

November 6, 1973

The Lutheran Ambassador



Independence Hall, Philadelphia

MEDITATION MOMENTS

THANKSGIVING

Thanksgiving is the other end of prayer. In petitions we make requests of God. When these are granted by God, we return thanks to Him.

It may be well and proper that we begin our prayers on the note of thanksgiving. Many Christians do. It is a continuous recognition of the multiplicity of God's gifts to us constantly. God gives gifts even to those who do not pray—and who never give a second thought to thanking Him.

Both prayer and thanksgiving belong to the sacrificial aspect of a Christian's worship. The sacramental part is the movement from God to man; God gives gifts. It seems to be a common response to want to reciprocate and give God a gift in return. Such a feeling is not wholly improper. Any impropriety there may be is the feeling that we may enrich God as He has us. God needs nothing. Any good which we can give Him is one which He first has given us.

The response which God desires to see in us is first of all gratitude. It is an integral part of His nature to be glad for grateful people.

This characteristic of God has been implanted in the people whom He created. We enjoy most of all that those to whom we give gifts receive them with enthusiastic gratitude. Es-

pecially are we aware of this trait within us when we see how children receive presents. They can hardly wait until the time comes for the gifts to be distributed; they throw their arms about the packages and can hardly wait until the wrappings can be removed. For the moment they may have forgotten the givers, and to say thanks; but parents enjoy it. They are experiencing the truth of the words of Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." This feeling on the part of the givers comes from the image of God in man—which every man bears still in spite of inherited sin.

The response of children we like to see in adults also, to whom we give gifts. We want them to receive with gladness the gifts we present to them. How disappointing it is to have people receive gifts with reluctance—or even to give the impression that they do not care for the gift. Then it is blessed neither to give nor receive.

God has given much also this year to all of us; He has given life, and all things necessary to sustain it, He wants us to receive this with gladness. Thanksgiving Day should be one of rejoicing. It is eminently fitting that we as a nation should set aside one day in the year to remind one another of the goodness of God; let

us rejoice and be glad in it. Saint and sinner ought both to rejoice and give thanks.

It is a wholesome experience to be grateful. God created us to live, eat and drink, breathe, see, hear, move about, work and play, rest and sleep—and to be thankful. It is with a sense of exhilaration that we do these things. It is only when an ailment prevents us from the normal performance of these functions that we keenly feel a sense of loss. A lame man is handicapped when he cannot walk as he wishes. A deaf person is deprived of what others hear. A person who does not sleep well suffers through both the night and the following day. So does a person who does not open his heart to give thanks. We may even go so far as to say that there is a distinctly therapeutic value in exercising gratitude. As the feeling of anger, hatred and ill will erodes the fibres of the soul, so the emotion of thankfulness soothes and restores the spirit in man. God made us such; for this also, let us give thanks.

Do you wonder how God feels about the manner in which we receive the greatest of His gifts to man—the Son with whom He is well pleased? Let us receive Him with gratitude, and give the angels in heaven another reason for joy.

Iver Olson

The Best Thanksgiving

by Pastor R. S. Persson
Astoria, Ore.

"This is going to be the best Thanksgiving I've ever had," she joyfully exclaimed, as she looked at her husband. "It will be for me, too," the husband responded. A few moments before they had been reconciled to each other, having embraced and asked forgiveness for anything that they had done to have caused the long fourteen-year separation.

A phone call had come to our parsonage by the sad wife. She had heard our Glad Tidings Broadcast many times and thought possibly that we might be willing to try to patch up the broken home. We learned that fourteen years previous, Oscar had become angry with his wife Ellen and left her with much cursing and bitterness. Even on the streets he would publicly curse her and would not listen to any efforts at reconciliation. The long years passed and it seemed that there never would be that restoration of a love life broken asunder.

Difficult and impossible though it seemed, we assured the distraught woman that we would pray and make an effort to speak to her estranged husband. Finally, after much praying and postponement until "it seemed good to the Holy Spirit," I made my way to the farm house to meet the angry husband. After considerable waiting, the door opened and a stooped, graying man opened the door and inquired what was wanted. I told him that I would like to come in and talk with him for a moment, that I was pastor of the Bethany Lu-

theran Church. Somewhat reluctantly, he invited me in. As he stood looking at me questioningly, I said, "I might just as well tell you right away that Ellen called and wanted me to ask you if there is anything she has done that she should ask forgiveness for and if you could get together again." At this his voice quivered and he said, "Well, I'll think about it." "Fine," I answered, "and when you've thought about it, you give me a call." "You know, Oscar," I continued, "one day you're going to leave your cows and things behind, and someone else is going to take them over, and you will not be ready to meet the Lord." "Well, I'll think about it," he responded.

Leaving him, I felt that I had done what I had agreed to do and could only trust the Lord for any good in the matter. A week later it was Oscar on the phone, "Say, are you still interested in effecting reconciliation with my wife and me?" "Yes!" I responded. "Well, you can come with her if you want to." "Wonderful!" I said, "We'll be there at eleven tomorrow morning."

I called the woman and said, "Ellen, put on your best Sunday-go-to-meeting dress and put up your hair real nice-like because tomorrow we are going to see Oscar." She was overjoyed at the wonderful news and said she would be ready.

We came to the farm house and I knocked on the door and as we waited, she said nervously, "Oh, I don't think he will be here." "Oh yes, he is," I responded. Slowly the door opened and I had the fleeting thought of a shotgun blast but then

to be dramatic I exclaimed in a loud voice, "Open in the name of the Lord." We entered and the wife extended her arms to her husband and he put forth his arms and they were in an embrace. I put my arms around both of them and quoted every verse that I could think of and threw in, besides, the expression, "Whoso will not forgive, tears down a bridge over which they themselves one day must cross."

I put forth the question, "Are you willing to forgive one another?" "Oh, I surely am," said the wife. To this the husband responded in a high-pitched voice, "I am, too!" And are you willing to ask the Lord to forgive you and come into your heart; that's the most important of all." "I surely do want to," responded the woman and to this the man said, "I do, too."

They broke their embrace and stood looking at each other and the wife exclaimed, "Oscar, how stooped you are, can't you straighten up?" "No, I can't," he responded. Desiring him to sit down and expressing concern for his well being, I said, "Now look, you people, have a lot to talk about, why don't I go and when you are ready, you call and I will pick you up." It was at this point that they exclaimed, that it was going to be the best Thanksgiving they had ever had. I left them then and never did get the phone call to come and get her. Several weeks later my wife said, "Don't you think you should check up on them?" I did so and asked the woman how it was going. The response was that all was well and that "only God could do a thing like that."

A FIRM FOOTING

THE MISERY OF FAITH AND THE COMFORT OF FAITH

To be poor in the spirit—here lies the misery and distress of faith. Indeed it is misery to be convicted of, that you are a poor, helpless one, who never can attain to be a real good Christian.

It goes to pieces for you so often. You desire to be good, God-fearing and obedient. But there is always so much sin within you, so much of your own self that tends to get mixed in and cause harm and stand in the way to hinder the fullness of the Spirit and the work of grace in your heart. It goes so lamentably slow with the sanctification.

Such things will just wind themselves around you very painfully, condemning the heart—just about enough to stun you completely.

If you only were sure that you are one of those who really are poor in the spirit. Then the Kingdom of Heaven would be yours. But you are not even certain about this. No, indeed, for if you were really poor in the spirit, then you could at least weep over yourself, but you cannot even make yourself do that. It is hard to know your sins and still have tearless eyes. For no one is more poor in the spirit than he who knows himself to be spiritually poverty-stricken, and yet not have as much as tears to weep out his own poverty.

But you don't find real uprightness in your heart. No matter how you turn yourself, you only find that which is impossible in our inner life. You feel stung and wounded in your heart with a quiet, but deep sense of misery. You are even afraid it is the misery of unbelief.

But in this you are mistaken.

This is not the misery and distress of unbelief, it is the misery and grievings of faith.

For the Holy Spirit is now trying

to show you your own helpless and lost condition, that you may feel a real need of Him who died for such. And when you follow the Spirit's wooing and promptings and go to Jesus and tell Him all, and just how you are, then it is exactly what it means to be upright before God. By nature you do have a false and hypocritical heart, but tell it all to Jesus, acknowledge it before Him—this is to be honest and upright in your spirit.

And then you do believe. For to come to Jesus—that is the same as to believe in Him.

Even if this should be the weak, trembling faith.

Our old Pontoppidan Explanation hits the nail on the head when in question 500 it asks and answers as follows:

“Is the true faith always and in all equally strong?”

“No, when true faith is tried and attacked by unbelief, then it is at times very weak like a quaking and trembling hand, which hardly dares to lay hold on the grace of God, or to step out on it, but it is stretched out after it in a sincere longing and desire.”

Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief (Mark 9:24).

Attacked and afflicted, faltering and trembling—yet a heart-felt longing after the grace of God, so that you go to Him and mourn over your distress and trouble and let your poor soul just hang onto His promises. Then you stretch your weak hand of faith up to the Lord. It certainly is not unbelief that does this, but the faith of the poor in spirit.

Faith may be attacked by the enemies, but:

Just as I am, though tossed about,
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
Fightings within, and fears without,
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

The poor in spirit is led to the Word for light and guidance in the matter of his soul's salvation.

He is not content with anything less than God's own promise in the written Word.

But there in the Word you will make the happy discovery that—

Your sonship and your letter of liberty have been written in the Word by God's own finger.

And out of the Word of Truth the Holy Spirit also bears witness with your spirit that you are a child of God and a member of the family of heaven. The testimony and the comfort of the Holy Spirit is always built upon God's own Word.

Through the comfort of the Holy Spirit and the Word, even the poor in spirit has received a new song in his mouth, a song of praise to his God.

—Peder Fostervold

TO THEE, O LORD, OUR HEARTS WE RAISE

To Thee, O Lord, our hearts we raise
In hymns of adoration,
To Thee bring sacrifice of praise
With shouts of exultation:
Bright robes of gold the fields adorn,
The hills with joy are ringing,
The valleys stand so thick with corn
That even they are singing.

And now, on this our festal day,
Thy bounteous hand confessing,
Upon Thine altar, Lord, we lay
The firstfruits of Thy blessing:
By Thee the souls of men are fed
With gifts of grace supernal;
Thou who dost give us daily bread,
Give us the Bread eternal.

We bear the burden of the day,
And often toil seems dreary;
But labor ends with sunset ray,
And rest is for the weary;
May we, the angel-reaping o'er,
Stand at the last accepted,
Christ's golden sheaves for evermore
To garner bright elected.

O blessed is that land of God
Where saints abide forever,
Where golden fields spread fair and broad,
Where flows the crystal river:
The strains of all its holy throng
With ours today are blending;
Thrice blessed is that harvest song
Which never hath an ending.

William Chatterton Dix
(from **The Hymnal**)

Women For Christ

GRAFTON CHURCH SITE OF WOMEN'S CONVENTION

The Women's Missionary Federation of the Eastern North Dakota District held their fall rally in Bethel Lutheran Church of Grafton, Dennis Gray, pastor, on Friday, Oct. 12. The theme for the day was "Walk Wisely, Redeeming the Time," based on the text, Ephesians 5:15-21. "O Master,

Let Me Walk With Thee," was the rally hymn.

Mrs. Darrel Moe was the organist and Mrs. Henry Hanson the song leader. Devotions were given by Mrs. Harold Hayward of Walhalla. Mrs. Don Olson and Mrs. Van Sickle of Fargo sang a song. The morning Bible study was led by Pastor Gray and he emphasized the need for personal spir-

itual growth and walking in God's will.

Mrs. Orville Vigness, district president, presided over the business meeting at which the following officers were elected: Mrs. Marlowe Martinson, Hatton, vice-president; Mrs. Russell Duncan, Fargo, secretary; and Mrs. Don Olson, cradle roll secretary. Mrs. Tilford Rundhaug, Fairdale, closed the session with prayer.

In the afternoon, Mrs. Albin Nelson, McVille, led in devotions, reading I John 1. Missionary Connely Dyrud based his message on Matt. 9:35-38. He told of his experiences on the field and admonished us to pray for workers and to support those who are out on the field now. Mrs. Olson and Mrs. Van Sickle sang "How Long Has it Been?" and Miss Edna Ohnstad of Fairdale sang "Jesus Is All the World to Me." The new officers were installed. Pastor Gray closed the rally with prayer and the benediction. There were 132 persons registered at the rally.

Mrs. Donald Jacobson, Secretary



FIRST PILGRIM SABBATH SERVICE

The Pilgrims hold their first Sabbath service after their arrival in Plymouth Colony.

NEWS of the Churches



SUNNYSIDE LUTHERAN AT STACY DEDICATES NEW CHURCH

Sunday, September 23 was a day of rejoicing and praising God at Sunnyside Lutheran of Stacy, Minnesota, as the congregation and many visiting friends joined with thankful hearts to dedicate the new sanctuary so graciously given us by God. We were very grateful to have President John Strand and his wife with us. He was our guest speaker and brought a very challenging message from the Word on the importance of dedicated lives and not only a building; that the church is to be a "river of joy." We were also thankful to have Rev. and Mrs. Herbert Franz, Cloquet, Minn., with us. Rev. Franz led us in the prayer of dedication and brought a greeting from the Home Mission Board, of which he is chairman. We are so grateful for their financial help through the Extension Fund. Rev. Leslie Galland, Spicer, Minn., and his wife were with us and were the only

ones who formerly served here who were able to attend. Pastor Galland was our guest speaker at the morning worship services at Sunnyside and Hope. Thank you to all who had a part in sharing this wonderful day with us and helped to make it a tremendous blessing. We would say thank you, too, to all who have helped us by your prayers. Isn't it good that we can uphold and help one another at the throne of grace? God is good!

In the spring of 1970 Sunnyside decided to begin construction of a new building. It was a time when the congregation was quite small as yet, but the Sunday School was divided between the church, the parsonage and the community building and many people were beginning to move into the community from the Twin Cities area. There was no money in the treasury but we needed the building and so with much prayer it was decided to go ahead by faith. The Lord provided in a marvelous way. Not only did He provide the finances, as we

moved along, but He also provided the craftsmen to do the job. He gave us carpenters, a bricklayer, a plumber, an engineer and other handy men, and these all joining the congregation just before the time we decided to build. It was as He provided for the building of the Tabernacle. So, together, the congregation designed, drew up the plans and built their church. The first winter the basement was capped and used for Sunday school classes. The second winter it was used both for Sunday School and worship and the upper structure was roughed in. By Easter, 1973, we were able to move into the upper sanctuary for services, using folding chairs. By the end of June, our new pews were delivered and installed and by September the PA system was installed just in time for our dedication. How we praise God for His goodness and blessings poured out upon us. We thank Him for the faithful workers, for the many hours of labor, for sacrificial giving and for the many prayers that have made this House of Prayer and Worship a "living reality."

"To God be the glory, great things He hath done." To Him we give humble thanks.

—Corr.

BESSEMER CONGREGATION INSTALLS PASTOR, DEDICATES PARSONAGE

On Sunday, September 9, newly ordained Pastor Kenneth Pentti was installed as pastor of Our Saviour Lutheran Church of Bessemer, Mich.,



Sunnyside Lutheran Church



The interior of the new Sunnyside Church, taken during the dedication service.

by Pastor Ernest J. Langness of Ishpeming, Mich. There were 72 in attendance at the service. A parsonage, purchased by the congregation, was dedicated at the same service.

Open house at the parsonage from 2 to 5 p.m. was attended by many members and friends of Our Saviour Lutheran.

May God's blessings continue to rest upon the work at Bessemer.

—Corr.

PEWS FOR SALES

Green Lake Lutheran Church, Spicer, Minn., has 20 used, stained, 14-foot pews for sale. If interested, please contact Rev. Leslie Galland, Spicer, Minn. 56288. Telephone: 612-796-2534 or 976-5216.

NEW CONGREGATION ANNOUNCES SERVICES

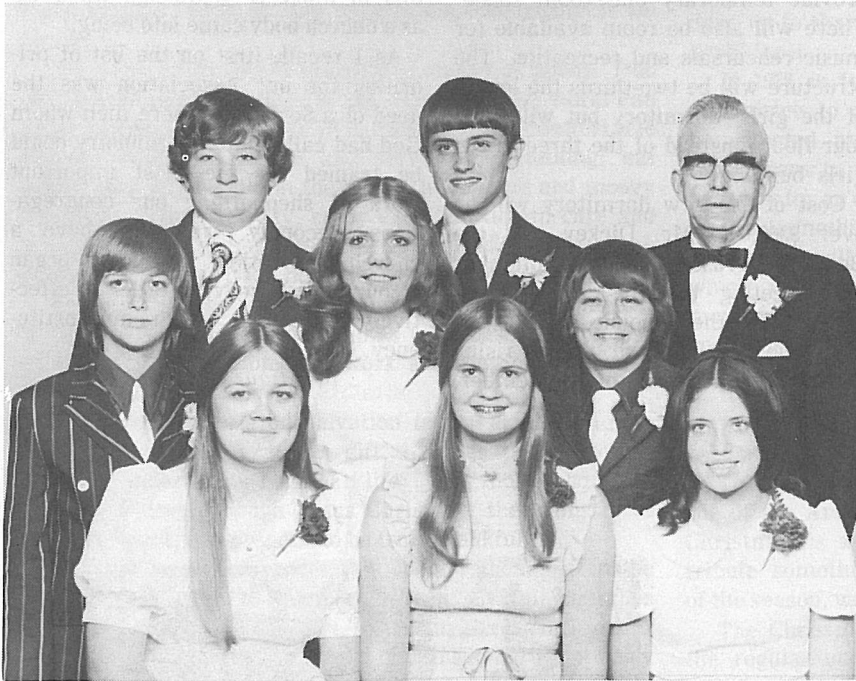
The newest congregation of the Association of Free Lutheran Congrega-

tions, Victory in Christ Lutheran Church, is now meeting for Sunday worship at the Sveden House in the Sun-Ray Shopping Center, 2109 Hudson Road, in St. Paul, Minn. Pastor Francis Monseth is serving the congregation on a part-time basis. Morning worship is at 10:45 a.m.

All interested persons in the area are invited to worship with the congregation.

YOUTH RALLY AT BIBLE SCHOOL

The first Saturday night youth rally of this school term will be held on November 10 at Medicine Lake Lutheran Church, beginning at 7:30 p.m. Pastor Allan Monson of Sacred Heart, Minn., will be the guest speaker. There will be special music. Rev. Francis Monseth is the faculty advisor for the youth rally program.

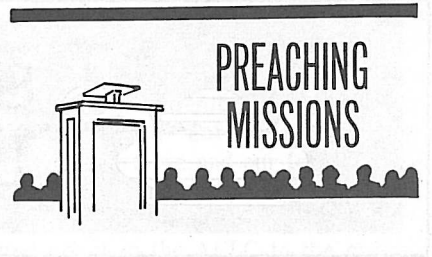


EIGHT CONFIRMED AT MCLEOD CHURCH

This class of eight young people was confirmed in United Lutheran Church of rural McLeod, N. Dak., on Sunday, Sept. 23. Pastor R. P. Haakonson, Moorhead, Minn., serves this church. His theme for the day was "Where Are You Taking the World Today?", basing his message on Proverbs 3:5, 6. Each member of the class gave a Bible verse, telling what it meant to them, after which they sang "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus." Before the sermon, Tim Jones sang "I Don't Know About Tomorrow."

The class members are, front row, left to right, Beverly Jones, Susan Huseth and Debbie Claus; middle row, Wayne Hegseth, Annette Breden and Paul Hegseth; and top row, Loren Hegseth, Gary Claus and Pastor Haakonson.

—Corr.



Everett, Wash.

Calvary Lutheran Church
Marvin Undseth, pastor
Nov. 11-15
Rev. Laurel M. Udden, AFLBS,
speaker

Minneapolis, Minn.

Medicine Lake Lutheran Church
Amos Dyrud, Co-ordinating pastor
Nov. 11-15
Rev. Eugene Enderlein,
Minnewaukan, N. Dak.,
speaker

Eugene, Ore.

Spencer Creek Lutheran Church
Elden Nelson, pastor
Nov. 11-13
Rev. Michael Brandt,
Lake Stevens, Wash.,
speaker

Cumberland, Wis.

Section Ten Lutheran Church
Tim Skramstad, student pastor
Nov. 11-13
Rev. Alvin Grothe, Stacy, Minn.,
speaker

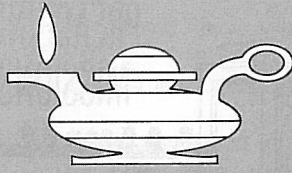
Lake Stevens, Wash.

Elim Lutheran Church
Michael Brandt, pastor
Nov. 18-21
Rev. Laurel M. Udden, AFLBS
speaker

Grafton, N. Dak.

Bethel Lutheran Church
Dennis Gray, pastor
Nov. 11-16
Rev. Kenneth Pentti,
Bessemer, Mich., speaker

Support these special meetings with your prayers.



SCHOOL NEWS

GROUND BROKEN FOR NEW DORMITORY AT AFLBS: START OF CONSTRUCTION COULD COME SOON

As one of the final acts of Homecoming at Association Free Lutheran Bible School, on Oct. 14, ground was broken for the boys' dormitory which will be built as soon as a building permit is secured and as weather allows. But when construction can begin is still not known. The Plymouth Village Council is making a final review of the building plans and the permit could be issued momentarily. The contractor is ready to begin work immediately if the weather holds.

The ground breaking took place in early afternoon on a warm, sunny day. Rev. John P. Strand, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, presided. After the singing of one stanza of "Faith of Our Fathers," Pastor Strand spoke briefly on Psalm 100 and offered prayer.

Mr. Ray Jacobson, Minneapolis, Minn., a member of the Board of Trustees, gave a greeting and turned the first shovelful of sod. (His remarks are also found in the School News section of the *Ambassador*.) Others giving greetings and partici-

pating in the ground breaking were James Rasmussen, Fargo, N. Dak., new president of the Alumni Association; Mr. Dale Finstrom, Buxton, N. Dak., president of the AFLBS student body; Mr. Howard Lieder, Minneapolis, representing the church-at-large; Mr. DeWayne Dickey, the contractor and a Christian; and Rev. R. Snipstead, dean of AFLBS. The service closed with the singing of the Doxology.

Those in attendance were present and former students of the school, staff members of the school and the AFLC, and other friends.

When it is built, the dormitory will house approximately 65 boys and provide temporary classroom space. There will also be room available for music rehearsals and recreation. The structure will be two-thirds the length of the girls' dormitory but will have four floors instead of the three in the girls' building.

Cost of the new dormitory will be over \$300,000. Mr. Dickey told the Board of Trustees at its September 21st meeting that his bid has increased by the amount of \$7,640.00 since the first of April, due to rising costs. At the end of September,

\$135,221.43 had been received toward the project in cash and pledges.

FOR GOD'S GLORY—Remarks by Mr. Raymond Jacobson, Member, Board of Trustees, at the Ground Breaking Ceremony for the New Boys' Dormitory.

As I was thinking about what might be an appropriate verse of Scripture for this occasion, I was reminded of a very familiar verse from Christ's Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Certainly we are all confronted with priorities in life. In this passage of Scripture the Word of God makes it very plain what the Christian priority must be. But even within the work of carrying out Christ's commission, as individuals and as a church, we are confronted with priorities.

The founders of our Association of Free Lutheran Congregations had this in mind 11 years ago when we as a church body came into being.

As I recall, first on the list of priorities for our Association was the need of a Seminary where men whom God had called into the ministry could be trained for the most important work of shepherding our congregations. Secondly, we must have a church publication, an official organ of our church body, in order to effectively communicate with our constituency.

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The crowd assembled for the ground breaking for the new dormitory.



Mr. Raymond Jacobson of the Board of Trustees turned the first shovel.

editorials

THANKSGIVING, 1973

"Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits" (Psalm 103:1, 2).

There are many benefits to enumerate in our land today. The Pilgrim Fathers, who began our Thanksgiving Day custom, found cause to be grateful in their simple blessings in a new world; we have much more reason to be thankful.

American men are not dying on any world battlefields, a situation which hardly existed a year ago. All known prisoners of war in the Asian war have been brought home. Who can forget the surge of emotion we felt as we watched the men re-united with loved ones?

These have been weeks and months of political turmoil and crisis in the land, but we are grateful that this is a nation where the rule of law and justice, and mercy, prevails. Not all countries face their failings as openly as we can do.

We have an immense quantity of material goods. This isn't an unmixed blessing for the objects of this world can prove temptations, too. We live, most of us, in comfortable homes, wear fashionable and serviceable clothing, eat better than any people in the world, have time and money for much leisure activity, enjoy excellent health care and are able to lay something aside against the future (bank debits continually rise to new record levels, for instance).

God has blessed us with many opportunities spiritually. We have freedom to worship as we please and to raise up Christian institutions and work and the Scriptures are freely available to us.

The Lord has offered salvation to us, and to all who have received His gracious gift, life has taken on new meaning, indeed, has become "life." For those who know God the Father through Jesus Christ, by the ministry of the Holy Spirit, it is possible to be truly thankful.

May we pause to render our special thanks unto the Lord God at this Thanksgiving season. By full churches at Thanksgiving services let testimony be borne to our dependence upon God and our recognition of that very fact.

Say "Praise God!" and "Thank God!" with new meaning.

ANY BICENTENNIAL OBSERVANCE?

Note has been taken that the American Lutheran Church is organizing an observance in the church of the bicentennial or 200th anniversary of the United States of America in 1976. The idea is a good one and we trust that others will follow suit.

It would be good if the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations should make something special of the occasion also. Somehow it seems easier to call forth a special effort when there is a remembering of something from the past connected with it. For the second of our nation's two centuries, at least, we and our forbears have labored on the American scene and have found it a congenial atmosphere for the Lord's work. It would be fitting to tie a united effort in the AFLC to the birthday of our nation.

For one thing, there should be an evangelism thrust. Many Association people refrained from taking part in the evangelism program this year, Key 73. They had their reasons for doing so. And it seems wrong to speak of doing something in evangelism two or three years from now, for it must be an ongoing thing. But nonetheless, a greater effort than usual could be put forth then to reach our neighborhoods for Christ, more could be done to start home mission congregations where there are promising and needy areas, and world mission programs could be strengthened.

Combined with this could be a special offering to fund the strengthening of all our work and for outreach. Association folk have given generously, but the potential is quite a bit beyond anything that has been done yet. We are speaking of our church as a whole. 1976 could be a time to remove all debts in current operating expense for our general work and in building that has been done up to that point. Impossible, you say. Not if we have a will for it.

If 1976 is to be a special year in the Association, a committee to suggest plans to the church will have to be selected at the next annual conference to present those plans to the assembly in 1975. In that way all will be ready for an observance which can begin Jan. 1, 1976.

It's something to think about and we hope that our fellowship will have some plan in operation come 1976 which will do justice to a very historical year, commemorating the founding of a nation which has been very hospitable to us personally and to the free exercise of our faith.

GOOD THINGS

There is a special joy in preparing the Christmas issue of the **Ambassador** and that is no less true this year. Christmas is a special season for us and if we can contribute something to your enjoyment and understanding of the season, we are glad.

The Christmas **Ambassador** is eight pages larger than the regular ones. It is printed in festive green ink and comes to you filled with inspirational reading, both prose and poetry. There are extra photos and attractive art work.

Some of this year's features will include the account of a Finnish Christmas celebration in the '20's, a story with a surprise ending, set in Norway, an account of 30 years of service in the U.S. government in Washington, D.C., a report on life at a Lutheran mission in Ethiopia, our usual Christmas sermon, greetings from the AFLC

[Continued on page 16]

BIBLE BOOK CLUB

The Bible Book Club is happy and excited about the new list of books available to our readers. We hope our regular subscribers and a host of new readers will enjoy looking over this new list and choosing the books that interest them most.

Please check 12 if you prefer one book sent a month or six if you prefer a book sent to you every other month. As a special gift to you subscribers, we will send you free either the Old Testament or New Testament Bible Study written by Pastor Mundfrom for a six-book order and both Bible Studies for a 12-book order.

(STORY)

LIGHTHOUSE—Eugenia Price's compelling novel about James Gould, who leaves New England and makes a life for himself in the magnificent, post-Revolutionary South. His son's life is told in **NEW MOON RISING**. . . 1.25

SOUND OF THE BUGLE, Daniel Burow—The lively adventure of Hans Schmidt. The story takes place from 1859 to 1866—seven years of a Civil War bugle call like no history text could ever record. . . 2.95

THE LIGHT IN MY WINDOW, **Francena Arnold**—A novel of mystery about a girl who came to the big city. Her story reflects the inner battles of everyone at some time in their lives. . . 1.25

(BIOGRAPHIES)

THE ANSWER IS GOD—Elise Davis lives with Dale Evans and Roy Rogers and tells the story of heartbreak, failure, success, and a miracle. A story that will move and inspire every reader. . . 1.25

A RANSOM FOR WURMBRAND—Amutza Moise is one of Richard and Sabina Wurmbbrand's friends and writes a challenging story of the ministry that grew out of their years of imprisonment for their faith in Romania. . . 95¢

MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THE GLORY, **Anita Bryant**—A frank and tender story of Anita's youth, marriage, her work, her four miracle babies and the joy of living when one is fully committed to Christ. . . 95¢

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[Continued from page 8]

Thirdly, we must have a mission program, home and foreign, in order to stimulate healthy growth and outreach. There were also those in the early years of our church, perhaps fewer in number, who felt very strongly that we should have a Bible school, a place where our young people could come for systematic and concentrated study of the Word and in so doing prepare for more effective leadership in the kingdom's work. At that time there were those, no doubt, who had some questions as to how important a place on the list of priorities a Bible school should have for a small and struggling church body.

However, we have long since been convinced otherwise, which was evidenced by quite an impressive majority vote of our annual conference in 1972 and again in 1973 that we go ahead and construct a dormitory and classroom building to better facilitate the ministry of our Bible School. I can personally testify to the worth of Bible school training as I had the privilege of attending a Bible school as a young man. I have often said that I can wish nothing better for any young person than to spend a year or two at a good Bible school and I sincerely believe that we have a good Bible school.

As a member of the Board of Trustees I can assure you that we as a board desire earnestly the best for our schools, both the Seminary and the Bible School. We desire to be led

by God's Spirit in every decision that we are called upon to make and covet your prayers that this might continue to be so.

I suppose that everyone present here today is well aware that it costs a great deal of money in these times to build and operate a private school. The tuition paid by the students covers approximately one-half of the cost of operation. We must depend on Almighty God to move in the hearts of interested individuals and congregations to supply the other half. We are thankful to God for your support in the past and sincerely believe that that support will continue, in prayer, first of all, and also financially.

So it is for the furtherance of God's kingdom and to His glory that we wish to erect this building. And I would like to take this opportunity during these homecoming festivities to challenge our alumni as well as our present student body to diligent support in prayer and giving that the ministry of our Schools may not be hindered.

SUCCESSFUL HOMECOMING CONDUCTED LAST MONTH

A tradition is growing at AFLBS. It is the annual homecoming for alumni and former students of the school. Each year the number of former students grows and the attendance potential increases.

Homecoming this year was held on the weekend of Oct. 12-14. At a meeting of the alumni on Saturday it was

decided to set a permanent date for future homecomings. That time is the last full weekend in September. Everyone involved is asked to reserve those dates and avoid planning events which will conflict with homecoming.

This year's activities began with a service on Friday evening which was led by senior Jim Lindgren, Concord, Nebr. The message was brought by Rev. Terry Olson, Radcliffe, Ia. His text was I Tim. 1:18-20 and he challenged everyone present to let the Word of God become the center of life, as Timothy did. There were several special musical selections.

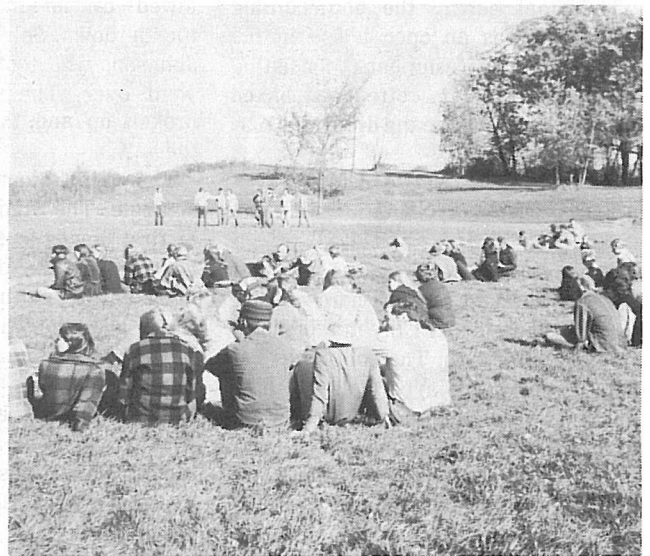
On Saturday morning Pastor R. Snipstead led a Bible study on Service, making reference to Acts 20:18-20. The group was broken down into four smaller ones for the purpose of discussion. These groups reported their conclusions back to the general assembly.

Also on Saturday morning, the Alumni Association held its annual meeting. President Jerry Holmaas, Newfolden, Minn., presided. The Scholarship Fund, instituted earlier, was activated at the meeting. It calls for an income of \$600.00 per year. Further details are given elsewhere in School News. A committee for the annual alumni retreat was set up. The members for this year are Charles Knapp, Steve Lee, Lois Hautamaki, Linda Luchsinger and Wayne Floan, all presently in the Twin Cities.

New officers of the Alumni Association
[Continued on page 12]



Among those seated at the head table at the banquet were, left to right, Pastor and Mrs. R. Snipstead, Cris Carlson and Dale Finstrom.



Part of the crowd at the football game during half-time.

[Continued from page 11]

tion are James Rasmussen, Fargo, N. Dak., president; Rev. Terry Olson, Radcliffe, Ia., vice-president; Mrs. John Schlenk, Wahpeton, N. Dak., secretary; and Steve Lee, Minneapolis, treasurer.

In the touch football game on Saturday afternoon, the Students defeated the Alumni 12-6. Other details are given in a separate story.

The banquet again this year was held at the Jolly Troll restaurant, on Saturday evening. A large crowd attended. Mr. Dale Finstrom, Buxton, N. Dak., student body president, was master of ceremonies. Rev. Raynard Huglen, dean of men, offered the opening prayer. Mr. Gene Finstrom, Buxton, student chaplain, led in devotions. Mr. and Mrs. Richard Anderson sang two songs. Misses Karen and Anne Snipstead, Minneapolis, and Karen Quanbeck, McVile, N. Dak., presented a violin, cello and piano selection. Pastor Francis Monseth gave the banquet address, admonishing the audience not to "settle down" in the Christian life but to go forward.

Many of the visitors at AFLBS for homecoming attended the Sunday morning worship at Medicine Lake Lutheran Church. Pastor Huglen preached the sermon.

Ground breaking ceremonies for the new boys' dormitory commenced at about 1 o'clock. Rev. John P. Strand, president of the AFLC, presided. Another article in School News tells more about the ceremony.

The final act in the homecoming festivities was an open house in the dormitory. Refreshments consisting of hot apple cider, coffee and baked goods were served in the dining hall.

STUDENTS GO BY ALUMNI 12-6 IN ANNUAL FOOTBALL CONTEST

The minutes were ticking away in the last quarter of the homecoming football game at AFLBS on a pleasant October afternoon. The score was 6-6, both teams had played well and hard and a tie didn't seem such a bad thing at all. For then there is no loser either.

Then with lightning swiftness the tides of fortune shifted and a winner emerged. Bob Nelson, who quarterbacked the Alumni during the second half, was dropped back on his five-

yard line. On the next play his pass was intercepted by player-coach Carl Selvig who brought the ball to the 30-yard line. Jim Rasmussen almost got it right back on the next play as he narrowly missed intercepting student quarterback Kurt Mortenson's pass. But Mortenson could throw again and he hit Steve Johnson at the four-yard line and then Selvig in the end zone for the winning touchdown. Mortenson's attempted carry for two points was stopped by Dan Mundfrom and the final score was 12-6.

When the game began, the Alumni struck early. Mundfrom kicked off for them and the Students soon found themselves deep in their own territory. Scot Robinson punted but Don Berge brought the ball back to the 21. Soon they had first down on the two-yard line but it took four tries against a stubborn Student defense before Bob Nelson's pass to Gary Jorgenson was complete for a touchdown. Jim Peterson, who quarterbacked much of the first half for the Alumni, failed in his conversion run and the score stood at 6-0.

The first quarter ended that way and it looked as if the Alumni might take that lead with them into the half-time intermission. But shortly before the half, the Alumni had punted and the Students found themselves on the Alumni 31-yard line. Mortenson saved a broken pass play for no gain. A broken play sent the Students back to the 36-yard line and that was followed by an incomplete pass. On fourth down Selvig passed to Steve Johnson, who took it on the two and went over. The conversion play was broken up and the score was 6-6 at the half.

The third quarter was a see-saw struggle. The Students made a couple of first downs and won the first down contest for the day. But it was an even battle, neither side giving very much and when time was running out in the fourth quarter it looked like a tie might not be the worst thing in the world. Then Mortenson threw that pass to Selvig.

Rev. Fran Monseth was the referee, pressing Corey Holm into service as a ball marker.

The Mission Club put on two skits during half-time and had popcorn for

sale to the spectators during the game.

ALUMNI GIVE DETAILS OF SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

A Scholarship Fund administered by the Alumni Association of AFLBS was given structure at the 1973 Homecoming in October.

The Alumni Association has set a goal of \$600 per year in contributions which can then be distributed in two \$100 scholarships per quarter to students or prospective students of AFLBS who come well recommended and have a financial need for assistance. The scholarship is open to AFLC or non-AFLC young people.

Alumni or pastors who wish to submit names for the recipients of these scholarships should send them to a member of the executive committee: Jim Rasmussen, 124 North Terrace, Fargo, N. Dak. 58102; Rev. Terry Olson, Radcliffe, Ia. 50230; Mrs. John Schlenk, 1611 N. 7th St., Apt. 45, Wahpeton, N. Dak. 58075; or Steve Lee, 2715 Hillsboro Ave. N., Apt. 312, Minneapolis, Minn. 55428.

Contributions are needed now, too. Anyone may contribute, but former students of AFLBS are especially urged to do so. \$200 is needed by Dec. 31. The remainder should be in by May, 1974. Send contributions to Steve Lee, treasurer.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Nov. 21—End of First Quarter at AFLBS
- Nov. 26—Registration for Second Quarter
- Dec. 9—Annual Christmas Concert, 4:00 p.m.
- Dec. 15-Jan. 1—Christmas Vacation. Classes resume on Jan. 2.

HOW CAN I SERVE?

(Tune: "Open Mine Eyes, O Lord")

How can I serve Thee, Lord?

What can I do?

How be in this dark world

Helpful, kind, and true?

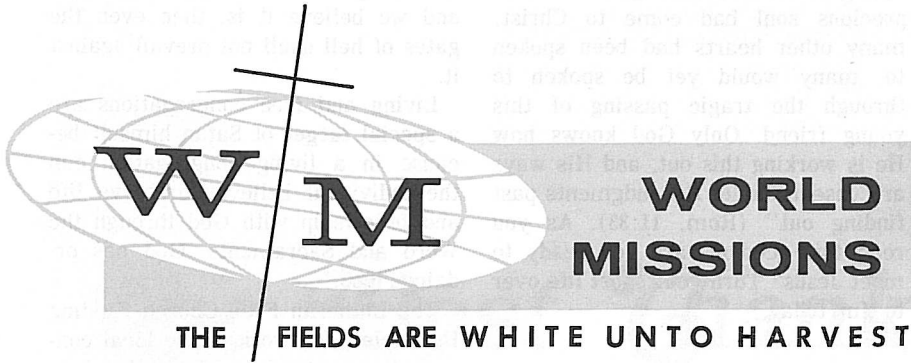
I yield myself, O Lord,

To be Thy channel, Lord.

Make me a blessing, Lord.

What can I do?

—Ella Rasmussen
Tucson, Ariz.



ONLY A FEW DAYS TRAVEL TO ETERNITY

by Missionary John H. Abel

"Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not" (Job. 14:1, 2).

I remember Euclides as a little blonde-haired boy running barefoot near the tall house of his father. Their little farm lay back among the pine trees and rolling hills in the interior of Parana. It was somewhat difficult to get back into this farm for they were ten miles down the valley from the little frontier town of Herveira, which itself was far off the beaten track. A Christian farmer, Alfredo Westfal, was instrumental in getting us to come out to his area, after having listened often to our radio program. He was of German background and so were these neighbors, the Kick family. Several years ago I had made a number of visits to this family. Most of the children couldn't read or write, but we had succeeded in bringing in one of the older brothers, Alcides, to our Bible Institute in Campo Mourao, and he has turned out to be a hard-working, intelligent student. Alcides this year became one of our new pastors. A couple years ago the father sold out the farm and moved into a neighboring boom town called "Camp of the Lake."

Euclides, now 17, joined his brother here in Campo Mourao to work and attend evening high school. A year had almost gone by, the brothers were often together, and then one Friday evening in September, Euclides finished an exam and said to his brother,

Pastor Alcides, "I'm going to take my bike and ride back to the boarding house; I'm too tired to wait for your last class." Euclides and another student started home. As they rounded the corner to the main avenue, a speeding car hit and killed both of them.

Pastor Alcides heard at school that there had been an accident involving two students. Something told him one was his brother, so he checked at the home and then began to call around to the various hospitals, finally locating his brother. He was still alive but unconscious. The doctors told him, "Get your parents." Alcides arranged a taxi and was home by three in the morning. By five a.m. they were back in Campo. At seven a.m. Euclides passed away. It was shortly after seven that word was sent to Pastor Knapp and me concerning the accident. While George (Knapp) helped Alcides get a coffin and the necessary papers to be able to travel with the body, Ruby and I stayed at the hospital with the parents. My pickup was readied for the trip and about ten a.m., with the casket tied in the back of our double cabin pickup, we headed for "Camp of the Lake."

What a sad homegoing. How true that "Man... cometh forth like a flower and is cut down..." Four younger brothers and sisters and three older sisters were awaiting us. Pastor Alcides was so sad that as he stepped out of the pickup, he fainted and they carried him into the house. He was especially worried about his mother who had left the hospital only two days before. But she stood up very well through this hard ordeal, of course, shedding many tears, but finding strength for each minute.

The Kicks' yard was full of friends and relatives as we arrived. A telephone call ahead had advised them of our coming. The father, Urbano, talked with a neighbor, a fellow German-background pioneer. They spoke about the tomb and soon arrangements were made with a local bricklayer for the building of the slab that afternoon. The burial had been set for the following morning, as here in Brazil there is as yet no embalming and burial must be done within 24 hours. Often, however, the authorities allow a few hours extra where cases of travel are necessary. I remember one old timer commenting to the group, "Well, when my wife died, I just sprinkled her well with aspirin and she kept fine for 30 hours."

We arranged to have the home service that evening, and then the funeral service at nine the next morning. Everything would be done in the home as we as yet have no church in this town. Urbano asked if I would use my pickup to haul some material to the graveyard for the bricklayer. I was glad to help in this and a few of the neighbors got aboard to help. One of the men asked me to stay at his home that evening, which I was happy to do because I knew the Kick home was way overcrowded. I discovered my host had a big cattle ranch with over a thousand head of cattle. They had a large, spacious home and I was able to open the Bible that evening with his wife and him and have a time of devotions with them.

The way of burial in this town was different than anything I have ever seen. They only dig down about two feet into the earth, then they make sides of brick going up about two feet above the ground. They put calcium powder on the ground, or lime powder and set the casket on this surrounded by this brick box. Over the box they place a large cement slab. In some cases they later build a tomb or place a tombstone on the slab. The casket, they say, soon deteriorates, due to the lime powder, and the earth beneath it causes us to remember "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust..." but we have the assurance and blessed hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our

Lord Jesus Christ.

Friday evening the home was full of friends and relatives. Our service was short but I tried to preach to these living as a "dying man to dying men." Many would never hear the Gospel except on an occasion such as this.

Saturday morning after the service in the home, they loaded the casket into the pickup and we began a long procession down the main avenue to the graveyard. About six cars followed us, and then many friends carrying flowers and following silently. It was interesting to hear the rumble of tin doors as the merchants pulled down their night doors and closed up shop while the funeral procession passed by.

After the funeral I stayed only a couple hours. It was Saturday afternoon, time for me to head home for the trip to another part of our field. Pastor Knapp and family would be arriving with some students to spend Sunday in Herveira, our church in the nearby village. They would be paying a visit to the family also. As I rolled along home I had only one passenger, a young friend of Euclides. He had hitchhiked out for the funeral and now asked for a ride to Campo. Along the way, I had an opportunity to present the Four Spiritual Laws to him and stopped the car as we prayed together for salvation.

A precious soul had gone, another precious soul had come to Christ, many other hearts had been spoken to, many would yet be spoken to through the tragic passing of this young friend. Only God knows how He is working this out, and His ways are unsearchable, His judgments past finding out" (Rom. 11:33). As you read this account, are you ready to meet Jesus? Turn your short life over to Him today.

Letters TO THE EDITOR

LIVING AND FREE CONGREGATIONS

In reading your report from the Missouri Synod Convention in the August 14th issue, page 4, you write: "The tactics used at the Missouri Convention, and I mean the whole of it, parliamentary maneuverings, the charges and counter-charges, etc., would destroy the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations in one convention, if they were present among us."

If our work in the Association is

according to God's Word and Will, and we believe it is, then even the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Living and free congregations are a special target of Satan himself because in a living congregation can the individual believer preserve life and fellowship with God through the Word and Sacraments. God has ordained it so.

The Lutheran Free Church Guiding Principles, for work of the local congregation, stand unchanged since 1897, when the Lutheran Free Church was formed through struggles and tribulations. In the merger proceedings, parliamentary and otherwise, it seemed hopeless, even the name had to be blotted out. But God provided leaders and means to continue. There is much religious work going on today, but let us see if it is done according to the pattern given in the Word of God.

The Apostles were true servants of God. All their work seemed to have one aim—to establish living local congregations, and the Lord Himself sent His message to the local congregations, not to any synodical authority.

The enemies of living and free congregations are always present, subtle and otherwise. So let us watch and pray.

Paul Bjornstad
Duluth, Minn.

A suggestion for your Christmas giving

WATERS IN THE WILDERNESS

Written by pastors and lay people,
edited by Dr. Iver Olson

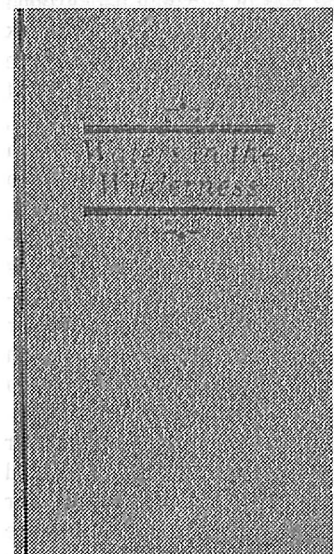
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**Two hundred Communist young people found Christ at the Communist World Youth Festival in East Berlin through the witnessing of Southern Baptist evangelist Sammy Tippit and associates. Tippit spent much time counselling the converts, and hopes to visit them soon behind the Iron Curtain. Tippit was at one time a street preacher in Chicago.

**In Copenhagen, Denmark, several thousand Christian youth marched in protest of the government's subsidizing a proposed pornographic film, *The Love Affairs of Jesus Christ*. Government financial support has since then been canceled.

**The Mennonite Church has thanked the government of Canada for giving sanctuary to Americans who fled the U.S. rather than serve in the military during the Vietnam war.

**Protestant and Catholic churches in strife-torn Northern Ireland have taken 500,000 Gospels of Luke to every home in the territory. Another half-million have been distributed in southern Ireland.

**Detroit's Oak Grove African Methodist Episcopal Church recently made ten tons of choice meats available to the public at greatly reduced prices. For example, fish sold at 59¢ a pound instead of the usual \$1.19. In explaining the purpose of the sale, the pastor said, "When Jesus saw someone suffering, He didn't preach a sermon. He healed the person."

—Tyndale House Publishers

PERSONALITIES

On August 2, **Pastor Karl Stendal** was admitted to the University of Minnesota Hospital Clinic for a physical check-up. After that he spent nine days at the hospital there, and has made periodic visits to the Clinic.

He has resigned the pastorate in Ontonagon, Michigan.

Pastor and Mrs. Stendal are now living in the home of their son Dean at 2145 Kelly Drive, Golden Valley, Minn. 55427. Telephone (612) 545-2524.

Our little twin girls were tucked snugly into bed, and mother was visiting with a guest downstairs. From the darkness of the stairway came a plaintive voice, "We can't find our way." Curiosity about the visitor had led them to the first steps of the stairs and there they stood waiting. Mother turned the light on, and guided them safely back to bed.

Many people "can't find their way." Have you ever lost your way when driving in an unfamiliar place, or when walking out in the woods? The important thing then was to find the right way out. If we are going on a trip somewhere, we do not simply follow the first vehicle that comes along, hoping it will be going in the right way. Is it good to make it a habit to follow where everybody seems to be going? We may not only go far astray ourselves, but we may lead a weaker brother or son or daughter into a trap of the evil one. Someone may be following where we go. Is it safe for your dear ones to go where you go?

A young college student said, "If you claim to be a Christian, you must live like a Christian." There is a difference, and that is "Christ-in" the heart. If we are following Jesus Christ we may be able to help someone who "Can't find the way." Can people see the difference in your life?

Life here on earth is a journey, and not merely going in circles like a merry-go-round. The road we travel may sometimes seem rough, not always have a border of roses, but may sometimes seem barren like a desert. However, the important thing is to know if it is the right way.

There are two roads in this life, and we must choose which one to follow. We have been given a road map, which we must study constantly. This road map is the Bible. Note carefully the directions given there.

"There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death." This is found in Proverbs 14:12. There are many other danger signals in this guide book to which we need to give heed.

The way to eternal life is Jesus. Thomas asked Jesus, "How can we know the way?" Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by Me." Let us never forget that when Jesus died on the Cross it was for the sins of the world, including yours and mine. He opened the way to the Father's house. It is by grace alone, through faith in Jesus alone, that we are on the right way. The way is open for all who will follow Him. He has gone before us, leading us on.

Let us follow Him on the upward way. "The toils of the road will seem nothing when we get to the end of the way." "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Guided by the eternal Word and the Holy Spirit we need not fear that we "can't find the way."

"The path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day" (Prov. 4:18).

Mrs. Laura Norum
Cameron, Wis.

A THANKSGIVING PSALM

We thank Thee, O Lord of the harvest.
The pickers have gathered the last
of the ripened grain;
the cows are happy among the stalks.
We have reaped that which we sowed,
Lord, the increase according to
Thy tender mercy towards us.
We plowed the earth, but the earth
is Thine.
We planted the seed, but who created
all?
The sun warmed, the rain watered;
Thou hast smiled on us.
Now we have taken what Thou hast
given.
Our cellars are full, our granaries
overflowing.
Our hearts bow down before Thy
greatness.
We thank Thee, O Lord of the harvest.
—Marlene Moline

[Continued from page 9]

and other items. We think you'll like this Christmas issue of the **Ambassador**, too.

It will be out early, toward the latter part of the week of December 2, in plenty of time for all to receive it before Christmas. Why not send copies of the **Ambassador** to your friends? We'll mail out individual copies for you or send a package of them to you for distribution. Only let us know which you prefer. Use the order blank enclosed and place your order now. Please enclose payment for your order when you write.

Happy reading!

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