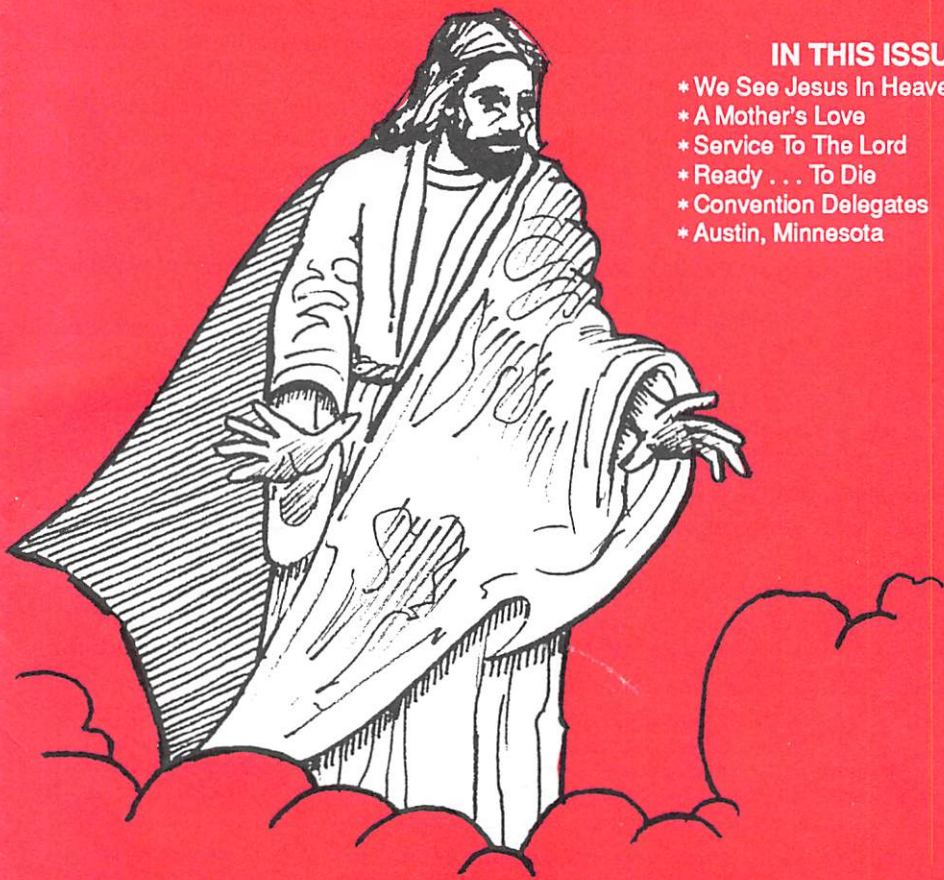


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IN THIS ISSUE

- * We See Jesus In Heaven
- * A Mother's Love
- * Service To The Lord
- * Ready . . . To Die
- * Convention Delegates
- * Austin, Minnesota



WHILE HE WAS BLESSING HIS DISCIPLES,
JESUS BEGAN ASCENDING INTO HEAVEN

CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

WE SEE JESUS IN HEAVEN!

“Out of sight, out of mind.” So the saying goes.

While Jesus was visibly present here on earth, He was very much on the minds of those who saw Him.

But then He was crucified. He rose from the dead. Forty days later, as His disciples looked on, He ascended into the sky and was removed from their sight by a cloud. None of them ever saw Him again in this life—except for special visions.

Jesus was out of their sight, but He certainly wasn't out of their minds.

Knowing Jesus

What kind of thoughts do you suppose the disciples had about Jesus? Certainly they thought of all He had done during His earthly ministry to save the world. Who could ever forget that? Who could ever stop praising Him for that?

At the same time, however, they also thought of all that He was doing for them *now*, in heaven. With their own eyes they had seen Him ascend. They knew that He was there, in the

presence of the Father. They knew that He was doing all the things He promised to do when He returned to the Father.

They knew that now Jesus had entered into the Most Holy Place of the heavenly tabernacle with the blood He once shed for all (Heb. 9:12).

They knew that now Jesus had sat down at the right hand of God and was using His almighty power to bless their labors in His Kingdom. He was preventing “the gates of hell”—the enemies of the Gospel—from prevailing against them (Mt. 16:18).

They knew that He was preparing a place for them, so that where He was they could be also (Jn. 14:1-3).

They knew that Jesus in heaven was the same loving Friend that He had been in the past, and would be the same forever (Heb. 13:8). He was the same Jesus who had invited them to ask “whatever” of the Father in His name and promised: “He will give it you” (Jn. 16:23). He was the same Jesus who had opened His arms to them when their souls were burdened

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and said: "I will give you rest" (Mt. 11:26). He was the same Jesus who had prayed for them, that their faith would not fail (Lk. 22:32).

They *knew* that Jesus had "passed through the heavens" for them (Heb. 4:14), for they had seen it with their own eyes. What they had seen with their eyes remained in their minds.

The Eyes of Faith

Now what about us? We have not seen Jesus with our earthly eyes, but we have seen Him with the eyes of faith. The Holy Spirit has given us spiritual sight through God's Word. Through the Gospel's message about Jesus, our Savior, the Spirit enables us to see Jesus in heaven and to keep Him before our mind's eye.

When we fall and fail, the Holy Spirit reminds us that "Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands . . . but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;" and "not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for

all, having obtained eternal redemption" (Heb. 9:24, 12). We see Jesus in heaven!

When all our plans go awry and the future seems uncertain, the Holy Spirit opens the skies before our eyes and shows us the one who said: "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth" (Mt. 28:18). Having seen Jesus in heaven, we can say: "Ah, but all is well! Jesus is Lord of all, and will do all things for my blessing."

When we have heartaches and special needs, the Spirit shows us *not* some unfeeling person who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses. He shows us Jesus, who "was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin." Having seen this Jesus in heaven, we are encouraged to "come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:15-16).

As long as we keep on using God's Word and receiving His sacrament, we will be able to see Jesus in heaven. May He never be "out of sight" or "out of mind"!

—Michael Thom



THANK GOD FOR A MOTHER'S LOVE

God commands that children respect and honor their parents. "Honor thy father and thy mother" is the one commandment with a promise attached to it. It is also repeated in the New Testament (Ephesians 6:1-3). *Ex 20:12*

There are also fearful warnings against those who would despise their parents. God's law for His Old Testament people prescribed stoning for one

who would dare to curse his father or mother. Also the book of Proverbs contains many pieces of stern advice to children. "My son, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother" (1:8). "A wise son makes a father glad, but a foolish man despises his mother" (15:20). And there is this grisly warning: "The eye that mocks his father, and scorns obe-

dience to his mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it" (30:17).

Honor Parents

Why is God so particularly severe in demanding that children not only obey, but honor their parents? Is it not that parents are the most important earthly gift which God gives to children? It is through our parents that we have received many gifts from God; not only food, clothing, and shelter, but also the instruction and training to bring us to maturity and fit us for adult life. No wonder the person who despises his mother is called a fool. Who but a fool would ungratefully throw back precious gifts into the face of the giver?

Notice that in each of the quoted passages *both* father and mother are mentioned. Mothers are given equal standing with fathers in receiving the honor and respect of their children. Yet they are mentioned separately. In the passages cited, the Bible doesn't speak of "parents" but of "father and mother." This suggests that each of the parents have something different and special to offer their children. And in this month which contains Mother's Day, we ought to consider what special gift God has given to us through our mothers.

A Special Gift

Surely our mothers taught us many valuable things which prepared us for adult life. But wasn't the greatest gift from our mothers the love that they gave us, which they demonstrated to us throughout our childhood? It was an unconditional and undying love, a love which was not dependent upon how

good-looking or smart or talented we were. It didn't even depend on how we behaved. Our mothers loved us because we were their children. This unconditional love made us secure knowing that we were valued in spite of all our shortcomings and deficiencies.

The love our mothers gave us was also unselfish and even self-sacrificing. They were willing to forego things for themselves so that they could provide for us. We are here thinking not only of financial and material sacrifices, but of the sacrifice of time and freedom which so many are unwilling to make today. We are probably not even aware of all the times and ways that our mothers unselfishly gave of themselves for us.

Picturing God's Love

God Himself teaches us the beauty of a mother's love by using it as a picture of His own love for His children. We are used to God's love being pictured as a father's love. But God also speaks of His love as a mother's love when He promises His people that they would be carried on His side and rocked on His knees: "As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you" (Is. 66:12f).

God's love for us surely doesn't depend on our own goodness or worthiness ^{but} or His love. He has demonstrated His love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8). His love moved Him to sacrifice His own Son for us. He has loved us as a mother loves her own child.

That God should use a mother's love to picture His own love should increase your appreciation for the unconditional and unselfish love shown to you by your own mother, or perhaps

by someone else who was a mother to you. Such love is a precious gift of God. Mother's Day is a good time to remember this gift and to honor the

mother who gave it.

It is also a time to thank God for a mother's love.

—John Klatt

IN SERVICE TO THE LORD

Individual believers in Christ are members of the body of Christ. The Body of Christ consisting of believers in Him is the Church. When the Lord brings together such as are of one mind and heart in matters of doctrine and faith, the assembly is called a church. The assembly is so called because of the believers that are gathered around Word and Sacrament in that place.

In the Congregation

Scripture ordains no particular organizational form for the Church. In a spirit of unity and love, and for the maintenance of good order, the assembly of believers elects various men to council positions. The description and number of positions is left to the discretion of the assembly. It chooses organists, Sunday School teachers, and others, men and women, to function in the specific sphere of responsibility assigned to each.

All those who serve do so in behalf of the congregation, not as lords and masters of the church. In their service to the Church they are in reality serving the Lord. All who are asked to serve the Lord receive a special responsibility to serve faithfully and responsibly. They who serve are due the respect and honor accorded to such as serve the Lord—regardless of the of-

fice or task.

Indeed, it is well for all members of the congregation to remember that whatever they are chosen to do, or whatever they are encouraged to give, they give and work for the Church *as unto the Lord*. The response of those who serve is pleasing unto the Lord when it is a response to the announcement: "The Lord has need . . ." (Mt. 21:3). Pastors and congregations are most appreciative for all those who serve with them and for them—to the welfare of the congregation and to the glory of the Lord.

In the Synod

The same is true in a synod—in the Church of the Lutheran Confession. The individual congregations of our body have made a confessional commitment to one another. We do preach, teach, and believe one and the same thing. Together we stand upon the Word of God, and are committed to that Word. There can, in fact, be no honest exercise of fellowship without unity in the Word.

By virtue of the believers in it the Church of the Lutheran Confession is called to proclaim the Gospel. To the furtherance of that divine work, the body in convention elects—calls—various people to look after the administration of that which is in reality the

work of us all. They serve in behalf of the body.

Some of those chosen to fill the constitutional offices and other committee responsibilities are pastors and teachers. Many are laymen. Anyone serving the CLC is in His service—serving the Lord—for it is the Lord's work we do.

... Pastors

Most pastors holding office are parish pastors. Thus they serve a dual role. While this certainly increases the workload, the Lord gives the strength to carry on. In this regard He will show when one can no longer function as pastor of a congregation or officer in the synod. At times one must lay down both mantles simultaneously.

It is deeply appreciated by the body when congregations willingly share the gifts and time of their pastor and teacher. The CLC could not function without the willing cooperation and assent of its member congregations who "share" their pastor.

At the same time it is important for pastors to remember that, as important as their synod responsibility is, they are first of all pastors of congregations. We believe that the "system" has worked well, and that our pastors have exercised good judgment in this regard.

... Laymen

At least as important as activity of the pastors who are involved is the activity of the laymen. Unless members of the CLC have been personally involved, they can hardly appreciate the total dedication and the amount of time that the elected laymen spend in administration of the CLC. Remember,

these men are husbands and fathers; they have day to day jobs in society—engineers, businessmen, college professors, farmers, division heads.

The work load of the boards—the Trustees, the Board of Missions, the Regents, the Board of Doctrine, the Board of Education—has increased dramatically over the years. Conference phone calls occur frequently. Occasionally there are special board meetings, in addition to the Coordinating Council which meets twice annually. There is paper work. There are administrative decisions.

Hardly would we expect that a church body of our size would be gifted by the Lord with such outstanding, dedicated, competent, and selfless servants as serve the CLC. Here we would also express our thanks to the wives and children of the laymen, and of the pastors and teachers, who also "share" husband and father.

At times the work is difficult, but it is always joyful when it is done in faith unto the Lord. It takes time—and occasionally late hours. It involves difficult, and sometimes unpopular, decisions. It even involves a literal headache from time to time.

While no one who serves the CLC is a martyr, and would not want to be perceived as such, the fact is that the constituency should know—and as they know, appreciate—the service of those called to serve the Lord through serving them.

"Thank You!"

As president of the CLC, by the will of God and His people, I hereby take the opportunity to thank all those who serve with me and who bear the burden of the work—the boards, the

editors of our publications, the standing committees, the specially appointed committees, and the officers. All serve without any financial remuneration whatever, but for the joy of doing the work of the Lord.

I encourage all the members to remember in prayer those called to serve in the home congregation or in the CLC. Pray for them that they may continually be endowed with grace from the Father—and speak a word of thanks for their faithful labor.

May all who serve be ready to do so again, according to the will of God and His people. If the Lord shall call to service you who are not presently engaged, we encourage you to respond positively. It is a joyful and uplifting

experience to use the gifts that the Lord has given to the benefit of His Church.

If you desire to know who those are who serve the Lord in your behalf, you will find them listed in the DIRECTORY, or you may ask your pastor.

“Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen” (Heb. 13:20-21).

—Daniel Fleischer



Serving the Lord as . . .

CONVENTION DELEGATES

Elsewhere in this issue our CLC President calls attention to the faithful laymen who serve the Lord on the various boards between conventions. With all due respect, may we add to his list? This is convention year, and we are thinking of



Delegates enjoying coffee break at last convention.

those who serve as their congregation's delegate(s) to convention. The work that is assumed by these men generally demands, and receives, the same kind of faithful attention and dedication that the president speaks of regarding those elected to serve in other positions.

Just ask any who have been there—it's truly *work*! It's sitting in on committee meetings and convention business for five *full* days; often it's starting with special meetings after the 8:00 a.m. breakfast; it may mean gulping noon and evening meals to make a committee meeting; it may mean sitting until midnight to discuss and "hammer out" resolutions to bring to the convention floor for action. And that is not necessarily the end. Discussion on the convention floor may result in a dreaded referral which likely means cutting one's coffee break short!

Just a few days of this mental gymnastics is exhausting work.

Guidelines

The Convention's Moderator distributes a set of "Guidelines" on opening day. These guidelines call for such things as: careful evaluation of assignments in the convention workbook called the *Prospectus* (no haphazardness in doing our Lord's work); opening and closing of committee meetings with prayer (the Lord's presence is necessary when *His work* is being done); no unexcused absences of any kind, even to conduct committee work, during official convention time (the work of any body is hampered if it's missing an arm or a leg); seek never to arrive late or leave early from the convention site.

The list goes on—all pointers to speed and facilitate five days of intense dedication to the reason we are there.

It becomes obvious that the words our president used to describe the work of laymen *between* conventions also applies to those who serve *at* conventions. "Outstanding, dedicated, competent, selfless" servants are needed, and are generally there. Needed are "husbands and fathers" ready to spend long hours in making "difficult decisions" which may involve "literal headaches from time to time."

We don't write to discourage, but to leave no mistaken impressions when we now add that—according to the words of the president—this too is a "joyful and uplifting experience." Again, just ask those who have been there! (How could serving Him who died for us, and rose again, be anything but?)

YOU???

Some fast checking found that, of our 67 congregations in 1988, 31 had two lay-delegates, 20 had one delegate, and 16 had none (though in each case these were "excused") in attendance at our Eighteenth Convention. In other words, some 80 laymen were present at last convention to complement the 74 pastors and professors and 13 male teachers present.

What about at this, our Nineteenth Convention, on the campus of Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin from June 18-22?

The hope is always that each of our congregations will be represented with lay-delegates. Most other synods are too large to allow for every-congregation



Prof. Gurgel & Pastor Pfeiffer—1988 Convention



Pastors G. Barthels (front) & N. Reim (back) visit with Prof. & Mrs. C.M. Gullerud (left).

direct participation. It should be counted as a blessing and a privilege that each congregation in the CLC has voice and vote at our conventions. Each one has as many voices and votes, in fact, as it has pastor(s), male teacher(s), and lay-delegate(s) in attendance. To this extent, each congregation among us can truly say; *WE* had a hand in the Lord's work at convention.

A last, encouraging word: don't let those adjectives describing faithful laymen keep you from volunteering *your* name as a delegate from your home church. Who is it, after all, that makes *any* of God's servants "outstanding, dedicated, competent, and selfless"? Who, but the Holy Spirit of God! Imploring His gifts and guidance, *you* may be just the man for the happy work!

Perhaps this year's listing of delegates in attendance could reveal that every CLC congregation was represented with two, or at least one, lay-delegate???

—Paul Fleischer



Tracing the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 21)—

"I am ready . . . to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13).

Paul's Willingness to Suffer and Die for Jesus' Name

The apostle Paul had begun to make plans for mission work in Rome and Spain. His third great mission journey was coming to an end. The congregations in Corinth and Thessalonica and Ephesus and other towns were able to continue their Gospel work without him in their midst. Paul wrote from Corinth to the Christians in Rome: "But now no longer having a place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come to you, whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you" (Rom. 15:23-24).

Paul was eagerly looking forward to bringing the Gospel to Spain, for he had made it his aim to preach the good

news of Jesus Christ to people who had never heard of Him. He expected the Roman Christians to support him

in this new undertaking.

The Necessary Trip to Jerusalem

But there was one thing Paul had to do first before going to Rome and Spain. He had to go to Jerusalem. For he had been gathering an offering for the poor Christians in Jerusalem from all the new mission congregations he had founded. The Christians in Jerusalem were almost all Jewish Christians. The Christians in the congregations Paul had founded were almost all non-Jewish Christians, or Gentiles. This offering from the Gentile Christians to the Jewish Christians was intended to show the unity of the Church of Jesus.

This was a very important matter to the apostle. He wrote to the Roman Christians: "Now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the saints. For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things. Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain" (Rom. 15:25-28).

The Holy Spirit's Warnings

But while Paul was on his way to Jerusalem with this offering, he kept on hearing that danger awaited him in Jerusalem. Apparently Christians who had the special gift of prophecy told him in advance that he could expect trouble in Jerusalem. He told the elders of the Ephesian congregation: "The Holy Spirit testifies in every city, say-

ing that chains and tribulations await me" (Acts 20:23).

Nevertheless, Paul continued on his way to Jerusalem, traveling from Cos to Rhodes to Patara to Tyre, where he and his companions stayed for seven days. There in Tyre the Holy Spirit again indicated that Paul would have trouble in Jerusalem. The prophets in the congregation who received this word from the Holy Spirit thought that it meant that Paul should not go to Jerusalem. "They told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem" (Acts 21:4). But Paul did not accept their advice as being from God. He kept right on course for Jerusalem, traveling from Tyre to Ptolemais to Caesarea.

At Caesarea a prophet by the name of Agabus told Paul clearly that he would be arrested in Jerusalem. "He took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, 'Thus says the Holy Spirit: So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles'" (Acts 21:11).

Paul's traveling companions and the Christians at Caesarea began to question whether it was God's will for Paul to go to Jerusalem. Since God Himself clearly foretold arrest and imprisonment in Jerusalem, why should not Paul escape disaster by simply not showing up in Jerusalem? The rest of them could bear the offering. Paul could fulfill his plans and head for Rome and Spain. Luke says: "Both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem" (Acts 21:12). Was this trip really necessary?

Paul believed that he had to go up to Jerusalem. As the Lord's specially chosen apostle to the Gentiles, he himself personally had to bring the Gentile

offering to the Jewish Christians. Just as Jesus Himself had to go up to Jerusalem to be handed over to the Gentiles and to suffer and die for the sins of the world, so also His apostle Paul had to go up to Jerusalem to be chained and arrested and delivered to the Gentiles, that is, to the Roman authorities. There was no doubt in Paul's mind. He told his pleading friends: "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13).

When Paul could not be dissuaded, his friends gave in and said: "The will of the Lord be done" (Acts 21:14).

Paul therefore went up to Jerusalem. James and the other Christian leaders at Jerusalem received him gladly, no doubt also gratefully receiving the offering from the Gentile Christians. But they recognized that the situation in Jerusalem was tense. False reports had been circulated that Paul was trying to persuade Jewish Christians to stop keeping the Jewish laws. They suggested that Paul should pay the expenses of four men who had made a vow according to Jewish custom. By paying their expenses Paul would indicate that he personally still kept the Jewish laws.

Rescued by the Romans

At first all went well. But then suddenly some Jews from Ephesus accused Paul of taking a Gentile man into the Holy Place of the Temple. A riot erupted in the Temple courtyard and Paul barely escaped with his life. For a while it seemed as though he would die in Jerusalem for Jesus' sake, just as Jesus died in Jerusalem. For the

book of Acts says that "they were seeking to kill him" (Acts 21:31). But he was rescued by a Roman commander and his soldiers. Even then Paul was in grave danger. "He had to be carried by the soldiers because of the violence of the mob. For the multitude of the people followed after, crying out, 'Away with him!'" Of course, this is the same thing that the Jerusalem mob said about Jesus.

Obviously, Paul believed that it was God's will for him to go to Jerusalem. Since it was God's will for him to be there, he was willing to suffer and die, if necessary, for the name of Jesus. He had said to the Ephesian elders: "None of these things (chains and tribulations) move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).

How About Us?

Most of us reading these words have also declared our willingness to suffer and die for the name of Jesus. For one of the traditional questions used in confirmation ceremonies is this: "Do you intend to continue steadfast in the confession of this church, and suffer all, even death, rather than fall away from it?" In other words, are you willing to suffer and die, if necessary, for the name of Jesus?

If our calling as Christians requires it, if faithfulness to our ministry in Christ's Church requires it, we indeed need to be as willing and ready to suffer and die as the apostle Paul. For this is what our Savior taught us: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his

cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world,

and is himself destroyed or lost?" (Lk. 9:23-25)

May our Lord make us as willing to suffer and die for Jesus' name as was the apostle Paul.

—D. Lau



Daily Devotions For June 1990



| Date | Scripture | Theme | Hymn |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|--|---------|
| 1 | John 15:17-21 | Love one another. | 231:1 |
| 2 | I Corinthians 2:12-16 | By the Spirit's working we have the mind of Christ. | 231:2 |
| The Church of the Spirit | | | |
| 3 | Genesis 11:1-9 | The Lord confuses the languages of the earth. | 231:3-4 |
| 4 | Joel 2:28-32 | God prophesies the pouring out of His Spirit. | 224:1 |
| 5 | Romans 8:14-17 | The Spirit-led are the children of God. | 224:2 |
| 6 | Revelation 21:1-5 | Believers await the new Jerusalem. | 224:3 |
| 7 | Isaiah 44:1-8 | There is no God like our God! | 235:1-2 |
| 8 | Acts 3:1-10 | The Spirit enables the apostles to heal. | 235:3-4 |
| 9 | Acts 3:11-21 | The miracle provides opportunity to preach the Gospel. | 235:5-6 |
| The Triune God | | | |
| 10 | Deuteronomy 6:4-13 | The Lord our God is one Lord. | 233:1-2 |
| 11 | Ephesians 3:14-21 | God be praised for His unspeakable love. | 233:3-4 |
| 12 | Colossians 2:1-9 | Beware of empty philosophy. Trust Christ. | 233:5-7 |
| 13 | Ephesians 4:1-6 | Strive to preserve the unity of the Spirit. | 541:1-2 |
| 14 | 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 | Ponder the apostolic benediction! | 541:3-5 |
| 15 | I Corinthians 12:1-6 | God dispenses a variety of spiritual gifts. | 246:1-2 |
| 16 | John 5:17-23 | Honor the Father by honoring the Son. | 247:1-3 |
| Apostles and Prophets | | | |
| 17 | Jeremiah 23:16-29 | Do not listen to false prophets. | 429:1 |
| 18 | 2 Peter 1:16-21 | The trustworthy prophetic word. | 429:2 |
| 19 | Ezekiel 2:1-17 | Ezekiel sent to rebellious Israel. | 429:3 |
| 20 | John 5:41-47 | Believe the words of Jesus. | 53:1-2 |
| 21 | Luke 24:44-49 | Preach Jesus, the Fulfiller of all prophecy. | 53:3-4 |
| 22 | Ezekiel 3:22-27 | The Lord's prophets can expect persecution. | 53:5-6 |
| 23 | Luke 13:22-30 | God's way is the narrow way. | 283 |
| The Great Invitation | | | |
| 24 | Proverbs 9:1-10 | Seek Wisdom—Christ and His Word. | 494:1 |
| 25 | John 7:37-39 | Come to Jesus, the Fountain of living waters. | 494:2 |
| 26 | Jeremiah 3:14-17 | Return to the Lord, O backsliders. | 494:3 |
| 27 | I Corinthians 14:26-33 | Let none cause confusion in God's church. | 494:4 |
| 28 | Luke 14:12-15 | Invite others to share in the joy of Christ. | 509:1 |
| 29 | Isaiah 45:22-25 | Look to the Lord and be saved. | 509:2 |
| 30 | James 2:1-9 | Beware of personal favoritism. | 509:3 |

Partners in the Gospel . . .



St. Paul's Lutheran Church Austin, Minnesota

"I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now" (Phil. 1:4). It was spring 1941 when 15 families in Austin, Minnesota appealed to the Wisconsin Synod to become partners in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and were granted mission status. The formal organization of St. Paul's Lutheran Church took place on June 27, 1941. It included 14 voting members, 43 communicants, and 57 baptized souls.

One of the first concerns was the need of a spiritual leader to guide them in spreading the Gospel. A temporary call was issued to L. W. Schierenbeck, a seminary graduate. On October 5, 1941 A. W. Blauert was installed as the first permanent pastor.

Longing for a home of their own and a place with which the community

could identify them, the voters made plans for the building of a church. Because of World War II, regulations restricted the congregation to the erection of a basement church at the cost of about \$6000. High spirits, ingenuity, and hard work brought about the construction of a beautiful basement church during the spring and summer of 1942. On October 4 these people of God gathered in their new home to sing the praises of their gracious Lord.

On August 29, 1944 the Lord suddenly called Pastor Blauert to his eternal home in heaven. It was with shock and fleeting dismay that the congregation lost their spiritual shepherd. Yet they were determined to continue with their part in the partnership of the Gospel. On December 10, 1944 they installed L. W. Schierenbeck as their



second pastor.

In 1948 a special service of thanksgiving was held, because God had brought them to the point where they were debt free and able to become a self-supporting congregation. Since the War was now over, the congregation resumed building plans. Construction of a joint church-parsonage began in June 1950. On July 1, 1951 the parsonage was completed. Two long years of difficult labor, much of it done by the members, saw the completion of the church. On May 17, 1953 it was dedicated to the glory of God.

In the late 1950's St. Paul's partnership in the Gospel underwent a change. After a careful study of Scripture the congregation concluded that the Wisconsin Synod had departed from the truth regarding the doctrine of church fellowship. In obedience to Romans 16:17-18 and to spare her Gospel proclamation from the leavening influence of false doctrine, St. Paul's severed her ties to the Wisconsin Synod on April 26, 1960.

On August 7, 1960 it became possible for St. Paul's to once again share in the spreading of the good news of salvation. On that date the Church of the Lutheran Confession was organized, with St. Paul's as one of the charter members. To this date St. Paul's continues to support the

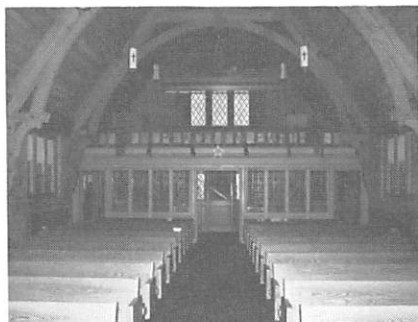
evangelical activities of the CLC.

In 1969, after almost 25 years as shepherd of the flock, Pastor Schierenbeck accepted the call of Messiah Lutheran Church in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. In January 1970 St. Paul's received her third pastor, Carl Thurow.

It was in 1972 that a most blessed event occurred. The congregation decided to open a Christian Day School. That fall, after the remodeling of the church basement, 29 children entered the new school. Shirley Wendland and Carla Thurow began the work of equipping these young soldiers of Christ for the good fight of faith. Since that time the school has been served by Diane Lietz, Mary Schuetze, Luella Gilbertson, Leif Olmanson, Irene Eichstadt, Quinn Sprengeler, Barbara Pfeiffer, Desirae Ohlmann, and Wendy Greve.

Through the years St. Paul's had kept a wary eye on the Red Cedar River across the street from the church. By the will of God the river rose a number of times, twice entering the church basement. On July 6, 1978 a heavy rainfall brought the water once more into the basement. Ample warning gave the members time to save most of the equipment. However, on July 17 heavy rains again fell upon the saturated ground. Although equipment was removed to the first floor, the waters reached it, covering even the pews. As extensive repairs were underway the decision was made to move the pastor out of the flood plain. The parsonage was remodeled to serve as the school.

This was also a time of spiritual upheaval for the congregation. As in the rest of the CLC, St. Paul's was engaged in a struggle to do the will of



The nave at St. Paul's, Austin

the Lord with regard to religious, fraternal benefit societies. The majority agreed with the synod's position that membership in such religious societies could be maintained only where there is full doctrinal agreement among the members. At this time there was a sizeable loss of membership.

In July 1984 Carl Thurow retired from the preaching ministry. In August John Pfeiffer was installed as the fourth pastor.

The years that followed were quiet years, except for a disruption in the community connected with a labor strike. By the grace of God the congregation was able to maintain a neutral position in this question of Christian liberty. Sadly, not all were so inclined, and a few members found it necessary to discontinue their partnership with

St. Paul's.

In 1991 St. Paul's will celebrate 50 years under the gracious guidance of the Lord. He has mercifully borne with her weaknesses, strengthening and comforting her by His Word and Sacraments. He has carried her through natural and doctrinal storms, always favoring her by keeping her faithful in His Word. May He move her to continually reaffirm her goal as outlined in the 1965 Annual Report:

"Our goal is the same as it ever was. It includes two things. First of all, we must be dedicated to preserving the truth that saves souls for ourselves and for our children. We have tasted the unbelievable sweetness of God's forgiving grace in our hearts. We know that in the possession of the saving Word we have all things; without it, though we have many things, we have nothing. Preservation of the truth demands the utmost dedication, or the truth will be lost. There is a continuing need for vigorous defensive warfare against Satan, who would first dilute the truth with error, knowing full well that if he can breach the walls of truth but once, eventually they will crumble and fall and salvation will be lost."

—John K. Pfeiffer

Wisconsin Delegate Conference

- When:** Begins at 7:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 3 (Central Time); closes at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, June 4.
- Where:** Messiah Lutheran Church of Hales Corners, Wisconsin
- Agenda:** The Propositions on the Doctrine of the Call—L. W. Schierenbeck
The Study of the 1990 *Prospectus*
- Announce:** Please announce to the host pastor.

The congregation requests your cooperation in announcing early enough for their preparations. For their meal and housing preparations please indicate your tentative time of arrival.

—John Ude, Secretary

West Central Delegate Conference

- Dates:** June 5-7, 1990; beginning at 1:00 p.m. (CDT) on Tuesday through 12 noon on Thursday.
- Place:** Grace Ev. Lutheran Church, Valentine, NE
- Agenda:** * A Devotional Study of Ecclesiastes Chapter 3—Pastor Norman Greve
* A Catechism of Differences: CLC and the Roman Catholic Church—Pastor Tom Schuetze
* A Thorough Discussion of the 1990 *CLC Prospectus*

Conference Chaplain—Pastor David Fuerstenau
Conference Speaker—Pastor Mike Sprengeler

—D. Fuerstenau, Secretary

Minnesota Delegate Conference

Date: June 10, 3:00 p.m.

Place: Salem Lutheran Church,
Eagle Lake, MN

Agenda: Discussion of Convention *Prospectus*
—R. Grams, Secretary

Roughrider Youth Camp

Roughrider Youth Camp for grades 5-12 will be held July 8-14. The site will, as usual, be Camp Rokiwan on Spiritwood Lake 15 miles outside of Jamestown, ND. For more information speak to your pastor or write to: RRYC Camp Committee, % Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 424 5th Avenue SE, Jamestown, ND 58401.

Pacific Northwest Youth Camp

The "Good News Games," a youth camp for CLC young people, grades 5-12, will be held July 30-August 3 (registration deadline July 15). The site is Zephyr Lodge on Liberty Lake, 10 miles east of Spokane. For registration forms and other information contact Gethsemane Ev. Lutheran Church, E. 11315 Broadway, Spokane, WA 99206. Phone 509-926-3317.

Organ Available

Any of our congregations may have—free for the taking—a 30-year-old Wurlitzer two-key-board organ. If interested, contact Mr. & Mrs. Oswald Christianson, 1348 Peterson Avenue, Eau Claire, WI 54703; or call (715) 832-0558.

Invitation

Holy Trinity, West Columbia, SC invites you to join them May 27, 1990 at 11:15 a.m. for a special 25th anniversary service—Pastor Paul F. Nolting, guest speaker.

Change of Address

Karl Olmanson
N. 1224 Felts Rd.
Spokane, WA 99206



1989 CLC Teacher's Conference, Mankato, Minnesota