

June 1990
Vol. 32, No. 12
(ISSN 0024-7537)

lutheran spokesman

19TH

CONVENTION



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN
COLLEGE

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CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION

“Ye are . . . a royal priesthood” (I Peter 2:9)

A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

The apostle Peter gave this honorable title to workaday Christians in Asia Minor. He intended the title for only those who *actually* trusted in Jesus and were “receiving the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls” (I Pet. 1:9). *Pretend* Christians are no more part of God’s royal priesthood than mud stuck to a fender is part of a car. Only *real* Christians are kings and priests before God.

In Spiritual Matters

A king exercises authority. A priest deals with spiritual matters. God’s royal priests have authority to speak and act for Him in spiritual matters. *Christians* possess God’s powerful Word and sacraments through which He creates and sustains spiritual life. *We Christians* are His hands by which He washes away sin in holy Baptism and feeds hungry souls in the Lord’s Supper. *We Christians* are God’s mouth through which He declares forgiveness. “Behold, what manner of

love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God” (I Jn. 3:1) and therefore His royal priesthood.

But also, what manner of responsibility has the Father placed upon us! God’s royal priests have much work to do. The Lord expects His followers to “continue in His Word” (Jn. 8:31). He wants them to “hear the Word of God and keep it” (Lk. 11:28). The Word of Christ is to “dwell in them *richly* and *in all wisdom*” (Col. 3:16).

So that His Word and sacraments are used efficiently, the Lord asks that Christians living near each other “assemble themselves together” (Heb. 10:25) for worship. He promises: “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them” (Mt. 18:20). Such a local group is called a Christian congregation because, according to Isaiah 55:11, real Christians will surely be found wherever the Bible and sacraments are properly used.

Postmaster: Second Class postage paid at Lake Mills, IA 50450. Send address corrections (Form 3579) to Lutheran Spokesman, 2750 Oxford Street North, Roseville, MN 55113.

The Lutheran Spokesman is published monthly by the Church of the Lutheran Confession, 2750 Oxford St. N., Roseville, MN 55113, and is an official organ of the Church of the Lutheran Confession.

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Material submitted for publication should be sent to Editor Paul Fleischer one month before date of publication. Announcements and other short notices should also be sent Editor Fleischer.

Business Manager: Benno Sydow, 2750 Oxford St. N., Roseville, MN 55113. Individual subscriptions: \$6.00 for one year; \$11.00 for two years; \$16.00 for three years. Subscriptions sent in bulk to congregations: \$5.00



Kings and Priests from Salem, Eagle Lake, Minnesota (See article on p. 17)

But the Lord wants His royal priests to do more than nurture their own faith in a local congregation. They are to “go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mk. 16:15). To do this, Christian congregations often pool their resources by forming a synod such as the *Church of the Lutheran Confession*.

The Public Ministry

Although a synod is a *man-made* organization and is required to function within the limits established by its member congregations, it is also a gathering of God’s royal priests because true Christians from the member congregations belong to it. That synodical gathering of royal priests has the same spiritual rights as its member congregations, namely: the right to preach the gospel, administer the sacraments, admonish its members, and watch over what is taught and done in its midst.

The royal priesthood of Christians is not the same thing as the public ministry. *All* Christians are God’s

kings and priests. Within certain limits, the Lord authorizes every Christian man, woman, and child to use and spread the good news of salvation. But on top of that, the Lord also wants Christian groups to appoint a qualified person to speak and act for their group whenever God’s Word and sacraments are used in their midst. Such delegating of spiritual authority by a Christian group is called *the public ministry*.

A congregation of Christians may call as many workers that it needs in order to make good use of God’s Word and sacraments. For example, in addition to a preacher, the group may call qualified persons to teach the children, visit the sick and elderly, or lead the worship music. It is important that a congregation tell its called servants exactly what their duties are and require them to stay within the limits of their assigned work. Such clear-cut job descriptions and limitations help prevent the called ministers from becoming “lords (conquerors) over God’s heritage” (1 Pet. 5:3).

All servants appointed by a congre-
3

gation are 100% full-fledged public ministers even though they have different duties. For example, the preacher might have more responsibilities than a Sunday school teacher, but that does not make the Sunday school teacher a second-rate public minister. All properly called workers are bona-fide servants of God's Word.

Appointing public ministers does not eliminate the spiritual activity of the remaining members of a congregation. They are still God's royal priests and should join in the hymns, creed, prayers, and offerings of the worship service. They should care for spiritual matters in their own homes, especially in making Christ the focal point in

their own lives.

These are ways in which the royal priesthood of Christians honors the Lord's name on earth.

**Glory be to Christ who loved us,
Cleansed us from each sin and stain.
Glory be to Him who made us
Kings and priests to serve and reign.**

—Robert Mackensen

(*Editor's note:* For a more detailed treatment of what the Bible teaches on the subject of *Church . . . and Ministry*, the reader might refer to the confessional document of the CLC by that title. It is available for a nominal fee from the CLC Bookhouse, 501 Grover Road, Eau Claire, WI 54701.)



Profile of a Leader of God's People—Nehemiah (6th in a Series)

A LEADER IS FAIR, JUST, AND IMPARTIAL

We know very well how in Nigeria there is so much which is not fair. Bribes are commonplace. A bribe given means that someone gets special treatment, often at the expense of someone else. How things go with you depend often more on who you know than on some rule of fairness and justice. Evil escapes punishment and those doing good are quite often afflicted. The police do not have a reputation for honesty. Elections are cancelled in their results because of rigging. On and on the list of injustice, unfairness, and partiality could go.

By contrast, how refreshing to study the actions and words of the governor of Judah, Nehemiah.

Fairness

Nehemiah took very seriously his office as that of one sent by God to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. He was God's servant for good. While the building of the wall of Jerusalem is the focal point of the first chapters of Nehemiah, there is much more reported in the full book of thirteen chapters. We see Nehemiah upholding fairness. He lived this. As governor he enforced this. His were not just flowery words to be compromised in practice.

Problems: *And there was a great outcry of the people and their wives against their Jewish brethren. For there were those who said, "We, our sons, and our daughters are many;*

therefore let us get grain for them, that we may eat and live." There were also some who said, "We have mortgaged our lands and vineyards and houses, that we might buy grain because of the famine." There were also those who said, "We have borrowed money for the king's tax on our lands and vineyards. Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children; and indeed we are forcing our sons and our daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters are brought into slavery already. It is not in our power to redeem them, for other men have our lands and vineyards." (Nehemiah 5:1-5) These were problems among God's people. What should Nehemiah do?

As a pastor you will be called upon to settle disputes between members of the congregation. What should you do? Favor your friends? Favor the one who has been better to you? Decide the issue as to how you feel? Ignore the problem? Obviously, none of these is the solution.

Nehemiah reflected on the Word of God and what it taught. He then sought the answer God gives through His Word. That must be our way also.

A Sense of Justice

I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these words. (5:6) Does injustice make us angry or have we gotten so used to it that we have no righteous anger? A righteous anger is being upset that right is not done. Nehemiah was bothered by these words even more because it was a report of injustice done to God's people by God's people.

As governor he was in a position to

do something about the injustices. Would he? It is easier at the outset to just ignore injustice. Why get involved in something that may cause you trouble, for after all the injustice is not done to you? This is what the sinful flesh says.

The Word of God says that we are to defend the oppressed. We are to uphold truth. Nehemiah acts: *After serious thought, I rebuked the nobles and rulers, and said to them, "Each of you is exacting usury from his brother." So I called a great assembly against them. And I said to them: ". . . What you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God? . . . (5:7-9) He rebukes those doing wrong.*

The Word of God is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. Like Nehemiah we must use the Word to convict of sin. Only those who know their sins can then by the power of the Spirit repent. Only those who repent have the forgiveness of their sins. It all begins with rebuking sin. If we don't act fairly and justly in declaring something as sinful according to the Word, then repentance cannot be.

Setting an Example

Nehemiah's sense of justice was an active one. He readily rebukes even to the point of bringing charges publicly. He furthermore sets an example: *I also, with my brethren and my servants, am lending them money and grain. Please, let us stop this usury! (5:10)*

Not one to say to others, but not to do himself, the governor gives and loans at no interest. The problem is not interest so much as the people could

not afford the interest, and there was a famine worsening the situation. Fairness required what Nehemiah did.

So often we hesitate to rebuke sin for fear of adverse results. But here we see the merciful and God-pleasing results: *Restore now to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their olive groves, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money and the*

grain, the new wine and the oil, that you have charged them. So they said, "We will restore it, and will require nothing from them; we will do as you say." . . . And all the congregation said, "Amen!" and praised the Lord. Then the people did according to this promise. (5:11-13)

To this we add our Amen—praise the Lord!

—David Koenig



Tracing the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 22)—

"Men, brethren, and fathers, hear my defense before you now . . ." (Acts 22:1)

WHO IS DEFENDING WHOM?

Only a Roman commander and his soldiers had kept Paul from being pulverized and mingled with the dust of Jerusalem's streets. As Acts 21 closes, however, we find the apostle pausing at the door of the

Roman barracks and begging for permission to speak—not to the "mob," but to "the people." (21:39) "Hear my defense before you now," he pleads.

But does Paul really believe that this is the place to defend himself? Isn't there a good chance that he will only succeed in further jeopardizing his personal safety? No doubt! And yet Paul belonged so much to Christ and longed so much for the salvation of Israel that he proceeds without fear. Indeed, we might ask: "Who is defending whom?" in Paul's following testimony.

One Last Chance

The talk in Jerusalem was that Paul had been teaching the Jews who were "among the Gentiles" to cease their observance of the Jewish laws and

customs, including circumcision (21:21). This was not true. Also false was the charge of those troublesome "Jews from Asia" who claimed that Paul had defiled the temple by bringing a Gentile into it (21:27-28).

We may be surprised that Paul does not attempt to answer these charges one by one. Was it just plain common sense and a desire to save his own skin that kept the apostle from losing his temper and sounding off against his persecutors? No. Paul's words were carefully chosen for the safety and "defense" of his countrymen rather than for himself. "Brethren," he wrote later, "my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved" (Rom. 10:1).

This was Paul's last chance to give saving testimony concerning Christ to

the Jerusalem Jews. Notice how he catches them off guard. The Jews expect him to launch another attack against the Jewish people, the law, and the temple. They expect him to commend the ways of the Gentiles and perhaps even speak to them in Greek.

But Paul addresses them as "brothers and fathers," speaking in the Hebrew language! As he continues his testimony, Paul does not use the critical/logical approach of the Greek mind. He simply relates the facts in a narrative manner which appealed to the Jews. It sounded like the Old Testament narratives!

Contrary to those false rumors which pictured him as an enemy of the Jews, Paul presents himself as a faithful Jew among Jews. His countrymen must know that his times, tongue, and testimony have been directed not by personal whim, but by "the God of our fathers" (22:14).

What Jew could hope to have better training in the law of the fathers than Paul had received in Jerusalem, at the feet of the great Gamaliel? Paul was possessed by the most zealous devotion toward the God of the Jews, like his hearers (Cf. Rom. 10:2). But more: The high priest and the Jewish elders could testify that Paul had been a ravenous persecutor of the Christian "Way" even "to the death"! (22:3-5)

Paul's Special Service

What then had come over him that now he was preaching this very Way of salvation to the Gentiles? *The Lord Himself had come over Paul to overcome him!* Jesus of Nazareth had appeared and spoken to Paul from glory, appointing him for special service.

It was Ananias, a "devout man according to the law," and a Jew of good reputation, who relayed the will of God to Paul as to the nature of this special service: ". . . you will be His ("the Just One") witness to all men of what you have seen and heard" (v. 15). "Then it happened" even as Paul was praying in the Jerusalem temple, that he saw the Lord telling him to leave Jerusalem.

"It happened"—it was not Paul's choice! He would have chosen to remain and work in Jerusalem; and so he reasoned with the Lord. It was the *Lord* who answered him: "Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles" (v. 21).

This was as far as Paul was permitted to testify. The angry voices of the mob cut him off. Nevertheless, in his defense of himself the apostle had masterfully defended the Gospel of Christ, sowing the seeds of salvation in Jerusalem one last time! Had they not heard again of the resurrection of Jesus, of the good news for "all men," of baptism which washes away sins—even those of Saul?

Here we see that Paul defended himself not for his own safety, but for the safety of his people. He sought to defend not so much his person as his persecutors, that they might be saved from the condemnation of their sins.

The Spirit at Work!

Likewise in the closing verses of our chapter, Paul's testimony to the Roman commander is not only a defense of himself but of his Roman antagonist. The commander had given orders to whip Paul until some statement of wrong-doing was forced from

him. Paul's searching question, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?" prevented the commander from making a career-ending (or worse) mistake! A few moments before Paul had told this commander that he was a "Jew from Tarsus"—which he did to save the Jews. Now, to save the commander Paul announces that he is also a *Roman*—not bought into, but born into, Roman citizenship!

Yes, there certainly is a whole lot of defending going on. Paul defends himself, the Gospel, the Jews, and the commander by his testimony. But whence comes such a superb testimony? Who is defending whom?

It is Luke, the inspired author of the *Acts*, who also records our Lord's encouraging words to His faithful confessors of all time: "Now when they bring you to the synagogues and magistrates and authorities, do not worry about how or what you should answer, or what you should say. For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say" (Lk. 12:11-12).

So, dear Christian, be ready with boldness to testify in defense of the Gospel and for the safety of all who oppose the truth, knowing that Christ and His Spirit are our defense. He who fears God need fear nothing else! (Lk. 12:4-7)

—Vance Fossum



NINETEENTH CONVENTION OF THE CLC

June 18-22, 1990

Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Beginning at 1:00 P.M.

Theme: *THE BODY OF CHRIST IN SERVICE*

**Essayists: Paul Naumann—Serving Him Who Redeemed Us
John H. Johannes—Serving the World for Which He Died
Mr. Harold Gutzman—Serving One Another in His Fellowship**

Convention Servants:

**Chaplain—Elton Hallauer
Memorial Service Speaker—Leland Grams
Communion Service Speaker—Vance Fossum
Communion Service Liturgist—James Albrecht
Editor of Convention Journal—John Reim**

—Paul F. Nolting, Secretary

Pilgrims on Earth (Tenth in a Series)—

“By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were unbelieving” (Hebrews 11:31).

THE SCARLET CORD

We have seen (March issue, p. 5) how Moses said NO to “the pleasures of sin.” We were concerned to know his secret, for all too many are unable to say NO to temptation. For example, less than 50 percent of women 18 and younger in our country are virgins. What of those who haven’t said NO and have become entangled in a sinful lifestyle? Is there any hope for them?

God’s Grace

God says YES in the story of another of the pilgrims of Hebrews 11. In the case of Rahab we have a striking demonstration of the reach of God’s grace. He is able to work faith and faith’s fruits in sinners whom people might consider beyond hope. To this day God says YES to people who have failed to say NO. That’s grace. And “by grace you are saved *through faith*” (Eph. 2:8).

Rahab didn’t say NO. In fact, before she came to faith she had made a business of not saying NO. But then this heathen prostitute in Canaanite Jericho heard about the LORD God of Israel; how He had “dried up the water of the Red Sea” to bring His people out of Egypt and had given them victory over the Amorites. (Josh. 2:10)

This news struck fear in the hearts of Jericho’s population. Yet they continued to oppose Israel; they continued to hope their idols would yet save the day for them. Except Rahab. She was moved from fear to faith.

When Joshua’s spies came to Jeri-

cho to investigate its defenses, Rahab welcomed them, hid them, and helped them. Further, she used their coming as an opportunity to throw herself on the mercy of the God of Israel, confessing the LORD to be “God in heaven above and on the earth below” (Josh. 2:11).

Rahab’s faith was clearly a result of the power of God at work in her heart through the report of His gracious redeeming activity. There was nothing in Rahab’s heathen background or personal life that contributed a thing. She was no more ready to believe than the other inhabitants of Jericho, who jeered at the Israelites as they marched around the city’s walls. She had fully bought into the lies of the heathen world—until God dramatically changed Rahab, changed her from the heart out.

Faith is Active

Faith is always a creation of God and ever bears the mark of its Maker. Active. Daring. Doing the unexpected, even the dangerous, in order to rescue others. Faith’s actions reflect the way God has acted on our behalf.

So Rahab helped the two Israelite

spies to escape capture and return to Joshua. As they were about to clamber down by rope from her window in the wall, the men told her that she and her family would be spared when Jericho fell—so long as they stayed in Rahab's house and a scarlet cord was tied in that wall window.

There is also a scarlet cord that runs through the whole of the Old Testament: God's promise of forgiveness and life through the blood of the Savior. Through the gift of faith God not only delivered Rahab from destruction when Jericho fell. The LORD also gave her a special place in His place of salvation. He made her part of His "scarlet cord." For Rahab not only left her former life to marry and be-

come a part of Israel. She became an ancestor of Jesus (Mt. 1:5).

Through faith God saved Rahab from death when Jericho's walls came tumbling down. The scarlet cord was her deliverance. Years later she, like everyone else, came to another wall—death. Once again faith and a scarlet line meant life instead of death—this time life eternal.

For the scarlet cord of which God made Rahab a part was that line which led to the fall of that last wall that would separate God from His people. Rahab's Savior and ours has "destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10).

—W. V. Schaller



A WARNING AGAINST DRUG ADDICTION

A young man who works for a burglar alarm company in Denver, Colorado wrote me the following letter which warns against drug addiction:

I've got to go to court tomorrow in Golden for a trial of a guy I helped arrest. I went to Longmont Friday to work on an alarm there. It was nice to go out of Denver for awhile. When I got back about 8:00 p.m. I realized that our night technicians were backed up on calls. I figured I'd hang around and help them out. I was at the office about five minutes when the alarm at South Federal Medical Center went off. I took the keys and headed that way. I got there in about five minutes.

When I got there, there were 2 Denver policemen who told me they had a broken window. We looked at the hole and figured that it was too small for anyone to get inside. We tried to open the door but they had apparently changed locks and my keys didn't fit. We weren't too worried about it since we figured it was just kids who broke the window and ran.

The maintenance man arrived about 30 minutes later. He opened the door and we all went in. We opened a door to a treatment room and there was a guy standing there with a hypodermic needle stuck in his arm. We had our guns pointed in his face and he turned and looked at us and went right back to pushing more junk into his arm.

I never saw such a poor excuse for a human being in my life. He was about 6

foot 4 and only weighed 110 pounds. He had a rubber hose tied around his arm that made his veins bulge and he was injecting that stuff right into the biggest vein he could find. His eyes were sunk into his head and were all black. He was soaked with sweat and really stunk.

We laid him on the floor and put handcuffs on him. He started crying and said that he wasn't done. He should have been because we found seven empty bottles of some type of cough medicine on the floor. The doctor that came later said that it would probably get him very sick and if he was "lucky" it would kill him. I don't think that anybody that ever sees a scene like that would ever fool around with drugs.

—Submitted by Pastor Robert Mackensen

Note: This letter written to Pastor Mackensen tells a sad story about the ruin that drug addiction can make of one's life. These sorry "fruits" of such addiction will cause one to think about the dangers of getting involved. Yet *fear of the consequences* is alone not a godly motive. Rather, let it be remembered that our bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost (I Cor. 6:19) which we will not wish to abuse. The Holy Spirit helps us to overcome the desires and sins of the flesh by crucifying it (Gal. 5:16ff). The 9th and 10th articles in our *Pilgrims on Earth* series teach us more on how the Gospel motivates us to say NO in time of temptation. —The Editor.

HAPPY ENDING IN HECLA*

Tonight, families will gather in the serenity of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Hecla for a midnight Christmas Eve service.

As Mark, James and Bill Klatt settle into their pews to hear their father, the Rev. John Klatt, deliver his Christmas message, the three may well reflect on their new-found blessings.

Just a few years ago the Klatt boys, ranging in age from 10 to 13, had little to look forward to on December 25. The youngsters were raised by a neglectful mother, and Christmas was just another day void of the happiness most young boys claim as a right of childhood.

A little more than one year ago, the lads were ensured of many merry Christmases to come. Klatt and his wife, Kristine, took the boys into their legal custody in October 1988 in hopes of adopting them. Their wish was granted in April.

After a few months of adjusting, the



Pastor & Mrs. Klatt with James, Mark and Bill

couple says, the family began sharing the love that those with genetic ties enjoy. "It doesn't take very long before they're your own," John said. "Now I can't imagine them not being there. They latched onto us almost immediately. They crave this belonging to a family so much. They miss that in foster care. They know they really don't belong there."

Although both parents and children were determined to make things work, Kristine said it took some time. "You

have to consider where they're coming from," she said. "You have to put your concerns on hold. It is easier for us to adjust than a child to adjust to something they don't know."

The Klatts were reluctant to elaborate on the brothers' former family life. John said the neglect his sons endured will occasionally creep into their new lives. One afternoon, for example, he gave them a soccer ball and they didn't know what to do with it. More than anything, John said, they just want to give their sons a chance at a normal life.

"We don't ask questions . . . but we're careful to let them talk about anything in the past," he said. "You have to be willing to listen. You have to realize their life did not begin the day they walked into your house. It's easy to want that though."

Kristine said she and her husband have made an effort to let the kids know they are not trying to take the place of their natural parents. They also encourage the boys to hang onto past relationships with an older sister and foster families they have stayed with in recent years.

"It's not normal to shut every door," she said. "Nobody wants their past eliminated; it's not fair. We tell them they have two families. They needed to know they didn't have to reject or betray their mother to be with us. We let them know we're here for them and that our relatives are their relatives."

As the children struggle to make up for lost time in school and are busy with paper routes and baseball, Kristine said the picture of their past has begun to fade. The couple has encouraged them to move on with their young lives, and John and Kristine

spend much of their free time helping the boys do just that.

Every night after dinner, the kitchen is transformed into a study hall as the boys tackle their homework and Kristine and John move around the table with encouragement and aid. They say the past year has not been easy, but they are committed to their children. They discover new pleasures as the family grows closer.

To those considering adopting, Kristine offers some advice: "Be sure you are confident in your marriage and each other before you jump into something like this . . . Some parents wanted (their adopted children) to be blond, blue-eyed and four years old. But when a child is in need, they can't wait around. I think you have to look at it as finding parents for a child, not finding a child for parents."

John said they were lucky enough to meet with the boys within months of their decision to adopt. Those seeking infants often wait years.

When leafing through the boys' baby pictures, John said regret of not having been their father sooner sometimes washes over him. He is now 41 and Kristine is 36. Yet John says the boys have brought him unbounded happiness, and he encourages prospective adoptive parents to consider older children.

"In some ways the situation is the same as if they were our own," he said. "You don't know how they'll turn out even when you raise them from birth. I even see traits of myself in them now. Children are like mirrors. They've taught me things about myself."

**(Adapted from the Aberdeen [SD] American News, December 24, 1989)*

WORSHIP ETIQUETTE

A couple of years ago I attended an orchestral concert at a Milwaukee Civic Center. I saved a page of the program which listed the "Ten Commandments of Concert Etiquette." These commandments (with their "meaning") included the following: Thou shalt not 1) Talk (the first and greatest commandment. Stay home if you aren't in the mood to give full attention to what is being performed on stage). 2) Hum, Sing, or tap Fingers or Feet (the musicians don't need your help, and your neighbors need silence. Learn to tap toes quietly within shoes. It saves a lot of annoyance to others, and is excellent exercise to boot). 3) Rustle Thy Program (restless readers and page skimmers aren't good listeners and greatly distract those around them).

Commandments 7-10 of concert etiquette were: Thou shalt not . . . Crack Thy Gum in thy Neighbor's ears; Wear Loud-ticking Watches or Jangle Thy Jewelry; Open Cellophane-Wrapped Candies; Snap Open and Close Thy Purse; Sigh with Boredom; Read (the "meaning" here was: This is less an antisocial sin than personal deprivation . . . It may, however, be better for those around you to read instead of sleeping and snoring); Arrive Late or Leave Early.

Quality Worship

Some interesting parallels, I thought, might be drawn to what might be called worship etiquette.

To begin with let it be said that we Lutherans are without apology a liturgical church. We are this in a day when most other Protestant ("evangelical") churches prefer a non-liturgical, informal and supposedly more popular atmosphere in their worship services.

However, in an article reviewing the heritage of Lutherans, one of the chief spokes-magazines for modern evangelicalism recently suggested that their churches can learn from us: "To non-Lutherans, however, the most distinctive thing about followers of the Wittenberg Reformer may be the *quality of their worship* (our emphasis). Christians accustomed in their own churches to children racing through the sanctuary before the service or a deafening chatter during the organ prelude cannot help but be impressed by the quiet reverence for God immediately apparent as one enters a Lutheran church service." (*Christianity Today*, Nov. 3, 1989, p. 14)

As the *Spokesman* series *Against Lethargy in Liturgy* has been reminding us, our liturgical service is "quality" in and of itself. Perhaps, however, we fall into some habits which can detract? "Walk prudently when you go to the house of God; and draw near to hear rather than to give the sacrifice of fools" (Eccl. 5:1). With such words in mind, we will not want to do anything, will we, to disturb our own worship or that of our fellow worshippers?

The Savior says that true worshipers worship God "in spirit and in truth" (Jn.

4:24). Such worship involves being “swift to hear, slow to speak” (Jms. 1:19) in God’s presence. Such worship begins with *heart* meditation, as the psalmist suggests: “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer” (19:14). We know that the Lord is not pleased with a worship which merely moves the mouth and lips but is void of meditation of the heart (See Is. 29:13, Mt. 15:8).

It is that meditation of the heart—our own and our neighbor’s—which can so easily be disrupted by children chattering or opening cereal cellophane; by clipping of fingernails; by the sounding of digital watches; by the nodding (or worse) of heads during the sermon; by the habits of some to arrive late (without valid reason) or to leave early (such as from communion services).

In the Presence of God

In the article referred to *Christianity Today* suggested good reasons behind the quality of Lutheran worship: “It reveals the Lutheran sense of themselves as unworthy sinners entering into the presence of an absolutely holy and transcendent God. This awesome reverence extends to the Lutheran attitude toward the sacraments . . . Protestants have much to learn from Lutherans of the mystery of God and the purity and sufficiency of divine grace.” (P. 14)

Indeed, those who are wont to criticize our Lutheran worship services as being boring and dull owe it to themselves to investigate the *why* we do things as we do. Particularly when it comes to the formality of our worship, our desire is indeed to project an attitude of awesome reverence—an awareness of our sin and sinfulness, of our complete dependence upon the grace and mercy of the holy God. It’s an attitude exemplified, for example, by the Lord’s telling His servant Moses: “Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground” (Ex. 3:5).

At the same time it will become obvious to the careful listener that our worship is intended to send worshipers on their way with a sense of deep joy and thanksgiving grounded in the surpassing love of a forgiving God. It will become obvious that our Lutheran (Christian!) hope and joy is grounded in the mercy and grace of God as that is supremely exemplified in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary’s cross.

It will become obvious that Lutheran Christians come to God’s house to *hear*—to hear the good and gracious Word of our God; and to *partake*—to partake of the sacraments of Baptism and Lord’s Supper. It will become obvious that we see in the Gospel Word and sacraments a *means of grace* through which the Spirit of God creates, nourishes, and strengthens saving faith in the heart.

Frequent concert goers appreciate and understand the concerns for concert etiquette. All the more so, regular church goers understand and appreciate the quality of our Lutheran worship. Regular church goers will also be sensitive to a quiet reverence—a certain etiquette—in the presence of the God we worship.

—Paul Fleischer

Welcome to the CLC Ministry!—

A New Pastor in Millston

On January 14, 1990 Mark Bohde was ordained and installed as pastor for Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, Millston, Wisconsin. Inasmuch as Pastor Bohde is somewhat new to our CLC, we print the following biographical information, most of which is taken from the worship folder which introduced the new pastor to his congregation.

Pastor Bohde was born in Mount Clemens, Michigan and was raised in the Detroit area. After high school he volunteered for the draft and served two years in the US Army. His second year was spent in Vietnam with the First Infantry Division.

After his discharge from the service, he attended the University of Pittsburgh, where he received his BA degree in Economics in 1974. After graduation he worked as an assistant manager with Mellon Banks in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; following that, as the manager of administrative services with K, M & G International, Incorporated; following that, as a minority partner and manager of a small franchise.

In 1979 Pastor Bohde began to work with Hmong refugees in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. An outreach ministry and Hmong church were started.

Soon after this Pastor Bohde went to Concordia Theological Seminary (Missouri Synod) in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. During his studies at Concordia he was invited by the Karen tribe of Burma to come and preach and teach God's Word. He did so in the summer



Pastor & Mrs. Mark Bohde

of 1983.

In 1985 Pastor Bohde met his wife Shelly in Conroe, Texas. In 1986 they were married and left the Missouri Synod. Soon after their marriage they attended an intensive course in culture and language acquisition in California, with plans to begin mission work in Thailand. The work permit that had been arranged with the Thai government fell through. Subsequently, they were asked by the Hmong to come to St. Paul, Minnesota to work with the Hmong community. They came to Millston from St. Paul.

Just prior to coming to St. Paul Pastor Bohde and his wife began attending Bethel Ev. Lutheran Church (CLC) in Spring, Texas. After arriving in St. Paul they attended Grace Ev. Lutheran Church (CLC) in Fridley, Minnesota where they were members. After a review with the Board of Doctrine, Pastor Bohde was accepted into the CLC Ministerium.

Prof. Gordon Radtke of Immanuel Lutheran College preached the sermon for the ordination and installation service. Basing his words on Deuter-

onomy 31:7-8, he spoke of how the Lord has a strong word of encouragement for Trinity congregation and her new Pastor "as they go forth to do the impossible." The ILC Seminary students sang: "We now implore God the

Holy Ghost for the true faith which we need the most."

An additional note: Trinity congregation has agreed with Pastor Bohde that he give one day each week to work with the Hmong people in the Eau Claire area.



Dedication in Live Oak, Florida—

A Tool For Gospel Work

"It is required of a servant that he be found faithful" and that is all! God does not operate on the "bodies, bricks and bucks" measure of success used by this world. On Judgment Day God's "Well done, Thou good and faithful servant!" will not be based on body counts, year-end inventories and balance sheets, but on simple faithfulness. Therefore, do not prejudge the success of your ministry according to things that are seen.

So the 63 souls in attendance were reminded by Pastor John Schierenbeck of West Columbia, South Carolina at the January 14th dedication of the new Fellowship Hall and parsonage of

Grace Lutheran Church in Live Oak. Pastor Schierenbeck addressed those in attendance on the basis of I Corinthians 4:1-5.

Assisting in the Sunday evening service were Pastor Mike Roehl, Pastor Terrel Kesterson, Teacher Ted Quade, and a choir made up of members from both Live Oak and Winter Haven, Florida. The service was held in the newly completed Fellowship Hall, and was followed by a reception for everyone attending, tours of the new facility, and some precious Christian fellowship.

These are, however, just the external facts of the dedication service. To

the friends and members of Grace Lutheran there was so much more.

First there was again the recognition that without our brothers and sisters throughout the CLC this project would never have been attempted. It is through their contributions to the CLC Mission Extension Fund (MEF) that this project became even a financial possibility. And it is due in large part to the gifts and donated talents of members throughout our CLC that this project became a physical reality. This building therefore serves as a permanent bond which joins the members of this young and very distant congregation to the rest of our brothers and sisters in the CLC.

A Constant Witness

This building also serves as a constant witness, an effective tool in the work of spreading the Gospel of our Savior in Live Oak. It has enabled us to begin Sunday School and Bible classes, Wednesday Night Prayer and Bible Study services. It has provided us with restrooms, kitchen facilities, and a place to enjoy fellowship dinners and the like. It has also given us a sense of permanence in the eyes of the

community, and has therefore provided many contacts and several new members. It is, in short, a tool to be used in our work.

The building itself is located on approximately 1¼ acres of heavily wooded land adjacent to the church now being used by Grace. The land was donated to the congregation in 1988 by a Christian woman outside of the congregation. Including parsonage and Fellowship Hall, the building is approximately 3300 square feet in size. The Fellowship Hall is large enough to serve as a chapel (seating 70) should the need ever arise.

Due to the generous contributions of friends from far and near, the building was constructed in 22 weeks for a total cost of slightly over \$17 per square foot—a figure unheard of in the building industry. How greatly the Lord has blessed this congregation!

With joy and thanksgiving our CLC congregation in Live Oak has dedicated its new facility to our Great God. With trust and confidence in the power of the Gospel we look forward to our ministry of that Gospel—striving always to be simply faithful.

—Pastor Mike Roehl



Partners in the Gospel . . .

Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church Eagle Lake, Minnesota

Like many of our partners in the Gospel, Salem congregation traces its beginning to the mission outreach of a local congregation during 1942 and

1943. The work begun by Bethany Lutheran Church (presently Mt. Olive), Mankato, Minnesota resulted in Lutheran worship services in nearby



Eagle Lake by the Rev. C.M. Gullerud. The congregation was formally organized on November 28, 1943 and called Pastor Gullerud to serve them with our Lord's Word of peace.

By the grace of God the congregation grew in numbers as well as in its resolve to become a permanent part of the area. The congregation purchased a church building in 1944 and moved it to Eagle Lake. Volunteers dug the basement and laid the foundation. The building was moved in September and placed at its current position along U.S. Highway 14. The church was dedicated in the first worship service held in the building on November 12, 1944.

During the next fifteen years Salem continued to improve and renovate the church building. A new bell tower was constructed in 1957 and many of the internal furnishings were obtained. In grateful acknowledgement of the Lord's blessings the congregation reminded itself of its faithfulness to Him and His Word. Reflecting on the growth of the congregation it was noted: "The spiritual growth through Word and sacrament can of course not be measured, but we are assured of this that the Word has not returned void and without fruits . . . and need to pray for steadfastness and faithfulness to the Word of our God and be ready to



Pastor Grams (left) & Salem Church Council suffer the loss of all things rather than to suffer the loss of the divine Word."

This confession was quickly put to the test in October 1959. At that time Salem withdrew from the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Synodical Conference of the Lutheran Church to maintain the doctrinal integrity of Scripture in its confession. In January, 1961 Salem joined its present partners in the Gospel by becoming a charter member in the Church of the Lutheran Confession.

In 1962 Salem released Pastor Gullerud from his call in order that he might serve as professor in Immanuel Lutheran Seminary, Mankato, Minnesota. (The Seminary and College were moved to Eau Claire, Wisconsin in 1963.) Salem formed a joint parish with Faith Lutheran Church, Nicollet, and was served by Pastor Keith Olmanson until 1975. The congregation constructed an office addition to enable the pastor to do more work in Eagle Lake.

As the years went by it became increasingly evident that a full-time pastor was needed at Salem. In 1974 the congregation resolved to call its first resident pastor, and purchased a three-year-old home located behind the church on the same block. Pastor Robert Mackensen was installed in

January, 1975. Salem has been served since by Pastors Robert List, Glenn Oster, and the undersigned.

The church property continued to receive close attention with further renovations and improvements. The space available for Christian Education stretched into the basement area. Finally, this also became inadequate

and in 1979 an educational wing was added to the office for classrooms and meetings. A Sunday School, two separate Bible Classes, instruction classes, and other meetings have made this congregation of "peace" a busy one. Any report of Salem congregation would be incomplete without mentioning how the ladies of the congregation

Daily Devotions For July 1990

Date	Scripture	Theme	Hymn
		The Word of Reconciliation	
1	Luke 7:36-50	A sinful woman is forgiven.	331:1-2
2	Luke 15:11-32	The lost son is forgiven.	331:3-4
3	Romans 13:1-7	God's children are good citizens.	581:1-3
4	I Peter 2:11-17	"Fear God. Honor the king."	581:4-7
5	Romans 4:1-8	Abraham's faith is counted for righteousness.	319:1
6	Romans 4:16-25	Look to the Promise, not the law, for salvation.	319:2
7	Romans 5:1-11	While we were sinners, Christ died for us.	319:3
		The Congregation of Sinners	
8	Genesis 50:15-21	Joseph reassures his penitent brothers	236:1
9	Colossians 3:12-15	As Christ forgave us, let us forgive others.	236:2
10	Matthew 5:43-48	Love, bless, do good to, pray for your enemies	236:3
11	Ephesians 4:30-5:2	Walk in love as Christ has loved us.	236:4
12	Matthew 18:15-20	How to deal with a sinning brother.	395:1-2
13	Philippians 2:1-4	Let there be unity through humility.	395:3-5
14	Acts 7:54-59	Stephen receives the end of his faith.	395:6-8
		Follow Me	
15	Matthew 4:17-22	Four fishermen called as disciples.	430:1-2
16	Luke 9:51-62	The cost of discipleship.	430:3-4
17	I Kings 19:15-21	God had a remnant of followers in Israel.	430:5-6
18	Matthew 19:27-30	First will be last, and the last first.	430:7-8
19	2 Timothy 4:1-5	Be ready at all times to preach the Word.	421:1-2
20	I Thessalonians 2:13-20	Paul gives thanks for the faithful Christians in Thessalonica.	421:3
21	Matthew 13:47-52	The parable of the dragnet.	421:4-5
		The New Righteousness	
22	Isaiah 45:9-13	Let God direct your ways in righteousness.	369:1-2
23	I Peter 3:18-22	Baptism saves us, as we believe in Christ.	369:3-4
24	Mark 16:14-18	He who believes and is baptized will be saved.	369:5-6
25	Colossians 2:6-13	Beware of vain philosophy. Trust Christ.	377:6
26	Ephesians 3:14-21	Appreciate the supreme love of Christ.	377:7
27	Mark 10:13-16	Jesus blesses the little children.	377:8
28	Revelation 3:1-6	Hear what the Spirit says to the churches.	377:9
		The Sanctification of Our Bodies	
29	Colossians 2:18-23	Do not let anyone defraud you of true freedom.	19:1-2
30	I Corinthians 6:12-20	Glorify God in both body and spirit.	19:3-4
31	Luke 11:33-36	Don't let the light in you be darkness.	19:5-6

have been active in the support and furnishing of the congregation from the beginning.

Salem has exercised its partnership with the brethren in the CLC by hosting Minnesota's pastoral and delegate conferences. It has been regularly active in the work of the CLC at Convention and in support of other projects to spread the Gospel. Behind it all is the grace of our Lord's blessing to proclaim "the peace of God which surpasses all understanding" (Phil. 4:7).

As the centerpiece of our name implies, Salem's prayer is that our gracious Lord's "peace be multiplied to you" who are our partners in His Gospel!

—*Pastor Rick R. Grams*

Correction: In the May 1990 issue, p. 4, 2nd column, the sentence ought to read: "God's love for us surely doesn't depend on our own goodness or worthiness of His love . . ."

Change of Address

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The Ladies Group of Salem, Eagle Lake, Minnesota