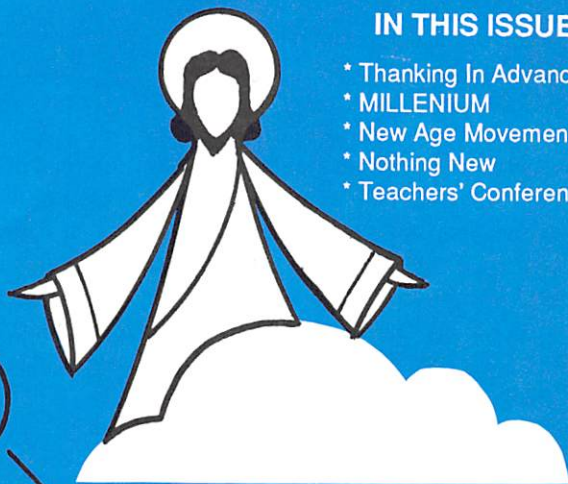


lutheran spokesman

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THEY WILL SEE THE SON
OF MAN COMING ON THE
CLOUDS OF HEAVEN
WITH POWER AND
GREAT GLORY.



CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

"Stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near" (Lk. 21:28)

THANKING HIM IN ADVANCE

During the month of November the thoughts of many turn to Thanksgiving. For those who think beyond football and feasting, it is a time when the harvest has been gathered in for another year, and grateful hearts sing their praises to God. It is good for us to do this also, not only for ourselves but also on behalf of those who do not know whom to thank.

For many Christians this is also the end of the church calendar, and thoughts turn to the last things: the end of the age, and the judgment day. It will not be long before we enter the season of Advent, when a new church year is begun by remembering the coming of Jesus, the Christ.

Actually these two seasons go together, for the end of the world will also mark the time of Jesus' second coming. And as we look toward the coming of Christ, it may be with several emotions.

FEAR

Because of our sinful human nature, we may not always enjoy the prospect of Jesus' coming. After all, it means the end of some things that we are quite used to.

It means the end of much plotting and planning that goes on now: plotting to get one's piece of the pie; chasing rainbows, pleasures, and pastimes (and sometimes isn't getting there half the fun?); planning for the next day, or month, or year(s).

It means the end of marrying and giving in marriage, a highlight of life for many (not just the young, either).

It means the end of serving oneself. There are some who picture the after-life as one great smorgasbord of fleshly delights in which one may indulge oneself; but the Scriptures declare that hereafter God's children will delight in serving HIM.

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Perhaps that is why our flesh rebels, and sometimes quite strongly. As one honest youngster put it: "Come, Lord Jesus, but not just yet. First I want to grow up and enjoy some of the things I look forward to . . ."

JOY

Because of our sinful human nature, we do not always realize that our happiest hours are really when we are serving (not ourselves, but) honored guests: children who need our care and guidance; parents and other members of our family, who might visit or need us; friends, and especially those who gather to hear and discuss God's Word (Bible Class, Sunday School, Study Conferences).

We do not, I say, always realize the joy of serving others. But God has revealed to us by His Spirit that there will be no more joyful day than that day when we rise to meet the Lord in the air and welcome Him to earth as an honored guest.

Not only will we have no more tears—pain—sorrow—death—or even bad memories of such things, but we will also have a most high and holy purpose: to serve One who is truly worthy of the highest honor.

It will be our joy to serve One who laid down His life not only for His friends, but even for His enemies—

for those who rejected Him,
for those who nailed Him to the cross,
for those who consider Him to be a failure,
for those who know it all so well that they yawn to hear His triumphs repeated again,

for those who think that "yes, it is true what He did for me, but the really important thing is what happens now in *my* life,"

for *all*, and therefore also for you and me, even though we, too, go through times of ingratitude and weakness of faith!

For ALL of us Jesus laid down His life and triumphed over *our* death! Truly such a one is worthy of the highest honor; and to think that He would come and say, "I must stay at your house today!" (Lk. 19) "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and HE WILL LIVE WITH THEM." (Rev. 21)

We do not yet see with our eyes all that Christ, the Priest, has accomplished or that Christ, the King, still does for us. But when He comes we will see!

And now, while many are celebrating in thanksgiving for what they *have seen*, we are also thanking Him in advance for what we *shall see* on the day of His coming.

"Stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near" (Lk. 21:28).

—Paul Schaller



MILLENIUM

Millenium is a big word that has "little" meaning because of how this word is used today. The Latin word millenium means a period of one thousand years. It is a term that has come to be used to describe the mistaken belief that Jesus will establish an earthly one thousand year kingdom.

The key section used in support of this wrong belief is Revelation 20. Read this chapter. John sees the Angel (Christ) who binds the devil for a thousand years (Rev. 20:2). During the thousand years those who had not worshipped the beast come to life and reign with Christ for a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4) At the end of the thousand year period, Satan is released for a short while to deceive the nations before being cast into the lake of fire. (Rev. 20:7-8) Then comes the final judgment.

Fanciful Theories

Many use this section of Revelation to construct all kinds of fanciful theories and teachings regarding the last days. In almost any Christian bookstore you can find elaborate charts and shelves of books telling what is supposed to be coming to pass. There is a certain hypnotic fascination in trying to find out what the future holds—in spite of Jesus' warning that no one will know the day and the hour of His return (cf. Mt. 24:36).

Millenialism has several glaring errors in its premise, its development, and its hope for the future. It should be noted that there are as many different

teachings about the millenium as there are millenialists. Let us look at several fundamental errors.

1) *Millenialism looks for the establishment of an earthly kingdom by Jesus.* Dispensationalism holds that Jesus failed in His attempt to establish an earthly kingdom as foretold by the Old Testament. This makes it necessary for Jesus to return before Judgment Day so that He can complete His unfinished work. The Augsburg Confession correctly identifies this faulty thinking as a "Jewish opinion." The nation of Israel rejected Jesus as their Messiah because they were looking for an earthly kingdom. Millenialism makes the same mistake.

2) *Millenialism is attractive because it offers the Christian an escape—an easy way out—from the suffering to come.* It holds out the hope of avoiding what is called the Great Tribulation, ignoring the fact that through much tribulation we enter into the kingdom of God (cf. Acts 14:22). Consider the so-called "Rapture" with its teaching that the Christian will be removed from this earth while the ungodly suffer.

3) *Millenialism fails to acknowledge the victory of the cross and misses the essence of the Christian hope.* Jesus

"MILLENNIALISM FAILS TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE VICTORY OF THE CROSS AND MISSES THE ESSENCE OF THE CHRISTIAN HOPE. JESUS DEFEATED SATAN AT THE CROSS. . ."

defeated Satan at the cross. When Jesus obtained forgiveness for the sins of the world, He effectively bound the devil. Satan fell as it were as lightning from the sky (Lk. 10:18). This era in which Satan was bound began at the cross and continues during the New Testament era. Beginning at Pentecost the Gospel was not bound by Satan and had free course. Satan's hold over the nations was broken. The Gospel became the world-wide deliverance for all mankind.

4) *Millennialism does violence to the book of Revelation by insisting on a literal interpretation for everything in this book.* Revelation is filled with vivid pictures and picture language from the Old Testament. Just as the 144,000 that are saved (Rev. 14:1) is a picture of the completeness of the Old Testament and the New Testament believers, so numbers in Revelation often have prophetic import.

The New Testament Era

The one thousand years of Revelation 20 is a long period of time with a definite beginning and a definite end. This one thousand years is the New Testament era beginning at the cross and going to the end of time. Jesus overcame Satan and bound Him in the abyss when Jesus died at the cross. We are now, as believers, reigning with Christ.

There will be one last, final effort by the devil to destroy Jesus and His people. But this is also doomed to failure. For through the Lamb that was slain we will escape the lake of fire and enter into God's new heaven and new earth.

As we read the book of Revelation and especially chapters 20-22, we learn to pray with the church of all ages: "COME, LORD JESUS!" (Rev. 22:20)

—John Schierenbeck



A Christian Perspective . . .

THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT (Part II)

Uncle Sam has for years supported New Age ideas spawned by an elite corps of former Green Berets called the Delta Group. As reported in an article in the *Seattle Times*: "Today, some of

the human potential principles the Army investigated are still being taught to soldiers by a Seattle company called *Sportsmind*." A serious plan evolved to equip New Age troops with divining

rods, stereo music, flowers, granola, and helmets designed to unite the left (logical) and right (intuitive) halves of the brain and parachute them in between two contending armies, unarmed, to deter fighting. "Get serious," you say? Have you ever heard the musical ditty played forever on TV: "Be all that you can be . . . join the Army?" Guess where it came from.

Here To Stay

We can be very sure that the New Age movement is a universal one that is here to stay. It uses a process called "imaging." Because you, too, are God, you can be anything you want to be and have anything you want to have. Envision yourself as a millionaire and don't give up until you make it.

Humanists are New Agers and vice versa. It has become very difficult to distinguish the majority of mainline Lutherans, who have given up everything except the name, from New Agers.

And the whole movement is surely mentioned in Holy Scripture as one of the signs immediately preceding the last days of the world and the final coming of Jesus Christ with all His holy angels: "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn

away! For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim. 3:1-7).

Let all those hear who have ears to hear.

It Gets Wilder

There is no short way to become informed about all that comes under the umbrella of New Age thinking. Just about the time one thinks one has heard it all, it gets wilder. An article from the *Seattle Times* of August 13th entitled "Paradise Found" stated:

"It sounds like wishing one's way to a better world. But local Convergence experts . . . cite the 'Hundredth Monkey' theory. Though it is an experiment New Age critics claim never happened, it has been widely publicized by New Age theorist Ken Keyes of Coos Bay, OR.

"According to Keyes, researchers found that when enough monkeys are taught a task (in this case, washing food) the skill seemed to be instantly transmitted to other monkeys miles away. The belief that 'a critical mass' of humanity dedicated to peace could similarly convert all humans was a factor behind the World Peace Event in the Kingdom on Dec. 31.

". . . 144,000 participants at 63 sacred sites around the planet can serve as a 'human battery' to jump-start a change in human consciousness."

In plain language that translates like this: if all of you descendants from the Planet of the Apes gather and think

powerful enough thoughts about peace, harmony, and love, then all the non-faithful even miles away (such as you and me, for example) will be switched on to your thought wave length and help convert this world to perfection.

Be sure of it: otherwise normal people from all walks of life are buying such nonsense. One New Age researcher is even praying for a tree. A giant Tule tree in Oaxaca, Mexico, which the Aztecs called, "the Tree of

"(God's) great plan of salvation through faith in Christ alone is both our defense and our offense. In the meantime, 'Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees' which would make self the source of all power and righteousness."

Life" (sic!) is supposedly dying, and if it does, so goes the world. But we still trust that the flaming swords of the Cherubim guard the entrance to Eden so that man cannot eat of the fruit and live forever in sin.

An Offer

Since the beginning of this year this writer has been video recording most of what has been appearing on local and national television concerning the New Age. About three hours worth of actual channeling as well as debates are available to any who will send the postage (specify BETA or VHS). An eighteen page Bible Class presentation is also available upon request.

Part of the video presents one of the most chillingly striking scenes one will ever witness. During an actual session, Knight-Ramtha was gently stroking the face of one weeping, obviously enraptured woman who declared, "Oh, I wish I were where you are!" The voice of Knight-Ramtha-Satan softly rasped back in prophecy, "You will be . . . you will be . . . and sooner than you think."

How are we Christians to protect ourselves and our loved ones from the diabolical attacks of the New Age philosophies? Psalm 1 outlines three steps leading to destruction. First, the curious are walking by and listening to blasphemers. Secondly, they are moved to stand still to hear more. Finally, they sit down and join in with the blasphemers.

"But the righteous are not so." They have by grace found the Gospel in Word and Sacraments which reveal the God from whom emanates the only true love, that of the Triune God for helpless, fallen man. His great plan of salvation through faith in Christ alone is both our defense and our offense. In the meantime, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees" which would make self the source of all power and righteousness.

Someone once said that people who stand for nothing will fall for anything. This has never been more true than with the New Age movement. The best protection parents can provide their families is a strong grounding in the truth of God's Word upon which they can stand firm in any age.

—B. J. Naumann

Pastor Bert Naumann, the author of our *Spokesman* articles on the New Age movement, enclosed a "sampler of MacLaine New Age philosophy and some answers from the God of Scripture." MacLaine's "theology" is taken from a printed summary of her teachings based on her books, "Out on a Limb," and "Dancing in the Light." We print it here so our readers can have a first-hand view of New Age teaching compared with Bible truth.

MACLAINE

God: is the unifying force behind the universe; we are part of that force; and we are thus God ourselves. Jesus was an example of spiritual development we can all achieve.

Reality: Reality is not objective, but "coagulated thought," that we create ourselves. If there is something about reality we don't like, we have unconsciously created it to help our souls learn. Or, we can change it.

Morality: "Everyone has their own truth," and it is found within. One participant explained that it is not moral anarchy, but simply personal responsibility—similar to how people choose a religion to match their own inner beliefs.

Life after death: An undying soul is reincarnated into another human life in both a physically connected soul and "higher soul." It is possible to visualize all past, present, and future lives simultaneously.

Purpose of life: For the soul to learn spiritual lessons, until it is ready for

reunification with the universal God-force. The actress was less certain how souls became separated or "fell from grace" in the first place, though she suggested the GM r-force toyed with physical reality and that our souls became seduced into entering the physical plane and were trapped here.

Evil: There is no good or evil, "only is-ness. Good and evil are concepts placed on reality by human beings." Why then do bad things happen to good people? First, karma: people are born into miserable lives because their souls need to learn lessons from their misbehavior in previous lives. Secondly, choice: one's higher consciousness may choose a horrible experience for this life to learn from the experience and spiritually advance.

Fate: Nothing happens by accident; life is predetermined, yet we control what happens to us. Confusing? One woman gave an analogy: a flat tire is predetermined, but your decision on how to react to the misfortune is free will.

"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name und

THE HOLY BIBLE

GOD: "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.'" (John 11:25-26)

REALITY: "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32)

MORALITY: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind . . . You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37 & 39) Read also Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6-8)

LIFE AFTER DEATH: "It is appointed for men to die once, but after

this the judgment." (Hebrews 9:27)

PURPOSE OF LIFE: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen." (Matthew 28:18-20)

EVIL: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." (I Peter 5:8)

FATE: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." (Romans 8:28)

CHRIST IS THE ONLY ANSWER

Two books giving a readable, good Christian critique of the New Age ideas are "Out on a Broken Limb" by F. LaGard Smith, a law professor at Pepperdine University; and "Unmasking the New Age," by Seattle author Douglas Groothuis, of the University of Washington.

heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

NOTHING NEW

"There is nothing new under the sun" writes Solomon in Ecclesiastes 1:9.

In his critique of the New Age movement Pastor Naumann has called attention to the fact that much of the movement's thinking can be traced right back to the Garden of Eden. The devil convinced Eve that she could be "like God, knowing good and evil" by disobeying God. Ever since, the devil has been successful in convincing people that they can be as God by not doing what He says. (Ponder the absurdity!)

"Superior Knowledge"?

Hardly had Jesus Christ, the Light of the world, returned to His glory in the heavens when Satan appeared in disguise as an "angel of light" in the form of teachers who taught that the Light had never actually appeared in human form. These first century false teachers were known as Gnostics (silent "G") from the Greek word *gnosis* which means "knowledge."

As the New Agers today, the Gnostics claimed to be in possession of a secret, divinely-given message on which entrance into the "higher life" depended. The Gnostics taught that man is "nothing but a small universe and the universe is nothing but a large man." Sound familiar?

The end result of the Gnostic teaching was that God couldn't have become man in the person of Jesus Christ, and if Jesus really did exist, it was with a phantom body. Following this through, Jesus' suffering and death for sinners was not only not necessary, but was in fact impossible. Furthermore, according to Gnosticism, sin and the removal of its (supposed) curse and penalty was not the problem Christian teachers claimed it was. Instead, one came into fellowship with God by way of one's own "superior knowledge" or *gnosis*.

True Knowledge

God the Holy Spirit did not delay in meeting this heresy head on. He caused the apostle John, in particular, to write many words exposing Gnosticism for what it was—and is in the various forms of New Age philosophy.

A careful reading of John's Gospel as well as his three epistles indicate that the burden of his holy message was to help mankind come to truly know God and His Son Jesus Christ. For example:

"Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, You both KNOW Me, and you KNOW where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not KNOW. But I KNOW Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me" (Jn. 7:28f).

"Jesus answered: You KNOW neither Me nor My Father. If you had KNOWN Me, you would have KNOWN My Father also" (Jn. 8:19).

"Then Jesus said to them, When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will

". . . To know Jesus Christ is to know God; to see Jesus is to see God; to believe in Jesus is to believe in God; to honor Jesus is to honor God; to reject Jesus is to reject God. . ."

KNOW that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things" (Jn. 8:28).

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, If you abide in My word, you are my disciples indeed. And you shall KNOW the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Jn. 8:31f).

"You have not KNOWN Him, but I KNOW Him. And if I say, I do not KNOW Him, I shall be a liar like you; but I do KNOW Him and keep His word" (Jn. 8:55).

"I am the good shepherd; and I KNOW My sheep, and am KNOWN by My own. As the Father KNOWS Me, even so I KNOW the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep" (Jn. 10:14f).

"If you had KNOWN Me, you would have KNOWN My Father also; and from now on you KNOW Him and have seen Him" (Jn. 14:7).

In John's epistle, this thread continues:

"Now by this we KNOW that we KNOW Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, I KNOW Him, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him" (I Jn. 2:3-4).

". . . The world does not KNOW us, because it did not KNOW Him." (I Jn. 3:1)

"We are of God. He who KNOWS God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we KNOW the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and KNOWS God. He who does not love does not KNOW God, for God is love" (I Jn. 4:6ff).

From these partial listings it is clear that John's divinely-inspired message to the world of his day and ours is that to know Jesus Christ is to know God; to see Jesus is to see God; to believe in Jesus is to believe in God; to honor Jesus is to honor God; to reject Jesus is to reject God. It is John, significantly, who quotes Jesus' exclusive claim: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (Jn. 14:6).

Vs. Gnosticism in any form the assertion of Holy Scripture is that fellowship with God comes about NOT through some subjective mystical super-consciousness; NOT through some metaphysical introspection or transcendental meditation; NOT through some supposed self-enlightenment. **"This is eternal life, that**

they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (Jn. 17:3).

The Incarnation

While we are on the subject, notice how John teaches NOT the reincarnation of sinners, but the incarnation of the Son of God in the person of Jesus. At the beginning of his Gospel John answers the charges of Gnostics of every age that Jesus had a "phantom" body: "He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not KNOW Him . . . and the WORD BECAME FLESH and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:10, 14).

At the beginning of his epistle John writes: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of Life—the life was MANIFESTED, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was MANIFESTED to us—that which we have SEEN AND HEARD we declare to you . . . and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (I Jn. 1:1ff).

Indeed, there is nothing new in the world—either as to Satan's lies or God's truth. Again this Advent and Christmas season, Christians shall rejoice in the incarnation of God's only-begotten Son. As writes St. Paul in chorus with St. John and all the Scriptures: "In Him (Jesus Christ) dwells all the fullness of the God-head BODILY" (Col. 2:9)!

We conclude as does John: "We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

"Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen" (I Jn. 5:18-21).

—Paul Fleischer



August 8-11, 1987, in Spokane—

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR TEACHERS

October is the usual time for teachers' conference, but this year on August 8th CLC teachers from many states arrived in the "Land of Opportunity," Washington to get an early start on the coming school year.

Pastor Paul Fleischer welcomed them with an appropriate question from God's Word found in Romans 2:17-21a. "You then, who teach others, do you not teach yourselves?" Christian educators need to "teach themselves"



Notice the trout jumping from the stream beneath the sunrise!

in the Word of God as well as in secular subjects, and then give evidence that they have been "self-taught" through the Word by the Spirit in what they teach and also in the example they give in the lives they lead.

The Fourth "R"

In addition to this opening devotion, the teachers received instruction in the most important of the "4 R's" which they teach their students, namely, religion, in daily devotions led by Professor Clifford Kuehne. The theme question was: "What's *good* about the work of the Public Ministry?" The answers found in the Word of God were that: it is highly to be desired; it was ordained by Christ; it extends Christ's kingdom; it is effective through the Gospel; the fields are ripe for harvest; it relies on the power of the Spirit; and it serves the needs of the flock of Christ.

During the Sunday morning Bible Class, Prof. Kuehne also reported on a

Creation Research Institute and a Bible Science Conference which he had attended just prior to this conference. The speakers at these conferences emphasized that "one's presuppositions determine what your conclusions will be on the subject of creation and one will explain data in a way which will agree with your presuppositions." Evolutionists can't be convinced of Creation by presenting data because they will bend the data and use bad logic to make the data agree with their evolutionistic beliefs, rather than believe the Bible which so completely agrees with the scientific data. We can thank the Lord for Christian schools in which we can teach the truths of Creation, and teach with the authority of Scripture.

In his Sunday sermon Pastor Fleischer pointed out that this "teaching with authority" is what distinguished Jesus from all other teachers and it distinguishes the teaching of our schools from the teaching in any other schools.

We establish Christian schools so that rather than trying to "bisect" the child into a spiritual and a secular part, we can educate the "whole person." "The heart of education is education of the heart" and that is achieved only through the imparting of the blessed truths of the inerrant, authoritative teachings of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh, and His entire Word.

In other papers concerning the "4th R," Pastor Paul Schaller likewise underscored the blessings of our Christian schools by reviewing an article by Prof. J. Schaller. The paper was entitled "The Christian Church and Education" and though written 70 years ago it is full of truth for today. And Pastor Kurt Luebke considered various tools for helping students "Get into the Bible" such as audio-visual aids and reference books.

The Three "R's"

The teachers were also helped to prepare themselves for the challenges of the impending school year by papers in secular areas of the curriculum. Grace Schreyer in her paper on "Help-



Pastor Fleischer welcoming teachers LeRoy Hulke, Mark Kranz, and Jim Lau.



Action was fast and furious on the sidelines.

ing Poor Readers" reminded them that "The goal of all reading is understanding what the author wishes to communicate," and gave them suggestions on ways to help readers achieve this understanding.

Kathy Markus discussed spelling patterns, especially "letter strings"; Kevin Hulke brought them information on new technology in "The Computer as a Teaching Tool"; Barb Hulke led a discussion on "Doing the Extras" in the classroom; and "hands-on" workshops were held by Beth Nolting and Prof. Mike Buck in the area of Science, and by Lynette Hulke in Art.

The profession of education itself was considered in a discussion by Mr. Armin Vogt, a member of Gethsemane congregation and superintendent of a nearby public school district. He spoke on some trends in education, especially a program in teacher improvement in which his district is involved. Ross Roehl presented for study a handbook

which will be helpful for those supervising student teachers.

A Western Welcome

The members of Gethsemane showed the teachers what is meant by a "western welcome" with warm Christian fellowship, delicious meals, and trips to local highlights. Some of the places visited included Mt. Spokane (which some cars and some people refused to climb), parks with lovely

waterfalls and flower gardens, and the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist which had a pipe organ some couldn't resist trying.

As the teachers dispersed by train, plane, or car, it was clear that they had been nourished in spirit by the Word of God, encouraged by the fellowship, and inspired to do the work to which they have been called—that "Good Work" of feeding Christ's lambs.

—Beth Sydow



Daily Devotions for December 1987

Under Zerubbabel, an ancestor of Jesus, a small band of Jews had returned to Jerusalem and had rebuilt the Temple in the days of Cyrus and Darius, kings of Persia. But these Jews in Jerusalem had powerful enemies, and their settlement was very weak.

Artaxerxes I finally permitted the scribe Ezra to lead another band of Jews to Jerusalem. Ezra's chief task was to teach the Jews the laws of God. When Ezra arrived in Jerusalem, he discovered to his horror that the Jews had disobeyed God's word by taking heathen wives. To correct this error, the Jews proceeded to divorce their heathen wives under Ezra's direction.

A few years later Artaxerxes I permitted his cupbearer, Nehemiah, to go to Jerusalem for the purpose of rebuilding Jerusalem's walls. Nehemiah wholeheartedly devoted himself to this task, and the walls were completed in 52 days. There was a great celebration, of course, but soon the people again began to disobey the word of the Lord.

God sent one last prophet, Malachi, to rebuke the people for their ingratitude and to announce the advent of better days to come. God was finally going to send the Messiah, the Lord Himself, as well as a messenger to prepare His way. How happy we can be that God kept His promise and sent John to prepare the way and Jesus as the Son of righteousness with healing in His wings. Let us praise the Lord forever for His mercy and truth!

Date Reading	Theme	Hymn
1 Ezra 4:7-23	The enemies of the Jews succeed in halting the Jerusalem building project.	472
2 Ezra 7:1-10	Ezra is given permission to teach God's law in Jerusalem.	283
3 Ezra 7:11-26	The decree of Artaxerxes provides protection for Ezra.	537
4 Ezra 7:27-8:20	Ezra and his company get as far as the Ahava River.	434
5 Ezra 8:21-36	Ezra and his company arrive in Jerusalem under God's guidance.	410
6 Ezra 9:1-15	Ezra confesses the widespread sin of intermarriage with pagans.	318
7 Ezra 10:1-17	The people take strong steps to correct the sin of intermarriage.	424
8 Psalm 102	We are guilty, but God's mercy endures forever.	583
9 Psalm 130	In our guilt and misery our only hope is God's merciful redemption.	329

Address Correction

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Installations

With the authorization of President Daniel Fleischer, the undersigned installed Kevin Hulke, Grace Schreyer, Karla Olmanson, and Elizabeth Klugherz as teachers of Immanuel Lutheran Schools, Mankato, Minnesota on August 30, 1987.

—Pastor L. D. Redlin

10	Nehemiah 1:1-11	Artaxerxes' cupbearer, Nehemiah, asks God to help His people.	462
11	Nehemiah 2:1-11	Artaxerxes authorizes Nehemiah to go to Jerusalem.	540
12	Nehemiah 2:12-20	Nehemiah resolves to build the walls of Jerusalem.	451
13	Nehemiah 4:1-12	In spite of ridicule and opposition the building project continues.	445
14	Nehemiah 4:13-23	The builders are provided with weapons, and the work continues.	449
15	Nehemiah 5:1-19	Nehemiah rebukes the rich Jews who were oppressing the poor.	440
16	Nehemiah 6:1-19	The walls are completed in 52 days.	640
17	Nehemiah 8:1-18	Ezra teaches God's Law, and the people worship joyfully.	296
18	Nehemiah 9:1-21	The Levites confess the sins of Israel's history.	19 (1-3)
19	Nehemiah 9:22-38	The Levites praise the Lord God for His faithfulness.	19 (4-6)
20	Nehemiah 12:27-43	The walls of Jerusalem are dedicated to God.	638
21	Nehemiah 13:4-31	Once more Nehemiah has to rebuke their unlawful activities.	515
22	Malachi 1:1-14	God's people are ungrateful for the Lord's blessings.	59
23	Malachi 2:1-17	The priests are corrupt and the people are still marrying heathen wives.	75
24	Malachi 3:1-7	Two messengers are on their way: the preparing messenger, and the Lord Himself.	136
25	Malachi 4:1-6	The Son of righteousness arises with healing in His wings.	94
26	Malachi 3:8-18	God mercifully spares and blesses His sinful people.	338
27	Psalms 146	The God of Jacob "keeps truth forever."	26
28	Psalms 147	Those who hope in the Lord's mercy are blessed.	41
29	Psalms 148	Let both old and young praise the name of the Lord.	243
30	Psalms 149	The Lord "will beautify the humble with salvation."	43
31	Psalms 150	"Let everything that has breath praise the Lord."	39

—D. Lau