the Concordia Lutheran

"The Scripture cannot be broken." John 10:35

"Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a Light unto my path." Ps. 119:105

Vol. XXXXIII July-August, 1998 Nos. 7 - 8

"Whom shall I send,
and who will go for
us? Then said I,
Here am I; Send me."

Isaiah 6:8

OFFICIAL ORGAN
of the
Concordia Lutheran Conference

This publication appears in a monthly or bi-monthly issue at a subscription price of $3.00 per year.

EDITOR:
Rev. E. R. Stallings, Jr.
110 Grasmere Court
San Antonio, TX 78218

ASSISTANT EDITOR:
Rev. M. L. Natterer
483 Tangent Street
Lebanon, OR 97355

LAY MEMBER:
Dr. John M. Steinke
5959 Wurzbach F-7
San Antonio, TX 78238-1733

Address all subscriptions, renewals, and remittances to: **Scriptural Publications, Central Avenue at 171st Place, Oak Forest, IL 60452**. A special notice of expiration will be inserted in the issue which terminates your subscription.

Officers of the Concordia Lutheran Conference

PRESIDENT:
Rev. Paul R. Bloedel
9658 - 54th Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98118

VICE-PRESIDENT:
Rev. David T. Mensing
17151 South Central Avenue
Oak Forest, IL 60452

SECRETARY:
Rev. Mark W. Dierking
Box 33
Wilmot, SD 57279

TREASURER:
Mr. Victor K. Bloedel
10200 - 62nd Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98178

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

To set forth in simple and plain language the pure doctrine of God's Word as taught by the true Lutheran Church in full accordance with the **Book of Concord of 1580** and the **Brief Statement of 1932.**

To show, **on the basis of Scripture**, what true Christians are to believe and how, out of love for their Savior Jesus Christ, they are to lead godly lives.

To furnish aids for Bible study and articles for Scriptural devotion and meditation.

To demonstrate, by our Scriptural stand, that our **Concordia Lutheran Conference** is not a sect or a false church, but that the congregations which form it confess, teach, and practice the Word of God in its full truth and purity and use the Sacraments according to Christ's institution. All who do this are the true visible Church on earth.

To seek out all who truly share our Scriptural position in doctrine and practice, and to urge the mutual public acknowledgment of such God-given unity. Thus we shall be able thereafter to practice a God-pleasing fellowship with them.

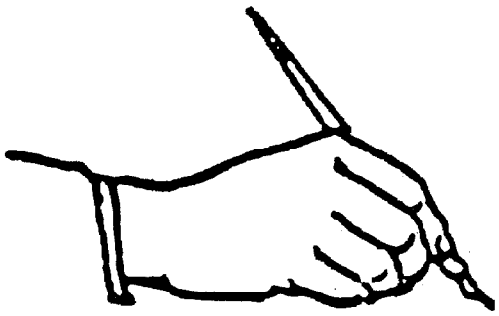
To show that we do not have among us a mixture of divergent teachings but that we are "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

To set forth pertinent historical information which has a bearing upon the Church and to expose modern philosophical thought and the so-called scientific theories which contradict the Word of God.

To expose particularly the false teaching and practice of the various so-called "Lutheran" church bodies by comparing their teachings and practices with what is plainly recorded in the Word of God, in the Lutheran Confessions, and in the old orthodox Lutheran writings.

To expose false teaching and practice wherever it makes its appearance and to keep abreast of the current happenings in the church and among the nations as signs of the times.

To be truthful and factual in our reporting and freely to correct any misinformation of which we are not aware and which has been called to our attention. Also to clarify any information or statement of doctrine or practice which may be unclear to our readers or which may create a wrong impression.



The President's Column

NEW AGE ECLECTICISM

The New Age movement is far from dead. In fact, it is alive and active, even in the midst of Roman Catholicism as well as in Christian sectarianism, to the ever-increasing delight of the devil, the world, and the sinful flesh of men! It is a spiritual malignancy which eats at and devours the very vitals of Christianity.

At the heart of the New Age movement, which in recent years has been gathering momentum and influence in religious thinking throughout the world, is **eclecticism**, namely, the notion that every intelligent person should assert his individual freedom in *concocting his own faith by combining beliefs and practices from a smorgasbord of religions.* The more numerous and varied the religions from which a person draws what he believes, the richer and more complete will be his faith, and the deeper will be his religious experience — and the more content and peaceful and well-rounded will his life become. And oh, how wise such people become in their own eyes, and what great influence they wield as the world readily swallows their broad-minded tenets which, of course, emphasize humanism, self-determination, and the rights of the individual. New Agers, therefore, believe that denominationalism is on the way OUT and eclecticism is on the way IN — which may well be true! Mission work on the part of Christians among the heathen is frowned on and denounced.

To get some idea as to how wide-spread New Age eclecticism has become, go to the various religious book stores in your area and inquire as to what books are the best sellers. It has been estimated that the demand for New Age books has increased 107% over the past seven

years while general sales in the book industry have increased only 5% during that same period. Religious book sellers report that people are looking for a *"more accessible"* and *"more understandable"* Bible. By this they evidently mean a Bible which makes salvation accessible to man by his own endeavors and accomplishments, not by the demeaning way of the Gospel which pours contempt on all man's pride and self-esteem; a Bible which is understandable, or palatable, to man's darkened and perverse reason.

The vast increase of popular interest in New Age eclecticism, among people who regard themselves as Christians, certainly bears out the truth of our Savior's words, *"When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"* (Luke 18:8). It appears that most sectarians, even some who call themselves Lutherans, think that this "renewed interest" in religion is great. They say, "People are developing a renewed spirituality, the like of which has never been seen before. Christianity is really growing by leaps and bounds, and is reaching a new high! There is a renewed swing toward Christian values and morality." All this has come about because **true** Christianity itself is at such a low ebb. Christianity has become so watered down, as the result of compromise and the lack of true confessionalism, that the average person who calls himself a Christian doesn't even know what true Christianity is, and is offended at what the Bible teaches against unionism, false prophets, and error in doctrine and practice.

Through the New Age spirit of eclecticism, the people of our nation and of the world are filling themselves with heathen perversity and hell-bent religious enthusiasm. There are those who insist that this new-world religion, or, as some call it, new-world Christianity, will come into full swing when denominationalism (*"We're right and you're wrong"*) is a thing of the past, and *"We're all God's children," "God loves you," "Jesus loves you," "We all love you,"* is embraced in a New Age spiritualism where *"to each his own"* will be the popular slogan and *"everybody's religion is right," "pick and choose what you want to believe,"* is the spiritual order of the day! This, of course, is the same as saying, *"Let each one be his own God and believe what he pleases."* What glorious advances and deep insights man has developed and fashioned for himself in these last evil days of the world — and how readily the people lap it up! In reality, they are merely following the tempting declaration of Satan, the old evil foe of God and man, who said

to Eve way back in the Garden of Eden, "*Ye shall be as Gods.*"

These are the clouds which lie on the religious horizon in this world — threatening a very real storm of persecution against those who earnestly desire to hold fast to the Word of God in all its truth and purity. Here, many cry out that the denominations must unite, despite differences in doctrine and practice, to form a united front against the New Age movement. But such a union, based only on outward unity, has no real strength but merely increases indifference to the pure teachings of the Bible. To wage a successful battle against the palpable influence and power of the New Agers, requires unwavering steadfastness and faithfulness to the pure teachings of God's Word in doctrine and practice without the slightest tinge of compromise — without the popular "agreement to disagree" which holds sway among all unionists and ecumenicists.

If we Christians earnestly believe and love the wonderful Gospel of salvation revealed to us in Scripture, namely, that God, by pure grace alone *for Christ's sake*, has declared the whole world of lost and condemned sinners righteous and has forgiven the sins of all people from Adam to the last person ever to live on earth, that all who believe in Jesus might not perish but have everlasting life, we will want to let God be God and let His Word alone unite us in everything that we believe and teach and upon which we base our lives. Only such a united front will prevail against the onslaughts of heathenism — a unity brought about by God Himself alone through the power of the Gospel — a unity which alone will enable us successfully to wield God's Word, a weapon glorious, even as we sing:

Rise! To arms!
With prayer employ you, O Christians, lest the Foe destroy you,
For Satan has designed your fall.
Wield God's Word, a weapon glorious!
Against each foe you'll be victorious;
Our God will set you o'er them all.
Is Satan strong and fell? Here is Immanuel.
Sing Hosanna!
The strong ones yield, With Christ our Shield,
And we as conquerors hold the field.

(T.L.H. 444, 1)

Notice what the Word of God says, ever so plainly, against such who are being deceived by New Age eclecticism. **First of all**, the Bible teaches us that *every* Word of God is pure and that we are *not* to add anything to it nor diminish from it, (Proverbs 30:5; Deuteronomy 12:32); that every Word in the Bible is God-breathed (II Timothy 3:16; I Corinthians 2:13) and is therefore without error or contradiction (John 17:17); that nothing in the Bible can be set aside (John 10:35) and that, by false teaching, the Name of God is blasphemed or mocked (Romans 2:23,24; Ezekiel 22:26).

Secondly, the Lord Jesus says, *"If ye continue in* ***My*** *Word, then are ye My disciples indeed,"* (John 8:31), *"He that is of God heareth* ***God's*** *Words,"* (John 8:47), and *"He that hath My Word, let him speak My Word* ***faithfully,"*** (Jeremiah 23:28). The sheep in the fold of the Good Shepherd hear His voice and follow Him (John 10:27,28). Furthermore, Jesus says, *"A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they* ***know not*** *the voice of strangers,"* (John 10:5). Those who are tempted to follow eclecticism are enticed to pick and choose what they want to believe — not to continue in God's Word as it is plainly set forth in the Bible. Jesus says that those who do not hear God's Words are *"not of God,"* (John 8:47) but, as He said to the unbelieving Jews, *"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it"* (John 8:44).

Thirdly, the Lord God earnestly warns against other religions, false Christs and false prophets. Through the Apostle Paul, God says, *"Keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called"* (I Timothy 6:20); *"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn their ears away from the Truth,"* (II Timothy 4:3,4); *"But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker,"* (II Timothy 2:16,17); *"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt*

minds, and destitute of the Truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself" (I Timothy 6:3-5). The Lord Jesus says, *"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing; but inwardly they are ravening wolves!"* (Matthew 7:15).

Fourthly, a Christian should be eager to confess his love for God's Word and his opposition to the teachings of the heathen, saying in Psalm 119:97-105, *"O how love I Thy Law! It is my meditation all the day. Thou through Thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep Thy Word. I have not departed from Thy judgments, for Thou hast taught me. How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth. Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a Light unto my path."*

And **last of all** the Lord earnestly forbids Christians to have any religious contact with the heathen, saying very plainly in II Corinthians 6:14-18, *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."* He also commands Christians to "**mark**" and "**avoid**" all who call themselves Christians but who teach, tolerate, support, uphold and defend false doctrine, saying in Romans 16:17,18, *"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."* God, moreover, gives us the armor which we need to fight against Satan, saying in Ephesians 6:10-17, *"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be*

able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

May the congregations of our Conference, by God's grace alone, always remain faithful to the Word of God in all its truth and purity, and to stand boldly as a bulwark against all error in doctrine and practice, and be enabled to remain *"stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord,"* (I Corinthians 15:58) in the face of whatever persecution may be in store for us and for our children at the hands of those who are the promoters of eclecticism and, what is closely connected with it, a one-world religion — for Jesus' sake!

—P.R.B.

WELCOME

TO ALL OLD AND NEW SUBSCRIBERS

We appreciate your concern for true orthodox Lutheranism and are certain that, by God's grace, you will receive rich spiritual benefits from your faithful reading of **CONCORDIA LUTHERAN** articles which are based solidly upon the pure and unerring Word of God.

Only $3.00 per year!

Give a subscription to a relative or friend.

CONVENTION DIGEST

MOTTO: "Here Am I; Send Me!"

—Isaiah 6:8

The splendid weather for which Oregon is so often noted lived up to its reputation during the week of June 22, the Lord providing six lovely days for the **47th Annual Convention** of the Concordia Lutheran Conference. The Convention, held on June 26-28, was hosted this year by St. John's Lutheran Church of Lebanon, Oregon, the Rev. M. L. Natterer, Pastor. The members of St. John's graciously opened their homes to delegates and their families and the host congregation provided delicious meals during the entire week. Indeed, as always, a big part of the convention's success can be attributed to the generous, loving, Christian hospitality shown by the host congregation's families to their guests. Our heartfelt thanks to them for their manifest Christian love!

The convention was preceded by a two-day **Pastoral Conference** and **Seminary Faculty Meeting** as well as the annual meeting of the Conference **Board of Directors**.

The Convention itself began on Friday, June 26th, with a service of convocation at 9:30 a.m. The *pastor loci* served as liturgist for the service, and the Conference President, the Rev. Paul R. Bloedel, Pastor of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Seattle, Washington, preached an edifying sermon based upon St. Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 8, verses 1-11. The theme of the message was **The Importance of Being Spiritually Minded**, the sermon dividing into two parts: **I. How spiritual-mindedness differs from carnal-mindedness,** and **II. How spiritual-mindedness is produced, nurtured, and sustained in us.**

Following the service, the opening session of the Convention was begun with a brief devotion conducted by President Bloedel. During this brief session, the *ad hoc* convention committees were appointed, the delegates were officially recognized and seated, and Pastor Bloedel presented the **Annual Report of the President**. Following this report, the official

Convention Agenda was adopted with the addition of two more items. The **Press Committee** reported that there was no report and immediately after brief announcements, the convention recessed for lunch.

The Friday afternoon session began with a devotion conducted by Pastor Natterer, the *pastor loci*. The highlight of the afternoon session, the presentation of the **Convention Essay,** then took place. Presented by the Rev. Mark W. Dierking of Wilmot, SD, the essay was entitled: **"Personal Christian Mission Work."** This first part of the essay centered on THE COMMAND, THE PROMISES, AND THE PREPARATIONS associated with personal mission work. (The essay in its entirety will appear in the proceedings of the convention so that all may benefit from it in their personal study at home.) The first part of the essay was interspersed with lively and edifying discussion.

Following the presentation of the first part of the essay, a recommendation from the Board of Directors was unanimously held in abeyance, pending the report of the Committee on Missions. Our Treasurer, Mr. Victor Bloedel, then presented the **Initial Report of the Finance Committee** followed by **Initial Budget Proposal and Worksheet.** Then followed the **Report of the Editorial Committee** and the **Report of the Publishing House Board of Control**. In that report, it was noted that copies of two Conference documents, *"A Catechism on the Doctrine of the Church and its Ministry,"* and *"How the False Doctrine on Church and Ministry (as it is taught by the WELS, CoLC, and in the ELS) Endangers Other Plain Teachings of the Bible,"* were sent to every pastor in the ELS. It was also noted that 200 copies of the "Sketch" had been re-printed for use by our pastors and congregations. Special thanks were expressed to our Business Manager, Mr. David Steinke, who resigned this year after years of faithful service. The report of the **Business Manager of Scriptural Publications** was then given. At this point, it was mutually agreed to amend the agenda to include the **Web Page Administrative Committee**. The Committee reported that the Conference WebPage was up and running. All our readers are urged to check it out at **http://www.concordialutheranconf.com.** It was decided to maintain the committee for the present, appointed each year by the chair, for the upkeep and maintenance of our WebPage. Any changes to the WebPage

are to be approved first by the President and Secretary of the Conference. The **Committee on Missions** then delivered its report, recommending that the subsidy for St. Stephen's, Wilmot, be continued. At this juncture, the **Recommendation of the Board of Directors** was presented. That recommendation was that a committee, consisting of Pastors Bloedel and Mensing, in accordance with the Constitution of the Conference, evaluate the circumstances and on-going need of the congregation in Wilmot. This recommendation was adopted at the urging of Pastor Dierking, and the congregation in Wilmot was amendable to it. This evaluation and the subsequent report to the Board of Directors was to be carried out as soon as possible, with the Board to act upon the subsidy based upon the recommendation of the committee. [As of this writing, the meeting between the Conference committee and the congregation has taken place. By God's grace, the meeting went very well. The Committee took its recommendation to the Board of Directors and the subsidy request by Wilmot was unanimously approved.]

Following the Recommendation of the Board, the minutes of Friday's session were read and approved and the session adjourned with a closing devotion conducted by Pastor Bloedel.

The Saturday morning session began by asking God's blessing upon our business with an opening devotion conducted by the Rev. David G. Redlin, Pastor of Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church, Tucson, Arizona. Immediately following the conclusion of the devotion, Pastor Dierking delivered the second part of his essay, **Personal Christian Mission Work**. This part of the essay focused first on the objective of mission work, namely, ***"to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me"*** (Acts 26:18). His essay continued with the objects or targets of mission work, beginning in the home. The discussion was so protracted and lively, as well as edifying, that Pastor Dierking was unable to finish this part of his essay, though time for it extended well past that which was allowed in the agenda.

After a brief break, our first seminary student in ten years, Mr. Paul E. Bloedel, delivered an informative and amusing interest report on his first year at seminary. He was asked and answered many questions from the

floor. The Convention then broke for lunch.

The Saturday afternoon session began with a devotion led by the Rev. E. R. Stallings of Holy Scripture Ev. Lutheran Church, San Antonio, Texas. After the devotion, the first item of business was the **Report of the Committee on Theological Education.** That report was presented in two parts by two pastors and the committee chairman. Pastor Mensing had been elected chairman last year, but because he was the first year seminary professor, it was necessary for him to step aside and the next pastor in line, the Rev. M. L. Natterer, took over as chairman. Pastor Mensing reported on the necessary preparations for our first seminary student in 10 years. Pastor Natterer reported on the progress of our Seminary student since he began classes in January of this year. Our student will continue under Pastor Mensing's tutelage until May of next year. He will then move to Wilmot and continue the next phase of his seminary education. There was one recommendation in the CTE report, namely, to continue the $300.00 per month **Student Maintenance Allowance**, which recommendation was unanimously adopted.

The afternoon session continued with the presentation of the report of the **Committee on Lutheran Union**. It was noted in that report that we were continuing our meetings with the Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations (FLC) and its president, the Rev. Robert Lietz. Representatives of our Conference attended the FLC convention this year and were authorized to do so again next year. The convention delegates then heard the **Report of the Committee to Review the President's Report**, the **Auditing Committee** report and the **Further Report of the Finance Committee on the Budget**. The **Initial Report of the Resolutions Committee** was then presented in which special thanks were expressed to Mr. Paul E. Bloedel and the Rev. Paul R. Bloedel for their unselfish labors in getting the documents on Church and Ministry ready for mailing to the pastors of the ELS, and thanks were expressed in the second resolution to Pastor Mensing for his seemingly endless labors as our Conference Secretary and Seminary Professor this past year.

The next item on the agenda was the **Election of Officers and Standing Committees**. The results of those elections were as follows:

President: The Rev. Paul R. Bloedel
Vice-President: The Rev. David T. Mensing
Secretary: The Rev. Mark W. Dierking
Treasurer: Mr. Victor K. Bloedel

Board Member-at-Large, Midwest: Mr. Phillip Martin
Board Member-at-Large, Far West: Mr. Raymond S. Kusumi

Editorial Committee: The Rev. E. R. Stallings, Chairman; Rev M. L. Natterer, Mr. John Steinke
Committee on Lutheran Union: The Rev. David T. Mensing, Chairman; the Rev. Mark W. Dierking, the Rev. M. L. Natterer, Mr. Lloyd E. Martin
Committee on Theological Education: The Rev. David G. Redlin, Chairman; the Rev. David T. Mensing, Mr. Dan Bloedel, Mr. Phillip Martin
Committee on Missions: The Rev. M. L. Natterer, Chairman; the Rev. David G. Redlin, Mr. Paul Bloedel, Mr. Paul Steinke, Mr. Mark Natterer
Finance Committee: Mr. Victor K. Bloedel, Chairman; Mr. Luke Dierking, Mr. Jerry Sidwell, Mr. Mark Mensing
Publishing House Board of Control: The Rev. David T. Mensing, Chairman; the Rev. E. R. Stallings, Mr. Ray Kusumi, Mr. Phillip Martin, Mr. Daniel Bloedel

The elections concluded the business for the Saturday session. The minutes were read and approved and the afternoon session was closed with a devotion led by Pastor Bloedel.

At the Sunday morning worship service, the host pastor, the Rev. M. L. Natterer, again served as liturgist with the Rev. E. R. Stallings of Holy Scripture Ev. Lutheran Church, San Antonio, preaching a very edifying sermon. The text for the meditation was Isaiah 6:1-8, from which our Convention Theme, ***"Here am I; Send me!"*** is taken. Using *"Here am I; Send me!"* as his theme, Pastor Stallings delivered this theme under two parts: I. How God applied the Law and the Gospel to prepare and move Isaiah to say, *"Here am I; Send me!"* and II. How God applies the Law and the Gospel to prepare and move us to say, *"Here am I; Send me!"* Delegates and visitors from our various congregations then

partook of the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the Lord's Supper for the remission of their sins, the strengthening of their faith, and in testimony of their ***"unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"*** as guests of St. John's congregation.

After yet another delicious meal, the convention session reconvened. The agenda was delayed slightly by a discussion initiated by our President as to where and under whose authority our periodical, the *Concordia Lutheran*, was to be printed. This discussion was prompted by an unusual result in our elections this year. Normally, both the Publishing House Board of Control and the Editorial Committee chairmen have been the same person and thus have been located in the same place. This year, the former committee was to be chaired by Pastor Mensing in Oak Forest, Illinois while the latter, our Editor, Pastor Stallings, is located in San Antonio, Texas. To make sure everything was to run smoothly, it was suggested that the Editor be permitted to continue to choose where he wanted to publish and distribute the "CL." After some discussion, it was agreed to let Pastor Stallings continue to determine where to print and distribute the "CL."

The last two sections of the essay were then hurriedly presented. In the conclusion of the second part, Pastor Dierking continued with the objects or target of our personal mission work, including our church family, our local congregations, and then the world at large. In the final part of his essay, the "HOW TO" of mission work was discussed. Pastor Dierking noted that Scripture itself emphasizes the fact that mission work, by its very nature, is confrontational, and that we should never fear to be confrontational in carrying out our mission work.

After a brief break, the final convention business was undertaken. We heard the **Final Report on the Budget**, which was adopted, the report of the Conference **Archivist**, and that of the **Seminary Bookstore**. Then the delegates heard the **Final Report of the Resolutions Committee** which included: 3) thanks to David Steinke for his efforts as Business Manager of Scripture Publications these last years; 4) thanks to Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Oak Forest, for hosting our seminary student, and to Pastor Mensing for his labors as seminary professor this past year; 5) thanks to the officers and standing committees for their faithful service; 6) thanks to Pastors Bloedel and Stallings for their edifying sermons and to

Pastor Dierking for his essay; 7) thanks to Stephen P. Bloedel and Lloyd E. Martin for beautifying our services with their talents as organists and to the members of various congregations who participated in the mixed choir which sang at our Sunday worship service; and last but certainly not least, thanks to Pastor and Mrs. Natterer and to the members of St. John's for their gracious and generous hosting of our convention. The **Final Report of the Committee on Registration and Excuses** and the report of the Conference **Statistician** were presented. Peace congregation, Oak Forest, Illinois, extended an invitation to host the 48th Annual Convention of our Conference on June 25-27, preceded as usual by a Pastoral Conference on June 22-23, and the Board of Directors Meeting on June 24. The invitation was gratefully accepted.

The minutes of the last day of the convention were then read and accepted and Pastor Bloedel conducted the closing devotion of the Convention. The Convention had been another wonderful exercise in brotherly fellowship. The delegates and visitors returned home edified and strengthened in their faith and in the blessed unity which we enjoy as a Conference. And it is to be hoped that each went home more determined than ever to answer the call to mission work, "Who will go for us?" with the words of Isaiah firmly rooted in their hearts and souls: *"Here am I; Send me!"*

—M.W.D.
Conference Secretary

TO ALL OUR READERS! STILL AVAILABLE...

...through our publishing house, copies of the "**SKETCH OF THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF THE CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE**". This important and useful pamphlet summarizes briefly what we believe and teach on the basis of Scripture in the matters covered. A real bargain at only $ 2.50/copy! Order directly from:

Scriptural Publications
Central Avenue at 171st Place, Oak Forest, IL 60452

Hark! the voice of Jesus crying,
"Who will go and work today?
Fields are white and harvests waiting,
Who will bear the sheaves away?"
Loud and long the Master calleth,
Rich reward He offers thee;
Who will answer, gladly saying,
"Here am I, send me, send me"?

If you cannot speak like angels,
If you cannot preach like Paul,
You can tell the love of Jesus,
You can say He died for all.
If you cannot rouse the wicked
With the judgment's dread alarms,
You can lead the little children
To the Savior's waiting arms.

If you cannot be a watchman,
Standing high on Zion's wall,
Pointing out the path to heaven,
Off'ring life and peace to all,
With your prayers and with your bounties
You can do what God demands;
You can be like faithful Aaron,
Holding up the prophet's hands.

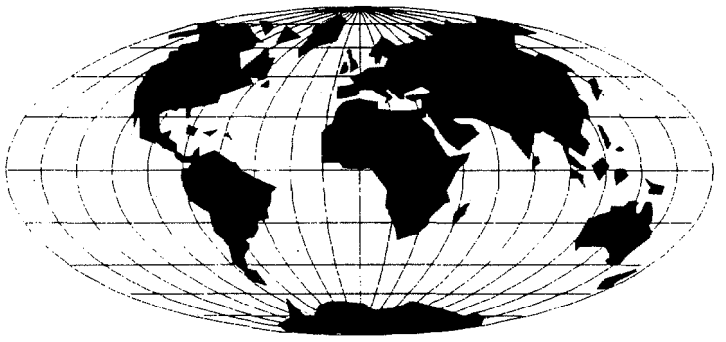
Let none hear you idly saying,
"There is nothing I can do,"
While the souls of men are dying
And the Master calls for you.
Take the task He gives you gladly,
Let His work your service be;
Answer quickly when He calleth,
"Here am I, send me, send me!" Amen.

(T.L.H. 496)

Around the World

with editorial comment

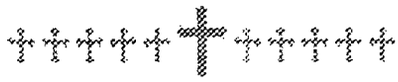
by M. L. Natterer



The term is now such an essential of any story like the Jonesboro, Ark., shootings, you probably don't even notice it. A tragedy occurs in a school, church or workplace anywhere in the United States, and who comes right behind the police, paramedics, rescue workers and news media? Trauma counselors. Do you ever wonder when we began to accept as fact that we can't cope with death or violence without the services of a therapist? Or why we decided that a stranger with a graduate degree in psychology is better equipped than anyone else we know to help us "properly" deal with and "heal" from a shocking or violent incident? "Instead of talking about 'tragedy', we now talk about 'trauma,'" said former psychotherapist Tana Dineen. "We psychologize things and turn normal human reactions into pathology. This is exactly what my industry wants." A licensed psychologist in Canada, Dineen abandoned her 30-year research and therapy career in 1993 because she felt psychology had become "neither a science nor a profession but rather an industry focused on self-interest and propelled by financial incentives." "It is infantilizing all of us," she said from her home in Victoria, B.C. "Under the guise of science, it pretends there are typical ways that people react to tragic or violent situations and some formula or standard for handling them. The message is: If you don't deal with this the 'right' way, you will get sick from it." ... "The idea that we are a species that is pretty resilient seems to have been forgotten." Replacing that idea, she

said, is "the psychology industry's view that everyone needs help whether they know it or not." (Rocky Mountain News, April 2, 1998)

While the Bible does not use the present-day terms such as psychology, psychiatry, etc., it is absolutely the best book in dealing with emotional disorders! When our sins cause us alarm and our conscience plagues us, then there is only one sure and certain remedy — the precious Gospel message which tells us, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee" (Matt. 9:2). Now we can rejoice in the Lord, since "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." (I John 1:7) And where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation. Since we are the dear children of our heavenly Father through faith in His Son, we know whatever takes place in our life is always for His glory and our welfare. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. 8:28). Let the devil rant and rave as a roaring lion. The devil and his angels have only a short time before they will be cast into the eternal fire which has been prepared for them. As long as we cling to Jesus and His Word we need fear no harm. This message calms our fears and causes us to exclaim with Paul Gerhardt, "The Sun that cheers my spirit is Jesus Christ, my King; the heaven I shall inherit makes me rejoice and sing." "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee" (Is. 26:3).



A freshman at Eagle Rock Junior High won first prize at the Greater Idaho Falls Science Fair on April 26th. He asked people to sign a petition to strictly control, or eliminate the chemical "dihydrogen monoxide," and he gave the following reasons:

It can cause excessive sweating and vomiting.
It is a major component in acid rain.
Accidental inhalation can kill you.
It can cause severe burns in a gaseous state.
It contributes to erosion.
It decreases effectiveness of automobile brakes.
It has been found in tumors of terminal cancer patients.

Questioning 50 people he asked them if they supported a ban of the chemical. Forty-three said yes, six were undecided, and only one knew the chemical was water. The title of his prize-winning entry was, "How Gullible Are We?"

When we apply this question within the realm of religion the results are astonishing and deplorable! Like the Athenians of old, people are waiting "to hear some new thing" (Acts 17:21). Let some flamboyant preacher come along with a new twist and, lo and behold, he attracts a following even from among those who call themselves Christians. Why is this? Simply because such do not really know, believe, and follow the Word of God. They gullibly follow the man and his false teachings instead of giving heed to the warning of the Lord Jesus, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7:15). They do not listen to the Lord's instruction, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1). They do not follow the example of those noble Bereans who were not gullible, but searched the Scriptures daily to see whether those things were so which they heard from the Apostle Paul (Acts 17:11). They pay no attention to the Lord's description of these last evil days in which "many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many" (Matt. 24:11). How are we to test and examine the prophets? By the only infallible source of all truth — the Word of God! This means, of course, that we must know our Bibles. Jesus says, "Search the Scriptures" (John 5:39). We are to "let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Col. 3:16). Look at the opportunities the Lord has placed before us! By God's grace, the pure Word of God still sounds forth from our pulpits and is taught in our Bible classes plus being readily available in our homes for personal devotion and study. But the question is: DO WE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THESE OPPORTUNITIES AS WE SHOULD? If we are not to be misled, then we must know, believe, and follow God's Word; otherwise, we have no one else to blame but ourselves!

Some 1,300 United Methodist clergy have signed a statement expressing their dissent from the denomination's teachings on homosexuality and affirming "appropriate liturgical support" for same-sex marriages or covenant partnerships. The statement, which has been circulating within the denomination since the end of the church's 1996 General Convention, and its signatories was made public as a gesture of support for the Rev. Jimmy Creech, an Omaha, Neb., pastor who has been suspended pending an investigation of his presiding at a covenant service uniting two women in his congregation. "We feel this is a moment for our movement to go public in support of Jimmy Creech and all United Methodist clergy who seek to extend pastoral care to persons without discrimination as to sexual orientation," said the Rev. Greg Dell, pastor of Broadway United Methodist Church in Chicago and a coordinator of the "In All Things Charity" movement. (Religious News Service)

The founders of the Methodists in the 1700s, John and Charles Wesley, would be horrified that anyone calling himself a Methodist minister would dare to excuse and uphold such a work of the flesh! In their day they minced no words in denouncing worldly sins. The permissive attitude prevailing in the Methodist denomination today is generally found throughout most of the mainline Protestant denominations — Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Mennonites, Baptists, etc. Even those who lay claim to the name Lutheran are by no means exempt. The January 1998 issue of the Lutheran Brotherhood Bond, in an article from its editor, Gaelyn Beal, wrote in glowing terms of her visit to Holden Village in north central Washington. She writes that "Holden Village is just one of 180 Lutheran outdoor ministries nationwide providing a place of retreat, renewal, reflection and recreation in an outdoor setting ... Ask your favorite Lutheran outdoor ministry organization for an Outdoor Outreach application, return it with your donation of $25 or more, and Lutheran Brotherhood will match your gift up to a maximum of $100." And what is so significant about this "Lutheran" retreat? Holden Village, according to an article in the Lent, 1991 Lutheran Forum, has a "gay rights agenda" and has become a gathering place for homosexuals and lesbians. It is a well-known fact that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) openly tolerates those within its midst who brazenly espouse the sin which characterized those wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah which the Lord destroyed (Gen. 19).

Unfortunately, the silent dissenters lack the conviction and courage of John the Baptist who so boldly denounced King Herod for living in the sin of adultery (Mark 6:17,18). In spite of the plain Bible passages condemning the sin of homosexuality (Rom. 1:26,27; I Cor. 6:9,10; I Tim. 1:10; Jude 7), far too many pastors "serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:18). The Last Day is rapidly drawing near. The Lord Jesus warns, "But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed" (Luke 17:29,30).

Summum Bonum Amen Ra (aka 'Corky'), 52, is the spiritual guide of Summum, a church whose temple is a 26-foot-high, 40-foot-long concrete pyramid that sits on the front lawn of Ra's quiet urban neighborhood in Salt Lake City. Here, followers of Summum mummify deceased pets, strive for sexual ecstasy and meditate around home-made 'nectar of the gods'. Ra said these nectars are the reason Summum is being persecuted: state law requires the church to pay $1,000 annually for a winery license to make 150 gallons of nectar a year ... Ra said the ancient method used to create Summum's libations — meditating around a vat of grape juice 24 hours a day for 77 days — predates the notion of winery and 'transubstantiates the juice into nectar of the gods. Just because there is 12 percent alcohol in it doesn't mean it is wine,' he said ... Ra, an ex-Mormon and Utah native, said he registered Summum as a church in November 1975, a few days after what he called his 'first encounter with the Summa individuals.' While meditating at his home, Ra (who until 1960 went by his birth name of Claude Rex Nowell) said he had a vision of a huge, graphite-colored pyramid. He met nine 'advanced beings' who telepathically programmed him with the 'Summa Principles,' including Sexual Ecstasy, Devotion and Cause & Effect, as well as how to make sacred nectar and perform mummification ... Ra estimated 200,000 people worldwide (including 20,000 in Utah) have learned to meditate through Summum ... Summum only mummifies pets, a process that costs between $4,500 and $14,000. (Sunday Oregonian, July 6, 1997)

The very first amendment of the original 10 amendments (the Bill of Rights) states very plainly, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof" ... This amendment, which had been passed by Congress on Sept. 25, 1789, and then ratified on Dec. 15, 1791, guarantees basic personal rights. However, knowing the reasoning of the founding fathers as expressed in their writings, they obviously never had the bizarre and kooky religions in mind which have sprung up like weeds in our country. But, being a free society, such outlandish religions must be tolerated by the State unless they infringe upon the rights of others or constitute a hindrance to the safety and welfare of the other citizens. Evidently the authorities in Salt Lake City do not consider this citadel of Satan to fall into this category. The Egyptians had many gods and goddesses (at least 60): Isis (Auset), the wife/daughter of Ra, was the most important goddess of all Egyptian mythology; Bast (Bastet), a cat-goddess; Osiris (Ausar), the god of the dead, etc. This ex-Mormon simply enlarged upon the vagaries of Joseph Smith who had claimed that he was given the golden plates upon which were written ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics. Because, so he said, some eye spectacles were given to him by the "angel Moroni," he was then able to translate these "ancient plates" into the Book of Mormon with the aid of two stones in silver bows which he referred to as Urim and Thummim, which had also been buried in the hill Cumorah in Northern New York in A.D. 420.

✠ Concordia Theological Seminary ✠

Concordia Lutheran Conference

- Orthodox Confessional Position
- Individualized Instruction
- Complete Traditional Curriculum
- Customized student accommodations
- Flexible class schedules
- Urban, suburban and rural campuses
- All instructors are in the active pastoral ministry
- Local parish internships starting in the first year
- Theological libraries on all campuses
- Student Aid Fund keeps living costs down
- Geographically diverse locales broaden experiences

Training well-prepared and faithful pastors for the future

Contact: The Rev. M. L. Natterer, 483 Tangent Street, Lebanon, OR 97355

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE
110 Grasmere Ct.
San Antonio, TX 78218

Non Profit Organization
U. S. Postage
P A I D
San Antonio, Texas
Permit No. 322

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE CHURCH DIRECTORY

GOOD SHEPHERD EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

4050 South Melpomene Way
Tucson, AZ 85730
Worship Service .....**10:00 a.m.**
Sunday School and
Bible Class .....**11:15 a.m.**
REV. DAVID G. REDLIN, Pastor
4050 South Melpomene Way
Tucson, AZ 85730
Telephone: (520) 721-7618

HOLY SCRIPTURE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

5605 Windsong Drive
Windcrest, TX 78239
Telephone: (210) 650-9053
Worship Service ..... **9:30 a.m.**
Sunday School and
Bible Class .....**11:00 a.m.**
REV. E. R. STALLINGS, JR., Pastor
110 Grasmere Court
San Antonio, TX 78218
Telephone: (210) 656-2125

PEACE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

Central Avenue at 171st Place
Oak Forest, IL 60452
(South Suburban Chicago)
Sunday School and
Bible Class ..... **8:30 a.m.**
Worship Service .....**10:00 a.m.**
REV. DAVID T. MENSING, Pastor
17151 South Central Avenue
Oak Forest, IL 60452
Telephones: Church Office and Pastor's Study:
(708) 532-4288
Parsonage: (708) 532-9035

Note: Services are also held each Sunday in our Midland Michigan chapel at the **Ramada Inn**, 1815 South Saginaw Road:
Sunday School and
Bible Class ..... **6:30 p.m.**
Worship Service ..... **7:30 p.m.**

ST. JOHN' S LUTHERAN CHURCH

6th and Tangent
Lebanon, OR 97355
(541) 258-8212
Sunday School and
Bible Class .....**10:00 a.m.**
Worship Service .....**11:00 a.m.**
REV. M. L. NATTERER, Pastor
483 Tangent Street
Lebanon, OR 97355
Telephone: (541) 258-2941

ST. LUKE' S LUTHERAN CHURCH

55th Ave. S & S. Fountain St.
Seattle, WA 98118
Telephone: (206) 723-1078
Sunday School and
Bible Class ..... **9:15 a.m.**
Worship Service .....**10:30 a.m.**
REV. PAUL R. BLOEDEL, Pastor
9658 - 54th Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98118
Telephone: (206)723-7418

Note: Services are also held in Victoria, British Columbia on the 1st and 3rd Sundays. Please call the Pastor for current location.
Worship Service ..... **7:00 p.m.**
Bible Class ..... **8:30 p.m.**

ST. STEPHEN' S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

Wilmot, SD 57279
Worship Service .....
(June 1st through September 30th)
..... **9:30 a.m.**
(October 1st through May 31st)
.....**10:00 a.m.**
Sunday School and Bible Class
..... **after the service.**
REV. MARK W. DIERKING, Pastor
Box 33
Wilmot, SD 57279
Telephone: (605) 938-4710