



THE NORTHWESTERN  
**Lutheran**

December 22, 1968





## Glory to God in the Highest!

*In Bethlehem a Babe is born,  
A Child of wondrous birth!  
This is the Christ! This is our God,  
The King of heav'n and earth!  
Glory to God! Glory to God!  
Glory to God in the highest!*

*God sends His dear, His only Son  
To us from heav'n above.  
A virgin mother bears the Child,  
The Father's Gift of love.  
Glory to God! Glory to God!  
Glory to God in the highest!*

*This is the promised Prince of Peace,  
Our Savior from all sin.  
He comes to live, He comes to die  
Our peace with God to win.  
Glory to God! Glory to God!  
Glory to God in the highest!*

*Good tidings of great joy are these  
For people great and small.  
The Father's love, the Spirit's grace  
Embrace them one and all.  
Glory to God! Glory to God!  
Glory to God in the highest!*

*For peace on earth, for God's good will  
Our voices now we raise  
To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost  
In jubilee and praise!  
Glory to God! Glory to God!  
Glory to God in the highest!*

WILBERT R. GAWRISCH



# Editorials

**Christmas Spirit** A news item with a Washington dateline reported recently that "the militant National Welfare Rights organization has promised a 'short, hot winter' unless welfare recipients are given special Christmas grants to buy gifts and family necessities." What the director of the organization meant when he promised a "short, hot winter," he himself explained. He would start a two-month campaign with a national "Get-It-Week." The members of his organization would refuse to pay their house rent, would pay only a part of their gas and electric bills, would demand special Christmas grants of \$50 or \$100. He said that his organization was tired of getting Christmas presents of cast-off clothing and food baskets. "You've heard of a long, hot summer," he said; "if welfare recipients don't get the money they need, it will be a short, hot winter." This demand and the threat that lies in the reference to the "long, hot summer" if the demands are not met can be understood, even though they cannot be excused.

Even before Thanksgiving Day, magazines, TV, newspapers and countless advertisements that came through the mail began urging the nation to buy, buy, buy. "The biggest Christmas in history. Economic and business reports from all across the nation point to just that." "Record-setting business; stores will be open nightly." So said the newspaper shortly after the middle of November. But there was one concession: Stores will close at four o'clock on Christmas Eve; taverns and bars will remain open two hours longer. If that is what Christmas has come to mean, one can understand that the director of the Welfare Rights Association and his associates feel that they are being cheated out of the blessings of Christmas if they don't get \$50 to spend for gifts.

The *Reader's Digest* for December has done its bit too to glorify Santa Claus, the "People's Saint." Another article in the same issue bears the title "Four Frauds to Beware of This Christmas." The article warns against cheats who are after your money. It doesn't mention the greatest fraud of all, that of turning the Christmas season into a tremendous bazaar. It may appear that this fraud has taken over the Christmas season and made it its own, but it has not yet, and never will, drown out the still, small voice that can still be heard here and there proclaiming that God gave us His own Son as our Savior and Redeemer.

"What the fathers most desired" is still being quietly proclaimed in spite of the racket that attempts to drown it out.

ERWIN E. KOWALKE

\* \* \*

**History With a Purpose** A passage of Scripture frequently quoted by the children in our national Christmas Eve services declares, "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman." Not directly stated in this passage, but clearly implied, is the truth that there is a purpose in history. The history of the world B. C. set the stage for the birth of Christ. Under the sovereign direction of God it was history with a purpose.

History since the coming of Christ likewise has a purpose. This purpose is indicated by Christ Himself: "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." The world continues to exist for the preaching of the Gospel for the salvation of redeemed

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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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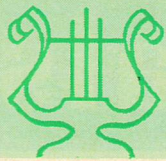
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# GLORY TO GOD

## *A Hymn Of Glory Sung By The Angels*

In our busy lives it could happen that we forget temporarily about God's holy angels, who are our friends and who are interested both in our bodily and our spiritual welfare. The Psalmist tells us of their interest in our bodily welfare (Ps. 91:11), and St. Peter reminds us of their interest in our spiritual welfare (I Pet. 1:12).

### **An Angel Brought the Christmas Message**

But especially at Christmas we are reminded of God's holy angels, for it was the angel of the Lord who appeared to the shepherds of Bethlehem and brought them the joyful news-broadcast of the birth of Jesus: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." It was a great multitude of angels which on this same occasion joined in praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

### **The Angels Sang a Hymn of Glory**

It is good for us to be reminded at Christmas not merely of the existence of angels but especially also of the Hymn of Glory which they sang at the birth of Jesus. By their hymn they not merely expressed the hope that glory might or should be given to God at some time; on that very occasion they gave glory to God. They honored Him. They praised Him. They gave all credit to Him.

Why? What had God done? He had sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons (Gal. 4:4, 5).

### **Glory to God for His Wisdom!**

It was proper for the angels to glorify God for His *wisdom* in planning the perfect way of salvation, which could never have been devised by man. Man by nature always thinks in terms of earning his salvation by his own good works, and he regards the way of salvation planned by God as foolishness (I Cor. 2:14). Glory to God for His wisdom!

### **Glory to God for His Faithfulness!**

It was proper for the angels to glorify God also for His *faithfulness* in sending the Savior. Not only did God promise the Savior; He also sent the Savior. God fulfilled the promise to our first parents, Adam and Eve, that the Savior would be the woman's seed. Jesus is the seed of the woman. Moreover, Jesus was truly born of a virgin, as God through His prophet Isaiah had promised (Isa. 7:14). Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary.

The birthplace of the Savior was Bethlehem, as God had promised in the writing of Micah: "But thou, Beth-

lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Mic. 5:2).

This Savior, Jesus Christ, would be man's substitute in fulfilling the demands of the Law and in suffering and dying for sin. The prophecy of Isaiah, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed," would find fulfillment when Jesus would be delivered unto the Gentiles, mocked, spitefully entreated, spitted on, scourged and put to death (Isa. 53:5; Luke 18:32, 33). Glory to God for His faithfulness!

### **Glory to God for His Love!**

And surely, it was proper for the angels to glorify God also for His *love* in sending His Son to this earth for the salvation of mankind. Mankind had not deserved such love. Mankind deserved only God's eternal wrath and punishment. But the majestic beauty of God's love lies in this glorious feature that purely out of mercy and grace God took into consideration the woeful condition of lost mankind and also made provision for the salvation of the world by giving His Son. "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son" (John 3:16). The best Christmas gift is the gift of God's son, Jesus Christ. Glory to God for His love!

### **"On Earth Peace"**

The hymn of the angels will have a beneficial effect on our hearts if we appreciate fully what the angels meant when they sang, "And on earth peace." Peace is a welcome word. It has a pleasant ring to it. It is significant that the angels referred to peace in connection with the birth of Jesus. Jesus is the Prince of Peace of whom Isaiah spoke (Isa. 9:6).

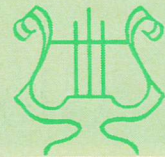
Through His sacrificial death on the cross Jesus appeased the just wrath of God over sin and reconciled the whole world to God. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (II Cor. 5:19). Stated positively, this means that the world's sins have been forgiven. When we believe this Gospel of peace, we have peace in our hearts (Rom. 5:1), and we seek to live peaceably with all men (Rom. 12:18). What peace came to Martin Luther when he learned that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the Law (Rom. 3:28)!

### **"Good Will Toward Men"**

When God out of love sent His Son to this world for the redemption of mankind, He was extending His good will toward men. When God in Christ reconciled the world unto Himself, He was extending His good will  
(Continued on page 434)



# IN THE HIGHEST!



## *A Hymn Of Glory Sung By The Church*

When the Savior was born, the angels sang: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!" Shepherds were privileged to hear that heavenly hymn.

They were in a field near Bethlehem, keeping watch over their flocks that night. What a great fear must have come into their hearts when all of a sudden a glory from heaven shone all around them and an angel appeared to them.

### **The Shepherds' Fears Calmed**

The holy angel calmed the fears of these sinful shepherds by telling them that their Savior was born in Bethlehem. The Son of God was come in human flesh to serve as the sinners' Substitute in fulfilling the Law of God and in bearing God's curse upon all sin! This good news the angel said, would be a joy to all people! The angel also told the shepherds that they themselves could see the newborn Savior. Even now He was lying in a manger in nearby Bethlehem.

### **The Savior Is Found**

After the angels went away from the shepherds into heaven, the shepherds agreed to go to Bethlehem at once and see the newborn Savior. Following the directions of the angel, they found this heavenly Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.

Oh, how the hearts of these lowly shepherds were filled with joy and thanksgiving that God had given them and all the world a Savior!

### **The Shepherds Made Known Abroad What Was Told Them Of This Child**

Having viewed the Child with a holy awe, the shepherds could keep silence no longer. Their joyful hearts bubbled over. They told Joseph and Mary and others about the appearance of the angels and their message. All who heard what these shepherds said wondered at their words. Mary, however, and more than likely Joseph also, remembered and sincerely believed everything the shepherds said. For Joseph and Mary, too, had been told by an angel that this Child born to the Virgin Mary, was the God-sent Savior of sinners.

But even though many merely wondered at what the shepherds reported about the angels and their message concerning this Child, the shepherds kept right on talking about it. They simply could not be silent about it. Duty called them back to their flocks. But all the way back they glorified and praised God for what they had heard and seen. Whenever they met anyone, they repeated the wonderful story. The words of the angel had filled their hearts with a faith that could not be shaken — with a faith that could not but speak of its firm convictions.

### **The Testimony Continues**

What the shepherds started when they "returned glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen as it was told unto them" has continued ever since.

After the Christ Child had grown into manhood, the Holy Ghost convinced John the Baptist that He was the God-sent Savior of the world. The Baptist kept crying to the multitudes that Jesus was the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. Only the sword of Herod finally silenced that voice in the wilderness that kept glorifying and praising God.

Later the Apostles Peter and John testified that this Jesus who had been crucified and who rose again from the dead was indeed the God-sent Savior of the world. They, too, could not but speak of the things which they had heard and seen concerning Him.

In Philippi Paul, the great Apostle to the Gentiles, and his helper, Silas, were thrown into jail because they had dared to testify that Jesus was the Savior of the world. But even while they were imprisoned in that dungeon, these men could not but continue to glorify and to praise God for all that they knew about this Jesus. And they did so fearlessly and unashamedly with loud singing in the prison house.

Luther, when he discovered the blessed truth, hidden from people by popery, that heaven was God's gift to the sinner through the Christ Child, could not but glorify and praise God for all that he had heard and seen in Holy Scripture concerning this wonderful Savior, Jesus Christ.

So the Church has hymned the glory of the Christ Child throughout the ages.

### **The Church Today, Too, Glorifies God By Preaching the Gospel**

And the Church today also cannot do otherwise than the shepherds did. We, too, must glorify and praise God for all that by faith we have heard and seen concerning this newborn Savior.

*Can we whose souls are lighted  
With wisdom from on high,  
Can we to men benighted  
The lamp of life deny?  
Salvation! Oh, Salvation!  
The joyful sound proclaim  
Till each remotest nation  
Has heard Messiah's name.*

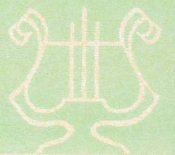
Today we have means and opportunities to glorify and praise God for giving us a Savior that are far more grand and glorious than anything those shepherds on Bethlehem's field ever dreamed of. We have the print-

*(Continued on page 433)*





# Glory to God in the Highest!



## *A Hymn Of Glory To Be Sung By All The World*

Fear walks the dark streets of the city—fear lurks in the international halls of diplomacy—fear haunts the eyes of mothers scanning war-filled newspaper columns—fear fills the hearts of sinners great and small. Fear is universal in a world filled with universal sin and hatred. Fear is everywhere in time and place. Fear also struck the hearts of simple shepherds in the fields of Judaea while tending their sheep some 2,000 years ago.

### **"Fear Not!"**

But then came the glorious heavenly message of the angel around whom shone the terrifying glory of God, "Fear not, for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

Put away your fear, my tender shepherds. Your sinful hearts are terror-struck as you contemplate the divine glory even of God's messengers. But, tender shepherds, think of the joy I bring you, joy for all and thus for you too. This day the Christ, the Savior, David's Son, is born. God has come to earth for all men, born a human child not only like you, but for you.

Then peace came to the shepherd's hearts. Gone was fear, and in its place was the desire to proclaim this divine, but saving message to whomever they would meet.

### **Fear Still Stalks Fallen Man**

In a sense God's glory still brings fear to mankind's heart. The vestiges of his vision of the glory of Paradise haunt fallen man as he walks through this world of sin. Viewing the fallen imperfection of his surroundings, he fears for his survival, and selfishly he seeks to gain the goods of others. Observing the gross imperfections of others, and perhaps even his own, in contrast to the marred vision of God's perfection in his conscience, he fears the sins of others and strikes out to get advantage first. Fear stalks man from the cradle to the grave.

But on this scene of fear also bursts the glory of the Nativity. Even the unregenerate heart brightens externally for a season and tries to reassure itself that all is right again. And to a heart touched by the Holy Spirit the full glory of God's act of entering the human race bursts forth with a strength that wipes out fear and replaces it with wonder at such a God. Behold a God, who fills all things, now becoming a human child, thus taking on Him the flesh of men, becoming a true man while still eternal God! There is no man excepted from the blessings of this work, for this Incarnation. The universal God becomes incarnate for all mankind. He deigns to do this despite the universal sin of man.

### **The Glory of God's Grace**

In fact it is because of this universal sin that He comes as man. He comes under the perfect Law to bear man's sin and the punishment which must follow—death. How can it be, a sinless, eternal God becoming man to bear man's universal sin? It is only because of His glorious grace, His wondrous undeserved love, and all-wise power.

Is there reason for any man to keep silent on Christmas Morn? All are included in the eternal benefit of this day. "Great joy which shall be to all people." How can any man, hearing of God's love in Christ for him, keep silent?

And yet voices are still. There are those who cannot bring their proud intellect to acknowledge God's simple but sole solution for their sin, a Savior substitute. There are those who reject anything that leaves their efforts out of the picture, calling for simple faith as the way of God's salvation. And there are other voices that are still because they have not yet heard the angel's message of a Savior for all men.

### **Sharing the Vision of Glory**

Is not this where God graciously permits us to share the full glory of Christmas?—in the singing and giving of Christmas time?—not in the mere singing of traditional carols and the giving of presents, but above all in the singing and the giving of the Vision of Glory that came to the Shepherds that wondrous night.

Here is the glory of the Christian life, to permit our hearts, bursting with the glory of the Christmas message, to proclaim to all people the Savior who became man, for every man, to redeem the world. Here is the message that replaces fear, born of sin, with the glorious joy in the Savior of the world, born of the Spirit.

Share in the glory of Christmas, which causes fear to flee, by proclaiming the Gospel to all through the mission work of your Church. Christmas means missions, for the Child born on this day was born in the flesh of all men. These good tidings "*shall be to all people.*"

Will you not sing the Hymn of Glory of the angels in foreign lands, throughout our land, and in your own neighborhood? Here is a Christmas Carol for the world which can be sung through your missions in many lands and many tongues: a Hymn of Glory—God's Glory in the Christ Child!

NORMAN W. BERG

[Pastor Norman W. Berg is the Executive Secretary of the General Board for Home Missions, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.]



# CALLED TO SERVE

When our present prebudget subscription system was adopted by the 1961 convention of the Synod, it replaced a quota system. Under the quota system, the Synod's budget was *equally* divided among the Synod's confirmed membership.

In arguing for the adoption of the prebudget subscription system, a committee report to the 1961 convention pointed out that "Christian giving is a personal or individual thing since it is the fruit of individual faith. Thus the individual and individual congregation should be confronted with the opportunities and the decision to make their voluntary offerings."

## An Every-Home Visit

The committee report recommended that "individual congregations would be urged to conduct every-home visitations on behalf of their local programs and the Synod's program during December of the even year. . . . This every-home contact would prepare the voting assembly for an intelligent subscription to the Synod's work."

The committee report, as adopted, was evangelically sound. But in practice it never quite worked out that way. In most congregations under the new system the individuals were *not* "confronted with the opportunities and the decision to make their voluntary offerings." When most congregations set their subscription for the Synod's budget, the essential question was, "What did we give last year?" This tended to contain the grace of giving within last year's limits and within a very human calculation of what was possible next year. There was little inclination to "let the Spirit have its way" in the heart of each individual Christian.

## The Growing Crisis

As the Lord called our Synod to ever widening areas of service, this failure to "confront the individual with the opportunities and decision to make his voluntary offerings" has precipitated as severe a financial crisis as we have ever experienced. Our Synodical giving, following the previous year's norms, has failed to reckon

with the many open doors through which God was beckoning us. Deficits in the operating budget—an estimated \$1 million by June 30, 1969—now threaten us with drastic budget reductions just at the moment the world so badly needs our vigorous witness to the faithful Word.

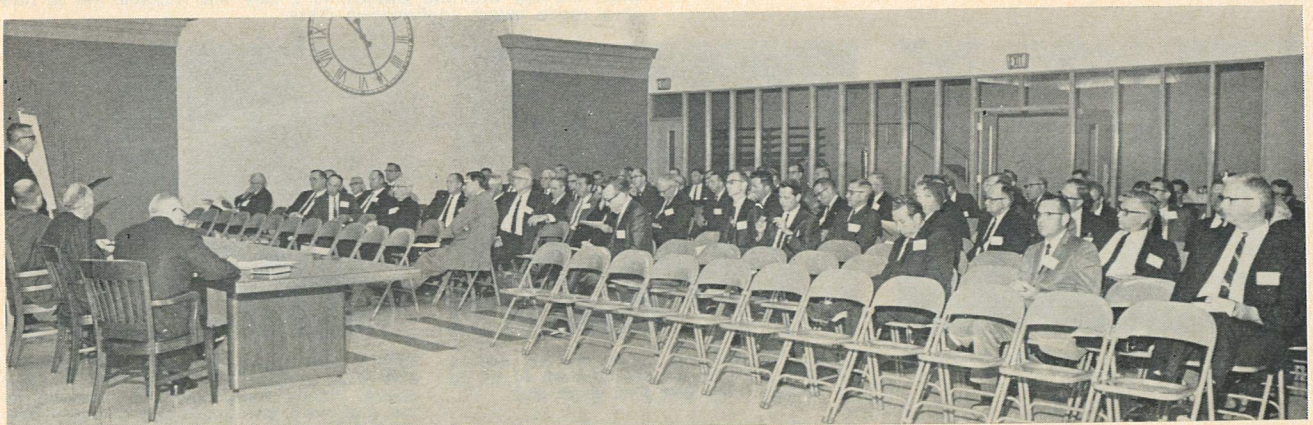
The *Called To Serve* program, proposed to our congregations for their fall stewardship programs by the Conference of District Presidents, was an attempt to recover the spiritual dynamics of the prebudget system as it was originally conceived. Using 150 key laymen, an orderly plan was conceived so that every one of our members might be drawn within range of the Synod's opportunities and responsibilities. According to the program plan, another 20,000 men and women of God would seek out their fellow members to encourage them to see "that they are men and women through whom God has chosen to accomplish His will in the world."

## November Meetings

The 900 congregations of the Synod are now at work carrying out the plan or a similar one, encouraging response on an individual basis. In a series of meetings held in November in the nine Districts with the 150 key laymen and visiting elders, it was reported that 90 per cent of the congregations were participating in one way or another. It was also reported that of congregations selecting goals 46 per cent adopted the minimum; 27 per cent the median; 21 per cent the maximum; and 5 per cent adopted a goal below the minimum. The goals are not levies but serve as "targets" for an every-home visit. Where every-home visits are being conducted, the scattered reports are encouraging.

Once more Christmas reminds us that "God so loved the world." And it reminds us that we are to be faithful witnesses of the Father's love for that world. The *Called To Serve* program has less to do with dollars and cents than with that faithful witness. Let it be said of us in our generation: they were faithful witnesses to the peace and forgiveness of the Father in a world of hate and strife and sin.

JAMES P. SCHAEFER



Introducing the Called To Serve Program to the visiting elders and conference lay chairmen.



# Bringing the Christmas Gospel to Puerto Rico

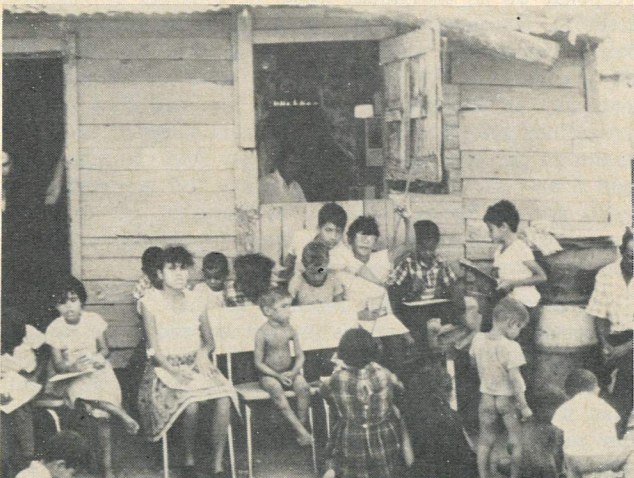
A Picture Story of How You through Your Synod and the Missionaries You Have Sent  
Are Bringing the Glad Tidings of Peace and of God's Good Will  
to the People of Puerto Rico



Mission work in Puerto Rico began out in the open in the shade of this tree. A dozen children from the area called in Spanish **Gran Stan Bran**, meaning Grand Stand Branch, met under this tree for Sunday school. Gran Stan Bran is a poor area economically, but it is home for many precious, blood-bought souls.



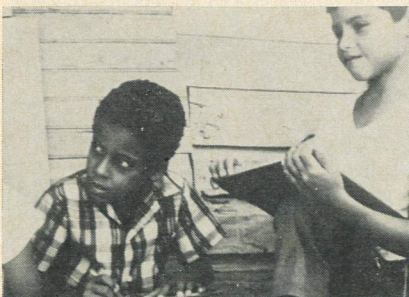
One day, while the Sunday school was being held under the tree, this woman came running out of her house. She invited the missionaries to use her yard for the Sunday school. The invitation was gladly accepted, and the school has been held there ever since.



Here we see the school being "celebrated," as the missionary puts it, on a Sunday afternoon about 3:30. Some of the children who come have hardly any clothing. From 20 to 30 children attend.



Ramona and Juan are holding up pictures of the crucifixion, which they have colored. They have learned that the Son of God was born at Bethlehem that He might die for their sins on the cross. Jose, the boy with the glasses, is a very fine student. He is now in a newly begun confirmation class.



Jesus (left) and his friend come to Sunday school without any shoes.

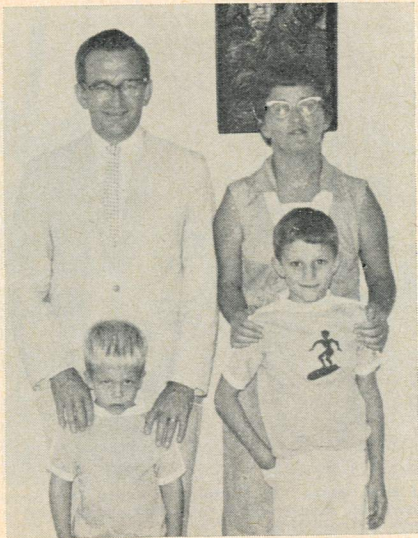


Maria y Namese and Rafael are the two in the center. There are six children in all in the picture. Can you find them all?

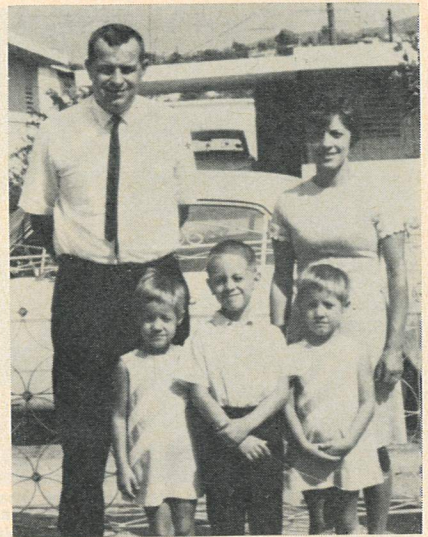


This is Senor Saez with his wife, Carmen, and their children, Wilfredo, Roberto, and Edwin. "They have been very helpful to me and have introduced me to many people," Missionary Sprain writes. "They have taken me to another area for mission work also."

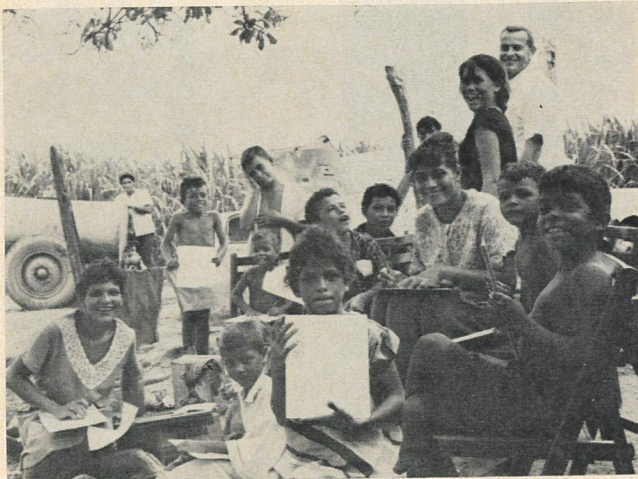




(Left) Missionary Rupert A. Eggert and his wife with their sons, Randall and Michael. The Eggerts live in Rio Piedras.



(Right) Missionary Roger J. Sprain and his wife with their children, John, Becky, and Debbie. The Sprains live in Guayama.



This is a class of older children in another area called Machete. About 20 children attend here. Note the field of sugar cane in the background.



Esperanza (on the right) is doing her religious art work.



This is Fernando. He is 16 years old. He is attending Missionary Sprain's Baptismal class at Machete. By Christmas he should be ready for Baptism.

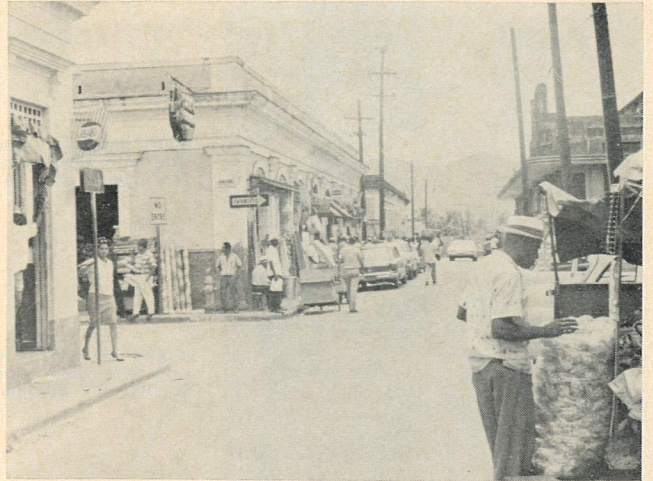


The mother of some of the children at Machete does her washing just before the Sunday school begins.





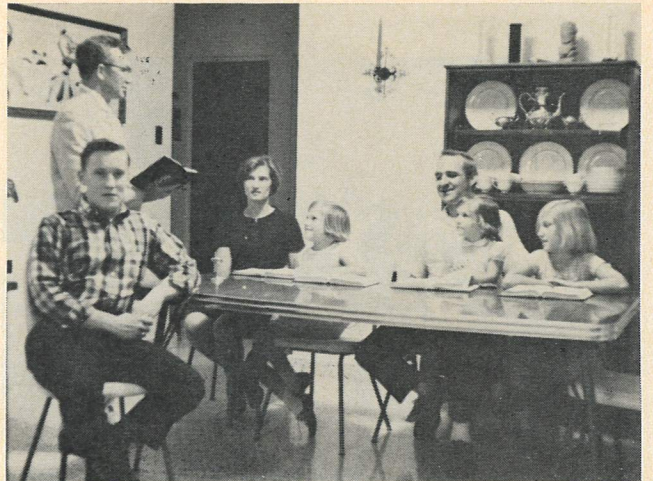
The men in the picture are fishermen who live in Machete. One night each week Bible history and Christian doctrine are studied with filmstrips serving as visual aids. This group is watching a filmstrip.



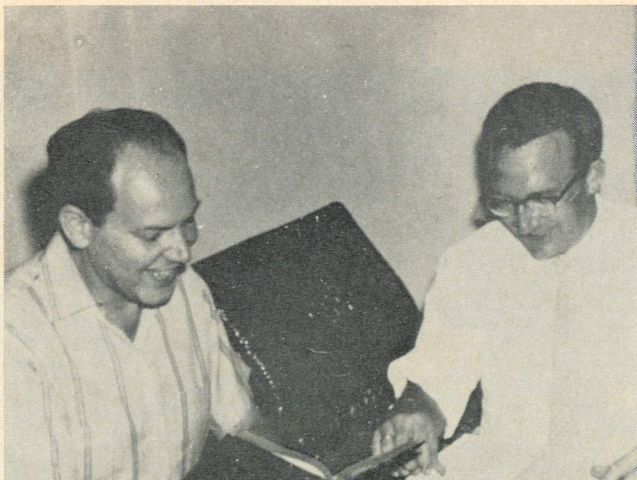
A view of the corner of the "plaza" in Humacao, where the Seed of the Word is being down by means of a radio broadcast and a program of door to door evangelizing.



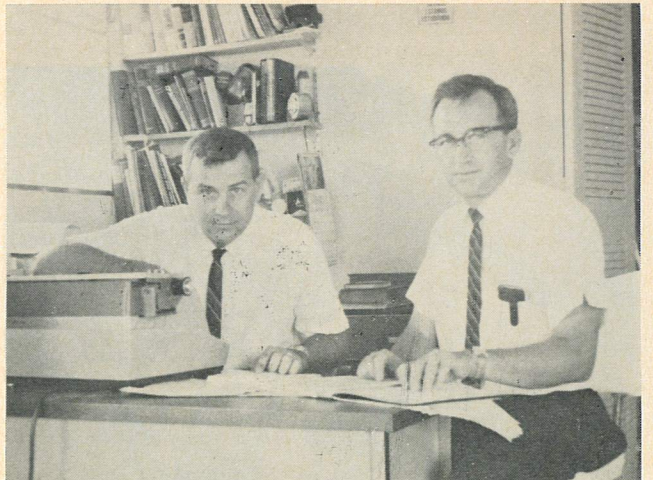
School children are shown going to their home in the public housing project in Guayama. In school the children are learning the 3 R's, Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic. Our missionaries are adding the 4th R, Religion, to make their instruction complete.



Missionary Eggert (standing) conducts a devotion in the home of one of our Synod's members stationed in Ponce. The Word of life is shared with military personnel and with members of our Synod sent to Puerto Rico by business concerns in the States. Devotions are also conducted at the military bases, Ramey, Roosevelt Roads, and Ft. Allen. Holy Communion is celebrated at regular intervals.



Christian literature and instruction materials in Spanish are being prepared by the missionaries. Here Missionary Eggert (right) goes over some materials prepared for a radio broadcast with Prof. Luis Mora, a Spanish teacher.



Missionaries Sprain (left) and Eggert plan and coordinate the work of bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the many who are still sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death in Puerto Rico. Because we have sent these ambassadors of Christ to Puerto Rico, the light of the Christmas Gossapel is now shining in the hearts of countless sinners who once were in the grip of superstition and despair.



# The Christian and the World

## IN IT, BUT NOT OF IT

### IS CHRISTMAS BECOMING A SECULAR HOLIDAY FOR US?

"Oh, how I wish the Christmas season would be over! I am physically, mentally, and emotionally exhausted. My checking account is depleted. I have done too much wining and dining. I am just saturated with everything. Christmas Day will really be a relief, for then it will all come to an end and we can go back to a normal life." Many people of this world have thoughts such as these at this time of the year.

#### **The World's Celebration of Christmas Often Leaves People Exhausted**

We can sympathize with these people of the world. Since Christmas is merely a secular holiday for them, their celebration of this holiday will exhaust them. Since Christ has no part in their Christmas observance, they will receive no uplifting and lasting benefit from the Christmas season. They do not accept the Christmas message as proclaimed by the angel, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." They merely pick out one phrase from the message proclaimed by the multitude of angels, "Good will toward men," and they capitalize on it. "Good will toward men" means to them that men ought to practice good will toward one another, and they reject the true meaning of this phrase, namely, that God manifested His good will toward men in sending Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world.

Having this false conception of the Christmas message, the people of this world, when speaking of the Christmas spirit, think it means only a showing of good will toward one's fellow man. They want to prove that they are imbued with this spirit, and they remember their friends and relatives in various ways. They greet their acquaintances with a cheery "Merry Christmas." They send many Christmas cards and purchase many gifts. They give their homes the Christmas spirit by hanging wreaths in the windows and green branches over the doors. A tree is decorated with lights and ornaments. Many friends and relatives are invited over to share the season's joy. Much Christmas cheer is dispensed in the form of liquor. The invitations of friends and relatives to come over are honored. No wonder that when the Christmas season is finally over, it is a feeling of relief to the people of this world!

#### **We Christians Are Influenced by the World's Worldly Way of Celebrating Christmas**

Is it not sad that we Christians are being influenced by the world in our preparation and celebration of this festival of festivals! We also are in danger of fretting and stewing about the externals of Christmas, the glitter and the glamor, the tinkle and the tinsel, the dress and the food, the giving and receiving of gifts, the hosting and the entertaining thing, like Martha of Bethany, we may miss the "one thing which is needful." The worldly side of this great festival presses down so hard

upon us, that we have so little time to ponder its true meaning.

True, we may love to listen to the singing and playing of Christmas carols. We may even sing along. But since we know these carols so well and have sung them so often, we may pay little heed to the words. Only the melody catches our attention.

To attend the children's services on Christmas Eve is an absolute must; and since the church is always crowded on this night, one must go early so that one can see his children. The children in all sincerity in song and verse present the Christmas message, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior," but in our eagerness to see and hear our own children speak and sing, we may lose the theme of the service. Yes, even our attendance at a children's service may only be an outward observance that does not touch the heart.

The climax of Christmas in most homes is reached when the gifts of the family are distributed. We may tell ourselves that we give gifts only in remembrance of God's precious Gift to us that first Christmas. But actually do the gifts that we receive remind us of the fact that God way back in eternity selected for us the Christmas Gift which we needed the most? Therefore, even our giving of gifts may only be an external observance of Christmas.

#### **The Festival Services on Christmas Day Often Bear Witness to the Indifference of Many**

Since the nativity of our Lord is commemorated in festival services on Christmas morn, one would naturally expect that Christians would fill their houses of God to overflowing. But, sad to state, this is often not the case. The attendance is frequently embarrassingly poor. The outward preparations for Christmas, such as the decorating of the home, the buying and giving of gifts, the selecting and making of wearing apparel, the purchasing and preparing of food, have sapped the strength of many a Christian to such an extent that he is too tired to attend the church service. Even if he should attend, his heart may be filled with so many worldly thoughts that he is in danger of rendering a mere lip service. When the offering plate comes his way, he finds his wallet so depleted that he can give very little to the Christ Child, who came to give His life for him. Surely, the danger is there that Christmas may become a secular holiday for us.

#### **How Can We Counteract the Temptation to Let Christmas Become a Mere Secular Holiday for Us?**

Let us counteract our tendencies to imitate the world in its celebration of Christmas by following the example the shepherd set for us. When they heard the Christmas message, they said, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass." Since their



Savior from sin and its curses had been born, they had to go and see. They had to see and hear all they could concerning Jesus their Savior. Thus, since the Christmas message has also been proclaimed unto us, let us also hear this message again and again; especially let us make the services on Christmas morning the pinnacle of our Christmas observance. The message we will hear will drive all worldly and false thoughts concerning Christmas out of our hearts and minds.

When the shepherds had seen the Christ Child, "they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child." Thus let us also tell others, that at the first Christmas, God gave us an indescribable Gift—Jesus our Savior. Let us take time to remind our own family again and again of this marvelous fact. Let us witness to our friends and neighbors that God so loved this world that He gave His only-begotten Son, and then invite them to come to the many festival services our church has arranged. By doing this we will

find that Christmas will mean more to us than a secular holiday.

In addition to sending Christmas greetings, let us become living Christmas cards which can be known and read by all men. When we let the Christmas message shine through our words and actions, men will see what God's Gift means to us, and they also will be led to glorify God.

What can we do to prevent Christmas from becoming a secular holiday for ourselves and our families? *There is only one answer, namely, a more abundant use of the Word of God.* This Word will show us our desperate need, will instill in us a greater appreciation of God's Christmas Gift, and will make all material things fade into insignificance.

JONATHAN H. MAHNKE

[The author is the pastor of Mt. Lebanon Ev. Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.]

## We Turn to the Psalter . . .

### . . . In Our Worship of the Newborn King

Portions of the Introits and Graduals for the various Sundays and festivals of the church year are verses from the Book of Psalms. These "snatches" from the Psalter help us in our worship. They serve to set the theme for the Sunday or church festival for which they have been chosen. The one verse marked "Ps." in the present Introits (*The Lutheran Hymnal*, pp. 54 ff.) is the remnant of the use of the entire Psalm in the early days of the church; it indicates which Psalm was appointed for the day.

Psalm 98 is one which joyously reflects the excitement of the Christian as he celebrates the Christmas Festival. The Introit for the Feast of the Nativity includes part of the first verse of this Psalm. One of the two

suggested Graduals also quotes from Psalm 98. "Oh, sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory." Let's not overlook the Psalter in our worship of the Newborn King.

Observe how this 98th Psalm declares the doctrine of universal justification: "The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen . . . All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God." The divine Son of David, the King of Israel, rejected by many of His own people, is the Savior of all nations. The "good tidings of great joy" brought by the herald angel to the shepherds of Bethlehem were

"for all people." Therefore "rejoice and sing praise. Sing unto the Lord with the harp . . . the voice of a psalm . . . trumpets and sound of cornet."

Even nature is brought in to participate in the joy of mankind over the Savior's birth: "Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together before the Lord." Compare these words with the last several verses of Psalm 96; it, too, is a Psalm of joy over the Christmas miracle. It, too, in verse 13, reminds us of the reason for the Incarnation, as Psalm 98 does in the last verse: "The Lord cometh to judge the earth . . . with righteousness and . . . truth." The mercy of the Lord will be clearly revealed, and His faithfulness to His blessed promises will be unmistakable.

"Oh, come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation" (Psalm 95:1.)

PHILIP R. JANKE

#### REQUEST FOR COLLOQUY

N. R. Carlson, Jamestown, North Dakota, CLC, has applied for a colloquy by way of preparing himself for re-entering the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and its public ministry.

Arthur P. C. Kell, President  
Dakota-Montana District

#### CORRECTION

We regret that as a result of some confusion arising from his moving, Pastor David Orea Luna's address as given in the issue of November 10 was not correct. He lives at Calle de Auditores num. 11-A, Colonia Sifon, Mexico 8 D.F., but his mailing address is:

The Rev. David Orea Luna  
Apartado M-7101  
Mexico 1 D.F.

#### EXPLORATORY SERVICES

Alexandria, Minnesota

Exploratory services are being held weekly at 10:45 a.m. Sunday mornings, with Sunday School at 9:45 a.m. in the 100F Building, 117 8th Ave E., Alexandria, Minnesota. Please send names of prospects to:

Missionary J. B. Erhart  
411 2nd Street S.E.  
Glenwood, Minn. 56334

#### NEW PLACE OF WORSHIP

Martin Luther Evangelical Lutheran Church, St. Louis County, Missouri, now has regular worship services at the Kennerly Elementary School, 10025 Kennerly Road, St. Louis County. Kennerly Road is just south of New Interstate 244 and the Tesson Ferry (Highway 21) exit. Sunday School, 10 a.m. Sunday worship, 11 a.m. Roger R. Zehms, Pastor, 892-7311.

#### NAMES REQUESTED

Please send the names and addresses of persons moving into the St. Cloud, Minn., area to the undersigned. WELS services are being held at 400 5th Ave. South. A dozen used folding chairs would be of great help to the mission in carrying on its work.

John C. Ibisch, Vicar  
400 5th Ave. South  
St. Cloud, Minn. 56301

#### WELS IN SAN ANTONIO

Please send the names of WELS families or prospects moving into the San Antonio, Texas, area to:

Pastor William Krueger  
4542 Lyceum Drive  
San Antonio, Texas 78229



# When They Had Seen It, They Made It Known Abroad!

The glory of the Lord shone round about the shepherds on Bethlehem's fields the night our Savior was born. This glory of the Lord appeared at first as a dazzling light which accompanied the appearance of God's special messenger. The night was suddenly turned to day, and the shepherds were sore afraid.

But the greater glory of God was revealed to them in the words of the angel. The message that God sent them by His special angel truly revealed His grace and His glory: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

This announcement of the Savior's birth, long promised and long awaited, truly brought the shepherds joy and drove out their fear. The Savior from sin had come. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation" had appeared to these shepherds and they followed the angel's directives to see the visible evidence of that grace. "And they came with haste and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger."

At this point St. Luke records the action of the shepherds which must be the natural and self-evident reaction of all who find their Savior: "When they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child."

As little as the shepherds could keep the heaven-sent message of



President Oscar J. Naumann.

their Savior's birth secret, so little do we want to keep it secret. As they made it known abroad, glorifying and praising God, so let us also share the truth concerning the world's Savior with our fellow men, wherever the Lord permits us to meet them. For in so doing we serve as God's messengers, driving out fear and revealing to men the glory of our gracious God.

This part of the Sacred Record in Luke 2 is in our thoughts constantly these months. Appeals are coming to us from faithful Christians in many lands, who are determined to "make known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child."

These groups are often small in number. Yet they are people who are determined not to change or to corrupt the message that they have learned concerning the Christ Child. They refuse to compromise the clear revelation of God. They are determined to tell faithfully and exactly what was told to them. And having heard of our Synod's confessional stand, they are asking us for help, for guidance, for support, and in some cases for trained missionaries to make known abroad the good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people.

Such pleas are coming to us from several areas in Africa, from Mexico, Java and Bali, and from India, as well as from many cities and villages in our own country where our Synod has not been able to place a missionary.

How natural and self-evident it ought to be for us, also, to do what the shepherds did! No matter what would hinder us in this proclamation, let us earnestly pray the Lord to remove every hindrance so that we can more faithfully and diligently make known the good tidings of great joy to all people: "Unto you is born this day . . . a Savior, which is Christ the Lord!"

Now that we have seen the Lord and have embraced Him in faith, let us in gratitude and love bring this saving news to others!

OSCAR J. NAUMANN

## A HYMN OF GLORY SUNG BY THE CHURCH

*(Continued from page 425)*

ing press, mailing service, radio, organizations large and small to help us to broadcast the message that Christ is born. Yes, today we can truly shout from the rooftops the message that so excited these shepherds!

And why shouldn't we? Surely we have nothing better, nothing more important, to do during our little sojourn in this world than to praise and glorify God for giving us and all the world the Christ Child to snatch us from the brink of hell and to make us the children of God and the heirs of heaven.

How can we claim to be the people of God and not

praise and glorify Christ when we know that the people of God will make all heaven resound with that glory and praise in eternity? The thousands upon thousands of angels and redeemed make heaven resound with the glory and praise of the Christ Child, saying: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive . . . honor and glory and blessing".

May God grant us His grace to be true members of His Church and praise and glorify the Christ Child in time and eternity!

OTTO W. HEIER

*[The author is pastor of St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, Tomah, Wisconsin.]*



## NOTES FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

• The art work in this Christmas issue of *The North-Western Lutheran* was planned and executed by Pastor Siegfried Fenske and Mr. Harold Schmitz of the North-western Publishing House staff. We believe our readers will appreciate the artists' contribution in carrying out the theme of this issue, "Glory to God in the Highest!"

• The Christmas hymn, "The Light of the World" (see below), may be sung to the tune of either hymn 263 or 412 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*. No appropriate hymn tune is available for either of the other two Christmas hymns found in this issue. Perhaps a musician among our readers would like to try his hand at writing suitable melodies. If the refrain is omitted, "In Bethlehem a Babe Is Born" may be sung to the tune of hymn 105, "Praise God the Lord, Ye Sons of Men."

• The starvation and suffering in Biafra as a result of the war being fought between Biafra and Nigeria

have been widely publicized in the public press. Biafra is in the area in Africa in which our Synod formerly carried on mission work jointly with the other synods of the now defunct Synodical Conference. Our Synod's Committee on Relief is prepared to channel to the unfortunate victims of the conflict in Biafra whatever gifts it receives.

In this Christmas season we are again reminded of "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (II Cor. 8:9). Helping to alleviate suffering among our fellow men by sharing our earthly goods with those who are in need is one way of proving the sincerity of our love for the Christ Child. Contributions for this cause may be made by directing them either through your local congregation or directly to Mr. Norris Koopmann, Treasurer, Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod, 3512 W. North Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208.

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### The Message of the Symbols

*An interpretation of the cover symbol  
in terms of the Te Deum Laudamus.*

CHI RHO      Thou art the King of Glory,  
                  O Christ;  
                  Thou art the everlasting Son  
                  of the Father.

MANGER      When Thou tookest upon  
                  Thee to deliver man,  
                  Thou didst humble Thyself  
                  to be born of a virgin.

ASCENDING    When Thou hadst overcome  
RAYS            the sharpness of death,  
                  Thou didst open the kingdom  
                  of heaven to all believers.

GLORY BE TO GOD ON HIGH!

### The Light of the World

*What wondrous gift from heaven above  
The Lord in His abounding love  
On mankind has bestowed.  
A gift so rare, so marvelous,  
This Holy night He gave to us,  
As it had been foretold.*

*His only Son, of virgin birth  
The Father sent upon the earth  
As Savior of us all.  
So meek and lowly there He lay  
Upon a humble bed of hay  
In a forsaken stall.*

*On bended knee beside His bed  
The Virgin Mary bowed her head  
In prayerful reverie.  
The shepherds praised His holy name,  
And wise men from the Orient came  
This wondrous Child to see.*

*This Light of all the world we praise,  
Our voice in glad hosannas raise  
To Him whom we adore;  
And welcome bid the King of kings,  
Who unto us salvation brings.  
We praise Him evermore.*

ERNA WESTPHAL

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### A HYMN OF GLORY SUNG BY THE ANGELS

*(Continued from page 424)*

to the world. When God graciously gives us peace and joy in believing the good news of our salvation in Christ, He is extending His good will to us. Just as the angels stated a fact when they sang, "Glory to God," and just as they expressed a truth when they joined in the words, "And on earth peace," so also they were describing a true state of affairs when they added, "Good will toward men." God's good will was being extended, and is being extended today, to men.

If you have forgotten temporarily about God's holy angels, may their hymn of glory remind you this Christmas of their existence. Above all, may you join the angels in glorifying and praising God now for the gift of His Son, who gives us peace and assures us of God's good will! May you also join the angels in heaven in singing a Hymn of Glory to God through eternity!

EDWIN C. SCHMELZER

[Edwin C. Schmelzer is pastor of St. Paul's and Zion Ev. Lutheran Churches, Remus, Michigan.]





## Studies in God's Word

### The Lord That Bought You—II Peter 2:1

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

Since this is the Christmas season, our thoughts naturally go to Bethlehem and the Child born of Mary. Peter in his two letters does not mention the birth of Christ. Instead he mentions certain events in the life of our Lord which in unmistakable language demonstrate the greatness of Christ's glory.

#### The Christ Child and His Gospel Are the Heart and Core of This Whole Epistle

In the first chapter, which we studied some time ago, Peter spoke of the Transfiguration of our Lord, when His face shone as the sun and His garments became white as the snow, and the voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." In the third chapter Peter speaks about the day of the Lord, Judgment Day, thus answering the taunting question of the unbeliever, "Where is the promise of *his* coming?" For us he adds the exhortation, "Be diligent that ye may be found of *him* in peace, without spot, blameless."

This is not a new topic for Peter. He had already touched upon it in the second chapter, speaking there of God's previous judgments upon the angels that sinned, upon mankind in the great deluge, and upon Sodom and Gomorrah. There, too, he admonishes us not to be deceived again, who "have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Thus Christ, born of

Mary, and His Gospel are basic to each chapter of Second Peter.

#### Christ Is the Redeemer of All, Including the Heretics

In the first verse of chapter two Peter speaks of Christ as "the Lord that bought them." Bought whom? Improbable as it may sound: the false teachers who were bringing in damnable heresies. Yes, Christ even paid for the sins of all heretics, whether they repent and are finally saved or, as the heretics mentioned here, "bring upon themselves swift destruction."

Heresy, of course, is a dirty word in our time. There simply are no more heretics! Outward Christendom has come to the point where a large church body recently found it impossible to convict a prominent bishop of heresy, even though he had denied almost every fundamental doctrine taught in Holy Scripture.

Actually, this should not surprise us. After all, Peter in this letter many years ago warned the Church that it would literally be invaded by such who teach other doctrines. They would, of course, do so "privily," that is, covertly. They would use orthodox phrases, but give them another meaning, and thus try to pass off their heresies as the "good, old Gospel." False teachers, after all, never publicly announce themselves as such. That would be self-defeating even in our wide-open day. Rather, they speak of various doctrines as so much excess baggage.

False teachers naturally cite the Scripture, too, but not at all in the sense in which Peter spoke of it in the first chapter of this Epistle. There he said, "No prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." In this connection I would like to share with you an explanation a young brother shared with me, and which is especially *a propos* for our day. It is clear that for Peter no

part of the Scripture is an expression of the writer's own private opinion, but totally God's revelation. This young brother suggested that since the basic meaning of the original word for "interpretation" is "a release," the meaning of the expression is accurately reproduced in present-day newspaper language, as when we speak of "a news release." Thus, the writings of the Prophets and Apostles were not their private thoughts, but actually "a release" of the Holy Spirit, for "holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

By the same token the teachings introduced by these "false teachers," against whom Peter warns, are their own "releases," not those of the Spirit. They are not God's Gospel, but heresies that damn. These men even deny the Lord that bought them — not indeed denying that He lived, but that He saves. In the rest of the chapter Peter reveals their sordid motives and their tragic fate.

#### Bethlehem's Manger Was for Christ the First Step on the Way to Calvary's Cross

"The Lord that bought them!" Even though these words take us out to Calvary and speak of the price Christ paid for our sins, they are at the same time a lovely Christmas thought. After all, this is necessarily included when the Christmas Gospels call Christ "Savior."

Listen to Zacharias: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and *redeemed* his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant Jacob." Or Gabriel's word to Joseph as he searched his heart when he found out that Mary was pregnant, "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: *for he shall save his*



people from their sins." Add the announcement of the angel on the night in which He was born: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord."

Christmas and Calvary and Joseph's garden are all part of the same "good tidings of great joy." Deny one, and you no longer know what to make of the others. The words of Peter and the accounts of the Evangelists are in agreement; they speak the same language.

#### **The Appearance of Bold Deniers of the Gospel Should Not Surprise Us**

But there are ever so many "great names" in the Church today who consider it unimportant whether

Christ was born of a virgin, suffered and died as our Substitute, actually rose from the dead in a physical sense, ascended into heaven, or is to come again to judge the quick and the dead. It is alarming to note how many so-called "theologians" have succeeded in persuading their church bodies to tolerate such ideas. It is equally distressing to see how many have blindly followed their leadership.

Alarming? Distressing? Yes! But not surprising, for here we have Peter's warning. Nor was Peter the first to issue this warning. That was done by Simeon in the temple when Christ was 40 days old, and Mary and Joseph came to present Him to the Lord. He took the infant Jesus into his arms, and said of Him, "Behold, this child is set for the fall

and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against." Thus the presence of such in the outward Church who deny the Lord that bought them is to be expected.

Even at Christmas time and in connection with the Christmas doctrines we Christians must be on our guard, examining carefully all that we hear and read. But having tested the product of your own church, the sermons preached from its pulpits, the doctrines taught in its classrooms and seminary, its publications, you and I have reason to thank God that our church by His grace still proclaims the Lord who bought us, and holds with Peter that the Bible is God's inspired truth—including the Christmas Gospel.

HAROLD E. WICKE

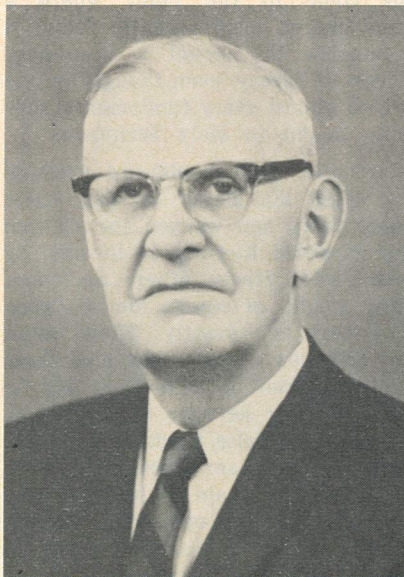
### **† Pastor Leonard Henry Koeninger †**

Pastor Leonard Henry Koeninger was born at Norwalk, Wisconsin, May 3, 1891, the son of John Koeninger and his wife Sophia, nee Lauritzen. He was baptized by the Rev. Christian Koehler at Norwalk and confirmed by the Rev. G. W. Albrecht at Ridgeville, Wisconsin. In 1913 he graduated from Northwestern College, where his parents were in charge of the refectory and maintenance staff. In 1916 he graduated from our Theological Seminary, then located in Wauwatosa.

His first assignment was a mission field at Raymond, South Dakota, where he served for six years. In 1922 he accepted a call from St. Paul's Congregation, North Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. After serving this congregation, also for six years, he was called to First German Lutheran Church, Manitowoc, Wisconsin, succeeding Pastor Karl Machmiller. Pastor Koeninger faithfully served this large congregation from 1928 until the time of his retirement in 1966, a span of 38 years. Thereupon he and his wife moved to Milwaukee and affiliated with St. James Congregation. Here he frequently assisted in the distribution of Holy Communion and was likewise willing to preach when called upon.

The Lord not only made rich use of Pastor Koeninger's gifts in the performance of his pastoral duties but enlisted them also for rendering valuable service in the church at

large. For 18 years he served as secretary of the Synod's Board of Trustees. This was during the trying period of the depression when many difficult financial decisions



Pastor L. H. Koeninger

had to be made to meet pressing needs and at the same time to maintain our church body on a sound fiscal basis. During another trying period, when our Synod's membership needed guidance to take its far-reaching confessional actions, the Lord again asked him to make a helpful contribution by serving on the Synod's Protest Committee.

For more than 50 years he found deep joy and great satisfaction in laboring as a public messenger of the Gospel. In an age when the Christian ministry has been exposed to the danger of losing itself in many externals and in organizational activity, the preaching, teaching, and administering of the comforting Gospel of Jesus Christ very definitely remained for him the heart and essence of the public ministry. In that spirit he also served on our Synod's Catechism Revision Committee, being much concerned that in the public ministry a thorough and effective catechetical instruction of the youth retain its proper emphasis.

On July 26, 1916, Leonard Koeninger was united in holy wedlock with Edna Frank. The Lord blessed their union with four children: one son, Leonard, pastor of St. Peter's Congregation, Plymouth, Michigan; three daughters: Irma, Mrs. Glen Knutson, Appleton, Wisconsin; Ruth, Mrs. Charles Kirst, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Leonore, Mrs. Robert Winter, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

On Wednesday, October 16, the Lord promoted His public servant to a higher service in His eternal fellowship. The burial service was conducted by his pastor at St. James Ev. Lutheran Church on October 19, and his interment took place at Oak Hill Cemetery, Watertown, Wisconsin. He is survived by his wife, his four children, his sister Helen, and five grandchildren.

W. O. PLESS



## Editorials

(Continued from page 423)

sinner. This constitutes the purpose and last chapter of the world's history.

Without this divine purpose, centering in Christ, history is without meaning; and man's life also is meaningless. History becomes a succession of unrelated events leading nowhere; and individual man is assigned involuntarily the role of temporary participant, if not that of victim, before he passes into oblivion.

Considering this, it is not difficult to account for the dissatisfaction, the unrest, and the rebelliousness which are so obviously building up in contemporary society. The gracious purposes of God in Christ are still unknown to millions. His revealed purposes are being increasingly ignored, also in many churches, which are ostensibly dedicated to the purpose of proclaiming God's Word and will. How can history without plan or purpose, as it is to so many, result in anything but a sense of frustration and to futility in the individual and in violence and upheaval in the world as a whole?

In the commemoration of the coming of the world's Savior we are reminded once again that there is a divine purpose in history and a continuing purpose for us as individuals. And in recognizing this purpose we find peace and stability amid all the hopelessness and confusion.

IMMANUEL G. FREY

\* \* \*

**Ideal Christmas** The promise of the ideal Christmas is everywhere. The gleam of the gift counters, the sparkle of the Yuletide ornaments,

the twinkling lights, the freshness of the holly and the fragrance of the evergreen — all promise the Christmas of song and story, the Christmas of golden memories, the Christmas of our dreams.

That kind of Christmas is a will-o-the-wisp, a never-never land. The dream and the reality do not focus. Seen close up, the gifts have flaws; their luster is dimmed by other gifts. We tire of them; they are quietly put aside. The givers' hearts are not perfect in their intention; nor are they always wise. The glitter and the romance of the season cannot screen out the everydayness of life; they even make it stand out in harsher relief.

Earth has no ideal Christmas to give. Heaven alone has. The heavenly Giver is perfect in His intentions and in His wisdom, changeless and perfect in His love.

Perfect, too, is His gift of the Christ Child. The newborn Savior answers all the desires of every man's heart and fulfills the need of every soul. No other gift will surpass that perfect Gift in grace or glory. It will never pall as earthly gifts do.

Where that perfect Gift has been accepted, where the Babe of Bethlehem has found a cradle in the heart, life's drabness, its emptiness, its frustrations no longer rob us of Christmas joy. With the Christ Child in our hearts we not only transcend all of earth's disappointments; He even transmutes them into blessings.

From the Giver of every perfect gift, through His gift of Christmas, we have the Christmas that earth cannot give.

CARLETON TOPPE

### WISCONSIN EV. LUTHERAN SYNOD CURRENT BUDGETARY FUND

1968 Prebudget Subscription Performance

Ten months ended October 31, 1968

	Subscription Amount for 1968	10/12 of Annual Subscription	Offerings Received	Per Cent of Subscription
Arizona-California	\$ 91,932	\$ 76,610	\$ 67,218	87.7
Dakota-Montana	111,973	93,311	87,141	93.4
Michigan	593,761	494,801	455,493	92.1
Minnesota	590,135	491,779	474,479	96.5
Nebraska	106,255	88,546	89,579	101.2
Northern Wisconsin	645,628	538,023	534,797	99.4
Pacific Northwest	28,425	23,687	22,040	93.0
Southeastern Wisconsin	781,034	650,862	570,496	87.7
Western Wisconsin	734,380	611,983	567,975	92.8
<b>Total — This year</b>	<b>\$3,683,523</b>	<b>\$3,069,602</b>	<b>\$2,869,218</b>	<b>93.5</b>
<b>Total — Last year</b>	<b>\$3,358,502</b>	<b>\$2,798,751</b>	<b>\$2,602,553</b>	<b>93.0</b>

### ORDINATIONS AND INSTALLATIONS

#### Installed

#### Pastors

**Kant, Robert A.**, as pastor of Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, Sanborn, Minn., by C. E. Miller, assisted by T. Henning, E. Peterson, L. Schalow, H. Bittorf; Nov. 24, 1968.

**Leyrer, Carl S.**, as pastor of St. Lucas Ev. Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, Wis., by R. G. Johnston, assisted by P. Eckert, A. Schupmann, V. Vogel, and R. Voss; Oct. 22, 1968.

**Pautz, Larry L.**, as pastor of St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church, Whitewater, Wis., by D. Bitter, assisted by P. Kuehl, E. Kiessling, V. Prange, W. Wagner; Nov. 24, 1968.

#### Teacher

**Behmer, James A.**, as principal of Gloria Dei-Bethesda Ev. Lutheran School, Milwaukee, Wis., by N. Engel; Sept. 8, 1968.

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

#### Pastors

**Kant, Robert A.**  
Box 25  
Sanborn, Minn. 56083

**Krueger, William**  
4542 Lyceum Drive  
San Antonio, Tex. 78229

**Plocher, David J.**  
7007 West 11th St.  
Wichita, Kans. 67212

### MISSIO DEI CONTRIBUTIONS

Total to October 31, 1968

Arizona-California	\$ 155,666
Dakota-Montana	168,646
Michigan	652,961
Minnesota	725,348
Nebraska	159,855
Northern Wisconsin	1,059,193
Pacific Northwest	50,131
Southeastern Wisconsin	1,285,356
Western Wisconsin	900,202
Gifts sent to Treasurer's Office	56,972
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,214,330</b>
Total subscription	\$5,525,000
Per cent received	94.4%

### CALENDAR OF CONFERENCES

#### ARIZONA-CALIFORNIA

**TEXAS PASTOR-DELEGATE CONFERENCE**  
Date: Jan. 14 and 15, 1969.  
Place: Mt. Zion, Hillsboro; Robert Hartman, pastor.  
Time: Opening Communion service at 10 a.m.  
Agenda: Guidelines for the Book of Revelation, R. Hartman; Sermon study, W. Diehl; What Constitutes a Fruit of Faith, Wm. Krueger; Exegesis of I Timothy 2, J. Nefendorf; Preparation for the reception of the Lord's Supper, V. Glaeske.  
Vilas Glaeske, Secretary

#### NORTHERN WISCONSIN

##### RHINELANDER PASTOR-TEACHER CONFERENCE

Date: Jan. 6, 1969.  
Place: Zion, Rhineland, Wis.; D. E. Kock, pastor.  
Time: 9 a.m., beginning with Holy Communion.  
Preacher: E. A. Kock (R. Oswald, alternate).  
Agenda: Topics — "Pastor Recruitment"; "Value of extra-curricular activities in relationship to our total school program."  
T. C. Spiegelberg  
Secretary pro tem



## Glory to God in the Highest

### With a Joy Beyond All Telling

*With a joy beyond all telling,  
Ever mounting, higher swelling,  
Angels saw what God intended:  
Men o'er whom the curse impended,  
Men from God by sin far severed —  
They by Him would be delivered  
Through the merit of Another,  
God's own Son, become their Brother.*

*Angels heard with joy God's sages  
Prophecy through many ages.  
When at last the promised Savior  
Came to earth by God's great favor,  
Then they set the air a-ringing  
With their "Glory! Glory!" singing,  
In their joy beyond all telling,  
Ever mounting, higher swelling.*

*Numbed by fear, men saw God's glory  
In the skies. But when the story  
Of God's mighty deed was told them,  
Terror could no longer hold them;  
For in Bethlehem was lying  
One to still their fearful sighing,  
One to fill them with rejoicing.  
Praise to God we hear them voicing.*

*Long the line of glad confessors,  
Like the shepherds! All possessors  
Of the Christ, the Gift from heaven,  
By the Father freely given,  
Praise with might the Lord's salvation.  
God's whole Church in ev'ry nation  
Sings with joy beyond all telling,  
Ever mounting, higher swelling.*

*Keep the "Glory!"-song resounding!  
Tell the Father's grace abounding  
For all men — none are excepted!  
Once for all He has accepted  
What the Savior, born of Mary,  
For them did and bore. Oh, carry  
Far the tidings, through them bringing  
Joy to fill sad hearts with singing!*

*Lift your eyes! Behold the wonder  
Of the Great Day breaking yonder!  
Mark how ends the Christmas story:  
Millions bask in heav'nly glory!  
Some are there because you brought them  
News of Him who came and sought them.  
Now their song with yours is blending  
In the joy that has no ending.*

WERNER H. FRANZMANN



# THE AGELESS SONG OF MEN AND ANGELS

## A Litany to Glorify the Incarnation of Our Lord

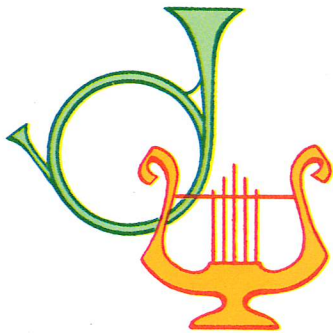
O God, our Father in Christ, before the foundations of the world were laid, Thou didst plan a rich gift for all the children of men, who were lying in bitter poverty. The hearts of Thy holy angels sang for joy when they saw that Thy love would spare no cost to redeem us lost and condemned creatures.

**Here let our "Glory be to God!" begin!  
Proclaim how long God planned the lost to win!**

To Israel, O God, Thou didst show Thy tender mercy from generation to generation, for Thou again and again didst give them the Promise of Him who would come to save them from all their enemies. By faith they waited for the Woman's Seed, the Descendant of Abraham, the Son of David. By faith they saw the day of Thy Redeemer, and they were glad.

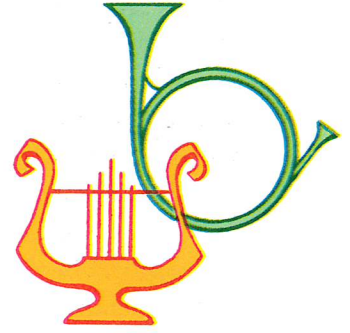
**Our "Glory!" now, like theirs, resounds:  
God's mercy knows no end or bounds!**

O Jesus Christ, to see whom is to see the Father, in Thee we behold the merciful love of the Father in all its fullness, for love brought Thee down from heaven and made Thee willing to redeem us guilty sinners by walking the way of deep humiliation and by sacrificing Thy divine blood and life for us.



**Love caused Thy incarnation,  
Love brought Thee down to me;  
Thy thirst for my salvation  
Procured my liberty.**

**O love beyond all telling  
That led Thee to embrace,  
In love all love excelling,  
Our lost and fallen race!**



### II.

At Thy birth, O Lord Jesus, the angels proclaimed peace on earth. Thou didst make peace, for Thou hast borne all our sins and hast removed them from God's sight and memory.

**"All glory be to God!"—for His own Son  
The priceless peace with God for us has won.**

Yet Thy peace, O blessed Lord, was meant not only for a few, but for all sinners. The holy angel named Thee Savior and Christ the Lord, and then pronounced the news of Thy birth the "good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."

**Then let the "Glory!" rising from our hearts  
Ring out to men in earth's remotest parts!**

O Savior of the world, at the Second Christmas which Thou hast prepared for Thine own Thou wilt make our hearts swell with wonder and delight. For then the voices of those brought to Thee through our song of witness will be joined to our own and to the voices of all the saints received to glory and of all the angels—an unnumbered host raising the mighty doxology that exalts Thee as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

**Glory be to Him who loved us,  
Washed us from each spot and stain;  
Glory be to Him who bought us,  
Made us kings with Him to reign!  
Glory, glory  
To the Lamb that once was slain!**





## Glory to God in the Highest!

In a thunderous hymn of praise the chorus of the heavenly host sang, "Glory to God!" at the birth of Jesus, the Savior of the world. The angels' jubilant hymn of glory echoed and reechoed through the dark Judaeen hills while a few simple shepherds, awed at the sight of the sky ablaze with the glory of the Lord, thrilled to music never before heard by earth-bound ears.

If angels so delighted to sing the praises of God at the birth of His Son, how much more should not we lift up our voices in joyous songs of worship, adoration, and praise! For the Child whose birth we are celebrating in this festive season is *our* Savior, not the angels'. The holy angels, though they desire to look into the mysteries of God's redeeming love, had and have no need of a Savior from sin. But it was for our redemption that the eternal Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. Thus a New Year in the history of God's creation, the New Testament era of God's grace and good will, was ushered in. May God's gifts of peace and joy through Christ be yours in fullest measure both now and forever to His eternal glory!

### A BLESSED CHRISTMAS IN THE BABE OF BETHLEHEM!

*The Editorial Board and the  
Contributing Editors of*  
THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN

*The Board and Management of the  
Northwestern Publishing House  
and all its workers*