

Lutheran Spokesman

A stained glass style illustration in shades of green. The central element is a cross with a dove in flight, its wings spread, positioned over the cross's arms. The cross is enclosed within a large oval frame. Radiating from the center are several triangular rays, creating a sunburst effect. Scattered around the central composition are several stylized flowers, each with three petals. The entire design is set against a background of a fine, repeating grid pattern.

In This Issue

- Real Easter Joy
- Lord, We Remember
- Thoughts On Ps. 23
- Juju Men in Nigeria
- Foundations
(1 Cor. 3)
- St. Paul,
Bismarck, ND

REAL EASTER JOY

Few need encouragement to be happy at Easter. In fact, one has to almost work at not being happy. Nature, with its own resurrection from the dormancy of winter, provides countless Resurrection signals: the trees, plants, and flowers beginning to bud, the sun lengthening its stay, the days warming, the birds and wildlife returning, outdoor activities increasing. Luther put it this way: "Our Lord has written the promise of the Resurrection not in books alone, but in every leaf of springtime."

Although the church and nature's calendar well coincide to reinforce the Easter message, there is also the risk of an artificial, seasonal "high" which easily can overshadow our real spring joy: A "Rising Son," new spiritual life and hope, the dispelling of spiritual gloom, "Sonlight" for us that will never end and much more.

The Swallower

Isaiah 25:7-9 prophetically foresees all this in the certain resurrection of Christ, our own final resurrection, and the Life-victory we now experience: "On this mountain He will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the

sheet that covers all nations; He will swallow up death forever. The Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces; He will remove the disgrace of His people from all the earth. The Lord has spoken. In that day they will say: 'Surely this is our God; We trusted in Him and He saved us. This is the Lord, we trusted in Him; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.'"

One of the most sobering symbols of death is that of a shroud, used throughout history to wrap a corpse for interment. Today a sheet or veil is pulled over at the time of death, almost as if to shield the living from

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.

Editor: Paul Fleischer, 710 4th Ave. SW, Sleepy Eye, MN 56085; Assistant Editor: Keith Olmanson; Artists: W. Bernthal, M. Schaser; Staff (Also District Reporters): D. Bernthal, M. Bohde, D. Fuerstenau (West Central), J. Klatt, D. Koenig, Joseph Lau, R. Mackensen, Bertram Naumann, P. Naumann, G. Radtke (Great Lakes), Rollin Reim (Pacific Coast), P. Schaller, D. Schierenbeck (Minnesota), John Schierenbeck (South-Eastern), M. Sydow.

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 to 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.

the reality and finality of death.

From the moment sin entered the world, Death, as God warned, became our great enemy. Never has it been our friend. Like a universal earthquake (the “fault” lies in man’s rebellion), Death swallows man beneath the earth, entombing his physical remains in the cold darkness of the grave. As far as unregenerate man is concerned, not only does it cruelly shred the closest human ties, but it separates from the Life-giving Creator and Redeemer forever. And despite all of man’s valiant efforts to himself weaken, disarm, or defeat this terrible enemy, it is a lost cause. For man himself Death has remained invincible.

Enter Christ and the Gospel. The Savior, promised already in Eden, became Death’s conqueror. Easter is the visible proof of that conquest. The swallower has now himself been swallowed up (See I Corinthians 15:54). Death has met its match. For believers, Death itself has died and God has interred it in a tomb that can never be opened. “Christ Jesus has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (2 Tim. 1:10).

By Action, Not Decree

And how has this momentous victory been achieved? Not simply by

issuing a divine decree from the lofty courts of heaven. Rather, by the Lord of Glory humbling Himself and submitting to death and hell as our sin-substitute to satisfy divine justice. He did not simply proclaim history’s greatest victory from afar; He personally met Death head-on and vanquished it—in full view of His faithful, His enemies, as well as a world of dying souls.

As real as sin and death were and are, even greater is the reality and power of Christ’s victory and ours. This Easter we place our hope and confidence not in any phantom dream or illusion, but in a risen, victorious, and living Savior who assures us: “Because I live, you also shall live.” Truly, Jesus has swallowed up Death forever!

Easter is the feast of victory for our God—and for us. Let our hearts sing and shout for joy. We have much more to brighten our day than the return of spring and the festive Easter trimmings. Christ is risen indeed!

It was a strange and dreadful strife
When Life and Death contended;
The victory remained with Life,
The reign of Death was ended.
Holy Scripture plainly saith
That Death is swallowed up by Death,
His sting is lost forever. Hallelujah! (TLH 195:2)

—Pastor David Schierenbeck



**The Lord has Written the Promise of the Resurrection
Not in Books Alone,
But in Every Leaf of Springtime**

Thoughts On Psalm 23

The Lord is my Shepherd: *The good Shepherd is Jesus who rescued the sinful human race.*

I shall not want: *I shall not be in want; shall not lack any spiritual need.*

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: *He provides me with nourishing Bible teachings.*

He leadeth me beside the still waters: *Where there is quietness and peace.*

He restoreth my soul: *He makes and keeps me a Christian through the Gospel.*

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness: *On the right way.*

For His name's sake: *The name Jesus means Savior.*

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death:
And we all must.

I will fear no evil: *Nothing bad will happen to me.*

For Thou art with me: *The Lord Jesus stays close by us when we die.*

Thy rod and Thy staff: *His great protecting power.*

They comfort me: *Making me feel secure.*

Thou preparest a table before me: *He sees to it that I get good spiritual food.*

In the presence of mine enemies: *Amid those who want to destroy my Christian faith.*

Thou anointest my head with oil: *His soothing words heal my grief of mind.*

My cup runneth over: *an abundance of God's love.*

Surely goodness and mercy: *His kindness and pity.*

Shall follow me: *Shall accompany me.*

All the days of my life: *Here on earth.*

And: *After that.*

I will dwell in the house of the Lord: *IN HEAVEN WITH JESUS.*
Forever.



—Pastor Robert Mackensen

LORD, WE REMEMBER — FORGIVE US OUR FORGETFULNESS!

The believers who followed Jesus had seen and heard much that they would need to keep their child-like faith alive and well.

From God, from His holy angels, and from His called servants they heard words such as: Unto you is born this day...a savior, Christ the Lord... You shall call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins...This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear Him...Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world...God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

From the Savior believers heard words of comfort, hope, and life when He said unto them before His sacrificial death: "We are going up to Jerusalem and everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man will be fulfilled. He will be handed over to the Gentiles. They will mock Him, insult Him, spit on Him, flog Him and kill Him. ON THE THIRD DAY HE WILL RISE AGAIN!" (Lk. 18:31f) Again Jesus said to them: "After I have risen, I will go before you into Galilee" (Mk. 14:28).

The followers of Jesus heard Him say from the cross: "It is finished!" They followed Joseph who took the body of Jesus and placed it in his tomb.

The Promised "Third Day"

Saturday dawned, and they rested

in accord with the sabbath laws. We cannot but wonder about the thoughts, anticipations, and preparations that filled the hours of that quiet Saturday as they eagerly looked forward to the promised "third day."

We may imagine their preparation to welcome Him with triumphal hymns and songs of hallelujahs that would make the Palm Sunday reception dwarf into a feeble rehearsal; we may imagine that their hearts were basking in the glow of their Savior's love that loved them unto the very end of their redemption when He declared: "It is finished!" The debt of their sin was paid for in full, and His own perfect righteousness filled their cleansed hearts. We may imagine how they rejoiced in knowing that everything—all that God's love had promised to poor sinners—was fully accomplished.

We may imagine how they waited in the bright light of the glow of their sure salvation, awaiting the appearance of their living Lord "on the third day," as He said unto them! We may imagine how they encouraged one another, recalling those words: "After I have arisen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee...on the third day the Son of Man will be raised to life."

We may imagine how they rose up very early Sunday morning to dress for this festive day, to gather the prepared foods for feasting and celebration, and to go forth to greet one another with: "Hallelujah, He is risen, He is risen indeed; welcome,



dear Savior, hallelujah!"

The Recorded Facts

Enough of this imagination. The facts are recorded for us by the evangelists. Luke writes in Chapter 26: "On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb." (Why to the TOMB of Jesus on this festive day?) "They found that the stone had been rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus." (Of course not, but surely this is the moment when the vibes of their "hallelujahs" will echo forth from the empty tomb!)

But no, Luke goes on to tell us that "while they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, 'Why do you look for the living among the dead?'" (A proper question indeed — why were

they at the empty tomb, why were they pondering, why fearful, why were they looking among the dead ones for Him who would rise alive on the third day?)

Luke lets us listen in on the glorious Easter Sunday gospel: "He is not here; He has risen!" The messengers from God continue to nourish the faith of those forgetful followers of His Son saying, "REMEMBER how He told you, while He was still with you in Galilee: the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and ON THE THIRD DAY BE RAISED AGAIN?" The ever-effective Word from God strengthened their forgetful faith: "Then they remembered His words!"

Forgetful followers! Oh, how they must have mourned Friday at Jesus' death and burial; how they must have felt the darkness of despair as they thought about their dead Lord and spent that quiet Saturday preparing spices to sweeten the fragrance of

death in His tomb. What terrible hopelessness became the product of forgetting what their Lord had said unto them.

But, for a moment (for the sight is shocking) let us glance into a mirror and behold ourselves. Not at all unlike the followers of Jesus that first Easter, we too so often have forgotten so much of what our Lord said unto us in order to strengthen our faith and increase our joy and hope. Oh the wretched hours of fear, worry, care

and woe that we have spent in the dark despondency of forgetfulness!

His faith-giving Word still sounds forth to call us to REMEMBER. As we journey further and further along our way Home, may our faith be strengthened by His words of life, "Because I live, you shall live also...where I am, there you shall be also!"

LORD, WE REMEMBER—FORGIVE US OUR FORGETFULNESS!

—Prof. Gordon Radtke



An Easter Message From Our CLC President:

During the last week in February, since two of the members of the Mission Board were spending winter time in Phoenix, the Board held its midwinter meeting there. The congregation of brethren, Holy Cross, took the opportunity to have its annual Mission Festival. It was a stirring service and afternoon gathering as we were all reminded of the wonderful blessing that we have in the message of the Gospel, and as we were reminded that with the Word of God we have all that we need to be missionaries—each and every member of our church. We have the message. Christ is the message. We have the reason to go. The world around us is dying in its sin, and there are people desperately in need of salvation. We have the energizing power in the Spirit who blesses the Christian with the ability and with a boldness to speak. We need simply to immerse ourselves in the Word of God, and grow in the joy of our own salvation.

Two examples come to mind. That they involved pastors does not diminish the fact that any who are reading this can indeed themselves be instruments in the work of missions. Remember, above all, that mission work does not call us to convert. Mission work calls on us to speak. "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

On the way to Phoenix a young woman sat next to Pastor Mark Bohde of Millston, Wisconsin. She had been the victim of a crime against her person. She bore physical reminder of the crime. Pastor Bohde struck up a conversation with her concerning the Lord Jesus; and, in Him, one's relationship to God the Father.

On the return home this writer took his Bible out to do some sermon preparation. This was the cue to a young woman, traveling with her husband, to take out her Bible. She was full of questions and a lengthy conversation followed. We were able



to share the blessed message of an accomplished salvation with her, as well as to share with her the meaning of and blessing in Baptism.

Will either of us ever meet these two young women again? Not likely. Yet the one meeting was meaningful to us as pastors because we could share the Word of God. We pray that, under the Spirit, it will have proven to have been a meaningful meeting for the young women.

Mission work is possible because of the fulfillment of prophecy which we celebrate at Easter. Our Lord Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, has restored innocence and life. God the Father "according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..." (I Pet. 1:3).

One of the noticeable emotions of Easter morning is excitement. As Christians who are possessors of the inheritance of heaven by the abundant mercy of God the Father, through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, we can hardly be other than joyful. In view of the confidence and joy we know, maybe we ought not speak of mission work as "work." Indeed, preaching and sharing the Gospel involves time and effort. Yet what is our work in view of what our Lord Jesus Christ "worked" for us, and for

the world? Maybe we should speak of the fulfillment of our Savior's commission to the church according to what it really is: "GOOD-NEWS SHARING."

As the women went to tell the disciples of the Savior's resurrection, Jesus himself met them. To these women Jesus said: "Rejoice" (Mt. 28:9). He encouraged them to turn their joy into action: "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see me" (28:10). Joy motivates to action. The reality of Jesus' resurrection inspires joy and overcomes fear in the hearts of those who are alive in Christ. And who are those but they who believe in Him?

There is much mission work in the world. Most religious bodies engage in mission work. Only they can meaningfully engage in GOOD-NEWS SHARING who speak as ambassadors of Christ, and who speak repentance and remission of sins to a dying world; only they who speak Christ crucified and risen again; only they who speak with the confidence of faith that characterized the apostle who, writing the inspired Word, said: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep...Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 15:20, 57).

By the power of the Savior's resurrection, may your confidence of life eternal, and your joy in that assurance, be full this Easter time and at every time. From the power of the same resurrection may your joy be turned into active GOOD-NEWS SHARING.

—Daniel Fleischer

Christianity And The Juju Men

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12).

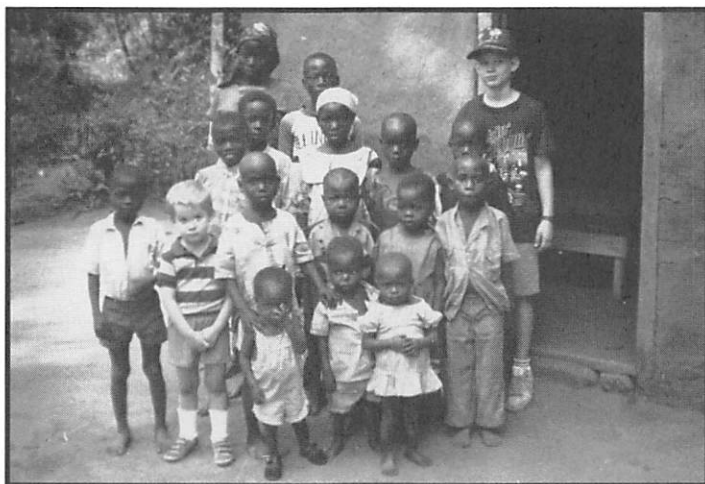
They came with machetes and cut down the poles we had placed for the walls of our church. They came again swinging their long knives and chased off the men we had assigned to stay there to watch and keep the place for us.

It was our land. Everyone knows it is our land. We bought and paid for it. We have poured a concrete slab on it for the floor of our church. But they don't want us there. They don't want Christianity in their area. They want the land for their own use. They want it for their own religious purposes (cults, heathen practices). So they come with death in their minds, death in their hearts, and death in their hands.

Spiritual Wickedness

They are the Juju men. They came again and again to do this terrible, hateful, destructive work. We appealed to the police. We asked for our money back from the previous land owner. Finally we found another piece of land for our church—for they are the Juju men. They think they have magical powers, spells and incantations in their arsenal of weaponry. They think the spirits of the nether world are their allies.

They themselves are not known by person, for they mask themselves and are themselves taken over by the spirits of those who died before. They are simply doing the will of those spirits who have returned and are showing the living the way they should walk, the actions they should take, or they are showing their displeasure or anger over a current situation. And remember, they think



Children in the NCLC Orphanage. The two white boys are Missionary Gurgel's children. The biggest girl is one of the Nigerian preacher's daughters.

that these are their ancestors speaking—their parents, uncles, grandparents, great chiefs and so forth—still leading them in the ancient ways.

Whatever the delusions, no matter how untrue their claims may be shown to be, they are the Juju men—the witches and magicians, the medicine men, the high priests of their cults and heathen religions. And they are feared, listened to, and still followed by many in Africa to this day.

Spiritual Light

It is into this that the Christian religion has come. It is among this that the native Christians must live and work and worship. To be a Christian means a complete break from all that they may have been before, and from what their relatives and neighbors may still be.

Can this still be? In the Christian era? In a land that is mostly Christian? Among Christians? With and to Christians?

Listen. There was to be a visit of the President of the country in our area and a function over which he was to preside. Special, new easy chairs

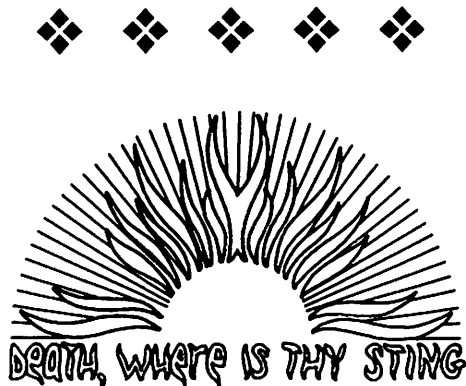
were being constructed for him and his entourage to sit on. Before the event the security men and body guards checked everything out.

They found a bump in the cushions of one chair. That chair and all the others were torn apart. They found a piece of wood in the springs and the stuffing. It was a fetish—an evil object upon which curses were placed and something meant to bring harm, sickness, and death to a man someone didn't like. The worker was hunted down and questioned. Who was the Juju man that was doing this evil work? Who were the men responsible for desiring such a thing?

Sometimes we learn the reality or a new meaning of an old familiar Bible passage when we enter a new locality or job. This is certainly the case as a missionary on a foreign continent, among different peoples and cultures.

“Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” (Eph. 6:13) is also very apropos for me. And for those who go forth to the battle in their own land, among their own people who face this every day.

—*Missionary Paul R. Gurgel*





Christ, the Power of God and the Wisdom of God — Studies in I Corinthians

Chapter Three—

Foundations

For many years I had been told that, apart from Christianity, every religion in the world teaches salvation by good works. That's quite a claim, isn't it? Enter my academic training which taught me something about being suspicious of sweeping generalizations.

Then the Lord taught me that some of them are true. It didn't happen over night. It is a culmination of learning opportunities over the years.

The Hindu religion centers on *karma* — activity. The problem of mankind is not called sin but desire. The solution to improve your lot and to better reincarnations is to be a better whatever you are. No forgiveness of sins is necessary or wanted.

Gautama said that people must know more to achieve nirvana (the cessation samsara — the cycle of reincarnations). That would lead to *enlightenment*, making a person a buddha (means "enlightened one"). Nagarjuna, a later disciple, went even further, suggesting that what a person needed to know is that there really is no self.

A Shaman, witch doctor, or medicine man teaches that the

problem with people is their living out of harmony with the natural world and nature's forces. The solution ("salvation?") is learning to live more in harmony with nature.

The Islam religion directs adherents' attention to observance of the five pillars: 1. the *shahadah* — the confession that Allah is God and Mohammed is his prophet; 2. Five daily prayers facing Mecca; 3. Giving of alms; 4. Fasting during the daylight hours of Ramadan (their holy month); 5. The *hajj* — the pilgrimage to Mecca once in a person's lifetime. Some add a sixth pillar: the *jihad* — the holy war. There are other works which Muslims do to earn what they consider heaven.

Check with those in the Far East and one finds a great deal of ancestor worship, more naturalistic religion (Taoists and Shintoists), and salvation by government (Kung Fu Tzu—Confucius).

The secularists of today reject the reality of God, His creation of the world, and His intervention in the affairs of mankind. They "consider the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life and seeks its development and

fulfillment in the here and now..." ("A Humanist Manifesto"—1933)

All of these are useless as foundations on which to build a life and future. They all feature man and the good works of man!

A Worthwhile Foundation

For a foundation to be any good it must suit the materials used for the superstructure. So in order for there to be a proper foundation for the spiritual life of human beings, the problems must be properly identified and solved. It won't do to say that all nature is an illusion. It doesn't help people hurting emotionally and confused intellectually to tell them to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. What good is a god whose best effort is limited to a few environmental controls so people can pursue self-righteous efforts?

One author asked in a title, *Whatever Became of Sin?*. His point: the problems of mankind are more than just illegal or sick. The problem is sin. It is a spiritual problem. It has to do with our relationship with almighty God.

* "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear" (Is. 59:2).

The foundation for our spiritual well-being must necessarily match the

problem to solve it.

* "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 3:11).

The Foundation Is Christ

* "Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: 'Behold, I lay in Zion a stone for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation'" (Is. 28:16).

The cornerstone and foundation is Christ. He is the One who offered Himself as the atoning sacrifice to take away the sins of the whole world. And a perfect foundation it is — just right for the spiritual well-being of mankind. Sin is the problem. A substitutionary atonement for the forgiveness of sins is the solution for that problem. Therefore, Jesus is the foundation. He earned the privilege.

* "(Christ) gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works" (Titus 2:14).

* "Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 2:4-5).

—Pastor Michael Sydow



"The memory of the righteous is blessed, but the name of the wicked will rot" (Prov. 10:7).

People will go to a lot of trouble to preserve the memory of loved ones who have died. They buy

headstones to mark graves. They keep letters, papers, and personal property. They display pictures and other mementos. The death of loved ones



Gems From Proverbs

brings not only sorrow at our loss, but also fear that we and others will forget them.

Our proverb reminds us that remembering the dead can be a wholesome thing especially when we are remembering the righteous, those who lived as Christians and died in the faith. Their memory is blessed and a blessing to those who remember their life and confession of faith.

The Lord wants us to remember Christians who have been a blessing to us. "Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct" (Heb. 13:7). It is good for us to remember Christian parents, grandparents, pastors, teachers, and friends who taught us the Gospel. When we remember them we remember also what they taught us and what they themselves believed.

We are right to make efforts to preserve the memory of faithful Christians. And we should not worry that they will be forgotten. God Himself remembers them, for their names are written in His book (Phil. 4:3, Rev. 3:5). He will also preserve their memory as it suits His purposes.

It is not only the righteous who are remembered, of course. The reputation of the wicked also lives on after they have died. But it is with contempt that they are remembered. The evil

that they managed to hide or disguise while they lived is often exposed after they die. So their name rots after they have gone.

We have an example of this in one of the bloodiest tyrants of this century. Stalin used to have himself photographed with a child on his knee, trying to present himself as a benevolent grandfather figure. And he used his power to hide his crimes. But after his death the enormity of his wickedness began to come to light. His name has rotted.

Countless other lesser tyrants and ordinary evil men have tried to make names for themselves. They may have been big men in their day. The very sound of their names may have caused faint hearts to tremble. But after their death they were quickly and gladly forgotten. Like the discarded apple that rots and finally disappears, the names of the wicked fade and finally vanish.

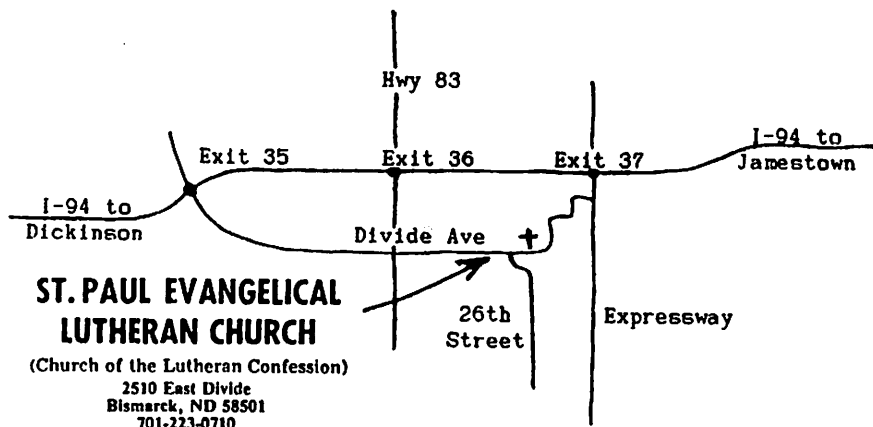
The names of the righteous also may fade, as time passes and contemporaries die. But the names of God's children will never vanish, for He Himself knows and remembers them. We have assurance of this in the resurrection of Christ and the promise of life that He has given to all who believe in Him. Those who have died believing and trusting in the living Christ will be raised to live with Him forever.

And when that day comes, we will no longer need to hold on to fading memories, for memory will give way to ever new and joyful experience.

—Pastor John Klatt



Partners in the Gospel...



Remember to put a “c” in Bismarck when you write. Many people forget. One way to remember: there is a Confessional Christian Congregation here in town — St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church (CLC).

There has been at least one faithful CLC family in Bismarck since the early 1970’s. Before the end of that decade there were two, then three—Wilkes, Blumhardts, McEnroes—usually attending services either in Jamestown, ND or Bowdle, SD two to three hours away.

Laying The Foundation

In early 1980 Pastor Paul Fleischer began holding regular services here out of Jamestown. During the next eight years he and Pastors Terrel Kesterson (Bowdle) and Peter Reim (Jamestown) came here quite regularly every 2-3 weeks. Services were held in various public meeting rooms, or at a member’s home. The video tape ministry was sometimes used. Pastor David Koenig came up from Lemmon a couple of times.

Potlucks were frequent, as is often the case when Lutherans get together. Ads in local papers proved to be not too effective. Attendances averaged around a dozen. Two baptisms and two confirmations took place between years 1979 and 1984.

A curious and anxious Missouri Synod pastor named Warren Fanning turned up at one of the services about ten years ago. He knew of the CLC, and had been thinking of getting in touch. He and his wife Janet knew several CLC people in Jamestown and elsewhere. Perhaps God might want them to make a change of Synod, sometime.

By early 1987 most of the people had moved from Bismarck, and regular services were discontinued. Then any CLC folks in town would have to travel to Jamestown, Bowdle, or Ipswich. By late 1989 CLC people here included names like Blumhardt, Wietgreffe, Schneider, Williams, and McEnroes (back in town!).

Meanwhile, Pastor Fanning had become even more disenchanted with



his Synod. Serious dangers had been long developing in the areas of fellowship, fund-raising, pastoral ministry, discipline, loyalty to the organization rather than to the Bible and Lutheran Confessions. There was virtually no church leader there, to whom to speak about these grave dangers. The painful situation was deemed irrevocable.

After many hours of talking with Pastors Paul and Daniel Fleischer, attendance at two Pastor Conferences at ILC, a Delegate Conference at Lemmon, and much reading and prayer, something developed. Finally it was realized that here in the CLC the Word and doctrine are supreme. It was different. There was a deeper sense of faithfulness among the pastors. This was more like “home.” It was time now, happily to resign from the LCMS clergy roster, and to suffer termination of his Call by the LCMS congregation he had served for fourteen years.

Building On The Foundation

The very next Sunday (September 17, 1989) an “independent” Lutheran mission began in Bismarck, with seventeen souls—names like Adams, Clausnitzer, Ollenburger, Schiermeister, Winmill (and later Johnson

and Unterseher). After the Fannings became communicant members at Our Savior’s in Jamestown, the group became a CLC mission. The thirteen CLC souls brought the total up to thirty. Sunday School saw seven enrolled, and services averaged 25 per Sunday.

Before long the group had a constitution, and budget (with subsidy from fellow CLC members), saw their pastor colloquized into the CLC, elected officers, called their pastor, chose a name, set a date for organization and installations (November 5, 1989), awaited their reception into the CLC at the 1990 Convention, and set out to look for land. Bible Class, Women’s Fellowship, Council, Voters’, Sunday School Teachers’, Building Committee meetings, were held regularly.

After using the Capital Electric (REC) Building for yet another 150 services, without charge, the congregation moved into a new church and parsonage. The months in between saw the purchase of three acres, through the MEF, at a good, highly



**“The Sword of the Spirit
...is the Word of God.”**

Ephesians 6:17

visible site. Plans were drawn up, discussed, changed, finalized. Jack Mayhew of Valentine, Nebraska was chosen to be our foreman. The total cost would be around \$190,000 for land and buildings—probably closer to \$250,000 if you include the volunteer labor by folks near and far, and the donated organ, hymnals, chancel ware, chairs, tables, kitchen items, etc.

From groundbreaking in September, to the day we moved in, was only about four months. The weather at first was terrible, then just cold! Despite that, and not too many disagreements and lost tempers, we rejoiced to see it all come together. What a thrill! Dedication was July 19, 1992. One hundred and six people came.

The Lord has blessed us richly. All of us are amazed. Attendances have been slowly climbing. Offerings have been good each year. Our repayment schedule is in place. We have two youths and one adult under instruction right now.

By the time you read this one of our members will have married and moved away, and another will be attending ILC. We have not really begun to advertise ourselves as yet, or set up any definite outreach plans. All that is ahead of us. We have walk-ins every other week on average. There is lots of work ahead, as we use the "Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." And we will be determined, as was St. Paul, not to make any other truth known than "Jesus Christ and Him crucified," and do that through the Word and Sacraments of our gracious God.

—Pastor Warren Fanning

Announcements

A New Address For The Editor

The new, immediate, and permanent address for the *Spokesman* editor is the parsonage of Grace Ev. Lutheran Church: 710 4th Ave. SW, Sleepy Eye, MN 56085. The telephone number at home or church is (507) 794-7793.

Please route all materials, announcements, or other short notices for the *Lutheran Spokesman* to this location. Thank you.

—Pastor Paul Fleischer

Third Annual Christian Singles Retreat July 27-30, 1993 Hill City, South Dakota

The third annual Christian Singles Retreat is scheduled for July 27 through 30, 1993 at Palmer Gulch Lodge located near Mt. Rushmore National Memorial. For a registration packet and information on fun and fellowship in the scenic Black Hills contact:

Paul Mueller
1090 War Eagle Dr. North
Colorado Springs, CO 80919
Phone (719) 548-1871