

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN



The Fellowship of Kindred Minds,

CLC Convention, June 15 – 19, 1998

Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, WI

A GUARANTEED STRESS RELIEVER

In the lines below you will find a formula that will change your life. If you follow it, it will make you a happier person. Not only will it reduce the level of stress you face. It will eliminate every true worry you have. It is not a gimmick. While it costs you nothing, it is guaranteed to work. Are you interested?

Here it is: begin each day with the prayer that God would open your eyes to the meaning of His ascension. Ask that “the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own

right hand in the heavenly places” (Eph. 1:18-20).

An Important Prayer

Each new day brings us the need to remember our Savior’s ascension. Around us we see the hopelessness of a world that grows increasingly wicked and is lost in sin. Against us we see the powers of darkness stalking our every move. Within us we see the failure to overcome temptation and the rottenness of lives that are wracked by sin. Above us, however, is our ascended Lord and Savior of whom the Psalmist wrote: “Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive” (Ps. 68:18).

Jesus ascended to His heavenly throne as the Victor over our enemies of sin, death, hell, and the devil. In two words, His ascension means “mission accomplished.” What He planned in

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eternity He fulfilled in time. His victory is our victory by faith. Though our battle against sin rages on and though we register a long list of losses each hour, through the tears of penitent eyes we quietly rejoice that the war has already been won. "Who shall lay anything to the charge against God's elect?" Paul asks rhetorically. "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. 8:33ff).

A Daily Prayer

Each new day the unknown stretches out before us. For this reason also we need to have our eyes opened to His ascension. Far from leaving us to fend for ourselves, Jesus is now seated "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named . . . And (God) hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church."

Each day we are assured that His unfathomable power is being used for

our benefit. People may think that things happen by chance, but they don't. We may struggle under the burden of anxious care, but we shouldn't. It may seem that the church will eventually fail due to the wickedness of the world, but then, high above everyone and everything, is the authority of Christ, our ascended Lord. When the dust settles at the end of time, everyone will see that He shaped all of history for the sake of His elect, the Church.

Before you spend another anxious moment, stop and pray. Before you get stressed out over next month's mortgage payment or how you are going to survive, remember Who is on the throne. Before you throw up your arms in despair over the plunging morality of this country and wonder how your children and theirs will ever make it, stop and remember that they too have the hope of His calling and are under the care of Him Who has absolute power. Ask God to open your eyes to the meaning of His ascension.

—*Pastor James Albrecht*

A Pentecost Meditation—

The Other Christmas'

"The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Romans 5:5).

As the fiftieth day after Easter comes around again this year, there will be no countdown of shopping days, no frenzy of gift purchases, and no endless repetition of holiday music in local malls. That's because the world does not bother to take notice of

Pentecost, which believers observe as the special day of outpouring of the Holy Spirit. On the first Pentecost the Spirit began a world-wide Gospel outreach program through Jesus' disciples which continues to this day.

While Christmas is the day when



Christians celebrate the Father's gift of Christ to the *world*, Pentecost is the day to celebrate the Spirit's gift of Christ to each of us *personally*. For Christ does not truly become our own until the Spirit gives the gift of faith in our hearts, which then rest on Christ for salvation. For this reason it is no overstatement to consider the Day of Pentecost "the other Christmas." The parallels between these two special events are striking:

Both were foretold by Old Testament prophecy.—The hopes and dreams of Old Testament believers were kept alive, not only by God's many promises of a coming Savior but also by promises of the special gift of the Holy Spirit:

"For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring" (Is. 44:3).

"And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions" (Joel 2:28).

Both were accompanied by miracles.—On the first Christmas (Luke chapter two) the arrival of God the Son

prompted the angels to sing of God's glory over the fields of Bethlehem, while a miraculous star notified the wise men in the East of the birth of the King. On the first Pentecost (Acts chapter 2), the arrival of God the Spirit came with the sound of a rushing wind and tongues like fire that sat on Jesus' disciples, who then began to proclaim the Gospel in many languages by the power of the Spirit. On that inaugural day of Christ's New Testament Church, 3,000 souls became believers through the Holy Spirit's work.

Both provided a vital link in God's salvation plan.—Our hope of entering eternal life depends on the truth of God's Word about the virgin birth, the sinless life, the suffering and death, and glorious resurrection of God's own Son for us. For that reason we rightly observe Christ's birthday with wonder over God's love for us in His Son. But the Scriptures also show us that Christ's redemptive work would never save anyone without the work of the Spirit, for "No one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3). It is the same Spirit who worked miracles on the first Pentecost who works the miracle of faith in our hearts. Through the Word of God which He inspired the prophets, apostles, and evangelists to write, our little "god" of self-righteousness is torn down, and the Lord Jesus is put in its place. Because we now have both the gift of God's Son as well as the gift of faith to believe in Him there is nothing to stand between us and an open door to heaven.

It's too bad that the world's infatuation with the almighty dollar obscures for men the true meaning of Christmas each year. Thankfully, Pentecost is still

unspoiled. It is a high and holy day for believers, without the worldly distractions. It is a special day of joy and thanksgiving as we remember both the Gift and the Giver. For Christ is the most valuable gift of all, and the Holy Spirit is the One who gives Him to us, through the Gospel in Word and Sacrament.

That makes “the other Christmas” a great day to celebrate!

Thou holy Light, Guide Divine,
Oh, cause the Word of Life to shine!
Teach us to know our God aright
And call Him Father with delight.
From ev’ry error keep us free;
Let none but Christ our Master be
That we in living faith abide,
In Him our Lord, with all our might confide.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! (TLH, 224:2)

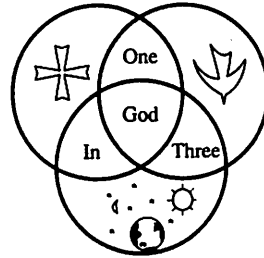
—Pastor Bruce Naumann

THE TRINITY AND GOD’S PLAN OF SALVATION

The church has struggled to define God in the three ecumenical creeds—the Apostles’, the Nicene, and the Athanasian. We confess that we worship God in Trinity—the mystery of three persons in one God.

And yet we do not understand the mystery of God by studying dogmatic propositions. The Bible reveals God in connection with what He has done and still does for us and for our salvation. In regard to the Trinity, there always remains a mystery that is revealed only by the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures.

The key to the belief in God, who reveals Himself in three persons, is the fundamental belief of faith that Jesus is the Son of God, true God, from eternity. The basic question of faith is posed by Jesus: “Who do you say that I am?” This question was answered for us by the apostle John. John wrote his gospel to reveal the three-in-one nature of God by showing how God saved the world from sin by sending His one and only Son in human flesh (John 20:31): “But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ (Messiah), the



Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.” John’s Gospel shows the down-to-earth importance of the doctrine of the Trinity in connection with our salvation.

Let us see how John reveals the “doctrine” of the Trinity by showing in his Gospel that Jesus is the promised Old Testament Messiah and the “only” Son of God. John also shows the importance of the work of the Holy Spirit in revealing Jesus as the Messiah. I would suggest that you read John’s Gospel in its entirety at one sitting and trace the theme of “the Trinity and Our

Salvation' through this Gospel.

John begins with the mystery of the eternal "Word" Who was with God and Who was God (John 1:1-3). John ties this in with the wonder of our salvation. The eternal Word became flesh and we beheld His glory in His life and at the cross (John 1:14).

In the Gospel reading for Trinity Sunday (John 3), we see how only the person born of water and the Spirit is able to see the significance of God giving His only Son to be lifted up on the cross. The love of God is revealed in the activity of the three persons of the Trinity.

The Wondrous Mystery

When the "Word" (Jesus) revealed Himself as the Son of God by miraculous signs, it provoked the Jews to question His authority. Jesus left no doubt as to His relationship with "the Father" (John 5). "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him" (John 5:22-33).

In the Gospel reading from the sixth Sunday in Lent, the people understood perfectly that Jesus was claiming to be the eternal God (John 8:56-59). When Jesus claimed that Abraham saw His day and was glad, the Jews tried to stone the eternal "I AM."

After Jesus said: "My Father and I are one" (John 10:30), the Jews lost it. "The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me? The Jews answered Him, saying, For a good

I would suggest that you read John's Gospel in its entirety at one sitting and trace the theme of 'the Trinity and Our Salvation' through this Gospel. . . .

work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God" (John 10:31-33).

Jesus revealed to the apostles His Father and the Way to the Father as He prepared them for His death (John 14:9-11). Jesus is in the Father and the Father in Him. Jesus is the Way. No man comes to the Father except through Him. This "Way" would lead Jesus to the cross where He would cry out: "My God, My God, why have You forsaken me?"

Is not this a wondrous mystery?

Jesus revealed His Father to us through the saving glory of the cross. "And this is eternal life that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. "I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was" (John 17:3-5). Jesus then promised to send the Comforter (the Holy Spirit) who would guide us in all truth.

As you read John's Gospel, every chapter reveals that Jesus is the Son of God and the promised Messiah. You find revealed the saving nature of God, Who has saved you from sin and death.

Find in the doctrine of the Trinity the story of your salvation and your hope of everlasting life.

—Pastor John Schierenbeck

LESSONS FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

“That We Might Have Hope” (Rom. 15:4)

Joshua Chapters One Through Five

Passing On The Promised Land

“What a trip!” We often hear such a phrase coming from the lips of parents at the end of a challenging vacation with the kids. Things don’t always go as planned. The children may not always cooperate. Adults don’t always cooperate. But, no matter how long, short, tough, or grueling our trip has been we have “home” to look forward to at the end.

On The Move

The children of Israel had been on quite a “trip.” Many of the members of that band had never lived in a permanent dwelling. They had been born on the move and had been continually pulling up stakes and moving on again. The younger generation watched as their parents and grandparents dropped in their tracks and were laid to rest in the rocky wasteland.

What was their motivation for going on? “Home” was at the end of the trip. The Promised Land lay waiting.

Joshua, the new commander, gave the order: “Prepare provisions for yourselves, for within three days you will cross over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess” (Josh. 1:11). What a momentous occasion,

not only for those individuals who were present at that event, but for all of their future generations as well!

It is fitting the Lord would accompany this occasion with a miracle. We read that as the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the covenant touched the waters of the Jordan the waters were cut off. To the south they flowed away and to the north the waters stood as a heap. The Israelites crossed over on dry ground. How their memories must have tingled! The story their parents and grandparents had told of the Red Sea crossing was truly underscored by this similar miracle. The lesson of the miracles was clear as well: The Lord has all power to work all things, even the elements, for the good of His people.

But the lesson wasn’t over. God had another very important bit of instruction for this new generation of believers. Joshua instructed a leader from each of the tribes to select a stone from the river bed at the priests’ feet. These stones were then to be set up as a memorial to future generations. “That (the memorial stones) may be a sign among you when your children ask in time to come, saying, ‘What do these stones mean to you?’ Then you shall answer...” The purpose of the answer? “That all the peoples of the earth may

know the hand of the LORD, that it is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever" (Josh. 4:6-7,24).

Something Wonderful In Store

What kind of a trip are we on? What is the land like where we are traveling? America may be considered "the land of plenty," but we know that it is fast becoming a spiritual wasteland. Iniquity and immorality seem to be the rule and norm. Wickedness and violence nearly fill the earth. So how are we to make it? What is it that motivates us when it appears it's no use to continue on?

Just as the children of Israel had the LORD leading them in the pillar of cloud so we have the Christ leading us! Jesus Christ has walked this earth. He has already faced and defeated every possible temptation that Satan may throw in our path. He has even walked through and conquered the valley of the shadow of death—for us! What a blessing our Savior is!

The Lord has also left us with another powerful motivation to keep us on the right track. Even as the children of Israel had the promised land of Canaan to look forward to, so we have the heavenly Jerusalem which should be our focus. We weren't created to

live in this world of sin and sorrow. The Lord has something much more wonderful in store for us. And just as our taking earthly vacations may teach us to appreciate our earthly homes, so too our daily bouts with sin and temptation should help us to appreciate the eternal blessings awaiting us in heaven.

What a joy to be a child of God! Each day pitching our tent one day closer to the end of our journey.

Now that we have this knowledge what are we to do with it? Again, as the example of the children of Israel is set before us let us not fail in this very important point. We are to instruct our children. The memorial stones were to pique the curiosity of the little children, but it was the parents who were to be ready to answer them. So we too must be ready to answer our children's questions. Direct them to the scriptures for God-pleasing answers. Help them keep their focus on the heavenly promised land.

A pilgrim and a stranger,
I journey here below;
Far distant is my country,
The home to which I go.
Here I must toil and travail,
Oft weary and opprest;
But there my God shall lead me
To everlasting rest. (TLH 586:1)

—*Teacher David Bernthal*



Pastor Warren Fanning was installed on February 8, 1998 as the CLC's second Exploratory Missionary. Here he is shown with the nucleus of his first field, Gold Canyon Lutheran Church outside of Phoenix (more on p. 11).

Parables Of The Master

Matthew 13:1-23

The Sower And the Seed

Just by way of introduction: as you read this text you note that vv. 3-9 give the parable; vv. 10-17 give instruction embedded in a riddle; and vv. 18-23 give what Jesus really meant by the parable.

Some of this is pretty scary—not as scary as the Jesus’ reference to the guy with the cement block wired around his neck and dumped overboard in mid-Atlantic (Mt. 18:6), for this is a farming parable. A worker of the soil can clue in on the difficulties of trying to raise a crop where the seed becomes bird-food, or the sprout gets sun-scorched, or aggressive weeds overpower the seedling. Even though good shares of the seed went to waste, there was a pay-off after all—from 30 to 60 to 100 fold at harvest! The old revival favorite verbalizes the farmer’s business: “We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves!”

So what’s the scary part? The sheer wastage of God’s Word and the human loss! As God’s messengers walk on human soil and broadcast God’s Word into human ears, too little of it is allowed to root, grow, and mature as God intends. Though God does indeed change hearts and lives, the parable reveals *our dark side*: we humans are entirely capable of taking the only really good, green, growing life we will ever have—and of murdering it. The black hole of Jesus-disdain (and disdain for His Word) will suck a soul down into the bottomless pit; that’s

what makes the truth of vv. 11-15 so utterly frightening.

The heavenly message of the parable is simple and clear; each of us must be humbly and painfully aware that God’s Word is under constant attack in *our* hearts too. Every day when we do not understand a given Bible passage, we are tempted to skip over it as not being our concern, and thus Satan’s weeds grow stronger. Or the good spiritual uplift we receive from a sermon or Bible-based conversation fades away when “real life” isn’t inspiring. Or reaching the end of the money before the end of the month screams for attention. Our sinful flesh makes *us* vulnerable to becoming an unfruitful variant of parcels one, two, or three of God’s farm.

As we read the center section, we may puzzle over the mystery embedded in vv. 11-17. It just doesn’t seem fair for God to give extra to the one who is already greening with God’s gifts, while He takes away from the other the little sprout he had to start with (v. 12). Yet this has always been integral to God’s fieldcare for humans, as Isaiah declares (vv. 14-15).

The crucial starting-point and growth-stimulus already possessed by

the disciples was *Jesus Himself*. Those who received Jesus into the soil of their hearts and lives were enabled to grow daily under Jesus' influence, simply because they absorbed the nutriment served by the Savior; while those who shrugged off the Word of life with scorching disdain were bound to be the losers of everything else, even their lives and souls.

So all spiritual life begins with and circulates around Jesus, but without Him it all comes to a bad end.

The person who by God's grace sees and hears and receives Jesus in his heart and stays with Jesus through the tribulations of life and assaults of Satan is given 30 or 60 or 100 times more than he started with—a huge surplus to be shared with other hungry souls.

Even so, Lord Jesus, bless my eyes, my ears, my heart, and my life so that I bear a bumper crop for You, for Your story of the Seed&soils redirects me to serve others in my living for You. Amen.

—Paul R. Koch

SMORGASBORD

● **A COACH IS HONORED** (*Our reporter, Pastor David Schierenbeck, Berea, Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota, who was captain of the first team coached by Prof. Roehl, also served as main speaker for this occasion of recognition.*)



Coach Roehl and wife Eunice

When Immanuel Lutheran College had its beginnings in 1960, the Lord supplied our school with a small faculty blessed with a wide diversity of gifts—spiritual, academic, and even extracurricular. One of these gifts was Professor Ronald Roehl who, in addition to teaching a number of classes, initiated a sports program for this fledgling school.

Yet it was hardly a stop-gap venture. For 37 years he continued to coach basketball and baseball on the high school and college levels. His teams included some state-ranked and state tournament squads. Ultimately he found himself coaching some second generation offspring of his earlier teams.

Retiring from coaching after last season (*Roehl remains active on the faculty-Ed.*), Coach Roehl was honored by his ILC family, past and present, in a special program held between games on February 21, 1998. Following words and mementos of appreciation, Coach Roehl expressed his appreciation to wife Eunice, players and fans, and to the substantial ILC support system.

It is the Lord who gives gifts to His Church. It is the Lord who gave Coach Roehl those special gifts of understanding, caring about, teaching, and influencing countless ILC students for good in his many years as coach and mentor. They have been a wonderful blessing to our school.



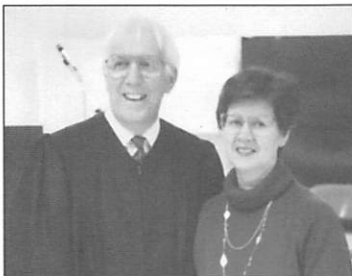
Coach Roehl with some members of the first team he coached at Immanuel: Bob Romberg, Dave Schierenbeck, Phil Radichel; front: original cheerleaders Beth Sydow and Sue Nelson.

● **A MISSIONARY IS COMMISSIONED** (*Pastor Michael Eichstadt, Holy Cross, Phoenix, reporting*)

Sunday, February 8th, was a rare day in Arizona! For one thing, the Phoenix area enjoyed a soaking, all-day rain which seldom occurs.

But what made the day truly exceptional was the commissioning of Pastor Warren Fanning as the CLC's second Exploratory Missionary and the first resident pastor of Gold Canyon Lutheran Church. An enthusiastic group of 70 worshipers gathered in the local elementary school cafeteria for the afternoon service. President Daniel Fleischer reminded all present that "the power is in the Word."

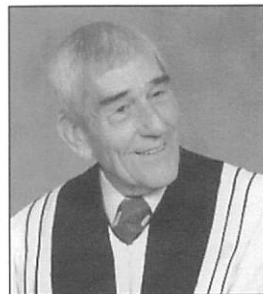
Also on hand were members of the CLC Board of Missions, as well as visitors from Holy Cross congregation in Phoenix.



Pastor Warren & Mrs. Janet Fanning

Please keep this fledgling group of believers and their new pastor in your prayers, that the Word may work powerfully among them to the Lord's glory.

● **AN ANNIVERSARY IS CELEBRATED** (*Pastor Delwyn Maas reporting*)



Pastor Victor Tiefel

Victor Tiefel graduated in 1937 from the WELS seminary in Thiensville, Wis. There he was taught by such professors as August Pieper and Erwin Kowalke. In 1938 he received a divine call to Platteville, Colo. where he was installed on March 6. Under the auspices of the mission board he also started congregations in Pueblo, Mancos, Lyons, Greeley, and Cheyenne. In 1945 he accepted the call to St. Luke's in Denver. In 1948 he was elected chairman of the WELS mission board. He held the office of chairman until 1961 when he resigned from the



That special moment captured on film! Concert Night, May 1997, at Immanuel Lutheran College, Eau Claire, Wis. As is the custom, Director John Reim (behind center mike) has just invited ILC alumni to come forward from the audience to join the student body choir for the singing of favorite hymns such as "Christ Is Our Cornerstone." Can you hear the song of praise as you picture this scene?

WELS and later joined the CLC.

In 1978 Victor and his congregation withdrew from the CLC over doctrinal concerns. He supervised the formation of Colorado Lutheran Seminary and there taught with two other pastors. Several students attended with one graduating. St. Luke's merged with St. James Ev. Lutheran Church in Golden in 1993 to form St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church. In 1996 the Holy Spirit led the CLC and St. Paul's to a resolution of their doctrinal differences (*Te Deum Laudamus!*). Victor continues to serve as associate pastor at St. Paul's.

● AN ANNIVERSARY AND A RETIREMENT

A number of special anniversaries and/or retirements have been mentioned lately on these pages. We lately discovered that we were remiss in reporting another—that of Pastor Paul F. Nolting.

On June 29, 1997 a service was held in Rochester, N.Y. celebrating the Lord's grace in granting 50 years of service in the public ministry to Brother Nolting. Son Pastor Paul D. Nolting conducted the service with Psalm 100 as sermon text. Daughter Ruth Ahrens was at the organ. Son-in-law Mark Kranz and two grandchildren supplied extra music with trumpets and flute. Choirs of the Nolting/Oster



Pastor Paul F. Nolting

grandchildren and adults added music. "It was the most beautiful and meaningful service in my lifetime," writes the celebrant.

Pastor Nolting retired from the ministry Dec. 31, 1997. He served as vacancy pastor until another pastor was called and arrived in Rochester. District Visitor, Pastor Paul Tiefel, installed Pastor David Schmidt on February 1. Paul and Betty Nolting retired to Eau Claire, where they are active members of Messiah congregation.

A "founding father" of the CLC, Pastor Nolting served his Savior in congregations in Sleepy Eye, Minn. and West Columbia, S.C. before being commissioned as a CLC Missionary-at-Large. In that capacity, before coming to Rochester, he served congregations in Ketchikan, Alaska, Austin and Dallas, Tex., Fairfax, Va., and Loveland, Colo. On the synodical level he served as secretary of the CLC from the synod's beginning until last convention. Nolting has long served, and continues to serve, on the Board of Doctrine.

God keep the Noltings and all of us in the confident faith expressed by one of the anniversary choir numbers: "Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in Him and not be afraid. For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, And He has become my Savior."

● OUR EARTHLY BLESSINGS

(from Vol. 1, No. 2 of the *Messiah Messenger*, newsletter of Messiah Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, Wisconsin; staff member Paul R. Koch is editor)

Perhaps you saw the "exclusive poll of the best places to raise a family" arti-

cle in the April '97 *Readers Digest*. The poll conducted by the editors reflected ratings of the "experts, parents themselves," in thirteen areas which parents value as affecting family life.

On average, the parents rated low crime rate as of highest value, closely followed by low drug/alcohol problems and good public schools. In fourth through seventh positions came the values of health care, environment, cost of living, and economic growth. Ranked eighth through tenth were concerns for extra-curricular school activities and access to colleges; eleventh—less than one hours' drive to a major city—ranked above "many private schools" and "warm and sunny weather."

Did you notice the one glaring omission? Neither the pollsters nor the parents seem to consider access to the church of your choice as a worthwhile consideration in raising a family. Or is religion simply a given, since one can find a Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish congregation almost everywhere?

Those of us who value our Christian Bible-based Lutheran congregation and pastor would have placed this criterion very close to—if not at—the top of our list of "where's the best place to raise my family?" When we or our children must move to a new job, we want to know how easy/difficult it will be to get to our CLC church services, to one of our parochial schools, to Bible Class and Sunday School, to choir rehearsals, PTO meetings, VBS sessions, congregational meetings, VBS sessions, congregational get-togethers, voters' meetings, etc. Being uprooted from a job is daunting enough to our emotional

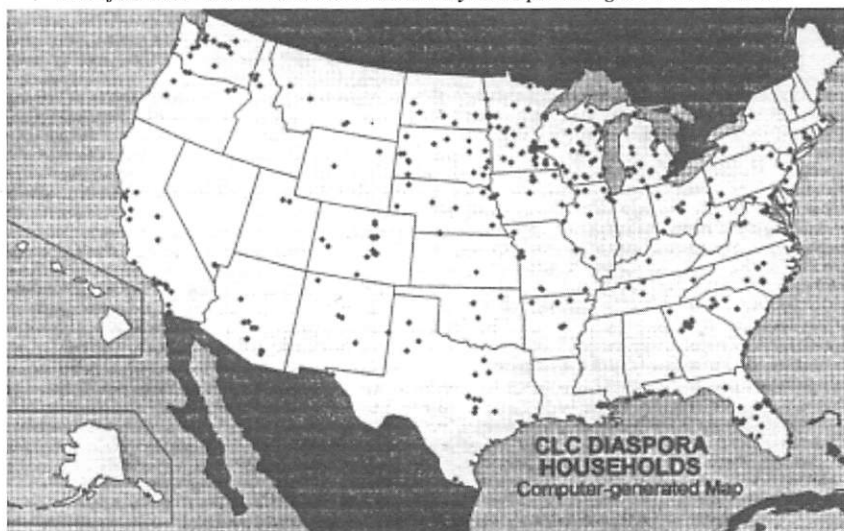
resources, but to be deprived of Christian fellowship robs our family of a most precious set of blessings—blessings that go beyond good health care, low crime rate, and extracurricular school activities. Those of our family of brothers and sisters in Christ who are in the *Diaspora* (the name given to those in the CLC who live at a distance from a CLC congregation) know from first-hand experience how severely such a trial weighs on them and their families. Lord, have mercy!

If some of your loved ones have the distinction of living in one of these "best" locales, it is even more amazing that so many of them also have access to a CLC congregation. Which cities that you are familiar with rank among the top fifty? At the top of the list is Sheboygan, Wis. (50 min. from Fond du Lac); second is Kenosha, Wis. (50 min. from Hales Corners); third is Fort Collins/Loveland, Colo. (Prince of Peace is IN Loveland, and Denver is close too); then comes Bremerton, Wash. (just across Puget Sound from Seattle. Isn't that amazing?).

A little further down the list, in seventh position, comes Charlottesville, Va. (about an hour from Fairfax, Va.); eighth is Spokane, Wash. (with two CLC congregations!); eleventh is St. Cloud, Minn. Later on come LaCrosse, Wis. (our Brice Prairie group is holding services in a home) in 30th position; 33rd is Rochester, N.Y. (Indian Landing); 37th is the Appleton-Oshkosh-Neenah complex (30 to 60 min. from Fondy); in 46th spot comes Battle Creek-Kalamazoo, Mich. (50 min. to Coloma and Sister Lakes); and in 47th position comes Green Bay, Wis. (about one hour to Fondy).

Earthly distinctions glitter even

“Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.”—Acts 8:4



closer to home. Chippewa Falls has been selected by *Time* magazine (Dec. 8, '97, p. 64-65) as one of ten communities that exemplify the American renaissance of the small town, thanks to the National Main Street project. Cray Research, Leinenkugel's, and the Mason shoe factory get favorable mention—besides Packermania.

And if that is not enough to fill our heads with home-town pride, other humble claims to fame for our home stamping grounds are dropping like apples all around us.

National statistics as presented in the Dec. 4 *Leader-Telegram* (data that reflect a Harvard study) point out that Stearns, Minn., Brookings, S.D., Jackson, Minn., Nicollet, Minn., and Carver, Minn. rank 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 in the nation as having the best life expectancy for females of all races (mostly Norwegian?), while Fairfax, Va. and Ozaukee, Wis. rank fourth and fifth for longevity of males of all races.

What does it mean that we in the

CLC have been blessed—

- with church homes in some of the most desirable places for raising our families;
- that small towns such as Chippewa Falls are desirable to emigres from metropolitan America, and
- that longevity soars in rural Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Virginia?

It certainly means that our LORD has piled layers of earthly blessings on top of the strata of our heavenly blessings. And in turn, we must ask what that means.

As we mull it over, we remember that we were taught by our parents that with privilege goes responsibility, just as it does with freedom. What doors of opportunity are awaiting the impact of our knuckles in our home-town communities, some of the best places in America to raise our families, and the locales of the ministries of God's messengers? ●

**CLC Convention,
June 15-19, 1998
Immanuel Lutheran College
Eau Claire, Wisconsin**

**Theme: "THE FELLOWSHIP OF
KINDRED MINDS"**

Essays:

1. *The Exercise of Fellowship in the Early Church* — Pastor Michael Roehl
2. *The Exercise of Brotherly Fellowship in the Waning Days of the Church Militant* — Pastor Mark Gullerud

Organist Coordinator — Pastor Paul Krause
Convention Reporter — Prof. Joseph Lau
Chaplain — Pastor Delwyn Maas
Communion Service Speaker — Prof. Clifford Kuchne
Liturgist — Pastor Joel Fleischer
Memorial Service Speaker — Pastor Rollin Reim

West Central Delegate Conference

Dates: June 5-7, 1998

Place: Grace Ev. Lutheran Church, Valentine, Neb.

Agenda:

- * *'Sheep Stealing' and Its Relation to Mission Work* — Pastor John Johannes
- * *The Lottery and Gambling* — Mr. Tim Fuerstenau
- * *Is It Appropriate to Refer to Christ as our Example?* — Pastor Michael Wilke
- * *Encouraging Young People to Remain Faithful to the One True Faith* — Pastor Michael Schierenbeck
- * *Devotional Study of Psalm 6* — Mr. Dennis Ahrens
- * Discussion of the CLC Convention *Prospectus*

Conference Chaplain: Pastor James Naumann

Conference Speaker: Pastor Delwyn Maas

—Pastor Steven Sippert, Sec'y

Minnesota Delegate Conference

Date: Sunday, May 31, 1998

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Place: Berea Ev. Lutheran Church, Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota

Mr. & Mrs. Albert Gebhardt
811 S. Union Road
Spokane, WA 99206

Agenda:

- * *Prospectus* to the CLC Convention
- * Business Meeting

Please announce attendance to the host congregation.

—Pastor Rick R. Grams, Sec'y

Delegate Conference (Texas)

A Delegate Conference for the western congregations of the Southeastern Conference will be held on Saturday, June 6, at Resurrection Lutheran Church, Corpus Christi, Texas. The agenda will include a study of the *Prospectus* for the 1998 Convention and an essay "Internal Politics: Striving for the Winds" by Jim Burkhardt.

—Pastor John Klatt, Conference Visitor

Installation

In accord with our usage and order, David W. Schmidt, who was called by Indian Landing Lutheran congregation of Rochester, New York to be its pastor was installed on February 1, 1998.

—Pastor Paul Tiefel Jr.

Correction: In our March 1998 issue, page 5, second column, line 8, please change the phrase "dead to sin" to read "dead in sin." Upon reflection, the significance will become obvious to the reader.—Ed.