

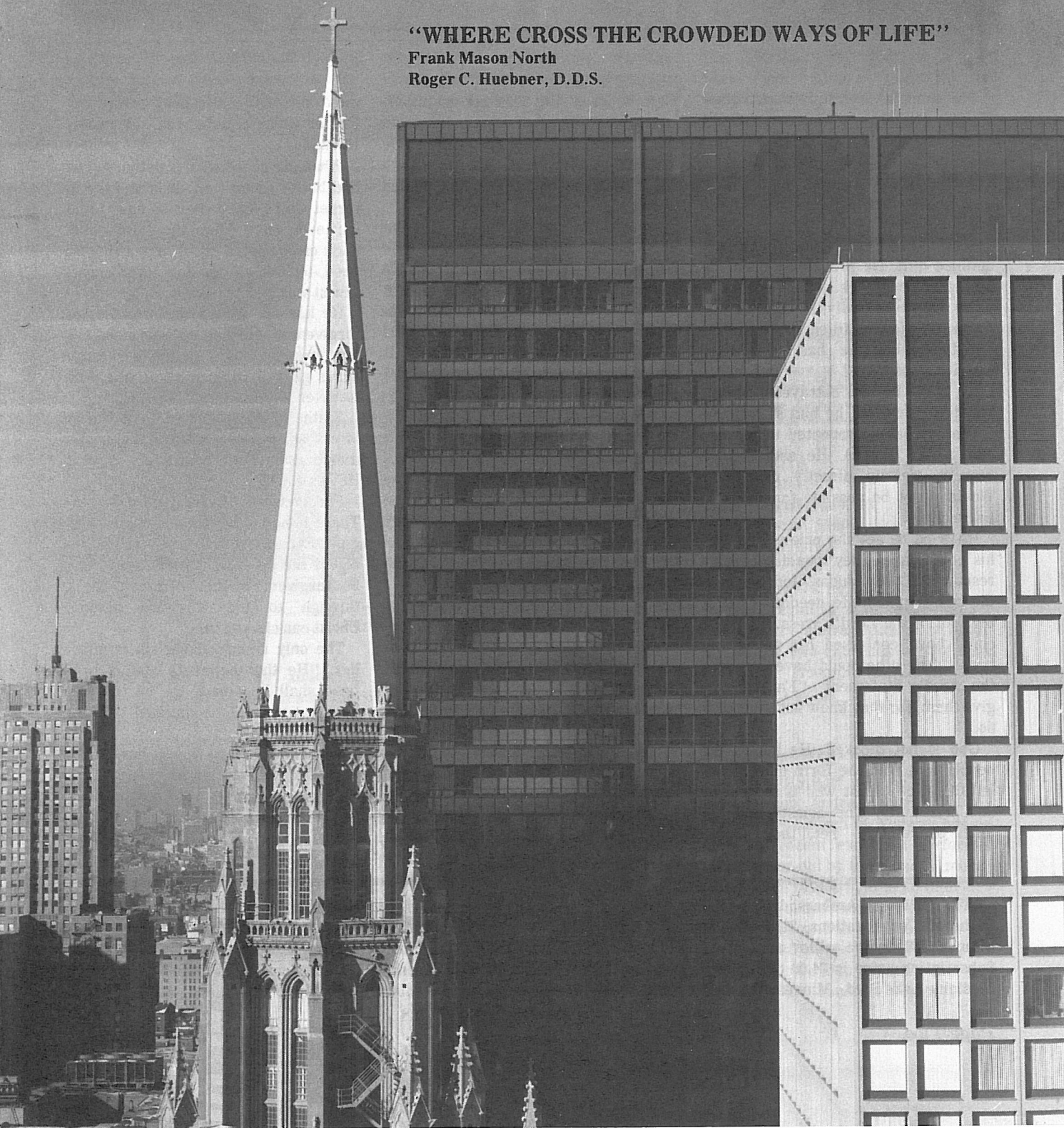
April 4, 1978

# The Lutheran Ambassador

**"WHERE CROSS THE CROWDED WAYS OF LIFE"**

**Frank Mason North**

**Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.**



# MEDITATION MOMENTS

## THE TEMPLE

Our thoughts come from Matthew 27:3-10. Sin always finds us out. We cannot escape our conscience unless our conscience is so blinded we have absolutely no introspection at all. It was the conscience of Judas that bothered him.

Judas had a conscience which condemned him. He probably did not intend the betrayal kiss to lead to the cross. He never really thought it would go so far. He was filled with remorse for the crime he had committed against Jesus.

He knew he had betrayed innocent blood. He realized he had sinned. He repented; but he repented to himself and to the priests. He should have brought his sin directly to Christ. Would it not be possible for Judas to be forgiven?

He tried to get the priests to salve his conscience. They would accept no responsibility for Judas. Judas was in the wrong place. He needed to be at the foot of the Lord's cross. There he could have confessed his act of betrayal. There he could have accepted the Lord's statement, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

God is not mocked. He knows the people who hold the form of religion, but deny the Christ who is the power of Christianity. The priests had the form of religion. Yet, they denied

Christ. Jesus' life was not as important as 30 pieces of silver. He could not ask the priests for forgiveness. He was in the same situation as they. Both held the form of religion but denied Jesus.

Sinners like Judas always enjoy the company of fellow sinners. They look for security in that company. Those who daily betray Jesus flock toward others who also betray Him. What release from sin and guilt does this bring? There can be no release. It would produce more inner conflict and turmoil.

Just think of the inner turmoil going on inside of Judas. He had betrayed Jesus with a kiss. Oh, the thought of any of us betraying Christ! Many there are today who do not live the abundant Christian life because they are traveling the same route that Judas traveled. At every corner, they betray Jesus.

One can commit spiritual suicide by allowing the conscience to become dead. Also, it can be allowed to be blunted or dulled. If these things happen, then the conscience cannot be used by the Lord. It became easier and easier to betray Christ. Soon, one is not bothered by it.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before

men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32-33).

When our conscience is bothered, we had better listen to it. It is so easy to forget God's Word. It is so easy to go our own way. When the Lord calls, each of us should kneel in prayer. We need to ask Christ for forgiveness. Christ wants us to have it.

He has not hidden the promises of forgiveness. He has no fine print nor any trick passages in the Scripture. Jesus gave of Himself so we might be forgiven.

Faith is to lay hold of what Christ offers us. Faith is to accept Christ's merits as our own. It is to rely on what He has done for us.

Forgiveness is the only cure for sin. There is no sin which God cannot forgive. Even those who again and again reject the call of the Holy Spirit can be forgiven. If the Lord can break through to the hardened person, Christ can cleanse him!

The only unpardonable sin is unbelief. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

So the word forgiveness has got to be one of the best words in the Bible! There is forgiveness offered to all of us! May we accept it as ours!

—Dennis Gray

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# Faith

By Rev. Ralph M. Rokke,  
McIntosh, Minn.

Faith is a very important subject. Therefore, please join me in looking at four questions concerning the subject of faith.

## I. What Is the Effect of Faith?

In other words, what does faith do in the life of a Christian? What is the difference between a person who has faith and one who does not?

Basically, the effect of faith is what the Bible calls being "born again." When a sinner comes to saving faith in Jesus Christ, he becomes a new spiritual creature. He begins to live spiritually. The change is so drastic and so significant that the Bible calls it being born again.

No one will ever get to heaven unless he is born again. Jesus made that fact very clear to Nicodemus, in John 3:3.

It is absolutely necessary for you, if you desire to go to heaven, that you be born again, and being born again simply means coming to trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. As I John 5:1 states, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God . . ."

When a person is born again through faith in Jesus Christ, great changes take place in his heart and in his standing with God. The changes cannot be observed outwardly. They are not physical changes, but they are very real nonetheless.

First, the person's heart is changed from being desperately wicked to being purified, as far as God is concerned. Secondly, whereas the person could not previously understand God's Word and spiritual truths, he becomes able, after being born again, to understand spiritual things.



Rev. Ralph Rokke

Thirdly, whereas the person had been a subject of Satan and a citizen of Satan's kingdom, he becomes instead a child of God and a part of the kingdom of God, and fourthly, whereas the person had been destined for hell, he becomes destined instead for heaven.

Now remember that it is faith in Jesus Christ which produces these tremendous changes.

## II. What Is the Source of Faith?

Where does faith come from, and by what means does it come into our lives?

Faith comes from God. It is not a work of man. It is a gift of God.

No human being would ever have faith if God did not give it to him. Ephesians 2:8-9 tells us, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God . . ."

Because faith is a gift of God, all of the credit for a sinner's salvation

belongs to God and none of it to the sinner himself. If faith originated in man, then man would deserve part of the credit for his own salvation, but since God gives faith as a gift, then all of the credit for what faith accomplishes in the life of a sinner goes to God.

God gives His gift of faith through means. Primarily He gives it through His Word. Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." This means that God through His Word builds faith in the hearts of those who do not resist what they hear.

God also, however, gives the gift of faith through baptism. Acts 22:16 teaches that sins are washed away in baptism. Titus 3:5 teaches that God gives the Holy Spirit in baptism, and I Peter 3:21 teaches that God saves sinners through baptism. Since all of these blessings are a part of having faith, we believe that God gives the gift of faith in baptism where His working through the baptism is not deliberately opposed by unbelief.

We baptize our children because faith is a gift of God and we believe that God can give that gift to a child just as surely as he can to an adult. Adults indeed are more likely to resist His working than are children. This is why Jesus said in Matthew 18:3: ". . . Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

When Jesus gave the Great Commission to go and "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," He imposed no age restrictions which would shut little children away from

the blessings of baptism. God in baptism gives the gift of faith to little children, but the children must then be trained up in God's Word and be led to conscious faith in him, if they are to retain salvation.

God strengthens the gift of faith through the Lord's Supper. Every Christian is not only invited but commanded by Christ to partake of the Lord's Supper, and when the Christian does so, he hears Christ say these words to him: "This is my body which is given for you..." and "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:19-20). Thus the Christian receives from Christ in the Lord's Supper that which forgives his sins and restores his fellowship with God. His faith is strengthened.

### III. What Is Faith?

A saving faith is basically a personal trust in the promises of God. Faith is not simply knowledge about God and about his Word. A person can have that and still not be saved.

Faith, basically, is a confidence that the promises of God's Word which offer forgiveness of sins to me through Jesus are promises which I can claim and be saved.

A person has to know some things in order to be saved, and the Apostles' Creed is a very good summary of the basic information that a person must have. No adult will ever be saved without knowing some things about God, but, on the other hand, knowledge alone is not enough. The devil, too, believes in the sense that he has knowledge of God, and yet he trembles because he is not saved. Knowledge is not enough.

Assent is necessary. A person must agree that what the Bible teaches about Jesus, about His virgin birth, about His death, and about His resurrection is true. A person cannot doubt that Jesus died for his sins and was raised again for his justification and still be saved. Yet assent is not enough. I may believe that Jesus died and rose again on the third day and still foolishly say, "What is that to me?"

The third and most important part of faith is confidence or trust. It is be-

ing able sincerely to say, "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so."

True faith is being able to say, "God's promises are true. I claim them. Therefore I am forgiven and saved! Of this I am sure!" Martin Luther said, "Faith is a vital, deliberate trust in God's grace, so certain that it would die a thousand times for it."

### IV. How Can You Overcome a Lack of Faith?

What should you do if you are plagued by doubts and feel that you do not have faith? What advice can you give to a friend who feels unable to believe?

First, realize that God wants you to be sure of your salvation. Hebrews 10:22 says, "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith..." It is not God's will that you live and die uncertain of whether or not you are saved. He wants you to know that you are saved.

Then realize that you are saved not by your feelings but by God, and so you are to be assured of your salvation not by your feelings but by God's Word.

Look at a verse such as I John 1:9. It says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Confess to the Lord every sin that He brings to your remembrance and then confess that you are guilty also of others that you do not remember. Now, having done this, you have the forgiveness of sins. God's Word says it.

Also, if you have trouble believing, do the things which you would expect to see in the life of a person who did believe. Read God's Word. Especially study the life of Jesus. See how perfect He was and try to live like Him. You will soon find that you cannot live as He did and this fact will strengthen your assurance that He was the sinless Son of God, able to be your Savior.

Also pray. As you attempt to communicate with God, He will communicate with you and His power will be revealed in your life. Your doubts will be displaced by experience of God.

Then change your life as God shows you changes that need to be made. If you are stubbornly holding on to a sin which you know that God wants you to give up, do not be surprised that you cannot find assurance of salvation.

Have fellowship with God's people. Attend the mid-week Bible study and adult Bible class in your church. Be faithful in attending worship services. Go to the places where discussion centers on God and His Word. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

Participate in the Lord's Supper. Believe the words of Jesus as you receive the bread and cup: "This is my body, which is broken for you..." (I Cor. 11:24) and "This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you" (Luke 22:20).

Finally, if you have trouble believing, do not look at your doubts but rather look at Jesus. Faith is best acquired not by constant examination for its presence but by constant attention to its source. Do as Hebrews 12:2 says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith..."

God wants you to have the full assurance of faith. Allow Him through His Word and the sacraments to give it to you.



### THOU ART THE WAY

Thou art the Way: to Thee alone  
From sin and death we flee:  
And he who would the Father seek,  
Must seek Him, Lord, by Thee.

Thou art the Truth: Thy Word alone  
Sound wisdom can impart:  
Thou only canst inform the mind,  
And purify the heart.

Thou art the Life: rending the tomb  
Proclaims Thy conquering arm;  
And those who put their trust in Thee  
Nor death nor hell shall harm.

Thou art the Way, the Truth, the Life:  
Grant us that Way to know,  
That Truth to keep, that Life to win,  
Whose joys eternal flow.

G. W. Doane  
(from *The Lutheran Hymnary*)

# WORLD MISSIONS

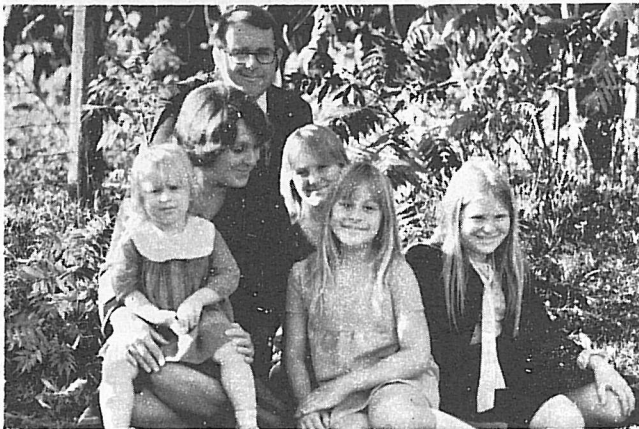
Some events of interest on the AFLC mission compound in Brazil in 1977.



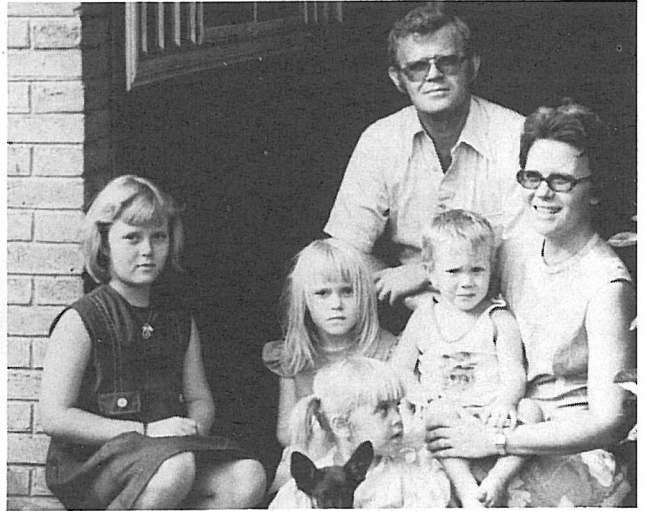
The John Abels return to Brazil in January with Nathanael and Priscilla. John is field president, national president and president of the N.W. Parana district and professor in the Bible school and seminary.



Priscilla Wold, field secretary, bookstore director and professor for American children and the Bible school.



The Dean Casseltons arrive in Brazil in July. A new missionary family comes to the AFLC field.



The Connely Dyruds return to Brazil in March. Connely is field treasurer, dean of the Bible school and seminary and president of the S.E. Parana district.



Some of the students in the AFLC Bible school in Brazil.



Paul Abel arrives in Brazil to teach America children in the Pan American Christian Academy and Debra Abel arrives in Brazil to study medicine in the Evangelical Hospital in Curitiba.

Alvin Grothe arrives in Brazil for a few days as mission board director. (Picture not available)



The Yeddo Gottels have a new arrival, Daniel, in Oct. Yeddo is first vice-president of the Brazilian national council, professor in the Bible school and seminary and teacher of Portuguese to new missionaries and pastors.



The George Knapps leave the Parana area in August to open a new work in the Rondonia territory. George is field vice-president, professor of extension seminary, and president of the Rondonia district.



Karen Knapp returns to Brazil in November. Karen is professor in Maranatha Bible School and school nurse.



Graduation in the Bible school. (back row, L to R) Rev. Ray Noah, graduation speaker, Rev. C. J. Dyrud, Rev. Y. A. Gottel, Rev. J. H. Abel and Miss Priscilla Wold.



The national and field councils. (Back row, L to R) Rev. George Knapp, Rev. Yeddo Goettel, Luis Romais, national second treasurer, Rev. John Abel, Rev. Connely Dyrud, and Moacir Fernandes, national second secretary. (Front row, L to R) Hercilio Ribas, national second vice-president, Ildebrando Texira, national first secretary, Oseias Camara, national first treasurer, and Priscilla Wold.



One of the many DVBS held in our various churches during the summer vacation.

F.L.Y group arrives in Brazil. Eight AFLC young people spend six weeks working in Brazil. More about this later.



# A PAGE FOR CHILDREN

## Happy Acres



### THE DANDELION CROP

On Monday morning as Paul looked out he saw bright yellow blossoms over the lawn. He slipped out of the house, and picked a handful of these dandelions and brought them to his mother.

"Flowers for you, Mommie," he announced happily.

Ann caught sight of her brother's bouquet and cried, "Oh, those aren't flowers, Paulie! Those are dandelions! They're weeds!"

Paul looked at his fistful of blossoms. "But I—I think—they're pretty. So I wanted to give them to Mommie."

Mom smiled at him. "They are pretty, Son. We'll put them in a glass of water, and set them in the window right above the sink so I can see how pretty they are while I wash the breakfast dishes."

"But, Mom," objected Ann as she took her lunch box ready to start for school, "dandelions are weeds, aren't they?"

"Yes," agreed her mother, "dandelions are weeds—but only because they have a habit of growing where we don't want them to grow. In some lands where flowers don't grow easily, folks would be delighted to have a bouquet of golden dandelions. Dandelions do have a lovely gold color—but we just have so many of them, and they grow so easily, they are a nuisance."

Then Mom turned to Paul. "What makes this bouquet most beautiful for me is that my boy brought them to me because he loves me."

That afternoon when Ann and Mark had returned from school, and had finished their after-school snack,

Mom handed each of them a dandelion digging tool. The two children groaned at the sight of these tools. "Oh, Mom, do we have to dig dandelions again this spring?"

"Seems we have a new dandelion crop again," Mom replied. "We can't let the dandelions get fluffy heads or they'll spread their seeds all over the yard, and we'll have more dandelions than grass."

The lawn around the Johnson house was no small city lot in size. Now as Mark and Ann went out to dig dandelions, they were sure their yard was the biggest one in the whole country.

"Mark," said Mom, "you will work in the front yard. Ann, you will work in the back yard." Both children knew why Mom said that—if they worked together, they would get to talking so much they'd forget to work. Also they might have a misunderstanding about who dug the most dandelions.

Mark dug at the first dandelions as though he would like to cut them to bits. "You pesty things!" he grumbled at them.

After he had dug for about half an hour, he had an idea. Why dig the whole dandelion root out of the ground? Surely, if he got the green top off, that would be enough. So, instead of digging, he just yanked and yanked—and the dandelions disappeared much faster from the front lawn.

Mom came out to see how things were going. "Mark," she asked, "aren't you digging the dandelions?"

"It goes faster to yank them—like this," said Mark as he jerked the leaves off a dandelion, leaving the

stubborn root sticking in the ground.

Mom shook her head. "I'm sorry to tell you this, but dandelions will grow if you leave their roots in the ground. So—wherever you have just pulled the leaves off now, you'll soon find a few dandelion tops growing—and we'll have the job to do all over again."

Ann came around the house to tell her mother, "Maybe dandelions have a lovely gold color, Mom, but I don't think they'll ever look beautiful to me!"

Mom chuckled. "I can understand that, Ann." Then she looked at the basket of dandelion plants Ann carried. "I'm glad to see you are getting the root and all. A poet once said, 'Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well.' That certainly is true of weeding dandelions—if we don't get all of the dandelions—it will soon be spreading itself all over the yard. The Bible has something to say about digging dandelions, too."

"Oh?" Mark and Ann both looked at her in surprise.

"Yes. This afternoon your job is digging dandelions. A person's job is his business. And the Bible says we are not to be slothful in business (Rom. 12:11). To be slothful means to be lazy or careless. In Proverbs, we are told, 'Go to the ant, thou sluggard: consider her ways and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest' (Prov. 6:6-8).

Mark, ashamed now, kept looking at the ground. His bright eyes caught sight of several ants, one following

right after the other, always going in the same direction, up and down blades of grass, and over any obstacle in the way. He grinned good-naturedly at Mom. "There's some ants right here—for me—to consider. Those little fellows sure know where they're going. And I guess I know where I'd better get going—digging dandelions, not just yanking them."

MEMORY VERSE: Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit, serve the Lord. Romans 12:11 (RSV)

#### FAMILY DISCUSSION

1. Does God expect each one of us to work for a living? (Genesis 2:15; Proverbs 14:23; Ecclesiastes 9:10; Ephesians 4:28; II Thessalonians 3:12)

2. Can you think of people who have never worked for a living, perhaps very wealthy men and women who have inherited much money? No doubt Mother and Father have read about such men and women in the newspapers. Have these people been happy?

3. Whether we work for our living on a farm or in the city, how shall we do our work? (Diligently—Proverbs 10:45; 12:11. Honestly—Deuteronomy 25:15; Romans 12:17).

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Key: The name of the town is the address of the deceased. Following that is listed the name of the deceased, age, date of death and the church in which he or she held membership.

#### NORTH DAKOTA

Hatton

Howard Johnson, 63, Mar. 3, Zoar

Mrs. Julia Sondreal, 91, Mar. 5, Zoar

#### MONTANA

Culbertson

Mrs. Kinley Bolstad, 78, Feb. 13,  
Bethel

# Perhaps I was DREAMING

## A MIDNIGHT MEDITATION

The clock was ticking, ticking, ticking. A muffled rumble in the distance told me that a street car was passing. A moment later an auto growled up the hill, then a second, and soon a third. The clanging of a locomotive bell and the crash of freight cars, far away, seemed almost musical. As I listened, I seemed to hear other sounds—the clash of opinions, the rearing and the collapse of great thought systems, the erection and the overthrow of thrones, the upbuilding and the downfall of empires, the whirl of solar systems and the flight of mighty star clusters.

Strangely it blended into one continuous roar, like the voice of a rushing river. Yea, even so, for it was the river of Time. Out of one eternity it came, into another eternity it went, sweeping everything with it. Everything—homes and families, kingdoms and empires, the cosmos itself—into chaos.

"Whatever appears in time must vanish in time," called a steady voice. That included me. Suddenly I saw that I, too, was being borne away by the restless river. I might have known it all the time, but the thought of it struck me like a dagger. Must I, too, be swallowed up in the awful silence ahead of us? Must I, too, disappear and be forgotten, even as millions of others, far nobler and greater than I, have disappeared and been forgotten? "Whatever appears in time must vanish in time." That includes all of us. It includes the earth itself, the solar system, and all the stars in space. I felt dizzy. Heaven and earth seemed to reel.

"They shall perish," called another voice, "but thou shalt endure. Yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end." "The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary," said another. And still another: "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God." And out of the silence of eternity came another Voice, most wonderfully rich and reassuring: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. Because I live, ye shall live also."

The clock was ticking, ticking, ticking. But above the rush of the river I heard as it were the tinkle of distant harps and the joy song of a great multitude which no man could number.

—C. A. Wendell



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# editorials

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## MOVEMENT VS. DIRECTION

Someone has written that we are more concerned about movement than direction. Don't be alarmed; that was written a long time ago. But if we do feel that it is a criticism of the present, it indicates that an age-old weakness is with us today, too.

Actually, movement is not in itself opposed to direction. Direction implies that there will be movement, at least, that there should be. On the other hand, there can be movement without direction and that is where the danger lies.

When we think of movement and direction in regard to church work, it is easy enough to recognize the possibility of having a great deal of activity in a congrega-

tion, for instance, but not a great deal of direction in what is taking place. As in many things in life, it is easier to see this as happening in someone else's congregation than in our own. It takes a great amount of honesty and maturity to fairly evaluate one's own. That goes for one's own life, too.

It is good for congregations and pastors to try to take an objective look at their programs to see whether they are goal-oriented or not, or to what extent they are. Be aware of movement or activity simply for the sake of movement and beware of such a situation existing.

We mentioned examination of one's own life. Certainly it is possible for individual Christians to get fooled by movement, to equate that with spirituality and maturity. Perhaps this is akin to the warning that is given that we shouldn't rest on experience and continuing experiences, but on Jesus Christ and what He has done for us and is doing for us.

When we speak of direction and goals, then, we must think of movement and activity which is Christ-centered and which seeks the glory of God.

In the congregation, activity must be devoted to bringing sinners face to face with Law and Gospel and providing room to grow for God's people, that they be sanctified. For the individual, movement must be directed in that same way, toward life and growth. And the direction which will rightly guide movement must gain its power from what has been called the "quiet time," the devotional life.

So, it shouldn't be a case of movement vs. direction, but movement and direction.

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## N. N. RØNNING

### PREACHING

One Christmas forenoon Rev. K. C. Holter, Mr. M. O. Haugan and I went to hear Matt. Hughes (of Wesley Methodist Church). He spoke on the coming of Christ in the fulness of time. Briefly he sketched the conditions in the pagan world and among the Jews. There was peace throughout the world; mighty Rome saw to that. There was one language, almost universal, the Greek language. Splendid roads radiated from Rome to distant lands on which not only Roman soldiers and merchants could travel, but also the messengers of the Gospel.

The pagan religions had lost their grip on many thoughtful people in all lands; they were eagerly looking for something new, something better. The Jews were chafing under Roman yoke and were hoping for the Great Deliverer. Then Christ came; He came in the fulness of time.

"That was a wonderful sermon," said Holter on the way home.

The sermons by these and other ministers in the Reformed Churches impressed me in three ways: The elegant language, the social application of the Gospel, the beautiful portrayal of the humanity of Jesus.

But the time came when I preferred a Lutheran sermon with its stress on the Law and the Gospel. If the conviction of sin, the forgiveness of sin, and the assurance of forgiveness are seldom if ever stressed, the message becomes more and more diluted. So

much is said about the application of the Gospel that the Gospel itself is lost sight of. A blending of the two kinds of messages would make ideal sermons. Some day we'll get them.

(From *Fifty Years in America*, 1938)



### PERSONALITIES

Rev. John P. Strand, who is leaving the presidency of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations when his present term expires on Sept. 30, has accepted the call to become pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Fargo, N. Dak., at that time. Rev. Raynard Huglen, Newfolden, Minn., is presently conducting the Sunday services at St. Paul's.

# Women For Christ

## WOMEN'S WORK AT NOGALES

Dear Friends of the Nogales Mission:

As we read news articles of events taking place in the various districts of our WMF, we thought you might like to get better acquainted with the "Arizona district," the Mary and Martha group of Triumph Lutheran Church in Nogales. A few of you have visited us through the years and we have greatly appreciated your fellowship in the Gospel. We also know that many of you have consistently prayed for our work here on the Mexico border and we thank you sincerely for your faithfulness. We are seeing some of God's answers to your prayers!

The Mary and Marthas meet every other Thursday evening, except that we occasionally skip a busy week, such as during VSB or the Christmas holidays. Still we progress slowly in our Bible study and just began the studies in Philippians the past fall. Until recently we conducted bilingual studies in English and Spanish and usually covered about half of one lesson. Now we have two separate groups in different rooms to better reach each woman in her own language and also to make better use of our time. We have very little business so the Bible study uses the major part of the evening. We also sing in both languages and recently purchased additional Spanish hymn books and Spanish Bibles to accommodate our growing attendance.

We usually meet in the homes. Most of the Mexican women are of Roman Catholic background and consequent-

ly are more reluctant to come to the church. Since the first part of September our attendance has averaged 23. Most of the women attend the Spanish group and less than half of them are active in Triumph Lutheran. So we praise God for this opportunity to reach out to the Spanish-speaking community with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

One particular answer to prayer has been the interest shown by an 86-year-old woman who for over 40 years had not gone to any church nor believed in a life hereafter. We prayed for her a year ago last fall during the "I Found It" campaign here. Now she looks forward to our meetings, comes faithfully with the help of a walker, and has asked for prayer.

Other women have purchased their own Bibles and copy references from the studies to share with those whose husbands won't let them come. Some of the younger mothers have started attending since their children came to VBS last summer.

So keep on praying for our work in Nogales and for those who are being reached with the Gospel. God's Word will not return void but will accomplish His purpose in the heart, as He has promised.

Sincerely yours, in Christ,  
Your Co-workers at  
Triumph Lutheran,  
Mrs. Gerald Mundfrom

## SIX BABIES ENROLLED AT MCINTOSH CHURCH

Trinity Lutheran Church of rural McIntosh, Minnesota, enrolled six babies in its Cradle Roll Department



last year. Seated above with their mothers, are, left to right, Holly, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Roed; Kjersten, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mark Langemo; Matthew, son of Mr. and Mrs. Terry Erholtz; and Heidi, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Philip Quam. Also enrolled from out of town were Marla Quam and Karla Nelson, by their grandparents.

## PUKWANA CHURCH WOMEN HONORED



The Elim Ladies Aid of Pukwana, S. Dak., honored three faithful members with Honorary Memberships in the Women's Missionary Federation following a regular fall meeting. They are, left to right, Mrs. Evelyn Cook, Mrs. Emma Baker and Mrs. Estella Swanson.

Devotions were given by Mrs. Etta Swanson, president. The favorite hymns of each honoree were sung. They were presented pins and corsages. Mrs. De Ett Willard presented the pin to her mother, Mrs. Baker; Mrs. Merna Picek, Mrs. Cook's daughter, presented her pin; and Mrs. Swanson's pin was presented to her by her niece, Etta Swanson.

The congregation at Pukwana is now being served by Rev. Philip Featherstone.

**A PRAYER**  
by Max Ehrmann

Let me do my work each day; and if the darkened hours of despair overcome me, may I not forget the strength that comforted me. In the desolation of other times, may I still remember the bright hours that found me walking over the silent hills of childhood, or dreaming on the margin of the quiet river, when a light glowed within me, and I promised my God to have courage amid the tempests of the changing years. Spare me from bitterness and from the sharp passions of unguarded moments. May I not forget that poverty and riches are of the spirit. Though the world know me not, may my thoughts and actions be such as shall keep me friendly with myself. Lift my eyes from the earth, and let me not forget the uses of the stars. Forbid that I should judge others, lest I condemn myself. Let me not follow the clamor of the world, but walk calmly in my path. Give me a few friends who will love me for what I am; and keep ever burning before my vagrant steps the kindly light of hope. And though age and infirmity overtake me, and I come not within sight of the castle of my dreams, teach me still to be thankful for life, and for time's olden memories that are good and sweet; and may the evening's twilight find me gentle still.

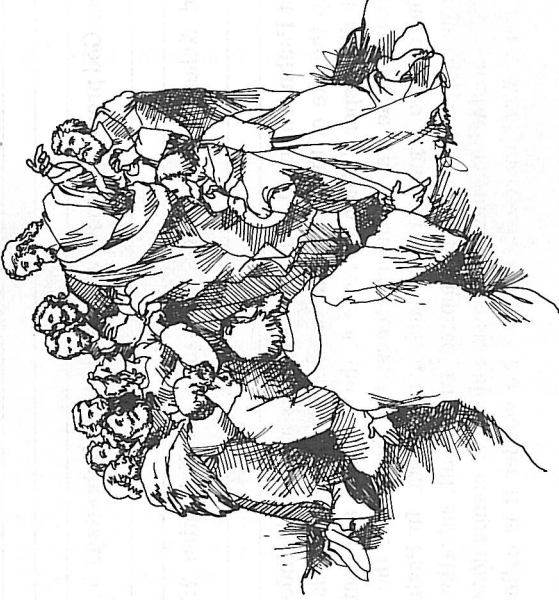


**WMF REMINDER**

Dear Co-Workers:  
For ladies of the WMF, May is a special month of gathering together at spring district rallies. These are meant to be wonderful occasions of enjoying Christian fellowship and being challenged from God's Word. Please, ladies, take time to attend your rally. Looking ahead to June 14, I would like to personally invite each one of

you to WMF Day at the AFLC Annual Conference. Come early for our 9 a.m. prayer service and enjoy a day of good messages and Christian fellowship. On Thursday evening, June 15, we will have our WMF Mission Festival Service.  
Please plan now to join with us at Medicine Lake Lutheran Church in suburban Minneapolis for our Annual Conference!  
Mrs. Eugene Enderlein

# W.M.F. BIBLE STUDY



May, 1978

**PROSPERITY**

Read Psalms 1 and 23.

This word, prosperity, brings many scenes before us. It is a variety of things to many people. To some a prosperous state includes the simple needs of food, shelter and clothing. To others the term "the sky is hardly the limit" might apply. Most of us could fall somewhere in between. Paul's words in Philippians 4:11, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content," sums up a valuable quality in a true child of God. We need much daily grace for a right attitude toward our circumstances. Some things we can change, others are firmly fixed.

1. What was John the Baptist's word to the people, in Luke 3:14? \_\_\_\_\_

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  2. Which desirable qualities are found in I Timothy 6:6-8? \_\_\_\_\_

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  3. Psalm 37:3-5 mentions three good suggestions. Name them. \_\_\_\_\_

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  4. What does God promise to those who are content? Hebrews 13:5 \_\_\_\_\_

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  5. How did Nehemiah encourage the people, in Nehemiah 2:7-20? note v. 20 \_\_\_\_\_

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- The first Psalm tells us of two men, two ways and two destinies. The psalmist sums up the life of the good man in verse 3 with the words "whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Then in verse 6, the two men are contrasted: "For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish." There is no argument with such a statement. In Psalm 23, we find perfect prosperity. Every need is supplied, first of all, salvation, followed by every kind of satisfaction, including rest, guidance, companionship, joy, provision and care. What more can we ask? No wonder it is called "The Pearl of Psalms."
6. Read Psalm 122. What was the psalmist's object of prayer in verses 6 and 7? \_\_\_\_\_

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  7. Because of David's desire to follow God, how was he daily blessed? Psalm 23:6 \_\_\_\_\_

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- David was a king who had been severely tried, who had been compelled to experience more of life's trials than most people. He knew what it was to sin and fall, to repent and to be restored to the Lord. Through all of this David learned to know what a rich and blessed life can be lived by fully believing and trusting in the Lord. This can also be our portion in all of life. Through the trials and victories of this life, we can experience the Lord's refreshing of our soul in wondrous ways. This is prosperity.
8. What do we find contrasted in Ecclesiastes 7:14? \_\_\_\_\_

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9. Read Genesis 39:1-5. How did God bless Joseph? \_\_\_\_\_

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10. Read I Chronicles 22:6-13. What was David's charge to Solomon? \_\_\_\_\_

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11. II Chronicles 20:20. What did Jehoshaphat proclaim to the people as they faced danger in the Wilderness of Tekoa? \_\_\_\_\_

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12. In II Chronicles 26:1-5, Uzziah became king over Israel at the age of 16. What do we read concerning his attitude toward the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_

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13. In Proverbs 28:13, who is it that will not prosper? \_\_\_\_\_

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14. What instruction is given in I Corinthians 16:2? \_\_\_\_\_

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15. Give the apostle John's greeting to Gaius, as recorded in III John 2. \_\_\_\_\_

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In these verses we observe that God desires prosperity for each of us. Did you note that frequently there are guidelines given? God's Word gives very clear directions for our daily walk with Him. This walk is also a witness before the world. We do not walk alone. The Bible states more than once that we must give an account of ourselves to God. In accounting to ourselves, we may fool ourselves. As others call us to account, they may make mistakes. But the judgment of God is according to truth. He will make no mistakes in His evaluation of our lives. Through our use of resources for the glory of God, we can be channels through which the love of God can actually affect the lives of others.



# NEWS

## of the Churches

### GLEANINGS FROM PARISH PAPERS

A Sweetheart banquet was held at the Hind Quarter on Feb. 11. The singing and fellowship was uplifting. Candy favors and flowers added to the beauty of the setting. Pastor David Hockenberry brought the "Love" message.

Stillwater and Faith families had a roller skating party on Mar. 21 at the Shady Lane Roller Rink.

—Kalispell, Mont.

The Oiland Ladies Aid, Greenbush, Minn., is getting a new cookbook together. A former one proved very successful.

Badger Creek Lutheran Church, Badger, Minn., will observe its 80th anniversary July 22-23.

—Badger and Greenbush, Minn.

"The Seven Words to the Cross" was the theme of Pastor Larry Severson's Lenten sermons at Trinity Lutheran Church, Boscobel, Wis.

—Boscobel, Wis.

Men's Aid was held at Maple Bay Lutheran Church, Mentor, Minn., on Mar. 23. Chester Broden was the chairman of the committee.

—Winger, Minn.

Pastor Jerome Nikunen and Lay Pastor Gustav Nordvall, both of Roseau, Minn., were the speakers at the community Good Friday service in Roseau this year.

—Roseau, Minn.

Mr. Al Palmquist of Midwest Chal-

lenge presented part of the program at Hope Lutheran Church, Wyoming, Minn., on Mar. 5. He also brought along the movie "Miracle at City Hall."

—Wyoming, Minn.

The Couples' Club of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Thief River Falls, Minn., gave a "Love Feast" in honor of widowed and single members of the congregation on Sun., Mar. 12.

—Thief River Falls, Minn.

An International Dinner was served at Medicine Lake Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn., on Feb. 10, by Mr. Sidhom Sidhom, director of International Students at the University of Minnesota. A talk was given by Mr. Hasanain W. of Uganda, a former Muslim.

—Minneapolis, Minn.

Cold weather curtailed some activities at Rice Lutheran Church, Bagley, Minn., during the winter months, but the congregation hopes to be back on full schedule this month. A spaghetti supper is being planned, for one thing.

—Bagley, Minn.

The annual Youth Retreat of the Drummond-Mason parish will be held April 21-23 at Mogahseen Resort. Earlier the Faith-Moland Luther League went swimming at the Northland College pool in Ashland and the Drummond League did the same at Tele-

mark.

—Mason-Drummond, Wis.

### "A KING FOR ISRAEL" presented at Zion Christmas Program

"Keep your lamps burning" was the theme of the Zion Ladies Aid (Tioga, N. Dak.) annual Christmas party.

On December 15th at 8 o'clock, ladies of the community were welcomed into the fireside room by Iola Warford, Lucille Breckey and Valerie Swensrud. A gaily decorated Christmas tree, holly wreaths and twinkle lights gave the room a festive air. In keeping with our theme, miniature red and green kerosene lamps on red velvet place mats burned brightly on our new round tables.

Beatta Gilbertson, at the guest book, gave each lady a lamp name tag on which she put her name and birth date. The ladies exchanged these later on and are to remember their partner with prayer and on her birthday.

The program opened with Lila Lallim, president, welcoming the guests and bringing greetings from our pastor's wife, Adeline Swenson, who was unable to attend.

Grace Syverson gave devotions, reading from Matthew 25:1-13. She reminded us that "We are here to celebrate a birthday, something we all like to do, but sometimes, amid the tinsel and glitter of the season, we forget whose birthday we are celebrating—it's the birthday of someone very special—the birthday of Christ, our Savior.

"We are here because of His first coming, but He is coming again as a bridegroom for His bride." In closing, she admonished us to be like the five wise virgins and keep our lamps trimmed and burning so that we are ready for that great marriage feast which will go on through all eternity.

The chorus "Give Me Oil in My Lamp" was then sung by all the ladies and we were challenged to let this little chorus be a reminder to each of us to keep our lamps burning brightly by feeding on His Word each day.

Before the play "A King for Israel" was given, a ladies quartet sang "Precious Child." The ladies singing were Delores Fifer, Evelyn Copes, LaVon Mickelson and Esther Nelson.

The highlight of the evening was the play, as cast and audience alike

were transported to Bethlehem and felt the wonder and excitement of that night when Jesus was born.

The curtains opened to the home of Sarah, an embittered, crippled, Jewish woman, played by Joanne Jorgenson; her daughter Deborah, played by Bobbi Lalim; Micah, her son, played by Carmen Eraas; and her sister Ruth, played by Jeanette Mortenson.

As Sarah piously prayed for the coming of the promised king for Israel, we were reminded of the suffering endured by the Jews under Roman rule.

A knock on the door strikes fear to their hearts—with relief they open to Deborah's fiance, Zechariah, played by Debby Knudson, and his friend Azor, played by Cleo Lee. They have come to get Micah to help tend the sheep as there is a restlessness in the air around Bethlehem that night.

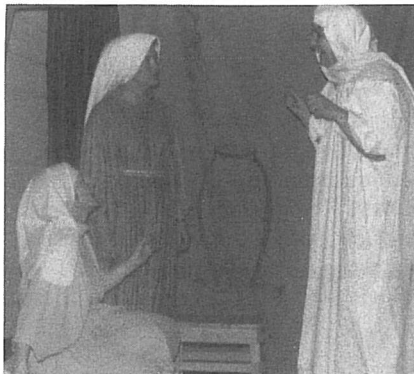
Micah leaves—the women are alone—again a knock! Is it the Romans? No—it's Miriam, the innkeeper's wife, played by Mary Davidson. The inn is crowded—they need help—could Ruth come? Maybe even Deborah? With great reluctance Sarah allows Ruth to go.

Night is coming on—two weary travelers approach Sarah's gate—"Could I take them a cup of water, Mother?" "Yes." "Could they possibly stay here tonight; she's going to have a baby!" "Of course not." Sarah relents—but too late—they have moved on.

Once more the dreaded knock. This time their worst fears are realized—three Roman soldiers (Alva Dyrud, Marcella Haakenson and Edith Arnstad) demand entrance to search their home for men to help during the enrollment. Scene I ends with Sarah once again praying fervently for the promised Messiah.

Scene II opens with Ruth pounding on the door, so excited she can hardly speak, but the wonderful news comes tumbling out—"The Deliverer has come—Our King is born, just as the prophets foretold!"

In wonder and amazement Sarah and Deborah listen as Ruth tells of the birth of Christ in a lowly stable. Sarah is filled with remorse—He might have been born in her home—Then joy fills her heart as the full realization comes over her—Her



Left to right, Sarah, Ruth and Deborah



The entire cast

prayers are answered! There is hope for the future!! Their King and Savior is born!

The curtains closed to the strains of "Silent Night" and reopened as the cast, kneeling around a life-sized manger scene, sang "Silent Night, Holy Night." The audience joined in on the last verse.

Spontaneous applause broke the silence, after which the Zion trio sang "O Holy Night."

With the joy of that long ago night lingering in our hearts, Mary Ellen David led us in singing Christmas carols, after which refreshments were served and ladies mingled, met new friends and rejoiced together over the birth of our Lord and Savior.

—Corr.

(Ed. Note: The above story was received last month and this is our first opportunity to use it. Thus the reason for "Christmas in April." But after all, the story of Christmas is timeless.)

#### SPECIAL EVENTS FOR ST. PAUL CONGREGATION

Sunday, Feb. 5, was a doubly significant day in the history of Victory In Christ Lutheran Church as it marked

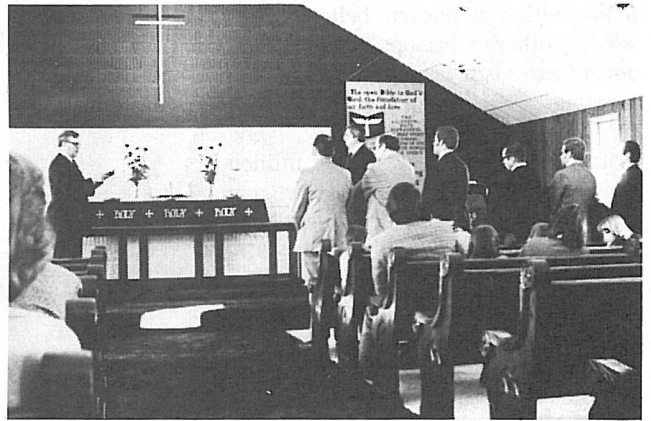
the first day of worship in its new church building at 1695 Gervais Ave. in Maplewood, Minn., as well as the installation of Pastor Gary Skramstad as pastor.

Victory In Christ Lutheran Church, the first member of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations to be organized in the St. Paul area, was formed on Easter Sunday, 1973, and has worshiped in various locations since then. The choice 2½-acre site, just northwest of the intersection of Highway 36 and White Bear Avenue, was purchased in 1975 and construction began the following year. The compact structure, with a decorative split-face concrete block exterior, is set back from the street behind a spacious lawn. Trees surrounding the building were present on the undeveloped property and were undisturbed by the construction.

The upper level of the building contains offices, a spacious narthex that is ideal for informal conversation before and after worship and the 180-seat sanctuary. Rich brown carpet in the center aisle directs one's eyes to the altar area where the platform is covered with the same carpet. The altar itself is mounted on a free-standing wall painted a soft yellow in contrast to the dark brown of the back wall of the sanctuary. A slim brass cross, illuminated by a hidden spotlight, is mounted on the back wall above the free-standing wall, directing both eyes and minds to the empty cross, the central symbol of Christianity. The lower level contains the nursery room, space for a future kitchen, and a large assembly area to be used primarily for Sunday School purposes. The walk-in basement doors provide easy access to the lower level.

Regular worship services are held at 10:30 a.m., preceded by Sunday School and Adult Bible classes at 9:15 a.m., Sundays. During Lent, Wednesday evening Lenten services were held. For the balance of the year, informal Bible study and prayer meetings are held at 7:30 p.m., Wednesdays.

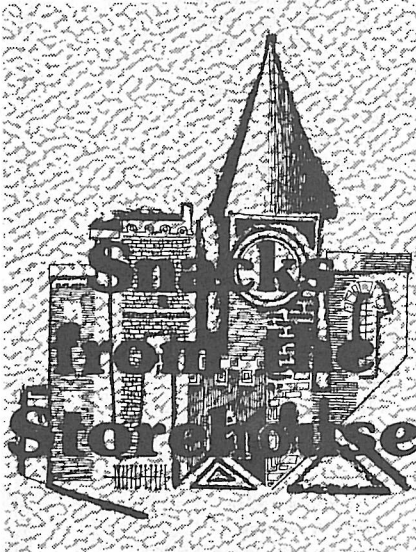
The service of installation of Pastor Gary Skramstad was held at 3:00 p.m. on Feb. 5. Pastor John P. Strand, president of the AFLC, was the installing officer and presented a challenging



message for both pastor and congregation. Pastor Elden Nelson, Director of Home Missions for the AFLC,

also brought an inspiring message. Greetings from other congregations and special music were included in

the service conducted by Pastor Skramstad. A time of fellowship with refreshments followed the service.



#### MUCH MORE

Following the Ark or following Moses? Which is it? The leadership of the one, Moses, led to a day-by-day wilderness experience. Nothing really "to write home about." The same menu day after day. Manna for breakfast. Manna for lunch. Manna for dinner. The same dust blowing in their faces day after day after day. No wonder they looked back to Egypt and wondered why they had left. No wonder they grumbled. Is that somewhat your experience? Being a Christian, to you, is like having a passport to heaven some day. Or like having a lifebelt in your boat, just in case.

If that is a picture of your experience with God, may I suggest, in love, that you get your eyes off Moses and unto the Ark of the Covenant (Jesus Christ). The Ark, as we meet it in the Book of Joshua, led them into Jordan, but it also led them out of Jordan into Abundance. There they got to experience the **much more** of the Christian experience that Paul speaks so enthusiastically about in Romans 5. As they entered the Land, the "manna ceased," we are told. Why not? The manna was God's survival kit for wilderness wandering. Now, as they by faith entered the Land of God's intention, they took and fed from the corn and the fruit of the land. What a difference! This is the abundance Jesus came to bring, that He tells us about. He came to bring Life but **much more** than that. With life He wants to give real joy and victory and fulfillment to those who are willing to "receive" the abundance of His grace (Romans 5:17). How about turning in the "survival kit" for His abundance? That's when life **really** begins as He wants it to be lived. That's when Life can become really exciting as one walks it day by day with Him. Let's take more time off to really get to **know Him as He is.**

Karl G. Berg



### In Memoriam

Key: The name of the town is the address of the deceased. Following that is listed the name of the deceased, age, date of death and the church in which he or she held membership.

#### MINNESOTA

Fergus Falls

**Ingolff Christenson**, 83, Feb. 8, Stiklestad, Doran, Minn.

#### WASHINGTON

Ferndale

**Selma Horn**, 74, Feb. 22, Triumph

**Mattie Gregor**, 76, Mar. 18, Triumph

(Both of the above ladies were organists in the two churches which joined to form Triumph Lutheran some years ago.)

#### News Briefs

**OSLO BISHOP ON EXORCISM:** Oslo Bishop Andreas Aarflot of the (Lutheran) Church of Norway has deplored a recent exorcism performed on a 10-year-old by ten persons, mostly clergy. The bishop said in an interview that "we cannot easily overlook the conception found in the Bible of a personified evil power, but this does not imply that we can identify this evil power in the concrete forms of de-

mons within a human being." Norway's Lutheran bishops were to take up the exorcism issue at their March meeting.

NORWEGIANS BUY NEW NEW testament; almost half a million copies of a contemporary Norwegian translation of the New Testament have been sold since it came out in 1975. (Norwegians number about 4,000,000.) "Norwegians obviously want the Bible," says the general secretary of the Norwegian Bible Society, "but the figures don't say anything about whether they read it or not." The whole Bible in the new translation is due out this summer.

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