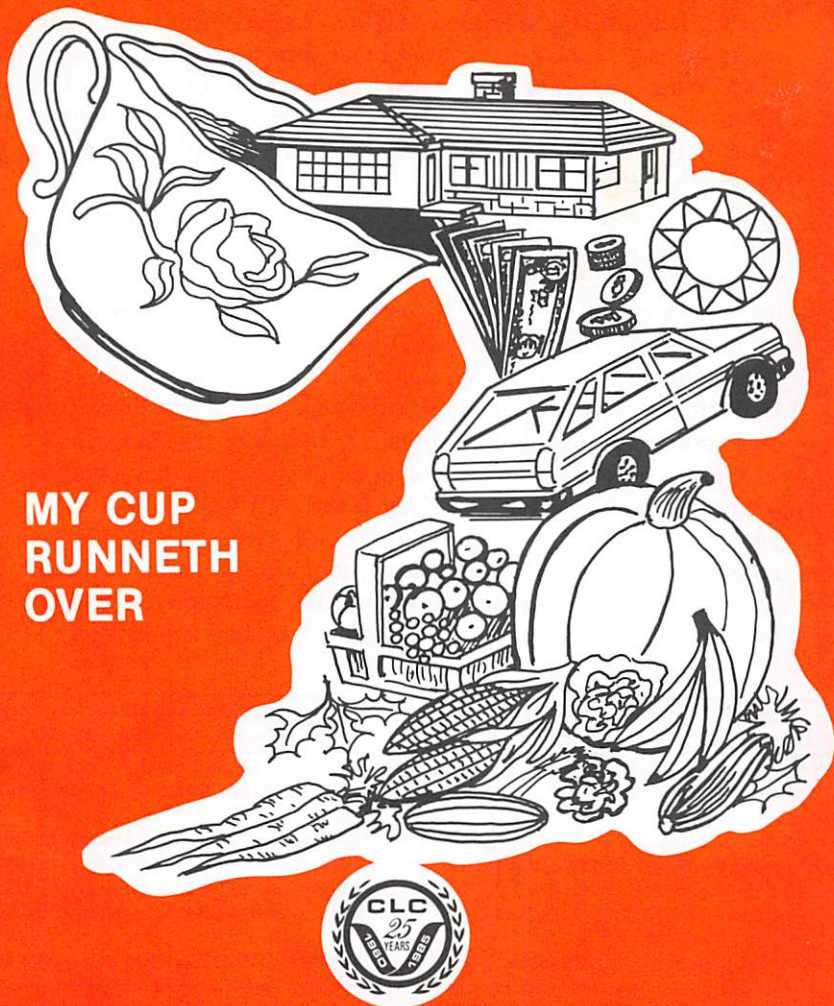


lutheran spokesman

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MY CUP
RUNNETH
OVER

CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

—In the Spokesman 25 Years Ago—

March 1961 (Vol. 3, No. 10): WHAT IS A SYNOD? A synod is an association of congregations and pastors. A synod is formed to confess the unity of the Spirit by external union, and to carry out specific parts of the Church's commission which cannot be achieved as well by individual congregations. Through such a union congregations can serve each other in many ways. Since a synod with a true confession can come into being only through the power of the Gospel, it is a divine creation. Only its external form is of human origin, as is also the case with all other forms of Christian association. What actually makes a synod a *church* body is the unity of the Spirit. And where this unity is absent, all religious fellowships are an abomination to God. The unity of the Spirit qualifies a synod to participate in the work of our Lord.

. . . A synod of the true confession is doing the Lord's work. This in itself does not make it a matter of conscience to join such a synod. Congregations can support this work without actually being members of the synod. Yet joining is not a matter of indifference. In a country where there are some 250 denominations within Christendom, joining a larger church body is a *confessional* act. Love for God and for our brethren will not allow us to treat this lightly, nor long postpone joining a church of the true confession. We Americans worry a lot about joining an organization and giving up the use of some of *our rights*. That is the cost. But the cost of not joining may be higher. Unless there are excellent and unusual reasons for not joining an orthodox synod, a congregation lays itself open to the suspicion that it is separatistic; that it prefers to go its own way in doctrine and practice without mutual supervision . . .

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LETTING THE LIGHT SHINE

During this 25th anniversary year we have heard much about letting our light shine, and rightly so. It would be hard to imagine a more appropriate theme. The expression, which is from the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5:16), reminds us that it is not we who produce the light: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has now shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor. 4:6).

To let our light shine, then, is not so much to produce any light as it is to be rid of the bushel baskets that would hide the light (Mt. 5:15). We, in our earthly state, are master-craftsmen at weaving such baskets in all sizes, and hiding our hope. That is why it is good every now and then to recognize an anniversary, and to use the year, not only for words of thanksgiving in our reflections and projections, but also for repentance. The very first of Martin Luther's famous 95 theses called for a *life* of repentance, for this means relying on God's forgiveness alone, whether looking back or ahead.

What better thanks could we bring to God than to confess our need of the banquet which He has prepared, and to "drink in" His kind words of forgiveness once again? "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? *I will take the*

cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord" (Ps. 116:12f). For all those sins which have beclouded the precious light, also in our CLC—for all the times that our selfish lives have appeared dark, as dark as the night around us, our plea is not that we were at least better than some others (liberals, etc.), but our plea is that His blood was shed for us.

Repentance and remission of sins—when these fuel the wick of our lives, then the light is shining.

The Result

What will be the end result? Jesus said that people would see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven. This is surely a *result*, for it is *not* our *purpose* to be seen by men. As Jesus said in the same sermon: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them" (Mt. 6:1). But while we are living lives of repentance and depending upon God's forgiveness, the light is shining, and people do see us acting like the children of God that He has convinced us we are in Christ.

What's next? Whenever methods of spreading the gospel light are discussed, the question arises: "What were the results?" Sometimes what is meant is: How many people expressed interest in the church? How many visited services? How many joined the church in its work of witnessing? How has our organiza-

tion grown in twenty-five years? How might we grow in the future?

These are not all bad questions to ask, but Jesus does not narrow it down so much. He says that people may see your good works and *glorify your Father in heaven*.

Such results may or may not be something that we see. As Elijah did not see seven thousand people glorifying God in Israel, so we may not see the results. But *God* will see them, and *our* joy will come from the same good news of forgiveness that we are sharing by word and life.

And if we are granted this grace, to see some of the results of the Light shining in the world, may God preserve us from that spoiler, Pride, so that our joy may still be rooted in the gospel of forgiveness alone. Of Christ

we may justly be proud for twenty-five years, for twenty-five life-times, for twenty-five worlds! We have seen *His* good works in the Word which He has preserved to us for all these years. May the result also be accomplished in us.

Give us lips to sing Thy glory,
Tongues Thy mercy to proclaim,
Throats that shout the hope that
fills us,

Mouths to speak Thy holy name:
Alleluia! Alleluia!

May the light which Thou dost
send

Fill our songs with alleluias,
Alleluias without end!*

—Paul Schaller

*Text of the hymn stanza is by
M. Franzmann

“Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.”
(Matthew 5:13)

“Ye Are (Not Only) The Light Of The World”

When I recently hinted to someone that I thought I'd write on “you are not only the light of the world but also the salt of the earth” since these are companion thoughts in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, this fellow Christian proceeded to tell me of a sermon he remembered from childhood days. His pastor was one who liked to use visual aids to make a point stick. Next to the pulpit he had placed an aquarium filled with water. There was also a light bulb attached to two electrodes sticking down into the water. At first the light bulb was not burning. But as the preacher in the course of his talk added more and more salt to the water the light bulb began to shine ever more brightly.

For those of us who aren't journeyman electricians, the simplest explana-

tion for this is that salt makes water a better conductor of electricity. Without salt, no light! If salt is added, the brighter the light! Just maybe this explains why, *before* teaching His disciples “Ye are the light of the world,” the Creator of the universe taught them: “Ye are the salt of the earth.”

In Bible times every home, however poor, made use of salt and light. The need for light in the home is obvious. As for salt, it had and has a variety of uses. It is essential for the human diet (though dangerous in excess, as is anything), and it is appreciated as a seasoning for food (see Job 6:6). In addition, salt is a natural preservative. Especially in the days before refrigeration, salt kept most meats wholesome and free of decay for an extended period.

This Decaying World

When Jesus spoke of His disciples as the earth’s salt, most likely He had in mind its preservative characteristic rather than its seasoning characteristic. We say this because there is no way Christians, or anybody else for that matter, can ever “season” this world to make it palatable to God. Since the fall into sin, God’s once-perfect world is and remains a fallen one. As its god and prince, Satan works 24 hours a day to make sure that “the whole world lieth in wickedness” (I Jn. 5:19) and that it is the epitome of corruption (2 Pet. 2:20). The apostle John writes that “all that is in the world . . . is not of the Father” and therefore exhorts his readers: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world” (I Jn. 2:15ff).

Is it not obvious how much in need of a preservative this world is? The flaunting of God’s will and commandments today rivals the godlessness of the time before the flood and the time of Sodom and Gomorrah. The humanistic, hedonistic (pleasure-seeking), narcissistic (“me first”), materialistic attitudes of our day are paralleling the conditions in ancient Rome (see Romans 1:18ff). Under the “do your own thing” philosophy mankind worships and serves the creature rather than the Creator. With such godlessness come all the raunching, stenching sins which support the contention that, were it not for a salt preservative, this world would soon self-destruct in its own rot and pollution.

And contrary to the hopes and dreams of most of its politicians, as well as contrary to the hopes and dreams of “Christian” teachers of a millennialistic utopia on this earth, the world is the world is the world is the world! The world is not only sick, but dead to God and everything He stands for. This world and everything in it that belongs to it has no choice but to deteriorate in an inevitable, relentless decaying process!

“. . . WERE IT NOT FOR A SALT PRESERVATIVE, THIS WORLD WOULD SOON SELF-DESTRUCT IN ITS OWN ROT AND POLLUTION.”

Yes, thank God, there are some governmental, state, and social laws and programs which help to some extent to curb the decadence and decay. If this were not true, how much *more* rotten the world would be! But the fact remains, nevertheless, that with all its programs of whatever kind, *the world can't stop itself* from going bad, rotting, decaying. The world will be the world!

Christian Believers—The Salt Preservative

What—where—who is the answer?: “YE ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH . . .” Since nobody and nothing *of the world* can stop its decay, only something or somebody *in the world but not of it* can hope to do this. Only salt introduced from outside can arrest or at least hinder the rot, the corruption, the stink, the decay. AND THAT SALT IS: “YE . . .” Christian believers who live and practice their belief are an essential preservative for a godless, corrupt secular society!

“Ye *are* the salt of the earth . . .” That’s a declarative statement, even as its companion statement: “Ye are the light of the world.” Believers need not, cannot make themselves over into salt. They *are* salt because of the Spirit’s work through the miracle of conversion.

Yet, due to the “maggot sack” of flesh (Luther) that clings also to believers, it was necessary for the Master to attach a condition, a rider, to his declarative statement. The condition is that God’s children by faith in Jesus must retain their saltiness if they are to accomplish what salt is intended to accomplish. “Have salt in yourselves” (Mk. 9:50) Jesus said in another place. Salt can become so contaminated with impurities that it becomes useless for the purpose it is intended to serve. If Christians are to fulfill their calling as moral disinfectants and not become desalted salt fit for the dunghill, they must not compromise their Christian convictions, standards, morals. They must not lose what someone has called their “Christian tang” by careless sinning, laziness, fear, compromise—by blending in with the world and blurring the distinction between them and the people of the world. Desalted salt, says the Savior, is but material for footpaths!



“CHRISTIAN BELIEVERS WHO LIVE AND PRACTICE THEIR BELIEF ARE AN ESSENTIAL PRESERVATIVE FOR A GODLESS, CORRUPT SECULAR SOCIETY!”

“MAY WE REMEMBER: ‘YE ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH’ AND THEREFORE ‘HAVE SALT IN YOURSELVES.’”

“To look at some Christians one would think that their ambition is to be the honeypot of the world. They sweeten and sugar the bitterness of life with an all too easy conception of a loving God . . . But Jesus, of course, did not say, ‘You are the honey of the world.’ He said, ‘You are the salt of the earth.’” (H. Thielicke) And Luther puts it this way: “Salting has to bite. Although they criticize us as biters, we know that this is how it has to be and that Christ has commanded the salt to be sharp and continually caustic . . . if you want to preach the Gospel and help people, you must be sharp and rub salt into their wounds, showing the reverse side and denouncing what is not right . . .” To this he adds: “The real salt is the true exposition of Scripture, which denounces the whole world and lets nothing stand but the simple faith in Christ.”

“Where Is The Salt?”

“Where is the beef?” is a phrase recently popularized in TV commercials. As far as the preservative influence of His children in a decadent society is concerned, Jesus is asking us to consider: “Where is the salt?” You, says He, My redeemed, regenerate, reconciled, and righteous people are where the salt is!

Of the many lessons to be learned in connection with the Christian’s being the salt of the earth and the light of the world, one of the most fundamental is this: *there is a difference* between Christians and non-Christians, between the Church and the world. As Christians we must be ready to accept the responsibility this difference and distinction puts upon us. But nowadays Satan is working overtime, also within the church, to blur this distinction. The results are sadly and painfully obvious. As we have written elsewhere: rather than the Christian church serving as a counter-attack against the prevailing sins of the society and culture in which we are living, that culture and society has, instead, come to dictate how and what the church preaches, as well as how and what she practices. Such a savourless salt posture on the part of a compromising, liberal Christian church is good for nothing but to be cast out!

As He looks at many of His professed children today, Jesus asks: “Where is the salt?” May we remember: “Ye are the salt of the earth” and therefore “Have salt in yourselves.” More salt—more light! As faithful Christians living in the midst of a sick and decaying secular world, we will exert the *positive* influence of light in this dark world as we exert the largely *negative* influence of being a salt preservative in it. To that end, help us, dear Father in heaven, through the power of Your indwelling Spirit!

—Paul Fleischer

REMEMBERING BACH—Part II

A Great Change

We wonder sometimes that Bach found time for his family at all with the work-load he carried in Leipzig. He knew, of course, when he arrived that he would be teaching Latin and catechism classes, as well as composing, conducting, and teaching music, not to mention supervising now and then in the dormitory. He no doubt also knew of the duties of the music director, to supervise the music for all five of Leipzig's churches. In two of the churches four hour services were held every Sunday. Of course, special services were held around the Christmas and Easter holidays. For all of this music, Bach would no longer have the well-trained professional court musicians which he had directed in the past. In fact, if it had not been for the music society organized by some of the students at the university, much of Bach's music might not have been performed.

Certainly Sebastian knew, when his cart rolled into Leipzig, that his salary would be only slightly higher than what he had received as a seventeen-year-old beginning organist. In order to support his family, now he would need the extra fees which could be obtained by providing music at all kinds of festivals, weddings, funerals, baptisms, university celebrations, and so on. For these he would compose, rehearse, conduct, and perform one masterpiece after another.



Sebastian may not have known that in Leipzig his apartment would be in the school building, separated from the quarters of fifty-five students by a thin wall. By now Bach had remarried, this time to Anna Magdalena Wilcken. Only six of their thirteen children survived and some attribute this to the unsanitary conditions in Leipzig at the time.

Thus Sebastian, with all his gifts and accomplishments, also faced troubles and obstacles such as humans have had to face since Adam saw his first thistle. Bach saw plenty of death, and yet, turning to Christ, he could still sing with Luther that "death is become a mockery." (*Ein Spott aus dem Tod ist worden—Cantata #4*)

It is this faith, which we share with Sebastian, that brings us close to him, whether we are musicians or not.

No Pietist . . .

Some have characterized Bach as being pietistic because he stood, sometimes alone, for the faith at a time when the Age of Enlightenment was already trying to put man in God's place. But early in his life, when Bach's superior at Muehlhausen was a follower of the pietistic movement, Bach disappointed him greatly. He wanted no complex music, but at the most a simple background for the personal experience of piety. Bach, on the other hand, looked to the Word of God for objective assurance, and saw music as a means of interpreting God's Word in a "resounding sermon."

No wonder the young organist, following the example of older organists like Dietrich Buxtehude, was characterized by his superior as "bewildering the congregation."

. . . But Pious

Bach was not a pietist, but he was pious. At Leipzig his superior, J. A. Ernesti, was a follower of the new "enlightened" thinking which no longer put God in the center of things. Everything had to be proven according to natural science. No longer was the chief purpose of music to glorify God, but rather to delight the ear and stir the heart.

Against this trend, Bach appeared old-fashioned to many as he continued to dedicate his efforts *Soli Deo Gloria* ("to the glory of God alone"—inscription found on Bach's

manuscripts). He must have felt very lonely at times. He aged quickly after his sixtieth birthday, and died at the age of 65. Although he was still composing music on his deathbed, auditions were being held during his last year to find a replacement "in case capellmeister and cantor Mr. Sebastian Bach should die."

Anna Magdalena, with no income of her own and three children still minors, asked the council for a half year of grace (to continue her husband's wages for six months). The council granted her request but reduced the wages because, when Bach had assumed the cantorship twenty-seven years before, he had been paid for the entire first quarter, but had begun working four weeks late.

In many ways, J. S. Bach was a "man just like us," as was Elijah (Jms. 5:17). Yet through "old Bach" God has blessed countless people with the gift of music. And because Sebastian's music pointed to Christ, Bach has also been used by God to bring a deeper joy than even music can give, a joy that will never pass away, the joy of God's own children. In this we are brought near to him through the centuries and for this we give thanks even three hundred years later.

Soli Deo Gloria

—Paul Schaller



Loving Enough to Discipline



"And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: 'My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those whom he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.' Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it." (Heb. 12:5-11, NIV)

There are two words used in our text which do not seem to fit together—love and discipline. Both are used in connection with God's and your parents' dealings with you. Scripture clearly distinguishes discipline (also called chastisement) from punishment. Punishment is simply a negative reward for undesirable behavior. If you break the law, you will be punished. Discipline, however, has a loving, positive purpose. It is always administered for our good. Proverbs 13:24 tells us: "He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline." In Deuteronomy 8 the children of Israel were reminded that their 40 years of wandering in the wilderness and much of what happened then served a good pur-

pose, testing and strengthening them spiritually.

Discipline, whether from the Lord or one's parents, is not always understood or appreciated by the one receiving it. "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful"—not only for the one being disciplined, but also for the one disciplining! And there are two dangers mentioned: that we either "make light of it" (ignore it, pass it off without realizing its purpose) or "lose heart" (become discouraged, overwhelmed, feeling it is a mere expression of anger and hatred).

How often when things in our lives don't go exactly as we'd like or planned or when unforeseen problems arise don't we feel as if God has let us down or turned His back on us.

Even David felt that way! All of us know also that our parents and those over us are God's representatives entrusted with the awesome responsibility of caring for you and rearing you in the fear and love of the Lord. Yet how often don't you feel some dissatisfaction and frustration with their efforts in your behalf, particularly in the area of discipline. Are there any of you children who haven't thought, if not said, to your parents after they disciplined you—"You don't love me!"

And while your parents may in various ways have reassured you of their love and care, perhaps not until you become a parent will you fully understand how much they loved you.

They love you enough . . .

- * To discipline and train you in the way the Lord have you go, even if it seems hard-hearted;
- * To be concerned about where you're going, with whom, and and when you will be home;
- * To teach you the value of honesty, hard work, self-discipline, and responsibility;
- * To stand over you for two hours while you clean your bedroom, a job that would have taken them 15 minutes;
- * Not to make excuses for your lack of respect, bad manners, or uncontrolled tongue;
- * To let you at times see the anger, disgust, disappointment, even tears in their eyes;
- * To let you know Jesus died for that and much more, forgives you as He does them, and

loves you more than you can even imagine;

- * To put your spiritual welfare above all else, even if you didn't always agree;
- * To take you to church and Sunday School, even on days you did not want to go or when there was a conflict with another activity;
- * To make you do your Sunday School, confirmation, and memory work—even when you didn't feel like it;
- * To make the sacrifices necessary to attend a church and school faithful to God's Word, even if there were others more convenient with better facilities and more activities.

They love you enough to do everything in their power to raise truly Christian children, who will themselves grow up to be faithful children of God who will pass the torch of faith and truth to others and with whom they can spend eternity together in heaven.

As a Christian parent, I can assure you children that **NOTHING MEANS MORE TO THEM** than the Lord's efforts through them to "produce a harvest of righteousness and peace" in your life. To that end may our dear Savior strengthen and bless them and you in your holy callings. This is love, real love, the kind for which each of us should thank God every day of our lives.

—*David Schierenbeck*

(Editor's note: Pastor Schierenbeck delivered this devotional talk to the youth assembled for the ILC Youth and Family Camp at Immanuel College, Eau Claire, in July of this year.)

Even Wind And Storm Must Obey Him



The Teacher's Apartment After The Flood

It seemed like a typical summer storm brewing as the clouds rolled into Cheyenne, WY early on the evening of August 1. But within the space of three hours it showed a fury which the city had never before experienced. Massive amounts of hail combined with six inches of rain left behind millions of dollars worth of damage. The hail stripped trees of their leaves, ruined roofs, chipped paint off homes, and pitted cars. Drifts of hail left streets impassable, and the sound of snow shovels could be heard as residents cleared off walks and driveways. The scene looked more like December than August. In some areas of the city swift-moving, icy flood water rushed through basements and swept away possessions. Roads undermined by

the water caved in creating dangerous hazards.

Located in this city of 50,000 is Redeemer Lutheran Church, a charter member of the CLC. As the disciples almost 2,000 years ago witnessed the providential care of the Lord on the Sea of Galilee, so the members of Redeemer experienced the same almighty protection. The disciples feared for their lives as the boat was tossed by the wind and waves (Mark 4), but all the Lord Jesus had to do was say, "Peace, be still!" and the storm obeyed. Even the tremendous forces of nature cannot go beyond the limits which God sets.

By His grace the lives of all the members of Redeemer were preserved. He saw to it that the day

school teacher, Miss Kathy Gilbertson, was in a safe area and not at home when the flood waters completely destroyed her basement apartment. There was some loss of personal possessions among the congregation. There was considerable damage to roofs and paint on both the church and parsonage, but again the Lord's watchful care is evident, for it could have been much worse.

Even in what is fittingly termed a terrible disaster, blessings can be

seen. Because of the flood, it was necessary to locate a different apartment for the teacher. The Lord provided one almost immediately which was much superior to the former one in appearance and location. The congregation has reason for grateful prayers of thanks for the wonderful outpouring of support from fellow Christians in the CLC. Phone calls, letters, and special gifts have all helped to lift the spirits of your brothers and sisters in Cheyenne.

—*Michael Eichstadt*

Hallelujah!



Pastor Paul F. Nolting with Mrs. Rhonda Esser and children.

September 1 was a special "Praise the Lord" Sunday for Prince of Peace of Loveland, CO. The congregation was privileged to receive five members of one family into membership through Holy Baptism—a mother and her four children.

Mrs. Rhonda Esser was led to Prince of Peace by her neighbor who is also a member. After an intense study of Bible teachings she was moved by the Holy Spirit to confess her faith in her Savior and her agreement to His teachings as confessed

and practiced by Prince of Peace. Her children, who are attending Sunday School, were taught the meaning and blessing of Baptism, and so they followed their mother to the font—April, Billie Jo, George, and Christopher. Before he was baptized little George—going on four years—confessed his faith by singing "Jesus Loves Me." Out of the mouths of babes . . .

Prince of Peace would like to share the joy of this occasion with all her brothers and sisters in the CLC.

—*Paul F. Nolting, Pastor*

THANKS

The apostle Paul's reasons for gratitude to God cover the whole territory of human life and experience. He gives thanks for:

- 1) His daily bread (Acts 27:35)
- 2) Men who have faith in Christ (Rom. 1:8)
- 3) Deliverance from anxiety (II Cor. 2:14)
- 4) Deliverance from temptation (Rom. 7:25)
- 5) The memory of his friends (Phil. 1:3)
- 6) Kindness in the day of trouble (Acts 28:15)
- 7) The "unspeakable" gift (II Cor. 9:15)
- 8) The grace of God given believers in Christ (I Cor. 1:4)
- 9) Those who bear the cross of Christ with him (Rom. 16:4)
- 10) Spiritual gifts given him (I Cor. 14:18)
- 11) The believers' faith, love, and hope in Christ (Col. 1:3)
- 12) The eternal inheritance of the saints (Col. 1:12)
- 13) Those who gladly received the Word (I Thess. 2:13)
- 14) The believers' growth in faith (II Thess. 1:3)
- 15) Being chosen to salvation from eternity (II Thess. 2:13)

"IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS: FOR THIS IS THE WILL OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS CONCERNING YOU." (I Thess. 5:18)

THANKSGIVING

For blessings more than we deserve,
Both physical, religious,
You, Lord, we'll praise and ever serve—
You shower these upon us!

So plentiful the "things" we own—
Material goods abundant!
So bountiful this land, our home,
So blessed—more than sufficient!

So generous the gifts enjoyed
By us, Your own believers:
Our faith, Your love, so unalloyed,
Wrapped up in our Redeemer!

How many o'er this so-blessed world
Take all Your gifts for granted!
Help us appreciate them, Lord;
Your praise—it must be chanted!

Paul Fleischer



Born With The CLC—Borne By God . . .

Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church Millston, Wisconsin



Eau Claire, Milwaukee, Madison, LaCrosse, even Wausau and Fond du Lac, are readily pin-pointed on a map as sites where CLC churches exist in the state of Wisconsin. But Millston? Where would you go to find this gathering of 118 souls committed to the pure Word? The *CLC Directory* tells us to find them “1 blk. W. off Hwy. 12” where they worship at 10:00 a.m. each Sunday.

Further map investigation reveals Millston to be 60 miles southwest of Eau Claire, just off interstate 94, and in the middle of the Black River State Forest, a truly beautiful locale. It’s an area, we’re told, where people like to retire. The area’s economy is largely dependent upon cranberry marshes, lumbering, and mosing sphagnum moss, but is fed as well by tourism (camping, hunting, and snowmobiling). It sounds inviting, indeed.

What we are observing is that the Lord God doesn’t favor large, well-known population centers when He plots the boundaries of His Kingdom

of Grace here below. Didn’t He, after all, have His Savior-Son born in the little town of Bethlehem, which was “little among the thousands of Judah”? God’s redeemed children at Trinity, Millston, can tell us quite a story of those evidences of His blessings in their little niche of His Kingdom.

Early on those blessings for Trinity Church (founded 1961) did not come in the form of a whole lot of stability brought about by resident pastors. To the contrary. Trinity’s first pastor, Robert Mackenson (1961-1965), lived out of town and was secularly employed. In those days it was a rare month when worship was conducted each Sunday instead of twice a month. Weekly worship became the rule only at the arrival of the first two resident pastors, ILC Seminary graduates James Sandeen (1966-1967) and Robert Mehlretter (1968), both of whom, nevertheless, were part-time pastors, working secularly as well.

The first full-time, resident pastor to minister to the congregation was Clarence Hanson (1969-1973). The Lord quickly showed what an added blessing such an unobstructed ministry would be to His work in the Black River Forest area. Growth in numbers made the blessing obvious at this time, and during the subsequent ministry of Mark Bernthal (1976-1983).

During vacancies occurring between pastors, Trinity learned to be grateful for her proximity to the school of the prophets at Immanuel, Eau Claire. Professors Roland A. Gurgel and Paul R. Koch have willingly preached and taught God's people here during the frequent vacancies over the years.

Nor does a congregation need to own its own church home to do its Lord's work. Ask the people of Trinity, Millston, how a Christian congregation can ably carry on while renting a church building owned by the whole community. They have done this for years, being the only active church group in their village. In 1981, however, the church purchased some lots now totalling 300 x 150 feet. On this site the congregation built a pre-fab home in 1977, and are currently at work to construct their own church home. Trinity members again find reason to be grateful for brethren to the north, for on occasion Eau Claire fellow-Christians have come down on weekends to lend a hand in construction.

Pastor Mark Gullerud (1984-present) and family now reside in the parsonage.

"Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church was born out of a sincere desire by concerned Lutherans to 'hold fast the form of sound words . . . in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus,' and to 'earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints' (2 Tim. 1:13 & Jude 3)." The history of Trinity is "a history of people, statistics, finances, building projects, purchases, pastoral changes, etc. for without these things it would be impossible to tell the whole story. But above all this brief history is His story, the story of the power of God's Word, of His boundless grace, mercy, and love to underserving mankind . . . It is His grace and mercy which have given us all the spiritual and material benefits that we have here at Trinity . . . May that precious Word He has given us in the past also keep us steadfast in the true faith in the future . . . To the Lord be all the glory!" (20th Ann. bulletin)

—Paul Fleischer

Born With The CLC—Borne By God . . .

Faith Ev. Lutheran Church Cambridge, Wisconsin

Once again the thankful voices of Faith Lutheran congregation raise the hymn of praise to the Almighty. This year their hearts find special cause for thanksgiving as they recall that Thanksgiving 25 years ago that marked their first worship service.

Thursday, November 24, 1960 found 42 children of God seeking "the old paths" (Jer. 6:16). They had looked for that "good old path" in their former fellowship but to no avail. With trembling prayer they followed Christ and the apostles in



“walking in the old paths.” They not only gave thanks for the preserved unity, but also for the amazing “good way” that had been shown to completely furnish a member’s basement in the four days since leaving their former fellowship. They dedicated their church to the glory of God, to “proclaim the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Bible, by which man alone can know the true God and the way to eternal life.” (*Statement of Faith and Purpose* of the CLC)

By November 29th this group had followed the path of organizing and calling their first pastor, Adalbert Geiger. Soon they had joined fellowship with other groups who had chosen that old path. During a period of illness for their pastor, Pastors Schuetze and Pieper lent helping hands from Fond du Lac. The “good way” of such a supporting fellowship was deeply appreciated.

Within a year the Lord opened their path to purchase a parsonage. Four years later the Lord brought an acceptance of their very “small” bid on a former egg plant/restaurant for their future church. “Who has despised the day of small things?” (Zech. 4:10) The Lord didn’t.

Much “member might” was used over the next five years to fashion a chapel for the administering of the sacraments and the proclaiming of the precious “rest for your souls.” With the exception of installing the heating unit, all the work was done by the members. With their 10th anniversary approaching, Pastor Geiger accepted a call to Lemmon, SD. Many hearts wondered what would happen now, but with confidence they gathered to dedicate the finished chapel and a new organ. All was done “not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” (Zech. 4:6)

Pastor B. Naumann from Hales Corners, WI served the congregation’s vacancy until God directed Pastor John Johannes to accept the care of this flock. He came with his family from Lamar, CO in June, 1971. During this pastorate a path was opened to share the “rest for souls” at Lake Shore Manor (a home for mentally-handicapped adults) in Madison and by means of a new mission church, Peace Thru Christ, in that same university city. In October, 1978 Pastor Johannes was led to carry on the Lord’s work in Fond du Lac, and ILC Seminary graduate, John Ude, arrived with his family to continue the work.

God’s path has often been an uphill grade that some turned away from. Presently the membership is 26. Yet God has lifted His followers on the wings of an eagle to support them and turn their faltering efforts into flight. He always provided a way when humanly there was no way.

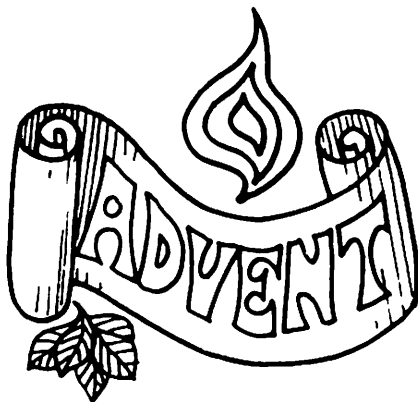
“Walking in that old path” which

puts the interest of the Kingdom of God first, has just this year brought a change at Faith. The congregation supported moving the pastor's family to Peace Thru Christ in Middleton where most of the mission contacts have developed. Again, God has led

them to walk in the "old paths" and not the ideas of men. In the future as in the past 25 years, God will provide the "good way." Thankful voices rise with confidence that the Lord, their God, would preserve them in the *age-old newness* of His Gospel.

—John Ude

Daily Devotions For December 1985



"Hosanna to the Son of David!" This is the Advent cry, summoning us to welcome and worship Jesus, the promised King and Savior from David's royal line.

There were many other sons of David who were kings in Jerusalem before Jesus. Our readings this month tell the stories of some of them: Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, and Ahaz. The first three of these all began well, but turned away from God in their later years. How the faithful in Judah in those days must have looked forward to the coming of a Son of David who would be perfectly loyal to the Lord in all His ways!

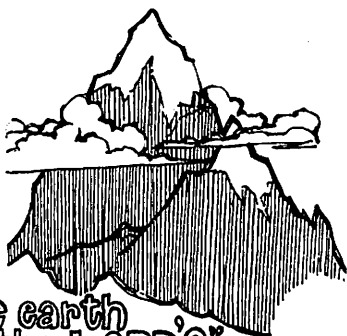
Jotham was a godly king and he prospered. But his son Ahaz was one of the most ungodly kings Judah ever had. Even in days of crisis Ahaz did not turn to God for help; he turned to the king of Assyria whose "help" just about destroyed the kingdom. Yet it was to wicked King Ahaz that God sent His prophet Isaiah with the marvellous promise of the virgin-born Immanuel, the true Son of David who would save His people from all their enemies. As we celebrate the birth of this Son of the virgin Mary this December, let us praise our God for revealing the miraculous method of His human origin so many years in advance.

And as we conclude this year of our Lord 1985, let us bow down before the Son of David and sing His praises. For He is our God and our Savior. He died for our sins and offers us in His Word the waters of eternal life. Now is the time to drink these waters while the offer is being made. Who knows how many more years or months of grace will be given to us?

Date	Scripture	Theme	Hymn
		<i>Joash of Judah, son of David—40 years</i>	
1	2 Chronicles 24:1-14	Joash begins his reign as a worthy son of David.	64
2	2 Chronicles 24:15-27	After the death of Jehoiada Joash turns away from God.	579
		<i>Amaziah of Judah, son of David—29 years</i>	
3	2 Chronicles 25:1-13	Amaziah listens to the Lord and wins a victory.	73 (3-4)
4	2 Chronicles 25:14-28	Amaziah worships idols and is defeated.	576
		<i>Uzziah of Judah, son of David—52 years</i>	
5	2 Chronicles 26:1-15	Uzziah seeks the Lord and prospers.	65
6	2 Chronicles 26:16-23	Uzziah transgresses in pride and becomes leprous.	75
		<i>Jotham of Judah, son of David—16 years</i>	
7	2 Chronicles 27:1-9	Jotham does the Lord's will and prospers.	70
		<i>Ahaz of Judah, son of David—16 years</i>	
8	2 Chronicles 28:1-8	Ahaz turns away from God and is defeated.	605
9	2 Chronicles 28:9-15	The Israelites return thousands of captives to Judah.	66
10	2 Kings 16:1-9	Ahaz turns to Assyria for help, instead of to the Lord.	583
11	2 Kings 16:10-18	Ahaz imitates the worship of the defeated Syrians.	68
12	2 Chronicles 28:16-27	Ahaz turns even farther away from the Lord.	60
		<i>The Book of Immanuel (Isaiah chapters 7-12)</i>	
13	Isaiah 7:1-9	In spite of the sin of Ahaz the house of David will stand forever!	71
14	Isaiah 7:10-25	"The virgin shall conceive and bear a son—Immanuel!"	78
15	Isaiah 8:1-10	Let the enemies come! God is with us!	81
16	Isaiah 8:11-22	Let them speak what they have been told by the Lord.	290
17	Isaiah 9:1-7	Jesus—the everlasting King from David's line!	106
18	Isaiah 9:8-10:4	Who can escape the anger of the Lord?	74
19	Isaiah 10:5-23	The remnant will return; Assyria will fall.	59
20	Isaiah 10:24-34	God is with us. Why be afraid of enemies?	103 (3-6)
21	Isaiah 11:1-9	Rod of Jesse, free us from Satan's tyranny.	62
22	Isaiah 11:10-16	The <i>Gentiles</i> shall seek the Root of Jesse.	645
23	Isaiah 12:1-6	"Great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst."	107

24	Micah 5:2-5a	The Ruler shall come out of Bethlehem.	647
25	Matthew 1:18-25	Jesus—Savior; Immanuel—God with us.	108
26	Luke 1:26-33	Jesus is the Son of David, the everlasting King!	105 (1-4)
27	Luke 1:68-79	God has saved us from our enemies through Jesus.	339
28	Matthew 21:1-11	"Hosanna to the Son of David!"	55
29	Romans 1:1-7	Jesus Christ—Son of David, Son of God!	343 (1-3)
30	Revelation 5:1-14	The Root of David has redeemed us by His blood.	344
31	Revelation 22:10-17	The Offspring of David offers the water of life.	278

—D. Lau



*"the earth
is the LORD'S"*

A PEACEFUL VALLEY

While traveling through the country

One sunny, summer's day,

I saw a peaceful valley

More fair than words can say.

The cattle on the hill sides,

A gentle stream below,

Providing welcome moisture

For stately trees to grow.

This valley held a rapture—

So quiet and serene;

A glorious view, more splendid

Than I had ever seen.

Such vast, unmatched beauty

No human hand could paint;

A scene of sheer magnificence

To cause the heart to faint.

It was so lovely to behold—

A gift of priceless worth;

I felt as close to paradise

As one can come on earth.

A place of restful splendor

Produced by God in love;

An elegant reminder

To praise our God above.

—Helen Lee Johnson

Pastor P. W. Schaller
1119 14th Street
Clarkston, WA 99403

Minnesota Pastoral Conference

Dates: November 11-13, 1985

Place: St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Austin, MN

Agenda:

New Testament Exegesis of Rev. 2:1-17—
John Pfeiffer

Isagogical Study of Amos—George Barthels
A Lutheran Response to Humanism—
Keith Olmanson

A Comparison of the Concepts of Soul &
Spirit—David Schierenbeck

How to Teach our Congregations to have a
Greater Respect for the Authority of
Scripture in Doctrine and Life—Harold
Duehlmeier

Chaplain: John Pfeiffer

—Robert List, Secretary

25th Anniversary

Messiah Lutheran Church of Eau Claire, WI will be celebrating its 25th anniversary on November 17, 1985. There will be two anniversary services, at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m., a noon fellowship meal, and an afternoon program. All friends and former members of our congregation are invited to join us in thanking the Lord for 25 years of blessings.

—D. Lau, Pastor

ILC Visitors' Day

Due to a possible schedule conflict at ILC, the College Visitors' Day and the Play Production will be moved one week later, to Friday and Saturday, November 15 and 16. Please adjust your ILC calendar accordingly.

—Prof. G. Radtke, President