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JESUS WILL COME AGAIN IN THE SAME
WAY THAT HE WENT UP INTO HEAVEN

PASTOR PAUL G. ALBRECHT

[1898-1976]

Paul Gottlieb Albrecht, son of Gottlieb and Christina Albrecht, was born on September 17, 1898 at Renville, Minnesota. After completing his elementary education, he prepared himself for service in the public ministry, attending Dr. Martin Luther High School at New Ulm, Minnesota, Northwestern College at Watertown, Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Seminary at Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, graduating from the latter in 1922. He followed his Lord's call to service in the Apache Indian Mission in Arizona, Graceville, Minnesota, Tolstoy and Faulkton, South Dakota, Bowdle, South Dakota, and Madison, Wisconsin. He served in the public ministry for 47 years, of which 39 years were spent in Bowdle. In the latter years of his ministry at Bowdle by reason of his faithful adherence to the Word of God he was called upon to withdraw from the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. He became the pastor of those in Bowdle who shared his convictions and who founded Redeemer Lutheran Church of Bowdle. Upon his retirement in 1969 he moved to Winter Haven, Florida. In 1971 he moved to Eau Claire, Wisconsin, where he became and remained until his death a faithful member of Messiah Lutheran Church.

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On February 27, 1924 at Minneapolis, Minnesota, Pastor Albrecht was married to Marie Hoffman, daughter of Pastor and Mrs. Theodore Hoffman of Mayville, Wisconsin. This union the Lord blessed with eight children, six sons and two daughters.

As an infant Pastor Albrecht was made a child of God through the washing of regeneration in Baptism and he confirmed his Baptismal faith in the Lutheran Church in Emmet Township, Renville, Minnesota. He was first and foremost a child of God through Jesus' blood and righteousness, and he loved his Savior and His Word with child-like devotion. His life of service to his God flowed out of that faith. He was a faithful pastor, who possessed singular special gifts that the Lord used for the welfare of His Church. He will be remembered with thanksgiving by the Church of the Lutheran confession, since he served as its first president from 1960 until his retirement in 1969. His faithful, strong and sound leadership is a matter of history. But we know that he would want to be remembered among us as a monument and tribute to the surpassing grace of God which captured his heart with its love and mercy, made him, a sinner, a saint before his God, preserved him steadfast in the true and saving faith and brought his soul into the eternal rest in heaven.

Pastor Albrecht was a man of vigorous strength of body as well as of spirit. He was stricken with a heart attack in 1973. He recovered from the first attack. He remained reasonably well and active until March 22, when the Lord called him to Himself in heaven. He died about 10:30 p.m. in Gallup, New Mexico, where he and his wife had stopped for the night at the end of the first day's travel on their way home from a vacation at Phoenix, Arizona.

The departed's earthly pilgrimage was 77 years, 5 months and 13 days. Funeral services were held at Messiah Lutheran Church of Eau Claire, Wisconsin on March 26, Pastor L. W. Schierenbeck officiating.

L. W. Schierenbeck

JESUS' ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN

Within a few weeks we shall again be calling to mind our Savior's ascension into heaven. We recall the days when the festival commemorating this event was widely observed in Lutheran circles on the fortieth day after Easter with a service of worship held in the forenoon of that day. Though it fell on a weekday, Lutheran Christians laid aside their daily work to take part in this festival service. Few deemed it proper even

to engage in their regular occupation during the remainder of the day. With the secularization of our society and the increasing emphasis placed on the importance of the earthly, Ascension Day has become the forgotten festival of the Church. Many churches, even most Lutherans, no longer observe it in any special way. Those few who still do so have only a handful of worshippers in attendance and must content

themselves with an evening service. Though the service is announced on the preceding Sunday, ever so many forget about it by the time that Thursday arrives unless they are once more reminded of it in a special way. The number of those present appears to decrease with each succeeding year.

What Is the Reason?

Is our Lord's return to the realms above of such minor significance for us believers that it no longer merits our time and attention? Or are we becoming so earthly-minded that things spiritual and heavenly no longer hold interest for us? Or is the pursuit of our daily bread and things earthly becoming so absorbing of our time and interest that we simply find no room in our busy schedule of activities for it? Or is it that we simply have not been instructed sufficiently concerning the blessed significance of this event for our faith-life? We prefer to ascribe it to this latter cause. We find it difficult to assume that such, who confess Jesus as their Savior and Lord and who profess to look forward to spend all eternity with Him in that heaven to which He has ascended, are so completely indifferent to and uninterested in this last great act of His concluding His great work of redemption.

The Fact of the Ascension

This is recorded for us by St. Luke, both in the Gospel which bears his name and in its sequel, the Book of Acts, also written by him. He reports that Jesus, having met

once more with His disciples in Jerusalem, after His various appearances to them in Galilee following His resurrection, then led them out through the Kidron valley, by the same route they had followed on Maundy Thursday evening, to the Mount of Olives, the high elevation lying between the city and the village of Bethany. Arriving at its crest, Jesus raised His arms and pronounced a final benediction upon them, during the course of which He began to rise ever upward before their eyes until a passing cloud hid Him from their sight. After that had drifted by, Jesus was no longer to be seen. Two angels, however, who had appeared in their midst, informed them that never again, until His visible return to Judgment, could they expect to see Jesus here on earth in visible form, that henceforth they must look forward to reunion with Him in the Father's house above to which He had returned. (Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:1-11)

Its Significance For Us

Jesus' ascension, first of all, puts the seal of successful accomplishment on His whole mission here on earth. He had descended from heaven to earth thirty-three years earlier to rescue and redeem our fallen human race from sin, from death, and from the devil's power. "O perfect life of love! All, all is finished now, all that He left His throne above to do for us below." That alone should call forth our rejoicing and thanks and praise to Him. Now we can rest assured that everything necessary to bridge the

gulf created between God and ourselves by our sinning has been done, that reconciliation with God has been effected, that the door of heaven, closed to us by our sins, is open to us again, and that, clothed in the righteousness which He worked out for us through His sinless life and innocent suffering and death, we can appear before God again and enjoy everlasting fellowship with Him.

It, however, has also another blessed significance for us. Jesus spoke to His disciples of that the evening before His death in the words: "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself that, where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:2-3). As our forerunner He has preceded us so that He may be on hand to welcome us into those mansions above, which He has secured for us through His passion and death and resurrection. What a comfort for us when our last hour here on earth arrives and our souls, released from earthly ties, soar to worlds unknown, to know then exactly where we are going and who will be there to welcome us! O blessed significance of Jesus' ascension into heaven!

But we must not imagine that, while awaiting our coming home, Jesus now is in a state of inactivity and rest. He is now seated on the right hand of the Father actively engaged as our High Priest and Prophet and King. As our great High Priest He continues daily to make intercession for us in our various needs (1 John 2:1.2). As our Prophet

He sees to it that His saving Gospel is proclaimed to us and to the world through ministers of His sending (Ephesians 4:10-13). As our King He rules all things in heaven and on earth in the best interests and for the benefit of His Church and everyone of us believers individually (Ephesians 1:20-23).

And though through His ascension He has now withdrawn His *visible* presence from us, making full and continual use of His ability to be present everywhere simultaneously also according to His human nature, He promises us His *invisible* presence, no matter where we may be upon the face of this earth: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:20b). What a blessed comfort this furnishes us as we, as strangers and pilgrims, wend our way through this world to the home above, where He awaits us!

Observe Ascension Day

Do we have reason to celebrate and to rejoice over Jesus' ascension into heaven? Indeed, we do. Let us therefore rid ourselves of the inertia and indifference with which life in this world wants to infect us and "seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Let not Jesus and your pastor look for you in vain at the ascension service scheduled in your church. Thank and praise your Savior for its blessed meaning for you and let it fill you with genuine longing for that home above where He awaits your arrival.

H. C. Duehlmeier

THE HIGHEST CALLING

PASTOR—AN EARTHEN VESSEL

The chaos within the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has dominated religious news headlines these last years. Without attempting to oversimplify the deep doctrinal divisions which have torn apart this former bulwark of conservative Lutheranism, the fact remains: Many problems have also arisen and mushroomed because loyalty to the synod or synodical president or some pastor took precedence over faithfulness to the Word of God.

“It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in men.” (Ps. 118:8) This is one of the great lessons of religious history. Only eternity will fully reveal how many souls have blindly followed a trusted spiritual leader who knowingly or unknowingly misused their confidence. This doesn't mean that we shouldn't honor and revere our spiritual leaders as shepherds whom God has called and placed over us—but that honor should never take the form of blind obedience.

The Bereans to whom Paul preached and ministered on his missionary journey (Acts 17) had found the proper balance in this matter. They welcomed Paul and Silas, receiving them as true servants

of the Lord. More importantly, “they received the Word with all readiness of mind”; they loved to hear God's Word. But they also did something else—they “searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so.” We can assume they checked their Bibles, comparing what Paul said with what God said. Interestingly, Paul was not hurt nor offended. No lack of respect for him or for the ministry was involved. Rather it was a spiritually healthy attitude, reflecting an understanding of the only real authority within the church. Such an attitude would bring joy to the heart of your pastor as well.

Human

For your pastor, like Paul, realizes he is an earthen vessel, a dirt container through which God pours out His grace upon men. God chose not angels, but just such earthen vessels through whom to proclaim His Saving Gospel, so that there can be no question to whom all credit and glory belong. When that Gospel comes out of such vessels pure and accomplishes the miracle of salvation—To God alone the glory! (Cf. II Cor. 4:5-7)

Your pastor possesses no indelible character. He is a sinner no different from you. He too needs to be assured of God's forgiving love in Christ every moment. Like you and every man of faith in Scripture, he too has weaknesses and shortcomings. His total sufficiency is of God. Yet he finds his joy and strength in knowing God's purposes are being accomplished through the Word which he proclaims. In that Word and not in him lies the power of God unto salvation.

Just as dangerous to place too much emphasis on the form in which the Word is presented, so also it is equally dangerous to place too much emphasis on the person presenting it. Your pastor wears a black robe for a reason. He is only the mouthpiece for the Lord. Most members of the CLC have been served by different pastors during their congregational history—and that may be more healthy than not. It removes the temptation to become committed to the man rather than the message.

Different, Yet Alike

All of our pastors are very different, yet very much alike. Different in personality, form and style of presentation, different in their gifts—yet very much alike in the things that matter—the message they proclaim, their calling, the goals of their ministry. We dare not let these differences interfere in any way with the glorious calling which pastor and congregation share. When we see

how partiality toward pastors threatened to divide and possibly destroy the Corinthian church (I Cor. 3:2-10), we can draw no other conclusion than that it is a most effective tool of Satan to hinder Kingdom work. The Lord needs this wonderful variety of spiritual gifts for various aspects of His work. Most of all, He needs faithful men deeply committed to Christ and His Word. The rest He will supply.

There is a precious unity of faith and doctrine among all our pastors and laymen, something, we might add, rather rare in church bodies today. The Spirit has made us One in Christ in every sense of the Word—a fact having tremendous practical application. How comforting for those congregations whose pastor has accepted a call, who are seeking the Spirit's replacement! How reassuring to know the same Scriptures are preached from every one of our pulpits and taught from every one of our classrooms. How uplifting for parents to know that the training of their children at ILC will not be anything new, but only reinforce and reemphasize those same truths learned at home and in church!

Although your pastor is an earthen vessel—yet to you he is a lifeline, a vessel by which the Lord pours out His mercy and blessing upon you. That is reason enough to cherish such a gift.

—*D. Schierenbeck*

INSTANT ITEMS

"Long spoke makes big tire," said the Indian. Another is quoted as remarking when he saw the mushroom cloud over Alamogordo as the atomic bomb was born, "Wish I'd said that!" Since childhood we have been impressed with the capsulated form of the incisive sayings of Jesus, of Moses, yes, of the Prophets who keep dropping bombs of thought without so much as the introduction, "God said," or "The people said," or "He (the prophet) said." One wonders at the great intelligence and imagination with which God credited the ancients—which they brought to their hearing and reading.

- We have the Means of Grace. They are *things* apart from us. We *sense* them with our *five*. Basically they are such things as paper and ink. On Sunday they are vibrations of atoms in the atmosphere. Sometimes bread, water, wine. In Israel's day they were a cloud, light, fire, a rock, or brass in the form of a serpent. Luther caught the significance of *things* in God's use to bring us grace. He argued with one who disbelieved the power of baptismal water to bring us salvation: "If God said that you would be saved by picking up a feather, would you not pick it up?" Thus is rebuked the popular notion that "Jesus in the heart" is a matter of the certain feeling one might have. One dying of cancer has other feelings. He needs the concrete Means of Grace, the sound of the Word and his pastor's voice.

- Be careful of appeals to conscience. "Mistaken conscience calls for correction by better light, but never for violation. To follow conscience is, by itself, no security that we are doing what is in itself right; but to violate conscience, which is our actual view of right and wrong, is always wrong." -Moule. -Whoever he was doesn't matter; what he said is right. It is as right as are the inkspots (things apart from us that we sense with our eyes, the Means God uses to correct our minds and hearts) in Romans 14:14, "I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean." The latter needs correction, but he needs to follow his conscience to keep his integrity.

- A second living is available right now. Not escapism in novels, dreams, drama, or the seashore and mountains, not even art in all its forms. "*It is your life,*" said Moses, "not a vain thing; set your hearts unto the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do." The Beck version catches this thought in Deuteronomy 33:47, "This isn't empty talk for you; no, it means your life and will enable you to live long." Not only eternity flows from the Word, but longevity spills over into life in the here and now. The daily occupations have changed, but these words from Erasmus (1522) speak of the second life available this moment: "I would to God the plowman would sing a text of the Scripture at his ploughbeam, and that the

weaver at his loom with this would drive away the tediousness of time . . . I would that all the communication of the Christian should be of the Scripture.” Moses would be pleased.

- In a real sense, those who serve are greater than those who are served. The thoughtful will envy them. Angels are our servants, and we could wish to be so fortunate as they. We have seen a Ph.D. admire the abilities of a grimy mechanic. Many an adult can feel less than little in the presence of some child playing the piano. In a strange way, those who serve us are greater than we are, apart from the axiom of Jesus on the matter; we must yield to them the palm. Bugenhagen lifted his hat to his pupils, we are told. But keep Satan away when Jesus says that “whosoever will be great among you, let him be your servant,” lest the spell of grace be broken. Pride in humility is detestable.

- “Please write!” All the following are from Scripture, uncluttered by quotation marks: Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! that they were graven with an iron pen in the rock for ever! . . . I will write upon these tables the words that I have spoken unto thee in a book . . . Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it (read though he be running) . . . He that sat upon the throne said unto me, Write, for these words are true and faithful.

- *Time to Write* is the title of a book. To write is for kindred spirits to communicate, to share, to visit. No report tells of Jesus writing anything except a few words in the sand, blown away. Yet he wrote the world’s best seller through his Spirit, and in his words he is with us, converts, shapes, and fills us to be complete in him. “Write anytime during the year, it need not be at Christmas.” We may rob someone if we do not write, and we are richer ourselves if we do. Language is for use. We do not know what St. Paul said in Corinth and many other places, but we have what he wrote. We could wish to have been along on Emmaus road, but the Converser there promised to “bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said.” And “we know that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding.” All of it through writing. Among ourselves, “Please write!”

- We must know some details of its origin to know something well. Not to know the Old Testament is not to know the New as we should. Not to know what was said and done in the formative days of the CLC is not to have the reasons for our existence as we ought. Our children may have the blank look when they are asked for the reasons, like that of a cow before a new gate, as Luther said. How plastic in confusion are the faces full of ignorance! How lost would the fathers have been when the eye-witnesses were gone had the New Testament not been written! Our early CLC leaders are gone or going fast, and with them the spoken witness. We think of John who gave only one reason for not writing more to the good Gaius: “I have much to write you, but I don’t want to do it with pen and ink. I hope to see you very soon and talk to you face to face” (Beck, third letter). We need the record.

A TIME TO KILL?

Life! A precious gift from God! So precious is this gift that the Creator Himself protected it with the dire warning: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man." (Gen. 9:6) Life, its origin and its termination, is to remain solely in the hands of Him who gives it. "I kill and I make alive." (Deut. 32:39) Therefore the psalmist says trustingly: "My times are in Thy hand." (Ps. 31:15) "Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest, return, ye children of men." (Ps. 90:3)

How, then, could the wisest man who ever lived (I Kings 3) ask for a sword so that he might divide in two a newborn infant? Surely this must have been the absolute opposite of divine wisdom. Or was it?

How precious something is to a person will be best exemplified by the lengths to which the person will go to preserve it, no matter what the cost. King Solomon knew this. And therefore he would settle the dispute as to who was the true mother of the infant. He would do this by suggesting that it be killed.

True Mother Love

The result? The real mother loved the fruit of her womb so much that she would rather give it to another than have it killed. The other woman

cared not if it lived or died. Thus she showed her low value of life. She showed her true colors, as the saying goes.

In the history of this world, people with the most reason to praise their Maker and Giver have done themselves in by taking on the attitude of the fake mother in I Kings 3. If they can't have their own way, they will endeavor to make life an expendable thing instead of a precious gift. Christians, beware! Advocates of abortion-on-demand clothe it with terms like therapeutic, psychiatric, eugenic, social, ethical, induced.

No matter how you translate these words, in the eyes of God they spell out the cry of the fake mother: "Divide it in two." Nor is that all. "Abortion is homicide," writes Dr. John Warwick Montgomery, and he continues: "The very fact the abortion advocates are moving to questions of euthanasia, voluntary suicides, to dealing with the elderly and the unfit, makes it perfectly clear what is involved here."

In the midst of a generation showing its non-Christian colors, Christians need to proclaim loudly and clearly that there is "a time to be born." (Eccl. 3.2) And most assuredly, the wisdom of Solomon did not refer to unborn children when he added: "A time to kill." (Eccl. 3:3)

-P. Fleischer

ON BEING A USEFUL CRITIC

No question about it, "It's an art."

Behind everything well done, there is always a good measure of thought and practice. And it is no different with useful criticism—the kind that is so desperately needed in the important work of a congregation or synod. It needs to be done, and it needs to be done well. So many things could be going better than they are! In hopes that they might, the following suggestions are offered by someone who has profited much from useful input, skillfully offered.

They're Called

Think of those who have special assignments. Pastors, professors, teachers, organists, directors, church officers—all are called by the Lord to serve the Lord. To the Lord they will give account, ultimately. Yet the Lord did His calling through the congregation, of which you are a part, a responsible part. Though you do not expect the called worker to serve at your pleasure, but rather the pleasure of the Lord, you are involved. *You* called them!

Every called worker is entitled to say with Paul, "Let a man regard us . . . as *servants of Christ* . . . To me it is a very small thing that I should be examined by you, or by any human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself . . . The one who examines me is the Lord!" (I Cor. 4:1-4 NASB) Be grateful if the

person is that God-directed in his thinking. You don't want men-pleasers in the gospel ministry. If his or her attitude is right in this regard, you can be sure that the person will welcome constructive criticism, for it can enhance the service of God.

Suppose, for example, that the organist plays faster than you would like. You are moved to speak with him about it. But how? As a good first step, remind yourself that the music-maker is not obliged to do it your way. He was called for the job, not you. He is supposed to exercise his judgment, not yours. But it is *useful* for him to know the struggles of those who sing to his accompaniment. This could suggest an approach. "I don't want to tell you how to play, but I think it might help you to know that some people like myself have trouble singing at a fast clip." He can weigh your preference against that of others who might like their singing brisk.

You Are One

A useful critic needs to remind himself that he is but one of many. For him the preacher's sermons might be too long (too short, too profound, too superficial, too abstract, too this, or too that). His advice will be well received and carefully weighed if he grants that others might well feel different about it, being of different age, intelligence, spiritual maturity, or what-

ever. Such a critic knows the value of a vote of confidence: "This is my personal reaction, and you are welcome to it. I know that you will consider it against the needs of the others, and do what is best for the congregation as a whole. And with that I would be content." An approach like that almost guarantees beneficial results.

The key to the whole thing is humility. "Not thinking of oneself more highly than he ought to think," Paul calls it in Romans 12:3. In matters of faith, where the Spirit has spoken, there is no need for humility of the sort that says "perhaps." There we can, and ought to declare "this is most certainly true." In cases of form and order, however, there is seldom an absolute standard. The most effective time-module for preaching, the best tempo for a hymn-sing,—these and a thousand matters more remain a matter of judgment in the face of circumstances.

In My Opinion . . .

Humility must have given birth to that marvelous little expression, "In my opinion." Surely it is the useful critic's most effective tool. When he uses it honestly, it is his way of making a view known without insisting that it is the only way. It grants that others may honorably hold another. It leaves the other person free to disagree without insulting you. After all, if you have just volunteered your opinion you are inviting him to express his. Surprisingly, it might be agreeably tuned to yours. In any case, that person is free to consider what you say without pressure, without a face-down. "In my opinion." Great phrase. The useful critic has to swallow hard sometimes, for he is so *sure* that he is right. He doesn't want to weaken his counsel by calling it mere opinion. But honesty forces him to do so. And his genuine desire to improve the situation prevails over his pride.

That's enough on the subject for now. At least in my opinion.

Rollin A. Reim

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Convention Theme: I AM NOT
ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF
CHRIST

Essayists: Professor C. M. Gul-
lerud
Professor Roland Gur-
gel
Pastor John Schieren-
beck

Convention Service

Speaker: Pastor Paul Nolting

Memorial Service

Speaker: Pastor Robert Reim

Chaplain: Pastor David Lau



DAILY DEVOTIONS

- June 1 Jeremiah 22:1-17 The Lord judges the tyrant . . .
2 Jeremiah 22:18-30 . . . and he dies unpraised, unhonored, unsung.
3 Jeremiah 23:1-8 True security is in the Good Shepherd—Who gives us His righteous-
ness.
4 Jeremiah 23:9-40 "Beware of False prophets!"
5 Jeremiah 13:1-17 The Parable of the Rotten Waistband
6 II Kings 24:1-17 Just as Jeremiah had said it would happen. (Jeremiah 22:24f)

DANIEL—CAPTIVE PRINCE OF JUDAH

Our last reading refers to two separate occasions when Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian armies invaded Judah and Jerusalem. Each time the heathen king left the Jewish capital standing—^{but} carried off captives and booty. The first happened in the days of Jehoiakim (II Kings 24:1) and was repeated 8 years later (II Kings 24:10-14) when King Jehoiachin himself was among the captives.

Many of those taken captive in Nebuchadnezzar's first invasion were of royal blood. Among them was a young man of about 16 named Daniel. Daniel spent the rest of his life in heathen Babylon as an advisor to eight kings of two different world powers. For over 70 years he was subjected to the manifold temptations typical of a corrupt, luxurious heathen palace. The Lord gifted him with great wisdom and, though a captive, Daniel rose to be Prime Minister of Babylon.

Daniel is a fine example of the believer exercising his dual citizenship. He was a loyal and trustworthy advisor to whatever government his God permitted to come to power. But above all else he was unswervingly loyal to the Lord Jehovah. The King of Kings used His servant Daniel to stabilize heathen governments, to ease the lot of Jewish captives, to bring His Word to Gentile nations, to reveal to men dream-visions of the distant future . . . and the Messiah.

The second half of the Book of Daniel (chps 7-12) gives an account of various visions the prophet received concerning the kingdoms of the world and the coming of the Messiah-King. The first six chapters relate outstanding experiences in the life of Daniel—experiences which portray most strikingly the power of God.

7 Daniel 1	Daniel and his friends—kept by the power of God.
8 Daniel 2	We see the power of God in all that He reveals to men.
9 II Chronicles 36:11-16	Weak and wicked Zedekiah. Last king of Judah.
10 Jeremiah 24	What else can one do with rotten fruit?
11 Jeremiah 27	The yoke of Babylon.
12 Jeremiah 28	"The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in Vain."
13 Jeremiah 29	Jeremiah writes to those already captive in Babylon.
14 Jeremiah 51:11-26	Babylon shall be destroyed and left desolate . . .
15 Jeremiah 51:34-37, 49-64	. . . for she destroyed Judah with heathen delight.

EZEKIEL—PROPHET OF THE EXILE

As long as Jerusalem stood undestroyed the Jews already in captivity kept in touch with their brethren at home. And as long as Jerusalem stood undestroyed false prophets in both Jerusalem and Babylon denounced Jeremiah as a deceiver. Some in Babylon even demanded that the prophet be executed (Jeremiah 29:24ff). Jeremiah answered this demand in a powerful letter (Jeremiah 29, June 13), and shortly thereafter God called a priest named Ezekiel to answer these false prophets to their faces.

At age 25 Ezekiel had been carried to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar in the year 597 BC, along with King Jehoiachin. He was in exile five years before God called him to be "chaplain" to His captive nation, and began his ministry eleven years before the final destruction of Jerusalem.

At first Ezekiel, who may have been a pupil of Jeremiah in earlier days, declared with untiring repetition—in words and symbols—that unfaithful Jerusalem would surely be destroyed. However, during the Babylonians' final siege of the city Ezekiel (chaps 25-32) ceased to speak of Jerusalem, and instead pointed out just as God was judging Judah for its sins, so He would bring retribution upon the heathen nations as well. Mingled with Ezekiel's messages of divine wrath and punishment are also words of sweet comfort for the faithful few who longed for the Lord's salvation. After Jerusalem's destruction these people needed and received God's promises that He would not utterly destroy His chosen nation, but preserve a remnant, return them to Palestine after 70 years captivity, and one day sent into their midst the promised Shepherd-King, the Messiah.

If much of Ezekiel's message is similar to Jeremiah's in emphasis, why has the Holy Spirit recorded so much of both? Or, more to the point, why should we spend our time reading in both? Here's one good reason: in our day of loose morals and fast-disappearing ethics it's important that we Christians never lose sight of sin's seriousness. Unless we recognize the deadly nature of iniquity, we will neither appreciate the glorious love of our Redeemer, nor seek His strength and guidance in the dangers of daily living. Ezekiel speaks plainly. Sin is personal, not collective. "The soul that sinneth, *it* shall die. (Ezekiel 18:20) But God is merciful. "Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep and seek them out." (34:11)

June 16 Ezekiel 1	A vision depicting God's almighty, merciful presence
17 Ezekiel 2	The Call and Commission of Ezekiel
18 Ezekiel 3:1-15	To speak the Word one must first digest the message.
19 Ezekiel 3:16-27	How can we fail to warn others of their sins?
20 Ezekiel 4	The siege of Jerusalem (1-3) The Exile's length (4-8) The hardships of Captivity
21 Ezekiel 5	The "Haircut" Vision (1-4) and its meaning (5-17)
22 Ezekiel 6	"Be not deceived; God is not mocked."
23 Ezekiel 7	Those who refuse the Lord's mercy learn to know Him in His judgment.
24 Ezekiel 8	Vision: The Abominations of Idolatry
25 Ezekiel 9	Vision: The Lord's Judgment upon the Guilty
26 Ezekiel 10	Vision: Jerusalem sentenced to flames and abandoned.
27 Ezekiel 11:1-13	Safe as the chicken in the pot?
28 Ezekiel 11:14-25	Those of simple faith have always been few.
29 Ezekiel 12:1-16	Ezekiel the Prophet in: The Exile's Departure.
30 Ezekiel 12:17-28	Ezekiel the Prophet in: Bread and Water

W. V. Schaller

Treasurer's Report

July 1, 1975—April 1, 1976

RECEIPTS:	MARCH	TO DATE
Offerings	\$18,312.35	\$147,061.46
Memorials	—	161.00
Mission Refund of Expl. Funds	—	286.00
Reimbursement, ILC Expansion Fund	—	219.00
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$18,312.35	\$147,727.46

DISBURSEMENTS:		
Retirement Benefits	950.00	8,550.00
Capital Investments	1,390.00	13,572.94
General Administration	1,211.70	5,028.45
Missions and Administration	7,296.01	67,008.81
Immanuel Lutheran College	5,745.00	51,705.00
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$16,592.71	\$145,865.20
CASH BALANCE FOR PERIOD	1,719.64	1,862.26
CASH BALANCE JULY 1, 1975		27,242.49
CASH BALANCE APRIL 1, 1976		29,104.75

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I.L.C. EXPANSION FUND RECEIPTS	\$ 4,128.18	\$195,925.46
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COMPARATIVE FIGURES

	MARCH	9 Months
BUDGETARY OFFERINGS NEEDED	\$19,652.00	\$176,868.00
BUDGETARY OFFERINGS RECEIVED	18,312.35	147,727.46
DEFICITS	(—\$ 1,339.65)	(—\$ 29,140.54)
.....		
BUDGETARY OFFERINGS, 1974-1975	\$11,954.59	\$142,623.50
INCREASE, 1975-1976	\$ 6,357.76	\$ 5,103.96

Respectfully Submitted,
 Lowell R. Moen, Trustee's Treasurer
 B. J. Naumann, Chairman

Announcements

West-Central Delegate Conference

June 8 to 10, Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. CDT to Thursday noon, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Watertown, South Dakota. Communion service on Wednesday.

Agenda: The term Armageddon as revealed in Holy Scripture, J. Klatt; Devotional Study of Psalm 23, D. Baker; How we can train a man to such a state of Christian maturity that he can keep the faith without the presence of clergymen, Delegate; What is an engagement between man and woman? P. Fleischer; The New Lutheran Hymnal and changes in liturgy . . . what changes are beneficial and what changes are harmful? H. Reed; Committee Work and Floor Discussion of the Prospectus of the 12th Convention of the CLC.

Announce to the host pastor.

W. Mielke, Secretary

Minnesota Delegate Conference

The Minnesota Delegate Conference will meet Sunday, June 27, 3 p.m., at Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church, 1534 West Avenue, Red Wing. In preparation for the 12th CLC Convention, the Prospectus will be reviewed. Please announce to the host pastor, D. Lau.

J. Gurgel, Secretary

139-018 • 9699
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HAYWARD CA
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1976 CAMP LITTLE LONGHORN

The CLC congregations of Texas are again planning their annual Christ-centered retreat.

All ages are invited. Those under 10 must be accompanied by parents.

The site is beautiful Bastrop State Park 30 miles east of Austin amidst the towering "Lost Pines."

The dates are June 14-17

The fees are \$15.00 per camper. No charge for any over three from a family.

Brochures may be obtained by writing to:

Pastor L. D. Redlin
19511 North Freeway
Spring, Texas 77373