

LUTHERAN SPOKESMAN

FEAST ON JESUS,
THE BREAD OF LIFE

AND THIS IS THE WILL
OF HIM WHO SENT
ME, THAT EVERYONE
WHO SEES THE SON
AND BELIEVES IN HIM
MAY HAVE EVERLASTING
LIFE; AND I WILL
RAISE HIM UP AT
THE LAST DAY.

JOHN 6:40

MARCH 2008, VOL. 50 NO. 9

CELEBRATING FIFTY YEARS OF SPEAKING GOD'S WORD OF TRUTH

“MIGHTY LOWLY”

Word play can be fun, and the oxymoron can be an entertaining and effective verbal tool.

The word *oxymoron* describes itself (the word means ‘sharp-dull’). An oxymoron takes two words that have contrasting meanings or seemingly contradictory ideas and combines them for a humorous or thought-provoking effect.

For example, we may eat with ‘plastic silverware.’ I have seen some ‘pretty ugly’ dogs in my time and I wonder how ‘paid volunteers’ get their jobs. We might even describe ourselves as ‘sainted sinners’ (or are we ‘sinner saints’?).

Palm Sunday has Christians focusing on Christ’s triumphal entry into Jerusalem. If we take a closer look at this incident, we may find some interesting and edifying contrasts—oxymoronic in nature—in the life of our Lord and Savior.

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him and without Him nothing was made that was made...And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us ...” (Jn. 1:1-3,14).

Our Jesus, the almighty, co-equal, co-eternal member of our Triune God, became Man for our sakes! He deigned to be conceived and born, not only under God’s laws and the laws of nature but even under man’s laws. The immortal taking on the mortal; the Creator becoming part of His creation!

The contrasts boggle the mind. And yet it was only the beginning.

Neither did Christ’s life on Earth reflect His heavenly origins. When we study the Gospels, we see Jesus, the Co-ruler and Co-creator of the universe, as a servant to mankind. From

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His humble beginnings—born in a stable to poor parents—Jesus lived a life devoid of any semblance of ease. The Bible passage which says “Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head” (Mt. 5:20) is the description of Jesus’ living arrangements as an adult.

The Way of the Cross

Why the Spartan existence? It was part of His humbling Himself to accomplish our salvation.

The Lord focused His energies on “spreading” the wealth. Jesus went about sharing the gospel and serving the needs of all He met.

A ‘triumphal entry’ usually conjures up some majestic images. There may come to mind a Roman general riding in the back of a golden chariot, or some celebrated individual riding high in a limo in a tickertape parade.

Yet our Savior-God rides into the capital city of Jerusalem on a lowly donkey! “Mighty lowly” of our Jesus—and

yet exactly what the Scriptures had prophesied: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey” (Zech. 9:9).

And where do ‘normal’ triumphal entries lead? Popular football teams are accompanied into stadiums by the cheering of adoring fans. Celebrities and other people of note are led to a dais where they can pontificate on things that are important to them.

By contrast, our Savior’s triumphal entry went the way of the cross. While the crowds chanted, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the Highest!”, they could not have understood the true importance of their words. This was not the coming of a conquering King. This was not the appearance of a vengeful God. This was the blessed revealing of our “mighty lowly” suffering Savior who had come to take our punishment upon Himself!

To the lowly human mind, our Savior’s life—and especially His lowly entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday—may seem like oxymoronic inconsistencies. But to our mighty, sovereign God, it was all a part of His blessed plan to accomplish the salvation of sinners.

—Teacher David Bernthal
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin



Each Sunday—

Yes, Each Day—a “Little Easter”!

*W*e read in the Gospels that it was “very early in the morning, before the sun had risen” that the

women got up and went immediately on their way to the tomb of Jesus.

How early do we get up on Sunday

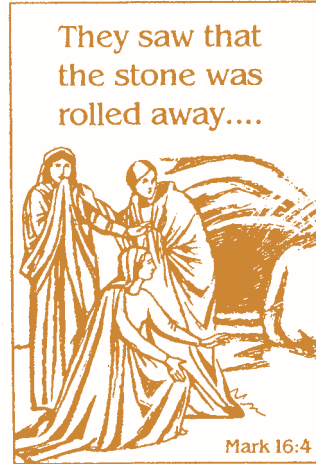
morning? With what attitude do we arise? Do we arise with an attitude of purpose—or one of drudgery? Do we find all manner of other choices tempting us rather than going joyfully to the Lord’s House on the first day of the week?

What might have been the choices of the women who went to the tomb that Sunday morning? It would have been easy for them to have awakened with the intent to anoint the body of Jesus, but upon meeting say, “Well, it’s still very dark out; maybe we should wait till later.” Or as they went and then realized that the stone would have to be rolled away, they might have reasoned, “Maybe we should turn back because we can’t roll the stone away.” Or perhaps they might have thought, “Let’s go get Peter and John to come with us to roll the stone away.”

On that first Easter morning the women did not find an excuse or a reason for not going to the tomb; and though they were going with the expectation of finding the body of Jesus still there, yet they went!

And where were the eleven disciples? Perhaps asleep in their beds? Perhaps pacing the floor wondering what now was going to happen to them since they were known to be disciples of Jesus, and how safe would they be?

John reports that on Easter evening the disciples were in the house, doors locked and windows shut, for fear of the Jews. This, still, even though the women had returned to tell them what they had seen at the tomb—it was empty. This, still, even though the angels had told them that Jesus had risen. This, still, even though Peter and John had then gone to the tomb and found it empty, with the linen lying



neatly folded. This, still, even though the two disciples from Emmaus (having walked home that afternoon, speaking with Jesus and in the breaking of bread discovering that it was He) returned to Jerusalem—no excuse as to how late in the day it was or how dangerous the road might be—to tell the rest of the disciples.

Not Vain or Empty!

The news of that Sunday morning, “He is not here. He is risen as He said!” was so great, so unexpected, and so comforting that those who heard and those who saw could hardly believe it, yet rejoiced at the fact that Jesus was not dead but alive—and alive forevermore.

Most of us have little or no problem getting up on Easter Sunday morning and heading off with joy to see our risen Savior. But is He not risen the rest of the Sundays in the year as well? Is He not risen the rest of the days of the year?

If that were not true, then as Paul says, “our faith is vain and you are yet in your sins.”

Christ is risen and remains risen forever—thus our faith is not vain or empty!

This news, this reminder, is there each Sunday for us. We hear the words of our living Savior and (while because of our human natures we may go with less than great rejoicing) we do not know what unexpected treasures the Lord through His Word will reveal to us that will gladden our hearts.

Week after week we need to hear the “same old stuff” because we commit the “same old sins”; and it is that “same old stuff” we should be most

interested in—the forgiveness of sins, the Word of our Lord, the hallelujahs, the amens, the prayers, the hymns, the benediction, and the peace which our risen Savior leaves with us.

He is risen—that day, today, and forever! And soon He shall come again to receive us to Himself that where He is, there we will be forever also—Hallelujah!

—Pastor Roland Gurgel
Weslaco, Texas



“The other disciples therefore said to [Thomas], ‘We have seen the Lord.’ So he said to them, ‘Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe’” (Jn. 20:25).

I am Thomas

What was Thomas thinking?! Why would someone who had seen the many miracles of Jesus doubt that He had risen from the dead? As one of the Twelve Disciples, Thomas with his own eyes had seen Jesus do the impossible. He saw Jesus heal the sick, give sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf, feed 5,000 with only five loaves of bread and two small fish, and do many other great works.

It wasn’t as though Jesus’ resurrection was a total surprise. On more than one occasion He had prepared His disciples for the gruesome events of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. He explicitly told them that He was going to be betrayed, condemned to death by the chief priests and scribes, handed over to the Gentiles, mocked, spit on, scourged, and killed.

But each time He told His disciples about the horrors they would see in

Jerusalem, He always emphasized the outcome—”And the third day He will rise again” (Mt. 16:21; 17:23; 20:19).

We are amazed at the doubting of Thomas. After all, if we had seen everything Thomas saw and heard everything Thomas heard, we would have been waiting at the tomb of Jesus on that first Easter to see Jesus fulfill His promise to rise from the dead. And if the other disciples told us that they had seen the risen Lord, we would not have doubted but replied, “Of course! He said He would—didn’t He?”

Thanks Be To Jesus!

But would we, truly? If the last image we had seen of Jesus, our Friend and Teacher, was His bloody, lifeless body nailed to that cross on Friday, would we have expected to see that same Jesus resurrected on Sunday?

If we are honest with ourselves and

examine our lives in relation to God's Word, we may well find that we resemble Thomas more than we like to admit.

How many times have we gone to church and heard that God for Christ's sake has forgiven all our sins? Though our pastor has assured us by God's Word that because of Jesus' sacrificial death God remembers our sin no more, how often, like Thomas, do we doubt that good news? Maybe we haven't used the words Thomas did, yet don't our attitude and actions often reflect the words of Thomas—along the lines of: "Unless I put my hands into the nail holes, I won't believe that all my sins are truly taken away"?

Maybe then we shouldn't give Thomas such a hard time? Maybe we are more like him than we'd like to admit?

Thanks be to God that the account of Thomas doesn't end here. The risen Lord did not abandon Thomas because of his weak faith. A week after Easter Jesus showed Himself to Thomas. To cast all doubt from Thomas' mind, Jesus said, "Reach your finger here, and look

at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing" (Jn. 20:27).

It was true! Jesus had risen from the dead! At the sight of Jesus, Thomas responded, "My Lord and my God!" (Jn. 20:28) He was doubting no more.

Even as we may have doubted the sure promises of God, let us rejoice with Thomas in our resurrected Lord. Christ Jesus truly has risen from the dead. All our sins truly have been taken away. Therefore, "Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

Thanks be to Jesus "who was delivered up because of our offenses, and was raised because of our justification" (Rom. 4:25).

He is arisen! Glorious Word!
Now reconciled is God, my Lord;
The gates of heav'n are open.
My Jesus did triumphant die,
And Satan's arrows broken lie,
Destroyed hell's direst weapon.
Oh, hear What cheer!
Christ victorious Riseth glorious,
Life He giveth—
He was dead, but see, He liveth! (TLH #189)

—Pastor Nathan Pfeiffer
Hecla, South Dakota



An Easter Message from our CLC President—

Feast on the Bread of Life

"For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day" (John 6:40).

This proclamation of life was made by Jesus early in His ministry. Jesus had just fed the multitude of over 5,000 with five loaves of bread and two small fish. He then resisted the attempt of the crowd to make Him

their "Bread King." That evening, Jesus further demonstrated His divine power by walking on the water and rescuing His disciples from the violent storm on the Sea of Galilee.

The next day Jesus attempted to turn the attention of the people from the food that perishes to the food that endures to eternal life. He proclaimed, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes

in me shall never thirst” (Jn. 6:35).

It was the Father’s will to give eternal life to His people living under the shadow of death. In this pivotal sixth chapter of the Gospel of John, Jesus tried to show that God was not talking about the good life here on this sin-damaged Earth. He was talking about eternal life—the restoration of what was lost when Adam sinned.

In order to give His people this life that conquers the grave, Jesus would have to die and rise and then raise us up on the last day. The emphasis of Jesus’ words in this chapter is that anyone who believes in Him will live forever.

In language that probably went over many heads in the multitude focused on the miracle of the loaves and fishes, Jesus revealed the saving will of His Father. It was the will of the Father that His eternal Son come down from heaven in human form. Jesus stated, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven” (Jn. 6:51).

As the manna in the Old Testament came down from heaven to sustain the children of Israel in their wilderness journey, so Jesus came down from heaven to sustain His people in their journey.

A Graphic Picture

The “bread” that Jesus would give for the life of the world was His flesh. Jesus pointed to the cross where “God made flesh” would suffer and die in the place of sinful humankind. Jesus would give up His holy life for those who crucified Him and for those who still crucify Him anew with sinful living. Jesus came as the “Bread of Life” in order to rescue us from death and give us life.

This gift of life becomes ours by

believing that Jesus, God’s Son, died for our sins. All who believe in Jesus feed on the Bread of Life and have the gift of eternal life.

Jesus used a graphic picture as He spoke of feeding on His flesh and drinking His blood. “Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day” (Jn. 6:54). Jesus is referring here to faith (as is made clear in verses 35 and 40).

We feed on Jesus by believing in Him, and so receive that bread which gives eternal life. “Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever” (Jn. 6:58).

We have stated that John 6 is a pivotal chapter in the revelation of God’s will as expressed in the cross and the empty tomb. This was a “hard saying.” As a result, many of His disciples (followers) turned back and no longer walked with Him.

They wanted a “Bread King”—the earthly benefit of the “good life.” When Jesus offered them the Bread of Life and eternal life, they did not think it worth following Him.

It is God’s will that we have eternal life. In order to accomplish this, the Father gave His only Son into death that we might live.

This Easter, may you have the faith of Peter who answered for the Apostles, “Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God” (Jn. 6:68-69).

Feast this Easter on the true Bread of Life!

NOTE: All quotes from the English Standard Version (ESV)

—*Pastor John Schierenbeck*
Winter Haven, Florida



Fifth in a series (of eight) on the life of

Samson

THEY ARE CRAFTIER THAN YOU ARE

I have searched the Book of Proverbs for one that would fit Samson's latest adventure in foolhardiness. It would say something like this: "Take heed that you do not fall in with fake friends among the worldlings, for they will turn against you. They are in their generation craftier than the children of God." Today's short episode from Samson's biography says it graphically.

Samson was a loner; if he had friends of his own religion, they had little influence on him, and on this occasion when we are told about his having companions, they were a bad lot of boozers and gamblers, crafty and brutal. These guys were bad news.

Samson was getting married, and we are told, "Samson gave a feast there, for young men used to do so." The custom called for an expensive shindig, the showier the better, with food and drinks for all the guests. It's scarcely noteworthy that even Christians get buffaloed into sponsoring a wedding reception geared to impress the other family, maybe even surrendering to peer pressure that the reception has to have booze, a dance, and an M.C. telling off-color jokes.

Many of you young people will be invited to a friend's wedding in someone else's church, and at the reception hall you'll see the guys handsomely dressed in their tuxedos; and the girls in gowns with plunging necklines will

be all aglow with the thrill of sharing the bride's big day; and everyone is happy to make your acquaintance.

That's pretty heady stuff for the Christian teen, and if liquor is served, you're going to feel weird if you don't drink; and if there's a dance, you're sure to be coaxed to get with it. "Come on, you don't have to be so bashful; here, take my hand, I'll help you learn."

It's a lovely picture, but the alarm bell ought to be clanging in your heart that you are leading yourself into temptation.

At Samson's wedding reception, chariot loads of the bride's friends and cousins came roaring in for free eats and drinks. "And it was so, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him."

When the locals saw the big guy step onto their turf to get one of the local girls, they contrived a way to get even. They figured they could run him into debt by inviting those burly free-loaders to munch through thousands of dollars' worth of hors d'oeuvres.

Power Struggle!

Well, Samson caught on and figured a way to outsmart them and recoup some of the grocery money; thus the riddle and the wager. If they could not solve Samson's riddle, they agreed to pay off: thirty outfits of sport clothing,

dress suits, hunting jackets, etc. to Samson.

“Then Samson said to them, ‘Let me pose a riddle to you. If you can correctly solve and explain it to me within seven days of the feast, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing.’”

Samson expected to get the clothes off their backs, which they could buy back if Samson did not set the price too high.

“And they said to him, ‘Pose your riddle, that we may hear it.’ So he said to them: ‘Out of the eater came something to eat, And out of the strong came something sweet.’ Now for the next three days they could not explain the riddle.”

This was a power struggle as to which side would outwit or outmaneuver the other. Samson gambled that his riddle was too tough for those high-school drop-outs to solve; and he was right. They were stumped, so they had to resort to threats on his bride; they would torch her Dad’s house if she did not cooperate to coax the secret from her bridegroom. They knew what kind of a snake she was, after all. And so with her wheedling, nagging, begging, and crying, she finally wore him down to tell her the secret; and then she blabbed it to her relatives.

They whipped Samson not in fair fight but by cheating! The children of this world are more resourceful in their wickedness than the children of God are in godliness. What did you expect?

Dear young friends, you may have been spared the dangers (so far) of gang rumbles, compulsive gambling, loan sharks, and crack houses, but we live right next door to the American sub-culture where liquor, drugs, and

sex are common commodities among the teenagers in Putnam Heights, Hales Corners, Fridley, and Okabena.

Doing stupid things did not die out with Samson; modern versions of Samson’s game would be making bets on sports events or blowing your church contribution on the state lottery or trying a “joint” or a “snort” on a dare. Let us realize that even a cool dude like Samson—on enemy turf—couldn’t win; he was outnumbered and outsmarted by Satan’s guerrillas; constant practice has made them professionals at what they do.

God has some good advice: “Do not be deceived, ‘Evil company corrupts good habits’” (1 Cor. 15:33). Be careful whom you consort with; beware of “those who are carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin....They have a heart trained in covetous practices....They allure through the lusts of the flesh and through licentiousness the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error” (2 Pet. 2:13,14,18).

I hope and pray that you will not have to live in the dirt that has buried many a teenager; here is where Samson failed, and he failed badly.

Watch! Let not the wicked world
With its pow’r defeat thee.
Watch lest with her pomp unfurled
She betray and cheat thee.
Watch and see Lest there be
Faithless friends to charm thee,
Who but seek to harm thee.

But while watching, also pray
To the Lord unceasing.
He will free thee, be thy Stay,
Strength and faith increasing.
O Lord, bless In distress
And let nothing swerve me
From the will to serve Thee! (TLH #446)

—Paul R. Koch
(first given as a chapel talk at ILC, Eau Claire)

Studies in First Timothy—

“This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work...” (1 Tim. 3:1).

Chapter 1:1-11

“No Other Doctrine”

A pastor reportedly began his Bible Class with the dramatic statement: “My dear friends, I have to announce to you that someone you dearly love has contracted a deadly disease.”

There was a long pause, and then...

“My dear friends, that someone you so dearly love is YOU. And you have had this deadly disease since your conception. And the Bible says that it pays a wage: death. You are already on your way to the cemetery.”

Looking over his class, the pastor could see many startled faces, almost as if in protest. But he was ahead of them. He went on to acknowledge that they already knew their sinfulness and that they already knew Jesus, their Savior; they trusted Him; they were baptized under His command and promise; they partook regularly of His Body and Blood; they were fairly active in the congregation’s programs....

Did the members (referred to above) or those in Ephesus—or do we ourselves—still realize the power of that disease? It keeps rearing its ugly head, continuing to assert itself.

And especially so among those professing to be good Christians! And that this evil disease continues to fight against God and show disrespect for those around us is evident, for it continues to plague us all our days on Earth.

Sometimes we might suppose that sin and the flesh in us have become benign, are in remission, or are not nearly as serious as they once were. But don’t be misled.

You know that the letters of Paul are full of warnings against the dangers of sin. And those same letters constantly offer the only antidote to this deadly disease.

Only One Antidote

The flesh expresses itself in many ways—and 1 Timothy lists many, both here and later on: belief in fables, idle talk, misunderstanding of God’s Law, deceit, blasphemy, lies, hypocrisy, gossip, willful ignorance, disputes, arguments, envy, strife, suspicions, craving for wealth, pride, profanity, trust in so-called knowledge—to name a few deviations prompted by Satan. And they all occur when people wander away from the doctrine of God, the Scriptures.

There is only one antidote, and no other. It is the major theme of Paul’s first letter to young Pastor Timothy. It is the doctrine given especially to sinners—the doctrine of justification by grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ. He is the One who came from eternity, and became flesh here in time for the sake of sinners. He suffered death on the cross for all sins, con-

quered Satan, and rose from death. He ascended into heaven, sits at the Father's right hand ruling all things, and will come again to judge the world.

There is no salvation apart from this remedy. There just is no other sound or healthy or correct doctrine (vv. 3 & 10), not anywhere in the world, not in any other book, and not in any other religion. No one else points out the deadly seriousness of sin and no one else offers the lively remedy—of grace and the forgiveness of sins. By the Holy Spirit, Paul speaks as one convinced of this, and that it is worthy of all acceptance (v. 15).

The Holy Spirit has also worked this acceptance in us. From now on our whole life is lived under the Cross of

our Lord Jesus Christ. There we find the same Spirit moving us to use the Word He has written, as He intended it to be used. By that Spirit we are able to believe in our Savior and to produce the good fruit He wills. We learn to avoid deviating from God's Word. We learn not to place any new ideas above it.

Because that Word cannot be improved upon! There is "no other doctrine." If we abandon Scripture, where shall we go? As Peter said to Jesus in John 6: "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God!" That's what we think of Scripture.

—Pastor Em. Warren Fanning
Sun City, Arizona



**Noting the 75th Anniversary of the
Brief Statement of the Doctrinal
Position of the MISSOURI SYNOD
(1932-2007)**

**A Trumpet Which Gave—and Gives!—a Clear Sound
(See 1 Corinthians 14:8)**

Brief Statement
Of Sunday
Of the Millennium

Introductory Thoughts:

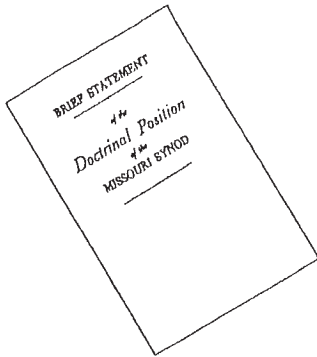
Satan knows the Scriptures well!

Does that statement sound strange?

It really should not, for if we read through the account of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness, we will find Satan cleverly misquoting Scripture as

he attempted to mislead Jesus. Satan does not believe the Bible, but he is very adept at misusing it in order to undermine it and thereby to deprive us of the blessings which flow from its teachings.

Consequently, Satan has caused



great harm to the Christian church over the centuries by introducing to it distortions of Biblical truth. The *Brief Statement's* treatment "Of Sunday" and "Of the Millennium" very clearly correct two such distortions and help its readers to see what the Bible teaches so very clearly!

Brief Statement text [with comment]:

Of Sunday

We teach that in the New Testament God has abrogated the Sabbath and all the holy-days prescribed for the Church of the Old Covenant, so that neither "the keeping of the Sabbath nor of any other day" nor the observance of at least one specific day of the seven days of the week is ordained or commanded by God, Col. 2:16; Rom. 14:5 (Augsburg Confession. *Triglot*, p. 91, paragraphs 51-60; M., p. 66).¹ ["Abrogated" means to cancel or repeal. The New Testament clearly states that the commandments con-

cerning the Sabbath Day, and all other commandments dealing with special religious holidays, are no longer in force. New Testament Christians, as redeemed children of God, therefore, enjoy a freedom with regard to their worship of God that was unknown in Old Testament times. Christians are free to worship on any and every day of their choosing. Any attempt to impose a specific day of worship, or to suggest that the observance of such specific days of worship is necessary to merit God's favor or to obtain eternal salvation, runs contrary to the spirit of the gospel. Such efforts must be opposed!]

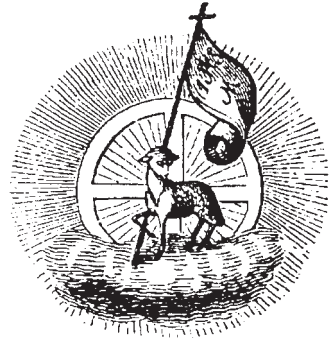
The observance of Sunday and other church festivals is an ordinance of the church, made by virtue of Christian liberty. (Augsburg Confession; *Triglot*, p. 91, para. 51-53, 60; M., p. 66. Large Catechism; *Triglot*, p. 603, para. 83, 85, 89; M., p. 401). Hence Christians should not regard such ordinances as ordained by God and binding upon the conscience, Col. 2:16; Gal. 4:10. However, for the sake of Christian love and peace they should willingly observe them, Rom. 14:13; 1 Cor. 14:40. (Augsburg Confession. *Triglot*, p. 91; para. 53-56; M., p. 67.)

[In order that everything might be "done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40), the church has established Sunday as a day of worship, as well as other religious holidays. These, however, are not mandated, nor is their observance to be made a matter of conscience. Rather, all true worship flows from hearts filled with a desire to worship God and to do so freely and regularly! Christian love is to reign in all such matters.]

¹ The references to the "Triglot" refer to a book entitled, *Concordia Triglotta*, which contains the Lutheran Confessions in three languages: English, Latin, and German. The references to "M." refer to an edition of the Lutheran Confessions in two languages: Latin and German published by a gentleman named Mueller.

Of the Millennium

With the Augsburg Confession (Art. XVII) we reject every type of Millennialism, or Chiliasm, [This opening statement could perhaps prove confusing, for at times our Lutheran (Biblical) position is described as “amillennialism.” “Amillennial,” however, means “no” millennium, which is what is being said.] the opinions that Christ will return visibly to this earth a thousand years before the end of the world and establish a dominion of the Church over the world [This opinion is the dominant view of millennialism today, and is known as pre-millennialism.]; or that before the end of the world the Church is to enjoy a season of special prosperity [This opinion was at one time very prevalent, but no longer enjoys much support. It was known as post-millennialism.]; or that before the general resurrection on Judgment Day a number of departed Christians or martyrs are to be raised again to reign in glory in this world; or that before the end of the world a universal conversion of the Jewish nation (of Israel according to the flesh) will take place. [The last two ideas are among the many varied and debated opinions of what will happen before the end of time from the millennialistic perspective. The easiest approach to understanding the end times and guarding against being misled by millennialists is simply to accept the clear statements of Scripture as summarized in the Apostolic Creed: Jesus “ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in...the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.”]



Over against this, Scripture clearly teaches, and we teach accordingly, that the kingdom of Christ on earth will remain under the cross until the end of the world, Acts 14:22; John 16:33; 18:36; Luke 9:23; 14:27; 17:20-37; 2 Tim. 4:18; Heb. 12:28; Luke 18:8 [As Christians we cannot and ought not expect a time of earthly glory. On the contrary, the Scriptures, as cited, allude to the troubles faithful Christians will endure as they follow their Savior.]; that the second visible coming of the Lord will be His final advent, His coming to judge the quick and the dead, Matt. 24:29,30; 25:31; 2 Tim. 4:1; 2 Thess. 2:8; Heb. 9:26-28 [The Bible so clearly presents the facts that when Jesus returns, it will be on the Last Day and for final judgment.]; that there will be but one resurrection of the dead, John 5:28; 6:39,40 [That resurrection will be for both believers and unbelievers.]; that the time of the Last Day is, and will remain, unknown, Matt. 24:42; 25:13; Mark 13:32,37; Acts 1:7, which would not be the case if the Last Day were to come a thousand years after the beginning of a millennium [A thousand year, visible reign on earth prior to the Last Day would certainly rule out any type of surprise.]; and that there will be no gen-

eral conversion, a conversion en masse, of the Jewish nation, Rom. 11:7; 2 Cor. 3:14; Rom. 11:25; 1 Thess. 2:16 [While it is our prayer that all people, including all Jewish people, will be led to embrace Jesus as Savior, Scripture does not give us reason to believe in the conversion of the entire Jewish nation.]

According to these clear passages of Scripture, we reject the whole of Millennialism, since it not only contradicts Scripture, but also engenders a false conception of the kingdom of Christ, turns the hope of Christians upon earthly goals, 1 Cor. 15:19; Col. 3:2, and leads them to look upon the Bible as an obscure

Let it be acknowledged that Scripture does speak of a “thousand years” (Revelation 20). Both Luther and orthodox theology identify the time period as “the entire New Testament era” (see F. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. III, p. 524). (Editor)

book. [*Millennialism is a clever deception of Satan, for it distorts the Bible in order to misdirect the faith of believers who normally have a very high regard for God’s Word. The result is that tremendous amounts of time, energy, and resources are diverted away from genuine gospel outreach and used to support a delusion! How very sad!*]

Pastor Paul Nolting
Mankato, Minnesota



Third in a series—

“Savoring the Spirit-fruit”

Peace

Paul wrote to the Ephesians, “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord...” (Eph. 5:8). In that same chapter he describes the life in darkness. It is a life of such who “were dead in trespasses and sins” (2:1), “in which you once walked according to the course of this world” (2:2). It is the life of those who “were without Christ...and without God in the world” (2:12). In Galatians 5:19 he further describes the sins of those dead in trespasses and sins. He calls them “works of the flesh.” Works of the flesh are the natural product of the unregenerate being.

But something happened. A change was effected. The Lord our God called us with a holy calling, by the light of



GALATIANS 5:22-23

grace to the light of faith! As a matter of faith, we believe that in Christ we have been reconciled unto God. Now we who were at enmity with God “having been justified by faith, [we] have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...” (Rom. 5:1).

What a wonderful condition in which we now stand in relation to God the Father! “Now may the God of hope

fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 15:13).

Our accomplished salvation and peace with God have a profound impact not only on our future but also in our daily life as we await the assured deliverance. Our new life in Christ is manifest through the fruits of the Spirit that characterize the Christian life. In the catalogue of fruits in Galatians 5:22, Paul speaks of “peace.”

In his commentary on Galatians, John Ph. Koehler said, “Peace too is something which has its roots directly in the peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (*The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, Commentary*, NPH, 1957, p. 152).

Yet the context of v. 22 suggests that the peace we have with God through Christ is not the emphasis here. Peace as “Spirit-fruit” is set against the stark and ugly description of “the works of the flesh....”

“Now the works of the flesh are evident...” (Rom. 5:19). The works of the flesh are not victimless crimes. The works of the flesh are hurtful to those against whom they are committed and bring death to the performer (Rom. 6:23); “but the fruit of the Spirit is

love, joy, peace...” (5:22). By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit—as compared to the works of the flesh, a product of sinful man—is a kindly, considerate, and Christ-like attitude toward the neighbor with and among whom we live while still on Earth.

In the Christ-believer Spirit-fruit Will Grow

The fruit of the Spirit is what it is. It is not generated by us. Peace as spoken of here is not a static, sterile thing. It is a living fruit in the Christ-believer as well as a spontaneous manifestation of one who is alive in Christ.

In his commentary, Luther spoke of peace towards God and men. He said, “Christians are to be peaceful and quiet. Not argumentative, not hateful, but thoughtful and patient” (*Luther’s Commentary on Galatians*, p. 231).

Let it also be pointed out that the fruit of the Spirit is not a peace that overlooks sin, nor is it a peace gained at the expense of truth. This Spirit-fruit is a quality that is manifest in the lives of those who know the peace that is theirs in Christ—and it is reflective of the mind of Christ.

The Spirit-fruit of peace is the outcropping of a heart made large by the Spirit; such a heart knows sympathy for the neighbor in need, seeking to live in harmony with all—as is consistent with truth and love.

Peace is what it is—a spontaneous outgrowth of one who is alive in Christ! We who know the peace of Christ assent to our Lord’s will which says, “If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men” (Rom. 12:17). Whether or not our neighbor responds in kind makes no difference. Since we are children of



God in whom the Spirit dwells, the fruit of the Spirit will manifest itself in “love, joy, peace....”

What then shall we say about our sin? We must admit that our sinful flesh fights against the Spirit, trying to dry up His fruit in our lives. We thank God that He is greater than our sin; Christ’s merit covers our sins. As we

confess our sins, “He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 Jn. 1:9).

In the penitent heart the Spirit is alive. Where the heart is alive with the Spirit His fruits will grow.

—Pastor Daniel Fleischer
Corpus Christi, Texas



Volume 50 Revisits Earlier Volumes

Volume 20, Number 8 (February, 1978)

(The author of this article, Rev. Harold C. Duehlmeier [1913-1986], was a charter member of the church body when he joined it for confessional reasons in 1960. His entire ministry was in congregations in Minnesota cities of Hancock, Morris, Sanborn, and Fridley. A regular contributor to the *Lutheran Spokesman*, he was also an active participant in synodical affairs, including serving for a time on the Board of Regents of ILC as well as on other district and synodical committees.—ed)

I BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY

As these lines are being written, our Upper Midwest lies in the cold, dark grip of winter. To some of our readers it may appear to be the wrong time to consider this Bible teaching, when all nature appears to be lifeless, and death seems to take an even greater toll among the children of men than at any other time of the year. Are we not accustomed to being reminded of the resurrection at Easter when all nature is being resurrected in glorious triumph o’er decay, even as our Savior rose from His grave? And yet is it not most comforting to be reminded at this very time of the year, when decay and death surround us on all sides, of the glorious prospect of the resurrection of

our own bodies?

The Evidence For It

But is this Christian hope of ours actually well founded—or is it merely a false, misleading dream based on wishful thinking? Human reason denies the possibility of it, advancing all sorts of reasons that would appear to make it



Pastor H. C. Duehlmeier

impossible. As far as we know, none of the religions or philosophies devised by men have ever set forth such a teaching. Yet when the Sadducees, the rationalists in matters of religion in Jesus' day, sought to ridicule this Bible teaching, our Savior quickly put them to silence by declaring that they knew neither the Scriptures nor the power of God (Mt. 22:23-32). He there demonstrated to them that the Old Testament Scriptures plainly taught a restoration of the bodies of men after death, referring them to God's statement to Moses at the burning bush, in which He spoke of Himself as "the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." According to our Savior's own interpretation of these words, by calling Himself the God of these patriarchs long after they had died, God plainly implied that they would be raised from the dead. The fact of the matter is that God's first promise of a Savior to come after the Fall, which we all heard again on Christmas Eve from our children, already implied the resurrection of the body. The bruising of the serpent's head implied the deliverance from all the evil results and consequences of sin, among which death and the dissolution of the human body are included. Job in his day, perhaps some two thousand years before the birth of Jesus, by inspiration of God clearly foresaw and foretold of the resurrection to come for his own body, when he declared: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me" (Job 19:25-27).

New Testament Evidence

In His day Jesus plainly and irrefutably demonstrated the possibility of the resurrection by raising the dead daughter of Jairus, the young man of Nain, and His own friend Lazarus. We have His own promise that this is but a preview of what He will do in the case of all the dead in John 5:28,29: "The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." We then see Him demonstrating His complete victory over death by His own triumphant resurrection on Easter morning. Following that, we hear His apostles preaching the certainty of the resurrection of all men again and again; and especially Paul, referring to it in his epistles, devoted the entire fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians to this subject. We are therefore not following a will-of-the-wisp with this resurrection-hope of ours, but have a firm foundation for it in the Word of God.

What Will Be Resurrected?

Concerning this, the Scriptures do not leave us in uncertainty either. It will be the same body [with physical characteristics—ed.] we had here on earth, as can properly be inferred from the words of Job: "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." It will not be a foreign body in which we shall arise but the selfsame one in which our soul was housed here on earth. Though the same, yet it will be different. We who believe in the Savior can look forward to a wonderful transformation on that day, as St. Paul assures us when he

writes to the Philippians concerning our Savior Jesus Christ that He “shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body” (Php. 3:21). Freed from all the deformities and ravages wrought in it by sin, restored to the glorious perfection Adam’s body had when he came forth from his Creator’s hand, transformed to fit into the conditions prevailing in heaven and in eternal life, our resurrection body will be a joy to behold. Those, however, who rejected the Savior and His grace can look forward to no such glorification, but they will be an abhorrence to all flesh [cf. Is. 66:24—ed.]. From St. John’s description of the vision granted to him of the great Judgment to come, we may rightfully conclude also that all will be raised at the age level at which they departed this life; for he writes: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God” (Rev. 20:12).

Some Questions

When will this resurrection occur? At Jesus’ return to Judgment on the last day of this world. Scripture speaks of only one general resurrection of the dead, as is evident from Jesus’ words: “The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth” (Jn. 5:28,29). This leaves no room for the erroneous belief held by some, who look for a prior resurrection of those who suffered martyrdom for their Savior’s sake. Such read something into Revelation 20:4,5 which is not found there, and which would be in plain conflict with what Jesus says in the previously quoted passage above. What about such who have been cremated, or devoured by animals, or

incinerated in the holocaust of an atomic explosion or otherwise? They will be restored by the power of God just as surely as those whose bodies returned to the elements by the much slower process of dissolution in the grave. To such who express doubts on this point we can only say, as Jesus once said to the unbelieving Sadducees: “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God” (Mt. 22:29).

Rejoice!

As you therefore join your fellow-believers each Sunday morning, also in the dead of winter, when you see death and dying surrounding you, confessing: “I believe in the resurrection of the body,” do so with firm confidence and conviction based on the Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testament and your Savior’s sure and certain promise. When thinking of your believing loved ones who have departed this life and whose bodies now rest in the cemeteries of this world, call to mind the heart-warming sight of them that will greet your eyes at Jesus’ return. When reflecting on the day when you yourself shall find your final resting place in God’s Acre, let no fears or misgivings trouble you, but say with full assurance of heart with the believing hymnwriter:

Jesus lives! The vict’ry’s won!
Death no longer can appal me;
Jesus lives! Death’s reign is done!
From the grave Christ will recall me
Brighter scenes will then commence;
This shall be my confidence. (TLH #201)

 **H**allelujah!

From A Pastor's Desk—

A Saviour For All Peoples, Times, and Needs

As one looks more closely at our Lord's ministry and His dealing with the lives and souls of people, one is struck both by His great love for souls and by His personalized approach to them. "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him" (Jn. 3:17). This was His calling, mission, and purpose in coming to Earth, and He would allow nothing to thwart Him. "Steadfastly" He set His face toward Jerusalem to journey to the cross and grave to redeem all mankind; "Lovingly" He reached out to lost souls with their aching hearts and burdened and struggling lives.

Their outward status or life-circumstances would neither impress Him nor deter Him in His calling; their initial and sometimes fleshly attitudes and responses (obstinacy, bitterness, indifference, misguided zeal, desperation, etc.) were not viewed by Him as insurmountable barriers but rather as symptoms of a deep need for Him, His Word, and His gospel. Every wayward, lost, and hurting sheep was precious

and of loving concern to Him (Lk. 15:3-7). In His omniscience He would see inside them and through them. He knew what was wrong, and He knew what kind of help was needed—a stern rebuke, a caring law reminder, a voice of comfort and reassurance, a dose of spiritual encouragement and strength, an uplifting Word of hope. Whatever they needed, He gave them—and still gives today through His Word proclaimed, shared, and counseled by His church and children in a variety of life situations.

While we struggle with human weakness and limitations which our Savior never possessed, let us ever seek to imitate His loving and personalized approach to people. With the apostle Paul, let us strive to be "all things to all people, that by all possible means we might save some" (1 Cor. 9:22).

The gospel is a gospel for all kinds of people, for every human need and dilemma, and for all the seasons of life. It still remains the "power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes" (Rom. 1:16) and the blessed solution to what ails our world, our society, our families, and the personal problems and struggles of every human being.

(From the bulletin of Berea Lutheran Church, Inver Grove Heights, Minn.; David Schierenbeck is pastor)



**Women's Retreat
(see next page)
took a side trip to this
Natural History
Museum in
Crawford, Nebraska**

WOMEN'S RETREAT

September 28-30, 2007
Chadron State Park,
Chadron, Nebraska

Dr. David Menton, Professor emeritus from Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, Missouri and a long-time member of our CLC church in that city (Faith Lutheran in Manchester), was the weekend's featured speaker.

A strong apologist for Creation in the on-going debate on origins, Dr.

Menton gave inspiring talks to the ladies present. His topics included: 1) "What a Difference a Day Makes" in defense of the Bible's teaching of a six-day creation; 2) "Fearfully and Wonderfully Made" in defense of God-created life beginning at conception; 3) "God's Girders—the Bones of the Body"; 4) "Beauty is Skin Deep," showing the intricacies of the "skin organ" of the human body.

On Saturday Retreat participants took a side trip to the "Trailside Museum" in Crawford, Nebraska. As self-appointed "tour guide," Dr.



Dr. Menton had the full attention of his audience.

Menton gave a running commentary on the various museum displays. Inspiring! Educational!

Some forty attendees hailed from CLC churches in Wyoming, Colorado, Nebraska, South Dakota. They were

unanimous in their assessment: it was refreshing to “retreat” from the prevalent evolutionary ideas in today’s culture to the amazing truths of the Word of God, led by a scientist who accepts the Bible for what it is!



Mission Helper Trip to Africa

This past fall (Oct. 22-Nov. 15) I had the unique opportunity to travel to Africa and visit several of our CLC affiliated church bodies in Kenya and Tanzania. I traveled with four others: Loren Hansen and Russell Schmidt, members of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minn., Mission Board member Larry Hansen, and Missionary David Koenig.

In those two countries we have four CLC affiliated church bodies:

The *Church of the Lutheran Confession in Nairobi* (CLCN) centered in Nairobi and led by Charles Gikonyo (this should not be confused with the NCLC, which is the Nigerian Church of the Lutheran Confession);

The *Etago Church of the Lutheran Confession* (ECLC) centered in Etago, Kenya (by Lake Victoria), and led by Enosh;

The *Church of the Lutheran Confession in East Africa* (CLCEA) centered in Arusha, Tanzania, and led by Jeremiah Issangya;

The *Lutheran Church of East Africa* (LCEA) centered in Himo, Tanzania, and led by Jesse Angowi.

These church bodies, though united in doctrine, are divided by distances not easily traveled in Africa, as well as by the culture and language of differ-



Seminary Building in Himo, Tanzania



Russell Schmidt and the Sem students; photos by Loren Hansen

ent native tribes (there are thirty-three tribes in Kenya and over a hundred in Tanzania).

Recent civil unrest in Kenya following the national election was one example of tribal conflict in these countries. In contrast, during the time we were in Africa we conducted three seminars in different locations as well as a regional Pastoral Conference, where men from many different African tribes were brought together to study the Word of God.

In spite of ethnic, cultural, and lin-



Showing the itinerary of the Mission Helpers, with location of the mission fields; the cross marks location of St. Peter's Seminary.

gual differences, we were all one in Christ Jesus. How fitting are those words of David: “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” (Ps. 133:1).

When you look at the statistics of Kenya and see that it is primarily Christian, you might wonder what we are doing in such an area (a recent survey says that 88% of the Kenyan population is Christian—a percentage which is higher than the current estimate in the United States!).

It was enlightening to visit with these men and to learn about what brought them to where they are. Most of them have come out of other Christian church bodies because of their concern for the truth of God's Word! As is the case with the pastors and members of our church body in the United States, they have followed the

Word of our Lord and left false teaching Lutheran and Protestant churches which were large and outwardly prosperous.

Even though many now worship in unfinished church buildings (some with only mud walls) or no church building at all, they rejoice to have the precious Word of God in its truth and eagerly want to learn more.

With us they are striving to study this precious treasure which reveals our salvation and to proclaim the importance of every teaching of Scripture to the people of Africa. They are also eagerly taking the message of salvation in Christ to the unchurched “bush-people” in their land, as well as to Muslims along the coast, who are growing in number.

My visit to Africa revealed not the differences that separate us, but our

many similarities. We all treasure the precious Word of God that has been preserved in its truth and purity, and we have separated from false-teaching church bodies. How eager they were to gather to hear and learn the Word!

May the Word of the LORD continue to grow in these people and

throughout their land!

Note: A detailed account of our trip to Africa (as well as pictures) can be found on our CLC Missions website at http://clclutheran.org/missions/mhp_africa_mayhew.journal.htm

—*Pastor Nathanael Mayhew
Lawrenceville (Atlanta), Georgia*



Seeing a Traveler Off

December 30, 2007, was the date for the installation of Pastor Matthew Ude as the CLC's second full-time foreign missionary. His acceptance of this call was an answer to heartfelt prayer, since the CLC Board of Missions had been calling for many months in order to fill this vital position.

The service of installation and commissioning was held at Messiah, Eau Claire, with more than 175 in attendance. Our host congregation was most gracious in providing musical accompanists, singers, and a dinner which followed the service.

Pastor Bruce Naumann, Chairman of the Board of Missions, conducted the service and installation. CLC Foreign Missionary David Koenig preached the sermon, which was based on 2 Timothy 2:5, "An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules." He encouraged our new missionary to recognize the opposition that he will face in working for the Lord's kingdom, to give himself fully to the preaching of the gospel, and to take comfort in knowing that the "Owner-manager" of our team is on the field with us.

There were fourteen current and retired CLC clergymen who participat-



Missionaries Koenig and Ude, Board Chairman Pastor Naumann



The new Missionary and his father, Prof. John Ude

ed in the "laying on of hands."

Pastors Ude and Koenig left the U.S. on January 10 in order to visit our CLC affiliate churches in Nigeria, Ghana, and Togo. The plan was to arrive, God willing, in Chennai, India, on February 8. They would then continue our work among the people of the BELC and CLCI together.

The following is from Pastor Ude's Internet journal, which is entitled "Paroikos" [see footnote]:

Paroikos is a Greek word which means stranger, traveler, exile, sojourner, someone who is away from home. I am reminded by this term what

a wonderful thing it is that this world is not our home. When you leave your home and go camping or to a remote cabin without electricity—or, like myself, half way around the world to underdeveloped nations—it is not so hard to live without those comforts for a time because you know that it is only a short time. Soon you will return home to what you know and are used to. So too, as we live in this world and are confronted day and night with discomfort and hardship, we who know the Lord do not care or worry, because we know this is not our home. When we see the vast amounts of poverty, crime, neglect, and injustice that are so prevalent in this world, we praise the Lord that soon all this will be gone. The world is caught up in an endless losing battle to fix these problems, but the world cannot fix the problem of sin. Only Jesus can and has. We rejoice that, unlike the world's many battles, ours is not a losing cause but one that is won already. We are Paroikous, travelers, and our walk is heavenly all the way.

Our heartfelt prayers go with Pastor David and Mary Koenig as well as with Pastor Matthew Ude as they work with our Lord's means of grace in preaching and teaching God's Word!

—Pastor Bruce Naumann
Sleepy Eye, Minnesota

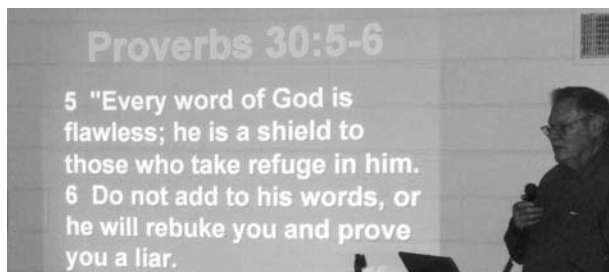
NOTE: Missionary Ude's ongoing account of his work and travels may be found by looking for "Paroikos" under the "What's New" section of the CLC Missions website: www.clclutheran.org/missions. Pastor Ude's installation service can also be seen from this site, via streaming video.

Announcement Installation

In accord with our usage and order, Pastor Matthew Ude, who was called to serve as a foreign missionary for the CLC, was installed on December 30, 2007, at Messiah Lutheran Church, Eau Claire, Wis. Participants in the service were the undersigned, Missionary David Koenig, and twelve additional active and retired CLC clergymen.

—Pastor Bruce Naumann
Chairman, CLC Board of Missions

Send Change of Address to :
Lutheran Spokesman
2750 North Oxford Street
Roseville, MN 55113



**Dr. David Menton
introduced his
Retreat talks
with scriptural
support;
more on p. 20**

Cover: Matt Schaser