and began his duties there on November 1. He and his wife reside in the parsonage in Minnewaukan.

New address for Rev. Philip Haugen in Fargo, N. Dak., is 1602 South 14th St. He is pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

ADDRESSES OF OUR MISSIONARIES

Remember them with a greeting
at Christmas.

Rev. and Mrs. John H. Abel
and family
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and family
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Miss Priscilla Wold
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Rev. and Mrs. Lawrence C.
Dyneson and family
1548 Patagonia Road, P.O. Box 1211
Nogales, Arizona 85621

Mrs. and Mrs. Leonard Swanson
Box 1211
Nogales, Arizona 85621

On loan to the World Mission Prayer
League

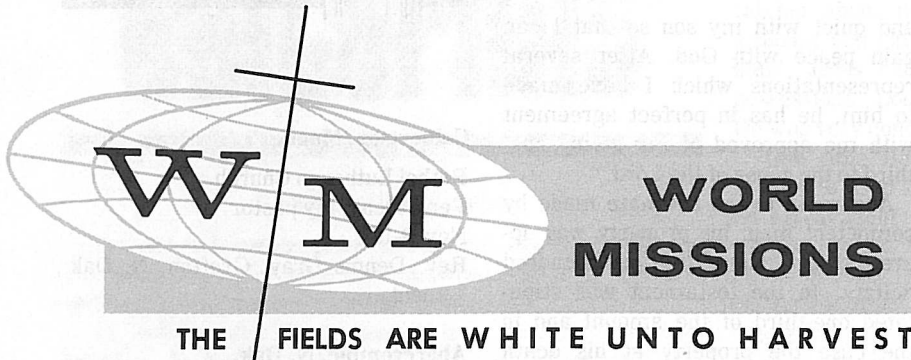
Rev. and Mrs. Richard W. Gunderson
and family
Casilla 266
La Paz, Bolivia

REV. E. P. DREYER IN WASHINGTON, NOT CALIFORNIA

Rev. E. P. Dryer (emeritus) is living in the Good Samaritan Home at E 17121 8th Avenue, Greenacres, Wash., not in California, as erroneously reported in a recent issue. Mrs. S. R. Kurle of Spokane, Wash., reports that Pastor Dreyer is doing "just fine" and all his friends will be glad to hear that.

His daughter Marie lives in a private home in Spokane, according to Mrs. Kurle.

The building in the background of our cover picture of this issue is the Sears Building, the tallest in the world.



ARISTIDES ALVES RAMOS

Greetings, my brothers. In the first place, I do not know you, but I would like to greet you in the name of Jesus Christ. I was born in 1955 in a Catholic home; there are 14 of us in the family. The rest are all staunch Catholics. I was also a staunch Catholic, seeking the true salvation that only Jesus Christ could give, but the Catholic Church could not fill the vacuum of



my heart. Today I am happy to say that Jesus is in my heart and I am studying at the Bible School. However, I feel very sad that I had to leave my father and mother for the sake of the Gospel. The last year

I was living with them I was the only Christian in a Catholic home.

I tried to show my mother the Word of God and what it could do to change her life but she would not accept it. She wanted me to return to the Catholic Church. She even cried when I told her I was going to the Bible Institute. My father would not let me leave home but finally, on the 14th of July in 1975, my father and I had a fight and I left my home for the sake of my life and went to the Bible Institute in Campo Mourao. There the pastors helped me in all that I needed as Jesus was guiding them to meet my needs. When I first came there I was sick with a foot infection, which was my first testing, but they helped me medically and Jesus cured me.

I am now working and studying firmly in Christ, and will continue being led by the Lord.

Aristides Alves Ramos

Aristides was saved in our Iretama Church a year ago and came faithfully to church each Sunday. It was this act that caused him to be expelled from his home. We therefore ask you to remember this young man in your prayers as he continues his studies at the Bible Institute, that the Lord would bless him as he prays faithfully each day for his parents who will not let him come home. Pray with him that the Lord will work a miracle in their hearts and in his home.

Wonderful Experiences in the Work of God's Kingdom

THE MAN WHO WOULD MAKE GOOD WHAT HE HAD NEGLECTED

During the last years of my labors in San Francisco, I began a little missionary work in Oakland. There, for a small rental, I hired a hall where I preached every Sunday afternoon. As time passed, the attendance increased at our meetings. Among those who came to our services was a Mr. Jens Reinertsen, a widower 68 years of age. He had lived the most of his life in Bergen, Norway. At the meetings he usually had his place near the table where I stood and preached. He was greatly impressed with the Word of God and later he confessed his salvation through Christ.

One week before my departure from San Francisco, I had a telephone call from him to come over to his home as he desired to talk with me about a very important matter.

Next day I came to his home and he said, "God has been inexpressibly good to me, and has saved me in my old age. When I look back upon my life I realize that I have neglected most of my time and that which is most necessary in life. I have done nothing for God or for His cause. I have been thinking back and forth whether in some manner I might not make compensation for a part of all that I have neglected to do and I have come to the conclusion that I am going to will one-third of my property for the mission work of the church. I want you to make out my last will and testament for this purpose."

"Jens," I said, "you remind me of Zacchaeus."

"Zacchaeus? Well, he gave one-half, did he not?" replied Jens. "I would do the same if I could do it in peace and satisfactorily, but I have my only son living with me and he is absolutely opposed to my giving anything to the mission, as he expects to get it all. I want to live in peace

and quiet with my son so that I can gain peace with God. After several representations which I have made to him, he has in perfect agreement with me approved of my giving one-third to the cause of the Lord."

According to the estimate made by competent men, his property was appraised at about fifty-four hundred dollars. In the testament was stipulated one-third of the amount and in the case the property at his death was not worth the taxed amount, the part going to the church was not to be less than eighteen hundred dollars.

The testament was signed by himself and two witnesses. As I on behalf of the church thanked him for the donation, I took leave of the dear brother and brought a copy of the testament with me to the treasurer of the church in Minneapolis, during the church convention held there at the time.

Some time later my friend went home to God and the church received the promised amount according to the last will and testament of Jens Reinertsen after his death.

Blessed be his memory.

—E. B. Slettedahl



Culbertson, Mont.

Bethel Lutheran Church
Verle Dean, lay pastor
Nov. 9-13

Rev. Dennis Gray, Grafton, N. Dak.,
speaker

Abercrombie, N. Dak.

Bethany Lutheran Church
Dale Mellgren, pastor
Nov. 9-13

Rev. Ronald Knutson, Drummond,
Wis., speaker

Doran, Minn.

Stiklestad Lutheran Church
Dale Mellgren, pastor
Nov. 16-20

Rev. Donald Greven, Sedan, Minn.,
speaker

McLeod, N. Dak.

United Lutheran Church
Rev. R. P. Haakonson, pastor
Nov. 30 - Dec. 3

Rev. Dale Mellgren, Abercrombie,
N. Dak., speaker

ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS 3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

BUDGET RECEIPTS (February 1—September 30, 1975)

	Total Budget	Current Budget	Rec'd during September	Total Rec'd to date	% of Current	% of Total
General Fund	\$ 64,250.00	\$ 42,833.28	\$ 1,660.15	\$ 25,213.85	58%	39%
Schools	102,000.00	68,000.00	4,900.99	46,990.86	69	46
Home Missions	53,000.00	35,333.28	3,673.79	25,317.13	71	47
Foreign Missions	66,840.00	44,560.00	3,672.47	27,028.91	60	40
Praise Fund	18,000.00	12,000.00	733.88	6,778.00	56	37
TOTAL	\$304,090.00	\$202,726.64	\$14,641.28	\$131,328.75	64%	43%
1974-75	\$264,200.00	\$173,133.34	\$11,770.01	\$106,090.26	61%	40%

Legacies: 1975-1976—\$3,511.20

Dorm Fund: 1975-1976—\$3,503.65

editorials

THREE MORE YEARS

As you will notice elsewhere in this issue, the Editor has been re-elected to a new three-year term by the Coordinating Committee, effective October 1.

In looking back one is conscious of how the Lord has provided in the past. We are reminded of the widow's cruse of oil and jar of meal which did not fail in Elijah's time. There has always been something from which to draw. The Lord has never permitted us to build up much of a store against the future, but the needs have always been met and that, after all, is the promise of Scripture.

A sincere thank-you to all who have provided material for the soon 325 issues of **The Lutheran Ambassador** which have been produced. Without your help, too, this wouldn't have been possible. Continue that support and particularly we encourage "creative" writers of both prose and poetry.

In looking ahead to the coming three years, as God grants them, if there is any emphasis we would like to stress it would be that of heritage. A heritage grounded in the Word, of course, but articulated by Spirit-prompted men and made manifest in various movements in and out of organized church bodies.

And not only religious heritage, but the national and patriotic heritage also, prompted by the U.S.A.'s Bicentennial observance through 1976.

As the Lord provides, then, we move on to this endeavor. And up to now, Luke 17:10 puts it well: "Even so ye also, when ye shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say, 'We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do'".

JESUS TALKED ABOUT IT

Sometimes people complain that their pastor is always talking about money. Granted, there are wrong tracks a pastor can get into concerning this subject. On the other hand, Jesus had a great deal to say about money and possessions. Look at the parables He told, for instance. He was very concerned about how people relate to money.

One time He commended a widow for giving all her money to God's work. On another occasion He praised an extravagant pouring out of ointment as a demonstration of love to Him. He warned against stockpiling treasures on earth rather than in heaven and urged the seeking of His kingdom first, with the promise that earthly needs would be taken care of, too. Yes, Jesus talked about money.

And like it or not, church work takes money, a good deal of it in these days. We can pray all we want and assemble all we want, but there is going to have to be generous giving, too, if the work is going to be maintained.

Giving is a personal matter. Each should give as he has prospered. Offerings should be made as a response of gratitude to God and out of concern that the world be evangelized. What powerful motivations those ought to be!

When life is laid before the Lord as a "living sacrifice," it certainly ought to include one's wealth, one's possessions. "All to Jesus I surrender; I surrender all." Under His guidance, all material goods will be used in a God-honoring way, as the late Prof. Andreas Helland brought out in his dissertation on stewardship found in another place in this issue.

Jesus talked about the right use of material goods. Your preacher should also do this sometimes if he is preaching the whole counsel of God. Don't fault him for doing this, but listen to him.

THE COMING OF CHRIST

He came to die that I might live
In fellowship with God;
His holy life He came to give,
The path for me He trod.

He came to live that I might die
As God's beloved child,
To ever live with Him on high
In mansions undefiled.

He came to win the victory
That set me free from sin;
He came to win a crown for me,
Through Him alone I win.

He came to seek and save the lost,
For them He bled and died;

He purchased them at highest cost,
When He was crucified.

He comes in love to every heart
Through Word and Sacrament;
To all, His grace He will impart,
Who trust Him and repent.

He comes to reign in hearts of men,
He conquers them by love,
Restoring fellowship again
'Tween man and God above.

He comes to bless and keep His own,
And bless their labors, too;
And daily at His gracious Throne
He meets His faithful few.

He comes to rally all His own

To serve Him faithfully,
Directing others to His Throne,
Where sinners are set free.

He comes at last to meet His Bride,
The living and the dead,
That to the end were true and tried,
And loved none else instead.

He comes with glory in the skies,
He comes without delay;
His sainted Bride with Him shall rise
To reign with Him for aye.

Come, Holy Ghost, with us abide,
Until our Lord shall come,
That we who are His blood-bought
Bride

May enter Heaven's home.

C. K. Solberg

STEWARDSHIP

CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful (I Cor. 4:2).

Have you, my dear reader, ever paid any special attention to the fact, that our Savior so often used the word "steward" and "servant" when He would explain our relation to God?

A steward is a servant who is charged with looking after his master's interests. In several of His parables Christ speaks about a master handing over to his servants certain sums of money before leaving for a foreign country. Later he returns and demands an accounting from them for the handling of his property. For he has, of course, all the time been the sole owner of this money; it has never for a moment been the personal property of his servants. Those servants or stewards who have used their master's goods according to his will and in the owner's interest, receive praise and reward. This reward is essentially an advancement: "Thou has been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things." But the wicked and unprofitable steward, who has misused his trust, acting according to his own evil notions, is cast out into the outer darkness of hopelessness.

Thus speaks Jesus. In two parables He speaks about rich men who suffered a terrible fate. Both made the awful mistake of regarding earthly possessions as their "personal property," and that to such a degree that they sought, and imagined that they had found in their riches the founda-

tion of their souls' happiness and well-being. But what God says to one of them is equally true about both: "Thou foolish one!"

Our Savior has by many examples taught us that nothing of what we possess is "ours," in a literal sense. We have received it from God with the understanding that it is to be used solely in His interest and according to His will. In fact, we "own" nothing. This rule holds good not only in spiritual matters, but in temporal matters as well.

This is also the way the members of the early church looked upon this question. That is why "not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own." And still we know about two persons who in their hearts disagreed with this view and with Christ's teaching concerning our relation to earthly possessions. Just as the rich men in the parables, so did also these two church members misunderstand the relation, with the result that they "kept back" part of their property, while they would have it understood that they admitted the Lord's unrestricted ownership to all of it. These two also acted as "foolish ones," and it cost them their lives, having agreed to commit the terrible sin of "trying the Spirit of the Lord."

But it is just as dangerous today to say—or even to think—about one's possessions that they are one's own, even if it be only part thereof that is "kept back." Most Christians are quite careful about the way in which they acquire their property. Yea, even worldly people hate to have it said

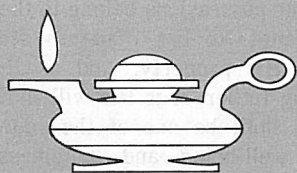
about them that they have obtained riches by fraud. But the acquisition of property is obviously only one side of the question. The other, and at least equally as important side, is how we use that which we have acquired. There is absolutely nothing to indicate that the rich land-owner in the parable had acquired his riches in an unjust way. "His ground brought forth plentifully," that is to say, he got a good crop, and that is certainly nothing to blame him for. No, his fatal mistake was that he made the wrong use of what God in His abundant goodness had bestowed upon him as a trust.

Here lies the great danger for Christian men and women. We have perhaps as a rule acquired what we possess in a just way, even though we, of course, need to be on our guard also on this point. But where we so often lose out, is in the manner in which we use our property.

There are people, who, following the Old Testament rule, plead for the reinstatement of tithing: Christians should give for the furtherance of God's kingdom one tenth of what they earn. Although this rule, where faithfully applied, brings great outward results, there is this to say against it, that it so easily becomes another means of fostering the vicious idea that only a fraction belongs to the Lord, all the rest is our "personal property."

Tithing may be all right as a practical working rule, but not as a Christian principle. Really Christian is only that principle which maintains that

[Continued on page 12]



SCHOOL NEWS

FIRST QUARTER PROCTORS

The dormitory proctors for the First Quarter of this year are as follows: **Boys' Dorm, 2nd floor:** Bob Ordway, Centuria, Wis., and Dave Rudebusch, Ortley, S. Dak. **3rd floor:** Dick Moberg, Fairdale, N. Dak., and Reuben Quanbeck, McVile, N. Dak.

Girls' Dorm, 2nd floor: Kendra Broten, Roseau, Minn., Judy Moan, McIntosh, Minn., and Naomi Nash, Galchutt, N. Dak. **3rd floor:** Pattie Erickson, Roseau, Minn., Kathy Ostrand, Ranier, Ore., and Karen Russum, Grafton, N. Dak.

VISITATION TEAMS ACTIVE

The students at AFLBS this year have been divided into seven deputation or visitation teams. Each team has a captain who has the responsibility of seeing that a program has been planned in advance of a visit to a home and that the team members know of each appointment. This year a team will go to the same nursing home or rest home each month throughout the year.

Here is a list of the homes to be visited and the team captains.

Mission Farms, Allen Herset and Arne Berge (two teams); Texatoka,

Gordon Grae; Colonial Acres, Keith Nash; Trevilla of Robbinsdale, Reuben Quanbeck; Trevilla of Golden Valley, LeRoy Flickinger; and Ambassador, David Forsberg.

The homes are mostly for the elderly with the exception of Trevilla of Robbinsdale. There the residents are chiefly young adults who have suffered paralyzing and crippling disabilities. An extensive therapy program is carried out among them.

Pastor Francis Monseth is the faculty advisor for the student visitation teams. At a Monday morning chapel early in the year he challenged the students to make this effort count for Christ and gave guidelines in how to minister effectively in the homes which are visited.

CO-EDITORS CHOSEN FOR ANNUAL STAFF— AND OTHER ITEMS

At a meeting of the Annual staff recently, it was decided that there be three co-editors this year. Chosen were Becky Johnson, Mentor, Minn., Vickie Bjorgaard, Newfolden, Minn., and Phil Schumacher, Minneapolis, Minn. Other staff positions are to be selected. Mr. Don Rodvold is the fac-

ulty advisor of **The Conqueror**.

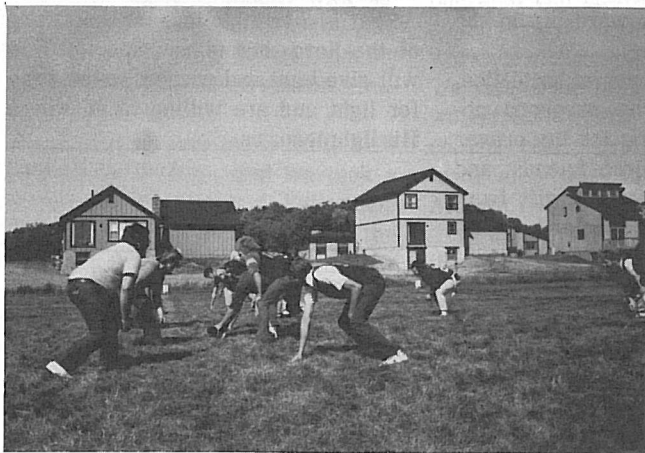
The pastors of the Twin Cities congregations of the Association have spoken at the Monday morning chapel services this fall. They are Dennis O'Neil, Faith; Francis Monseth, Victory in Christ; Richard Anderson, Rosedale; J. G. Erickson, Medicine Lake; and Chester Heikkinen, Morgan Avenue.

Evangelist David Molstre concluded nine days of meetings at Medicine Lake Lutheran on Oct. 19. Many of the students attended those services. On Oct. 15 Pastor Molstre spoke at the joint chapel service.

Missionary John H. Abel of Brazil was our joint chapel speaker on Oct. 22. He has a son, David, in the Seminary. Pastor Abel was in the Cities to attend the Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts which met in St. Paul, Minn., that week. The AFLBS students were also in attendance.

A senior Gospel team consisting of Mary Barnaal, Kendra Broten, Judy Moan, Keith Nash and Allen Herset presented a program at Zion Lutheran Church, Willmar, Minn., on Oct. 19. Mr. Don Rodvold accompanied them and gave the message at the evening program.

The annual Christmas concert by the Choir and Choral Club will be presented on Sunday, December 14, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon at Medicine Lake Church. Now a tradition at AFLBS, the concert is expected to attract a packed church. A supper for the public will be served in the church parlors following the program which will also feature some instrumental music.



The scrimmage line in the homecoming flag football game won by the Alumni 6-0.



Recent students at AFLBS in their prayer group at homecoming. Photos by Don Rodvold



NEWS

of the Churches

CONGREGATION AT GRAFTON HAD SESQUICENTENNIAL SERVICE

Bethel Lutheran Church of Grafton, N. Dak., hosted a Norwegian-English service commemorating the 150th anniversary of Norwegian immigration in this country. One hundred and sixty-three persons were in attendance to hear Rev. M. J. Vettrus deliver the sermon. Pastor and Mrs. Vettrus also shared in special music.

Rev. Roger Berg, area pastor, and his father shared their testimony in song. Mr. Roy Mohagen led in Scripture and prayer. Rev. Dennis Gray, pastor at Bethel, led the service. Pastor Gray knows no Norwegian, but several others who know only English also attended.

Pastor Gray's aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Ordell Berven, from Sioux Falls, S. Dak., also were in attendance. They have made several trips to Norway, visiting the location where the Bervens are from, a place called Berve. Mrs. Berven shared in song.

The committee in charge consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Christ Fett, Mrs. Andrew Bjornson, and Mr. and Mrs. Palmer Russum. Norwegian pastries were served for the lunch following the service.

The service is to become an annual affair at Bethel Lutheran.

NOTES FROM KALISPELL, MONTANA

Rev. John Rieth was installed as pastor of Faith and Stillwater Lutheran Churches on Sunday, Oct. 5, by

his brother, Rev. Robert Rieth, Kirkland, Wash. Pastor Robert Rieth preached the sermons at both churches.

Pastor John Rieth spoke at evangelistic meetings in Calvary Lutheran Church, Fergus Falls, Minn., Oct. 19-23.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS FROM WRC

Dear Brother Hautamaki:

Greetings in Jesus' name. How wonderful of you and your colleagues to continue your vote of confidence and wonderful share to World Relief Commission. We appreciate this more than words can say. We trust that you will convey to all your colleagues, staff and friends our sincere thanks as well as our gratitude for their vote of confidence and prayer interest. Please assure them of our promise of good continued stewardship in the Saviour's name.

I hope soon to be back at the office, Lord willing and my surgeons co-operating. I thank you for the prayer of you and your church friends, and I am happy to report the gift from the Lord of perfect peace and speedy recovery.

We will send receipts and letters to each of the churches and contributors, but I did want you to know how grateful we are for all that you have done to help.

Everett G. Graffam
Executive Vice President
World Relief Commission

all our possessions belong to the Lord, and that He has made us stewards over His property. And as He is a loving father, it is His will that these gifts shall be one of the sources of our well-being and happiness. But through it all it is necessary for us to remember that we are to render an account for our stewardship.

"For ye, brethren, were called for freedom; only use not your freedom for an occasion to the flesh, but through love be servants one to another." This is the Christian principle in these matters, and if we really act in accordance therewith, we shall experience happiness in giving of the means with which the Lord has intrusted us.

"How much?" you ask me. That no one can say, but the Word of God gives dependable advice even on this point. Each one should give "as he may prosper," and we should remember Christ's words: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Christian stewardship is a most vital question for the church as well as for the individual member. It directly concerns the salvation both of the individual and of the whole human family. It is indeed a matter well worth thinking about, speaking about, and praying about.

Many there are who have received much and received it honestly, received it from the Lord as a trust. But they make the fatal mistake of using it as a means to bring their soul to "take its ease," and as a consequence they come under God's wrath as "foolish ones."

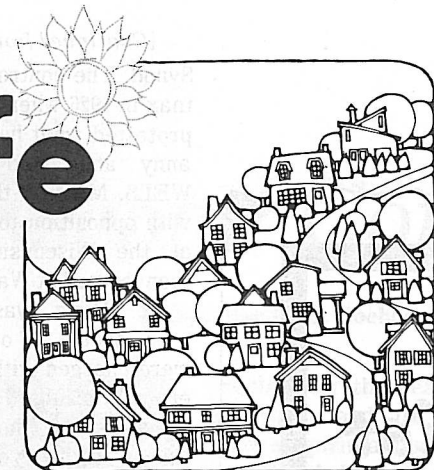
That is a terrible fate for a steward of the Lord, but to you and me God will give light and wisdom, if we pray for light and are willing to go where His light leads us.

—Andreas Helland

In the absence of any scientific demonstration of any other method of bringing something new into existence, no good reason for rejecting the Biblical doctrine (of creation) can be assigned.

—L. S. Keyser

Life on the Edge of Town



TWO HAPPENINGS

The weekend of Oct. 11-12 brought two once-in-a-lifetime happenings, a 25th anniversary of a college graduation and participation in an observance of the sesquicentennial of Norwegian immigration in America.

As to the latter, I took in two events, a prayer breakfast at the Leamington Hotel in Minneapolis and a public festival at the Minneapolis Auditorium on Sunday afternoon.

The prayer breakfast was the first such occasion I've ever attended. We must not think that a prayer breakfast is going to be like a prayer meeting, for it isn't. Perhaps such gatherings are mis-named. But I found much commendable at this one. Mrs. Paul Sonnack sang two stanzas of "Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now," without accompaniment, to beautifully set the stage for what followed.

The main talk was given by Representative Albert Quie of Minnesota's First Congressional District. He talked about Hans Nielsen Hauge of Norway, a man with whom he had only recently become familiar. Needless to say, it was gratifying to hear a representative speak about the man who led Norway to spiritual revival and to speak of personal faith in Jesus Christ.

Complementing that address was the one by Mrs. Gladys Severson, Minnesota Mother of the Year. She told of the origin of a women's Bible study group to which she belongs and which has continued for some years.

The Sunday afternoon meeting at the Auditorium was honored by the presence of the King of Norway, Olav V. He came to the stage carrying his felt hat in his hand. He sat in a row alone in front of other dignitaries, but the chair was a plain, low-backed armchair.

Thor Heyerdahl, the anthropologist and adventurer, read a lengthy paper (about an hour and a quarter) about the contributions of Leif Ericson and Christopher Columbus to the discovery of America. It was an excellent paper and one could appreciate that the speaker was not one who has confined himself to the office or classroom, but has tested his theories on the world's oceans.

A number of distinguished Norwegian-Americans were honored at the meeting. They are distinguished in many fields—medicine, the military, economics, politics, law, to name a few. Two of them are sons of Lutheran pastors. Some of them were born in places like Hawley, Ceylon, Wallace and Dell Rapids. Those of us with Norwegian blood in our veins can be justifiably proud.

It was a shame that such an unusual event was not greeted by a packed auditorium in this center of Norwegian-Americanism.

As to the college reunion, that took place at Augsburg College. I arrived early and so took a nostalgic walk down Riverside Avenue to Cedar. Past Manley's delicatessen on 21st Avenue, where some of us watched

World Series games in the early years of television; past Riverside Presbyterian, where some of my classes were held in those first two years; past the Blue Goose cafe on the corner of Cedar, where I sometimes ate a late supper after work at Messenger Press (which stood where a freeway now runs); past the Columbia and Holtzman department stores; and where Brodahl's Cafe used to stand. None of these places are in operation under those names now; some of the buildings stand empty.

And at the alumni luncheon it was nice to see that it was still possible to recognize those whom I had known all those years ago. Not everyone was back, by any means, but it was good to see all those who could make it. The next 25 years will deal more harshly with us, to be sure.

We were perhaps the first post-war educated class. Some of us began college fresh out of high school. Some of the members were back from the War, twice as old as us, and with the G.I. Bill behind them, planning to go to college. Those were exciting days. I trust that we have made some mark for good in our world, some mark for Jesus Christ in the 25 years since we received our B.A. degrees at Central Lutheran Church on June 2, 1950.

—Raynard Huglen

EDITOR RE-ELECTED

The Co-ordinating Committee of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations has re-elected Rev. Raynard Huglen as editor of **The Lutheran Ambassador**. The term is for three years and commenced on October 1. He has served in this position since February, 1963.

According to AFLC procedure, the nominations for Editor are made at the Annual Conference and the election is made by the Co-ordinating Committee.

The Ambassador has approximately 3750 subscribers in the U.S., Canada and several other countries. The current subscription price is \$3.50 per year (25 issues).

Women For Christ

SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT WOMEN HAVE CONVENTION

The Emmanuel Lutheran women of Eagle Butte, S. Dak., hosted the South Dakota District Women's Missionary Federation convention on Tues., Oct. 7. The theme for the day was "Serve the Lord," based on Deuteronomy 10:12. "Saviour, My Heart Is Thine" was the theme song. The district president, Mrs. Alta Hosek of St. Olaf Lutheran, presided over the sessions. Special music was provided by Mrs. Hosek and Alma Nelson. Pastor Edwin Kjos of Faith conducted the morning Bible study on the Divine Imperative, stating that man is a rebel but cannot change himself. He must be born again. The morning session closed with the song, "Joy in Serving Jesus."

The afternoon session opened with a singspiration led by Mrs. Harold Kilness with Mrs. Wayne Sletten at the piano. Pastor Howard Kjos of Roslyn led in devotions by reading Psalm 98 and offered prayer. Special music was provided by Pastor Severson of Wallace, Mrs. Ervin Tvinnereim and Mrs. Earl Davidson of Webster, and Mrs. Marvin Haara of Pukwana. Pastor Haara brought a challenge with his message "Serve in Truth," based on Joshua 24:14. Do not let your attention be focused on wealth, sports, pleasures, or entertainment but be willing to serve the Lord in truth for He is our God.

Mrs. Sherman McCarlson gave the Cradle Roll report and an invitation that the 1976 convention be held at

Tabor Lutheran, rural Webster. The 1976 officers are from Emmanuel WMF. They are: Mrs. Lydia McCarlson, pres.; Mrs. Stella Iverson, vice-pres.; and Mrs. Florence Schuler, sec.-treas.; and Mrs. McCarlson of Tabor as Cradle Roll secretary.

—Mrs. Emma Baker
Secretary protem

NEW ADDRESS

New address for **Rev. and Mrs. Elden K. Nelson and family** is 86286 Pine Grove Road, Eugene, Oregon 97402. Pastor Nelson serves Spencer Creek Lutheran Church, near Eugene.

WOMEN HONORED AT BINFORD



Mrs. Thorval Vigasaa, left, and Mrs. Ellen Pederson were given Honorary memberships in the Women's Missionary Federation at the August meeting of the Bethany Ladies Aid, Binford, N. Dak., Rev. Kenneth L. Anderson, pastor.

Synod. The controversy reached a climax in 1926 when the Rev. W. F. Bietz protested what he called spiritual tyranny and dead orthodoxy in the WELS. Much of the controversy dealt with opposition to the theology taught at the Wisconsin Synod seminary, then located at Wauwatosa, Wis.

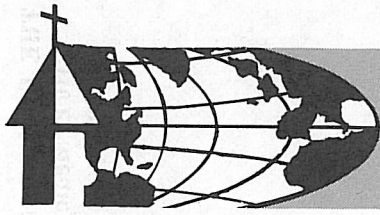
Mr. Bietz was suspended, along with about 40 other pastors. Some were charged with false doctrine, others with insubordination. The loose association of those suspended continued as the Prote'stant Conference, but they did not organize a new church body or try to expand their fellowship. They now list nine congregations with about 1,500 members.

Another group dissatisfied with "liberalism" in the LCMS was the **Concordia Lutheran Conference**, organized in 1956. The group split from another splinter known as the Orthodox Lutheran Conference which later dissolved itself and joined the Wisconsin Synod. The Concordia Lutheran Conference now lists five congregations and about 350 members.

The end of its life is in sight for the tiny **Eielsen Synod**. For several years this smallest Lutheran church body has had about 200 members and only one pastor. The official name of the synod, organized in 1846, is the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, but the denomination traces its roots to a Norwegian immigrant, Elling Eielsen, who opposed highly-educated clergy, liturgical services and other facets of the larger Lutheran churches.

The five remaining Eielsen Synod congregations admit that they are composed of mainly elderly persons and have no confirmands preparing for church membership. Congregations are in South Dakota, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Lutheran unity has long been a concern for the larger Lutheran denominations, which have until recently been steadily moving towards the establishment of one large Lutheran church in North America. But full Lutheran unity is a long way off, since about half a million Christians—subscribing to the Scriptures and the heritage of the Lutheran Reformation—are in Lutheran church bodies not currently involved in any meaningful dialogue with their fellow Lutherans.



CHURCH-WORLD NEWS

THE CHURCH AROUND THE WORLD

**A group of 186 scientists has released a statement strongly condemning the "pretentious claims of astrological charlatans." A spokesman said there is no scientific support for horoscopes and astrological forecasts. But people are grasping for anything, he said, to serve as a guidepost in today's confusing world.

**Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina, is bowing to what it terms a "tyrannical government" by admitting single blacks for the first time in its history. BJU had excluded single blacks because of fear of racial intermarriage among its students, and the belief that this is against God's law. To prevent this within the new policy, interracial dating is forbidden. (A few married blacks had been admitted in the past.) The Internal Revenue Service had threatened to remove Bob Jones' tax exempt status because of its discriminatory policy.

**Despite the recession and inflation, Americans bought 5.2 billion gallons of alcohol in 1974—327 million more than the previous year. Ten million alcoholics roam the streets, highways, board rooms, and factories of our land.

**The U.S. has the highest divorce rate in the world. There were more than 1,000,000 divorcees in 1974. In Southern California, the ratio is one divorce to one new marriage. Christians called a "Continental Congress on the Family" in St. Louis, Missouri, to see how the church could deal with this grave situation.

—Tyndale House Publishers

SMALLER LUTHERAN GROUPS SHUN MOVES TOWARD UNITY

New York—(LC)—Unlike Roman Catholics, Lutherans do not have an international church organization. While the major churches around the

world belong to the Lutheran World Federation, almost every continent has its share of splinter groups, chips off the Lutheran block, all emphasizing their own kind of piety, organization and confessional concerns.

In the United States, most of these smaller Lutheran church bodies came into being as groups of Lutheran churches—usually staunchly conservative—broke away from the major denominations.

The Lutheran Church in America, American Lutheran Church and Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod account for 8,200,000 of the nation's nearly nine million Lutherans. But there are others who claim the name and heritage of Luther—nearly one-half million Lutherans who are not only separated from the major denominations, but frequently oppose the policies and practices of the three largest Lutheran churches in North America.

The largest of these is the **Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod**, which currently reports a membership of about 400,000. For 90 years the Wisconsin Synod and the LCMS were joined in the Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America. But the WELS, organized in 1850, broke fellowship with the LCMS in 1961, charging that the larger body had departed from its original confessional position and become "liberal."

The WELS withdrew from the Synodical Conference in 1962 and is currently the largest of the Lutheran church bodies not currently a member of the Lutheran Council in the USA.

The **Evangelical Lutheran Synod** is Norwegian in its background, having been organized in 1853 by Norwegian settlers in the midwest. A strictly conservative body, it was once in fellowship with the LCMS, but broke its relations with that church body in 1955 because the ELS felt that Missouri's discussions with the American Lutheran Church were leading it into "heterodoxy and error."

The ELS now claims about 18,000 baptized members. In 1972 it declared pulpit and altar fellowship with the Federation for Authentic Lutheranism, a group now merged with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Dr. J.A.O. Preus, president of the LCMS, was once a member of the ELS.

When the Lutheran Free Church merged with the American Lutheran Church in 1963, congregations not wishing to be part of that merger formed the **Association of Free Lutheran Congregations**, after a legal dispute over the right to the name.

The AFLC has congregations in 13 states and is strongly congregational in its structure. Their opposition to merger with the ALC was based on the contention that the Lutheran Free Church was an association of congregations and not a denomination.* It presently lists about 13,000 members in 126 congregations.

The **Apostolic Lutheran Churches** are the result of Finnish pentecostalism which came to this country in 1864. The Finnish pentecostals were known as "Laestadians" because they followed the revival movement of Lars Levi Laestadius. Lay leadership was emphasized and the group has been split several times. They stress simplicity in life styles, disparage theological studies and prefer simple church buildings and styles of worship. The Apostolic Lutheran Churches claim about 64 congregations, 36 active clergy and about 9,000 members.

The **Church of the Lutheran Confession** organized itself in Sleepy Eye, Minn., in 1961. At the time, it had about 3,500 members who formerly belonged to the Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America but

* This was hardly the reason for opposition to merger. Congregationalism, pietism, theological conservatism, all entered into the picture—Editor.

withdrew because member churches—the LCMS, the WELS and the ELS—adopted policies that were considered too “liberal.” Currently, the CLC claims about 9,500 members. The former Synodical Conference has now been dissolved.

Another revival movement just before the turn of the century resulted in the formation of the **Church of the Lutheran Brethren**. Organized in 1900, the church followed closely the constitution of the Lutheran Free Church of Norway. It emphasized a “personal experience of salvation,” a “biblical structure” for congregations, simplicity in worship forms. The denomination has been active in overseas mis-

sion work and now reports 91 congregations with about 8,599 members.

The **Lutheran Churches of the Reformation** left the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in the late 1960's, protesting issues which included dispute over doctrinal orthodoxy and congregational freedom. The LCR was organized in 1964 by those who saw “theological liberalism” in the LCMS and objected to LCMS ties with other Lutherans and other Christians. In 1973 the group reported 29 congregations and about 6,000 members.

The **Protestant** (pronounced **Pro-TEST-tant**) **Conference** developed out of controversies within the Wisconsin

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