JUTHORAN June 1977 Vol. 19, No. 12 SPOKESMAN

CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION



The Lord will Command his loving-Rindness in the day time, and in the night his song shall be with meand my prayer unto the God of my life. Ps. 42:8.

My Life Is Not Here

O Thou precious Savior, Jesus Christ, My Light, my Life, my heart's true love, Who bought and won me—Thy blood the price. How I long for my home above!

But since I await Thy chosen day, Doing Thy work 'midst this world's sin. Grant me Thy Spirit to preserve my way That this life my love may never win.

By Thy Spirit grant the Father's grace To view earth's things by faith's true light, That I may in glory see Thy face And know the joy of heaven's life!

-V. Fossum

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Postmaster: Send notice on Form 3579 to the Lutheran Spokesman, 2750 Oxford St., No., Roseville, MN 55113. Second Class postage paid at Lake Mills. IA 50450.

The Lutheran Spokesman, published monthly at 204 N. 2nd Ave. W., Lake Mills, IA

The Lutheran Spokesman, published monthly at 204 N. 2nd Ave. W., Lake Mills, IA 50450, is an official organ of the Church of the Lutheran Confession, the issues appearing during the first week of each month.

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Material submitted for publication should be sent to Editor G. Sydow one month before the date of publication. Church and school news should be sent to the Church News editor. Appropriements and other short notices should be sent directly to

News editor. Announcements and other short notices should be sent directly to Editor G. Sydow.

Business Manager: Mr. Peter Sydow; Assistant Business Manager: Mr. Benno Sydow. Address: 2750 Oxford St. No., Roseville, MN 55113. Subscriptions: \$3.00 for one year; \$5.50 for two years; \$8.00 for three years. Group subscriptions to congregations: \$2.50.

Blessing The Lord

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Psalm 103:3-5: "Who healeth all thy diseases; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles."

"Bless the LORD," says David. Be thankful for all His benefits! Be thankful he is the LORD. thankful because he is your LORD. Be thankful for your redemption, be thankful for your physical wellbeing! It is this thought particularly that we want to think about this morning. We will not be thankful unless first we are thoughtful. If you look up the word, "thank" in the large dictionary, you will see how closely related it is to "think." Think about all the good things that your LORD has done for you, and you can not help but thank. Think, says the Psalmist, how He heals all your diseases, how He takes care of our bodies, how He relieves our physical pain. It is when things seem to go well, when pills seem to be effective, when medication seems to work that we tend not to think of our LORD at all, but begin to trust doctors and pills and medication. It is many times only when these things do not work, when we are up against a situation that is virtually hopeless that we cry to the LORD, that we remember His mercies, that we desperately call to Him for a way out, that we begin to think! To think of our total dependence on our LORD, whether it is for relief from a simple headache or from pernicious cancer, for He heals all our diseases, though it is many times only when He for a moment withholds His gracious hand that we realize this truth. We mortal creatures cannot afford to forget our LORD for a single moment, and He, in turn, does not forget us. In moments of pain and trouble He is there with His sheltering wing and His outstretched hand to offer comfort and relief. In our greatest physical as well as spiritual needs the LORD is there to help.

Day by Day Involvement

Yet we must not get the idea that the LORD comes only into our lives in moments of trouble! Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Psalmist not only says, "He heals all your diseases," but he adds, "He crowns our lives with loving kindness and tender mercies." And that happens every day. You rise in the morning, not only a forgiven creature with a clean heart, but with the energy and will to face the new day, with a healthy body. You attend classes with the excitement of learning. You come to the gymnasium with the potential and restless energy to become involved in some athletic activity. You are excited about singing or playing an instrument or speaking a part in a play, or enjoying the companionship of one of your schoolmates. If you think carefully, you cannot fail to see these tender mercies-what a beautiful expression—showered upon your life

to make it something more than just being alive. It is nothing short of amazing that we are so totally involved with our LORD and our LORD with us. He is involved with our spirits to give us clean consciences and the hope of heaven: He is involved in our lives to heal our pains and diseases: and He is involved in our choicest and most precious moments. He crowns your life in so many ways. He wants to be involved in your curricular and extracurricular activities, and He wants you to remember Him and to recognize that all the good things that happen from day to day are His blessings.

The Blessing of Food

In this connection the Psalmist would invite you especially to think about one of the activities that happens most of all in your lives, that happens three times a day, namely, eating. He says, "The LORD satisfies your mouth with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagles." He does not only give us what we need, but He satisfies our mouths with an abundance and variety of food. There was a time in David's life when he was very hungry, hungry enough to take the showbread out of the temple, and yet he can say, "I have been young and now am old, yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread," or as he writes in Psalm 145: "The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O LORD, and Thou givest them their meat in due season: Thou openest Thy hands and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." With the food we eat the

LORD satisfies our desires and makes us young again, and that is something we ought not take for granted. We eat, and by the blessing of God we possess new energy and new strength. We are revitalized! That is why the words of our meal prayers are so important. Important not as a ritual or as a meritorious act, for then it might be better if we did not pray at all. Rather they are important because when we pray we think, and when we think, we thank. Those precious words, "And let these gifts to us be blest," must not be gone over lightly, for without the blessing of God you could eat and eat and eat, and still starve to death: or you could eat and still be sickly and weak. This whole matter of daily bread is important in our lives. important enough for our Savior to include a petition about it in the Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," not in the sense that as carnal belly-servers we would proudly demand our every whim from God, but rather, as Dr. Luther describes, that as his children we would learn to receive with appreciation and thanksgiving our daily bread.

If this text has any meaning at all for us, it is this that we think about all the temporal blessings of our God who heals all our diseases and crowns our lives with tender mercies and satisfies our mouths with good things, and all of this because He is our heavenly Father for Jesus' sake. O may we think about these things, and then thank, and then cry out with David in humble appreciation, "Bless the LORD, O my soul!"

-R. Dommer

INTERPRETATION III

In an earlier number of this series it was suggested that what a person "gets out of" a book depends on what kind of book he thinks it is. (March 1977) What an individual gets out of the Bible depends on his assumptions about it. Interpretations will vary according to those assumptions. Scripture's witnesses of itself is that it is God's Word, given by inspiration through men whom the Holy Spirit selected for that singular purpose. The Scripture's purpose is a saving one—to bring the knowledge of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins to sinners (cf. 2 Timothy 3:15-17).

There are many meanings from the Bible available to unbelievers. They can read it and receive many of its thoughts, since the words are communicating the thoughts of the Author. But an unbeliever's ability to interpret Scriptures is necessarily limited, since by definition he neither acknowledges God nor His personal revelation in Jesus Christ. If an individual does not believe that there is a God, then he will not accept the possibility of such a God acting in the history of mankind.

The Spirit Creates Assumptions

One of our hymns states, "Lord, 'tis not that I did choose Thee; That, I know, could never be; For this heart would still refuse Thee Had Thy grace not chosen me." (Hymn 37) In countless Scriptures God describes the absolute inability of a human being saving himself. A person is saved only through the regenerative power of the Holy Spirit working through the Gospel word. "... natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised." (1 Corinthians 2:14) "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, nor come to Him. But the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel ..." (3rd Art. Explanation)

Part of the assurance which the Holy Spirit bestows when He converts an unbeliever is that the Gospel's historical information is correct. Otherwise the historical events on which the Gospel is based are unbelievable—a virgin birth—a perfect human being—a person able to suspend the laws of nature to perform miracles—one who reversed the universal human experience of death. When the Holy Spirit does His work, He convinces people not only of their forgiveness in Jesus Christ, but also that the information about Jesus is true and the historical events on which the Gospel is based actually happened.

The Assumptions

1) Since the Scriptures' essential purpose is to bring men and women to faith in Jesus Christ, only those who have been brought to faith are really able to understand and interpret the Scriptures. So the Holy Spirit is creating the assumptions and presuppositions necessary for the proper interpretation of His own Book. Without His enabling work, interpretations can only reflect the

natural impulses of those "natural" individuals who cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God. Those not justified by faith are inadequate interpreters of the Scriptures.

- 2) The Holy Spirit is convincing us not only that Jesus is our Savior from sin and death, but that the Book which brings this information speaks the truth and is therefore reliable. The word of Promise has to be God's Word because of the purpose for which it is given.
- 3) Furthermore, the Holy Spirit brings us assurance of the possibilities of God. He is Creator; we are created. His position as Creator is a sovereignty which we cannot understand. All of God's actions are absolutely free. Ours are confined by our limitations as creatures and complicated by our moral ineptitude. When the Holy Spirit recreates the pristine relationship of mankind in fellowship with his God, He also assures them of the unlimited possibilities of God. Conversion itself fits into the category of impossible—like camels going through the eyes of sewing needles. "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26) An assumption of a limited God will only produce weak or incorrect interpretations.

De-myth

One way to by-pass the intended meaning of the Scriptures is to suggest that events did not occur as they were reported. Some suggest that the hidden meaning behind what is stated—in a miracle, for example—is what the interpreter must try to find. They say the Bible must be demythologized—the myths must be taken out. They hold that historical events are not important in and of themselves. But one can't use such an excuse to deny that the events took place. According to the "de-myth" scenario, the resurrection of Jesus did not actually happen. Reading the apostolic witness of the resurrection is to lead the worshiper to thoughts of new life and spiritual renewal. But the apostle Paul dissents. He pins the possibility of our resurrection on the fact of Christ's. Without genuine, real resurrection, that is, return to life after death, there is no Gospel. God gives us saving information with the historical events on which they are based.

The assumption of those who want to de-myth the Scriptures is that God didn't—or perhaps even couldn't—do what He said He did. Another prejudice of the Scripture's critics is that the biblical authors did not possess the same knowledge of science and geography as we do. They did not accept the same criteria of what is history and accuracy. Whence this twentieth century monopoly on what is "fact"? Events are not altered by the century in which the witnesses lived.

For example, Jesus went out of His way to establish the fact of His resurrection. Many people witnessed that He was indeed alive after being dead. Witnesses don't go around inventing stories about what they saw, especially when they don't believe the events actually could or might have happened. Skepticism and unbelief were rampant on Easter eve—in spite of the scattered reports of appearances. Jesus' personal presence in glorified flesh shattered

impossibility. "What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with out eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of life..." (1 John 1:1) What type of scientific or geographical criteria could have altered or improved what John witnessed? The apostles could not "stop speaking what we have seen and hear." (Acts 4:20) To question their witness requires an assumption about the intelligence of these men and their ability to report accurately what they saw, heard, and felt.

The Holy Spirit creates proper interpreters of the Scriptures. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God, which things we speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words." (1 Corinthians 2:12,13)

-M. Sydow

Church News

"IT'S A MIRACLE!"

A little over five and one half years ago in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of Western North Carolina, an LCA pastor and some 30 souls separated from their false-teaching synod according to the Word of the Lord.

Living Word Lutheran Church was created by the Spirit of God in the fall of 1971, and for almost a year the young congregation worshipped in the rented facilities of the local Seventh Day Adventist Church. In the summer of 1972 a parsonage was purchased and the basement was remodeled into a chapel, where the congregation worshipped for the next four years.

As the Holy Spirit led people in the community to seek the truth of the Gospel that, by God's grace, *Living Word* proclaims, the worship and educational facilities of the parsonage rapidly became inadequate.

Something New

So in the summer of 1975 the congregation began a search for suitable property upon which to build a church. In October of the same year a new venture in faith was begun as the people of Living Word purchased an older building with the purpose of developing it into a house of worship. The building was so old and decrepit that many thought it was impossible to even salvage. But with God nothing is impossible! And by His grace the men of the congregation, along with the help of some friends, worked for a year and a half. The result was a beautiful new church building with a sanctuary that seats over 100 people; a large classroom that can be divided for Sunday School; a large classroom/ fellowship room; a kitchenette; two bathrooms; a utility room and a pastor's study.



Living Word Lutheran Church dedication, April 10, 1977.

On February 20, 1977 the first Service of Worship was held in the new church building. And on Easter Sunday afternoon, members from Living Word, Holy Trinity of West Columbia, South Carolina and Immanuel of Winter Haven, Florida gathered to praise the Name of our risen Savior and to dedicate Living Word's church building to the glory of God. Pastor Fred Archer of Living Word conducted the service: Pastor Paul Nolting of Holy preached the sermon based on Rom. 8:31, "If God Be For Us, Who Can Be Against Us?", and retired Pastor Martin Galstad of Immanuel brought greetings to the 117 people who attended the Service.

Possible in the Lord

Could men have delivered themselves from the bondage of a synod overcome by apostasy? Could it have been possible for sinful human beings to seek and find the truth of God's Word and then to organize themselves into a self-supporting congregation of some 30 souls? Could mere mortals have caused this congregation of 61 souls (at the present time) to be able to own both a parsonage and a new church building, all within a period of 5 years? The answer is a resounding NO!

When local people see the new church building of Living Word many exclaim, "It's a miracle!" And that is the story of Living Word congregation from the very beginning. The God of all grace and mercy, who in the greatest miracle of all, raised His Son from the dead for the salvation of the whole world, still performs miracles today as the history of Living Word so clearly exemplifies.

May God grant us all the grace to stand firm in the faith He has delivered to His saints until the Last Day, when we shall meet Him face to face. Amen.

-F. Archer

SNOW FROM HEAVEN

Contrary to the usual pattern of things, the vicinity around Coloma, Michigan, came through the winter with all the moisture it could handle, —more than 100 inches of snow. It was literally true at times that there wasn't enough room to receive the blessing.

It was the same with another kind of blessing. The Lord opened the windows of heaven and poured out His kindness in the form of numerous new students for the Christian Day School of Faith congregation at Coloma. The present school facilities could hardly contain the thirty-nine who were enrolled.

Deeper and Deeper

It was only three years ago that Miss Shirley Wendland came to start the Day School for the fifteen year old congregation. Although there were serious difficulties in getting approval of the facility for school use, the endeavor got under way with an enrolment of seven in grades K-2. This was in the 1974 fall term. By September of 1975 grades 3-4 were added and the number inched up to eleven.

During this period the church's pastor of 16 years, the Rev. Paul Schaller, left for a new assignment in New Mexico. Pastor Paul Tiefel, Jr., of Sister Lakes served the vacancy until June, 1976, when James Sandeen was installed as pastor.

When a survey indicated a probable enrollment of more than thirty in grades K-6 for the fall term of 1976, the need for a second teacher was obvious. Trusting the Lord for an outpouring of the necessary material blessings, the congregation called Mr. Tim Koch.

There was momentum in the project. The Lord stirred the hearts of the people, that summer, to provide desks and equipment, a new fire exit, book cases, housing and two school vans for transportation of students in outlying areas. Mrs.



Faith School, Coloma



Teacher Shirley Wendland and Class

Harolyn Quigley accepted the call of the congregation to assist the lower grade teacher as an aid.

In fall there were thirty nine in grades K-6, with 15 in the kindergarten. The facility, a 36 x 36 wing added to the church in 1966 for Sunday School use, was barely adequate to receive the blessing. But the problems, as all others before, melted away as the Son of grace shone brightly in the hearts of members to make-do and make-shift.

No Let Up

One can count on more snow in the forecasts for SW Michigan next winter, and one can count on more students for the coming school year. Projections are for about fifty-five in grades K-7, including another large kindergarten. In anticipation of this the congregation sought another full-time teacher of the Lord and received answer in the person of Miss

Susan Lueck, who will join the faculty in mid-August of 1977.

More Storage Space

Rather than limit the enrollment to the present facilities, the congregation boldly decided on an expansion program, trusting that the Lord would continue His habit of making provision.

Under construction now is a 40 x 80 extension with three class-rooms. Cost estimates are in the neighborhood of \$100,000, but the people are determined to do the building themselves for a materials cost of less than half that amount. Ground-breaking ceremonies were on Easter Sunday, with actual construction under way the following week.

Needless to say, the congregation is going to be "snowed" with work to finish by the end of August. Supporting four full-time workers,



Teacher Tim Koch and Class

and maintaining the rest of the church's work at home and at large, these people will be taxing themselves heavily in all respects. How they will manage is a question. But they continue to look to the Lord and His Word for the strength they will need. An every-member contact program is under way to encourage faithful use of the Word and Sacrament, where strength of faith is found. And they do count on the Lord's performance of His promise,

"As the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven . . . so shall my Word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please and prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isaiah 55)

There has never been a lack of snow in Coloma, nor a lack of God's blessing on the endeavors of the congregation. The members of Faith do not look for any change this coming year!

-James Sandeen

MILES CITY

It's a rather simple matter for congregations to implement their mission endeavors through the agency of the synod. Funds are supplied. A mission board does the rest. In an increasing number of cases, however, we find established congregations getting directly involved in the

exploration of potential mission fields.

This broadranging activity of a local congregation often gets started when some members move into a new area. If they are isolated, the question comes quite naturally. Can a congregation of our confession be

established? Before any answers can be given, especially in the form of a synodical commitment for subsidy, a lot of preliminary work must be done. It is to this that established churches are giving themselves.

It is St. Luke's congregation of Lemmon, South Dakota, which did the preliminaries for the new CLC church in Miles City in the eastern sector of Montana. Together with the synodical mission board, this group is now calling for a full-time pastor.

How It Was Done

Two years ago the Lemmon church decided to undertake the project of determining the mission potentials of this neighboring community, some 200 miles to the west. The town is the commercial hub of a large area of ranch land, where "cattle is king." Recently the quest for coal has brought national attention to the area, and a rather dramatic increase in population is anticipated. A growing community usually offers the best opportunities

for gospel work, so there was good reason for that "open door feeling."

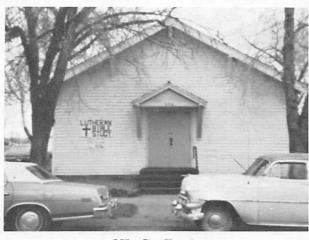
A special treasury was established for the project. The Rev. David Koenig, pastor of the congregation, was authorized to conduct Bible studies in the area every two weeks. On two occasions they sent teams of members to do personal canvassing. They arranged for radio publicity and mailings to support the canvassing efforts.

The response has been encouraging. A small group has already formed a nucleus. On Easter Sunday seventeen people gathered to worship the risen Christ, and to rejoice in the baptism of three children.

In evaluating the situation in Miles City, Pastor Koenig observes that "there are many opportunities waiting for us to witness to the hope that is within us. Our prayer is that a missionary will soon come to this area to do this work."

A good work has been begun. Many will pray that it be continued with the same zeal.

-Rollin A. Reim



Miles City Chapel

DAILY DEVOTIONS

The Apostle Paul traveled (Daily Devotions June 16-30) and so do we. During the summer months our travels are often excursions into the great out-of-doors. Visits to the beach, trips to the mountains, hikes in the woods, an evening on the patio-whether a week, a day, or a few hours is involved—these are times to remember that the world of nature is our Father's world. Remembering this we will find that the Word of God is the key for unlocking a wealth of divine revelation in the world around us. The Bible is full of references to God's great creation-to trees and flowers, the heavens and the birds, the seas and the mountains. And God's creation speaks to us of His wisdom, His love, His power, and also recalls to our minds messages recorded in God's Word.

With this in mind the Scripture selections for July and August are well-suited to summertime usage, but even better suited to use in "the unwalled sanctuary of the out-of-doors." For this reason you might well note those selections you would like to use sometime on vacation, at the beach, at a

cook-out, or on a hike.

1 Psalms 65:9-13

7 Matthew 6:25,26,33: 13:31-32

July

"The earth is full of Thy riches."

The Lord our God fills the earth with goodness.

2 Genesis 2:1-3: Matthew 11:28-30 Rest is good, especially rest for the soul. 3 Psalms 107:31-37 Drought? Look to the Lord who works change for our good. 4 Psalms 104:1-15 See the majesty of the Lord when you look at His world. 5 Psalms 104:16-23 The goodness of God is evident in His creation. 6 Psalms 104:24-35 Observe the wisdom of the Lord when you observe His creation.

Learn to see heavenly truths in earthly scenes.

Use your time in the outdoors to draw nearer to God. Worship the Lord of Creation.

"The heavens declare the glory of God."

10 Psalms 19:1-6; Genesis 9:12-15 11 Psalms 148

9 Psalms 96:9-13

8 Job 12:7-10: Jeremiah 23:23-24

12 Psalms 8

13 Psalms 136:1-9,26 14 Isaiah 55:6-11

15 Job 38:1.31-36:

42:1-5 16 Matthew 16:1-4

17 Psalms 91:1-4

18 Genesis 1:20-22

20 Isaiah 40:28-31

19 Matthew 10:28-31: Job 39:26-29

21 Psalms 1 22 Genesis 21:33: John 4:21-24

23 Genesis 1:27-31 24 Jeremiah 17:5-8

25 Luke 22:39-46 26 Psalms 92:1-9.12-15 The sky above tells of the glory and grace of God. Are you listening? Praise the Lord of creation.

Consider the works of God's fingers, and think!

See the loving kindness of God in His creation, and give thanks!

God, whose thoughts are far above ours, reaches down to us in loving forgiveness through His Word.

Take your worries and cares to Him who rules the vast universe. Don't read the sky and ignore the Word.

The Lord our God is like a refuge in the rocks, a protective

eagle-parent.

The Christian does not pollute and abuse the world his Father made.

A word from the birds. God is tireless in His care and love.

"Consider the lilies, how they grow."

Discuss how the believer is like a tree.

The forest can be your temple if you worship the true God from a true heart.

Consider all that your Creator has given into your care.

Happy are those who know that in God, not man, is our future. "Into the woods my Master went" for strength to walk the way ahead.

Lord, help us to grow.

27 Mark 4:26-29 28 Genesis 1:9-12

29 Luke 12:27-31 30 Luke 12:16-21

31 Psalms 51:1-10

Lord, let Thy Word bear fruit in us. God creates for a purpose.

A word from the flowers.

God's gifts are rich, but He is the treasure.

Let the rain remind how God washes our hearts.

W. V. Schaller

Treasurer's Report

July 1, 1976—May 1, 1977

RECEIPTS:	APRIL	TO DATE
Offerings	\$20,207.26	\$177,753.24
Memorials	100.00	525.00
Mission Refund of Expl. Funds		231.90
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$20,307.26	\$178,510.14
DISBURSEMENTS:		
Retirement Benefits	1,178.00	13,110.00
Emergency Support		387.53
Capital Investments	1,672.79	17,790.86
General Administration	777.20	5,030.82
Missions & Administration	7,493.07	73,347.36
Immanuel Lutheran College	7,12 <u>8.00</u>	71,280.00
Printing, '77 Directories		551.00
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$18,249.06	\$181,497.57
CASH BALANCE OR DEFICIT FOR PERIO	OD 2,058.20	(- 2,987.43)
CASH BALANCE JULY 1, 1976	OD 2,030.20	30,189.95
CASIT BALANCE OCE 1, 1070		
CASH BALANCE MAY 1, 1977		\$ 27,202.52
ILC EXPANSION FUND RECEIPTS	\$ 903.75	\$229,107.62
Disbursements:		224,539.68
Balance On Hand		\$ 4,567.94

COMPARATIVE FIGURES

		APRIL	10 MONTHS
BUDGET OFFERINGS NEEDED	\$2	0,994.00	\$209,940.00
BUDGET OFFERINGS RECEIVED	2	0,307.26	178,510.14
	(—\$	686.74) (— \$ 31,429.86)

BUDGET OFFERINGS, 1975-1976 \$20,218.00 \$167,945.00 INCREASE 1976-1977 89.26 10.565.14

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

Announcements

West Central Delegate Conference

The conference will meet June 7-9 at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Bowdle, South Dakota, beginning at 10:00 A.M. Tuesday, CDT. A communion service will be held on Wednesday evening.

Agenda: Is it wrong to have organists, soloists and ushers who are not of the CLC serve in our Sunday services, funerals and weddings? N. Greve; Is participation in Alcoholics Anonymous pleasing to God? L. Grams; Historical study of one of our Lutheran Confessions, V. Fossum; What is our scriptural commission in regard to Mission work? V. Tiefel; A devotional study of Psalm 100, R. Schaller.

-M. Mielke, secretary

1977 Camp Little Longhorn

The CLC congregations of Texas are again planning their annual Christ-centered retreat. All ages are invited. Those under 8 must be accompanied by parents.

The site is Camp Mohawk, 35 miles west of Galveston Island. The date is June 12-17. The fee is \$16.00 per camper. No charge for any over three from a family. Brochures may be obtained by writing to Pastor L. D. Redlin, 2831 Spring Cypress Rd., Spring, Texas. 77379

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