

# Lutheran Spokesman



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*Church of the Lutheran Confession*

**A**

poem exalting our Savior, Jesus Christ, and His three-fold office fulfilled in our behalf: Prophet, High Priest, and King. The author is unknown.

*Fulness of prophetic story,  
Fulness filling all in all;  
Brightness of the hidden glory,  
Answer to the world's long call—  
Jesus, Thou our future knowest,  
Fill it with Thyself alone;  
May we follow where Thou goest,  
Ever Thee our Prophet own.*

*Great High Priest, above all other  
Sacrifice of God complete,  
May we never own another,  
Or confess at other feet;  
Never seek another altar,  
Never wish another Lamb;  
Pardoned, washed, why should we falter,  
Pleading in Thy priestly name?*

*King of kings! May Thy dominion  
Multiply and still increase.  
Give Thy sway the eagle's pinion,  
King of righteousness and peace.  
Rule within Thy Church! Inherit  
All that Thou hast bought, great Son;  
Rule o'er each blood-ransomed spirit,  
Prophet, Priest, and King in one.*

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Editor: Paul Fleischer, E. 11315 Broadway, Spokane, WA 99206; Assistant Editor: D. Lau; Artists: W. Bernthal, M. Schaser; Staff (Also District Reporters): D. Bernthal, M. Bohde, V. Fossum, J. Klatt, D. Koenig, R. Mackensen, Bertram J. Naumann, K. Olmanson (Minnesota), Rollin Reim (Pacific Coast), Ronald Roehl (Great Lakes), P. Schaller, W. V. Schaller (West Central), J. Schlerenbeck (Eastern), M. Sydow, M. Thom.

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# CHRIST OUR KING

It is common to hear our fellow Americans finding fault with the leaders of our government, especially with the president. We ourselves may have done so at times.

Before being quick to criticize, however, perhaps we should consider how much worse things could be. We could have a Saddam Hussein at the helm, using mustard gas to eliminate his opposition. We could have a "strongman" like Manuel Noriega funneling the nation's wealth into his own Swiss bank account. We could have a Stalin or a Hitler.

Good leadership in government is truly a great blessing from God. Through good rulers God dispenses earthly blessings for this earthly life—but ONLY earthly blessings, and ONLY for this earthly life. Earthly rulers can do nothing to give us spiritual life with God, and the blessings they do bring expire at death.

## The King Of Love

Our gracious heavenly Father wants to bless us not only with earthly blessings, but also with spiritual blessings. He wants to bless us not only in this life, but for all eternity. That is why the Father has anointed His own beloved Son, our Lord Jesus, to be CHRIST OUR KING.

Whenever we hear the word "king" our suspicions are raised. We have heard too often of malevolent monarchs who abuse their people. We are reluctant to acknowledge anyone as our ruler until we are convinced that he really cares about us. So we ask, what kind of king is Jesus? Is He a shepherd-

king who serves His people, or a selfish king out to fleece the flock?

Our study of the Bible convinces us that Jesus is A KING WHO TRULY LOVES ALL MANKIND. When Jesus came into this world, He did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life a ransom for many (Mt. 20:28). Jesus wanted all mankind to be free from slavery to sin and Satan. He wanted to deliver all sinners from the everlasting fires of hell. He wanted all to have a life of fellowship with God, both now and eternally.

Therefore, the King of love came on His rescue mission. He did not come in royal splendor, but in the form of a humble servant. He came to do for all mankind what we could not do for ourselves. He lived the life that we cannot live—the life of righteousness. He offered to God the sacrifice that we could not—the sacrifice good enough to atone for all our sins. He did it in our place.

In so doing He took away the devil's power to accuse us before God. He broke down the prison walls and loosed the shackles by which Satan held us. He set us free to live with God.

Without question Jesus is a King who loves all mankind.

## Count His Blessings!

Unfortunately, however, not all mankind loves Jesus. Not all mankind wants to be delivered from sin and Satan. Multitudes turn away from their King of love and the salvation He brings. Sadly, they will never experience the blessings of Christ their King. They will have only His judgment.

We are glad to say that by the grace of God this is not the case with us. By the grace of God we have been led to receive Jesus as our King. We give thanks to Him and bow the knee before Him. We rejoice to say with the psalmist: "We are His people and the sheep of His pasture" (Ps. 100:3).

We rejoice to call ourselves His people because we know that Jesus is A KING WHO TRULY LOVES HIS PEOPLE. How does He love us? Let us count the ways!

When life is confused and we don't know which way to go, He shows us the good and blessed way. Through His Word He provides us with unerring guidance. His Word is "a lamp to our feet and a light to our path" (Ps. 119:105).

When faith grows faint and our courage fails us, He leads us to His Word and Sacrament, and we are revived. We see His love overseeing all in our lives, guiding us to a joyous and victorious finish. He will "guide us with His counsel, and afterward re-

ceive us to glory" (Ps. 73:24).

When we fall into sin, our King lifts us up and restores our soul. He reminds us that He has suffered all and that God is propitiated. He tells us, "Son, daughter, be of good cheer. Your sins are forgiven you" (Mt. 9:2).

When we have problems and needs, He gladly hears and answers our prayers. When dangers threaten, He stands ready to protect us by His almighty power. When death draws nigh, our King does not forsake us, but sends His angels to transport our soul to the mansion He has prepared for us in heaven.

How blessed we are to have such a King! How privileged we are to live under Him in His Kingdom! Let us rejoice in His gracious rule, as we confess with the hymnwriter:

The King of love my Shepherd is,  
Whose goodness faileth never,  
I nothing lack if I am His,  
And He is mine forever. (TLH 431:1)  
—Michael Thom



*Pilgrims On Earth (Samuel)\*—*

## A Potion For Tired Faith

"Do you suffer from 'tired blood'?"

So people were asked some years back in television ads for an iron supplement. But what about spiritual anemia?

There are times when we grow weary in well-doing, tired of trusting,

worn down by Satan's continual harassment. In such times we can become careless or hesitant in matters of faith and life, in doing what the Lord sets before us. But what do you take for "tired faith"?

### The Faithful Suffer Too

The answer is found in the "Halls of Faith," that gallery of believers painted for our encouragement in Hebrews 11.

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*\*This completes the series begun in January 1989 on the "heroes of faith" in Hebrews chapter 11.*

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**...Gideon was frightened, Barak was hesitant, Samson was flip-pant, Jephthah was rash, David was sensual, and Samuel...suffered from “tired faith”...But God did not discard (them) but helped (them) overcome...**

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There we see people who suffered from the same weaknesses as we do, whose circumstances distressed them as ours do us. Yet these same people found the strength to do what needed to be done—found it in the Lord their God.

He is the Great Physician, but His word to us is not “take these and call me in the morning.” Rather, He says as He did to Moses: “I will be with you” (Ex. 3:12). And to Joshua: “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Josh. 1:5).

The last names listed by the inspired writer in Hebrews 11 (v. 32) are all men who suffered from failings like our own. Gideon was frightened, Barak was hesitant, Samson was flippant, Jephthah was rash, David was sensual, and Samuel, in his later years, suffered from “tired faith.”

Samuel!?! The first great prophet since Moses, born of prayer, man of prayer, God-devoted, unbendingly true to his calling, reformer of the nation—that Samuel? Yes, that same Samuel.

As a youth Samuel had carried God’s word of judgment to Eli, whose sons had abused the authority their father had mistakenly granted them. In his old age Samuel appointed his sons to judgeships they in turn abused. The same Samuel who spent his life as a spokesman for God took Israel’s request for a king as a personal rejection. The same Samuel who fearlessly confronted Saul to tell him God had re-

jected him as king was later fearful for his life when the Lord sent him to anoint David to be the next king (I Sam. 3:11-18 & 8:1-3; 8:6-7; 15:26-28 & 16:1-2).

### **Depend On The Lord**

Are we to feel better about our times of “tired faith” because a great example of faith like Samuel also suffered such weaknesses? Misery loves company? God forbid!

Rather we are to note that God used Samuel both when the prophet stood tall and when he stumbled. The Lord held him up when he was strong and picked him up when he was weak. God did not discard Samuel because of his weakness, but helped the prophet overcome it—helped him once again find in the Lord his strength. Samuel was learning and growing as a believer *all* his days (I Sam. 16:7).

Be we leaders or followers, pastors or people, our faith is ever less than perfect. Ever we hold on to God’s promises in Christ, but sometimes we need to have our grip strengthened. We can depend on the Lord who called us (the same Lord who called Samuel!) to do this in exactly the right way.

So, when you suffer from “tired faith,” stop analyzing your weakness and take up the Word of your strong God. Take your heart to Him whose heart has gone out to you.

—W. V. Schaller



## The Gospel, the Power of God— Studies in Romans

*“The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, so that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 5:20-21).*

### The Contrast Between Law And Gospel

Paul continues in the book of Romans to highlight the contrast between the law and the gospel. This reaches a stirring climax in the fifth chapter of Romans. In this chapter the Holy Spirit makes the contrast between Adam, sin, the law, and death on the one hand, and Jesus, obedience, and life on the other hand. “For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:17). Adam’s act of disobedience resulted in death for all people. Jesus’ act of obedience resulted in life for all people through faith.

#### The Law

Adam’s sin and the resulting sin we inherited from Adam resulted in death. For before the law was given on Mt. Sinai, sin and death were in the world. Death came through one man’s sin. Death ruled in the world for 2,500 years before the law was given at Mt. Sinai.

The law was not added to provide a way for people to earn their righteous-

ness before God. The law was given so that people would see their deep sinfulness. The law was given so that every mouth might be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. “Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God’s sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin” (Rom. 3:20).

So a strange thing comes to pass by the law. The law increases the trespass. Instead of the law diminishing and restraining sin, the law multiplies sin. Because of the “old Adam,” the law can only make people’s spiritual condition worse. The law is not the answer. In fact, the law incites sin and sinful behavior. The law has the same result with us that it does when you tell a two-year-old child “No!”

Sin reigns through death. When Adam sinned, the punishment was “You shall surely die!” Death bears silent witness to the power of Adam’s sin and our own sins. Death came through Adam’s sin, and death came to all people, because all have sinned. Death is in control. The fact of the universal nature of sin is reflected in the universal nature of death. The law, sin, and death

reign in God's creation.

### Overflowing Grace

God, however, has countermanded all this through Jesus Christ and the power of His gospel. Jesus has overcome sin and death for us through His righteous obedience and life. The gift of God is greater than the sin of man. For where sin increased because of the law, grace increased all the more. Every trespass was covered by the overflowing gift and grace that came by Jesus Christ.

The fifth chapter of Romans emphasizes the substitutionary obedience of Jesus which is credited to us as righteousness. "For just as through the disobedience of one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19). As bad as sin is, and as horrible as disobedience becomes, God has it covered by His free and overflowing grace. This is the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

God has even overcome death. Just as sin reigns in connection with death,

so grace reigns through righteousness. This grace of God brings eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. The message of the gospel is a message of life. Death has been overcome by the resurrection victory of Jesus Christ.

The sufferings of this present world, even death itself, cannot dim the sure and certain hope of life that God gives us in connection with Jesus Christ. The result of Jesus' righteous obedience is justification that brings life for all people. The message of the gospel is the message of life. God's grace brings eternal life to you through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The sixth chapter of Romans carries through this picture of the power of the gospel. For only God's grace and the gospel frees us from sin in our daily lives. Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. For where sin abounded, God's grace abounded even more.

This is why the gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes.

—John Schierenbeck



*Prophecy Or Fantasy?*

## The Middle East—Part III

Judea! Samaria! *Ha erez!* (*The Land!*) Those are the battle cries of former and current Israeli premiers, Begin and Shamir. They are the shibboleths of the Likud party. Pressure is being brought upon Israel to trade land for peace. Zionist hardliners shout, "No, for how can we surrender what God gave our fathers!" Many Christians of dispensational and premillennial persuasion are of the same opinion.

### The Abrahamitic Covenant

They point to the covenant that the Lord God made with Abraham. The Lord instructed Abraham to leave his homeland and travel "to a land that I will show you" (Gen. 12:1). After Lot had separated himself from Abraham, the Lord told Abraham to look around in all directions and promised: "All the land which you see I give to you and

your descendants *forever*" (Gen. 13:15).

Almost a quarter of a century passed. Abraham still did not have the promised descendant. Once again the Lord appeared to Abraham, introducing Himself as the "mighty God." He renewed His covenant with a sign—circumcision. And again the Lord repeated the land promise: "Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an *everlasting* possession; and I will be their God" (Gen. 17:8).

This covenant is called "unconditional." God promised—with no strings or conditions attached. He hasn't finally fulfilled that promise, but He will—sometime in the future. The creation of the State of Israel in 1948 was the beginning, proof that *The Land* belongs to Israel according to covenant promise! So the argument goes! I give you *The Land* "forever"!

But the Hebrew word "forever" doesn't always mean eternally, but into the dark unseeable future. How long will that be? That all depends—in this case upon faithfulness to the covenant.

### **An Unconditional Covenant?**

Yes, and No! When the Lord God makes a covenant with man, He binds Himself with His promises. All men are liars, but not the Lord! Men make and break covenants, treaties, contracts, but not the Lord! "The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable" (Rom. 11:29). Our God ever remains faithful to His promises.

But who the beneficiaries of His promises will be depends upon faithfulness to the covenant! That is crystal

clear in the very passage in which the Lord made the alleged "unconditional" promises of The Land to Abraham and his descendants. "Walk before Me and be blameless!" Those are the words with which the Lord introduced His promises! What if Abraham or his descendants failed to walk blamelessly before the Lord? They would jeopardize not the Lord's promise, but their being beneficiaries of that promise.

"I will give you the land," the Lord promised, but He added: "I will be their God" (Gen. 17:8). What if His people rejected Him? That would mean forfeiting the blessing promised.

### **A History of God's Faithfulness and Israel's Unfaithfulness**

What happened? God kept His promise! The book of Joshua confirms the Lord's faithfulness. "So the Lord gave to Israel all the land which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they took possession of it and dwelt in it...Not a word failed of any good thing which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel. All came to pass" (Josh. 21:43-45).

The kingdom of Israel reached the zenith of its power and glory under David and Solomon (I Kgs. 4:21-25). When the Lord appeared to Solomon a second time after the dedication of the temple, He reminded Solomon and the nation that if they turned from the Lord, "I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them...Israel will be a proverb and a byword among the people (I Kgs. 9:3-9). Israel rejected the Lord their God and was removed from The Land during the Babylonian Captivity.

But the Lord remained faithful and



merciful. Through his prophets He promised a return to the land (Amos 9:14-15). Again the Lord affirmed that His people would “no longer be pulled up from the land I have given them” (Amos 9:15).

But as always, receiving a promised blessing or averting a threatened judgment was conditioned by faith or unbelief, obedience or disobedience, repentance or hardening. Read Jeremiah 18:7-10 for the Lord’s personal commentary on this point.

Once again the Lord God disinherited His people—this time through the military power of Rome in 70 A.D.—because in rejecting His Son as their Messiah they had rejected Him. The post-exilic prophets and New Testament writers make no mention of *The Land*. It had become a dead issue because the nation lost its “favorite status” with the Lord.

### The Present Situation

But what of the creation of the State of Israel in 1948? What of the amazing military triumphs of Israel over its Arab enemies? Are not these events evidence that *The Land* will one day be Israel’s according to prophecy and promise? No!

Some Jews are in Canaan today, but not because of the covenant that the Lord made with Abraham. God kept that covenant! He gave them the land, cast them out, and restored them. But when Israel rejected the Abrahamitic covenant that culminated in Jesus the Christ, Israel as a nation was hardened and cast off to become “wanderers among the nations” (Hosea 9:17). Jews are, indeed, living in Palestine. The State of Israel is a historical reality, but

not as a prelude to a future glorious fulfillment of the covenant once made with Abraham.

This is the way it is: Some Jews are living in Palestine according to the sovereign rule of our Lord over the nations. What we see in Israel today is a current manifestation of that which the apostle Paul proclaimed to the Athenians: “God has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and boundaries of their habitation” (Acts 17:26). In the incomprehensible wisdom of the Ruler of the nations some of Abraham’s descendants, both Jews and Arabs, are bitterly contending for the land once promised and given to Abraham’s descendants.

The human observer notes the ebb and flow of geopolitical forces, as Jews and Palestinians are locked in a death struggle for *Lebensraum* (a homeland). Judgment has fallen upon both. Strife and contention, fear and hatred, danger and death, rocks and rifles, Scud missiles and gas masks now fill *The Land* where once the chosen people lived in peace and security, “each man under his vine and his fig tree” (I Kgs. 4:25).

—Paul F. Nolting





Final fling on campus for college grads (left) and High School

## GRADUATION 1991—IMMANUEL STYLE

The graduation at our Immanuel Lutheran College in Eau Claire, Wisconsin is unique in many ways and has its own special style. Graduation time at Immanuel gives glory to God for the accomplishments of the graduates during the school year.

The talents of the students are apparent as Class Day and the graduation concert are conducted on the Friday before the graduation service. The talents are obvious as they are used to praise our God for all He has done for each of us. The accomplishments of our students are many and varied and mention is made of those accomplishments, but the glory is God's.

Our style of graduation is to gather for a worship service to thank and praise God for all His blessings and then to send the graduates off into their new life with a Word from our God which will help and guide them in the future.

This year that Word was delivered by President John Lau to the largest gathering ever at the Fieldhouse on the Immanuel campus. On the basis of his text, from Matthew 7:24-29 Professor

Lau urged all, and especially the graduates, to use Christ as their authority as they build their own House of Life.

Thirty-four high school seniors, thirteen collegiates, one seminarian, and one special graduate were given special attention by the speaker as he directed the Word of God especially to them under the theme "Building our House of Life."

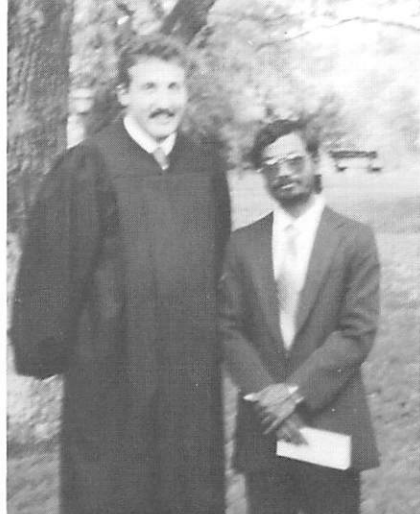
Our special graduate was Jyothi Benjamin who is leaving Immanuel to return to India after two years of study. Jyothi will be missed by many at Immanuel who have learned to know and love him. We wish him Godspeed in his journey home, and the blessing of our Lord on his work in India with the CLCI.

Each year at the time of graduation we see some different things and some things that remain the same. This year



l grads (center)

the different thing was the look of Class Day. For the first time the speakers were chosen to represent different phases of life at and after Immanuel. This year we heard a high school freshman, a high school senior, and an alumnus speak on looking forward,



Seminary graduate Paul Krause  
Special graduate Jyothi Benjamin

memories, and looking backward. It was very refreshing.

This refreshing air was carried through the evening as the band and the strings entertained and the choir edified. The traditional songs, with the alumni joining once again, concluded



**Top:** Ellen Radichel, Joanna Fleischer, Rebecca Rust, Tina Radichel, Angela Ochsner;  
**Kneeling:** Jay Sydow, Philip Strike

These seven high school graduates, all members of Grace Lutheran in Fridley, Minn., have been together since the 6th grade in Grace's Day School. Six of the seven have been together since first grade! In 1987 they comprised the 8th grade class at Grace.

May God's grace abound in them and all the graduates!

the spiritual section of the graduation concert.

The faces change, the songs change, the musical selections change, but Immanuel's graduation has one constant.

That constant is an atmosphere of giving all glory to God for all He has done for Immanuel and for its graduates. May this never change.



Professors  
James Pelzl and  
L. W. Schierenbeck

## 90 Years of Experience

Graduation at Immanuel College this year also marked the retirement of Professors Pelzl and Schierenbeck from the teaching staff. Words could not give justice to the contribution of these men to the Church, nor would they want to read such words. It was apparent from their words after receiving plaques commemorating their years of service that all glory be given to their God for any accomplishments their lives have shown. Grace and grace alone has brought them through their lives to this point of retirement.

Professor Schierenbeck has been in the service of his Lord as a pastor or teacher for 50 years since his first churches in Darfur/Butterfield, Minnesota in 1941. He has been a teacher at Immanuel since 1982. His experiences that he was able to bring to the classroom will be sorely missed by the stu-

dents.

Professor Pelzl has been in the service of his Lord for 40 years as a teacher since his first Call to Winnebago Academy in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin in 1951. Twelve of those years were spent as a dedicated lay-person as he taught in public universities. Prof. Pelzl came to Immanuel in 1971. His knowledge of mathematics and science has made him a leader in the development of an excellent math and science department at Immanuel. Prof. Pelzl's expertise will be missed by Immanuel and its students.

May these men be richly blessed in their retirement with a faith in God that confirms them in their belief that all glory goes to God, and that grace and grace alone will bring them to their goal—heaven.

—Prof. Ron Roehl

# THE OLD TESTAMENT APOCRYPHA

The Old Testament Apocrypha (ah-PAHK-riff-ah) are fourteen religious books found in some editions of the Bible such as the Greek Old Testament, the Latin Vulgate, Luther's German translation, early printings of the King James Version, and the Roman Catholic Douay Bible.

The Apocrypha are not divinely inspired and should not be used as a basis for religious teaching. Even though they existed at the time of Christ, our Lord Jesus never quoted from them. For Him the Scriptures—which could not be in error and from which He quoted—were the writings of Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets. Today, only the Roman Catholic denomination declares the Apocrypha to be sacred and equal in authority to the Old Testament.

The fourteen apocryphal books vary in content. Some were offered as additions to our Old Testament books of Ezra, Esther, Jeremiah, and Daniel. Others contain legends and Jewish history.

*The Song of the Three Children* is words of praise supposedly offered by Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego while walking in the midst of King Nebuchadnezzar's burning fiery furnace. A portion of this apocryphal book is printed on page 120 of *The Lutheran Hymnal*.

*Susanna* tells of a godly woman whom Daniel rescued by proving that her accusers were lying.

In *Bel and the Dragon* Daniel shows that the idol Bel is not alive and later the prophet is said to have destroyed a fierce dragon by filling it

with explosive food.

*Baruch* purports to be a letter from Jeremiah urging the Jews enslaved in Babylon to avoid false gods.

*The Prayer of Manasses* claims to be a confession of sin and plea for forgiveness made by that king of Judah while captive in Babylon.

*Additions to the Book of Esther* describes a dream of Mordecai, his and Esther's prayers, and King Ahasuerus' efforts to rescue the Jews from Haman's execution orders.

*First Esdras* (Greek for "Ezra") repeats much of the Old Testament book of Ezra plus a debate about which is the most powerful: wine, the king, women, or truth. *Second Esdras* relates a series of visions but also teaches about the six days of creation, our inherited sinfulness from Adam, the resurrection of the dead, and the final Judgment. It also uses the titles "Jesus," "Christ," and "Son of God" when referring to the coming Savior.

*Tobit* is the story of a pious Israelite whose son, with guidance from an angel, casts out a demon from his wife and removes his father's blindness by using parts of a fish.

*Judith*, a beautiful Hebrew widow, rescues her people by cutting off the head of a general in Nebuchadnezzar's army.

*The Wisdom of Solomon* describes the blessing of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked.

*Ecclesiasticus* (not to be confused with our Old Testament book "Ecclesiastes") contains practical proverbs. Its words in chapter fifty—"Now therefore bless ye the God of all, which only

doeth wondrous things everywhere, which exalteth our days from the womb, and dealeth with us according to his mercy"—are the basis for stanzas one and two of our hymn "Now Thank We All Our God" (*The Lutheran Hymnal* #36).

*First Maccabees* and *Second Maccabees* describe wars which the Jews fought during some of the 400 years between the close of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament. Only *First Maccabees* offers reliable historical information. *Second Maccabees* mingles history and leg-

end. Still worse, its author glorifies suicide, prayers for the dead, and the giving of money to pay for the sins of those who have died (12:39-45 & 14:37-46).

When reading the Apocrypha out of curiosity, a Christian will soon realize that the fourteen books do not provide spiritual nourishment. There is no substitute for the divinely inspired Holy Scriptures. They alone are able to make us wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. The Apocrypha are not Bible.

—Robert Mackensen

### *What Is This Thing Called Love?*

## LOVE IS . . .

Say "love" and you can tell a truth—or you can manipulate. It is said to be an integrating force for marriage. What do a man and a woman communicate when they say, "I love you"?

Put it with various words and love takes on other shades of meaning. There's a world of difference between "make love" and being "in love." The Greeks knew about "love's" multiple dimensions. They had different words for erotic love, affectionate love, and willful love.

Oh that there were a nice definition of love in the Bible—a noun followed by a linking verb followed by a noun: love is...What we do have in Scripture are adjectives following the linking verb (for example: "love is kind"). There is a host of verbs telling about the way God loved, and many imperatives inviting and urging us to love the way God did. Descriptions abound.

Spiritual love is "defined" by the acts of God. That's how we discover what it is and what it is like.

\*John 3:16—"God so loved the world..." God's love was special because He was loving the unloveable, the rebellious, the spiritually indifferent.

\*I John 4:10—"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." God's love cost Him dearly—the life of His beloved Son. But such a price was needed and such a price He paid.

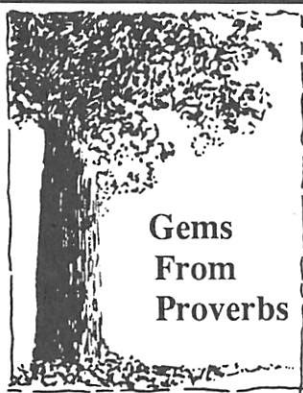
\*I John 4:11—"Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

\*John 15:12—"This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

In the months to come, indeed if the Lord wills, we will examine the depths of this special love of God, a love He expects us to mirror during our earthly pilgrimage.

Next time: LOVE IS INDISPENSABLE.

—M. Sydow



**“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people” (14:34).**

In his explanation of the Petition “Give us this day our daily bread” Martin Luther points out that our Lord Jesus wants us to be concerned about the society in which we live, to pray for “pious and faithful rulers, good government...good neighbors and the like.” The people of our country are people for whom our Savior died. We desire good things for them—along with the best thing of all: faith in Jesus Christ.

We do not want our nation to be ravaged by evil and destroyed by sin’s folly. We also realize that those countries in which evil and corruption hold sway are usually places where the spread of the Gospel is hindered, so that people suffer a worse fate than human oppression. Therefore, as Christian citizens we will work and pray for two sorts of righteousness: righteousness among men and righteousness before God.

Now, there is only one righteousness which avails before God: Christ’s Righteousness. This righteousness is His doing, not ours—a gift received by faith, not a standing earned by our goodness. We “work for” this righteousness when we witness to Jesus as Lord and Savior in word and action, in the way we live and in the Gospel message we share.

The other righteousness is often called “civic righteousness.” We promote this righteousness when we encourage what is good, right, and moral in our nation and among its people. We dare never forget that this righteousness changes no one’s status before God.

Still, the fact remains that such righteousness is beneficial to us and our neighbor. For God’s commandments are true, both in an ultimate sense (they come from God who is true) and in a practical sense (they provide a working framework for a society—one in which evil is punished and hindered and good is encouraged and rewarded).

God is not honored when evil perverts government and society—channels through which He would bless a country. Therefore, through political involvement and community action we, as Christian citizens, will want to encourage civic righteousness wherever God gives us opportunity. Through daily prayer, informed voting, and timely comment we will be the “salt” our Lord has called us to be—a preservative in a society whose members are all too often doing what is right in their eyes with no thought to the will of their Creator.

Arise, O Lord of hosts, be jealous for Thy name  
And drive from out our coasts the sins that put to shame.  
The powers ordained by Thee with heavenly wisdom bless;  
May they Thy servants be and rule in righteousness!  
O Lord, stretch forth Thy mighty hand  
And guard and bless our Fatherland. (TLH 580:2,4)

—W. V. Schaller

*Witnessing To One Who Has...*

## Respect For Religion But With Doubts

**T**here are many in this life who may respect our Christian religion and yet not believe in the Lord. This Pharisee showed respect for the Lord. He invited Him to his house and provided food. There it ended. There was not saving faith. Simon, the Pharisee, even doubted if Jesus were much of a prophet.

### The Oblique Approach

The Lord did have Simon's ear so He told the story of a creditor and two debtors and related it to Simon and the woman. Simon had the typical attitude of a Pharisee which was self-righteous. This leads inevitably to a "holier than thou" attitude. Simon showed it when he said to himself, "who and what sort of woman this is...a sinner."

Our Lord does not tear into Simon. He has his ear. Though Simon is self-righteous, yet he listens to the Lord.

The Lord uses what we could call the oblique approach. He does not confront Simon with his sin and demand repentance. Instead our Lord tells a story in which Simon must decide a question. The question Jesus asks is: "Which of them will love him more: the one forgiven fifty or the one forgiven five hundred?" Simon is bound to answer: "The one forgiven five hundred."

This reminds us somewhat of Nathan's story to David by which he

then showed David his sin. The response of David was immediate and it was repentance.

With Simon we do not have it recorded. Were our Lord to use a more confrontational approach and demand repentance, Simon would likely bristle and balk. Whether Simon at this time repented and believed or not, he did have a very simple and clear story by which the Spirit could show him later.

We can learn from this to use the oblique approach when we have a prospect who is willing to listen to us, who has respect for our belief. Very true, the hypocrisy and self-righteousness of the Pharisee was and is disgusting. Why alienate a willing listener, however, by "stomping on his toes" so that he rejects listening to you before you get your point across?

### Something To Think About

The Lord further gets the point across by turning to the woman and making the comparison of Simon's lack with the woman's tears, wiping His feet with her hair, kissing His feet and anointing His head with oil. The lesson is well taught to Simon: true love emanates from forgiveness of sins. We don't know whether Simon was one of those who said "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" He must have at least thought it.

As Simon is left with something to think about, we would also want to



leave those we witness to with something to think about. In Simon's case, he was left with what was necessary for the Spirit to convict him of sin. He also was left with the Gospel as he heard it spoken to the woman.

In our witnessing we want to be as clear in our message as the Lord is here. We also want to give something simple to remember as the Lord does with His story. There are many illustrations in Scripture we could use, as well

as thinking up some out of our daily life. It is good to have some illustrations in mind when witnessing. The illustrations could be geared to the different situations we meet.

And finally, it is practice that makes perfect. The more we witness, the more we will feel comfortable in doing so. And the more will be the passages and illustrations that the Spirit will call to our mind.

—D. Koenig

## Partners in the Gospel . . .

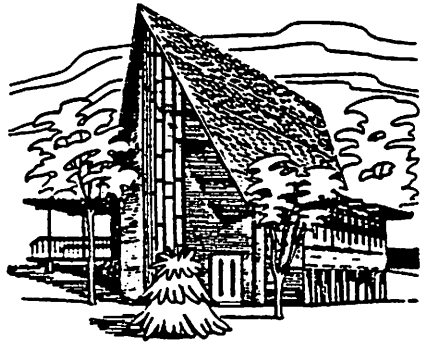
### Redemption Ev. Lutheran Church Lynnwood, Washington

#### "The Alderwood Manor"

The title above first appeared here in the Jan. '71 edition, in which you may find pictures of the then new church building and its pastor. As the title indicates, there have been many unique features which need to be taken into account to get a good grasp of the Seattle congregation's beginnings. Otherwise the last 30 or so years of history is very much the same in most of our CLC congregations, give or take a few different dates and figures.

The title, of course, is a little play on words, since the original area developers spelled it "Manor." (And guess what kind of tree causes allergic reactions in the lady of the manor?) The same yet unique? Yes, and perhaps the reader will want most to hear the unique.

We believe it to be unique that the congregation here was formed by lay people who on their own left local fel-



lowships because of a lack of faithful pastoral leadership. Two families found each other after leaving their congregations in the summer of 1959. They began worshiping in each other's living rooms, and alternately inviting the late Pastor Gilbert Sydow over (the mountain passes) from Ellensburg, or packing up kids and all and attending there. Not too many these days put up with the two hundred miles of driving to church on a Sunday. But ask both parents and now grown youngsters and

they speak of those hardships as some of the finest and happiest times of their lives (the "first love" days? Rev. 2:4).

Short notices in the *Spokesman* tell the familiar story of this, and similarly most, CLC congregations. There are short notices in this publication of Dec. '59, Apr. '60, Nov. '60, and Aug. '61. Another "Church News" article in the Jan. '61 issue announced the installation of the first resident Pastor, Norbert H. Reim, who had then just resigned his professorate in the Nigerian mission for confessional reasons.

More notices in Aug. '63 and Nov. '64 tell of concentrated efforts in this suburb of Seattle and of 78 visitors in a six-week period, plus a Sunday School enrollment numbering in the sixties. (One of the early VBS enrollments topped 120.) A five-bedroom home was built for \$17,000—and, of course, lots of donated labor.

### Rainbow Hues

An Oct. '66 article entitled "Spring-time Harvest" spoke of growth—fourteen added at a mid-June service—and a bond issue for financing a new church. This was unique since the interest required was unheard of, a seemingly exorbitant 7-3/4%! The first shovel of dirt was turned over that Fall and the first services held in the new basement the next November, and dedication on Easter of '69.

Pastor Reim wrote: "The weather patterns of Puget Sound make for green landscapes and grey skies. As you approach the church building you find that it fits, in its own way of understatement. The split shake roof and natural redwood exterior suit the scene. When you enter the sanctuary, how-

ever, you come into a surprise. For suddenly you are in the midst of a rainbow! The side walls are fitted with floor-to-ceiling panels of colored glass that is mounted in a graduating pattern that moves from the cool colors of the spectrum at the rear to the warm tones of red at the front. Even on a grey day you sit in vivid light, warmed by an almost tangible reminder of God's covenant of grace with Noah and all generations after him."

As Pastor Reim accepted a call to Phoenix, Arizona, Pastor Bertram J. Naumann was called to service and installed on July 1, '73. Some initial plans for a pipe organ were presented. In a July '74 article here, there are pictures of some unique altar furniture, designed and fabricated by the one man most associated with this building program almost from the beginning, Art Mantei. (He and his beloved wife "Chick" celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on the first Sunday this June.)

As the church was paid off in April '81, the congregation began investigating the possibilities of starting a Christian Day School in keeping with its constitutional goals. On January 14 of '84 planning began in earnest. Once again the "first love" zeal showed itself in the city-wide scrounging for and re-finishing of school furniture and equipment.

On June 24 Miss Susan E. Carstensen (now Rehm) became the first organizer, opener, and principal of our new school. She was succeeded in the summer of '88 by Mr. David W. Bernthal. He is being in turn succeeded this summer by Mr. Barry Hay, a '91 ILC graduate. (Susan accepted a call to Be-

rea, St. Paul, Minnesota and David to Faith, Coloma, Michigan.)

As of this writing our organist, Thomas Caulton, is about half finished with a very ambitious project indeed—the renewed effort at the installation of a new 27-rank pipe organ. The congregation now numbers 100 communicants, 130 souls, including many young children soon to be enrolled in the school.

In connection with the early history of Redemption, the late Pastor G. Sy-

dow wrote, quoting an Aug. '61 contributor to this magazine, words which also provide a fitting conclusion: "Let us in faith scar the land with ditches, as Elisha commands, and let us groove it with congregations, though they be small. For the hearts thus assembled, where the Gospel in its purity still finds obedient welcome, are the basins that will store and hold the moisture of which we and others shall drink in the heat of the day."

—Pastor Bertram Naumann



From July 1961:

## "O Come, Let Us Worship"

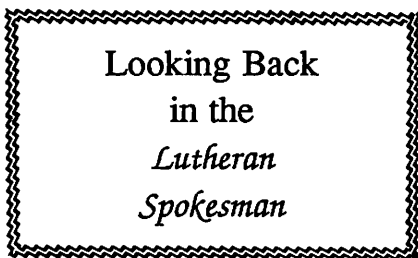
To say that the reading of Scripture is an important part of the worship of a Christian congregation is to utter a commonplace so self-evident that it would provoke little or no further thought. Yet isn't that about the measure of attention that these readings receive? They are a traditional and accepted part of the liturgical service and one would miss them if they were not there. But let us think for a moment just *how* important they are, and what our worship would be without that Word.

The apostle Paul describes the building of the New Testament Church in Ephesians 2:20-22. He tells us that it is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets," their writings, both Old and New Testament. He tells us what makes this Word such a sure foundation, even though it was written by men. For here Jesus Christ himself is the chief cornerstone. His glorious person and work was the sum and substance of the prophets' message. He was the One who sent the apostles, giving them His Word to speak. Thus this foundation was provided. And it is in Him also that "all the building fitly framed together *groweth* unto an holy temple unto the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."—The Word is therefore the secure foundation and at the same time the very life of the Church.

It was most fitting, therefore, that the Ancient Church gave much time in its worship to

the reading of the Word, "as much as time permitted." No mere selected and abbreviated "lessons" for them! They read entire books at a time. They read their way through the entire Bible time and again. And—with minds uncluttered with that mass of print and speech that is characteristic of our day—they *remembered*.

How meager this makes our modern services look. Granted that they have more of the Word than just the prescribed lessons. For the various Versicles, Introits and Graduals, though

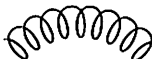


short and pithy, are pure Scripture, and contain many a precious bit of Gospel. And if the sermon is worth its salt, it will certainly have much more of Scripture in it than merely the text. It should and will in its entirety be a proclaiming of this same Word of God.—Yet there are a number of things that both pastor and people can do to enrich our worship. Let the pastor

explain the reason for the choice of the traditional Gospels and Epistles for the day. (The Sunday Bulletin provides an excellent opportunity.) Let him alternate or supplement these with other well chosen series of readings, not hesitating to substitute or add other appropriate selections, as the occasion may indicate. And as for those of us who sit in the pews, let us really "give attention to (the) reading." Let us re-read the lessons at home. And let us use our Bibles (in that convenient book form that the early Christians did not enjoy) and *read*, read our Bible again and again. Thus we shall gain understanding, be built and grow and be blessed. The method is so simple that Paul could compress it into one single sentence:

"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly."

— Prof. Edmund Reim



### Installation

Authorized by President Fleischer, the undersigned on April 14, 1991 installed John Klatt as pastor of Bethel Lutheran Church in Spring (Houston), Texas.

— Norbert Reim

### "Diaspora" Update

In order to bring the "Diaspora" up to date, all pastors are requested to prepare a list of all members of their congregation who are now living in localities where they cannot attend regular services. The list should include the following:

1. Name of member.
2. Address. State whether permanent or temporary.
3. Phone number.
4. How they are being served, i.e., video tapes, MbM, etc.
5. Name and address of congregation with which they are affiliated.

In order to expedite the work of the committee, it is requested that the above information be sent by July 15th to:

Mrs. Milton Meyer  
R.R. 1, Box 217B2  
Caledonia, MN 55921

— CLC Board of Missions

### Change of Address

Pastor Bruce Naumann  
2192 Francis Avenue  
Santa Clara, CA 95051  
Phone (408) 246-8391

Pastor Michael Wilke  
8880 R. Golden Oak Dr.  
Manassas, VA 22110  
Phone (703) 335-5832

### Worship Site:

The Old Town Hall  
3999 University Dr.  
Fairfax, Virginia

(Note: Pastor Wilke asks that all mail be sent to his home address.)