

July 1995  
Vol. 38, No. 1  
(ISSN 0024-  
7537)

# Lutheran Spokesman

## O' Sweet and Blessed Country



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# PROPHETS AND PROFITS

Business and Industry are out to make a profit. But the Church is called a "non-profit organization." In a way that's too bad.

## Non-Profit Organization?

Think of the Church as a "profit" institution — for herself and others. The profit is spiritual and eternal — the best kind, a Bible notion. In Mark 8:36 Jesus asks: "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Isaiah 48:17 tells us: "Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer: I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you in the way that you should go."

## Profit Through Christ

You know what these words are saying. You believe in Jesus, profiting immensely and beyond expressing, by His Gospel of the forgiveness of sins. Hundreds of Bible passages report the gains received. 1 Corinthians 3:21 says: "... all things are yours," show-

ing the profit you have through Christ.

The Church must continue to explain clearly the advantages and blessings of the Gospel, the "benefits of Christ" — to use an Augsburg Confession term. (The losses must also be explained as warnings to the Old Adam within, as well as reminders of the devil's tricks and the world's baits and lures.)

## Profits and Prophets

This leads us to the other word. There is a connection.

You may think the word "prophet" is antiquated, that its use has died out. But there are prophets in the world today, in your congregation. When Jesus ascended He left prophets behind to carry out His prophetic work. Every man-, woman-, and child-believer has this function. The Great Commission clarifies it. The congregation which exercises that Word receives many blessings, some appearing as "new members." Where

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 to Editor Fleischer.

Business Manager: Benno Sydow, 2750 Oxford St. N., Roseville, MN 55113. Individual subscriptions: \$7.50 for one year; \$14.00 for two years; \$21.00 for three years. Subscriptions sent in bulk to congregations: \$6.50.

Printed in U.S.A.

To CLC pastors and all subscribers to the *Lutheran Spokesman*

## DISCLAIMER

The editor of the *Lutheran Spokesman* herewith asks that an announcement similar to the following be made in church bulletins and/or attached to the July 1995 issues distributed in bulk:

***The cover designation "O sweet and blessed country..." refers, of course, to "the home of God's elect . . . that eager hearts expect . . . that dear land of rest" as hymn stanzas 448:5, 605:5, 613:4, 614:5 in The Lutheran Hymnal have it. The eagerly awaited and expected country of God's believing children is the paradise above, and has nothing whatsoever to do with any earthly government, any and all of which are destined for destruction when Jesus, the King of kings and Lord of lords, returns to take His believers to heaven and to banish the unbelieving to hell.***

***We are sure the cover artist's good intent was: "God bless America." For that - in keeping with such Scripture verses as Jeremiah 29:7 & 1 Timothy 2:2 - we continue to pray.***

--Pastor Paul Fleischer, Editor  
Sleepy Eye, Minnesota  
July 7, 1995



there are faithful prophets there are great profits.

### Scripture Basic

St. Paul says: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable . . ." (you know the rest). Profiting prophets are bound to both Testaments. The Church remains the only durable "profit organization," claiming souls for God and heaven through the Word and Sacraments.

If a denomination and its people neglect the Word, you can expect a decline, not always in quantity, but certainly in quality. A non-*prophet* (non-Word) church is soon a non-*profit* (non-faith) church. Could it happen to your church? Has it happened elsewhere?

Three questions spring from the Book of Job: "What shall I profit if I be cleansed from my sin?" (35:3) "Who is the Almighty that we should serve Him. What profit do we have if we pray to Him?" (21:15) Unless we come often to sit at Jesus' feet to hear

His Word and take His holy body and blood, we might end up with another Job quote: "It profits a man nothing that he should delight himself in God" (34:9). God will then say of us as He said of His people in Jeremiah 2:8, 11: "My people have changed their glory for that which does not profit."

### The World Needs The Prophets' Profits

If you were to neglect, abuse, and despise Word and Sacraments, you would soon despair. And the world around you will fall into a worse despair than it has now! That world needs you. It is "held together" by the Church. It needs you to "share the wealth," the gain, the advantages and profits that come streaming through the Means of Grace.

Our congregations are in positions to cause communities around us to profit in all things divine and eternal. So we strive, by God's Spirit, to increase our prophet-ability. And our profit-ability.

—Pastor Warren Fanning



## Free Indeed

A mother wrote to her state senator complaining about laws that allow women as young as eighteen to perform as dancers in bars. She had sent her daughter to Houston to go to college. To make extra money, the daughter got a job dancing in a bar. The money in this line of work was so good that she soon forgot about getting an education.

The senator used this mother's moving letter to write an editorial piece for a Houston paper, arguing

that at the very least the minimum age for this degrading work ought to be raised to twenty-one, to prevent immature eighteen-year-olds from being lured into it.

It wasn't long before a letter to the editor appeared, challenging the senator's idea. The writer argued predictably that an eighteen-year-old should be able to decide for herself what is best for her and that she should not be told by a bunch of middle-aged men in the state legislature.

This letter expressed a common modern American idea of freedom. In the mind of the writer, freedom is the license to do whatever you please; it is an exemption from having to listen to anyone who tries to tell you what to do. This is the sort of thing many seem to have in mind these days when they celebrate the freedom we have in our country.

### Doing What God Wants

But the freedom they have in mind is no freedom at all. It is in fact freedom's very opposite: bondage. The undisciplined person's freedom is an illusion, a lie. Satan is the originator of the idea of license as freedom. He first tried it on Eve, when he suggested that she would be a lot better off doing something other than what God had commanded. Throw off the constraints of God and be free, he said.

Eve and Adam found to their sorrow that not only was disobedience to God not liberating, it was enslaving. It gave Satan a hold on them, to lead them where they did not want to go, to trick them into doing things they regretted and that brought them endless misery. Their experience has been universal to the human race. The promise of freedom in giving in to the desires of the flesh turns out to be a most cruel and enslaving lie.

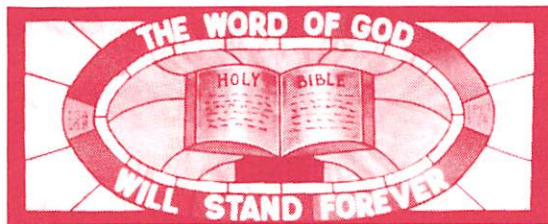
There is such a thing as real free-

dom, however. It is the freedom that Jesus won for us by atoning for our sins with His cross. Jesus promises that whoever continues in His Word will know the truth and that truth will give freedom (John 8:32). The truth is that Jesus has broken sin's power and released us from its hold and from its final result, which is death and eternal damnation. Jesus said: "If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (Jn. 8:36).

The really surprising thing about the freedom that Christ gives is that it is exercised in bondage to God. Real freedom turns out to be this: to be able to do, not what we want, but what He wants. The flesh wants to be free from God, to follow its own desires. But the spirit—that new nature in us that is the creation of the Holy Spirit—knows that it is good to be God's slave.

The apostle Paul put it better: "For when you were slaves to sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:20-23).

—Pastor John Klatt





## LESSONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

“That We Might Have Hope” (Rom. 15:4)

*Genesis Chapters Twenty-seven Through Twenty-nine*

### Jacob's Ladder

**T**he Lord is forever faithful to His promises — that we might have hope. Believers, yet in their sinful flesh and in this sinful world, are not always faithful in believing His promises. They become weak in faith and hope, and begin to doubt that the Lord can keep His promises without their clever interventions and devices.

#### God's Will Is Always Done

The great promise of a Savior from sin was passed from Adam and Eve down through Noah and Shem; then through Abraham and his son, Isaac. God chose to withhold the blessing of children from Isaac and Rebekah for twenty years. In addition to their natural desire for children, they also knew that the promise of the Savior was to pass on to the next generation through their son. In connection with their prayers to the Lord for His blessing, He revealed to Rebekah that she would be the mother of twins. He also revealed His will that, contrary to the customary order, her first-born twin would serve the younger (Gen. 25:19-26).

In chapter 27 we are surprised to read that the aged Isaac called his elder son Esau to prepare a special meal and bring it to him to receive the

blessing of the first-born. Surely Isaac remembered the Lord's will concerning the son who would receive the savior-promise. And, if aged Isaac was a bit forgetful, surely his faithful, believing wife, Rebekah, would consider it her sacred duty to remind her husband of the Lord's will and promise — to Jacob, not to Esau!

Instead of such expected behavior, we are confused and dismayed by Isaac's determination to do otherwise than the Lord had said; and by Rebekah's deceitful plot to gain the precious savior-promise for her son, Jacob. Furthermore, where was Jacob's trust in the Lord's will and its fulfillment? Did the Lord need the deceitful and lying assistance of mortals to accomplish His will?

We blush with shame to read of the account of our believing ancestors as they go their way and use their devices to circumvent the will of the Lord. (Yet, the blush quickly fades to a lack of color as we remind ourselves of the many, many times we have chosen to “go our own way,” to “do our own thing,” and somehow circumvent the will of the Lord concerning us. O Lord, have mercy!)

Believers pray: “Thy will be done” and indeed, the will of God is always done. So with Jacob of old. Because

*As Jacob with travel was weary one day,  
At night on a stone for a pillow he lay;  
He saw in a vision a stairway so high  
That its base was on earth and its top in the sky.*

*This stairway can never, no never be made  
By man with his might, for his cunning is vain;  
But God in His love has revealed the One Way  
By which man can leave darkness and come to God's day.*

*The love of the Father invites to ascend;  
His Spirit gives faith through the Word to this end,  
That mankind so base might arise from the dust  
To the mansions prepared by the Savior above.*

*O joy! We arrive at the stairway to Home,  
'Tis Jesus who is the One Way to that goal.  
With hearts full of love, with the angels we sing:  
Praise God for His stairway, we live now with Him!*

of Esau's anger and intention to kill Jacob, Rebekah arranged to have him go to her brother's house in distant Haran. Isaac also called for Jacob and blessed him with the blessing of Abraham, directing him to go to Haran. There Jacob was to find a believing wife to be his helper as they together carried on the promise of the coming Savior.

To equip Jacob for this journey of faith, the Lord would teach him anew that he could trust God's promises. To that end the Lord repeated the words of the Messianic promise through Isaac: "May God Almighty . . . give you and your descendants the blessing of Abraham!" (Hebrews 11:20 adds the note that "by faith Isaac blessed Jacob.")

The Lord would also repeat the promise directly to Jacob on his way to Haran (a journey of some 500

miles). As Jacob was along his way to Haran, tired and alone, he stopped to rest. With a stone for a pillow he went to sleep. And the Lord prepared an audio-visual lesson for him: "He had a dream in which he saw a stairway set up on the earth. Its top reached up to heaven, and God's angels were going up and down on it. And the Lord stood above it. 'I am the Lord,' He said . . . 'and in you, that is in your Descendant, all the people on the earth will be blessed.'"

Jacob awoke and named the place Bethel (the house of God). He arose to continue his journey to Haran with the added security from God: ". . . I am with you and watch over you everywhere you go and will bring you to this country."

### **Learning To Despair Of Self**

The account of Jacob's arrival at



Haran and his life under Laban is recorded in chapter 29. There Jacob learns to despair of self and look to the Lord. Laban was a greedy man and sought to take advantage of Jacob at every opportunity. He deceived Jacob after he worked for Laban seven years to gain the hand of Rachel, Laban's daughter, in marriage. Laban gave him his daughter Leah instead. Jacob worked another seven years for his beloved Rachel and won her. When the Lord observed that Leah was the less-loved wife, He blessed her with four sons: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah. The name Judah signifies "praise." Judah became the ancestor of King David and of the Savior, Jesus.

Jacob was being taught to know by faith: despite the treachery of evil

Laban, God's will was always done. The Lord was with Jacob! — No matter what Laban did to take advantage of Jacob, the Lord saw to it that Jacob always came away with the material blessings.

Thus the Lord was training and schooling Jacob to trust in His gracious promises, to lean upon Him in every time of need, and to avoid resorting to his own schemes for accomplishing what God had already promised. All this was done for the sake of the savior-promise, that generations to the end of time "might have hope."

*Hallelujah to Jesus who died on the tree,*

*And has raised up a stairway of mercy for me!*

—Prof. Gordon Radtke



## Floundering At Sea

Those who keep abreast of what is going on within the churches know that the larger Lutheran synods are often recipients these days of many thousands of dollars of fraternal grant monies. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LC-MS), the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS — and its sister, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod {ELS}), are regular beneficiaries of grant money from fraternal insurance companies such as Lutheran Brotherhood (LB) and Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL).

It will not be news to anyone who reads the *Lutheran Spokesman* that our CLC synod, long ago now, adopted a stance, for conscience reasons, against receiving and accepting such fraternal monies. We were uneasy, and said so, when we perceived that connections with AAL would involve us in fraternal activities with those with whom we were not doctrinally like-minded (known in the church as "unionism").

The uneasiness of which we speak was the result of extended careful and in-depth study of the issues involved. The uneasiness was, furthermore and most importantly, the result of a consistent application of copious scripture passages in which God warns His believing children against compromising their Christian faith, and their confession of that faith, before a watching world.



## Ecumenical Endeavors

As the world watches the following, for example, what must it conclude?:

- \* AAL awards grants totalling \$600,000 to the three major church bodies within the Lutheran denomination for a 1994 "Church Membership Initiative Grant Program" to study trends and attitudes about membership in the Lutheran church. . . (May 25, 1994 AAL news release)
- \* Gethsemane Lutheran Church, Maplewood, has been awarded an \$800 grant from AAL. The funds will help the church in conjunction with Transfiguration Catholic Church, to conduct an ecumenical Vacation Bible School June 20-24. Children aged 4 through second grade will meet at Gethsemane Lutheran Church. Those in grades 3-5 will meet at Transfiguration Catholic Church. . . (May 20, 1994 release)
- \* The Inter-Lutheran Seminary, Hancock, has been awarded a \$2,500 grant from AAL. The grant will provide tuition assistance to seminary students. AAL awarded the grant through its Church Vocations Enrichment Program, which gives financial support to 16 Lutheran seminaries in the United States. . . (July 1, 1994 release)
- \* The Council of Lutheran Churches of Greater St. Louis has been awarded \$500.00 to help fund the Oct. 15 Lutheran Octoberfest in St. Louis. . . (July 5, 1994 release)
- \* Etc. (such releases come to our desk almost monthly)

As the world reads about such ecumenical and inter-Lutheran activities on a regular basis it can draw only one conclusion: the "big three" Lutheran synods are "in this business" (pun intended) together. The world even has the right to conclude that at times these Lutheran "big three" are willing to do church work together with the Roman Catholic Church.

### Some "Dirty Little Secrets"

As far as we are concerned, there is more involved than simple sinful unionism. Financial support from AAL — which, by the way, includes members of all three major synods on its national policy board — turns up here and there for questionable purposes. There is the report of how a \$2,200 AAL grant helped fund a new magazine called "Appropriate." This magazine which bills itself as a Christian humor magazine was founded last year by a California couple. To us it approaches blasphemy. The first issue, for example, talked about something it called "The Gospel of RuPaul" in which "the transvestite entertainer is presented as a disciple of St. Paul."

Equally as telling can be activities to which AAL chooses not to lend its financial support. Under the headline "AAL's Dirty Little Secret" is this report: "Aid Association for Lutherans has a policy of not funding pro-life efforts in the Missouri Synod because this might alienate some of its customer base, particularly within the ELCA. AAL's dirty little secret is that it is not willing to defend the life of the unborn, but prefers to protect its market share in the Lutheran insurance business instead." (*Christian News*, March 27, 1995).

Knowing how the ELCA has embraced the new theology of liberalism, and how the LC-MS has long allowed pockets of liberals to exist within its fellowship, we are not surprised when these synods see no problem with the confessionally-compromising activities of the fraternal insurance companies.

What does perplex, however, is how the WELS and the ELS can continue to flounder about in the sea of Lutheran fraternal activities. When we of the CLC meet with them — officially or individually — to discuss fellowship questions on the basis of Scripture, their representatives often speak good words.

### **Guilt By Association?!**

For example, listen to these good words spoken by a WELS church leader. In answer to a reader's question about "guilt by association" and whether "a person's membership in a church body or organization (i.e. lodges) indicate acceptance and support for the beliefs and standards of that organization," this is said:

*"The Bible teaches guilt by association especially in the area of religious confession, membership and practice, for what is at stake is: the glory of God, the truth of Scripture, the witness of the church, the integrity of a Christian, and — ultimately — the salvation of the misguided. 1 Corinthians 10:18 asks rhetorically, 'Do not those who eat the sacrifices participate in the altar?' . . . To participate in, subscribe to, and subject oneself to the influence of spiritual falsehood is to contaminate one's own faith and understanding with error. Paul's metaphor for that demonstrable fact is: 'A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough' (Galatians 5:9)." (Paul E. Kelm, in the official WELS magazine, the *Northwestern Lutheran*, p. 279, August, 1991)*

Well spoken. But now what about the practical application of the doctrine? Isn't it "participating at the altar" of false religions when one uses fraternal monies to support liberal Lutheran seminaries and even activities with Roman Catholic Churches? Isn't it clear that the yeast is in the dough when unChristian practices are supported and/or condoned by one's fraternity? How can one participate in these things and claim, before God, one is free of contamination? Pilate washed his hands, but they were still dirty.

Apparently WELS and ELS have floundered about so long and so far in the sea of fraternal dollars that there's no turning back. What's worse, from a spiritual standpoint, is that apparently most of them are getting used to, and even enjoying, something which at one time we know gave many of their pastors and people a bad case of seasickness.

It is sad. Especially when essential things like "the glory of God, the truth of Scripture, the witness of the church, the integrity of a Christian" (Kelm quote above) are stashed in the hold of the ship as the craft flounders at sea.

—*Pastor Paul Fleischer*

(Note: Since the time of this writing, a letter in which AAL explains its gift to "Appropriate" appeared in *Christian News*. In effect, it is said the gift was channeled indirectly through its Lutheran Network grant program. The AAL Grant Program Manager writes that "(we) feel we were deceived" by the way in which these particular grant funds were used, and adds: "We are saddened by the offense caused by what was promoted to be a Christian publication.")



## ASPIRIN-SIZED WORDS

Customer: "I want to buy some acetyl-sali-cylic acid."

Druggist: "Do you mean aspirin?"

Customer: "Yes, I can never remember that word."

Most people *can* remember and understand simple words more easily than "jaw breaker" terminology. In our Bible the Holy Spirit has presented mind-boggling truths in "aspirin-size" words.

For example: Scripture declares that Jesus is God and man in one Person. His divine and human natures did not remain aloof from each other like two kinds of wood glued together. Nor did they melt into just one nature making Christ not quite God, yet super human.

Instead, the Son of God and the Son of man share the use of each other's abilities just as powerful electricity and the wires in your toaster share their individual capabilities in order to make toast. In order to produce our glorious salvation the God and human parts in Christ worked together.

But see how the Bible presents these stupendous truths in "aspirin-size" words! Is our Savior both God and man? Answer: "Unto you is *born* . . . the *Lord*" (Lk. 2). "*God* was manifest in the *flesh*" (1 Tim. 1).

Did His two natures share the use of their abilities with each other? Answer: "Jesus went unto them *walking on the sea*" (Mt. 14). "But that ye may know that the Son of *man* hath *power* upon earth to forgive sins, (He said unto the sick of the palsy), 'I say unto thee, arise and

take up thy couch, and go into thine house'" (Lk. 5).

Did God and man in Christ accomplish our salvation by working together? Answer: "We were *reconciled* to God by the *death* of *His Son*" (Rom. 5) "The *blood* of Jesus Christ, *His Son*, *cleanseth* us from all sin" (1 Jn. 1).

Pharmacists must study long hours in order to know precise (but long-worded) terms for simple medicines like aspirin. Our future ministers must also study long hours in order to know precise (but long-worded) terms for the great truths of Scripture.

At Immanuel Lutheran Seminary in Eau Claire, Wisconsin these dedicated young men, under the professor's guidance, discuss how Christ's divine and human natures work together. Their discussion involves sentences such as: "The communication of Christ's attributes in the idiomatic (individual), majestic, and apotelesmatic (accomplishing) areas."

God wants us to have well-trained pastors who guard us from the poison of false religious ideas. Yet, relying on their *pastor* should not cause church members to shy away from studying Scripture *themselves*. The Holy Spirit is an excellent Teacher. By using "aspirin-size" words, He enables *all* Christians to search the Scriptures daily, to judge the correctness of the minister's teaching, and to have the Word of Christ dwell in them richly.

—Pastor Robert Mackensen

## **“The Second Martin, the Life and Theology of Martin Chemnitz”**

by J. A. O. Preus

Concordia Publishing House, 411 pages, \$35

I last saw Jack Preus, former president of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, at a Bach concert, where he told my son, “If you want to translate, get a regular job. Translating doesn’t pay very well.” Preus, who died in 1994, will be remembered for two things: 1) He was the only LCMS president since Pfoth to move the Missouri Synod toward orthodox Lutheranism; no progress has been made since Preus left office. 2) He translated a considerable amount of Chemnitz’ works and capped his translating career with a fine biography of a little known Concordist.

Those who do not know the works of Martin Chemnitz should acquire them. They are easy to read, filled with Scriptural insight, witty, and eloquent in their presentation of the Gospel, the two natures of Christ, the Real Presence, and other essential doctrines. He deserves being called “the second Martin” because of his orthodoxy and sense of humor. Basic works are: *Examination of the Council of Trent*, a devastating refutation of Roman Catholic false doctrines; *Enchiridion*, a brief outline of doctrine; *Loci Communes*, a complete doctrinal textbook; *The Lord’s Supper*, a defense of the Real Presence against the Reformed; and *The Two Natures of Christ*, a brilliant and devout treatise on Christology. Preus translated all of them except *Examination* and *Enchiridion*.

Chemnitz’ greatest achievement may be his role in drawing up the Formula of Concord and the Book of Concord at a time when Lutheranism was badly divided. As a student of Martin Luther and Philip Melancthon, Chemnitz had the training and God-given talents to draw together the lax followers of Philip and the overly zealous Gnesio (pure) Lutherans, who took certain doctrines to the extreme.

Preus’ biography offers a vivid background for an era which is almost totally neglected, the time after Luther died (1546). The Roman Catholic emperor stood over Luther’s grave and gloated. The Protestant revolt seemed to be ended, not only by political might, but also by internal strife.

Weaknesses of Philip Melancthon, “The Hamlet of the Reformation,” and George Major were translated into Lutheran treachery. The Wittenberg faculty became committed to anti-Lutheran doctrine while persecuting orthodox Lutherans, much like today’s “Lutheran” Church Growth Movement in the former Synodical Conference.

Luther battled the papists and also dealt with the Reformed. Chemnitz spent more of his time refuting insidious Reformed doctrines which invaded Lutheranism.

The son of a cloth merchant, Chemnitz enjoyed Latin much more than fabrics. He studied at Wittenberg



as a child and later as an adult, where his genius caught the attention of Melanchthon. In Koenigsberg, Chemnitz was paid to cast horoscopes for the duke, a position which allowed him to become an expert in the church fathers, using the duke's library. He later earned a doctorate at Rostock.

Chemnitz was mild mannered and an expert in Latin and Greek, like Melanchthon, but he never shied away from a doctrinal battle to enhance his theological career. He never compromised with the papists or the Reformed. Nor did a duke's power sway him to ignore wrongdoing. When Duke Julius took part in a Roman Catholic mass, Chemnitz objected and lost everything in the process: position, money, and ducal support for the Formula of Concord. How few Lutheran leaders we have today with the courage of Chemnitz!

The Formula of Concord, largely the work of Chemnitz and Jacob Andreae, owes its clarity and Scriptural power to the pen of Chemnitz, who was tried and purified in the fires of doctrinal strife. The final words of the Book of Concord

remind us why people during the Reformation gave up everything, even their lives, for orthodoxy:

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquillity, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ" (*Concordia Triglotta*, p. 1095).

—Gregory L. Jackson

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## Construction Underway On The Eau Claire Campus



## **Construction Projects**

*(Editor's note: At our request Prof. John Reim was our on-site reporter for this year's graduation at Immanuel, Eau Claire. We thank him.)*

The setting was unusual. Those attending the graduation events at Immanuel Lutheran College in Eau Claire, Wisconsin on May 20 found the traditionally serene landscape of the campus considerably less so. Entering the fieldhouse meant maneuvering wooden boards and dodging a few ditches. Evidences of construction were all over the place outside.

And inside.

An even more important type of construction was to be found in the members of the class of '95. Marching in stately and colorful procession was a group of Christian young adults whom the Holy Spirit had built up in the faith through their study of His Word. Nathan Kettner, representing the senior class during the Class Day exercises, spoke appreciatively of the opportunity to grow in Biblical understanding while he was at ILC — that upbuilding which was accomplished in the graduates by “the power of the Gospel.”

President John Lau spoke of that power as he addressed the assembly on the basis of Jeremiah 6:16: “Thus says the Lord: Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls.” And Acts 1:8: “You shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. And you shall be witnesses to me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea,

and in Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth.”

One of the construction workers whom the Lord brought into His Church's site is Gordon P. Radtke. For over fifty years he has faithfully served both as pastor and teacher in the on-going work of building up the saints. In recognition of his retirement, Pastor Michael Sydow recalled the significant dimensions of the ministry of this “fellow student of the Word,” and led the assembly in grateful applause for all that the Lord has accomplished through his labors.



**College Graduates**

Shortly thereafter it was out the door for the graduation class of 1995. From the high school department 24 seniors received their diplomas. From the college department two students graduated with Associate of Arts degrees, six with Bachelor of Science degrees, and three with Bachelor of Arts degrees. Three theological students graduated from the seminary as Candidates for the Holy Ministry.

It was out the door from Immanuel's unique construction site





**High School Graduates**

to the many other locations and situations into which the Lord Jesus will place these newly trained workers. Equipped with saving faith and the means of grace, they too have been directed by the Church's Head to head out to make disciples. Thus equipped,



*Graduation In Mankato—*

## Sign Posts

Six young people formed the 1995 graduating class at Immanuel Lutheran, an area CLC High School in Mankato, Minnesota. The graduation service was conducted in Immanuel church at 2:30 p.m. on Pentecost Sunday, June 4. Pastor L. Dale Redlin served as liturgist and speaker.

His encouraging remarks to the graduates, their family and friends, centered around the words of the Savior in Matthew 6:25-34 and the theme "What Will You Seek In Your Life?" Pastor Redlin mentioned his own high school graduation, recalling comments from some who couldn't understand why he would want to go into the work of the church. Such will be the attitude of those who imagine

they are to continue in the Church's construction until that day when the scaffolding of this world is removed, and the Church Militant graduates to the status of the Church Triumphant.

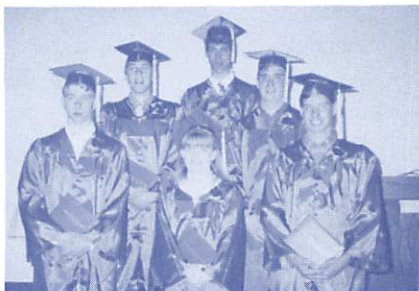
On Graduation eve, Immanuel's choir sang confidently of the growth which Christ promises to give His Church. They were words with which these Christian graduates can take up their work:

*We thank You that Your Church, unsleeping  
While earth rolls onward into light,  
Through all the world her watch is keeping  
And never rests by day or night.*

*So be it, Lord; Your Church shall never,  
Like earth's proud kingdoms, pass away.  
Your kingdom stands and grows forever  
Until there dawns Your glorious day!*

"things" and "stuff" is what life is all about. Not so, said the pastor, but a truly fulfilling life is rather about seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, trusting God to provide the "things" which are good and necessary.

Before concluding, the pastor asked the graduates and the assembly to remember three sign posts along their path through life: 1) Recognize



the Hand of the Lord in Your Life; 2) Remember what True Wisdom is — God's Word; 3) Realize that You Cannot Serve God and Mammon.

Graduate Kristin Arndt spoke in behalf of her class. She thanked God, pastors, teachers, congregation, and parents for the Christian education provided at Immanuel. Then quoting something she had heard in her home church in Sleepy Eye recently, she gave what could be called another good sign post along life's path: "Live each day as though it will be your last, for it may; live each day as though

you will live forever, for you will." She spoke well, talking about living each day not fearfully and fatalistically, but confidently in Christ.

The titles of the hymns sung by the grade school and high school choirs during the course of the service left no doubt as to the direction a Christian education points its students: "*Christ Is Our Cornerstone*"; "*My Hope is Built On Nothing Less*"; "*How Firm A Foundation*"; "*Go, My Children, With My Blessing*"; "*All Within Me, Bless the Lord.*"

—Pastor Paul Fleischer



## Graduates Of The Martin Luther Bible School

With this issue we are happy to take note also of the graduation of four young men from our Bible School (Seminary) in India as well.

Two of these men — Binoy and Mani — completed their studies last December. The other two, Mark and Paul, were scheduled to graduate at the end of May.

The instructor of these young men, Pastor Mohan Bas of the Church of the Lutheran Confession in India (CLCI), sent the *Spokesman* some photographs of, and a brief story line about, each of these graduates. From the brief biographical sketches which

Pastor Bas gives of each of the young men, it is obvious that the Holy Spirit has brought the powerful and saving Word of God to bear on their hearts.

It will be no big surprise to hear that none of the four were raised Lutheran. One (Mark) was born into a Hindu family; another (Mani) had been a Roman Catholic and two (Paul and Binoy) had early associations with the Church of South India (Reformed). Before finding joy and peace in Christ Jesus, each young man in his own way had to experience great difficulties as well as mighty spiritual struggles to get to the point



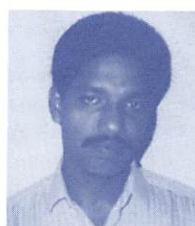
Mark



Paul



Binoy



Mani



where he is today. For example, in the case of Mark, his family at first opposed him. Now — according to Pastor Bas' report — as a result of Mark's Christian witness, the family is planning to be baptized into the Christian faith.

We thank God for His wonderful grace in leading these young men to believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior, and to confess the doctrines of God's Word of Truth with us.

After giving his thumbnail sketch of each graduate, Pastor Bas closes each story with the refrain: "Pray for him..." Indeed, what better graduation gift could be given across the miles than our fervent prayers in behalf of each graduate, his family, and his Gospel ministry to his countrymen? And as we pray, let us remember also Pastor Bas in his continuing faithful work in behalf of the CLCI and the Martin Luther Bible School.

"For the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For 'whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.' . . . 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!' . . . 'Their sound has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world.'" (Romans 10:13, 15, 18)

—*Pastor Paul Fleischer*

Pastor P.W. Schaller  
4724 N. Wall Street  
Spokane WA 99205

## Announcements

### Address Correction

Mark Bohde  
9/2 Samlan Soi 6  
Tambon Prasingha  
Amphur Muang  
Chiang Mai 50200  
Thailand

### Bismarck Services

Summer worship services at St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bismarck, North Dakota are at 8:30 a.m.

### Installation

As authorized by President Fleischer, I installed the Rev. Terrel L. Kesterson as Pastor, Gift of God Lutheran Church, Fairfax, Virginia on May 21, 1995.

—*Ron Rust*

*President, Gift of God Lutheran Church*

**Bible School  
Graduates  
With Pastor  
Mohan Bas  
(seated).**

