

January 13, 1976

The Lutheran Ambassador



THE CAMP IN WINTER
Roger C. Huebner, D.D.S.

MEDITATION MOMENTS

ASSURANCE OF SALVATION/ REAL OR COUNTERFEIT?

With the coming of a New Year our thoughts turn to inventory. It is in order that we make a spiritual inventory as well. Have we made progress as we travel the narrow way? Are we still on the right road to heaven? Or could it be that we have never been on it? Have we unknowingly drifted onto the broad way? We do well to check.

How good it is to have God's peace and thereby know that we are on the narrow way. The Bible assures us that such is possible (Jn. 20:31).

However, the devil is very tricky. He offers a false or counterfeit assurance, which many ascribe to. This counterfeit assurance also gives a type of inner peace. It does not depend on what God does, but upon what the sinner does. Quite often, just being baptized is all it takes to obtain a counterfeit assurance. Another basis for false assurance is good works. Many there are who believe that God promises heaven to those who do good.

Some people who have this false assurance become so sure of their salvation, in their own thinking, that they no longer feel the need of staying close to Jesus, feeding regularly on God's Word, and communing with Him in prayer. Oft times these same people have real freedom to flirt with the world without any fear of losing their soul. They have a type of assur-

ance which gives them some inner peace, but it is counterfeit and it did not come from God, but from the devil. It leads to hell and not to heaven.

Jesus describes these people in His letter to the Laodicean church (Rev. 3:17) when He says: "Thou sayest, I am rich and have need of nothing and knowest not that thou art wretched, miserable, and poor and blind and naked." In other words, Jesus is saying, "You are lost, on the wrong road and don't know it. You think you are right, but you are so wrong."

You see, the truth is that the faith I have in Jesus, my assurance of salvation, the new spiritual life in me, has to be kept warm and alive through continuous Bible study and prayer or it will grow cold and die. Sin, if allowed to come in, will destroy all that has been gained.

False assurance blinds one to the spiritual needs he has in his life.

False assurance gives a feeling of having attained when nothing has been gained.

False assurance leaves no hunger or desire for a deeper understanding of God's Word.

False assurance gives a feeling of being mature when there is a complete lack of maturity, because there has been no feeding on God's Word.

False assurance leaves no desire for

a closer walk or more fellowship with Jesus. Those with a false assurance have a desire for heaven but their love is in the world.

Several years ago, when on one of my preaching tours, I kept assuring myself that I was on the right highway. But I became suspicious. The road was strange and unfamiliar. As I thought on this I could not imagine having made a wrong turn. Finally, I couldn't stand it any longer and stopped and checked the map. Sure enough, I was on the wrong road.

Three things came to my attention then: one, I could see where I made the wrong turn. Two, I found out where I was. Three, I saw the way back to the right highway.

Many people drift through life this way. They assure themselves that all is well, but never check with the map, God's Word. God's Word will show us where we are wrong, where we are, and how to get on the right road to heaven.

Why take a chance? Why not check with God's map, and do it regularly?

If our assurance of salvation is so sure that we do not need God's map to continuously check up on ourselves, then we are banking on a false assurance which did not come from God, but which is of the devil. It leads to hell and not to heaven.

Gerald F. Mundfrom

The Lutheran Ambassador is published biweekly (except the second issue in August) by the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441. Rev. Raynard Huglen is the editor. Subscription price is \$3.50 per year in advance. Subscriptions should be sent to The Lutheran Ambassador, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441. Second-class postage paid at Minneapolis, Minn. Volume 14, Number 1

The Augsburg Confession

by Dr. Iver Olson, Minneapolis, Minn.



Dr. Iver Olson

1. Background

It has been said that the Mohammedans caused the Augsburg Confession to be written. There is some truth to that allegation.

Though the Mohammedans had been decisively defeated by Charles Martell in the Battle of Tours in 732, they continued to be a threat from the East. In 1453 Constantinople fell before their invading armies; by 1500 the entire eastern segment of the old Roman Empire had yielded to the Saracen sword. To wit: eight years earlier the Genoan navigator, Christopher Columbus, sought to find another route to reach India; the overland route was no longer safe to any European. The Turks continued to press from the east, and by 1530 there was the grave possibility that they might invade Europe.

Emperor Charles V of the Holy Roman Empire—an entente which included most of modern Europe—greatly feared that the threat of invasion might become a fact within a short time. He realized that religious unity in Europe was necessary if the invaders were to be rebuffed. The Protestant Reformation had brought disunity into the Empire; to restore that unity was imperative if the land should not be laid waste by Moslem forces. To bridge the gap between conservative Catholics and the radical Reformers he ordered Lutheran Germany to send delegates to a Diet to be held at Augsburg in southern Germany; here they were to meet with a similar group from the Catholic Church to discuss their differences with the view of arriving at a common agreement in doctrine. The Lutherans were requested to draw up a statement setting forth their religious convictions. The Catholics were to do likewise.

2. The Forming of the Confession

As soon as the Wittenberg theologians—notably Luther and Melan-

thon, but with the assistance of others—received orders to appear at Augsburg, they proceeded to formulate plans for their statements. At first they intended merely to take up those points of doctrine and practice which were at variance with Roman Catholicism of the day. They had several meetings in their home area before they departed for Augsburg in southern Germany.

At this point there fell into the hands of the Lutherans a document of 104 points recently published by Dr. John Eck—chief spokesman for the Roman Catholic delegation—containing every imaginable sort of heresy against the Reformers, particularly Luther. The Lutherans then found it advisable to revise their statements to include—not only objections which they held against certain practices of the Church—but also positive statements on what they themselves believed. The result was a document of twenty-eight Articles that together would fill from 15 to 20 pages in an ordinary book today. The first twenty-one of these Articles dealt with points of doctrine which they held to be true according to the Word of God. The last seven Articles listed and discussed a number of practices in the Church which the Reformers asked to be re-

moved or rectified. This document has come to be called the Augsburg Confession from the place at which it was first presented.

3. Characteristics of the Augsburg Confession

It is irenic; that is, it is conciliatory and peaceful. The Reformers still had hopes that the leaders of the old Church, from the pope and down to all members, would agree with the statements here drawn up if the people were but fully and favorably informed and if the theses were sufficiently well explained. Strong, and sometimes abusive, language as is found in the Smalcald Articles of 1536, is noticeably absent here. The Reformers were anxious to make a favorable impression upon the churchmen of Rome; so they “walked on cats’ paws” as Luther often said of Melancthon. Points at which there was agreement between Rome and Wittenberg were forcefully expressed and delineated in the Confession. There was far more agreement than disagreement between the two contending parties; and this Melancthon was very anxious to demonstrate. The longest of the first twenty-one Articles is the one on good works. The Lutherans had been accused of rejecting good works. Melancthon showed that nothing could be farther from the truth. One of the shortest is the Article on Justification. It is composed of only two sentences and, in the Latin version, of only 47 words. Yet the meaning is forthright and unequivocal.

Some people have been disturbed by the presence of damnatory phrases in the Confession. “They condemn” is a phrase that appears a number of times in the document. It is heresies that are condemned; this is so even when groups like the Donatists and Pelagians are named. Many heresies were known by the person or group that first taught or promoted the par-

ticular heresy. The Roman Church also condemned these heresies. Furthermore, Luther had been charged with all of the heresies mentioned; in defense of himself and his evangelical followers he disavowed the heresies mentioned; in defense of himself and his evangelical followers he disavowed the heresies in strong terms. This is but another example of the spirit of irenicism.

4. The Diet of Augsburg

While the Diet of Augsburg was scheduled to begin on April 8, 1530, there were many delays. The Lutherans did not arrive until May 2; even so, they were the first to be there. The Catholic delegation came still later and the Emperor did not arrive until June 16. It was not until June 25 that the Confession was read. Luther was not present; for security reasons he remained in the village of Coburg some distance away, and under a Council favorable to the Reformers. The judgment of the Diet of Worms, 1521, still hung over Luther's head: he was to be "free as a bird," which meant that anyone could kill him without fear of punishment. Yet Luther was in constant contact with Melancthon through a courier on horseback who constantly brought messages back and forth between the two men.

At the request of John the Constant, Elector of Saxony, the Confession was read in the German language—since they were on German soil. The reading took two hours; it is reported that the Emperor fell asleep, but this may have been only fleetingly. After all, he had adenoids—if one can trust Holbein's painting of him; besides, he understood the German language only imperfectly. Both the Latin and the German copies of the Confession were delivered to the Emperor; he kept the Latin one for himself, but gave the German one to the Chancellor. No one knows what finally happened to either one of the copies; they were never returned. During the weeks of the summer, Melancthon rewrote it from memory. This one is known today as the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.

5. Contents of the Augsburg Confession.

The doctrines enunciated in the Augsburg Confession are, in the main, the teachings of the Protestant Churches. We can go even further to declare that with some exceptions, they are the doctrines of the whole Christian Church. On the doctrine concerning God the Reformers took their stand on the declarations of the Nicene Creed. God is of one essence, but of three persons; He created all that is. Sin came into the world as a permanent pollution, passing on both as a defect and as guilt to every one born into the Adamic race. The one exception to the curse of the last sentence was Jesus Christ; of divine paternity and Marian maternity, He was completely divine and human at the same time, having two natures in one person; as God-Man He suffered and died for men. He descended, arose, ascended, and will return. The order of salvation for man is: repentance, faith, justification, regeneration and preservation. The Sacraments were instituted to facilitate the process of salvation. Baptism is necessary, and Christ is truly present in the Lord's Supper—though transsubstantiation is not mentioned. Good works are aids in sanctification. Both the Church and the ministry are necessary for God's work on earth. Auricular confession can be helpful, but ought neither to be prescribed nor proscribed. Christ will return eventually to judge the living and the dead.

6. Response by the Roman Catholics

When Dr. Eck, on behalf of the Roman Catholic delegation, responded to the Augsburg Confession later in the summer, it was Article 4 that was singled out for refutation and reprisal. Nothing was said about the rest of the Confession. At least, he recognized it as the crucial principle of the whole Reformatory Movement. The Article reads thus:

"Also they teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by his death, has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness."

"On this Article the Church stands or falls," said Luther. It is the rock of Protestant doctrine; the Roman Catholics of 1530 found it to be a rock of stumbling.

The religious differences between Germany and Rome were not resolved; neither did the Moslems invade Europe.

LEM MIDWINTER CONFERENCE DETAILS GIVEN

"Victory in Christ" will be the theme of the annual Midwinter Conference of the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement (LEM), when it celebrates its 40th Anniversary Year, January 25-29. The conference will convene at Augustana Lutheran Church, 7th Street and 11th Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minn.

Evening speaker will be Rev. Bob Griffin of Otisville, N.Y., LEM's eastern evangelist. He will speak at the opening service at 7:45 o'clock on Sunday, and will continue each evening through Thursday.

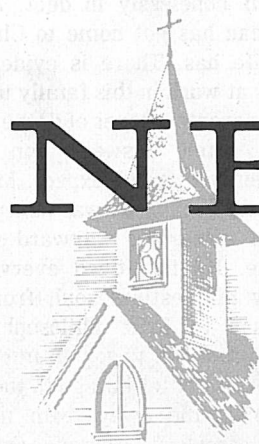
Day sessions will begin Monday at 9:30 with a Prayer Hour, followed by a 10 o'clock Bible study in I Peter, led by Evangelist Philip G. Hanson, associate superintendent of New Hope Center in Minneapolis. The 11 o'clock hour will be led by Rev. Jack Aamot, Associate Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls, Minneapolis. He will use as his theme "Men Made Free," based on Romans 5-8.

The afternoon hour, beginning at 1:30, will have an anniversary theme: "The LEM—Past, Present and Future." Speakers will be LEM evangelists, Nels Pedersen, Kenneth Ellingson, Sterling Johnson and Steve Lombardo.

Daily sessions will continue through Thursday, January 29.

The conference will be preceded by a conference for youth at Metropolitan Sports Center, Friday evening and all day Saturday, January 23 and 24. Rev. Bob Griffin will bring the evening messages and special speakers and music will be featured on Saturday.

NEWS of the Churches



LESLIE GALLAND INSTALLED AS EVERETT PASTOR

Rev. Leslie Galland was installed as pastor of Calvary Lutheran Church, Everett, Wash., at an evening service on Sunday, Nov. 2, 1975, by Rev. John P. Strand, president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. The service of installation was preceded by a fellowship dinner in the church parlors at 5 o'clock.



Rev. Galland, right, is greeted by Pastor Strand following the installation.

Rev. Michael Brandt, Lake Stevens, Wash., was the liturgist and Rev. Robert Rieth of Kirkland, Wash., led in Scripture reading and prayer. Mr. Harold Mickelsen, chairman of the congregation, gave a greeting.

Rev. Silas Erickson, pastor of Central Lutheran Church in Everett, sang the solo "His Eye is on the Sparrow." It was pointed out that he had sung at the wedding of Pastor and Mrs. Strand.

Pastor Strand used Hebrews 4:14-16 as his text. We have a High Priest praying for us, a mediator between us and God, he said. Sinful though we

be, He is faithful to intercede on our behalf. Hold fast to your confession and remember that we can draw near to Him in confidence, Pastor Strand declared. He went on to state that even though a pastor may seem to see no fruit from his work, he can go to the throne of grace and find mercy. We can go to God for wisdom also, but most of the time we need mercy from Him, he said. God will use you mightily, Pastor Strand reminded Pastor Galland, not in your eyes but in the eyes of God, to do what needs to be done here as well as in other places.

The choir of the church sang the song "To God Be the Glory" earlier in the service.

The fellowship dinner had featured corn-on-the-cob furnished by the Ivan Johnson family.

—Corr.

A TABLE OF THANKSGIVING

The members of Calvary Lutheran Church, Fergus Falls, Minnesota, set



The table with the Thanksgiving gifts.

a table of thanksgiving in the front of their church on Thanksgiving Day, as a reminder to them of God's bountiful blessings which they have received in the past year. The food items were given to God for the glory of His name and were donated to the Association Bible School for the kitchen. Calvary began this project to help support the Bible School in this way last year and we have decided to make it our annual project. The food and money totaled about \$100.00. We pray God's blessing upon the Bible School and these gifts which have been given.

ROAD SIGN ERECTED

The Aspelund Lutheran Church served by Pastor Dennis Gray and located between Langdon and Wallhalla, N. Dak., recently put up a new



directional road sign. It is located on land owned by Mr. and Mrs. Qualo Thompson and was erected by Mr. Art Hegstad. The new sign is situated about 300 yards from the main road.

—Corr.

PERSONALITIES

Rev. Orville T. Olson has resigned as pastor of the McIntosh, Minn., parish (Calvary, Trinity, Mt. Carmel) to accept the call to serve Zoar Lutheran Church, Hatton, N. Dak. He will take up his work there shortly.

Take Heart, Mom & Dad

by a mother

A few days ago we learned that one of the girls in our church, daughter of a Christian mother and barely sixteen, is pregnant. The headlines of our local paper recently announced that the son of one of our Christian acquaintances was arrested for selling marijuana. About a year ago the daughter of one of our pastor friends turned "hippie." Shortly before that the son of one of the missionaries we know left his wife and two children to live with another woman. A well-known evangelist's son of our acquaintance was jailed for shooting a man in an argument over a card game.

To come closer home, our own son was temporarily suspended from the Christian high school he attended—for smoking. Later we learned that he was going to places we did not approve and taking a drink once in a while. It nearly broke my heart some time later to catch him with liquor on his breath.

Financial reverses, disloyalty of friends, illness, even death itself—none of these crush the Christian as much as the waywardness of his or her own children. Christian parents today are literally "worrying themselves sick" over their children. "Where have we failed?" they ask themselves in anguish as they see their children turn their backs on God, and on his standards and ours.

I am sure we can safely say we have all failed—in one way or another. We have tried with God's help to bring up our children in his way. We have taken them to Sunday school and church, had family devotions in the home, tried to set a good example. But sometimes we have failed, made devastating mistakes. Now, we look back and ask, "Am I to blame for my child's waywardness?"

God, through Solomon, says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). Did he give this promise to perfect human beings who never fail or make mistakes?

I think not. He gave this reassurance to Christian parents who sincerely try—though often clumsily—to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

What can we do for our erring children? We can't spank an eighteen-year-old or put him to bed without supper. We can deny him the use of the family car, but we can't deny him a certain amount of freedom. We can't watch over him every minute to see that he doesn't do the things he shouldn't. We can't force him to read God's Word or even listen to it when it is read. For all practical purposes the training period is over. Now we must let him go and trust God to carry out his part of the bargain.

"We've just got to commit Larry to the Lord," my husband often tells me when I lie awake wondering where our twenty-year-old son is and what he is doing at two o'clock in the morning! Often phrases from the Bible come to me in those long, weary hours, rebukes to my unbelief: "Yet in this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 1:32); "...according to your faith be it unto you" (Matthew 9:29); "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?" (Mark 4:40).

When we pray for our loved ones we want to see the answer immediately, but this is not always possible. God does not force anyone into his kingdom. It takes years, sometimes, and many adversities to bring some people to see their need of God.

Perhaps we are praying incorrectly, asking God to shield our children from hardship when hardship is exactly what they need. One Christian couple prayed for an unsaved son for years with no evident results. Finally, in desperation, they asked God to bring **anything** into his life that would wake him up to see his need of Christ. Things began to happen almost immediately. Through a series of circumstances the son lost his position and prosperity. In a short while he

who had made his million found himself hopelessly in debt. Although this man has not come to Christ yet, his wife has. There is evidence that God is at work in this family in answer to the parents' prayer of desperation.

God often answers our prayers differently than we expect. Monica of the early church was deeply concerned about her wayward son, Augustine. He had tried everything to satisfy his restless soul, from sinful excesses to false philosophies. His latest whim was to go to Rome.

"God, don't let him go to the wicked city of Rome away from my influence," prayed Monica. One night as she slept, her son sailed for Rome. But God had not forgotten Monica's prayer. At Rome Augustine heard of an opening for a professor of rhetoric at Milan. He accepted the position. There he met the godly Bishop Ambrose, who influenced him to seek God. Monica need not have worried. God was at work in answer to her prayer. He knew better than she how to bring about the desired results.

Of course we are concerned about our children, and rightly so, but are we worried? God has shown me that worry is disobedience to him. It is unbelief—a sin! Paul says, "In nothing be anxious, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God" (Philippians 4:6). He promises God's peace to those who follow this simple formula.

"Lord, the next time I wake up at night with that panicky feeling (where is my boy and what is he doing?) help me to remember that you love him even more than I do. You are the only One who can really help him. And you have promised that you will in answer to my prayer of faith. Lord, instead of fretting, help me to thank you for what you are doing in his life even though I cannot see it. Help me to see that my part is not to nag and worry but to commit my loved one to you, then to trust and rejoice. Thank you, Lord, in advance, for what you are doing and are going to do. Thank you for taking this heavy burden and giving me peace. Amen."

—Reprinted by permission
of the author

Epiphany Is for Wise Men

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



Rev. Dale Mellgren

"And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: And when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh" (Matt. 2:11).

January 6 marks the Epiphany of our Lord. God used a star to guide the wisemen to Bethlehem where they found the Child whom they sought. They honored Him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. But of far greater importance than the gifts that they brought was the priceless gift that He came to give: salvation to Jew and Gentile alike. So the Magi worshipped Him.

In the Gospel of John, we read, "He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Herod sought to kill Jesus as a child, His own countrymen finally did crucify Him, but the magi worshipped Him. How have you received Him?

Many say in various ways that Christ has not come. Some simply refuse to believe that Jesus was God manifested in the flesh. They do not believe that Jesus was the Messiah.

Others deny that He has come by claiming that they themselves are the Christ or that someone other than Jesus of Nazareth was. Most live as though He had never come. They speak and act as though God never existed or as if He had forgotten His wrath toward sin. The sins of the unrepentant plainly speak forth the fact that they have no faith in an all-seeing and totally just God. Their sins tell God that, for them, it was unnecessary for Him to send a Savior, for they want no part of Him. It is much the same today as in the days of Christ's earthly ministry, "He was in the world... and the world knew Him not."

Not everyone fails to acknowledge Christ, however. This passage from the Gospel of John speaks of receiving Him. There are many who acknowledge Jesus who never do receive Him.

Many acknowledge Jesus socially. When asked, they will answer, "Oh, yes, I am a Christian." To many who would be recognized as Christians, however, their faith consists in what they have done. They have attended church more or less faithfully, have submitted to the rites and ceremonies prescribed and they believe that Jesus was born of a virgin, crucified, resurrected, certainly, or they wouldn't have bribed those who guarded the tomb and urged them to say that the disciples had stolen Christ's body. Yet, merely believing the historical facts does not constitute saving faith. This is why many who believe that they are Christians have no personal experience of Christ's presence and power in their lives on a daily basis. He is not there. Jesus Christ is not just a historical figure, He is a living Lord. He must be received into the heart if there is to be living faith.

Some acknowledge Christ philosophically. Perhaps many of you are aware of the "Jefferson Bible." This is the result of Thomas Jefferson's having read the Scriptures, then cut-

ting out the passages that he thought were valuable and making his own Bible with them. Many people do this today, too, if only in their minds. It is pleasant to hear of heavenly bliss, but terrifying to hear of the anguish suffered in hell. Yet Jesus spoke more often of hell than He did of heaven. Many people block out of their minds what they wish Jesus had not said and accept only that which is pleasing to them.

What is it, then, to receive Christ? Verse 12 says much in this regard. Notice that to as many as receive Christ God gives power to become His children. The strange thing about this power is that when you experience its work in you, suddenly you realize that you are very weak. That is, when confronted with the awesome fact that it is God who "... after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell." In the face of such truth you are helpless, because God judges sin. Yes, God holds your life and your eternity in His hand. This is an awesome fact if you begin to look back an hour, a day, or a year, because if you honestly examine your thoughts words and deeds you find a multitude of sins. There are the thoughts which you and God alone know, thoughts that would make the most vile person blush. Many unkind words have been said, even to those you love, perhaps especially to them. The places you've gone, the things that you have done, openly or in secret; you have tried to live as clean a life as you thought possible, and it is not clean enough for God. How helpless you are to rid yourself of sin; you and all of mankind.

But God is not weak, nor is He helpless. Verse 13 speaks about God's work. Here God tells us that His children are born, not through any effort of their own, but totally by His will and work. We don't want to come into the presence of a holy God, with all of our sins. The very thought frightens us. Nevertheless, He tells us to come. And when we stand in His presence, guilty and trembling, we can but fall on our knees and cry like the publican "God be merciful to me a sinner!" But will God be merciful? Will He forgive our sins if we honestly confess them and truly repent? Why should

[Continued on page 10]

been made in Brazil and of the work that needs to be done.

The afternoon offering was given to the General Fund. It amounted to \$124.75.

A busload of ladies from the Tioga Parish and two ladies from the newly organized church at Minot, N. Dak., attended the rally. We look forward to having the Minot ladies in our district.

The ladies of St. Olaf, rural Tioga, will host the spring workshop.

Mrs. Eilert Haakenson
Secretary

But the difference in the yield was not the fault of the sower nor of the seed, but of the reception given by the soil. Thus Jesus seeks to bring before our minds and hearts the vast importance of the right kind of hearing. However winsome the preacher, however truthful his message, it will all end in failure unless there is the right kind of response by the one who hears. No wonder, therefore, He warns with all the emphasis of His hot heart—"take heed how you hear."

Clovis G. Chappell

Women For Christ

EASTERN MONTANA-WESTERN NORTH DAKOTA WMF MET AT BETHEL CHURCH

The ladies from Bethel Church, Culbertson, Mont., hosted the WMF fall rally on Saturday, November 8, 1975. The theme for the day was "Every Good Tree Bringeth Forth Good Fruit," from Matthew 7:17-19. Mrs. Verle Dean, Culbertson, gave the opening devotions. In keeping with the Bicentennial, we sang a number of patriotic songs and a reading, "I Wept for America Last Night," was given by Mrs. Dale Lalim, Tioga, N. Dak.

Regular business was conducted by our district president, Mrs. Laverne

Johnson. Mrs. Art Olson was elected vice-president and Mrs. Orville Qualley secretary for two-year terms. The noon offering of \$103.50 was given to the Association Bible School.

The John Abels, our missionaries home on furlough, were the guests for the day. They sang for us, showed slides of Brazil and the mission field and spoke of the progress that has



Rev. and Mrs. John Abel

ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

BUDGET RECEIPTS

February 1-December 31, 1975

	Total Budget	Current Budget	Rec'd during December	Total Rec'd to Date	% of Current	% of Total	Needed to meet Total Budget
General Fund	\$ 64,250.00	\$ 58,895.76	\$ 8,426.05	\$ 47,347.71	80.3	73.7	\$16,902.29
Schools	102,000.00	93,500.00	10,171.05	70,124.16	75.	68.7	31,875.84
Home Mission	53,000.00	48,583.26	10,350.34	51,381.50	105.	96.9	1,618.50
Foreign Mission	66,840.00	61,270.00	13,389.55	57,649.12	94.	86.2	9,190.88
Praise Fund	18,000.00	16,500.00	2,750.79	11,486.13	69.6	63.8	6,513.87
TOTAL	\$304,090.00	\$278,749.02	\$45,087.79	\$237,988.62	85.3	78.2	\$66,101.38
1974-1975	\$264,200.00	\$242,183.37	\$47,954.91	\$212,467.90		80.	
1973-1974	\$236,202.00	\$216,518.50		\$174,157.66		73.7	
Legacies:	\$6,492.02						
Dorm Fund:	\$7,650.69						

editorials

HAVE YOU DONE WHAT YOU CAN?

This is being written without having seen the December report of the Business Office of the AFLC concerning budget receipts for the fiscal year ending January 31. That report may be found elsewhere in this issue.

But the report through November (L.A., Dec. 30), indicated that the budget had been subscribed to 63.4 per cent after ten months. Thus, considerable remained to be done if the 1975-76 budget is to be met. In dollars and cents, the amount still needed was over \$110,000 of a \$304,090 budget.

Yes, percentage-wise, we are ahead of the standing last year, slightly, and total contributions are up, but much support must be given in these last days of January if our budget, a minimum budget, is to be fully subscribed. The current budget is almost \$40,000 higher than the one previous. These budgets are established by the annual conferences of the church, that is, by the decision of the people of the church.

Again this year, and it is nothing new in AFLC experience, contributions to the Schools lag behind Missions and, at present, the General Fund. It is always a source of amazement that this should be so, because our people take pride in their seminary and Bible school. May we encourage special attention to the needs of the Schools and the Praise Program, which also is concerned primarily with capital expansion at the Schools, during these closing days of the ingathering.

It hardly needs saying here that if we fall below our goals, which provide for **minimum** operation in all areas of our church work, it won't be healthy for our total effort. It may be even more difficult to make a deficit up in the future than to give now.

Bear in mind that inflation remains a problem also in church work. Even if goals are fully met, the funds are reduced by the toll of inflation. If we fall short, the deficit in reality is greater than it appears on paper.

Association people and friends have given heart-warming support to the work over the years. We are sure that when the year is over (January 31), that will have been the case again. Thank you for what you have done and will do. It is God's work we are about. Act at once if there are further offerings you can make and should make for our common work in missions, schools and church operation.

COLD WATER

The reports with which the old year ended of immoral digressions by U.S. presidents, past and recent, plus the events of Watergate, have thrown cold water on the beginning of the Bicentennial year of our country. The reports of immorality and dishonesty, coupled with the fact that recent presidents have been profane in their speech, are not ones to hearten Christian people. Nor are the sins confined to the presidential level of political life, but are to be found among the members of Congress and in state and local governments.

There have been and are decent and God-fearing public servants, too, let it never be forgotten, but it is all too true that we, as a people, have gone along with officials whose private lives were much less than what we should have accepted.

Recent revelations, some only rumors perhaps, but carrying an undeniable element of truth, put a damper on Bicentennial observance, but must not negate our plans to remember in this year 1976 our country's history and heritage. In His mercy, God has dealt favorably with our nation, not because we have merited it. There are great moments, great victories, great advances, great men and women to recall and these we must look to in our celebration.

In spite of evil God overrules and guides purposes to His ends. This does not mean that sin, public or private, or private in the lives of public men and women, is of no consequence in His eyes. It will surely be called into account unless there is true repentance. But in His purposes He permits our nation, for instance, to continue in this day of grace and withholds His hand of judgment, yea, even giving us goodly circumstances in which to live.

God has many people in the U.S. Perhaps for this reason, too, He stays the judgment we deserve as a nation. But it behooves us, if we are His own, to face the Bicentennial year with a spirit of humility, for we also have sinned and stand in daily need of His grace. Joined with our sins of commission may be more sins of omission than we realize, the failures to do good and to stand on the side of what is right. For all of these transgressions we must ask forgiveness of Almighty God.

May the Lord bless us in this Bicentennial year and help us to rightly observe it. Celebrate it, we must, with pride, with hope, tempered by the spirit of humility which realizes that we have not been what we ought to have been, individually or collectively.

THE AUGSBURG CONFESSION

As something special in this Bicentennial year we are presenting a series of articles on the Augsburg Confession, Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation, and the three universal Creeds of the Christian Church. Most of the articles will deal with the Augsburg Confession (Confessio Augustana), and the first of those appears on page 3 of this issue of **The Lutheran Ambassador**.

As Lutheran people we should know something about the great formulations of doctrine as set forth by the scholars. We have said before that if anyone proposed to change the Augsburg Confession there would be loud protests. But do we really know what is contained in this great document? And why shouldn't we be more familiar with what it is?

To that end these articles are presented and, if all goes well, there will be one in nearly every issue of 1976. Hopefully, every Augsburg Confession Article will be covered in some manner during the year. Appreciation is expressed to those professors and pastors of the church who have found it possible to write for this series. Some did not feel that they could take on this added task.

You will be reading theology in these articles on the Augsburg Confession, but we have advertised the **Ambassador** as a paper containing theology. Don't be discouraged by the word "theology." You may know more of it already than you realized. And learn, and refresh yourself on, what the Lutheran Church teaches. If you are a member of a Lutheran congregation you have com-

mitted yourself to a particular view of Scripture, one which we believe to be correct, in the light that we have.

May this Bicentennial series prove a profitable one for all, deepening and strengthening Christian faith and witness. Be sure to read Dr. Iver Olson's introduction to the Confession in this issue.

SOUTH AMERICAN TOUR ATTRACTIVE

That tour to South America and our mission field in Brazil is a mighty attractive one, isn't it? The Board of World Missions through Missionary John Abel and New Departure Tours have come up with an outstanding 22-day trip to the southern hemisphere, beginning February 23.

It's too bad that advance information didn't get out earlier, a problem which plagued the tour of two years ago also. But we hope that at least the minimum 12 persons, from the AFLC, can be secured to make the trip a reality.

While visits to LaPaz, Rio, Iguacu Falls, Brasilia and the Amazon would be unforgettable experiences in themselves, AFLC people should find their greatest fulfillment in viewing firsthand the mission work in Parana, in the region of Campo Mourao and meeting the Christians in our church there. And it is the increased interest in that work by those who do visit the mission that will produce the big and lasting results in the AFLC and for eternity.

The fact that Missionary Abel will be along as the tour guide is an exceptional plus for this year's tour.

Join the tour if you can.

[Continued from page 7]

He? There is nothing about us which makes us worthy of His grace. This is very true. However, there is One who can stand in God's presence without guilt or shame. Jesus the Perfect One was born into this world to die a miserable death and bear the anguish of hell for us. On the Cross He bore the punishment that sinners deserve and now He "ever liveth to make intercession for us." Jesus stands before God on behalf of every repentant sinner and intercedes for him. Then, God no longer looks upon the corruption of your heart and the sins of your life, but on the righteousness of Christ. Have you come face to face with your sins and their condemning effects? Have you asked Jesus to be your Intercessor? He is willing to stand before God on your behalf and apply to your sin-stained soul the cleansing power of His blood. This is what it means to be "born of God." This is what it means to receive

Him. To say that Christ has been received is also to say that He now abides within the heart. So it is that the Christian experiences daily the power of God as He grows in Christ.

None of you remained a baby after you were born. So it is in life with God. You will grow when you deliberately turn from sin and unto Christ through daily repentance. This, too, is the work of God as He convicts you of sin and draws you to Jesus.

The Magi came to worship the Savior. Doubtless the journey was long and difficult, but in the end they looked upon their Savior. Perhaps you haven't made the journey or don't think you can, but remember, it is the power of God that brings you to the Savior and keeps you in His presence. Submit to God, He will draw you to your Savior.

There is a popular bumper sticker that reads "Wise men still seek Him." Perhaps not in the eyes of men, but certainly in the eyes of God this is still true.

WINTER CONFERENCE DATES ANNOUNCED

The Co-ordinating Committee of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations announces that the 14th Annual Winter Bible Conference will be held Feb. 26-29 at Trinity Lutheran Church, Grand Forks, N. Dak. Rev. Harvey Carlson is the pastor of the congregation.

Program details, as well as lodging information, will be given at a later date.

Plan now to attend the Winter Bible Conference for good fellowship and stimulation in the study of God's Word and His program through our church.

And yet the thought comes home to us, that those who would not share their joys with the Lord on earth are of the company excluded from the marriage feast of heaven.

F. Hammarsten

James 1:22

We have seen how a meeting with Jesus can gradually enlarge and strengthen faith. She who once looked upon Him as _____ (4:19) and finally as the _____ (4:9) later saw Him as a _____ (4:29). How far have you come in your relationship with Him? Is He just another historical character, a prophet among many prophets, or is He your Lord and Christ?

What will you do with Jesus?

Neutral you cannot be;

Someday your heart will be asking,

“What will He do with me?”

“Jesus, I give Thee my heart today!

Jesus, I'll follow Thee all the way,

Gladly obeying Thee!” will you say:

“This will I do with Jesus!”

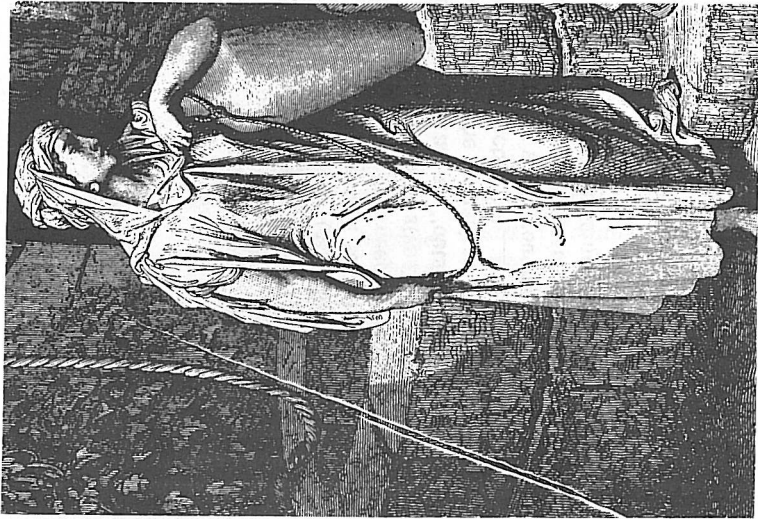
WMF REMINDERS

Church Extension was our project for January. Through this fund money is loaned to new congregations and those who need to expand their facilities. As the loan is repaid, the money is re-loaned. Let us not limit ourselves to goals because this project is so important in the furtherance of God's Kingdom in our own beloved United States of America.

February's project is the Praise Program. This project assists the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations in the overall debt reduction as well as capital improvements on real estate held by the Association. God has been so good to us in giving us this property. Let us be good caretakers of it.

Our winter Bible Conference will be held February 26 to 29 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Grand Forks, North Dakota. We pray that you are already making plans to attend. The WMF Workshop will be Friday, February 27th at 4:30. We would appreciate hearing from each WMF group as to the approximate number of women that will be attending this meeting.

Mrs. Robert Dietsche



WMF Bible Study

THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA

Lesson 2

February 1976

February is often referred to as the month of hearts. Valentine's Day provides an opportunity to express some warm thoughts that may otherwise be left unsaid. The Word of God also has a great deal to say about hearts. But it is more than sentiment, more than a once-a-year gesture. It is all-inclusive. It has a message to the sin-sick heart; to the broken, contrite heart; to the cleansed, forgiven heart. As we study Bible characters and meet people in their daily lives, we are fully aware that what they really are is known to God alone who knows the heart (Ps. 44:21; Rev. 2:23). We can say we know a person only because we have an opportunity to observe the _____ (Matt. 12:34) and _____ (Lk. 6:43-45) in that person's life. Through this Bible study we will seek to know the woman of Samaria a little better. Carefully read John 4:1-42 about the woman with a changed heart. Ask yourself (1) What was her background? (2) What did she say? (3) What did she do?

What Was Her Background?

An outsider as to race: Where did Jesus meet this needy woman? (4:1-9) _____ The Samaritans were an alien race descended

from colonists planted in the land by conquering Assyrians. (If you choose, you can read about it in II Kings 17:6, 24-34.) They were a mixed Jewish people with whom orthodox Jews would have no dealings. (Note Jn. 4:9).

An Outsider as to religious beliefs: What erroneous ideas did she have about worship? (4:20-24) as to place _____; as to the object of her adoration _____; as to her attitude _____.

An Outsider among her own people: Perhaps it was to avoid the scornful reproach of her own people that the woman came to draw water in the heat of the noon hour. It was a time when none other was likely to be present. Why can we suppose she may have been avoided? (4:16-18) _____

Her life had been a sordid one. She was a reproach to Samaritan and Jew alike. But Jesus, who knew her heart, also knew her need. From this account of a brief encounter with Jesus we see the initial steps to a changed heart and a new person despite her background as an "outsider." Compare our background apart from Christ with that of the Samaritan woman. (Jn. 4:22-23); (Is. 59:2) _____; (Acts 4:12) _____

Discussion: In the light of these verses, how would you interpret "outsider"? Do we have any "outsiders" in our community? What are we doing for them? Where do we begin? Does Jesus' approach to the Samaritan woman appear applicable today?

What Did She Say?

The attitude we bring with us into any of life's situations is one determining factor as to what will be derived from it. This was also true for the Samaritan woman. Notice the open perplexity and questioning each time she speaks. Keep in mind four leading interrogatives as you translate what she seems to be asking Jesus.

Why? (Jn. 4:9) _____

How? (Jn. 4:15) _____

Where? (Jn. 4:11) _____

Who? (Jn. 4:12) _____

These questions reveal unfulfilled needs in her life. What were her needs as Jesus knew them?

v. 10 _____

vs. 13-14 _____

vs. 16-18 _____

vs. 22-24 _____

How did she react to or interpret these needs as they were exposed?

v. 11 _____

v. 15 _____

v. 19 _____

v. 25 _____

In the conversation Jesus got to the heart of the matter. Her sinful life had been revealed. Conviction of sin demands a response. What do you think the Samaritan woman was trying to do in vs. 19-20? Perhaps she was trying to change the subject. Perhaps the revelation of hidden sin in the presence of a divine Messenger from God awakened an interest in spiritual things. We will never be sure of her motives in changing the subject from a personal to a public question. Knowing our own responses in times of conviction can help us surmise her motives. How did she attempt to dismiss the discussion? (4:25) _____ Did this statement relieve her of the responsibility of making the decision? _____

What profound truth does Jesus entrust to the Samaritan? (4:26) _____

Now she could no longer avoid the issue. She had met the Christ face to face. A decision was imperative. How do we sometimes attempt to avoid making decisions in matters pertinent to our salvation or even our own sanctification?

Acts 24:25 _____

Matt. 23:37 _____

Matt. 21:28, 30 _____

I Cor. 1:18 _____

Conviction of sin brings with it the invitation to repent. We alone can make the choice. Whenever such a decision must be made, how should John 4:26 help us make the right choice?

Discussion: How does our responsibility in responding to His Word increase with our knowledge of the Christ? What happens if we continue in sin of which we have been convicted?

What Did She Do?

Six times Jesus addressed the Samaritan and each time she made a reply. Christ spoke His seventh word and declared His Messiahship. Did she give Him a verbal response? (27-28) _____ What kind of a response did she give? _____ Why do you suppose she left her water jar? _____ What was her message to her townspeople? (29) _____

Does she refer to what Christ said about Himself? Do you think her testimony changed as she grew in the faith? In what way? _____ What was the result of her testimony? (4:30, 39-42) _____

The woman left her water jar, but she took with her a well which flowed with living water unto eternal life. Perhaps we don't have the water jars to forget in our errands for Jesus, but how many of us get so excited about the Gospel message that we forget the petty cares and even physical needs of life? We marvel at the spontaneity of the Samaritan in her witness to those who had once shunned her. What does the Word also tell us to do? Mark 5:19 _____



W M

WORLD MISSIONS

THE FIELDS ARE WHITE UNTO HARVEST

HOLIDAY ON ICE

by Missionary Priscilla Wold

No, it wasn't the Ice Follies, not even an ice skating party. It was Youth Bible Camp in southern Brazil in July! (July is the month-long winter holiday for most students and many workers in Brazil.) And was it ever cold, and I do mean freezing!

It all started when it began to "chover a cantaros" (rain cats and dogs) the very night camp began. It continued to rain most of the next day, too. And with the rain here in winter comes the cold spells. This cold got very cold, as many of you have already heard; in fact, one night it got down to 27 degrees F, which is "freezing," especially without furnaces. At night I slept with my jacket on, in a sleeping bag, and also had a quilt inside the bag, but still I was cold. Even when we were inside we could see our breath in the air. In the mornings there were frost and ice on the ground and it looked like it had snowed. (And it did snow farther south in Parana's capital city of Curitiba, the first snow in about 50 years. I guess it was quite a sight to see snow on the leaves of the palm trees!)

When we came into the kitchen in the mornings, we found ice in glasses in which we had left water the night before. The milk was frozen on top and the bread felt like ice, so it was hard to slice it. We had to warm up our hands quite often in the oven. Then, too, the water froze in the pipes so no one could wash or brush his teeth right away in the morning. And later on in the week we didn't have any running water at all.

But in spite of all these miserable

physical conditions, the Lord gave us a very joyful and blessed week. The camp spirit was simply tremendous and the campers remained enthusiastic all week. The main thing that gave them enthusiasm was the strong competition between the two teams into which all the campers were divided. And, of course, to try to keep warm during the sessions, we sang all the choruses we could think of that we could clap our hands and "stomp" (not just "tap") our feet to! One carload of campers went home the second day, but just about everyone (about 60 campers) stayed all week. Another mission had scheduled camp that same week, but when it turned so cold they sent everyone home. They aren't like we hardy Scandinavian Lutherans are!

We had the usual Bible studies in the mornings, sports in the afternoons and evangelistic services at night. The talent, skit and Bible contests were also held. Since we wanted to stay inside a lot, Helen Knapp had handcraft sessions each day which were greatly appreciated. The campers made necklaces and caps and painted designs on some camp curtains. One night we had a banquet (or really a "hobo night"). It was too cold to have a formal banquet, so we just decided to do everything backwards. The girls invited the boys and instead of dressing up, we just wore our warm clothes backwards and inside out! Afterwards we had a campfire outside, but you can well imagine that it didn't last very long. Some of us girls wanted go serenading one night, but we decided just to stay in bed where it was at least a little warmer than outside.

Karen Kvistero also was at camp one day. A group of people from Fiel (evangelical book distributors with whom Karen travelled for a month) spoke at camp one morning and showed a film on Christ's death and resurrection at night.

Therefore, despite the miserable physical conditions, God was working. The Holy Spirit taught us, gave us the right attitudes, and brought us close together. Some campers made decisions for Christ. So praise the Lord with us for a blessed camp and also pray with us for those who made decisions that they will grow and win others to our wonderful Savior.

PRAYER AND PRAISE FROM BRAZIL

Praise the Lord for:

—Dona Eva, who was baptized and made confession of faith in our Lar Parana church.

—completion of the bridge to our church in Alvorada, making it possible to reach that church, rain or shine.

—the time of fellowship we had at Thanksgiving time with fellow Americans here in Campo Mourao.

—the spiritual growth of the WMF ladies in our Central church, who have now decided to have a weekly Tuesday afternoon prayer meeting.

—the many new converts who will be, for the first time, celebrating the true meaning of Christmas.

Pray for:

—D.V.B.S.'s in all our churches and evangelistic meetings. Also for the special speakers during these weeks.

—a location for a Bible book store to be opened and a national worker to manage it.

—our weekly radio program and Senhor Raimundo, who is responsible for it.

—our Bible camps: Children's Camp, Feb. 3-7, and Young People's Camp, Feb. 23-29.

—our national pastors and lay workers.



Atheism Fails in Time of Need

Mr. Olsen was a man 40 years of age; as he had a good farm and was thrifty and industrious, he had worked himself up to a fair degree of prosperity. His wife was a devout Christian, but he himself had no use for God and the Bible. Occasionally he would brag about being a "free thinker" and said that he got just as far ahead in this world with his atheism as the Christians did with their superstitions about Christianity.

The Olsen couple had two children, a little girl, Lena, eight years of age, and a little boy, Harold, five years of age.

The spiritual seed which the mother tried to pass into the hearts of the little ones, the father tried to root out with his scornful talk. When the wife and the two little children came from church the husband would talk in a contemptuous manner about the people who were so ignorant as to believe in Christianity and to take any stock in what the preachers were telling them about getting their daily bread. Then, too, he complained that his wife, whom he praised as a good and sensible woman, should go to church and listen to such nonsense.

While there was a reasonably good relationship in their marriage, the mother was anxious about the spiritual welfare of the children. Deeply grieved, she gently reprimanded her husband that he as the father would talk despitefully about God and the Bible in the presence of the children. To this he would answer in a frivolous manner: "Well, you know, my dear, that what the heart is full of the mouth runs over with."

In the early part of spring the little girl Lena was taken sick with diphtheria and died. While the father grievously felt the loss of his little girl, his heart remained cold and

hard. He still had little Harold, who was his pet, and whom he adored above everything else in the world.

Little Harold used to go out to his father working in the fields with coffee and lunch, which made the little fellow tremendously proud, while the father was made happy with these visits by his pet.

Along in the autumn the same year in which his daughter died, Mr. Olsen sat one day driving two mules ahead of a self-binder machine cutting wheat. While he was busy with this operation, his little Harold appeared and shouted: "Papa, here I am with coffee from Mama!"

The father, who had just started on another round of the field, said: "You wait here, my little boy, till papa comes back again from this round."

While Mr. Olsen was busy with the cutting with the wild team, he did not realize that the boy had gone into the high wheat field. Suddenly he heard a heart-rending shriek from a child. As he looked about, he noticed that little Harold was not there, and when he realized that something was wrong he jumped down from the binder without caring about the mules, who now ran away. On investigation he found to his terror the little boy Harold lying bleeding on the field, the sharp knives of the binder having cut off both the legs of the child above the knees.

In frightful anguish, he lifted up the child's body and the two limbs that had been cut off and hurried home. All covered with blood, he met his wife in the house and groaned: "Here is our little Harold." And so saying, he laid the bleeding child on the bed. The mother, who was nearly fainting, threw herself on her knees before the bleeding and dying child while the father, trembling in grief, stood be-

fore it and stammered the words, "Little Harold, Papa's little Harold, are you going to die now and leave your papa?" To which the child answered with a weak voice:

"I am going to Jesus. Mama believes in Jesus." The words had barely passed his lips before the child lost consciousness and died.

The mother still lay upon her knees and relieved her heart in prayer while the husband continued standing at her side: "You have a place to go to find comfort in sorrow, but I have no place to go." Throwing himself on his knees at her side, he stammered in broken language: "My God, my God, is there any mercy for me, as great a sinner as I am?"

While the couple were thus remaining upon their knees, a half-grown boy who did not know of the accident stormed through the door and shouted: "Mr. Olsen, your horses have run away and destroyed the self-binder."

"I don't care about the self-binder," moaned Mr. Olsen, "I have lost a great deal more than that." All this was a frightful experience for Mr. Olsen. It was feared that he would lose his mind. He walked about mumbling to himself the last words of the child, "I am going home to Jesus; Mother believes in Jesus."

The atheism was blown away from his mind and he became a penitent sinner who from the heart prayed to God for forgiveness and grace, both of which he found through faith in Christ. He became an entirely different man. About two years after this event I heard him bear testimony in a prayer meeting about the hard road in which God had led him to save his soul from sin and that atheism does not hold out in time of trouble, least of all in the hour of death.

—E. B. Slettedahl

PLEDGE OF CONSECRATION

I, who am a child of God, heir to all the riches in glory through Christ Jesus, do hereby tonight rededicate my life to the service of my king.

I rededicate my mind to the study of God's Word, to the reading of Christian literature that will challenge me to live as consecrated men and women of the Christian Church who have lived before me.

I rededicate the use of my hands to performing acts of love to my family in my home where I am most often negligent, to those who are ill or in sorrow, to those who may be faltering in their Christian walk, to those who are living outside of the Kingdom of God.

I rededicate the money I earn, that its primary purpose may be to be used to further the cause of Christ in my home church, in home missions, in foreign missions, in Christian schools, in institutions of charity, or wherever God may show me it is needed to perform a service which is pleasing to Him.

I rededicate my time that it may be used wisely and well in the development of my body, mind and spirit.

I rededicate my talents and abilities, gifts which may pertain both to the use of my body and my mind, that they might be developed and used to glorify Thee.

I rededicate my life to prayer that channels of love and mercy might be opened to the lives of others and the Sunlight of Thy grace may flood their beings and give them Life Eternal.

—Selected

MY DAYS ARE NUMBERED

My days are numbered, that I know,
I have not got so far to go.

A rugged stretch of road, maybe,
There still may lie ahead of me.

But if my Savior holds my hand,
I know that I shall reach heaven's
land.

The span of life allotted man

On earth is three score years and ten.

Those years I've passed, my strength
seems spent.

My tired soul is heaven-bent.

I long to leave this world's discord

And be forever with my Lord.

Thou God hast been my strength and
stay,

My helper through the darkest day.

When burdened with a load of care,

I turned to Thee in earnest prayer.

Thou gavest me strength, hope and
cheer

And took away all anxious fear.

Thy goodness, Lord, along life's way

Has followed me from day to day;

So often, Lord, have I failed Thee.

For all life's blessing, joy and pain,

I give Thee thanks in Jesus' name.

Submitted by Mrs. George Rygmyr

Zumbrota, Minn.

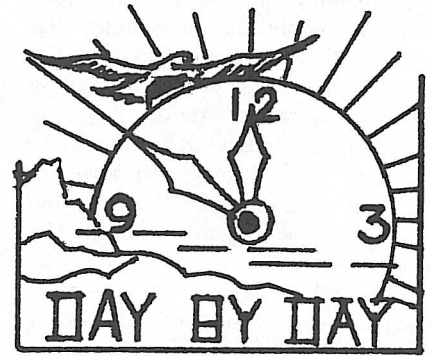
WOMEN HONORED AT ZION IN DALTON

Mrs. James Formo and Mrs. Orlin Moebius were given Honorary Membership pins by the Zion Ladies Aid of Dalton, Minn., last August. Mrs. Edmond Holo, daughter of Mrs. Formo, and Mrs. Rodney Moebius, daughter-in-law of Mrs. Moebius, had the honor of presenting the pins. Rev. Wendell Johnson is the pastor of Zion Church.

GIFT AMBASSADORS FOR CHRISTMAS DELAYED

With the exception of about 50 copies, the gift Ambassadors for Christmas were late in reaching those for whom they had been ordered. Through some oversight, the 500 extra copies which had been ordered were not printed. They have since been printed and mailed out as directed. We are heartily sorry for this inconvenience, but it is one of those things which can happen, even though we always hope it will not. Thank you for your patience.

The Editor



by

Lars Stalsbroten

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday,
and today, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8).

We have again been presented with a new almanac in which there are 366 blank unwritten pages, this year being leap year. None of us know if it shall be our lot to turn all these pages to see what is written on each, and that is a mighty good thing. On some of these pages there may be written sorrow, sickness, distress, and even death, but we need not be anxious, because Jesus Christ who is the same yesterday, today and for ever is with His own. If His wonderful name is permitted to shine as the Sun of righteousness over our lives each day, then we shall see in His light that all things work together for good to them that love God.

Lina Sandell expresses this truth in such a beautiful way in one of her poems:

"Day by day, and with each passing
moment

Strength I find to meet my trials
here;

Trusting in my Father's wise be-
stowment,

I've no cause for worry or for fear.

He, whose heart is kind beyond all
measure,

Gives unto each day what He
deems best,

Lovingly, its part of pain and plea-
sure,

Mingling toil with peace and rest."

We are living in an ever changing world: time changes, people change, the weather changes, the economy changes, the government changes; but how good that we have a never

changing Savior. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. His love is unchangeable and everlasting, His daily forgiving grace the same, His compassion for His erring and failing children the same. As the days, so shall your strength be, He says in Deuteronomy 33:25. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength (Is. 40:29).

With such a Savior, we can meet every day in the coming year without fear and worry.

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55427

Second-class postage
paid at Minneapolis, Minn.

Directory of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

OFFICERS

President

Rev. John P. Strand
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Vice-President

Rev. R. Snipstead
630 Mt. Baker Avenue—Box 397
Ferndale, Wash. 98248

Secretary

Rev. Dennis D. Gray
1586 Hill Avenue, Box 497
Grafton, N. Dak. 58237

CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

Chairman

Rev. Kenneth L. Anderson
McVile, N. Dak. 58254

Secretary

Mr. Sheldon Mortrud
715 S. Tindolph Ave.
Thief River Falls, Minn. 56701

ASSOCIATION SCHOOLS

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chairman

Rev. E. J. Langness
858 N. Pine St.
Ishpeming, Mich. 49849

Secretary

Rev. Robert Rieth
11611 N.E. 140 St.
Kirkland, Wash. 98033

Dean of Free Lutheran Seminary and Acting Dean of the Bible School

Rev. Amos Dyrud
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

WORLD MISSIONS

Chairman

Mr. Robert Knutson
McVile, N. Dak. 58254

Secretary

Rev. Eugene W. Enderlein
404 Kendall Avenue South
Thief River Falls, Minn. 56701

HOME MISSIONS

Chairman

Rev. Herbert L. Franz
1301 Wilson Avenue
Cloquet, Minn. 55720

Secretary

Rev. Larry V. Severson
Wallace, S. Dak. 57272

PUBLICATIONS AND PARISH EDUCATION

Chairman

Mr. Kent Quanbeck
McVile, N. Dak. 58254

Secretary

Mrs. Melvin Walla
Lot 78, Oak Ridge Estates
Fergus Falls, Minn. 56537

Executive Secretary

Miss Judith Wold
324 N. Arnold
Thief River Falls, Minn. 56701

YOUTH BOARD

Chairman

Mr. Roger Strom
14010 40th Ave. No.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Secretary

Mr. Rodger Olson
6300 27th Avenue North
Minneapolis, Minn. 55427

STEWARDSHIP BOARD

Chairman

Mr. Robert L. Dietsche
Sand Creek, Wis. 54765

Secretary

Rev. Stephen Odegaard
Box 161
Winger, Minn. 56592

BOARD OF PENSIONS

Chairman

Mr. Clifford Holm
3100 East Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Secretary

Rev. Jerome Nikunen
805 2nd St. N. E.
Roseau, Minn. 56751

WOMEN'S MISSIONARY FEDERATION

President

Mrs. Robert Dietsche
Sand Creek, Wis. 54765

Secretary

Mrs. Reuben Wee
960 9 Avenue
Granite Falls, Minn. 56241

Treasurer

Mrs. Reuben Emberson
Esko, Minn. 55733

Executive Secretary

Miss Judith Wold
324 N. Arnold
Thief River Falls, Minn. 56701

LUTHER LEAGUE FEDERATION

President

Rev. Richard Anderson
140 West 44th Street
Minneapolis, Minn. 55409

Secretary

Miss Karen Russum
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Treasurer

Mr. Steve Lee
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441