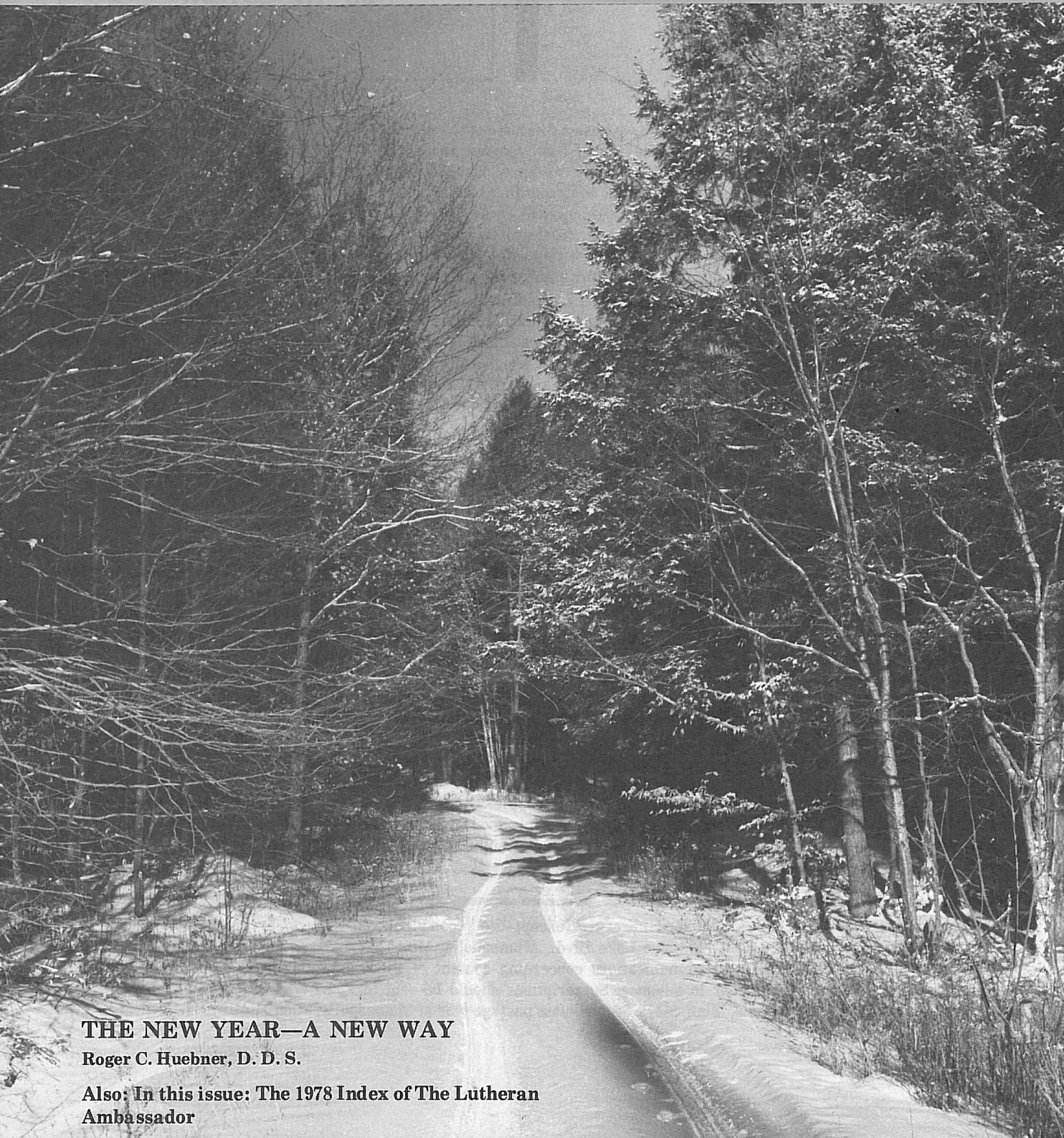


December 26, 1978

# The Lutheran Ambassador



## **THE NEW YEAR—A NEW WAY**

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

**Also: In this issue: The 1978 Index of The Lutheran Ambassador**

# MEDITATION MOMENTS

## ALL THINGS NEW

“... and He shall wipe every tear from their eyes; and there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away” (Rev. 21:4).

Our future is as great as the promise of God! Great is His faithfulness, His mercies never fail. What a thrilling prospect as we come to the end of another year. In spite of all men's hopes and dreams for peace and prosperity in the world, we now know that that is illusory at best. People are looking for a heaven or trying to build one here. Only God can make a heaven, and it won't be on this old earth. Each year brings new events that leave us more stunned than before. Will it never cease?

Yes, it will. And all things will be made new.

There is a time for everything, says the preacher (Eccles. 3:1). And everything must run its course. Each year we begin again, hoping to start afresh, making resolutions that *this* year will be better and we will *do* better. But it always ends up the same 365 days later, and we start all over again. There's always hope, so we say.

Days and years pass without much change in the state of the world, but for the believer with his sights set on Jesus, who is the same yesterday, today and forever, the outlook is bright. In

Him we have a foretaste of the glory to come, for He has overcome the world. In our hearts we know that all things will work out according to His perfect will. Judgment will come, sin will be vanquished, death will be defeated. All things will be new. Any descriptions of that future state of glory and eternal bliss are often explained in figurative language that is hard to grasp. The place is real, but we find it hard to relate to something which we have not experienced. To know what it is *not* going to be, however, helps clarify it, because these things we know so well. Who has not experienced sorrow, crying, pain—and death? To be rid of these will be heaven. One day in God's time a transformation will take place that will make any new year's celebration pale by comparison.

No more sorrow. Today there is sorrow as we meet with the effects of sin and death. We sorrow over the unsaved, over those who are unresponsive to the call of God. Sorrow because of strife within the church, even among believers. Sorrow because the Lord is not honored and loved as He ought to be among His own people.

No more crying. Today there is weeping and crying because sin has a hold on so many people. There is weeping, as Jesus wept, over loved ones whom death has claimed. Weeping, as Jesus wept, over cities that hear and

see the Word but remain unmoved. Today there are cries for mercy ascending to the throne of grace from God's people around the world. Today the vision is blurred by tears; one day we shall see Him face to face.

No more pain. Today there is suffering as people are gripped in spiritual and physical bondage, slaves of the devil, the world and their own flesh. Desperately trying to find hope, they become more hopeless. But there is One who bore our griefs, carried our sorrows, and was pierced for our transgressions. The Lord has caused our iniquity to fall on Him (Is. 53). He has suffered as we suffer, so that one day we will not.

No more death. Today there is death which brings sorrow and crying and pain to all people. Today we reap the wages of sin. One day death, which from Adam onward has destroyed men's bodies and souls, will itself be thrown into the lake of fire. “The last enemy that will be abolished is death . . . thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (I Cor. 15:26, 57).

For those whose names are written in the Book of Life, there is a new world coming, and it is good. This year and the next will be dissolved, but our future with the Lord is as sure as His Word.

—Wesley Langaas

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# A CALL TO FAITHFULNESS

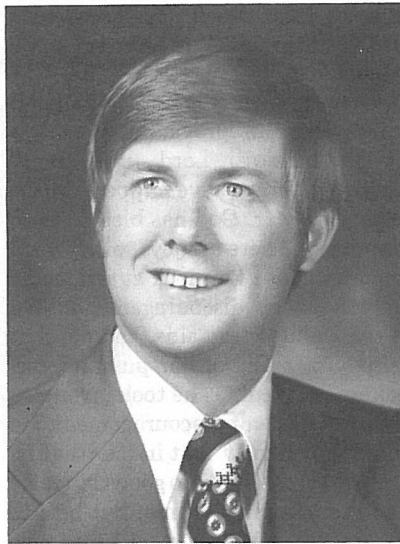
by Pastor Rodger Olson Grafton, N. Dak.

Once again we are reminded that time passes so quickly. For it seems like only yesterday that we were reminiscing about 1977 and looking forward to the new year filled with new opportunities to redeem ourselves of the failures and neglect of the year past.

The personal inventory at the year's end causes us to discover that time is a precious commodity that flees by so rapidly, not waiting for anyone who might cry out, "Hold up, wait for me! I'm not ready yet! I haven't finished with all that I had planned for '78." Time waits for no one. As we observe the years passing so quickly, we are faced with the realization that our existence in this life upon earth is but a brief mist, as James writes in James 4:14, "You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away." As youngsters, we are filled with dreams of a great lifetime of accomplishments and successes. Then as the years rapidly accumulate, we are faced with the real facts of our own weaknesses, inabilities, and things that we have not accomplished. In the face of such revelations, we ask ourselves, "What is this life all about?"

What does a personal inventory reveal about your philosophy of life? Are the accomplishments of 1978 in themselves meaningful and satisfying? As we look back on the year, perhaps we would list: another crop harvested, a raise in pay, the house remodeled, business increased, a trophy for athletic achievements, a new car, a bigger herd of cattle, a few more quarters of land to farm, graduation from high school or college, etc.

Solomon was one who sought the



Pastor Rodger Olson

answer to the question, "What is life all about?" He tried to discover all the things that make life satisfying and meaningful. He said, "I set my mind to seek and explore by wisdom concerning all that has been done under heaven." Solomon indulged in pleasure. His riches were great; his accomplishments were many. Solomon saw men working hard, diligently trying to acquire wealth, fame and success. He saw the futility of such selfish goals. As Solomon experienced and analyzed all of these pursuits, he came to the conclusion: "All is vanity."

What then should be our attitude toward these years that God has given us to live upon this earth? What should be our purpose in living? What are the things that really make life worth living? Solomon closed the Book of Ecclesiastes with some sound advice. He wrote: "Let us hear the conclusion of

the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."

There is nothing greater that we can do with our lives than to be faithful to God. The life that overflows with joy and satisfaction is the life of faithfulness to God. What God wants from you and me in 1979 is faithfulness. "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father" (Col. 3:17).

Faithfulness is expressed through obedience, obedience in all areas of our life. To live a life of faithfulness to God, we must start with our relationship to God Himself, with our relationship to Christ our Lord. As we look back and take inventory of that area of our life in 1978, have we been diligent to nurture our faith in Christ? Have we sought to grow in Him? Are we still being defeated by the same old sins, day after day, year after year? Peter commands us, in II Peter 3:18, "But grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." There can be no growth in our relationship to Christ without spending time in prayer and in the Word. Many make the resolution each year to have daily personal devotions, only to find that another year has passed by without any real success in this area of their lives. When our goals and purposes in life become something OTHER than faithfulness to God, there will be no time for prayer and study of the Word. Other priorities will take up our time as we pursue things, which in themselves, are vanity.

Do you have a better understanding

and knowledge of Scripture now than you did a year ago? Have you memorized and laid up in your heart more of God's Word? One common remark of many Christians is, "I don't know my Bible very well." We are commanded in God's Word to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing (handling) the Word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15 KJV). But many Christians would be ashamed to death if they were called upon to display their skills in handling the Word of God. If we worked at our vocations with the same skills that some Christians display in handling the Scriptures, we would be fired within a day. Friend, let us seek to be faithful to God in the study and use of His Word.

Another area of our life in which we should seek to be faithful to God is in our home with our families. The homes of today often are nothing more than bunkhouses and watering holes for the busy and active members of that particular home. What has your home been like this past year? Has one of your main purposes been to instruct and teach the things of God to each one under your roof? This was one of God's commandments to the Israelites, in Deut. 6:6-7: "And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up." If we do not keep as our purpose in life to be found faithful to God, then we will neglect instructing our children in the Word. Could it not be said that a day without sharing God's Word and praying together in our homes is a wasted day, regardless of all other successes or accomplishments? It's too easy to give of ourselves to things that are noticeable to others, while we neglect or put off our most important ministry in the home. The days pass quickly. The years come and go until our children are gone from home. While parents have been busy with pursuits of vanity, the real important things of life have been neglected.

As we continue to take inventory of our lives this past year, many things that we had good intentions of doing, we find undone. Have we been faithful

to God in our ministry to people? Have we taken time for people, people in need, lonely people, forgotten people, sick people? After hearing of the death of someone in the community, many of us have often said, "I had planned on getting over to see him, but I just never got around to it." James writes in his epistle that if we see people with needs and say to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled; and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?" Jesus said, in Matt. 11:42: "And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you he shall not lose his reward." It is only when we lose our self in Christ that we find real life.

As we review the year 1978, surely we cannot help but proclaim, "Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!" Many good things have happened to us during this year. God has blessed in so many ways. There are joys, many good memories. But as we look at self, there surely must be discouragements. We see the failures, the sins, the neglect, the folly of many of our pursuits, our weaknesses. Paul, as he took inventory of his own life, saw discouragement. He wrote: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do" (KJV).

Where, then, was Paul's victory? Where is our hope in the midst of our frustrations with our sins and failures? How can we escape the guilt of mistakes and sins of omission? Surely not in our own resolutions to do better next year! We must look to Christ who alone is our strength and forgiveness. The words of Oskar Ahnfelt in his song, "I Look Not Back" express it all so well:

I look not back; God knows  
the fruitless efforts,  
The wasted hours, the sinning,  
the regrets.  
I leave them all with Him who blots  
the record,  
And graciously forgives, and  
then forgets.

I look not inward; that would  
make me wretched;

For I have naught on which to  
stay my trust.  
Nothing I see save failures and  
shortcomings,  
And weak endeavors, crumbling  
into dust.

But I look up—into the face of  
Jesus,  
For there my heart can rest, my  
fears are stilled;  
And there is joy, and love, and  
light for darkness,  
And perfect peace, and every hope  
fulfilled.

And so, friend, as you look back over the old year, may you look to Jesus. Look to Him who knows your failures and sins, yet loves you anyway. Look to Christ who is able to blot out the record of our sins. May our faith look up to God, who, while we were yet "dead in our trespasses and sin, made us alive together with Christ."

As you look forward to a new year of grace and opportunities, take for yourself Paul's motto: "For me to live is Christ." Seek to be faithful to Him who holds the future. "Only one life, 'twill soon be past. Only what's done for Christ will last."

## TWO ISSUES WITH SAME DATE

Two issues of the *Ambassador* in 1978 bore the same date, June 13. We regret this error. They did, however, bear different numbers, 12 and 13.

Editor

## INDIAN MISSION ANNUAL MEETING SET

The annual meeting of the Northern Lutheran Mission will be held at Bethel Lutheran Chapel at White Earth, Minn., Saturday, Jan. 13, at 10:30 a.m. The Indian missionaries will give their reports. Those at White Earth and Elbow Lake are the Harold Nashes, at Redby, Roland and Lucille Newton.

At 1:30 there will be a mission service with Pastor Lea Johnson of Waubun, Minn., as guest speaker. Musical numbers will be provided by Indian mission groups.

Helmer Hanson, president  
Harvey Dyrud, secretary



# The Lutheran Ambassador Schedule for 1979

(Please save for reference)

1. The first date given is the date on which the *Ambassador* is published, every two weeks.
2. The second date is the deadline on which material for that issue must reach the Editor at Box 128, Newfolden, Minn. 56738. Please send all correspondence to him at that address.
3. Material which arrives late will not be included in the next issue unless it is of an emergency nature or there is room for it.
4. Unsolicited material is certainly welcome, but it will be used at the discretion of the Editor and as space permits.
5. All material should be in double-spaced typing. Handwritten material will often be delayed.
6. The second issue in August is omitted.
7. In sending in notices of meetings, keep in mind that subscribers receive their copies up to a week or more following the date of publication.
8. Regular writers for the *Ambassador*, as well as other possible contributors, are asked to note the special issues given below so that they may write concerning those topics if they so desire.
9. Please note that the Editor's Deadlines have been moved up *one week* to allow more time for layout work on the paper.

Publication Date	Editor's Deadline	Special	WMF Bible Study
January 9	December 16	Women's Missionary Federation	Yes
January 23	December 30		
February 6	January 13	World Missions	Yes
February 20	January 27	Patriotic	
March 6	February 10	Lent	Yes
March 20	February 24	Lent	
April 3	March 10	Easter	
April 17	March 24		Yes
May 1	April 7	Mother's Day	
May 15	April 21	Pentecost and Pre-Conference	Yes
May 29	May 5	Pre-Conference	
June 12	May 19		Yes
June 26	June 2		
July 10	June 16	Conference Reports	Yes
July 24	June 30	Conference Reports	
August 7	July 14		Yes
September 4	August 11	Youth	Yes
September 18	August 25		
October 2	September 8		
October 16	September 22	Reformation	Yes
October 30	October 6	Stewardship	
November 13	October 20	Thanksgiving	
November 27	November 3	Advent	
December 11	November 17	Christmas	Yes
December 25	December 1	New Year's	
January 8, 1980	December 15		Yes

# LUTHER LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

## HOME AND FAMILY

### Part II

"Do you sometimes wish you could get right away from your family?" In my first article on "Home and Family" (Nov. 28), I mentioned this quote from a book called *My Family—How Shall I Live With It?* Instead of wishing that we could "get right away from our family," we should rather seek "to get right with our family." What are some ways by which this can be accomplished? I would like to suggest two possibilities.

*My first suggestion is that we work for a togetherness or spirit of unity in our family.* This requires that we not only spend time with one another but that we also do things together. We human beings were created for fellowship with each other as well as with God. In Deuteronomy 6:6-7, God said to Israel, "And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." Thus God tells us that a family is to spend time together as we think of Him and study His Word.

For me, I can honestly say that the most wonderful thing that we as a family do together is to have family devotions. To pray together certainly draws a family together, thus helping it to stay together. It results in the members of the family being united in a oneness of spirit. To share God's Word together and for each member of the family to open his lips and pour out his prayer to

God in the presence of his family is definitely a uniting force. I consider our daily family devotions to be the very highest point of the day in our family. My wife and I have been inspired and encouraged by our children's sincere prayers that have moved us to tears as well as to smiles. I recall one Christmas Eve when one of our sons, at five years of age, prayed, "Dear God, thank you for the gifts I am going to get." Yes, our spending time together with God as a family has produced a real spirit of togetherness and peace in our home. The parents and children who have never done this have deprived themselves of some of Heaven's choicest blessings.

In order to have a spirit of togetherness, it is also important to play and work together. My wife and I have tried to do this over the years. Fortunately, we have had the cooperation of our children. I well realize that in some families it is extremely difficult to do things together simply because the children dishonor their parents by refusing to do this.

When our children were small I tried to take time to romp with them and read to them in the evenings before leaving home for church commitments. Many a time I would take them with me when I went calling. As they grew older, we played ball together and did gardening together. One "together" project that I shall never forget was our moving to Bismarck last summer. My wife and I had the privilege of having five of our sons work together with us in packing, loading, U-haul truck-driving, getting settled, building bookcases for my study, etc. That experience of toiling and perspiring together with the love of Christ in our hearts, certainly helped create a feeling of togetherness in our spirits.

*My second suggestion to help get right with our family is to work for a condition of selflessness.* In Galatians 2:20, Paul wrote, "I have been crucified with Christ." He had let his self be put to death. When the "I" has been crucified, we will no longer be so sensitive to slights and insults. No longer will it matter if I get a smaller piece of cake than my brother or sister.

Love is selflessness, for one of the definitions of love that we find in I Corinthians 13 is that "love does not insist on its own way." Real love is open to listening to the desires of our parents

and of our brothers and sisters.

In the home children sometimes feel that their parents interfere with their plans and expectations, that brothers and sisters are an invasion to their privacy. However, when we surrender our wills to Christ and die to self, then these family conflicts cease. Instead of selfishly insisting upon our own way, we are to yield to God's way, and God's way is the way of selflessness.

I was astonished when I recently read that Japan had 800 kamikaze frogmen during the closing months of World War II. These frogmen were trained to blow themselves up alongside American ships. The Japanese Navy also had 1,000 "human torpedoes" who would sit on torpedoes and guide them into the hulls of American warships. Think of it! Those Japanese men had arrived at a state of selflessness where they were willing to give their lives for their Emperor and their nation! Let us ask ourselves, "To what extent am I willing to put Christ and my family before myself and my own interests?" When we surrender ourselves to Christ and die to self, then great harmony, peace and joy will permeate our homes.

The home and family are of tremendous importance. They are to be directed toward the future home in Heaven. Only a few years are allotted to us to live in our home and family. What sort of home and family life do you have? Have you thanked God for your family? Are you willing to ask God to show you what you can do to better your home and family? Instead of wanting to get right away from our family let us with God's help seek to get right with our family and thus make our home and family a foretaste of Heaven.

(Conclusion)

Pastor Einar Unseth

## WINTER BIBLE CONFERENCE DATES SET

The 17th annual Winter Bible Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations will be held Feb. 14-17 in Bethel Lutheran Church, Grafton, N. Dak., Rev. Rodger Olson, pastor.

Housing and program details will be announced soon. Plan now to attend for rich blessings and fellowship.





# A PAGE FOR CHILDREN

## Happy Acres



### THE LADY WITH A BASKET

"Tell us a story about real people," Melissa begged of her father as he settled himself in his favorite chair.

Dad was tired. The day had been especially warm, and he had worked hard. He did not feel like telling a story. He felt more like just doing nothing. But his children gathered about him, hopefully, after hearing Melissa's plea.

"Well," said Dad, "I think I'll tell you about a lady with a basket. Some day we may go down to Minneapolis and I can show you a hospital there that this lady with a basket started many years ago.

"She was a nurse, a deaconess nurse. Her name was Elisabeth Fedde, but because she was a deaconess, people called her Sister Elisabeth. She came to New York from Norway—oh, about seventy years ago now—to help sick Norwegian sailors and immigrants there. She had no money of her own, and no salary. But she knew these sailors and immigrants needed her help, and she was sure it was God's will for her to come to help them.

"At first, Sister Elisabeth had no hospital where she could bring her patients, and she took care of them wherever she found them. She found penniless and hungry immigrant people, hungry immigrant children without enough clothing. But she had a basket she carried on her arm, and she would go to the butchers and the bakers and the grocermen and beg for food for the hungry people, and whatever food was given to her, Sister Elisabeth would put in her basket and take to the hungry ones. She would go to the housewives in Brooklyn and ask them, for clothing they might no longer be

needing, and she would put the old clothes in her basket and bring them to the little children who didn't have enough clothes.

"Soon Sister Elisabeth organized a relief society among the Norwegians in Brooklyn. This society helped her get money and food and clothing for the immigrants and sailors who were in need.

"Sister Elisabeth started a Sunday school for immigrant children. She dreamed of a hospital where she could take care of her sick countrymen. She kept remembering God's promise that He would supply all her needs (Phil. 4:19). So sure was Sister Elisabeth that the Lord wanted her to have a hospital that one day she brought sheeting and got her lady friends busy sewing pillow cases and bed sheets for the hospital—even before there was any such hospital planned.

"She hung a slate outside the door of the little apartment the society had rented for her. And any people who knew of someone that was sick or hungry and needed Sister Elisabeth to help, would write the name and the address of that person on Sister Elisabeth's slate. Then Elisabeth would find the sick or hungry person and care for him the best she could.

"Elisabeth's first hospital was just a rented house. But after a while the Norwegian people in Brooklyn built a big white hospital of their own. Sister Elisabeth was made the hospital superintendent, and what do you suppose one of her first jobs was?"

"I suppose she had to help operate on somebody," said Melissa.

"No! She had to go out and buy a horse!"

"A horse?" exclaimed Mark. "What

would she want with a horse—at a hospital?"

"She needed a horse to pull the hospital ambulance. Back in those days, even the streetcars were pulled by horses.

"Well, Sister Elisabeth learned to do many things in order to help people. Once, when she came to Minneapolis on a vacation, some Norwegian people there begged her to help them organize a hospital. So she did. That hospital was out in open country at first, with a lot of meadow around. So Sister Elisabeth even kept a cow to provide fresh milk for the hospital. The nurses would take turns milking that cow until Sister Elisabeth was able to hire a young Danish immigrant to take care of the cow. This man not only brushed the cow, but he washed her as well. Also he scrubbed the cow's stable and kept the floor sprinkled with saw dust.

"After years of hard work in her hospitals at Minneapolis and New York, Sister Elisabeth became very ill. She went back to Norway. She had to give up nursing, and then she married.

"But to the end of her long life, she was always called Sister Elisabeth because whenever there was someone sick or in need in her neighborhood, Elisabeth just could not stay at home, but had to go and help."

MEMORY VERSE: Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. Philippians 4:6 (RSV)

### FAMILY DISCUSSION

1. How was Elisabeth Fedde's life different from the life most of us live?

(Continued on page 16)

# Women For Christ

## PUKWANA LUTHERAN PLACE OF WMF GATHERING

The 1978 fall convention of the South Dakota District Women's Missionary Federation was held on Oct. 10 at Pukwana Lutheran Church, with St. Olaf congregation as co-host. Rev. Philip Featherstone is the pastor.

Fifty-three were registered for the day under the theme "The Harvest is Plentiful" (Matt. 9:37, 38). Mrs. L. M. Dorsett, president, introduced the new pastors in the district: Wm. Moberg, Ortley, Wallace Jackson, Wallace, and Mr. Featherstone. The theme song was "Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling." A warm welcome was given by Mrs. Percy Gunderson of St. Olaf. She also introduced Mrs. Featherstone, president of the Pukwana WMF.

Devotions were given by Mrs. Dorsett. A duet, "Faith Will Bring a Blessing," was sung by ladies from St. Olaf. The Bible study was given by Pastor Jackson. He stressed the importance of women in the church and thanked God for the role and the potential of that role which women have taken. He said that we should ask ourselves, am I satisfied with my role as a worker? We should strive to do more for the work of God's kingdom.

A trio from Slim Buttes WMF, Reva, sang, "Have I Done My Best for Jesus?" Pastor Featherstone closed the session with prayer and the benediction and a delicious noon luncheon followed.

The afternoon session opened with an inspirational singspiration conducted by Mrs. Edwin Swanson of Pukwana. Mrs. Harley Gulbraa, Wallace, led our devotions. Pastor Moberg gave the offering meditation.

Rev. Dean Casselton, Zumbrota,

Minn., and briefly a missionary to Brazil, gave the afternoon message. It was based on Matt. 25:31-39 and he spoke on what it means to be a servant of Christ. He told about the situation in Brazil out of his experience there.

A skit on the Ten Commandments, "Go Down with Moses," was given by ladies from the Faith WMF. "Great is Thy Faithfulness" was sung as a duet by the St. Olaf ladies. Rev. Howard Kjos, Roslyn, closed the meeting.

In the business meeting, the project report was given by Mrs. Featherstone and the Cradle Roll report by Mrs. Sherman McCarlson, Webster. It was decided that Aid district dues should be paid by January of each year.

These officers were elected: Idell Dozark, president; Mrs. Edwin Swanson, vice-president; Mrs. Otto Swanson, secretary-treasurer; and Mrs. Sherman McCarlson, Cradle Roll secretary.

Mrs. Arlo Kneeland, Ortley, national WMF vice-president, spoke briefly. The 1979 convention will be held at Calvary, Wallace, with the conventions alternating between the east and west in future years. It was voted to give \$50 to Home Missions.

We thank God for the beautiful day in weather and fellowship.

Mrs. Dale Miller  
Secretary

## GREENBUSH CHURCH HOSTED RALLY

The fall rally for the Northern Minnesota District Women's Missionary Federation was held at United Lutheran Church of Greenbush on October 10, Burton Rygh, lay pastor. Mrs. Ingvald Rokke opened the meeting with the theme verse for the day, Romans

8:28. The theme song was "Have Thine Own Way, Lord." Mrs. Gust Nordvall led in the singspiration, with Mrs. James Olson as pianist for the morning session. A welcome was given by Mrs. Don Christianson from the host church. Mrs. Harvey Melby had Scripture reading and prayer. A duet was sung by Mrs. James Olson and Mrs. Jerry Olson, entitled "Something Worth Living For." The Bible message was brought by Lay Pastor Gust Nordvall. He read his text from Psalms 18:30. He asked the question, "Which way do we take?" and then he continued to show us the need to examine ourselves in the light of the 'Perfect way.' "My ways are not your ways, saith the Lord" (Isaiah 55).

Following Pastor Nordvall's message, the Olsons sang, "It Will Be Worth It All."

The business meeting began with roll call of the churches represented in the district. It was decided to give the forenoon offering to the Praise Program. The following ladies were elected to be on the nominating committee for the spring rally: Mrs. Bernhard Dalager, Mrs. Olga Melvie and Mrs. Merle Knutson.

The Greenbush WMF served a delicious noon meal.

The afternoon session began with a singspiration led by Mrs. Nordvall, accompanied by Mrs. Jerome Boen as pianist and Mr. Nordvall with guitar. Mrs. Enderlein shared with us about the mission program and encouraged our support. Inga Johnson of the Thief River Falls Parish read Psalm 125 and led in prayer. The rally choir sang "Fairest Lord Jesus," directed by Mrs. Nordvall. Mrs. Tarkel Ose gave a report on the national WMF convention from the 1978 Annual Conference. Ruby Nygaard sang a solo entitled "Send the Light," accompanied by her daughter Karla. Pastor Ralph Rokke, McIntosh, Minnesota, gave the afternoon message, taken from Isaiah 55:6-11. There are two ways in life: 1) what we want and 2) God's way. It is important to go God's way—God calls us to obedience. Following Pastor Rokke's message the audience sang the theme song. Mrs. Dalager closed in prayer. Total attendance was 98.

Mrs. Paul Flaten  
Secretary



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# editorials

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## THANK YOU, PASTOR LANGAAS

As we change writers for Meditation Moments, we will be going, geographically, from the open prairies of north-eastern North Dakota to the open plains of south central South Dakota.

Our sincere thanks go to Pastor Wesley Langaas of Hampden, N. Dak., for his clear, well thought out devotional articles in the second half of 1978. He has done a good job

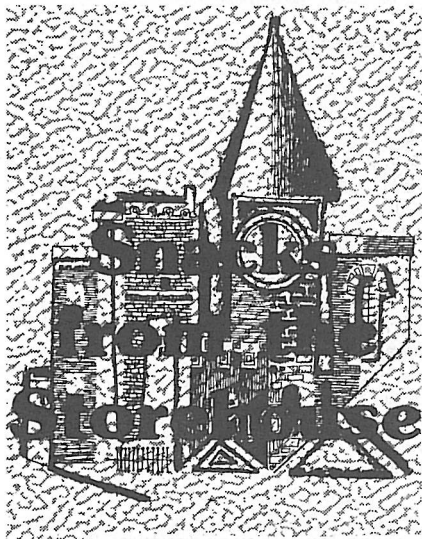
and no one can say that they haven't been easily understandable, bringing home a point applicable to everyday Christian life.

Thank you, Pastor Langaas, for your good work and we ask the Lord's blessing upon you and the congregations you serve.

Our new writer will be Pastor Philip Featherstone of Pukwana, S. Dak. He, too, lives in a great part of the country, where a man can stand and scan great distances and roam free. And few of our pastors live closer to the mighty Missouri River, the roadway through a new continent travelled by Lewis and Clark 175 years ago.

Pastor Featherstone worked as a carpenter before beginning theological studies. By now he has had considerable experience as a parish pastor. We welcome him as our new writer and look forward to what he will write as the Lord lays it upon his heart.

We should also say thank you to Pastor Karl G. Berg of Salem, Ore., who has written a series entitled "Snacks from the Storehouse." Now, besides other writing, he will continue concentrating on getting a couple of books published. Thank you, Pastor Berg, for the blessing which has come through the "Snacks."



ONLY TO ABIDE

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5).

Without me—nothing. Have you and I really learned that great secret, brother and sister in the Lord? Some of us are so slow at learning the deeper things of God. This is one of them. We have a burden and we take it to the Lord in prayer, but we are so slow at leaving it there. Instead we struggle and struggle on in prayer as though the answer is all up to us. Peter struggled

all night trying to find some fruit from his labor, but at the break of day he had to confess he had caught nothing. So much effort and so little fruit. But Peter did learn. It was a break of dawn to him as he later on that morning saw his nets filled to capacity. He never forgot that great lesson. "What I have, I give," he could say to a lame man. He wasn't drawing on his own resources any longer. He needed something bigger than that. The situation was too big for him but not for God. And the need was met. The lame man walked.

Fruit and abundance is God's intention for his children. It's a serious matter with Him. Branches that don't bear fruit are cut off. Individuals, synods and nations have been "cut off" as branches for Him. He wants those that are His to be like a "tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season." Isn't that a hard standard to reach? Yes, it is. In fact, we cannot reach it, so God meets His own demands in His own Son. He had made Him unto us—everything.

What then do *we* have to do, if He does it all? Isn't there a place for us, too? Yes, there is and that is the lesson of the vineyard. "Ye are the branches," He tells us. Branches are so helpless but, oh, *so important*. Without them there would be no fruit and still they

don't do a thing to produce it. Not a thing. Here is no special effort, no resolutions, not even an effort at assisting.

The branch doesn't produce the fruit. That isn't its responsibility. All it has to do to produce fruit is to stay closely connected with the vine. Then the life-giving and fruit-producing sap of the vine has a chance to flow into and become a part of the branch, resulting in fruit.

We stand again at the very gateway of a new year. What lies ahead for our Association? Will it flourish as a "tree planted by the rivers of water," or will it wither and die as so many synods before us? The answer in the final analysis doesn't depend on God. His desire for us is abundance. How did the branch attain to abundance? By allowing the life-giving sap from the vine to flow through it. Are we willing to be only a branch, depending completely on the Vine, the Lord Jesus? He in us, living His life through us? We cannot produce fruit but He can. We haven't the answers, but He has. As we make ourselves available to Him to take complete control, we discover a position of rest and fruitfulness even in the midst of activity. God's secret to abundance is just here: "I in you and you in me."

Karl G. Berg

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**COMMITTEE ON  
PROCEDURES IN  
CALLING PASTORS ORGANIZED**

The 1978 Annual Conference of the AFLC set up a committee to study and recommend procedures in the calling of pastors by parishes. A meeting of the committee was held in Fargo, N. Dak., on Dec. 2. The committee is desirous of getting input from interested persons and invites suggestions to any member of the committee prior to the next meeting on Feb. 16.

Before that time, please contact one of the following: Rev. Kenneth L. Anderson, McVille, N. Dak. 58254; Rev. Julius Hermunslie, 832 Stanton Avenue West, Fergus Falls, Minn. 56537; Mr. Harvey Dyrud, Newfolden, Minn. 56738; Mr. Norman Haugen, Murdock, Minn. 56271; or Mr. Lawrence Dahlgren, 1538 3rd St. North, Fargo, N. Dak. 58102.

**NEW CONGREGATION  
RECEIVED INTO AFLC**

Chippewa Lutheran Church, Brandon, Minn., has been received on the congregational roster of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations by recent action of the Co-ordinating Committee. It is being served by Mr.

Gordon Graze, senior in Free Lutheran Seminary, at the present time.

**MATERIAL CROWDED OUT**

Due to limited space available in this issue, some of our material has been crowded out. It will be used as soon as it can be.

There is a perennial problem with material received from mid-November

and on each year. Our Christmas issue is devoted largely to special material pertaining to that season. The last issue of the year contains the Index, thus limiting space available. We hope that our readers and correspondents understand the situation.

Furthermore, reports of meetings carried in this issue have been shortened due to the reasons listed above.

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

**BUDGET RECEIPTS (10 months)**

February 1 to November 30, 1978

Fund	Total Budget	Current Budget	Rec'd During November	Total Rec'd to Date	% of Current	% of Total
General Fund	\$ 78,630.00	\$ 65,525.00	\$ 4,670.53	\$ 45,168.18	68.9%	57.4%
Schools	143,190.00	119,325.00	8,228.31	77,434.11	64.9	54.07
Home Missions	75,000.00	62,500.00	12,460.57	47,235.04	75.6	63.
World Missions	113,512.00	94,593.30	15,478.26	74,505.68	78.8	65.6
Praise Fund	35,000.00	29,166.70	1,975.09	17,129.29	58.7	48.9
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$445,332.00</b>	<b>\$371,110.00</b>	<b>\$42,812.76</b>	<b>\$261,472.30</b>	<b>70.5%</b>	<b>58.7%</b>
1977-78	\$382,477.00	\$318,732.50	\$39,083.26	\$247,414.82	77.6%	64.7%

(Continued from page 7)

2. Read Luke 10:30-37. Sister Elisabeth was like which of these three men?
3. Can you think of a neighbor or friend who is like Sister Elisabeth, always ready to help those who are in need?
4. Read Luke 4:38-41 and 5:12-17.

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**LUTHER LEAGUE FEDERATION  
CONVENTION SET**

The national Luther League convention for 1979 will be held at AFLC headquarters in Minneapolis, Minnesota, July 10-15.

Further information will be available soon. Leaguers, please pray for our convention and plan to attend.

Pastor Dale Mellgren  
LLF President