

# THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN

*"The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; let Him not leave us, nor forsake us."  
1 Kings 8: 57.*

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## LOVE — THE CROWNING GLORY OF FAITH'S WORKS

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity. 1 Cor. 13: 13

It is hardly necessary to inform our readers that charity spoken of here is not used in the common acceptance of that word. Almsgiving and care and provision for the poor, sick and suffering are what we usually think of in connection with our idea of charity; but the apostle tells us, though we give all our goods for such purposes, we still have not the charity of which he speaks. That is more than philanthropy, more than a kindly and benevolent disposition which naturally distinguishes some persons from others, more than all natural beneficent affection and friendship.

Charity spoken of here is love, Christian love, which is the fruit of faith. The original Greek word *agape* used here is the same as that in Scriptural passages like, "Faith worketh by love," Gal. 5:6, or "Love is the fulfilling of the law," Rom. 13:10, or "Love is the bond of perfection." Col. 3:14. So charity is nothing more and nothing less than love — love to God showing itself in love to man, or love to man for the sake of love to God, and that is the crowning work of faith or its highest manifestation.

### Relation of Faith and Love to One Another

It is of primary importance, in the first place, to see the relation of faith and love to one another. Faith, as you know, is not love, and love is not faith; they are two distinct characteristics in the Christian's life, yet both stand in intimate relation to one another; in fact, the two are the vital constituents of true Christianity, the essential qualities on which alone a man can rise to eternal happiness.

We know what part faith takes in our holy religion. Briefly stated it is the means by which we are saved, and this is its very distinction from love. Nowhere does Scripture ascribe salvation to love. It does not say for instance, "Thy love hath saved thee," but "Thy faith hath saved thee." It does not say, "Love the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," but "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Neither are we told in the divine Word that we receive remission of sins, either through our

love, or for the sake of our love, but through faith alone for Christ's sake.

Yet this does not mean that Scripture depreciates love; it does not mean that if man did love, and always had loved, God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ and his fellow-men, as he ought to love them, he would not be a saved man; it only means that love is not the means of salvation. A man is saved by faith, not by love; but he is saved by faith in order that he may love, or as Scripture puts it, "By faith which worketh love," as indeed love is the finest fruit of faith. In other words, by faith the believers obtain salvation earned for all men by Christ's atoning work; and this same faith shows its life in the manifold deeds of Christian love which are praised so highly in Scripture.

### Christian Love — the Life of Faith

"Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of them is charity." Why is charity or Christian love the greatest of these three graces? Why so prominent? We would answer for one, because Christian love is the very life of faith; it is the spirit of its activities. As Luther writes: "He that hears the Word of Christ in all sincerity, and adheres to it in faith, will also soon be clothed with the spirit of love." Again he says: "Oh, but faith is a living, busy, active, powerful thing, so that it is impossible that it should not always be doing something good. It does not ask whether good works are to be done, but before one asks, it has done them, and is always active in doing them. But what are the good works which faith does? They are comprised in the one work — love, love to God and love to man." All good works are but works God demands in the ten commandments, and the substance of these is love. Compare Christ's own interpretation of the law. Matt. 22: 35-40.

Love — Christian love — is not a mere emotion, it is not even a mere benevolent desire; it is a practical thing. It cannot help doing something to the glory of God and the welfare of men. How beautifully Paul describes its activities in his famous hymn of love's praise from which the words for our present meditation are taken! And mark well, Christian love does not serve merely humanitarian purposes, working for the material welfare of men, and social uplift. It does, indeed, not neglect men's physical distress; it

delights in affording even the simplest pleasure to a child. But it always does these things with the consciousness of that feeling which seeketh not its own, but with unselfish affection promotes not only the material but above all the spiritual welfare of men.

Furthermore, love is not merely intellectual or emotional, but a moral power. It involves nothing less than the keeping of the whole moral law. Nor is it a mere performance of a set of external acts, or a mere devotion to duty for duty's sake. The Christian who by faith walks in love is no longer under the schoolmaster, his performance of the law springs not from obedience to a stern voice of duty but from an overpowering impulse; he **loves** the law of the Lord; he does the things of the law not because he must, but because he wills to do them.

As such love is certainly the crowning glory of faith's works, and this finally so much the more, because of the three supereminent graces — faith, hope, charity — which are the very life and soul of our holy religion, binding as they do to God and immortality — love abideth forever. The time is coming when faith will give place to sight, and hope, to fruition. Their office has been fulfilled, their end achieved, and their very being changed; but love shall live on and never change. It is the fruit of faith which never ceases, the goal, the culmination of all other gifts. We are saved by faith and hope, but the very life and joy of that salvation is love.

J. J.

### LAMENTATION

That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left . . ."

"The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate, the barns are broken down; for the corn is withered."

"How do the beasts groan! The herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; yea, the flocks of sheep are made desolate." Joel 1:4. 17. 18.

Now is this Scripture fulfilled before our eyes. Stand in the shade of a building and gaze intently into the brassy bowl of a Dakota sky. Through infinite heights their flashing, iridescent wings soar, like chips of mica riding on the merciless wings of the drought-wind. Grasshoppers. Or locusts? Naturalists would know. To us they are simply the horde which is reaching in to end the sentence written upon the parched fields by weeks of blazing sun.

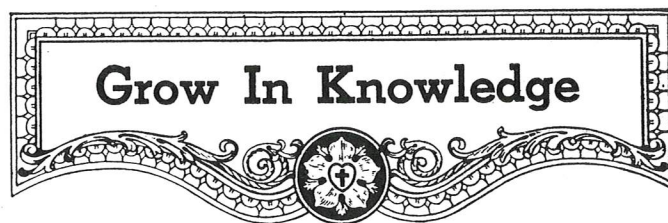
The pastures lie stricken; yet they are alive, crawling with myriads of hungry scavengers that will not yield one spear of struggling grass to the cattle. Where hoofs of cows and sheep tread, they stir up whispy clouds of dusts; for the horde has been before them, and has left only powdery earth to be muzzled and snuffed at by the mouths of beasts grown gaunt and shapeless.

Cattle cars roar through the country-side out of the

West. They carry the hope of many prairie farmers over the whining steel rails: Milch cows whose cream has kept owners and merchants alive, but now sent to the slaughter at utterly inadequate prices because they cannot eat grasshoppers and dust. With them ride sheep flocks, diligently developed and built up for years behind costly miles of woven-wire fencing — now sacrificed to the Moloch of drought. Little pigs squeal in the loading chutes of a thousand shipping corrals. They should be at home stuffing corn and mash until the late fall finds them round and smooth; but the fattening grain they might have had lies rotting under the clods, planted in the dawn of a summer that has made barren the womb of earth.

How eloquent to us are the Prophet's words: "The herds of cattle are perplexed." One must see it to understand. There seems to be a certain wonderment in their vagrant journeyings along the ditches of the road where faded stalks of clover still hold out; or when they lie with heaving sides along the cool surface of the water-tank and close their eyes against the scorching wind. They cannot quite grasp the significance of a world clothed in the blankness of early spring, yet scourged by the unbelievable fury of furnace heat. But when the voice of their master calls them at evening, it conveys to them, perhaps, the feeling that he, like themselves, is searching for an answer to it all, for a plain and certain definition of the words that God is writing upon the fiery skies of the West. We may, perchance, find this also in the Book of Joel.

"O Lord, to thee will I cry; for the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness, and the flame hath burned all the trees of the field." E. S.



### THE FOOLISHNESS OF PREACHING

This essay was read at the convention of the Dakota-Montana District, June 16-19, 1936, and is published here at the request of that body.

If it is possible to compress into one comprehensive word the nature of the work which binds us together, laymen and clergy, into one living, animated whole, into one pulsating organism; which has brought us together here to deliberate and discuss its manifold problems; which commands and by the power of the Holy Spirit receives from us both physical and spiritual, material and mental devotion; that one word would be: **Preaching**.

Perhaps we are prone to forget this truth: That the diversified interests of our synodical body must

not only have their source and motive in the urge to preach, but that they must literally be preaching of one type or another in order to justify their existence. Our schools and seminaries can never be mere educational institutions; they are and must be temples erected for the purpose of preaching. Their curricula, their every discipline must be vehicles for the transmission by proclamation of the Gospel. Our charitable organizations would be utterly sterile if conducted primarily for the sake of sympathetic assistance to the mental and physical cripples among our fellow-men. We think of our sanatoriums and asylums as specialized instruments for bringing preaching to such who cannot be reached effectively in any other way. Always, always, preaching is the object, because preaching is the sole commission of the church as a body.

In evidence we proudly offer our authority. Possibly no one within striking distance of the voice of our ministry has failed to hear the authorization quoted: Preach the Gospel to every creature. For we brandish this as a club in the face of those who would divert the strength of the Church into foreign channels; we lay about with it as with a sword, we use it as a goad for our own sluggish flesh. And we sturdily challenge mankind to show cause for its repeated insistence that the Church has other duties on earth beyond that: To preach the Gospel.

Not quite so frequently, but no less proudly, do we produce for public consumption the verse which contains the charter of our holy calling. Formulated by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 1:21b, it reads, "It hath pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

Men have lavished praise, not without justification, upon the American Declaration of Independence. As our national charter, it is unquestionably one of the noblest documents of human history. Yet it is, when measured in terms of time and space, limited both in scope and influence. The charter of the Church defies all attempts at evaluation. It embodies all philosophy, it shatters every preconceived human equation. When Paul and Silas came to Thessalonica, it was their activity under the great charter which earned them the reputation of being "men who turned the world upside down." Every word of the charter is a revolution in human thought. It sets forth a pleased God, an unknown and unsought means of salvation, a divine use of folly. It has brought to the Church both a notoriety for being the greatest drag on progress, and the honor of being the only force in the universe by which true progress has ever been achieved.

To focus the eyes upon this charter of our common calling and united labor is indeed a wholesome exercise. For here lies the battle-ground of the Church; here we stand or fall. And ironically enough, de-

velopments of the last fifty years increasingly tend to show that the enemy of the Church has accepted her terms, and has begun to fight it out with her upon this very ground. The gauntlet has been thrown and the battle drawn upon the very heart of the charter, which is the phrase: Foolishness of preaching.

A pungent phrase it is, and extremely realistic, as a moment of closer study reveals. The Greek term *moria*, which gives us the translation **foolishness**, has a familiar ring to all who have been reading newspapers since 1924, when the famous case of Leopold and Loeb broke into the headlines and made America conscious of a new group of human beings classed as morons. The derivation is from this very Greek word *moria*, and indicates for us the element of degenerate idiocy which may be read into the expression. The sub-normal stupidity of preaching is the declared, eternal method of the Church in its work.

It is no longer enough that we take pride in this evidence of the unearthly character of our charter; we must realize also that "foolishness of preaching" is no longer a monopoly of the Christian Church. Competition has become tremendous. Foolishness of preaching God wants? Very well — Satan through the modern pulpit has chiseled a square peg to fit into this round hole. Now we have foolish preaching in every pulpit bearing the emblem of Christ; yet not in one out of three do we find the genuine article. Most of it is sheer counterfeit — the answer of the devil to our charter and its challenge. It behooves us to distinguish. Foolishness varies in form and substance. There is divine foolishness and human foolishness. Our first defense against the rising tide of modern preaching lies in careful examination of our charter, and in thus properly establishing the difference between the preaching which we uphold, and the preaching which has been so brazenly imposed upon a sin-sick world by the prophets who preach their own thoughts and say: God saith it. Our Lutherans have often enough been told that, to listen to preaching outside their own Church is probably wasted time, and possibly harmful to their souls. Not all preaching is true preaching. Let us make an effort to explore this matter thoroughly.

## I

### The Preaching in Which We Engage, and to Which Our People Listen, is Foolishness

The Apology of the Augsburg Confession states that the preaching of the Gospel is the chief service of God (Trig., p. 327, Art. 18, 42). With such supreme evaluation, we are prepared to find that preaching is an occupation unsurpassed by the greatest achievement of man. And it is true, even by consent of the ungodly world, that the evangelism of the Church is a performance unique in history and sublime in its devotion to a cause.

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The preaching of which we speak is New Testament preaching, which as an undertaking of the Church was foreshadowed by John the Baptist, instituted by Christ, and initiated on the day of Pentecost. Since then it has made its way through the centuries, encompassing all shades and conditions of men, existing in every imaginable environment, pioneering always, and again bringing up the rere-guard of human advance. As evidence of its astonishing power to pervade the life of the world, to be at the forefront, the center and the death of nations, kingdoms and empire-buildings, consider that, in 1532, forty years after the discovery of America by Columbus and two years after the Diet at Augsburg, the Augsburg Confession was ratified and signed by a colony of German emigrants in Venezuela, South America. Although preaching, Gospel-preaching, stands alone and apart, olympian in its solitude in the cosmos, having no counter-part and no precedent, making no compromise with anything of this world, asking no favors and receiving none, the world finds it impossible to do anything, say anything or think anything without reference to such preaching. Every philosopher is compelled, and instinctively tries, to estimate the effect which millions of sermons, saturating the earth to its bowels may have on the results of his philosophical conclusions. Every artist of any lasting fame has had to dip pen or brush into the ink that spatters the manuscripts of Gospel-preachers. Every literary man must draw inspiration from the efforts of those men that fill the language with their sacred expressions. Every evil enterprise must pause to match wits with the granite rock of a stumbling that weak mortals have by the word of their mouth cast into its path. When yet in its infancy and earliest bloom, this astonishing influence of preaching made itself felt. Alone and unbefriended, a prisoner beneath the rock-ribbed fortress of Machaerus, John the Baptist held at bay the blood-thirsty tyrant Herod by

the sheer weight of sermons. By his preaching young Stephen had an entire city on edge until his mouth was stopped. The good advice of Gamaliel in the council chamber was not the power which prevented assassination of Peter and John, but was used as an opportune excuse for escape by those who could not face the necessity of proceeding into the teeth of the preaching in the name of Christ. It was the preacher Paul who, because he would not be silent, called the city militia into action at Jerusalem. Again it was Paul who charmed the venomous Felix for two years at Caesarea, and forced an audience with Agrippa and his wife.

There is in this world no manner of escape, for either the wise or the fool, the king or the knave, the rich or the poor, the filthy-mouthed scum or the silken-tongued blasphemer, from the pervading force of New Testament preaching. And the strange observation is made that, despite its apparent power, it makes no pretenses of greatness. The world has known many forms of proclamation, and many means of communication. Always there have been men who had ideas to submit, news to impart, messages to bring, ambassador's duties to perform. But there has been no similarity between them and the preachers of Christ. What bearer of a King's tidings, for example, has ever gone afoot, from Samaria half-way to the sink-hole of Ethiopia, trudging along a desert wagon trail in order to impress his message upon a solitary, emasculated servant of a negro queen? What man having rocked a barbaric Asia and a savage Macedonian coast with oratory, could be found, as Paul was, calmly sitting in Aquila's tent-shop stitching leather for a living? When has a man, sought after by a proud Roman army commander, ever been found in the home of a tanner by the sea, as Peter was? And when did the world, with its great discoveries and splendid developments to advertise, consider a handful of laundry-women by the river-side in Philippi an adequate and satisfying audience?

To say, then, that Gospel-preaching is an unusual phenomenon is to indulge in an understatement. This preaching, now more than 1900 years old, having shaped the course of history and cradled the world in the hollow of its voice, yet equally vigorous and earnest in an audience of one and before the assembled court of kings, is utterly sublime because it is heaven-born, heaven-sent and heaven-powered. We are proud and deeply humbled in the privilege of being associated with it and instrumental in its perpetuation. Our laymen who support it with the toil of their hands, our ministers who surrender body and mind and heart to its service, exult in the knowledge that they, too, are permitted to be behind the driving might of that medium by which, as our charter states, it pleases God, yesterday, today and to the end of the world to save them that believe.

At this point, however, we crash with paralyzing force against the cool assertion of the Apostle that our preaching is a foolishness. Coming as it does, almost like an evil echo to our hymn of praise to preaching, the statement sounds libellous and abusive. But we shall learn presently to grant, and grant cheerfully, its description of our work. For by all human standards which after all are inevitable yardsticks of every human effort, Gospel-preaching is foolish to the point of being moronic. We shall examine this charge in detail.

The form and nature of Gospel-preaching are its first characteristics to conform to the allegation of foolishness. Every human craft is subject to variation and fluctuation of quality. Some doctors apply the art of healing better than others; when they do, their work is more effective, for the effectiveness of medicine and surgery depends greatly upon the skill with which they are administered. Some lawyers know their law better than others; they are thus the men to look for when involved in legal difficulties. Without unnecessarily adducing more examples, it is plain to everyone that human work not only varies in value, but achieves its purpose in direct relation to the skill of the worker. But the Church insists that preaching does not follow this natural order. Gospel preaching is always at par. Now we grant that there is a difference in preachers. Some are eloquent, some are hesitant and heavy of tongue. Some command the language, others are enchained by language. Some have a more ready mastery of the intricate interrelation of Law and Gospel than others. Some enjoy a more pleasing appearance on the pulpit and elsewhere than others. Yet this varying quality of workmanship has no bearing upon Gospel preaching. The art is greater than its craftsman. Pure, cold water drawn from a stone well by a moss-covered bucket is as delicious and refreshing and wholesome as the same water flowing from the elaborate beauty of a chromium faucet in a tiled kitchen. One is crude, the other a refined product; but the water, coming from the same source, is unaffected by its vehicle. The analogy holds. Pure Gospel preaching, with its power and grace, derives neither harm nor benefit from the quality of the instrument, the preacher. Be he a good preacher or a poor preacher, the Truth from his lips is always magnificently the same.

We acknowledge this, as pastors and as congregations, in the attitude we take toward the calling of a minister. What we want is Gospel preaching in our churches, not a fashion-plate or a Doctor of Philosophy in our pulpit. If we get all three, well and good; but we do not call ministers on that basis. If a congregation insists on human qualifications, it has lost sight of the fact that preaching is foolishness. We have known vacant congregations to ask ministers to

come and deliver a sample-sermon before they extend a call. Such practice is not only improper, it is folly. What are they looking for? The pure Gospel? If they call a man proposed by the officials, they are sure of getting that. If they seek more, then they forget that no man, regardless of his personal abilities, can do more for the Gospel than simply to preach it. If congregations want only a Gospel preacher, they may as well inquire after his table manners, which have as much bearing on the needs of the parish as oratory and a Ph. D. If they are looking for more than pure Gospel preaching, let them hire a hall and engage a Chatauqua lecturer; they do not want a preacher, they want a sideshow performer.

Thus we deal with preaching differently than with any other human undertaking. And to the world it is very silly. It knows of no work which is not measurable by the varying skill of those who perform it. Men continue to judge clergymen by the way they preach, not merely by what they preach. For that reason we find men like Fosdick and Cadman in the spotlight of admiration.

The world further insists that there cannot possibly be any virtue in saying the same thing over and over again. If advertisers do it, that may be a business advantage; but it is none the less slightly moronic. Even the advertisers, however, do not carry repetition beyond a certain point; when it becomes unbearable to the greatest number of people, they shift to something new. But what shall one say about Gospel-preaching? It is not only always the same thing, but it has been going on for 1900 years. Still its proponents maintain that it has lost none of its persuasive value.

The charge is justified. Our preaching is foolishness because it is everlastingly unchanged in its message. Our people know what they are going to hear before they set foot in our churches. It follows reasonably that they could improve themselves by staying at home and eliminating the preacher. For the sermon will be about Christ; about the curse of the Law from which He redeemed us, the blessings He has earned for us, the life to which He has bound us. Everything we say has been said a million times before, often better than we can say it. As in God, so there is in Gospel-preaching "no variableness or shadow of turning." This sameness is only emphasized in the style of our service liturgies, which, while not uniform, is nevertheless as permanent as the tide.

The world demands novelty; for novelty is motion, and motion is life. Our preaching is static, therefore dead. Our claim that it is the galvanic source of all true spiritual life is disallowed with the sardonic smile that brands us as purveyors of childish nonsense.

If the content of our preaching were something else than the Gospel, even the world might suspend its judgment, or at least judge more mercifully. If,

for example, we proclaimed an involved type of social philosophy, it could be conceded that men would need to listen to two millenniums of it before grasping its meaning. But unfortunately for our reputation, even the contents of our sermons are foolish. For one thing, our preaching assumes too much as proven fact which has not been and cannot be proven. If we list the premises upon which our message is based, we startle and disgust every man who operates with what he calls his mind. Gospel-preaching takes for granted that there is a heaven and a hell. We are vague about the location and dimensions of these mansions of the hereafter, we do not feel able to describe them except by comparison with human concepts. We cannot prove their existence. Yet the assumption that people will after death occupy one or the other of these estates is fundamental to the entire Gospel message. — In like manner, our preaching insists that the Bible be, without any preliminary argument whatever, accepted as infallible though written by men, as a complete record of God's revelation to men, regardless of the similar claims of other sacred writings, as the unerring norm and guide of life and morals. Enough has been written and said on this subject since the Reformation for every one of us to realize what we mean by our tenet that the Bible is the Word of God, and how completely our preaching stands and falls with this proposition. We must be fully aware, however, that this and similar bases of preaching are rationally and logically unproven assumptions. Insofar as the world considers them unreasonable, it will consider Gospel-preaching foolishness.

We on our part do not always appreciate how unreasonable our basic doctrines seem to the natural man, because we are new creatures who operate by faith. It seems natural to us to accept the principle of an infallible Book and a two-fold eternal fate as absolutely established premises, because the authority of faith has superseded the authority of human reason. But faith is a miracle wrought by the Spirit of God, and not a human instrument. The world says, with Dr. Durant: "For our part, we cast in our lot with sensation and reason, content to accept life as the test of our thinking." What it thinks of faith and its great Exponent is accurately confessed by Nietzsche, who remarks in his book called "Antichrist" that "in the whole Testament there appears but a solitary figure worthy of honor: Pilate," who "enriched the New Testament with the only saying in it that has any value — What is Truth?" While reasoning man does indeed admit that any attempt to construct a system of philosophy or of metaphysics necessarily predicates the assumption of certain basic, though unproven, principles, he nevertheless insists that these principles dare not be of such nature as to violate the laws of nature, reason and experience.

When we, therefore, preach Christ Savior from hell and Satan, and with Him a complete philosophy of life from origins to eschatology, the world challenges our premises, which have no standing in reason. God made me, therefore I am, is unspeakably foreign to the mind of Descartes who said: "I think, therefore I am." God saw my lost estate and desired my salvation, is a statement containing at least three assumptions which grate on the mind of the materialist, who has seen God in nature and defines man as a development of living atomic matter into mind-matter. Having successfully found a God in the electron, the world is sunk in nature-worship. What does it matter that the scientists violently disagree on details? Who cares that they, looking suspiciously at one another resemble the Quaker who said to his wife: Everybody is queer but me and thee; and sometimes I think thee art a little queer too? At least the fundamentals are agreed upon: There is no personal God, and man has no lost estate.

With that declaration, making our premises void, our preaching receives its judgment. Religion is the opium of the people. Gospel-preachers are throwbacks to the dinosaur age — creatures with mammoth energy and brains the size of a pin-head, who have, as Mencius says of most men, thrown that little away which makes us differ from animals — reason. And if the preachers are so regarded, what will be said of those who listen to them? Our Gospel is unreasonable, therefore preaching is foolishness, the work and joy of morons.

The deep abyss that lies between the reasoning unbelieving world and the Christian who regards faith as supreme, is so great that we do not bridge it even by flashes of sympathetic understanding for the world in its aversion to our unproven premises. But it touches our sensitive center of doubt very much more directly when our preaching is branded as foolishness because of its avowed objective.

Why do we preach? By our charter we declare that "it hath pleased God by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." We must pause a moment to analyze the meaning of this declaration. We profess to save people by preaching to them. That might be reasonable even to the world if we meant it in the right sense. Suppose that we had discovered by reasoning and deduction, a way in which people might save themselves; and suppose that we engaged, as a church, in trying to teach and instruct men to see the logic of our way and adopt it. Suppose that we said: If thus and so, and do thus and so, experience has taught us that you can find salvation. Would not that be favorably regarded by the world? Salvation is a universal word. Many people understand many things by it — salvation from social evils, salvation from economic evils, salvation from the machine age, or salvation in a heaven after death. Even with the

last-named could the world reconcile itself, if only we permitted it to save itself and offered merely to be its guide and advisers.

But that is not what we intend with preaching. We believe that preaching saves people. We do not offer them a method for self-salvation, with detailed instructions in ten lessons at \$1.00 each. We preach salvation into their hearts. We believe that, when we preach the Gospel, it does three things: It carries the gift of salvation into the heart, creates in the heart a longing for it, and then leaves it here as a treasured possession. The people do nothing — the activity of proclaiming the message does everything through the Holy Spirit who uses it as a vehicle. In short, the preached Gospel is in itself essentially a power of God conferring salvation upon the hearers.

We ourselves are stunned by this claim. Our own reason stirs in its narrow confinement. How can preaching do such great things? Thus avowed, its principle seems stupid. Does the act of advertising a refrigerator make it mine and install it in my kitchen? Does the tale of a great banquet automatically give me a seat at the table with the odors of food rising to my nostrils? Does the financial statement of a bank place its resources on my checking account? Such utopian dreams out-trust the brain trust. Small wonder that the world smiles crookedly at the Church which professes by the word of its mouth to transfer the treasures of God into the laps of its children. There is no realism in the claim, not even honest idealism. The foolishness of morons, nothing more.

So we have frankly revealed the truth of our common work as it appears to everything earthly, to the human mind and heart. There has been no attempt made here to defend our Christian position or to show that reason is a failure and true faith the only reliable source of knowledge. For such an effort is needless on the one hand, and would further involve us in an exploration of human philosophy. It is enough to say that, to our mind, the premises of our preaching have been proven far more conclusively than the assumptions of philosophers; they are in accord with experience, very logical, have been tried in the fire of persecution through many centuries and not found wanting. We shall not cease with Gospel-preaching; it is our life and love. But it is necessary that we cherish no illusions about the figure we are cutting in this world. We are regarded as morons. When it does seem that the world is showing us some honor and respect, let it be perfectly clear to us that such kindness has no relation to our Gospel-preaching. When the world honors us, it forgets for the moment what we really are. That fact ought to make us suspicious of all charitable treatment which we receive. We must not allow the world to forget what we stand for.

But we do, and it does. People are naturally superstitious, for all their prating about reason. There is something mystical about the Church which impresses superstition and softens the animal heart of the unbeliever. And so, ministers receive respectful treatment, and congregations are regarded as powerful agencies. But let them flash their banner and declare their sole interest and purpose. Immediately everybody moves back into their proper alignment, and we stand self-condemned, like Paul in Athens, sneered at as hollow drums whose voices only disturb, but do not serve, the needs of rational men. We are outcasts of society, aliens in a strange country, so long as we persist in the foolishness of preaching. E. S.

(To be continued)



#### P. T. Barnum and the Churches

News reports are that Supreme Justice Paul Bonyngue ruled that citizens may place bets on the greyhounds raced by the Nassau County Kennel club at the Mineola fair grounds. The judge said in his decision, if reported correctly in the Milwaukee Journal: "More than half a century ago P. T. Barnum recorded the fact that the American people delight in being humbugged, and such is still a national mood. Nowhere is the trait more clearly shown than in the field of gambling. A church fair or bazaar would scarcely be complete without a bevy of winsome damsels selling chances on bedquilts, radios and electric irons and a host of other things."

"If the proceeds are to be devoted to the ladies' sewing circles or to the minister's vacation, no sin is perceived, and the local police and the prosecutor, whoever he may be, stays his hand, but if a couple of dusky youth are apprehended rolling bones justice perceives the infamy of the performance and the law takes its course."

One can hardly blame the judge for his sarcastic fling at the hypocrisy and credulity of the American public. The question arises for us: Are we justified in giving offense to the jeering world by resorting to such tricks as these mentioned above to raise money for the church? Is it not about time that we grew out of this silly habit? Think it over. Z.

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**Church Attendance and Birth Control** It was Roger W. Babson, newly elected moderator of the General Council of Congregational and Christian Churches in Massachu-

setts, who linked these two up in his address to this body. "As head of a special commission on the study of church attendance, "according to the Rev. John Evans in the Chicago Tribune, "Mr. Babson has been engaged in compiling church statistics during the last seven years. His studies, he stated, now show that Congregational pews are seldom more than one-third full and that there are never more than 25 percent of the actual members of a given congregation in attendance at any regular divine services."

Among the reasons for this sad state of affairs, Mr. Babson blamed the decline in Congregationalism's birth rate. "Unless Congregationalism is to suffer dire consequences, most of our churches must encourage larger families and see that they are trained in the Christian life. Our declining birth rate is an important reason for the appalling decline in our Sunday schools. A willingness to sacrifice to have children and to give them home Christian training is fundamental to an efficient church."

Mr. Babson's point, of course, is well taken. There is no gainsaying the fact that our birth rate throughout the country is declining alarmingly. Families of seven or eight children are becoming exceedingly rare among us. One or two children used to be the rule some time ago, but now the childless home is becoming a usual thing. We are aware of stepping on delicate if not dangerous ground in discussing this problem in a church paper; so we will confine ourselves to the facts without going into the manifold causes. The facts are seen, if not in our church attendance, on our church records. Where a congregation, of let us say 200 families, had fifty to sixty baptisms in a year, and classes of 30 to 40 catechumens for confirmation, the number has now dwindled to much less than half of that. That raising families of the size that our fathers did calls for more sacrifices than it did years ago may well be granted. There are many reasons for this. But we said that we would not go into these reasons. It is not easy to do justice in many individual cases, however easy it may be to pass judgment. Not because of the effect it may have upon church and home and state, but because our Lord has said in blessing: Be fruitful and multiply, we should discourage race suicide and birth control.

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**A New Russian Constitution**, among other things, such as guaranteeing protection for private property as houses, household furnishings, articles of personal consumption and comfort, and savings accounts," also promises complete religious freedom, separates church and state, permits voluntary religious organizations, and gives assurance of freedom of speech and of the press. This constitution as promulgated on June 12 transforms the soviet dictatorship into a government based upon the free

and universal franchise of all the people regardless of status, sex, property and political opinions.

Pertinently inquires the Christian Century: "Where is the catch in all this? Or is there one?" Judging by past performances of the soviet in giving out fair words that in no wise agreed with the deeds perpetrated in its name, we had better reserve our jubilation over this apparent setting free of the church in Russia. There is a joker. The church is to bring its prestige and teaching to bear upon the people "for the purpose of strengthening the socialist system." That may cover much.

We hope that further reports on this question may resolve some of our doubts and fears as related to the nearly suppressed church in Russia. Z.

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**The Ignorance of Our Young People** The Living Church quotes some questions asked by the boys of St. Giles' Cathedral Club, Edinburgh.

"Can we prove that the story of Christ's resurrection is true?"

Do we really know anything at all about life after death?

Isn't it possible to be good without being a Christian?

How is it possible for anyone to be like Jesus Christ?

What is sin? Is there a personal devil? Is there a hell?

Why is it necessary to go to church?

There are others that show the great need of instruction to correct this lamentable ignorance of the young. Such instruction can and must be the only remedy. But if that instruction is not honestly Biblical, is not thoroughly based upon an extensive knowledge of the Bible, if it is only a smattering of religious half-truths, without going deeper into the real meaning of our beliefs and hopes, then such teaching can tend only to the greater confusion of the young.

The editorial writer in the Living Church blames the spread of present day scientific knowledge for the ignorance of the young in matters of religion and faith. We hardly can agree with him. It is not the great variety of present day knowledge and its mass that is laid before the young that is to blame, but the fact that our young people have not been trained in the fundamental facts of our religion, so that they can rightly place and give the true value to these worldly sciences. In other words, a good and thorough knowledge of God's Word is the only means for correctly judging the findings of human wisdom. To be learned in Scriptures means to understand and rightly judge of all knowledge.



Meanwhile it will not do to underestimate this ignorance of the young and of the old as well, for that matter, in religious things. Pastors may well heed the criticism that a frank vestryman voiced on a sermon by his pastor. The Living Church tells the story. This preacher spoke on the parable of the Prodigal Son. "You all know the story," said he in opening his discourse. This was the deacon's criticism on that: "Never take anything for granted. You had people in church who come only occasionally in Lent or at Easter and Christmas; you had others whose early teaching was scrappy and who don't know a thing in the Bible. Why not tell the story? Even those who think they are familiar with it have only a vague remembrance. You can't be sure that anybody knows anything. Don't let them guess it, but take for granted that most of them are pretty ignorant. Tell them, and tell them once more, and next year tell them all over again."

These words of sage advice by the frankly speaking deacon may well be heeded by all of us, in the pulpit and in the pew. We take too much for granted. It is for us to patiently tell the Bible truths and stories over and over again to our people. As the Living Church puts it: "That goes for young people and for adults too."

Z.



## Our Synod

### WHY DO WE STILL STRESS THE STUDY OF GERMAN AT OUR SYNODICAL INSTITUTIONS?

We are often confronted with the question why we still lay so much stress on the study of German at our synodical institutions. Why do we insist that the students attending our Northwestern College possess not only a good reading, but also a fairly good speaking knowledge of German when they graduate? Since these and similar questions seem to indicate a lack of insight, a lack of understanding and appreciation of the value and importance of the knowledge of German in our work, we shall endeavor to answer these questions and state a few of the reasons why the study of German is still obligatory at our college.

We hope that we are agreed that our college at Watertown exists primarily for the purpose of preparing young men for the study of theology and the holy ministry. They are to receive the general education required and necessary for the profitable and successful pursuit of their theological studies at our

Theological Seminary at Thiensville. But what has the study of German to do with that? Let us see.

It is an undeniable fact that the bulk of our genuine and soundly Lutheran theological literature is found in the German language, written originally in German by German theologians. And the top rank, as far as volume and value is concerned, is held by the truly inexhaustible treasure of the writings, the works of Luther. These alone comprise twenty-four volumes. Now if our students of theology and future pastors no longer possess a fair knowledge of German, these truly inexhaustible and invaluable sources will no longer be accessible to them. And if they can no longer draw from these genuine Lutheran sources they will have to, and will, turn to the English sources, and will to a great extent be dependent on them and draw from them. And since most of these are Calvinistic and sectarian in spirit, and since it is perfectly natural that they will gradually be influenced and affected by it and eventually absorb much of it, the results will be that the genuine, positive Lutheranism will be diluted, weakened, and endangered, and, indeed, eventually will be completely lost. And such loss would truly be irreparable, would indeed be disastrous. For if the true Lutheranism, and which is the same, true Christianity, has once disappeared from among us and once been lost, we will never regain it. It will never return again. This fact the history of the Christian church clearly and undeniably teaches us. If, then, the true, positive Lutheranism is to remain with us and among us, it is absolutely essential that our students of theology and our pastors continue to have access to the genuinely Lutheran sources, and can draw from them directly. But this requires a fairly good reading knowledge of German.

But why not translate all these German works into English? That would solve the whole problem, wouldn't it? It would, if such translation were possible. But we are frankly very sceptical about this. The people that make such proposal evidently have no clear and adequate conception of the immensity of such task. They clearly do not realize and see what a vast amount of time and effort it would require to translate only the most essential and valuable of these works into English. We are, therefore, convinced that this work cannot and will not be done. It cannot be done because our Lutheran Church in America is beyond the "order of its first love," and therefore is lacking that spiritual fervor and enthusiasm, that inner drive necessary for such a huge task. It seems imperative, therefore, that our teachers and pastors know enough German so that they have direct access to, and can draw from, the original German sources. And that means that we shall have to continue to stress the study of German at our academies and colleges.

It is furthermore our opinion that for another generation, or more, there will be a goodly number of congregations in our synod that will demand divine services in the German language, and that actually stand in need of them. And they stand in need of German services because of the presence of a goodly number of older members who have received their religious instruction, or training, through the medium of the German language, who naturally will not receive the spiritual benefits or blessings from an English sermon that they would from a German. It seems to us that it would be just as uncharitable to force English services on these older people as it would be if we forced German services on the younger people that have little or no knowledge of German. In both cases the results would be the same. It is this fact that makes it necessary for us to advance our students sufficiently in the German so that at the time of their graduation they possess not only a good reading, but also a fairly good speaking knowledge of that language.

Furthermore we must not overlook the fact that our academies and colleges are also attended by students that are not preparing themselves for the Lutheran ministry but for some other secular calling or profession. Here again it is a fact that cannot be denied that in the whole field of the sciences and the arts, in practically every special branch of them, there are works, classical, fundamental works to be found in the German language. Whether the students later on wants to take up the study of chemistry, physics, electrical engineering, forestry, medicine, history, or philosophy that makes little difference, in each one of these fields or branches he will find books, works of inestimable value in the German language. And to many of these sources the student must have access, direct access, if he is to do the best work possible in that respective field. This again makes necessary a fairly good knowledge of German.

Finally, we are still old-fashioned enough to believe that if one lays claims to a general education one ought to master besides his own tongue at least one other living language. That is the view quite generally held in most of the European countries. How narrow-minded and foolish, on the other hand, is the opinion one often meets over here, that one, the national, the English language is perfectly sufficient — "United States is good enough for me" — and that it is nonsense and a waste of time and effort to acquire a second or a third tongue besides. We are trying to combat this narrow and foolish view with every possible means and insist that the young people that attend our college with the object of obtaining a general education, study, and attempt to master, besides their native tongue at least one other living language. That this primarily is the German language

is quite natural and really self-evident for the reasons stated above.

G. A. Westerhaus.

† RUTH INA KOBS †

It has pleased the almighty God to summon out of this vale of tears to our eternal home Ruth Ina Kobs, infant daughter of Rev. and Mrs. George Kobs of Markesan, Wis. She was born on the 12th day of May, 1936, and received the sacrament of Holy Baptism on the 31st day of May. She died while sleeping, without any pain, apparently well on the morning of June 17. The Rev. Max Hensel preached a most comforting sermon on the words of the prophet Is. 54:15. May our God who inflicted this sorrow abide with the parents and comfort them according to His divine promise: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Wm. Wadzinski.

**FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF TRINITY  
EV. LUTH. CHURCH OF HOSKINS, NEB.**

Trinity Ev. Luth. Church of Hoskins was privileged on June 27 to celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. Two special festival services were held in which Rev. J. Dowidat of Oakfield, Wis., Prof. F. Brenner of our Seminary in Thiensville, Wis., Rev. J. Harms of Lyons, Neb., all three former pastors of the congregation, and Rev. F. Miller, Colome, S. D., a son of the congregation, delivered the jubilee sermons. The offering was devoted to the synodical treasury.

Pastor M. Pankow of Norfolk, Neb., began to conduct Lutheran services in Hoskins the early fall of 1886. December 6 of the same year a meeting was held in the home of Mr. Wm. Zutz, which resulted in the organization of the congregation. Only one of the original charter members survives, and he is now a member of a sister congregation in Norfolk.

At first services were held twice a month on Sunday afternoons in the Hoskins Public School. Already at the organization meeting, however, preliminary plans were made to acquire a church home. The plans, under the blessing of the Lord, developed so speedily that the church building could be dedicated on November 13, 1887. This building served the congregation as its house of worship until October 30, 1904, when the present church building was dedicated. This building was seriously damaged by a windstorm April 29, 1933, but, after having been repaired and renovated, could again be placed into use the following June.

During the first ten years of its history the congregation was served by pastors from Norfolk and Winside. The first resident pastor was Rev. John Dowidat (1896-1898). He was followed by Rev. R. Gruber (1898-1908), Rev. J. Aaron (1908-1928), Rev. J. Harms (1918-1919), Rev. F. Brenner (1919-1929), and the present pastor, Im. P. Frey, since 1930.

In order to provide for the religious instruction of the children the first resident pastors conducted a parochial school. In fact, when the first church building was sold, the proceeds were used to erect a school building, which served until the present modern structure was completed in January, 1925. The first regularly called teacher was Mr. Victor Albrecht, who served from 1922 to 1927. He was followed by Mr. C. A. Finup, who has been in charge of the school since.

No records concerning the official acts in the congregation during the first ten years, when the congregation was being served by neighboring pastors, are available. But since 1896 the following official acts have been performed: Baptisms, 600; confirmations, 409; marriages, 109; burials, 131.

According to the last annual report, the congregation at present numbers 290 communicant and 79 voting members.

May the precious seed of the Gospel which has been planted and watered these fifty years continue to sprout and prosper under the benediction of Him who alone can give the increase. I. P. F.

#### MICHIGAN DISTRICT CONVENTION

The Michigan District of the Evangelical Joint Synod of Wisconsin convened at Benton Harbor, Michigan, June 18 to June 23. The local congregation, St. Matthew's Ev. Luth. Church, and her pastor, the Rev. H. C. Haase, were most generous hosts.

The Synod was duly opened with a divine service, the local pastor officiating at the altar and the Honorable President J. Gauss, of Jenera, Ohio, preaching the sermon. In his sermon based on the Word, Matt. 28, 16-20, Pastor Gauss sounded the theme which was to dominate the entire convention, "*Onward for Christ.*" In pointing the convention to Christ, Pastor Gauss called attention to three points: 1, that Christ was and is the Son of God; 2, that Christ became true man assuming the nature of those whom He had come to seek and to save, according to which nature *all power was given unto Him in heaven and on earth*; 3, and that this *God-man* who here speaks in the text is the *victorious* Christ, who not only bought back the souls of lost and condemned mankind with His life-blood as the price, but also overcame and completely despoiled the enemy, Satan, the world, and our flesh. Thus with authority to speak the victorious God-Man now commissions His disciples, "to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Thus we, the Lutheran Church of today, having the same commission to "go and make disciples" need not hesitate, need not fear, knowing that the Christ who has sent us also has the power to accomplish that whereunto we are sent. The Lutheran Church which has been signally blessed with the pure teachings of God's Word, need not hesitate to do its required work. Imbued with the Spirit from our

Lord, Jesus Christ, the ministers, disciples, though powerless in themselves, become ambassadors of peace and good will on earth. For this reason the Lutheran Church with its pastors, teachers, and laymen, must at all times recognize its responsibility and respond with hearts and hands and voices; hearts which cling to scriptural truth in faith, hands which are ready at all times to support the work in the Lord's kingdom, and voices which are ready at all times to preach from the house-tops the word of "reconciliation between God and man." Thus all members of the Synod were urged to keep this thought uppermost in their hearts and minds as she again set about doing "our Father's business," that all things might be done decently and in order, to the glory of God's most Holy Name and to the salvations of the souls of sinners.

On Thursday, 1:00 P. M., the Honorable President Gauss declared the meeting officially opened and proceeded to give his report on all activities within the district during the past biennium. In his introductory remarks, attention was called to the 75th Anniversary of the Michigan Synod. In giving a sketch of the activities of the body it was pointed out among other things that this body was organized on December 10, 1860, at Detroit, Michigan, with eight pastors under the presidency of Pastor Friedrich Schmidt, who in 1831 was sent from Wuertemberg, Germany, to a settlement of Wuertemberg immigrants near the present site of Ann Arbor, Michigan. The Synod was organized and adopted a constitution based on a solid doctrinal foundation, obligating itself to all the canonical books of both the Old and New Testaments as the sole rule and standard of faith and life, and to all the books of our Evangelical Lutheran Church as the true interpretations of Holy Scripture. In the summer of 1892 at a regular meeting of the Synodical Conference, the Michigan Synod was accepted as a member, and during the fall of the following year, together with Wisconsin and Minnesota Synods, organized to form the General Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan and Other States. Because of a division of opinion regarding the Seminary at Saginaw, Michigan, the District Synod was organized, but continued to fulfill her obligations toward the Synodical Conference and this General Synod. Today the Michigan District is still a member of the Synodical Conference and is one of the eight districts forming the organization officially known as The Evangelical Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States.

Conservative Lutheran practice could be noticed in all activities reported within the district. Anniversaries of church organization and dedication as well as ordination of pastors, and other jubilees, were confined to a proper service of thanksgiving. Visitations of both congregations and schools were properly made by the respective officials. Conferences, both pastoral and delegate, were held regularly throughout the district. Special mention was made of the fact that not only were these conferences well attended, but good sound spiritual food was provided for all concerned.

A committee appointed by the chair drew up a necrology for each of the sainted pastors, Pastor G. F. Wacker, of Pigeon, Mich.; Pastor Paul Schulz, of Scio, Mich.; Pastor J. Wuerthner, em., of Saginaw, Mich.

The selection of district officials brought few changes. Pastor J. Gauss, who for the past ten years so faithfully and unselfishly served as president of the district, found it necessary because of ill health to resign his office. Reluctantly the convention accepted the resignation, but in turn elected the honored pastor to the second vice-presidency. Other officers elected were: President, Pastor Karl Krauss, Lansing, Mich.; 1st Vice-President, Pastor A. Westendorf, Bay City, Mich.; Secretary, Pastor O. Hueschen, Owosso, Mich.; Recording Secretary, Pastor Ad. Lederer, Saline, Mich. Pastor E. Wenk, of Saginaw, Mich., was again elected to serve as treasurer. The Mission Board which served the district during the past two years was again elected to serve for the next biennium.

Though the report on the individual stations in the district, as read by the chairman of the Mission Board, revealed marked progress in each station and was received with thanksgiving, the Synod nevertheless found special cause to rejoice, namely, because new fields had been opened and more men had been placed. Not only did the Synod urge all stations which at present are being subsidized to put forth every effort to reduce the subsidy and become self-supporting, but when considering the financial status of the district, and in keeping with the dominating theme of the convention, also resolved to encourage each individual member of Synod to put his shoulder to the wheel and support the work of our Lutheran Church with prayers as well as with their gifts. The fact that 28 young men are at the present time standing at attention awaiting the word of the church, "we are ready to send you," a command which in every sense of the word they have a right to expect according to Rom. 10, 15: "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" Yes, this fact combined with the great need for the Gospel, a need which today is as great as at any time in the history of the world, should move our Christians to consider the great opportunities and obligations which we have before us. Here is another opportunity for each individual member of our Lutheran Church to carry out the command of our Lord, "Go ye!" by sending these young men who have dedicated their lives to this service. Though we have ample reason to rejoice because of the accomplishments in our mission stations, we still have greater reason to repent of our short-comings and neglects in our giving to the support of the work. This latter fact was brought to light when the financial report of the district was presented to the convention.

It was somewhat gratifying to note the upward trend in contributions throughout the Synod. However, when the figures were considered in the light of God's Word and compared with the many material blessings received and the money needed, the entire body expressed itself as being convinced that many of our Christians had utterly

failed in giving to God the things which were God's. The fact that the Lord is answering our prayers: "Thy kingdom come," should certainly move us to consider what is to be done when the Lord has answered so generously. In failing to do our part, we not only create a deficit in the treasury, a deficit which at the present time stands at several hundred thousand dollars, but we bring about a still greater evil, namely, a paralyzed condition in the work in the Lord's kingdom. Dear reader, please take note of the above statement. Ask your pastor to explain it to you. Bring it to the attention of such fellow-Christians as are not readers of the *Northwestern Lutheran*. That such a condition exists should be warning enough as to what will follow should no effort be made to bring about a change of attitude toward this important part of Christian living.

The present Debt Retirement Plan should receive a hearty response of every Christian in our midst. Here is an opportunity for us to give evidence of the fact that we wish to amend our wrongs done in the past years when we failed to support the work of the Lord without reservation. In doing away with this enormous debt we will be able to turn more than \$30,000 per year into channels which will supply the many needs which have arisen during the last years, as the opening of new mission fields, fulfilling the demands of our institutions, restoring the salaries of our missionaries to a normal level, to say nothing of answering the many other "cries for help." Whether your gift is large or small give it cheerfully, for remember "the Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

The Christian Day School received much attention at the convention. The Synod expressed itself as being convinced that no effort or sacrifice should be spared to implant sound Lutheranism into the hearts of the young, the men and women of tomorrow. Christian training is essential *now* if we would guard our Church of tomorrow. The subject of Christian training for the youth was climaxed with a divine service dedicated to this cause. In his sermon, the Pastor B. Westendorf, of Flint, Mich., not only instructed the pastors, teachers and laymen present to support such efforts within our Lutheran Church, but urged them to inform their congregations of this important part of Christian duty that they, too, might have the opportunity to not only support the cause, but if at all possible to establish such institutions in their midst.

Though the express attitude was to guard and protect our youth by instructing them in Christian doctrine, the Synod was very skeptical regarding the "need" of special attention being given to our young people via "Youth Organizations." The Church is *one* organization, and such a move would be fostering the organization tendencies which already are prevalent in the Lutheran Church. Why throw temptations before them? It might be well to call to mind the words of Luther, "Nothing will keep the people in the Church as well as the good sermon." The Word of God like Christ *was, is, and always will*

be the same. The Word, the Gospel, is still "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth."

The paper presented by Pastor H. Hoenecke on the theme, "Should dinners, ice cream socials, theatrical performances, and other similar activities be permitted in our congregations, particularly if they are used for raising money for synodical and congregational purposes?" was very timely and well presented. The essayist endeavored to show that very few church societies justify their existence. The only justifiable aim of such a group can be to "foster Christian fellowship," a fellowship built on and around Christ. Thus Bible Classes, Sunday Schools and societies for instruction in the Word of God are permissible. Social functions, though introduced by various members, may have been harmless to begin with, have become monstrosities. Though some supervised simple activities may be harmless in themselves, they are nevertheless an appeal to the baser elements in man. Such activities cannot foster Christian fellowship, cannot arouse the interest of the unchurched, since this can be accomplished solely by the Gospel through the Holy Spirit. Such appeals to the flesh cannot build, but only destroy. (Aus dem Fleisch will nicht heraus der Geist.) Fun in the church is indeed a contrast to worship in God's House. All activities within the church separated from the spirit of worship have a tendency to secularize the church and callous Christian virtues. Regarding money making plans and schemes which usually play a prominent part in all church societies, we need say very little. We direct our Christians to read the Word of God, John 2, 13-16 and Matt. 21, 12-13, where the Lord Jesus' wrath and judgment in such matters are recorded. In order that uniform practice may be established within our Lutheran Church regarding all church societies, a committee has been requested to draw up theses clearly defining the scriptural stand and sound Lutheran practice regarding such societies and their activities within the church.

Since the old order of holding the convention over Sunday proved unsatisfactory to all concerned, a resolution was adopted to henceforth hold the convention from Tuesday morning to Friday evening.

The Synod voted cordial thanks to the St. Matthew's Congregation and her shepherd, Pastor H. C. Haase, as well as to Teacher A. Janz and the members of the children's choir. May the Lord reward them for their successful efforts for Christian hospitality.

Thus after several days of earnest and prayerful deliberations of the Lord's work as carried on in our Lutheran Church in the Michigan District, the Synod adjourned Tuesday at 4:00 P. M. And so pastors, teachers, and delegates set out with renewed energy for their homes there to continue their work in the Lord's vineyard.

O Lord of hosts, whose glory fills  
The bounds of the eternal hills,  
And yet vouchsafes in Christian lands,  
To dwell in temples made with hands,

O now and ever, Lord, protect  
The temples of Thine own elect;  
Be Thou in them, and they in Thee,  
O ever-blessed Trinity.

W. E. Steih.

### SOUTH EAST WISCONSIN DISTRICT CONVENTION

The Southeast Wisconsin District of the Joint Synod convened at Wauwatosa, Wis., from June 22 to 26. Host to the convention was St. John's Lutheran Church, C. A. Otto, pastor.

In the opening service Monday forenoon the president of the district, Rev. Paul Bergmann, sounded the keynote in an exposition of 1 Cor. 15, 58; his theme being, "The Admonition of the Apostle Paul to Prosecute the Work of the Lord," — by being, "Steadfast and Unmoveable in the Lord, By Always Abounding in the Work of the Lord, Knowing That Your Work Is Not In Vain In the Lord."

The early part of the afternoon session was devoted to the organization of the Synod and the appointment of committees. The president's report contained a survey of the district's activities the past two years, which indicated that earnest effort and some progress had been made. Presentation and discussion of reports on various educational institutions held the attention of the assembly until adjournment.

The greater part of the week's forenoon sessions were given to hearing and discussing two highly instructive subjects. Prof. Aug. Pieper's exegetical paper on Luke 12, 49-53 was summarized in the theme, "An Earnest Sermon Against Modern Unionistic Tendencies." The expounded truths could not react otherwise than as an incentive and encouragement to more earnest and zealous work in the Lord's vineyard. The essay, "Conservative Lutheran Order of Service With A View to Present Day Liturgical Innovations," as presented by Prof. M. Lehniger was most apt and comprehensive and called forth lively and interesting debate. A vote of thanks and appreciation was voted both essayists.

Business matters consumed the time of the afternoon sessions. Reports of the School Committee and Home Mission Board elicited much pointed discussion, as did also the report of the district treasurer. In connection with the latter a letter addressed to the district by he general president, Rev. J. Brenner, was read to the assembly, which was supplemented by a most earnest exhortation from the general president in person. His remarks "urged all to do their utmost in wiping out the district deficit by the end of the month."

A painstaking and detailed report by Rev. Paul Pieper on the work and progress made thus far in the endeavor to liquidate the synodical debt by July, 1937, showed a goodly number of congregations already at work with others ready to start this fall. The report left an indelible imprint for the need of 100% cooperative effort

by every congregation for the successful termination of this project.

Other reports consumed considerable time, such as, the report of the Board of Trustees, Indian Mission, Negro Mission, Poland Mission and Board of Support. In connection with our Arizona Indian Mission, Rev. F. Up-egger gave reasons why there are no organized congregations in the Apache Indian Mission. The report of the Committee on the Memorial of Young People's Work was accepted. Other reports were referred to the various conferences for further consideration.

Balloting necessary to the election of officers continued at intervals through most of the convention. Elections resulted as follows: President, Rev. Paul Bergmann; 1st Vice-President, Rev. J. Ruege; 2nd Vice-President, Rev. A. Voss; Secretary, Rev. W. Keibel; Essay Recorder, Rev. E. Sponholz; Treasurer, Mr. C. Werner; Mission Board, Rev. A. Halboth, Rev. J. Ruege, Mr. G. Hinz; School Committee, Rev. P. Koehler, Teacher A. Ehlke, Mr. C. Jeske.

In the communion service Thursday evening Rev. E. Blakewell preached on 1 Cor. 10, 16, "The Cup of Blessing Which We Bless."

Adjournment late Friday afternoon.

E. Blakewell.

#### FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

On June 14, the first Sunday after Trinity, the Immanuel Ev. Luth. Congregation of Ward, South Dakota, was privileged to observe the fiftieth anniversary of its organization. The festival speakers were: The Rev. R. Polzin, Prof. J. Monich, the Rev. A. W. Eggert, former pastors of the congregation; and the Rev. A. J. Engel whose father ministered to the congregation for many years. Pastor R. Polzin, by whom the congregation was organized, spoke during the morning service in the German language on John 8:31-32. In the first afternoon service Pastor A. W. Eggert occupied the pulpit addressing the assembly in the American language on the basis of 1 Cor. 15:1-2. In the second afternoon service Prof. J. Monich preached in the German language. His text was 1 Sam. 7:12. The speaker of the evening was pastor A. J. Engel whose text was Isa. 60, 10-12.

During all four services the church was filled to capacity by worshipers, to join the celebration of their sister-congregation. The anniversary offerings went into the Synod's treasury. A souvenir booklet containing the history of the church was published as a memorial of the day and distributed at the close of each service. Noonday and evening meals were served by the ladies.

The history of Immanuel Congregation extends back to the year 1878. It was at this time that a number of Lutheran families of various parts of Minnesota and Wisconsin settled in the vicinity of Ward. The itinerant missionaries, Pastor Christian Boettcher,

Pastor A. Reim and others visited the scattered Lutheran settlers and ministered unto them. Until the year 1886 divine services were conducted in district school buildings near Ward.

In the year 1886 Immanuel Congregation was organized and in the same year the first church building was erected one mile North of Ward. In the year 1902 the first church was replaced by a larger edifice. Three lots were donated for a church site in the town of Ward. During the pastorate of the Rev. C. Mikulski the present church was erected.

From the time of its organization the following have served this congregation: Pastor R. Polzin 1886-1890, Ward, Elkton and Verdi then constituting a self-supporting parish; Pastor J. Ch. Albrecht 1890-1892; Pastor Schoemperlen 1892-1895; Pastor J. Dammann 1895-1897; Pastor G. Fisher 1897-1900; Pastor C. Mikulski 1900-1904; Pastor J. Monich 1904-1908; Pastor A. W. Eggert 1908-1911; Pastor J. Engel 1912-1922. Since December 17, 1922, Pastor William J. Lindloff is in charge. On the church roster are 205 souls, 38 voting and 142 communicants; 442 baptisms, 263 confirmations, 59 marriages, 69 burials and 4601 communions are recorded.

Under the present careful leadership this congregation has enjoyed a healthy growth and may look cheerfully into the future. May the Lord of the Church continue to bless the work of Immanuel Congregation.

A. J. Engel.

#### THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY

On July 5, 1936, Trinity Lutheran Church at Lime Ridge, Wis., celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of its organization and of the dedication of its church building. The Rev. S. Martell of Dundalk, Maryland, held the morning sermons on Acts 20:32 in German and on Rev. 2:10b in English. In the afternoon the Reverend H. Kirchner of Baraboo, Wis., addressed the assembly. His text was Phil. 1:3-6. The children rendered: "I am but a stranger here" and "Let me sing of Jesus."

A brief history of the congregation is this:

In April of the year 1906 the following men met with the Rev. S. Martell, then known by the name of Mlotkowski and now stationed at Dundalk, Maryland, and organized the Trinity Lutheran Church at Lime Ridge, Wis.: Julius Faerber, Frank Gudenschager, Julius Hammermeister, William Heuer, Fred Laue, William Niebur, Rudolf Radloff, Christian Riedel, Herman Schilling, Charles Schultz, William Schultz, Charles Siemandel, and William Siemandel. In September of the same year the church was completed and dedicated. In the year 1912 the congregation decided to add a tower to the church. And a bell for the church was donated by Christian Riedel, August Schmidtke, and William Weseloh. In the same year

the congregation decided to become a member of the Wisconsin Synod.

In the fall of 1906 the Reverend Martell accepted a call to a congregation in Chicago. He was succeeded by the Reverend Maisch, who served the congregation until May 1911. Then the Reverend H. Reimer was called, who served the congregation until 1935. From then on the present pastor was called.

Of the founders only two are members of the congregation at the time: Frank Gudenschwager and Christian Riedel. Three have passed away. Some have joined elsewhere and others have drifted from the church.

In the past thirty years 85 children were baptized and 8 adults. 53 children and 11 adults were confirmed. 3,274 partook of Holy Communion. 14 weddings took place. 32 received a Christian burial.

The congregation at present numbers 50 communicant members, 22 voting members, 73 souls. There are 17 children in Sunday school, and three are receiving confirmation instructions from the pastor.

Sunday school is conducted by the following staff: William Krueger acting as superintendent, Mrs. Paul Weseloh teaching the intermediate class, Miss Doris Sander teaching the Juniors, and Miss Maxime Sander teaching the primary class.

The church council consists of the following: Fred Hammermeister, Arnold Meyer, Fred Sander, Albert Siemandel, William Volz, and Paul Weseloh. Fred Hammermeister is president, Albert Siemandel is the treasurer, and William Volz the secretary.

By the grace of God it was possible that the Word of God could be heard in this congregation in the past thirty years. Certainly a great privilege, and one that we cannot esteem too highly. What if we did not know Christ, that He had died for our sins, opening the gates to heaven for us, if we but believe and trust in the merits of Christ. And in view of the benefit the Lord bestowed upon this congregation in the past thirty years let us say: "Let us give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good and His mercy endureth forever." Amen.

#### ANNUAL CELEBRATION AT THE HOME FOR THE AGED

Sunday, June 28, the annual festival held in the interest of the Home was celebrated at the Home for the Aged at Belle Plaine. The Board had invited over fifty congregations from the surrounding country to send delegates to take part in this festival. It proved to be an ideal day. Already in the forenoon visitors arrived who had brought their dinner luncheon along. In the course of the early afternoon friends of the Home from near and far came pouring in and the campus was fairly swarming with people.

A short program followed. The assembly joined in the hymn of praise: "Lobe den Herren, den maech-

tigen Koenig der Ehren." The Rev. A. Ackermann, chairman of the board, delivered a brief German address. The Rev. L. F. Brandes addressed a few words in the English language to the assembly. The service closed with the hymn: "Before Jehovah's awful throne."

The greater part of the afternoon was spent in viewing the Home and in visiting. Many guests voiced favorable comments as to the condition and management of the Home. Representatives from the various Ladies' Aids expressed their willingness to cooperate in supporting the Home and promoting its cause.

The ladies' organizations held outdoor meetings and discussed various measures of church work. Mrs. C. G. Reim of New Ulm was elected president and Mrs. A. Ackermann of Mankato, secretary.

The Lanesburg band offered musical entertainment. Refreshments, ice cream, and lunch were served. It was a happy and interesting day for all.

W. Schuetze.

#### DR. MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE, NEW ULM, MINNESOTA

On Tuesday evening, June 11, our College choir presented the annual commencement concert. After that the alumni met in the dining hall. The society voted \$100 toward the purchase of a moving picture machine for the College. This donation is very welcome, and, although it should not be necessary to say it, we appreciate it.

Our school year closed with the commencement exercises on Friday morning. Twenty-four were graduated from our High School and sixteen from our Normal Department. Of the sixteen, twelve have received calls. Prospects for the placement of the remaining four are very good. Because we have received a number of inquiries from congregations in need of teachers, we hope to report before very long that no more candidates are available.

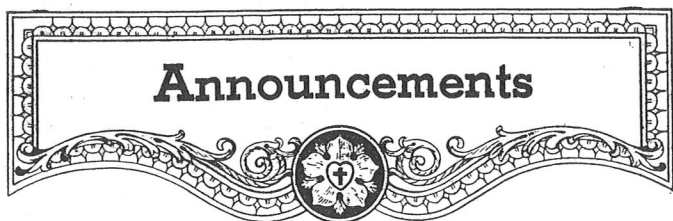
Professor E. E. Kowalke delivered the commencement address. He called our attention to the gifts God has at various seasons bestowed upon His Church. Among these he numbered our Christian schools, which should and can, in a measure, make up for the many qualities we lack today and which the early Church and the Church of Reformation days had in greater abundance. Julius Wantoch, Stanton, Nebraska, was the valedictorian.

By two o'clock in the afternoon the campus was deserted. It is interesting to note how quickly everybody manages to leave for home. Farewells are shouted, the car doors slam, and away they go. It takes us a few days to grow accustomed to the unusual quiet that now reigns on the hill, a quiet that was interrupted for a few days only when the Minnesota District held its session here.

Our janitors are now busy cleaning, painting, and

making the few minor repairs necessary before September. If pastors and teachers will give us the names and addresses of prospective students, we shall be glad to communicate with them. In our Synod we have many families who are able and also willing to give their children a Christian training if this is brought to their attention in the proper way. Let us not deny them this opportunity by remaining silent.

S.



### NOTICE — DIRECTORY LIST OF NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN ANNUAL AND GEMEINDEBLATT KALENDER

Pastors, professors, teachers, lady teachers, who have changed their address since the last Annual was issued are requested to report their new address by the first of October; later corrections cannot be considered.

In reporting correction use a postal card and state — Your full name.

Whether you are pastor, professor, etc.

Your place of residence (street and number if possible).

Your post-office.

R. F. D. No.

County and State.

Of which synod are you a member?

Do you reside in a rural district?

If the latter is the case, which is the nearest city?

In which direction is it from your place of residence?

How far is it away?

This notice also applies to such as have so far not held office and were therefore not listed.

Address your card to

Northwestern Publishing House,  
935-937 North Fourth Street,  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

### FOX RIVER VALLEY PASTORAL CONFERENCE

Our sessions will be held at Center, Wis., Rev. A. H. Werner, R. 2, Appleton, Wis., July 21 and 22, beginning at 9 A. M.

Papers: Ex. Hom. Treatise of Rom. 6, 19-23 by Otto Henning; What Is Meant by the Expression "Fear of God" in the Chief Passages of Scripture, by R. Schoeneck; Significance of Christ's Baptism, by Fr. Brandt; The Pastor and His Family, by L. Kaspar; Isagogics of Leviticus, by Im. Boettcher; Isagogics of Numbers by Theo. Brenner; Isagogics of Deuteronomy, by Ph. Froehle.

English Confessional Sermon by R. Ziesemer — W. Zink. Kindly announce in due time with Rev. Werner.

F. A. Reier, Sec'y.

### MEETING OF SYNODICAL CONFERENCE

The Ev.-Luth. Synodical Conference of North America will meet August 6-11 in Indianapolis, Ind., within Rev. H. M. Zorn's congregation. Essayists: Prof. T. Laetsch: "The Holiness of God," and Prof. T. Hoyer: "Union Movements." Details pertaining to this convention will be published at a later date.

L. Fuerbringer,  
President of the Synodical Conference.

### CENTRAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE

The Central Delegate Conference will meet on July 28, 1936, at 9 A. M., in Friesland, Wis. (Pastor Aug. Paetz).

Papers will be read on: Missions of Joint Synod; What Shall We Do for the Education of Our Children?; Debt Retirement; Our Supplies for College.

Dinner will be served by the ladies of the congregation.

Please, inform Pastor Paetz as to how many delegates you intend to bring. H. Geiger, Sec'y.

### ANNOUNCEMENT

The undersigned hereby gives notice that Rev. F. Reuter, White, South Dakota, has severed the bonds of fellowship with us.

(Signed) E. R. Gamm,  
President Dakota-Montana District.

### NOTICE

Beginning July 28, at 9 A. M., a three day course in the "Music of the Liturgy" will be given by Pastor Carl Bergen, Leonia, New Jersey, at Hope Lutheran Church, Pastor Lange, Milwaukee, Wis. The course will offer principles and practice in the music now used in our churches and introduce new music for propers as well as for Introids and Graduals. The Gregorian Psalm Tunes will also be studied briefly. A \$1.00 fee for this course will include music needed for the course. Pastors, teachers, organists, or others interested may receive further information from Rev. G. Fischer, Peshtigo, Wis.

### LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL OF MILWAUKEE, WIS.

This Christian high school, owned and controlled by more than thirty congregations of the Synodical Conference in Milwaukee, is glad to serve those young people of our church at large who wish to enjoy the benefits of a Christian high school training. God willing, the new school year will begin on Wednesday, September 9. Four-year academic and commercial courses are offered. The general tuition is \$40.00 a year, payable in monthly installments. For further information write the Director,

E. H. Buerger,  
Lutheran High School,  
1859 N. 13th St., Milwaukee, Wis.

### INSTALLATIONS

Authorized by President Wm. Nommensen the undersigned, on July 5, installed the Rev. Otto Kuehl in Zion Congregation of Cambria, Wis. The Rev. Leonard Bernthal and the Rev. Aug. Paetz assisted. May the Lord bless both pastor and congregation.

Address: The Rev. Otto Kuehl, Cambria, Wis.

\* \* \* \*

A. J. Engel.

Authorized by President John Witt of the Nebraska District, the undersigned installed the Rev. W. P. Holzhausen as pastor of Grace Congregation, Sioux City, Iowa, Trinity Sunday, June 7. The following pastors assisted: R. Torgler, Edw. Wittkopp, H. Otten, A. Janke, W. E. Hinck, H. Kettler.

Address: Rev. Wm. P. Holzhausen, 1105 S. Cornelia St., Sioux City, Iowa. Geo. Tiefel.

### CHURCH RENOVATION

Under the above head we recently reported on the celebration which took place on June 7 at Hortonville, Wis. To this report should be added the words, "Rev. Frank Reier preached in the English language." G.

### MISSION FESTIVALS

#### Trinity Sunday

Redwood Falls, Minn., St. John's (Edward A. Birkholz).  
Off'g: \$141.35.

#### Third Sunday after Trinity

Lewiston, Minn., St. John's (Rud. P. Korn). Off'g: \$400.00.  
Henry, So. Dak., St. Paul's (G. E. Schmeling). Off'g: \$65.53.