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# Reformation

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CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

From The Editor . . .

## In This Issue

Our readers have noticed that we have begun listing on the cover some of the feature articles in each issue. In addition to telling at a glance what the monthly contents are, we hope "In This Issue" will be a small aid to those who may be looking at past issues for a particular article.

This past July convention hall at Eau Claire held a mock up or display of the steps involved in producing each *Spokesman*, from original copies submitted to the editor through to the final printing. Not a few said it was informative. However, what could hardly be shown there is the selection by the editor of articles appearing in each issue.

Most often, we readily admit, there is not a lot of rhyme and reason to this selection process. From what the staff (and others) submit, we pick and choose and print for your edification. We beg of you to notice, however, how the Spirit of God directed the contents of this issue. Unplanned ahead of time, it worked out that submitted articles and editorials for this Reformation issue stress the merits of plain and simple communication of biblical truth. As Pastor Weis implies, Luther himself would appreciate this emphasis in our day of theological double talk.

With that, some "plain talk" from Luther on the very subject at hand: *"I beg and faithfully warn every pious Christian not to be offended by the simplicity of language and the stories that will meet him here (in the Scriptures). Let him not doubt that, however simple they may seem, they are the very words, works, judgments, and deeds of the exalted majesty, power, and wisdom of God. For this is the Writing that turns all the wise and prudent into fools and is an open book only to the small and foolish folk, as Christ says in Matt. 11:25. Therefore dismiss your own notions and feelings and think of this Writing as the most sublime, the most noble of holy things, as the richest of mines, which can never be entirely exhausted. Do this that*

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Editor: Paul Fleischer, 1270 N. 118th St., Wauwatosa, WI 53226; Assistant Editor: D. Lau; Artist: W. Bernthal; Staff (Also District Reporters): V. Fossum (Eastern), J. Klatt (West Central), D. Koenig, K. Luebkeman, K. Olmanson (Minnesota), Rollin Reim (Pacific Coast), Ronald Roehl (Wisconsin), Ross Roehl, P. Schaller, W. V. Schaller, J. Schlerenbeck, C. H. A. Schmutzler, M. Sydow, P. M. Wels.

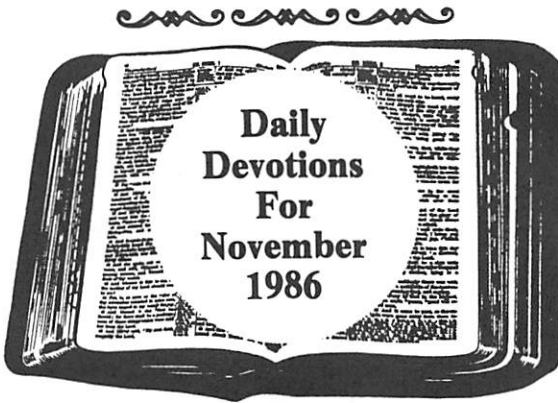
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*you may find the wisdom of God which He here submits in a manner so foolish and simple in order to quench all pride. Here you will find the swaddling clothes and the manger in which Christ lies, to which the angel directs the shepherds. Plain and ordinary are the swaddling clothes; but dear is the Treasure, Christ, which lies in them.” (What Luther Says, Vol. I p. 213)*

And why not, then, place our monthly “Daily Devotions” column *first* for a change. We do this for an obvious effect—an effect which all true heirs of Luther and the “sola Scriptura” heritage he left us will readily appreciate. Luther said:” . . . *If it is well said that the letter of princes should be read three times because they must speak with deliberation in order not to be considered fools, how much more necessary it is for one to read the letter of God, that is, the Holy Scriptures, three, four, ten, a hundred, a thousand, and many thousand times. . . Whoever does this becomes better and more learned from Scripture. Whoever does not do so learns nothing, nay, becomes the worse for it.”*



#### **Themes From John Chapters 6-9**

##### **Jesus is the Bread of Life** (Hymn: 312)

- 1 John 6:1-15
- 2 John 6:16-21
- 3 John 6:22-40
  
- 4 Exodus 16:1-32
- 5 John 6:41-51

A miracle of divine power and compassion.  
Another miracle revealing Jesus truly is the divine Creator.  
Jesus gives more than a sign, like manna. (v. 30-31)  
He Himself is the Bread of Life. (v. 35)  
Manna preserved physical life—for a time.  
Jesus gives and preserves spiritual life—forever.

- 6 Luke 2:1-14; John 1:14 "The Bread that came down from heaven."  
 7 John 10:14-18 "This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."  
 8 John 6:52-59 Eating = Faith. As we depend upon food for physical life, so faith's absolute dependence upon Christ is necessary for spiritual life.  
 9 Psalm 34 Jesus is the true food for a starving world.  
 10 John 6:60-69 Like eating, faith is a daily activity, a daily walk with Jesus.  
     **Jesus Is the Rock of our Salvation**  
     (Hymns: 149, 376, 277:2)  
 11 John 7:14-31 The Feast of the Tabernacles (booths) recalled Israel's wilderness journey . . .  
 12 Exodus 17:1-7 and the LORD'S miraculous provision of life-giving water.  
 13 John 7:37-44 For this unsatisfied and thirsty world Jesus is what the water-giving rock was to Israel of old.  
 14 John 4:1-14 There is in every heart a thirst, that "something is missing" feeling, which only Jesus can satisfy.  
 15 Psalm 42 The soul especially thirsts for God in time of trouble.  
 16 Isaiah 44:1-8 The water Jesus, our God and our Rock, gives is the gift of the Spirit, forgiveness and salvation.  
 17 Isaiah 55:1-11 Ho! Everyone that thirsts, come!  
 18 Isaiah 12:1-6 Let us with joy draw water from the wells of salvation.  
 19 Revelation 22:1-6, 12-17 ". . . and drink from the river of Thy pleasure forevermore."  
     **Jesus Is the Light of the World**  
     (Hymns: 512, 88, 277:3)  
 20 John 8:12-20 Jesus now compares Himself to the Pillar of Fire that led Israel through the wilderness  
 21 John 9:1-23 A miracle with a spiritual message for a sin-blind world.  
 22 John 9:24-41 Follow that blind man!  
 23 Isaiah 60:1-3, 15-21 The LORD Himself will be your light.  
 24 Isaiah 49:1-7 The Promised Savior will be "Very Light of Very Light"  
 25 Luke 4:16-30 The Light still shines in the darkness; the darkness has never put it out.  
 26 Colossians 1:9-13 God has brought us out of darkness into the kingdom of His Son, the Light.  
 27 Numbers 9:15-23 Jesus, the Light of the World says to us, "Follow me."  
 28 I Thessalonians 5:1-11 Jesus delivers from the darkness of sin's ignorance.  
 29 Ephesians 5:1-14 You are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.  
 30 I John 1:5-2:11 Walk with God. Walk in the light.

—W. V. Schaller

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"God who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son. . ." (Heb. 1:1-2)

## God's Final Word To The World

### Double Talk

*A New Zealand official:* "It is obvious from the difference in elevation with relation to the short depth of the property that the contour is such as to preclude any

reasonable developmental potential for active recreation." Translation? The land was steep.

*An office memo:* "Verbal contact with Mr. Jones regarding the attached notification of promotion

has elicited the attached representation intimating that he prefers to decline the assignment." Translation? Mr. Jones does not want the job.

In 1845, upon scaling the summit of a Swiss Alp, a *Mr. Dollfus-Ausset* exclaimed: "The soul communes in the infinite with those icy peaks which appear to have their roots in the bowels of eternity." Translation? Mr. Dollfus-Ausset enjoyed the view.

Gobbledygook. Legalese. Officialese. Bafflegab. The disease has many names. The symptoms include multisyllabled words, contradictory statements, unintelligible phrases, excess verbiage and baggage. Garbage. Neither writer nor reader understands what has been said or written.

This problem has been parodied by a legal expert: "It is no longer possible to say, 'Have an orange.' Today one must say, 'I hereby give and convey to you, all and singular, my estate and interests, right, title, claim and advantages of and in said orange, together with all rind, juice, pulp, and pits.'"

Laughable? Yes. But equally serious.

### **Plain Talk**

For life's complexities we need simple, certain answers. Not gibberish, not bafflegab, not double talk. Plain talk. Facing death, the assurance of eternal life. Having sinned, the knowledge of forgiveness. Suffering loss, the promise of gain. Failing, the assurance of success.

Confused communicating is always the result of the following conditions: 1) the writer and reader are "worlds apart;" 2) the writer neglects to address needs that are

truly human; 3) the writer refuses to assume the role of the reader.

Now behold the Gospel! What does it teach and celebrate? God come to address us in Person. God come to assume our place, join our Race, feel our hurts, carry our sins. Communication and communion.

**JESUS CHRIST IS GOD'S FINAL WORD TO THE WORLD.** Here there are no many-syllabled words or contradictory statements. The Gospel has come in flesh and blood. And of this reality Dr. Martin Luther, the Reformer, spoke eloquently in plain language:

"Behold Christ lying in the lap of his young mother. What can be sweeter than the Babe, what more lovely than the mother! Look at the Child, knowing nothing. Yet all that is belongs to Him, that your conscience should not fear but take comfort in Him. Doubt nothing. Watch Him springing in the lap of His mother. Look upon this Lord of peace and your spirit will be at peace. Who is there that this sight would not comfort?"

Jesus Christ is God's final Word to the world. And what is a final word? A final word settles the matter. A final word ends the argument. A final word silences the doubt, dismisses the fear. "Amen" concludes the last stanza.

Jesus Christ is God's final Word to the world. The verdict has been rendered. You ARE redeemed. You ARE forgiven. You ARE restored. Listen! You who have found GOD in the manger and on the cruel cross—what more can He say? What more should He say?

—P. Mark Weiss  
5

## RECONCILIATION

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (Jn. 3:16). These words of Jesus are the heart and core of the gospel message we Christians are privileged to believe and proclaim.*

One of the greatest blessings this gospel message provides us is the absolute certainty of our salvation. God does not want any of us to live in uncertainty, and therefore He uses a variety of terms within His Word to explain the gospel message to us with absolute clarity. One of those terms is **reconciliation**.

### **A Change In Our Relationship With God!**

Reconciliation is a social term. It denotes a change in the relationship between two parties. Two parties are at odds with each other—they view each other with hostility. When their differences are resolved, there is a change in their relationship. They no longer view each other with hostility, but rather are at peace with each other. They are no longer enemies.

The Bible uses the terms “reconcile” and “reconciliation” when speaking of the relationships people have with other people, and the relationship of people to their God. Jesus, for instance, warns us to be reconciled to our brother, should he have something against us, before we bring our offerings to God (Mt. 5:23-24). Paul, likewise, urges wives to be reconciled to their husbands (I Cor. 7:11). But that which is most

important to us as believers is the way in which God uses these terms when describing our relationship with Him.

### **A Change Effected By Christ!**

“God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself” (2 Cor. 5:19). Before there is any need of a reconciliation, there must be a problem which separates. Sin is the problem that separated mankind from God and continues to afflict mankind’s relationship with God. Isaiah sums it up when he says: “Your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear” (Is. 59:2).

There was no need for reconciliation in the world as God created it, but sin entered the world and caused a division between God and mankind. By nature mankind is now separated from God, opposed to God, an avowed enemy of God. Were it left in the hands of mankind, there would ever be a reconciliation with God. Thanks be to God, this is not the case!

Paul wrote the Corinthians: “Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the

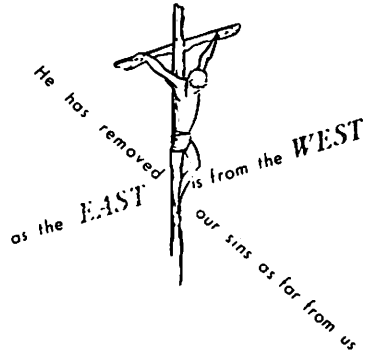
ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For he made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:18-21).

From the moment that sin entered the world, God planned to deal with sin. He was determined to reconcile mankind to Himself. He did this *not* by ignoring sin, or by forgetting about sin, or by denying its existence. Rather, God resolved the matter of sin by sending Jesus Christ into this world. Through Jesus' perfect life and innocent death, God made Jesus take our place. He became sin for us in order that we might possess God's righteousness through Him!

Yes, the whole world has been reconciled to God through Jesus. God views the world with love and mercy. Mankind's standing has changed in God's eyes. His message to the world is that of the Christmas angels: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Lk. 2:14).

**A Change Accepted By Faith!**

God's message of reconciliation becomes the Christian's mission in



life! We are to be God's ambassadors; we are to share the good news that God has reconciled the world—that we are now at peace with God through Christ. It is a message which proclaims God's reconciliation of the world with the hope that the world will now be reconciled to God! How is that to be done? The answer lies in faith—the simple acceptance of what God through Christ has already done!

Paul wrote the Romans: "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were sinners, Christ died for us . . . if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation" (Rom. 5:8, 10-11).

Sinful mankind receives the reconciliation of God through faith in

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**"SINFUL MANKIND RECEIVES THE RECONCILIATION OF GOD THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS—FAITH HAVING BEEN WORKED IN THE HEART THROUGH THE GOSPEL MESSAGE WE PREACH. HOW WONDERFUL IS OUR GOD!"**

Christ Jesus—faith having been worked in the heart through the gospel message we preach. How wonderful is our God! He reconciles the world to Himself through Christ, and then leads men to an acceptance of that reconciliation through faith in the gospel!

### **A Change Affecting Our Lives!**

God's reconciliation of the world, and our reconciliation to God through faith cannot but affect our lives. We are no longer God's enemies, but rather His friends. We will, therefore, not want to oppose Him, but to live in harmony with His will and in accordance with His Word.

This is God's intent as expressed by Paul to the Colossians: "It pleased the Father that in Him all

the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and irreproachable in His sight" (Col. 1:19-22).

Reconciliation—what a wonderful thought that God would reconcile us through Christ! Reconciliation—what a wonderful message we are privileged to share with others about Christ! Reconciliation—what a powerful influence on our lives as we live in Christ!

—Paul D. Nolting

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## **Prattling With The Young**

What do Dr. Martin Luther and Prof. C. M. Gullerud have in common? They are both students of the Scriptures who love(d) to "prattle with the young" about the truths of Holy Scripture.

### **A Challenge!**

This similarity came to mind as we set out, this "Luther season" of the Christian church year, to review Prof. Gullerud's Bible Story Primer: *Bible Tho'ts For Tots*. Many of our readers have become acquainted with Prof. Gullerud's "Family Devotion Hour" which was intended for the family but was determined—by the author himself—to fall short of reaching the youngest family members, the young children.

The answer? This retired

### **BIBLE THO'TS FOR TOTS: A Bible Story Primer**





theological professor at our Eau Claire school set to work to “write these brief devotions with the use of monosyllabic words as much as possible. Through the use of one-syllable words, it becomes possible to reach the small children. . .” (from the book’s *Foreword*) In our judgment, the professor did a fine piece of work! Yes, it is work. If you doubt this, pick the field of labor or study to which you have devoted your life, and seek then to write of it and define and describe its subtleties in a manner pre-school and kindergarten children can grasp. You have your work cut out for you!

It was the learned Doctor Luther who said: “Since we are preaching to children, we must also prattle with them.” In his day “Doctor of Theology” Martin was willing to, and did, take on emperors and papal representatives, yes, the popes themselves, in arduous debates and colloquies for the sake of the kingdom of Christ and its truths contained in the Holy Scriptures. The dear Doctor could play and wrestle with polysyllabic words with the most learned, and yet he had little time and patience for those whose verbal sophistry sought to put a stranglehold on the plain and simple words and wisdom of the Bible.

How thankful we are, for example, that Luther stood firmly in defense of the little word “is” when debating Zwingli on the doctrine of the Lord’s Supper at the Marburg Colloquy in 1529. The Scripture teaches the *Real Presence* of the Lord Christ in the Sacrament, he said, for “‘Is’ is ‘is’ and always is ‘is’”—especially when the Spirit of God uses the word! And in *The Bondage of the Will* the dear Doctor wrestled the precursor of today’s humanists, Erasmus, to the ground by standing four-square on the biblical truths that the conversion of sinners is, from beginning to end, *God’s* doing. With all his divine sophistry, Erasmus had much to learn from Luther about God’s revelation of holy truths to *babes* and not to the worldly wise (see Matt. 11:25).

### What Does Scripture Say?

Of all his writings, Luther himself said that *The Bondage of the Will* is one of but two of his books which he prayed would escape the fires of Rome. The other? What but his Catechism(s)! On his visitation of the Saxony churches Luther was moved by the great ignorance he observed. So in 1529 (the same year as the Marburg Colloquy) he prepared his *Large* and *Small Catechisms* which, said he, were “planned and undertaken in order to furnish a course of instruction for children and the simple-minded. . . The young should be thoroughly instructed in the parts which belong to the Catechism, and should diligently exercise themselves therein.” (It’s in the *Large* that Luther makes the remark about prattling with children.)

To those who knew, and know, him it is obvious that Luther carefully observed children and wanted learning—particularly *biblical* learning—to be made pleasant and easy for them. In addition to his Catechisms, Luther endeavored to prattle with his own children (and others as table guests) on Bible truths. His “table talk” is sprinkled throughout with biblical illustra-

### For Our Children\*

Once when a minister got sick he asked the people of the church to pray for him. Some of the older people said, "Why should we pray for him? He can pray so well for himself." This, of course, was a sad mistake. For the minister needed to have others pray for him as well as anyone else. When the same minister heard that little children were praying for him, he was very glad. They didn't stop to ask, "Why should we pray for the pastor?" But they thought like this, "The pastor is sick. We must pray for him." And they did.

Yes, dear children, here is something wonderful that you can do for those whom you love—for father and mother, sisters and brothers, for pastors and teachers. You can pray for them. You don't have to pray long prayers. You don't have to use long words. But simply speak to your Heavenly Father as you would speak to your earthly father. He will understand and, for Jesus' sake, He will hear your prayers.

Jesus said, "Suffer (let) the little children come unto Me." When you come to Him in prayer He will be listening. He was listening when the little children on Palm Sunday were singing praises to Him. And so He is still today. The first "Abba Father, Amen," of your baby brother or baby sister at home is just as precious to Him as the long prayers that are sometimes spoken by us older people.

O Thou, by Whom we come to God,  
The Life, the Truth, the Way!  
The path of prayer Thyself has trod;  
Lord, teach us how to pray.

(\*This is a sample of the children's devotions written by Prof. C. M. Gullerud for the "Lutheran Sentinel" some years ago.)

tions and scriptural truths geared to a child's level. He wrote his well-known Christmas hymn, "From Heaven Above To Earth I Come" for his children. And who of us hasn't heard of his prattling about heaven to his little son Hans? On top of all this, the learned Doctor practiced what he preached: "When I get up in the morning, I pray and recite the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer *with the children*. . ."

We know that Prof. C. M. Gullerud will be the first to disown our suggested comparison between himself and the Reformer of the Christian church. Yet the one we have made, we believe, can stand without apology. Our esteemed colleague is not a stranger to controversy in the church, having sat in on more than one conclave of theologians when wrangling with words seemed at times to be the order of the day. For his part, "What does Scripture say?" was all C. M. wanted to hear at such meetings. In *Bible Tho'ts For Tots* Prof. Gullerud has earnestly endeavored to prattle with the young. He has succeeded better than many others who have tried.

Above all, because he obviously approaches the words (whether big or little) of Holy Scripture as just that—holy, because they are divinely-inspired of the Holy Ghost.

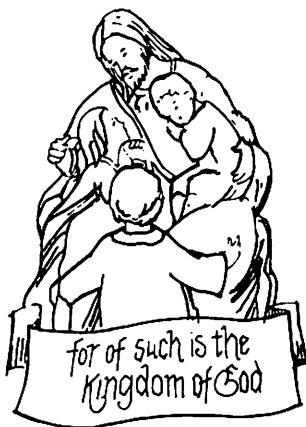
### **Make It A Happy Day!**

Before we stop, let it be noted that Prof. Gullerud's prattling with the young goes back many years. In pre-CLC days he was a regular contributor to the *Lutheran Sentinel*, the magazine of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. His most happy contributions in those early days? A children's column! A column which one of our acquaintances fondly recalls as "the first thing mom and dad would read to us kids; it was a happy day when that magazine arrived!"

Every day will be a happier day for those children whose parents take the time to read simple Bible stories to them. For such parents *Bible Tho'ts For Tots* is a worthy resource. The price is \$3.75 or \$4.50 if by mail. Orders can be placed directly from the author at 218 Grover Road, Eau Claire, WI 54701, or from the CLC Bookhouse, Immanuel Lutheran College, 501 Grover Road, Eau Claire. There are 20 devotions based on the Old Testament and 30 on the New.

"Let no one think himself too wise, and disdain such child's play. When Christ wished to teach men, he became a man. If we are to teach children, we must become children. Would to God we had more of this child's play! We should then see in a short time a great treasure of Christian people, souls rich in the Scriptures and in the knowledge of God." (Luther)

—Paul Fleischer



**Ye parents, hear what Jesus taught  
When little ones to Him were brought:  
Forbid them not, but heed my plea  
And suffer them to come to Me.**

**Obey your Lord and let His truth  
Be taught your children in their youth  
That they in church and school may dwell  
And learn their Savior's praise to tell.**

**For if you love them as you ought,  
To Christ your children will be brought.  
If thus you place them in His care,  
You and your household well shall fare.**

(TLH #630)

## From Under The Fig Tree

Somehow, you know, somehow I always have been under the impression the disciples of Jesus all must have been extremely busy people. I don't know quite why, but if I try to see them with my inner eye they always appear to me in intense activity of one kind or another, hurrying about like ambitious ants but never at rest. And certainly never lazy like you and me! No, they ceaselessly do this or that: asking deep (and now and then dumb) questions, listening attentively, running errands for the Master, preaching and praying, discussing with one another and with the standers-by, trying their faith and their skill at healing or at evicting evil spirits, organizing the throng of people following Jesus, putting their noses into the Lord's business (and getting them tweaked—yes, we know how *that* feels), doing this and attending to that. No rest, no pause, no calm.

You will remember what happened to Mary, sister of Martha, when she tried to sit a while at the Master's own feet. Isn't that typical, say? Indeed, to be amongst the first Christians must have been tough. Stressful, almost. So much to see, hear, observe. So much to do, to grasp, understand, believe in! No



wonder they would fall asleep during that last night there in Gethsemane. I cannot but imagine they all sincerely wanted to stay awake and let Jesus feel their support. But I understand they must have been extremely exhausted, simply worn out from following Him on the long, long road up to Jerusalem. Never a day's rest . . .

Well, I realize, of course, I am falling prey to something many people are not really aware of, I mean, the fact that the Gospels give us sort of a compressed report of what happened when God walked amongst men. The impression of incessant, almost frantic activity that we get when reading the Gospels is caused by what we might call a "condensed" time-frame. Only the really important things are reported, and the simple, daily, routine matters just are not mentioned. Whatever is of no relevance for our faith is passed over in silence. It's just not worth mentioning. There must have been days, many days, when nothing special at all happened: calm days, days of rest, days of

nothing to record. Probably even weeks that were as your and my weeks are—most of the time: “as usual.” Nothing to put into the diary. Nothing to write about in letters. Nothing to mention in the Gospels either. They are not at all intended to be a daily report. No, they are a summary, concentrating on essentials. This explains the “breathless” style of reporting.

So when we read the Gospels we ought to sort of insert verses of pure Nothing here and there. Then suddenly all this activity becomes much less concentrated, spread out over a longer period of time. And we understand: the first Christians were after all not that different from us. As a matter of fact there is one amongst them who is a little closer to my heart than the rest of them. It is the one of whom we know for certain he wasn't always busy. I am thinking of Nathanael. He was called to come to Jesus by Philip. And how did Philip get hold of Nathanael? Well, he found him under a fig tree.

OK, you say, big deal: what's so remarkable about that? Nothing really—but it gives us a small, charming insight into the very human sides of the first Christians. Because—what do you imagine Nathanael did do under that fig tree? I bet he was doing nothing at all. I imagine it was one of those hot days you cannot spend better than discreetly retreating into the cool shadow of a nice big tree. And there you sit, snug and relaxed, and listen to the bumble-bees, and hear the tall grass whispering, and smell the flowers. Aaaaah! And from far away

perhaps there comes a-drifting the sounds of people busily at work. But not you, no. And before you know it you are blessedly asleep, there in the shadow under that fig tree.

Now, I don't want to make you fall asleep reading the *Spokesman*. Certainly not. But I should like to share with Nathanael and with you something of that beautifully relaxed quality of resting under that tree. Of speaking on matters of faith and matters of daily life in a low voice, as it were. Deliberately, you know. Thoughtfully. Not preaching, and not teaching, and not coming with great tidings either. Just a meeting between you as a Christian and me as a Christian, and plain and soft talk about life. Let's meet on occasion under that tree!

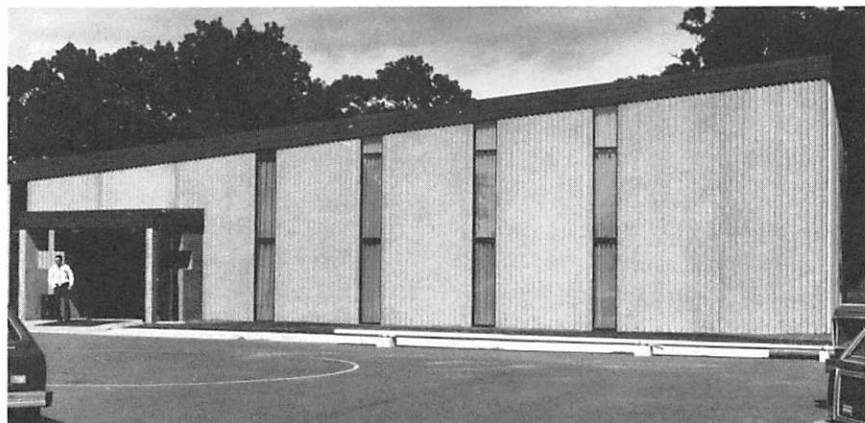
You haven't got the time, you tell me? Come on . . . besides, it actually was there that Jesus saw Nathanael, blissfully a-snoozing. See you there, watched by our Savior, in a month or two . . .

—C. H. A. Schmutzler



*"Dead Matter Coming Alive . . ."*

## Dedication In Fridley



What began in a spirit of realism with the establishment of a building fund in December of 1977 reached a milestone in June, 1986. On June 1 Pastor Carl Heinrich A. Schmutzler addressed the worshippers who had gathered for the dedication of the new church and fellowship building at Grace of Fridley, MN. Robert Auel, congregation president, and Pastor Daniel Fleischer conducted the rite of dedication.

### **A Multiphase Plan**

When the project began it was recognized that much time and labor would be involved. In June, 1982 a multiphase plan was approved. The first project involved remodeling the lower portion of the original building to make it more efficient for school use. This remodeling was completed almost exclusively through volunteer help from the congregation.

In May, 1983 design approval was

given for the new building. The decision was to build the fellowship and church building at the same time, but that completion would depend on money available. In July, 1983 ground was broken. Construction began immediately. After the erection of the building and pouring of the floors, the work was completed. With a few exceptions the work was again by volunteer help. Weekends proved to be the most suitable. Up to 25-30 people turned out on occasion—men, women, and children.

It was a time of hard work, but of most enjoyable fellowship. Members deepened their acquaintance with one another. The end result was a 40 by 80 fellowship area and a 50 by 80 worship facility. The actual worship area is 50 by 50 feet, discounting the narthex, lavatories, parents' room, and pastor's office. Overflow capaci-



ty is 350 comfortably.

### **Dedicating Ourselves**

Christmas service was held in the fellowship area in 1984 and in the rather barren church building in 1985. With the approaching arrival of Pastor and Mrs. Schmutzler, efforts were increased so that the installation of Pastor Schmutzler could be held in the new church. This took place on February 9, 1986 with over 400 worshippers in attendance.

Pastor Schmutzler put the whole project into the proper perspective in the dedicatory service. He applied the words of Jesus from John 4:19-24 as follows: "This beautiful building of ours, source of shared pride and mutual satisfaction, actually is just an empty shell: a cleverly constructed crate with nothing inside—a handsome frame, void. In spite of all our efforts, our prayers, our work, we have been able to create but an inert object, a dead thing. We certainly might call it 'God's house,' but as certainly God does not live in a house. What we indeed have

managed to create is instead an opportunity, a chance that longs to become realized. The void craves to be filled. This dead matter needs to come alive with us at worship. The church is not the building, but what we do inside the building. What we dedicate this afternoon therefore is not this house. No, we dedicate ourselves to worship in truth and in spirit, as Jesus says.

"The truth is not any truth, nor any of our truths. No, it is the truth about God, and Him in relationship to you and me. A truth as sharp and cold and deadly as a sword. We dare to be realists: we know we are the people of the sword. But this truth comes with the spirit: the enormous willpower of God aimed at you, ever re-shaping, re-creating, molding us after His will. Worship thus is workshop. The Spirit also is a sword: a wooden one, and cruciform—we lift it high. We dare be Christians: we know we are the people of the cross. When the clash between the swords is over, this ceiling will disappear, these walls will crumble down, this place will know its name.



**Grace Building Committee: (L to R) Robert Auel, Ronald Strike, James Sydow, Maynard Hammond, Phil Radichel**

We will be alone, you and I, and we will see no one save Jesus only.”

### To God The Glory

And yet the work is not finished. As time and money permit, a new garage will be attached to the old worship area which, in turn, will be remodeled into living quarters. Soon the bell will be removed from the old steeple and rehung to call God's people to worship.

Members of Grace are thankful for the grace of God which has moved people to contribute gifts, make personal loans, and expend personal time and labor to construct the building. Untold man hours were spent without anything but a scratch now and then. To God alone the glory.

Yet for all the beauty and comfort of the church, there is necessity that attaches itself to the project without which what is built is built in vain. As Pastor Schmutzler reminded the worshippers, that necessity revolves around the truth of dedication and commitment. May we dedicate ourselves to worship our Lord in spirit and in truth!

You are invited when in the Twin Cities to join us in such worship.

—*Daniel Fleischer*

### Installations

Under the authorization of President Daniel Fleischer, I installed Mrs. John K. Pfeiffer as teacher of St. Paul's Lutheran School, Austin, MN (Grades 1-8) on Sunday, August 31, 1986.

—*John K. Pfeiffer, Pastor*

On August 3, 1986 I installed Miss Collette Sieg as teacher at Bethel Lutheran School, Spring, TX as authorized by President Daniel Fleischer.

—*Pastor Michael Thom*

### Request For Colloquy

Pastor David Sweet of LaCrosse, WI (WELS) has applied for colloquy to the CLC. Related correspondence should be in the hands of the President by October 19, 1986.

—*Daniel Fleischer, President*

### Attention Pastors!

The ILC promotional video tape is now available for your use. Please make requests known to the ILC Student Council.

### Minnesota Pastoral Conference

Dates: Nov. 10-11, 1986 beginning at 9 a.m.  
Monday

Place: Grace Ev. Lutheran Church, Fridley, MN

### Agenda:

Exegesis of Rev. 2:8-17—John Pfeiffer  
Exegesis of Job 19:23-27—Norman Greve  
Isagogics of Joel—Thomas Schuetze  
The Pastor as Shepherd and Family Man:  
Keeping the Balance—Robert List  
The Relevancy of our Present Hymnal for our Worship Service—L. D. Redlin  
The Proper and Improper Distinguishing among "Fundamental Doctrines," "Non-fundamental Doctrines," and "Open Questions" especially as they Relate to our Church Fellowship—Elton Hallauer  
How to Teach Congregations to Have a Greater Respect for the Authority of Scripture in Doctrine and Life—H. C. Duehlmeier

—*Robert List, Secretary*