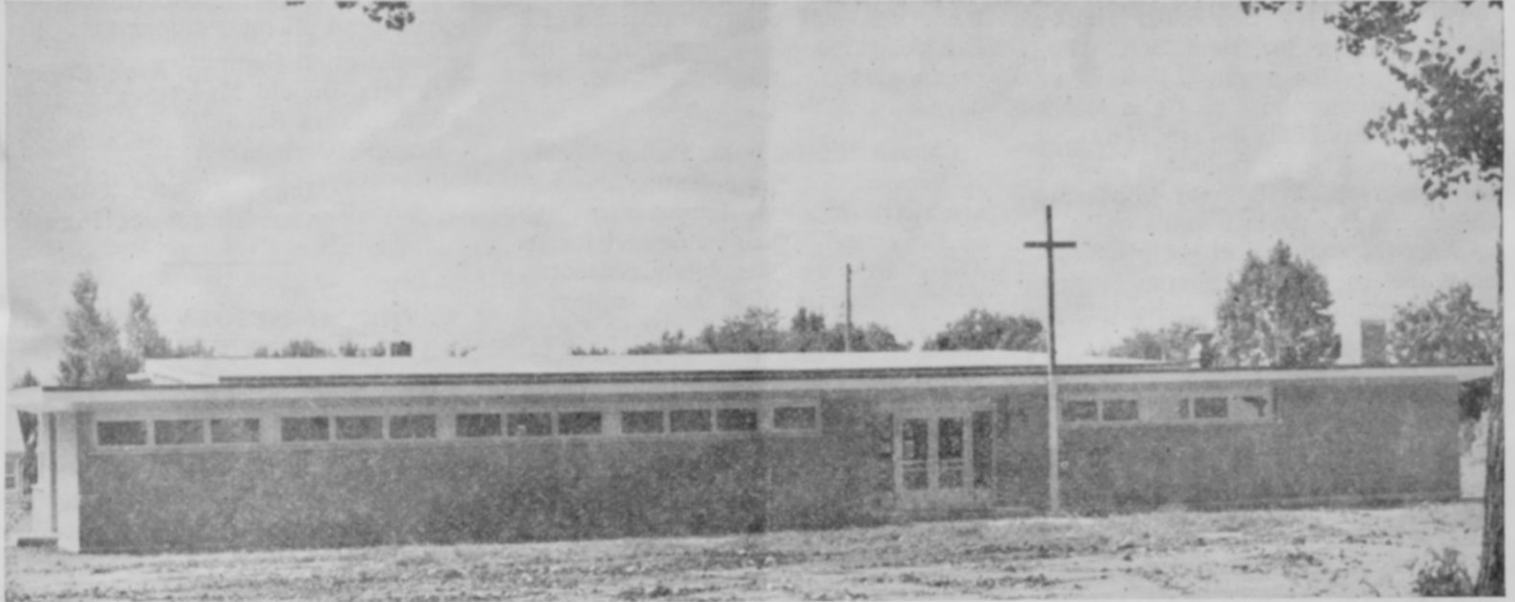


The ANSGAR LUTHERAN



Storm Lake, Iowa Dedicates First Church Unit

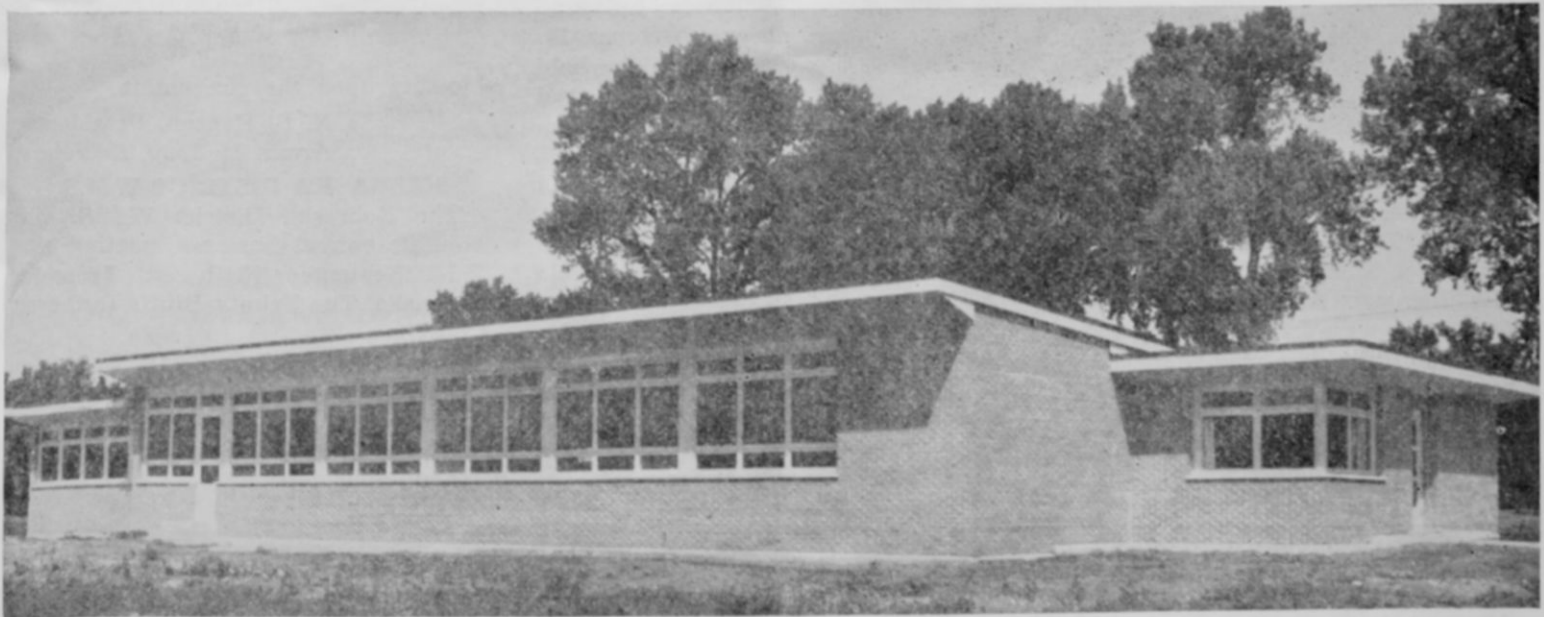


FRONT OF CHURCH

St Mark's Lutheran Church, Storm Lake, Iowa, a home mission congregation of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, will dedicate its parish unit, Sunday, September 12th with Dr. Hans C. Jersild, president of synod as officiating minister. Others present will be Dr. H. Conrad Hoyer, Executive Secretary of the Division of American Missions of the National Lutheran Council, Pastor C. M. Videbeck, president of the Iowa District, and several of the pastors of the Iowa District. The Dedication Service will take place during the closing service of the Iowa District's Fifty-seventh Annual Convention.

This mission was started in 1952 by the Iowa District who has assisted the congregation in the purchase of property and the building of the parish unit. St. Mark's now has a membership of 200 baptized souls.

The present unit has been functionally designed to serve the purpose of worship, education and fellowship. The church will be built in front and parallel to the present building.



REAR OF CHURCH

News and Notes

Kenosha, Wis. On Sunday evening, August 29th, at St. Mary's Lutheran Church, Kenosha, Wisconsin, the Rev. Bernhard Erling, son of the late Rev. Svante Erling, and Miss Marilyn Siersbeck, daughter of the Rev. and Mrs. Lawrence Siersbeck, were united in marriage at St. Mary's Lutheran Church of Kenosha.

The couple left September 7th on the Gripsholm for Heidelberg, Germany, where the groom will study on a Fulbright Scholarship. He is at the present a candidate for the Ph.D. at Yale University where he has studied. He has served Bethany Lutheran Church of Des Moines and St. Paul's of Ansonia, Connecticut, both churches of the Augustana Lutheran Church. The bride has attended Dana College and graduated from Augustana College. She has taught in the public schools of Fremont, Nebraska and Kenosha, Wisconsin. For the past three summers she has been with the recreational department of the City of Kenosha.

Friends of both families from near and far away were present. The use of congregational singing at the ceremony turned out to be an unusual but inspiring experience.

If you need a Pulpit contact the Rev. Verner N. Carlsen, 804 Bluff St., Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Greenville, Mich. The Ladies Aid of Greenville, Mich., had charge of the program and refreshments, at the annual fellowship service at the Bass Lake Bible Camp. The program at the tabernacle was opened by a "Welcome" by the president, Mrs. Harry Nelson. Scripture reading and prayer by Mrs. Odin Bidstrup. A solo was sung by Mrs. Chas. Ramlow, accompanied by Mrs. Elton Hansen. Rev. Leo Andersen of Greenville gave a talk on "Don't Cut Off the Buttons." "Lord, for Tomorrow," was a solo by Mrs. Ramlow. After the program refreshments were served to about 250 in the beautifully decorated camp dining room.

Minnesota W.M.S. The Minn. W.M.S. will hold its annual meeting in con-

junction with the Minnesota District Convention at Edina, Minnesota, October 7-10. The business session will be held Friday afternoon from 3:00-5:00 p.m. and the devotional service Friday evening at 8:00 p.m.

Illinois W.M.S. The annual meeting of Illinois District Women's Missionary Society will be held Sept. 17, 1954 at the Atonement Church, Chicago, Ill. All delegates please register at the preliminary meeting at 10 A.M. Friday, Sept. 17th.

Council Bluffs, Iowa, Pastor Verner N. Carlsen. The congregation has just completed a major improvement job on the church both outside and inside. The church was completely redecorated. The congregation also employs a full time parish worker, Miss Esther Olsen.

Pastor Leif Kirkegaard of Standard, Alberta, is the new president of West Canada District. He succeeds Pastor A. Morek.

Dickson, Alberta. The congregation has recently celebrated its 50th anniversary in connection with the West Canada District Convention August 5-8. Prof. Paul Nyholm was a guest speaker. The Rev. Ole Larsen is pastor of the congregation. The congregation is the oldest of the U.E.L.C. churches in Canada. Next year St. Peter's Lutheran Church at Salmonhurst, N.B., will be fifty years old.

PACIFIC DISTRICT CONVENTION

The Pacific District Convention will be held at the Bethesda Lutheran Church, Eugene, Oregon, October 13-17. The opening meeting will be held Wednesday, October 13, at 8 p.m., and the closing meeting on Sunday, October 17, at 3 p.m.

All congregations are urged to send delegates. Any person who has reached the age of 21 years and who is a member of the congregation is eligible to serve as a delegate. Each congregation is entitled to one delegate for each 50 members or a fraction thereof. Please note: according to our constitution—the term, member, is understood to mean persons who have reached the age of 21 years.

All members of the district are cordially invited to attend the convention.

Christian Justesen,
President, Pacific District

Bethesda congregation extends a cordial invitation to all pastors, delegates and friends of the Pacific District to attend the 50th Annual Convention to be held in our church October 13-17, 1954. Let us know if you are coming by car, train, or plane.

Please send all reservations to:

Registration Committee
% Mrs. Donald Madsen
3378 Elmira Road
Eugene, Oregon.

Ingward Olsen, Pastor
Carl M. Jensen, President

THE MINNESOTA DISTRICT CONVENTION

The Edina Community Lutheran Church extends a warm welcome to the 58th annual District Convention to be held at our church. We consider it a privilege to serve as host this year. Registration cards are now in the mail, and all delegates and alternates are requested to return these cards no later than October 1st. See your pastor about this matter, and please come and be with us during convention days.

Sincerely,

Jack Bernie, President
Paul F. Keller, Pastor.

The Minnesota District will hold its annual convention in the Edina Lutheran Church from October 7-10. All congregations are asked to send delegates and report to Pastor Paul Keller, that they are coming. Pray God's blessing upon the convention.

N. B. Hansen, President
Armin Hellpap, Secretary.

NEBRASKA DISTRICT W.M.S.

The Nebraska District W.M.S. will hold its annual business meeting 1:30 P.M. September 24th at Fremont, Nebraska, The Trinity Bluffs Lutheran Church.

Prof. Paul Nyholm will be guest speaker at the missionary service, Friday evening.

W.M.S. breakfast Saturday morning.
Send your delegates.

THE ANSGAR LUTHERAN. Official Organ of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, published weekly by Lutheran Publishing House, Blair, Nebr.

Otto H. Stave, Business Manager. Subscription price: United States and Canada, \$3.00 per year in advance; foreign countries, \$4.00. All communications that concern the Editorial Department, news items and books to be reviewed should be sent to the editor at Spencer, Ia. Everything pertaining to the Youth Department should be sent to Rev. Homer Larsen, 904 Bluff St., Cedar Falls, Ia. A special club rate of \$2.00 per year is offered Bible classes and organizations of the church when ten or more copies are sent to one address, and \$2.00 a year if the congregation has The Ansgar Lutheran in every home—Church Paper in Every Home Plan. Subscriptions, remittances, change of address, advertisements and all communications pertaining to the Business Department should be sent to the Lutheran Publishing House, Blair, Nebr. When CHANGE OF ADDRESS is desired give old as well as new address. Entered as second-class matter, December 14, 1927, at the Post Office at Blair, Nebr., under Act of March 3, 1879.

Much of our news is received from Religious News Service, and the News Bureau of the National Lutheran Council.

JOHN M. JENSEN, Editor
321 E. 8th Street
Spencer, Iowa

Editorials and Comments

"HE WILL DO IT AGAIN"

The Rev. Joseph M. Girtz attended the World Council of Churches Assembly at Evanston as an accredited visitor. He writes an interesting account of his impressions in his parish paper at Los Angeles, Calif., from which we quote these excerpts:

It was a rather bewildering affair for our friend Tudu and myself to find our way to the registration place and then go through all the rigmarole that it takes to get going in such an affair as the World Council of Churches. But we were met at the closed door of the registration building by a friendly Methodist pastor, turned reporter for four papers in and around the little old mining town of Nevada, California, in order that he too might get to the WCC. He regaled us with stories until the doors opened, and we, tired and hungry, could get our morning coffee and something to eat. Having had that, the world looked brighter (in spite of the rain) and friendlier. Soon we were in the great fieldhouse that had been built, at least in part, for this giant gathering, on the beautiful campus of the Northwestern University. Here we truly were many who had come from the East and West, to sit down together, to council together, regarding all the many things that could be connected with the theme of the gathering: "CHRIST, THE HOPE OF THE WORLD."

First it was almost as if we "saw men as trees walking about," but then our eyes became accustomed to the great crowd, seated in all orderliness, and we began to find those whom we knew, and we began to see those of whom we had heard and read—the great leaders of the churches of the world. 1,600 representatives were here from 48 countries, from 60 churches, representing 170 million Christians the world over. Then the huge galleries and bleachers were full of visitors, people who had paid to get into the building to hear and see.

Of course, it did not take us long to find the India delegation and greet them. Then we had to seek out our mutual friend, Bishop Fuglsang-Damgaard, primate of Denmark, and his delegation. He asked about Olivet and its people. I gave him a copy of our ground-breaking bulletin and told him what was going on. He was sorry he had so little time that he could not come to see us. But we shall have the visit of Bishop Skat-Hoffmeyer from Aarhus, who is a jolly good fellow by the looks and feel of him.

One little incident I would like to relate. Kagawa, small and bent with age and almost blind (he read with thick glasses and a reading glass when he delivered his message), was standing looking at the book exhibit. I had to go over and say my "kanishuwa" to him. As I was going away two teen-age American boys came up to him to tell him that they had read his book, and one of them said that in his home his mother often read one of his poems—the one about the light of God coming into our darkness. That touched me. Here was a little

man, who had become poor, sick, almost blind, imprisoned for Christ and His witness' sake, but he had blessed many people in many lands. The thought came to me: O, to do a deed or say a word that would help someone. Then life would not be in vain for any of us. O, to help someone nearer to God!

The theme of the council is "Christ the Hope of the World." There is much debate (as there would of necessity be). Just what is meant by this? Is it for this poor world, or is it for the world to come? Of course, for us Lutherans, the answer is for both. But as I pondered the theme, I began to remember that Jesus surprised us all. He came so unexpected to Bethlehem and the whole world was amazed, and still is, at His coming. He lived His life with us making us forever rich and happy in His fellowship and faith. Then when cruel hands nailed Him to the cross and put Him to a shameful death, He, as Kai Munk so ably says, fooled them all with an Easter morn. Here He was again and how glorious the returning!

Some day when this old world runs down like an old clock that needs winding, He will do it again. When some hopelessly mourn "where are the signs of His coming," then this divine prankster of God will fool us again. He will come with glory and salvation "a second time" for all those who believe and follow Him. I want to be in that blessed company, and we shall try as hard as we can to see to it that all of Olivet's children, those that now are and those that in the days to come shall come into the area of our responsibility. Meanwhile let us all seek to do His will here on earth, even as it is done in heaven.

CLERGYMEN ELIGIBLE FOR SOCIAL SECURITY ON VOLUNTARY BASIS

Clergymen will be eligible for social security benefits next Jan. 1 for the first time since the federal system was set up in 1936.

Under the final version of a bill passed by Congress to extend coverage to an additional 10,000,000 persons, ministers and priests become eligible as self-employed persons. Participation will be voluntary.

The measure also offers coverage to foreign missionaries, Christian Science practitioners and members of religious orders who do not take a vow of poverty.

The offer of voluntary coverage applies whether the clergymen and others actually are self-employed or not. They will pay social security taxes as if they were self-employed. Under this arrangement, the churches or church organizations which employ them will not be required to match the clergymen's contributions to the system.

To enter the plan, a clergyman must file a certificate on or before the due date of his income tax return for the second taxable year ending after 1954 for which his net earnings are \$400 or more.

However, the measure provides that persons ordained
(Continued on page 15)

Contact With Russian Christianity

Address at W. C. C. at Evanston

By Dr. Gustav W. Heinemann of Germany

The resistance to Hitler made close allies, in many countries, of Christians and communists. Today Christians and communists are in separate camps, but personal, human solidarity between them need not necessarily be severed. In my home city of Essen (West German) after the war, one of the best-known communists was named mayor by the military government, and I assistant mayor. In 1946 I beat him in an open election and we are openly political opponents. But I admit freely that I still feel myself drawn to him as a human being.

Communism is our direct next-door neighbor in Germany. Its exponent, the Soviet Union, has German territory, eighteen millions of my compatriots, and still thousands of prisoners in its hands. **What are we to do? I say, if you don't want to shoot—you must speak.** That is the one reason why I took a trip to the Soviet Union two months ago. Another reason, however, is as follows: the free world likes to represent its struggle against communism as a struggle of Christians against materialists. That there is much materialism in the western world, too, we know. How does it, however, stand with the Christians in the Soviet Union?

A Trip to Russia

At the invitation of the patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, on the 27th of June, I went to Moscow and was in Moscow, Lagersk, Leningrad, Kiev, and Odessa as his guest for nineteen days. In nineteen days one cannot get to know either the United States or the Soviet Union. But one **does** know more than if one never goes there. There were six of us, Germans with predominantly church interests; one of us spoke fluent Russian. We were able to go out alone in every city and were allowed to take pictures. We saw much of the church life, large industrial plants, agricultural projects, theaters, political weekly reviews, the Lenin Library with 17,000,000 volumes, the Komorrossow University for Natural Sciences, completed in 1953, with its 40,000 rooms and 18,000 students which is exclusively dedicated to the natural science techniques (with the exception of medicine) and many other things.

After years of hard, violent persecution the Russian Orthodox Church has been living, since 1943, under legally controlled conditions as follows:

Russian Church Now a Speaking Church

Three things are forbidden to it: 1) instruction among the youth; 2) charitable work; 3) so-called religious propaganda. Services in church rooms and official acts of the priests (baptisms, weddings, funerals, prayers of intercession) are permitted to it. From many reports in Evanston I have learned that the position of the

Protestants in some Catholic countries is not any better. Since the Revolution of 1917 the Orthodox Church in Russia developed the sermon, and even reading of the Bible in its services, more than at any time previously. From a singing and praying church it also became a speaking church.

The Orthodox Church is under the jurisdiction of a particular state bureau, which conducts the liaison between church and society. All requests of the church for materials (building materials, gasoline, newspaper, etc.) must be cleared by this bureau. Anything that other agencies have to settle with the church likewise passes through this bureau, which at the same time watches that the legal status of prohibitions and permits is observed by all.

The church services we visited on weekdays and Sundays were crowded. There are allegedly 20,000 Orthodox churches in the Soviet Union. In Moscow there are 55. That is a small number in proportion to the population. But the churches are more heavily used because the number of services is greater than in our country and because there is only standing room. Juveniles and children can participate in the services, and actually do so. Since all real estate in the Soviet Union belongs to the state, the church can also own no property. The state leases the grounds to it for church needs, and, in fact, without compensation and for an indefinite period of time.

Number of Baptisms Large

The number of baptisms is surprisingly large. In one service in Leningrad 250 children were baptized. A bishop in the Ukraine indicated the number of baptisms as 90% of the newly-born children. On an average it is supposed to be far more than half. Our translator, whom we knew as a confirmed Marxist and atheist, and whose wife shared his convictions, also had his child baptized.

As in the United States, the church lives from voluntary contributions alone. It sells candles for the adoration of the icons at a price that also comprises a contribution to the church. It takes up collections in its services and accepts donations for the official acts of its priests, for instance, for a baptism, as a rule, 25 rubles. We are under the impression that the Russian church is not too badly off financially.

The Orthodox church was, up until 1917, a state church. It supported the czaristic regime and the feudalistic exploitation of the peasants. Therefore it was involved in the revolution. In the war the Bolshevik rulers made a place for the church again, as I have already described. The anti-religious propaganda continues. Schools, universities, newspapers and television

(Continued on page 13)

CHURCH NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

New Presidents of W.C.C.

Six new presidents of the World Council of Churches were elected at a plenary session of its Second Assembly at Evanston.

Named from North America was the Rt. Rev. Henry Knox Sherrill of New York, Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Also chosen for the presidium was His Eminence, Archbishop Michael, who represents the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, and is now the Archbishop with jurisdiction over North and South America, with his offices in New York.

The others named were:

The Very Rev. John Baillie, renowned theologian and Principal of New College, University of Edinburgh, who is a member of the Church of Scotland.

Bishop F. K. Otto Dibelius, Bishop of the Evangelical Union Church of Berlin-Brandenburg, and president of the Evangelical Church in Germany, a federation of Lutheran, Reformed and United Churches.

Bishop Sante Uberto Barbieri of Buenos Aires, Bishop in Argentina, Uruguay and Bolivia of the Central Conference of The Methodist Church (of the U.S.).

Mar Thoma Juhanon, Metropolitan of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, in South India.

Church Women Want Some Male Influence

Evanston, Ill.—Women who work on studies of the World Council of Churches about women want a little male influence.

A report to the Council's Second Assembly here by its Commission on the Life and Work of Women in the Church proposed that a man be named as the group's next chairman.

It also recommended that a man be appointed executive secretary, and that the commission's name be changed to "Department on the Co-operation of Men and Women in Church and Society."

Although the commission carries on its work solely among women, it is not a "women's commission," the report emphasized.

Thirty-eight women from nine countries are official delegates to the Assembly here as against 19 at the Council's organizing meeting at Amsterdam in 1948. In addition, 20 women were named consultants and 71 "accredited visitors."

Evanston Watched by Velde and Jenner

Participants in the Evanston assembly of the World Council of Churches may not have been aware that they were being watched for subversive conduct. But they were. According to Religious News Service, Senator Jenner's subcommittee on internal security, Representative Velde's House committee on un-American activities and the FBI were all on the job, determined to see that no dangerous thought escaped from the ecumenical meeting, or if it did, to see that it was properly punished. The R.N.S. dispatch from Washington, dated August 16, said that both the Jenner and Velde committees had undercover agents at Evanston and that the FBI had assured a congressman that it will keep the iron curtain delegates under surveillance as long as they are in this country. Senator Jenner's subcommittee, it was reported, is concentrating on things said by the iron curtain churchmen, while Congressman Velde is paying more attention to speeches by Americans. (There's lots of "subversive" stuff in that sermon by Bishop Oxnam, Mr. Chairman.) An illuminating sidelight on this attempt to see that Evanston does not deviate from the pro-McCarthy-American line is the statement that "the House committee will rely mainly on reports from what one member described as 'right-thinking ministers' who will be present at the assembly as observers." Whether "right-thinking" here connotes right-thinking a la Spiritual Mobilization or right-thinking a la Carl McIntire, we are not sure. Perhaps both. But what a business for committees of the United States Congress to be in—spying on a world assembly of churches of Jesus Christ!—Christian Century.

Wisconsin, Missouri Synods Fail to Compromise Differences

The 43rd convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America ended at Detroit with its two dominant groups unreconciled over a doctrinal dispute which threatens to end their 82-year-old fellowship.

The Wisconsin Synod objects to the Common Confession, a doctrinal agreement approved by the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church. The Wisconsin group also has accused the Missouri Synod of engaging in "unionistic practices" by permitting joint prayer with persons outside the Synodical Conference. It further disapproves of the Missouri Synod's co-operation with the Boy Scout movement and the chaplaincy service.

These differences led to a charge by the Wisconsin Synod in 1953 that the Missouri Synod had caused a break in relations between the two bodies. Some Wisconsin Synod members favored an immediate withdrawal from the Synodical Conference or a move to eject the Missouri Synod from the Conference.

At an early session in the meeting here delegates were hopeful that an accord had been reached when the convention's floor committee introduced a "harmony" resolution. However, the convention ended without a vote on the compromise measure which was based on discussions held between leaders of the two Synods.

The resolution asked the Missouri Synod to "deactivate the Common Confession as a document for future fellowship with the American Lutheran Church." It noted that the ALC was taking part in merger negotiations with the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Free Church.

"In the light of (these) recent developments" the resolution said, "it is highly improbable that the Common Confession will ever become the confessional document establishing Church fellowship between the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church."

Urging the removal of whatever might threaten to disturb the unity of the Synodical Conference, the resolution said that dissolution of the body would be a "tragedy."

But objections raised in the course of debate could not be dissipated—although the floor committee came up with constant revisions of the resolution in an effort to do so.

Even an emotional plea by Dr. John W. Behnken, Missouri Synod president, on the convention's closing day, for the opposing groups to "approach

each other as brethren" failed to bring any agreement.

The Missouri Synod leader said he was "saddened beyond description" at what happened but added that he was "still hopeful we are not coming to a break." This sentiment also was expressed by the Rev. Oscar J. Naumann, Wisconsin Synod president, who said that he did not share the "futility" expressed by some members of the Wisconsin Synod delegation.

Norway Group Ready for Mission Work in Pakistan

Oslo—The Norwegian Santal Mission society has announced its readiness to begin mission work in East Pakistan if congregations isolated there by the 1947 partitioning of India can be helped in no other way.

When India and Pakistan emerged as independent nations in 1947, several villages including about 1,000 Christian Santals in East Pakistan were cut off from the rest of the Santal congregations in Bihar province, India. Because of the ensuing strained political situation, it has been extremely difficult for missionaries on the Hindu Indian side of the border to visit the congregations in Moslem Pakistan.

The Norwegian Santal Mission believes it would be impossible to have missionaries in Pakistan operating under an administrative office in India. Thus, Christian Santals in Pakistan and missionaries in India have strongly urged the mother mission society to accept responsibility for a new field in East Pakistan.

Final decision in the matter is left to the executive board of the Santal Mission, which will also consider use of native evangelists in East Pakistan, improvement of educational training methods, and modernization of hospitals and other institutions in both India and Pakistan. Field missionaries are expected to offer suggestions.

The Santal Mission fostered the

growth and organization of the Ebenezer Evangelical Lutheran Church, which emerged as a new Lutheran Church in India in 1950, with some 31,000 members. Though still somewhat dependent on the Santal Mission for financial support, it is an autonomous church with membership in the Lutheran World Federation.

Church Membership in United States Rises to All-time High of Nearly 95 Million

More Americans are church members than ever before, the National Council of Churches has reported. Church membership in the United States climbed to a record 94,842,845 in 1953, exactly 2,565,716 above the preceding year.

Furthermore, church giving is at an all-time high, construction has expanded eightfold since 1940, and the United States now has more churches, more clergymen, and more Sunday school members than at any previous period in its history.

Figures Taken from 'Yearbook'

The figures are from the Yearbook of American Churches for 1955, scheduled for publication by the National Council on September 15.

Dr. Benson Y. Landis, Yearbook editor, said the statistics showed a "vigorous, sustained movement of Americans into the churches." He said he felt one important reason for the gains was the continued shift in public opinion "in favor of a life that includes the spiritual and, in fact, is not complete without it."

Other factors cited by Dr. Landis were the increase in the birth rate, effective evangelistic efforts of the churches, population shifts which have produced new suburban churches, and, possibly, the unrelieved world crisis.

Six out of 10 Americans—59.5 per cent—now hold church membership, the Yearbook reported. It said the 1953 total represented a 2.8 per cent

increase over the 1952 figure of 92,277,129. The church membership gain compared with a U.S. population gain of 1.7 per cent.

According to the Yearbook Protestants now number 55,837,325; Roman Catholics 31,476,261; Jews, 5,000,000; Eastern Orthodox, 2,100,171; Old Catholics and Polish National Catholics 366,088, and Buddhists, 63,000.

The relative strength of Protestant and Catholic groups has remained "virtually constant" for more than 50 years, the Yearbook said.

Although the Yearbook includes figures from 255 religious bodies, the division in American Christianity is not as wide as the number indicates.

Concentrated in 77 Groups

According to the tabulations 98.2 per cent of all church members are concentrated in 77 groups. There are 18 bodies with more than 1,000,000 members.

Leading the Protestant groups in membership are the Methodist Church with 9,151,524, the Southern Baptist Convention with 7,883,708, and the National Baptist Convention USA with 4,526,887. The United Lutheran Church in America is the largest Lutheran body with 2,061,004 members, followed by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod with 1,850,100. (These figures are for the United States only; Canadian members are not included.)

The Yearbook said 30,000,000 persons had joined American churches since 1940. This was three times as many as had become members in the previous 14-year period.

Present growth of the churches is the continuation of a long-term trend. In 1850, the Yearbook noted, only 16 per cent of Americans held church membership.

Another table in the Yearbook shows that a total of 35,389,466 young people enrolled in Sunday or Sabbath schools, an 8.1 per cent gain in a year.

BAREFOOT BOY

It is told that, many years ago, the elders of a small church in Scotland met with their aging and hoary-headed pastor and gravely urged him to retire. The reason for their request was that, for a period of a year, there had been no conversions in the church.

"But there was one," the old preacher told them.

"And who was that?" they asked.

"Don't you remember?" he remind-

ed them. "It was the wee lad, Bobbie."

They remembered the boy, then. Not only had he confessed Christ as his Saviour, but he had dedicated himself wholly to the Lord from that time and henceforth. And at a service held in the church in the interest of foreign missions, they recollected that it was this same "wee Bobbie" who had, when the offering plate was passed, asked the usher to place the plate on the floor. To the astonishment of all, the lad stepped barefooted into the plate,

and said: "I give myself to missionary service. It is all that I have to give."

The name "wee Bobbie" is not widely known. But his name as the gifted missionary in Africa is revered and loved the world over, among those who love his Lord. For "wee Bobbie" was none other than Robert Moffatt, who became one of the brightest lights ever to shine upon the Dark Continent, only excelled, perhaps, by his son-in-law, David Livingstone.

—Our Hope

Our Foreign Mission Fields

Edited by Rev. K. R. Jensen, Viborg, South Dakota

The Bible in Colombia

by Jose Siciliani in "La Biblia en America Latina"

(Mr. Siciliani is sub-agent of the United Bible Agencies in Colombia, South America.)

The year 1825 marked the founding of the Bible Society of Colombia. Its founders were members of the Roman Catholic clergy and valiant laymen who together formed the board of directors. Its first president was Dr. Pedro Gual. Mr. James Thompson, agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society founded in London in 1804 served in advisory capacity. One can almost say that this Society died at birth because its accomplishments were negligible. Although it voted to print the Catholic version of the New Testament, there is no certainty that this was done.

Nevertheless, all was not lost for God had begun to scatter the good seed and the harvest could be expected in due season. Men who had served with the British Legion in the battle for Colombian independence remained in the country; as Protestants they could not keep silence about their faith in Christ. Among them was General Fraser who gave real support to the Gospel cause; descendants of his continue to do likewise today. Within a short time brave and enthusiastic missionaries came and continued sowing the good seed. Among them were: Milne and Penzotti, who traveled extensively and sold Bibles or Bible portions wherever they went; Dr. H. Pratt, to whom we owe the esteemed Modern Version of the Spanish Bible; Mr. S. Smille, author of the well-known Manual of Introduction to the Study of the Sacred Scriptures. The Presbyterian Mission, which will celebrate its first centennial in 1956, has wielded a tremendous influence among several generations of young people, especially through its American Schools in Barranquilla and Bogota. Many of their former students are an honor to the nation and to its homes today.

In 1953, 128 years after the founding of the original Bible Society in Colombia, the Roman Catholic clergy was stirred with a new interest in the distribution of the Scriptures. In March of that year Bogota's Catholics celebrated their first Bible Week. In conversation with me, a certain priest said: "If Protestants distribute the Bible, why can't we Roman Catholics do the same?"

The same month marked the founding of Catholic Bible Action, and rumor has it that a "Catholic Bible Association . . . such as exists in other countries" will be formed. The chief promoter of these activities is Father Florencio Alvarez Vasquez of the Society of Jesus, parish priest of the Church of La Perseverancia in Bogota. The program for Bible Week included a series of lectures by various members of the clergy and laymen and women on such subjects as: "What is the Bible?", "The Bible and the Rule of Faith" and "Literary Beauties of the Bible." Questioned by news reporters as to the reason for initiating a Bible Week, Father Alvarez replied: "It seemed to me it would be a good idea since Protestants make much of the fact that we Catholics do not know the Bible. . . ." Asked if Bible reading is necessary for the Christian life, he answered: "The Church says that reading the Bible itself is *not necessary* (italics ours) for Christian living, since the Bible reaches us *through other channels* (italics ours): the catechism is a simple summary of the Bible; the Word of God, the passages from the Gospels and other Biblical books are

made known through sermons, through the preaching of the priests, which *becomes the living Bible* (italics ours) . . . And what is Catholic living other than the Bible in practice?"

It is clear then, that while there is a desire to give the Bible to the Catholic people, yet the opposite is true, since according to Father Alvarez the catechism and the priests suffice as the living Bible. Are they not already sowing "on stony ground"? The results may be the same as they were back in 1825. Naturally Colombian Protestants are pleased that Roman Catholics may get to know God through the Catholic version of the Bible.

I was told that more than 300 Bibles and 5,000 copies of the Four Gospels were sold during Bible Week. No doubt, publicity through press and radio, announcements of the subjects to be treated and the offers of 300 days indulgence for each 15 minutes of Bible reading awakened much interest among Catholics who previously had not dared to read the Bible for fear of excommunication. Far from doing harm, the results were most favorable to us, since many bought not only the Catholic but also the Protestant version of the Bible so as to make comparisons. In our book store we sold 15 Nacar-Colunga Bibles and many of our own. Once more there must come the conviction that it is impossible to change God's purposes with respect to man: He wills their salvation and freedom, not submission to the will of men. Isaiah says in chapter 55: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. . . . So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

The contrast between prohibiting the Bible and giving it to the people is a tangible thing: where there is prohibition there is retrogression; where people are free to read it there is progress. Thus it has been in our beloved Colombia: those who have come to know the will of God through the searching of the Scriptures do not fill our taverns, prisons, hospitals, houses of vice, because Christ reigns in their hearts. Those places are left for those of a false faith. Isaiah expressed it well in 3:18: "Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." May God continue to bless the seed sown in Colombia to the glory and honor of His Name.

Colombia is a propitious place for the Gospel. The majority of its people are of a tolerant nature and an open spirit. There is, too, an extreme religious zeal which is capable of fighting to the death against another which runs counter to it, using whatever means may be at its disposal when the time is ripe. This religious character is deeply permeated with superstition which finds expression in idolatry, all for lack of knowledge of the basic teachings of Jesus, because their guides are also straying from the Way. When such persons come to a knowledge of the Truth, they become as firm in the true faith as they once were in their erroneous beliefs and practices.

The change in the political picture has been a retarding factor in the advance of the Bible in recent years. An assurance of rights and liberties for the people and by the people will make it possible for the Scriptures to reach to the farthest corners of the land. In view of the difficulties

(Continued on page 13)

Summons at Midnight

AN ADDRESS AT WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

By Dr. Daniel T. Niles

IT IS MIDNIGHT in the parable. It is also midnight in the world today. The night is so deep that everything has become just an object to be avoided, an obstacle in the dark against which men must take care not to bump. Certainly there are those who are blaring out guidance; but the guidance offered is so confusing that wisdom seems to lie in not accepting any of it. The hour of midnight is the hour when all cows are black, and he is a good prophet who simply tells men what not to do.

Besides, at midnight every color loses its distinctiveness and becomes merely a dirty shade of gray. There is today so much disappointment and disillusion, so much frustration and bewilderment, that cynicism and despair have taken possession of many men's souls. Nothing seems to matter, not in the dark. Honesty, chastity, sobriety, courtesy—these deal with distinctions in human behavior which tend to become irrelevant when it is a long midnight. Men at midnight listen easily only to those who speak about the tragedy of life.

Relief at Inaction

Also, at midnight, nobody expects anything to happen. It is the hour when no-happening is good news. How anxiously, in whatever part of the world we live, we read our newspapers and as we put them down heave a sigh of relief. Nothing has happened! Everywhere the unresolved problems continue to stand on end and nowhere have they toppled over into violent activity or event. So midnight drags on with our ears strained in the hope that they will hear no sound.

But as in the parable, so in our day the tense silence of midnight is disturbed by the sound of a knock. It is the door of the church on which somebody is knocking. That is still

"Which of you who has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey, and I have nothing to set before him.'"

(Luke 11:5-6)

Dr. Niles was born of Tamil parents 46 years ago in Ceylon. He was one of the outstanding speakers at the World Assembly at Evanston. This sermon on Evangelism should be read by all.

the one familiar landmark to which the traveler at midnight comes. How bitterly men and women speak about their disappointment with the church. They may be right or wrong, but at least in this their attitude is significant, that they feel that the church should not have disappointed them. It is the one house which stands where it has always stood, the house to which the man traveling at midnight either comes or refuses to come. Many decide not to come. Some, however, come and knock. And those who decide not to come are still preoccupied with the church which they have rejected.

Groups at the Door

But is it only individuals who knock at the door of the church? What, for instance, is the truth about this assembly of the World Council of Churches? Whose knocking has compelled the churches to gather here? Too exclusively and too easily we conceive the Christian task as that of seeking and finding the lost; we are constantly preoccupied about going out to do it. We do not sufficiently realize that the

evangelistic situation is again and again that of being surrounded and sought after and questioned. There are those who are knocking at the door of the church—and they are not merely the hungry, the homeless, the refugee, the displaced person, the outcast. There are at the church's door also every type of community—nations, races, classes, political groupings—knocking for different reasons. Some ask for bread. Others simply ask what kind of people live in this house in which a light shines at midnight. Still others come just to shake their fists in the faces of those who keep a light burning but have no bread.

For it is true that so often there is no bread in the house. The church is expecting no callers and has laid in no supplies. With what bread it had it has just managed to feed its own children. It has sufficient obedience not to put out the light in the window, but it does not have sufficient expectancy to believe that anybody will come.

Unfortunately, however, there is also the other fact—that so many members of the church get worried when the church tries to prepare to welcome all callers. A year ago the Ceylon government lifted its subsidy on rice, and the political parties of the left declared a day's *hartal* in protest, a day's general stoppage of work. Some hooliganism broke out and the government used force to quell the disturbances. It was the kind of situation in which most people were concerned with what was policy and expediency, and where the common mass of people felt helpless to think or speak in terms of what was right or wrong. Their silence and helplessness knocked at the door of the church. The Methodist Church in Ceylon heard the knock, woke up, and spoke to the situation in the name of Jesus Christ. Immediately the question was raised, "Should not the church have kept quiet? After all, it is midnight, and nothing that the church says or does will make any difference!"

More than Personal

It is true, isn't it? that there are those who bear the name of Jesus Christ who want the church not to answer any call but the call of private personal need or the call for salvation after death. Here at this assembly the churches have come together to speak on the questions put to the church on international affairs, on racial and ethical tensions, on social and economic problems, on the issues of church unity and disunity—and surely the churches are right in this undertaking. "God so loved the world that he gave his Son." So that the task of the church is to proclaim God's Son as the hope of the world. This means that Jesus is the hope of men in all the complexities of their relationships to one another, and that Jesus is the hope also of the church precisely when the church is engaged in setting forth Jesus as the hope of the world.

Evangelism means that the Christian community, by all that it does and says and is, brings to bear the truths of the gospel on the torments of the world. It means that thus the pressure of the gospel upon the world is maintained, so that the solution to every human problem—whether it be the problem of war-torn Korea or the problem of a widowed mother who does not have the wherewithal to feed her children—may be worked out under that pressure by those whose responsibility it is to work it out. It is a question wrongly put when it is asked, "What is the Christian solution which the church can offer to this or that problem?" For the task of the church is not to offer Christian solutions to specific problems, but to incarnate the Word in every human situation. The result of such evangelism may be that the Word is crucified, but Jesus "must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things and be killed and on the third day be raised." Pilate had power to send Jesus to his death, but Pilate had no power to prevent the resurrection. The hope of the world is Jesus whom the world has the power to crucify.

When the church ceases to be concerned with the world, then it ceases to hear God speak to it; for God's conversation with the church is a conversation about the world, and the church must be willing to converse about the world if it is to converse with God. It is the world which is the direct object of God's action. He made it. He loved it. He saved it. He will judge it through Jesus Christ. Indeed, a church that is disobedient to its commission to go to the world becomes a menace to the world itself. Disobedient Jonah was the cause of the storm that overtook that ship on

its normal trading voyage, and those sailors had no alternative but to throw him into the sea. Even this is part of God's providence when the world casts the church overboard and leaves it at God's mercy. The church may not escape its commission to be the friend.

The Position of True Evangelism

"A friend of mine has arrived on a journey." So speaks the man in the parable, and in so speaking he defines the position and attitude of true evangelism.

Whoever comes and whenever he comes, he comes as a friend, and he comes because we have turned ourselves into friends. Have we not found that when we Christians begin really to desire to share with others our friendship with Jesus Christ, when we give ourselves to expectant prayer asking God to help us find new friends for Jesus, when we take seriously the need of keeping watch over ourselves lest they who come to us find no evidence of our friendship either with Jesus Christ or with them—that then the experience of evangelism becomes not so much the experience of going out to find as of being ready to welcome those who come?

The ashram in Jaffna, the town in Ceylon from which I come, last year opened an evangelistic mission among the Veddahs, the aboriginal tribe of Ceylon. There it is a contest between the power of the gospel in the whole life of man and primitive belief in the power of demons. There was in the place a Hindu devotee who was the center of no-response to the Christian work that was being done. How were his cooperation and sympathy to be won? One day his son, going out into the woods to gather honey, got stung by forest wasps. It was known to be fatal to be stung like that. The boy, running away in headlong flight, came to the ashram settlement. A crowd gathered. The mother of the boy was sent for. But there was nothing anybody could do. There were no medicines, no doctors in a place so far away from anywhere. The body of the boy began to swell. The Christian evangelist in charge of the place had a cup of hot coffee made, gave it to the boy, knelt down and began to pray. As the prayer went on, the boy quieted down. Soon he was breathing without panting, and in two hours' time he went home with his mother, perfectly whole. The next morning the father arrived, full of apologies and bursting with thanks. A friend had been won to the cause of Christ. Christ had brought him to the door of a friend.

Causes of Failure

There are many causes for the lack of results in evangelistic work, but the primary cause always is failure in expectant love. Often we do not care sufficiently about people as people. We are concerned about evangelism, but this concern is largely the consequence of a desire to fulfill our evangelistic duty as Christians. But evangelism, to be true evangelism, must cease to be a duty. It must become an inevitability. The shepherd looking for his lost sheep is not fulfilling a duty. A mother praying for her erring child is not meeting an obligation. A church declaring God's judgments to the people is not just obeying a call. A friend sharing his friendship with Jesus is not simply discharging a responsibility. "The love of Christ controls us," says St. Paul.

Listen to the cry of him who is the Evangelist, as it comes to us echoing down the pages of the Bible: "Adam, where art thou?" "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?" "How shall I deliver thee, Israel?" "Oh Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how I would and ye would not!"

It is so easy to engage oneself in what are known as evangelistic activities, to have even a true theology of evangelism, and yet be and remain the kind of person to whose hands the Great Shepherd cannot entrust his sheep. Let me put the question in this way: Can you mention the names of the people—two or three perhaps—who are to you a cause of real sorrow because they are not Christians? They are good people, they are your friends, but always when you think of them there is a pain in your soul because they do not serve Jesus Christ. Are there such people in your life? If not, you are not an evangelist, however much the evangelistic work which you may be doing.

Love the Essential

This emphasis on the impulse of evangelism is also of significance where the so-called foreign missionary enterprise is concerned. There is a world of difference between the missionary who comes to proclaim the truth of the gospel and the missionary who comes to care for a people with the care of Jesus Christ. The heart of the experience for every evangelist lies just here: it is when we are really concerned with people as people that we discover our own poverty too. We have speeches, arguments, techniques; schools, hospitals, orphanages; books, pamphlets, posters—but of love and real care we do not have what is necessary to meet the need. As in the parable, so we are driven to say: "A

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THE LUTHER LEAGUE

Homer Larsen, Editor

Girls Will Be Boys

Roy L. Smith

I have become firmly convinced of late that I belong to the superior sex. In fact, there seems to be no doubt about it. The women themselves admit it, by imitating us.

But the strange thing to me is the fact that women, instead of beginning on our virtues, have started by imitating our vices.

I have done a little fishing, not much, just enough to know that one kind of bait will catch one kind of fish and another kind of bait will catch another kind of fish. As a general rule I can tell from the kind of bait the girl uses what kind of a poor fish she is angling for. The facts are that a cigaret dripping from the lips of a girl has never yet attracted any kind of man worth attracting.

The secret of a woman's power has always been her womanliness, not her masculinity. I know of a girl who is an expert boxer, but I do not know of any man who wants to marry a trained sparring partner.

"The Lord made the women beautiful and foolish: Beautiful so that the men would love them and foolish so that they could love the men."

The modern girl who thinks she can best gain her rights by stepping down from high ideals of womanhood is simply mistaken. She will get some flattery, some ridicule behind her back, and sure disappointment.

The alarming thing about this gasoline, self-starting age is the fact that so many young women are ashamed of their best. They would rather be called good sports than good women. Liberty does not consist in being allowed to be our worst, but the right to become our best.

We have complained against the double standard. I am opposed to it. But the only progress we have made in attaining the single standard has been the lowering of women's standards down toward that of the men.

Self-respect is the finest virtue that any person can cultivate. The world will never rate us any higher than we rate ourselves. We frequently hear girls complaining about the restrictions of conventions that interfere with a girl becoming more womanly. I do know of some that have developed for the purpose of safeguarding her modesty, protecting her from insults, and making her fight for chastity easier. Chivalry and courtesy are the finest compliment that good men ever pay to good women. The woman who attracts that sort of attention from any man is the one who is most a woman. The lowest gutter bum instinctively recognizes a womanly woman, and summons all his remaining manhood to show her respect. The woman whose strongest appeal

is her sex is certain to get the attentions of men who have no other interest. The woman who esteems herself common will be accepted as such by the community. The girl who gives her high favors to every man is held in high favor by none of them. She who reserves her best for one man will be respected by all.

I overheard a young woman defend her drunkenness on the grounds that she was broadminded on the subject. I do not deny that any woman has the right to drink. But she also has the right to the rewards of drinking. If she has any doubt as to what these rewards are let her go down to the Municipal court and see the crowd of drunks that come up. Look into the faces of these wrecks who have won their rights by long and patient years of drinking.

One does not need to be broad to be deep. The Washington Monument is narrow but lofty. I have a feeling that the modern girl is being swindled. She is trading her modesty for recklessness, chastity for sophistication, freedom for danger, womanliness for daring, and charm for cosmetics.

It is pathetic when girls will be boys. They fail as girls, and make themselves ridiculous as boys.

—The Christian Advocate.

Our Leaguers in the Armed Forces

Dr. C. C. Madsen

When our Lord Jesus Christ was here on earth He looked forward across an unknown stretch of centuries to the end of this age and the time of His return. As a part of this vision He declared—and you can find His words in your New Testaments in Matthew 24 and 25

and Luke 21—"There shall be wars and rumors of wars . . . Nation shall rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. . . Upon the earth distress of nations in perplexity . . . men fainting with fear and with foreboding of what is coming on the world. . . ." These signs are

very real today. Those of us who face life face it in this kind of a world. The great Christian leader, Elton Trueblood wrote in 1950, "It appears that all of us are resigned to live the rest of our lives in a time of crisis."

One very real aspect of this age

of crisis affects very directly the life of many of our Luther Leaguers, at least most of the able-bodied boys and perhaps some of the girls. This is the prospect of being required to serve in the armed forces. So this message is directed particularly to our young folks who are in service, or who face the prospect of such service—and to their dear ones, fellow Leaguers and pastors who wait for them at home.

First of all, let me say it once again: read those chapters in Matthew and Luke. Particularly, note that Jesus does not say those days of crisis are days of utter hopelessness or destruction. He emphasizes that He forewarns us in order that we may be **ready**; that amid the signs of His coming we may be confident in His salvation and sincere in our expectation of His return. Note His words: "When you hear of wars and tumults, do not be terrified." And "When these things begin to take place, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." (Luke 21:9 and 28.) And note particularly Luke 21:13: **"This will be a time for you to bear testimony."** (Quotations are from the Revised Standard Version.) These words are basic to our discussion. The best and only adequate preparation for the battle of life and all of life's various battles is to be living fellowship with Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord and to be living witnesses for Him wherever we are. Paul describes life in terms of military service in Ephesians 6 and sums it up in the words, "Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might."

With this as our starting-point, let us add a few practical suggestions. 1. For those of you who are still facing the draft or possible enlistment, this suggestion: get all the training and education you can before you go in. Most branches of the service recommend this, for the simple reason that they prefer better trained personnel. The more training you have, the more education, the wider choice you will have in selecting a specialty that interests you, and the better opportunity of getting specialized training before your service, remember the importance of spiritual training. The

temptations of military life are great—greater than most of our Leaguers face at home. The more maturity and Christian character you have before you "do your hitch" the better will be your chances of "going straight" and bearing witness for Christ wherever you are called upon to go.

2. Remember, it's just as true in military life as anywhere else that you'll be able to find just what you are looking for. If you seek companionships that are vulgar, obscene and degrading, you'll have no difficulty finding them. But there are countless witnesses who can testify from actual experience that it's just as true that you can find the opposite kind. In barracks, on liberty, aboard ship, anywhere in this land or in any other, you'll find among your buddies and among civilian friends earnest, consecrated Christians, young and old, who will enrich your Christian experience and add new joy to your faith. (Just the other evening I visited with a Navy chief petty officer who is eagerly looking forward to completion of his twenty years of service in the Regular Navy so he can enter a theological seminary to prepare for the ministry. He told me stories of his own Christian experience that made me ashamed of the frequent luke-warmness of my own faith.)

3. Know your Chaplain and attend services regularly. Chaplains, like our ministers at home are not all alike nor equally popular. But the majority of them are sincerely interested in each man's welfare and spiritual concern while he is in the service. If you are located near civilian churches, chaplains will be glad to help you find the church of your choice in the community. For those who are going into service there's a fine little leaflet called "Your Chaplain Speaks," written by a Lutheran Chaplain. Pastors and Leaguers would do well to give this to their youth who are entering the service. This and other excellent literature, such as "A Mighty Fortress," that fine little Lutheran magazine for those in the armed forces, can be ordered from the Bureau of Service to Military Personnel, National Lutheran Council,

2633 16th St., N. W., Washington 9, D. C.

4. Now a word to those of you who carry on at home. First of all, and always, **PRAY**. "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of"—also for your dear ones in service. Many a veteran testifies with deep gratitude to the sustaining power of the prayers of his dear ones, his pastor and the church at home during the dark days of battle, loneliness or temptation. Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount we shouldn't boast of our prayers or make a show of them; but I am sure He would be pleased to see us write often to our friends and dear ones in service assuring them we are praying regularly and earnestly for them.

5. And do write to them often, including Christian leaflets, letters from your League and messages from your Church. Did your pastor call your attention to a recent poster for your bulletin board? It says, "Don't Forget Your Friends in Service. Pray for Them. Write to Them Often." It is a USO publication, but the National Lutheran Council likes it so well they sent word of it to all Lutheran pastors. If you didn't get one, your pastor may still have it—or you can get it, and other good helps in your ministry to those in service, by writing to the address given above.

—"And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:7.)

Editor's Note:

Dr. Madsen has just received official confirmation of his promotion to rank of Commander in the Naval Reserve.

SENIOR SEMINARIAN TO ENTER NAVY CHAPLAINCY

Mr. John Beck, senior student at Trinity Seminary has completed eight weeks of training at the U.S. Naval Officer Indoctrination School for Chaplains, and graduated with the class at Newport, Rhode Island, August 26. He is an Ensign in the Navy Reserve Chaplain Corps, and will be eligible for active duty when he graduates from Trinity next Spring.

BY THE FIRESIDE

IN THE VOLUME OF THE BOOK

By Walter H. Brooks

I thought, and prayed, and wondered
as I thought,
Might I not have, like those of long
ago,
Some glimpse, as in a sudden sunbeam
caught,
Of Christ, the Master, passing to and
fro?

And as I prayed, it seemed the vision
came,
The Master looked upon me, grave
and sweet;
And I, in mingled ravishment and
and shame,
Bent my bold eyes, all lowly, to his
feet.

"And wouldst thou see me?" graciously
he said;

"Thou hast the picture; thou mayst
always see:

Search thou the Scriptures thou hast
always read,

For they are they that testify of me."

—The Watchman-Examiner

EFFECTIVE PREACHING

In one of Dr. Alexander Maclaren's
sermons he told of how he had read
somewhere of a preacher who had delivered a very eloquent series of sermons in refutation of some form of infidelity, for the special benefit of a man who attended his place of worship.

Soon after the man came and declared himself a Christian. The minister said to him, "Which of my discourses was it that removed your doubts?" The reply was, "Oh, it was not any of your sermons that influenced me.

"The thing that set me thinking was that a poor woman came out of the chapel beside me and stumbled on the steps, and I stretched out my hand to help her, and she said, 'Thank you!' Then she looked at me and said, 'Do you love Jesus Christ, my blessed Saviour?' And I did not, and I went home and thought about it, and now I can say I love Jesus."

—From the Methodist Recorder

MY HAND IN HIS

The day had gone: Alone and weak
I groped my way within a bleak
And sunless land
The path that led into the light,
I could not find . . . In that dark night
God took my hand

He led me that I might not stray
And brought me by a new safe way
I had not known.

By waters still thru pastures green
I followed him; the path was clean
Of brier and stone.

The darkness lost its strength;
My waiting eyes beheld at length
The streaking dawn.

On, safely on, through sunrise glow
I walked, my hand in his, and lo,
The night had gone.

—The S. S. Banner.

MAN IS A SICK FELLOW

"Every philosophy and every religion which depends on the inherent goodness or power of man, present or future, founders on man himself. Such theories read well, but attempted practice proves them false. They fail to survive the test, and man remains the same. They may claim that human nature is essentially good and that their task is simply to free him from the political, economic or religious tyrannies which have driven him underground. But when man is released from one tyranny, he loses himself in another."

—J. C. Pollock.

REST

Rest is not quitting

The busy career:

Rest is the fitting of self

To one's sphere.

'Tis the brook's motion

Clear, without strife

Fleeting to ocean

After its life.

'Tis loving and serving

The highest and best;

'Tis onward unswerving

And this is true Rest.

—Wolfgang von Goethe.

WELL SPENT

If you sit down at set of sun

And count the acts that you have
done,

And, counting, find

One self-denying deed, one word

That eased the heart of him who
heard;

One glance most kind,

That fell like sunshine where it
went—

Then you may count that day well
spent.

But, if, through all the livelong day,
You've nothing done that you can
trace

That brought the sunshine to one
face—

No act so small

That helped some soul and nothing
cost—

Then count that day as worse than
lost.

—George Elliot.

STILL IN FORCE

The Ten Commandments were not abrogated nor altered nor amended by Christ. He interpreted them, He exemplified them, He gave men power to keep them. He taught that they applied to motives and desires as well as to actions. He insisted that they are infallible, unchanging and of universal application.—Charles R. Erdman in "Your Bible and You" (Winston).

SUPERLATIVE COMPLIMENTS

I only know one compliment paid to a wife finer than that spoken by a coloured man in America just after his wedding and the completion of its registration. "How much Ah owes you, rev'end?" he asked. "Oh," said the minister, "just pay me whatever it's worth to you." The young man looked over his bride from head to foot with adoring eyes, and said, "You's ruined me fo' life, re'end, you shure has!"

The compliment that, in my judgment, surpasses that, came from the lips of the famous American lawyer and raconteur, Chauncey M. Depew, when somebody asked him whom he would like to be if it were possible for him to come to earth a second time. Like a flash he answered, "My wife's second husband," and thus made her the happiest and proudest woman in the world.

The salesman, after gaining entrance to the prospect's home, put on his personality act. "My, what a lovely home you have," he gushed. "And pray tell me what is in that beautiful vase on the mantel?"

"My husband's ashes," said the young wife.

"Oh, I'm so sorry. How long has he been dead?"

"He's not. Just too lazy to find an ashtray!"

The employer asked his secretary to look at a letter addressed to him.

"I can't make out whether it's from my tailor or my lawyer," he worried. "They're both named Smith."

And this is what his secretary read:

"I have begun your suit. Ready to be tried on Thursday. Smith."

friend has arrived and I have nothing to set before him." We cannot feed them on scraps. We love too truly to do that.

But there is another Friend to whom we may go, one who has promised to provide us with bread whenever we ask. "Ask," he said, "and it will be given you; seek and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For if you who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?"

Answer to Prayer for the Holy Spirit

The answer to the prayer for the Holy Spirit is always Yes! There is always bread with him who is the Bread of Life. And he gives it to those who ask. Our problem is that we forget that we cannot feed our friends who come to us out of our own sufficiency, or that we do not know the way to our other Friend's home sufficiently well in order to run to him in a hurry. The evangelist must be a man of prayer or he will never find the bread with which to feed the hungry. But it is just here that we must reckon with another truth, a truth which any evangelist who has gone to Jesus asking for bread knows. Again and again the answer of Jesus to the request for bread is this: "Friend, a large supper is ready; therefore go and bring your friend, and not only him but many others also."

Bread for those whom Jesus will bring to our door, and bread for those whom Jesus bids us go and find and

bring to his door—both are indivisible parts of the one task. We have no bread, but he gives the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. A supper is going to waste, a supper which God gave his Son to die on the cross to prepare. Therefore, "go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in."

Some who are hungry will come asking for bread, but many who are equally hungry must have the bread taken to them. "Do you believe in Jesus?" we ask someone whom we would win for the Kingdom. We get no answer, for the question in his heart is, "Does Jesus believe in me?" The evangelist must know how to say, and say convincingly, "Yes, my friend. Jesus does believe in you and he is waiting for you. Come!"

Compel Them!

But just what does it mean that the Master says to us, "Go, and compel people to come in?" What does it mean that we are ordered to succeed? Surely we are here face to face with the basic contradiction in which the evangelist is involved—the contradiction between the command to succeed in his mission to those to whom he is sent and the need to be faithful to the message with which he is entrusted. The truth is that many who are invited will not come, and that the Master will not send his invitation back to them in a more acceptable form. Our faithfulness to Jesus Christ does set limits on our search for successful evangelistic methods, but even so does the love of God for every man drive

us to seek for methods which will be more successful.

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. The temptations arose because he must succeed in that which he came to do and because he must also be faithful to his Father who sent him. Our serious temptations, too, lie just where we are led by the Spirit.

Where We Are Led?

By way of illustration, let us look at a pervasive feature of the human situation today, a situation which seems to be a characteristic of this midnight hour in which we live. For countless men and women, the natural context of their lives has been destroyed. Family and neighborhood no longer determine how life is lived. Rather, the determining factors are the companions with whom they work, the clubs of which they are members, the gangs to which they belong. When the evangelist succeeds with people like this, there arise congregations of Christians whose form of existence calls into question the normal structure of the parish. Do we see where the path of obedience lies in this situation? We must be faithful; we must also succeed. What shall we do? Our present problem—and it is an urgent one—is that in situation after situation of this kind, where evangelistic experiment has pointed to uncharted ways or called into question accepted structures, the churches are in large measure refusing to be led by the Spirit into the wilderness, there to be tempted by the devil. They seem to prefer to go to the cross some other way.

THE BIBLE IN COLOMBIA

(Continued from page 7)

which evangelical work is still undergoing in Colombia, the fact that distribution of the Scriptures is possible at all must be considered a blessing of God upon this people. Placing our trust in Him, we believe that, in the not-too-

far-distant future, closed doors will be opened anew for the great cause of Christ. God save Colombia!

Translator's note: * Interestingly enough the themes for 1954's Bible Week almost all had to do with Mary. I am sorry I don't have a copy of the themes as the nature of a number of them was such that one wonders what Bible texts they could possibly draw upon to support them. One was the Assumption of the Virgin.

CONTACT WITH RUSSIAN CHRISTIANITY

(Continued from page 4)

—which is extremely widespread in Russia—all serve Marxism. But many Orthodox priests told me that they were convinced their church would live to the end of time. I read in local newspapers, that anti-religious propaganda is being stepped up. After 37 years of Bolshevik rule this is proof that Orthodox Christians are even today adhering to their faith.

Russian Church Loyal to State

The Orthodox church refrains from every expression concerning the official industrial or cultural life of its people. It is contained in itself and has transferred the

loyalty which it once showed the czaristic state to the Bolshevik state. That is hard for us to understand, but apparently more in accordance with their history and theology than any other attitude. I don't believe that we should apply our own church attitude toward nation and state indiscriminately as a criterion for the Russian church.

I also talked to Lutherans and Baptists in Russia. For lack of time I must omit what they said.

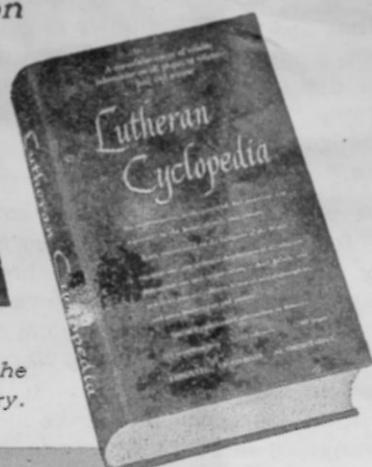
The main thing is that Christianity also exists in the Soviet Union. The figures run into millions. It has a hard time of it. But God can be near it as He is near to us in His judgment and mercy.

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IS THIS YOU?

I ought to belong to the church because I ought to be better than I am. Henry Ward Beecher said, "The church is not a gallery for the exhibition of eminent Christians, but a school for the education of imperfect ones."

I ought to belong to the church because of what I can give to it and do through it, as well as because of what I may get out of it. The church is not a dormitory for sleepers, it is an institution of workers; it is not a rest camp, it is a front-line trench.

I ought to belong to the church because of hopes; hope that lives when promises are dead; hope that paves the way for progress; hope that visions peace and social justice; hope for time, and hope for eternity—the grand hope that casts its anchor behind Jesus Christ.

I ought to belong to the church because of memories; memories of things I can never forget; memories of faces that will never fade; memories of vows that are the glory of youth.

I ought to belong to the church, but not until I am ready to join a going

concern; not until I am willing to become an active partner with Jesus Christ.
—The Messenger.

JUST LISTEN

Many Protestant preachers have discovered a new field of usefulness in what is known as pastoral counseling. But an elderly business man in the East, upon retiring from the firm, found a new occupation for service in "just listening." A pastor wrote about him in the Christian Herald as follows:

"They don't want advice, and they wouldn't take it if I gave it; they just want to unburden their hearts. The overworked doctors and you busy ministers can't spare a whole hour or more on one case, and these people can't afford and don't need a psychiatrist. That's where I come in—and just listen."

We have known of this need, but there are few who minister it. The Roman Church has recognized the need through the centuries and has found in its confessional a source of strength. In more recent years, the psychiatrists

have tried to meet the need scientifically.

In Protestant circles we have not done anything about it. We train preachers to preach, run a church, counsel or advise, but not "just listen." Still, there is comfort and strength and "release" to have someone listen to us when we want to open our hearts—someone who will listen without criticism and without importuning or scolding.—Covenant Weekly.

A little more play would meet a real need now in most rural communities. It would help us to forget our work and our worries and make us think and act with other people.

The rural Church Department, Drew Seminary, Madison, N. J., has made a selection of over a hundred games that farmers like to play. These games are described in such a way that they can be used by any local person without the help of a recreational specialist. This bulletin is being sent out upon request.

We don't quit playing because we grow old, but we grow old because we quit playing.

EDITORIALS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from page 3)

in the future also will have two years to make up their minds.

The provision concerning clergymen was only part of a large-scale revamping of the social security system. The amending act brings in large numbers of farm employees and self-employed farm operators and professional men.

It also raises monthly benefits by at least \$5 for single retired workers and as much as \$31.25 for some families. New social security tax increases range up to \$12 a year for employees (matched by employers) and \$18 for the self-employed.

Estimates of the number of clergymen and religious eligible under the liberalization have ranged as high as 250,000.

According to a member of the Church Pensions Conference, an organization of denominational pension fund executives, the new act is not expected to affect the pensions paid to retired ministers through denominational funds.

Most denominations, he said, planned to continue present pension arrangements and advise clergymen to participate in the social security system as well.

One provision of the law allows for retroactive correction of records within two years of the bill's enactment to correct hardship cases and inequities among employees of non-profit organizations.

Because of clerical errors, it has been found in many cases that employees who were paying their social security tax and thought they were covered had not been certified properly by the hospital, college or religious body involved.

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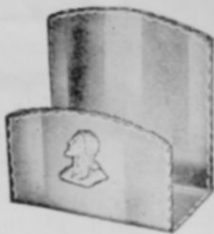
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