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Baptism Saves And Drowns

By mid-summer in most normal years the South Dakota short-grass prairie is turning brown. It then becomes a visual, daily reminder of sinful mankind's true status: weakness, frailty, and death. This pride-bashing judgment of God was recorded through Isaiah: "All flesh is grass . . . the grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever" (40:6-7).

In the temperate rain forest of Southeast Alaska, brown, withering grass is rather uncommon. But there are other visual reminders of spiritual truths. The mountains of solid stone bring to mind Psalm 121 ["I will lift up my eyes to the hills . . ."] and 2 Samuel 22:2 ["The Lord is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer"]. And the annual rainfall of 160 inches plus, the boats at harbor and the sea are constant reminders of the grace of baptism which saves and drowns.

Amazing Grace

It is amazing how several inches of rainfall can restore the green to once-brown prairie grass. It is truly amazing grace by which God restores life to spiritually dead sinners through baptism.

St. Paul referred to this grace as a "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5). Jesus instructed Nicodemus that "unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (Jn. 3:5). St. Peter wrote that even as eight souls were saved by the waters of the Flood, "there is also an antitype which now saves us, namely, baptism" (1 Pet. 3:21).

Water alone does not save—Noah needed the ark; nor do baptismal waters simply wash away dirt from the body. Baptism is what God graciously does for the sinner "by giving us a

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Holy Baptism

good conscience.” But a good conscience can be ours only when by faith in Christ Jesus our sin and guilt are washed away, and we have peace with God.

Grass withers and fades away, but never God’s Word. It is that holy Word of God in baptism that gives this sacrament its power and efficacy. A doctor prescribes certain medicines—to be drunk with water. But the water itself doesn’t heal. So God’s Word with the water is that spiritual medicine that is the power to save by creating faith and forgiving sin. It is the means by which God gives to us everything Christ has accomplished for our salvation. We are grass. Let every raindrop splashing on our heads be a visual reminder of our baptism which washes, restores, and gives life to the heart and soul.

Baptism also signifies death. All human flesh except eight were drowned through the Flood—water being the means of judgment. So baptism signifies that our yet sinful flesh is to be drowned by daily contrition and repentance. Daily the Old Adam in us attacks with lusts and counteracts with temptations. Daily the Christian repents and so keeps his flesh coughing

and choking on baptismal waters, never to regain control over him. Through baptism God gives such spiritual strength so to drown the old nature and walk in the newness of a godly life.

Practice Baptism Without Ceasing

Luther wrote of this significance in his Large Catechism, “Baptism must be practiced without ceasing.” And, “The Christian life is nothing else than a daily Baptism, once begun and ever to be continued.”

Baptism is the beginning of our new life in Christ, and a daily, continual washing and drowning and receiving by faith all that God has done for us grass-like sinners.

Thus it is profitable to use every reminder we can to recall this mercy of God. The Germans called their baptismal certificates a *Taufschein*—a show of baptism—and hung such certificates on their bedroom walls.

The original use of ‘holy water’ was intended to recall to mind one’s baptism. Baptismal candles and the font itself remind us of this grace of God.

And in Southeast Alaska, the not uncommon daily rain and the ark-like cruise ships are a striking, visual reminder of how baptism graciously drowns and saves.

—Pastor David Fuerstenau



THIS BLEST COMMUNION

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread” (1 Corinthians

10:16-17).

One of the most special rites of the church is our regular celebration of the Sacrament of the Altar.

When we attend the Lord's Supper, we use a very special word

for this action—we say that we “commune.” This is not a word that we use a great deal in our daily conversation. This may lead us to lose sight of the very special meaning this word has and what it expresses about our participation in the Lord's Supper.

In Webster's dictionary one finds the following definition for the verb *commune*: “to talk together intimately, to be in close rapport.” *Rapport* is defined as “a close sympathetic relationship, agreement, harmony.” We use this word with deliberate care because of the very special relationships that exist and are expressed in the Lord's Supper. That simple word that we so frequently use expresses a great scriptural truth about the blessing of coming to the Lord's Table.

The intimate message and the rapport which our Lord Jesus expresses to each Christian as he remembers the Lord's death is a great gift of grace. We are engaged in a close sympathetic relationship with our Savior.

The Lord knows our need to be assured of His love and forgiveness. He knows this is our greatest continuing need throughout this earthly life. He sympathizes with our need and responds to that need with this Holy Communion. As we each eat that bread and drink that wine, we each wondrously receive—by the power of our almighty and gracious God—the very body and true blood which Jesus offered as the sacrifice for the sins of



the world.

For YOU!

In the sacrament Jesus says: “. . . given and shed for YOU for the forgiveness of sins.” We often hear how Jesus died for the world—and that is the most marvelous gospel message—but as often as we hear it, our flesh is still very capable of missing or even denying its individual application. As each individual believer partakes of the sacrament, Jesus comes to each one of us and we receive the most intimate assurance: “That sacrifice offered to God at Calvary included ME.” This brings me together with my Savior. This brings me together in peace and harmony with my God!

We do not, however, commune in a vacuum—we commune in fellowship with other Christians. We are sharing something that each of us holds dear in our hearts, which also binds our hearts as one. This is most evident when we commune together in public worship. As we approach the Lord's Table together and there eat those consecrated wafers, we all eat of the same bread. Partaking of the same sacramental bread proclaims our unity as one body in Christ. We are not alone in our faith. We are not alone in our hope of eternal life. The power of the Spirit of our God

unites our hearts, not only in public confession of the truth, but as the body of Christ.

In the sacrament we celebrate the unity we confess as we commune with one another.

Remember what a wonderful word we use to express the blessing which the Lord brings us in His Supper. We *commune* with our fellow Christians, intimately expressing our common

faith in our Lord's death, our agreement in confession, our harmony with one another, and a sympathetic relationship modeled after our own loving relationship with our Savior.

We forgive one another. We bear one another's burdens. We *commune*—we are drawn close to one another by Him who draws us close to Himself.

What a treasure we have in *this blessed communion*.

Pastor Theodore Barthels



Patriotism And God

At national observances like Memorial Day or Independence Day a predominant theme is patriotism.

Patriotism has been defined as devoted love, support, and defense of the fatherland, that is, the land of one's ancestors or one's native country. In the carrying out of the theme for these special days, we may hear references made to the patriotism of the founding fathers of our nation or of other citizens who distinguished themselves as great leaders, defenders of our native soil, and loyal to the country we treasure so dearly. Great is the benefit to the homeland when its citizens are patriotic.

When the subject of patriotism is the focal point at such observances, very often it is linked together with the name of God. We might hear the name of God invoked in a patriotic speech, song, or prayer.

As children of God we readily acknowledge that the LORD our God is worthy of receiving honor, glory, and praise, because He is ultimately responsible for the favorable conditions we enjoy as a nation, such as



freedom, peace, and prosperity. His unseen hand is mightily active behind the scenes, working through the forces of nature, government officials, military personnel, and other fellow countrymen. Since the future success of our nation is dependent upon the gracious hand of God, we ought to make supplication to Him for continued blessings upon our country.

A prayerful hymn that was written for our country as a patriotic song resounds with these words:

God bless our native land!
Firm may she ever stand
Thro' storm and night!
When the wild tempests rave,
Ruler of wind and wave,
Do Thou our country save

By Thy great might.

For her our prayer shall rise
To God above the skies;
On Him we wait.
Thou who art ever nigh,
Guarding with watchful eye,
To Thee aloud we cry,
God save the State! Amen. (TLH 577)

Misconceptions

While it can indeed be fitting to link patriotism with God, when the name of God has been used at national observances, it is quite common to find misconceptions being promoted and the name of the LORD not being hal-
lowed.

The faulty statement has been made that the founding fathers of our country were Christians who led the way in establishing a Christian nation. A closer look at the religious beliefs of the founding fathers reveals that a number of them (for example, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and Thomas Paine) were Deists. Although Deism acknowledges a belief in a god, yet it rejects the belief in the Triune God. When Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence and made reference to God, he was not referring to the true God of the Bible.

The prayers that are offered at patriotic events sponsored by veteran organizations quite frequently are directed to a generic god. As the gathered crowd (of mixed religious belief) hears and is included in this kind of prayer, the false impression is given that people of all faiths believe in and pray to the same God.

When the psalmist declares, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD" (Ps. 33:12), he is speaking of the Triune God.

"How important and needful it is for us as Christians to testify to our fellow citizens concerning the LORD of the Bible, so that our countrymen will glorify Him for the blessings we enjoy as a nation . . ."

The LORD has graciously and mercifully blessed our nation in spite of the false beliefs of many in our country. How important and needful it is for us as Christians to testify to our fellow citizens concerning the LORD of the Bible, so that our countrymen will glorify Him for the blessings we enjoy as a nation and offer prayers to Him on behalf of our nation.

The LORD our God is the source and fountain head of the highest form of patriotism. This spirit of patriotism does not come from an inner sense of personal nobility, but rather from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

Our Savior's sacrificial love inspires us to be devoted citizens and faithful stewards of the land and country in which we live by His grace. And we are moved to willingly lay down our lives for our fellow countrymen, because Jesus laid down His life on the cross for our eternal salvation.

The LORD God be praised for the blessings we enjoy as a nation. May He instill in us and our fellow countrymen the spirit of Christian patriotism, and by His grace continue to bless our native land.

-Pastor Mark Gullerud



Studies In Ephesians

Proclaiming the Unsearchable Riches of Christ (See 3:8)

Chapter 5:22-33

The Missing Link in Modern Marriage

“Wives, submit to your husbands.”
 (“Gasp!”—from the ‘feminist’)

“The husband is the head of the wife...” (“You’ve *got* to be kidding” snorts the grad student)

“Husbands, love your wives” (“Hey, I do” protests the salesman; “I work fifteen hours a day and she doesn’t lack for anything, boy, I’ll tell ya’. But when I come home, she’s nothing but crabby. When’s she going to start loving *me*, huh?”)

Marriage, by all accounts, is supposed to be a state of harmony, pleasure, and bliss. But it seems that no social institution is more troublesome to so many people today than marriage. Even very fine Christian people may at times find marriage to be difficult and contentious.

In the letter to the Ephesians we find Paul offering a means of improving the situation. But his suggestion, as we noted above, is all too often reviled as paternalistic, branded as sexist, and derided as outmoded. “It can’t work,” couples protest.

The Model for God-pleasing Marriage

If taken as presented above, they may be right. The ‘husband-as-the-head, wife-as-submissive-partner’

arrangement of Ephesians—taken from a worldly point of view—invites all of those criticisms and fears.

That is, it does—as we presented it above—where there are only the two parties in the relationship. But something has been left out, hasn’t it? There is a missing link to the union.

That missing element is Christ, the Savior. He is the One who brings grace into the lives of husbands and wives the world over. He is the One who by faith receives them into His Church and brings them under His guidance, counsel, and power. He, through His Spirit, has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. If He can do that, we have no doubt that He can make husband and wife live together in harmony and blessedness. As was previously noted in this series, “Paul emphasizes the impact God’s wonderful grace in Christ has upon how a believer lives his life. Grace has made us different people.”

So let us understand that Paul was not trying to market himself as a marriage-guru to the secular world. He was speaking to those whose hearts had already been quickened (made spiritually alive). He counseled those for whom the Word of the Lord was already a powerful influence on their



hearts and minds, and he urged every wife and husband to reflect on the parallels between their wedded estate and their spiritual estate.

Christ and His Church are the model for a God-pleasing marriage.

Husbands . . .

“Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it.” The love of Jesus, who gave His life for the Church, becomes the model for husbands in their demeanor toward their wives.

The love of Christ was not a self-serving hunt for pleasure, but a *sacrificial*, self-denying mind and will. Jesus “laid down His life for the brethren”; everything leading up to the Cross and everything that happened on the Cross was done for the love of the Church. A man’s love for his wife is to mirror that selflessness.

Jesus’ love was also *purposeful*; He gave Himself for the Church to the end that “He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word . . . not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.” In other words, His objective in dying for the Church was that she would be saved, would flourish, would shine under His

favor with genuine beauty and purity.

Let that be a husband’s chief goal in marriage—to see to it that his bride does flourish and prosper under his loving kindness, protection, and leadership.

Wives . . .

“Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord.” The pattern for the wife is the Church’s submission to her Lord. Such “surrender” to Christ is not manipulative and resentful; the Church genuinely loves and honors Christ as her Lord.

Christian wives are among that devoted assembly. Now it is laid upon them to render a like honor to their husbands. No, he (your husband) certainly didn’t suffer and die for you. But he *has* accepted his role as your head. He has taken on the Lord’s charge to “nourish and cherish” his spouse. She who looks to Jesus with grateful respect as Savior and Lord needs to cultivate that same attitude toward her own husband.

Wives respond to gentle love; husbands respond to grateful respect. That’s not to say that one’s spouse will always fulfill his or her duties to the other’s satisfaction, but it is not to the spouse, but rather, our Lord, to whom submission and trust is *first* offered. Many times following this course may challenge the fleshly instincts; human nature will find reasons not to love or submit; but one can never expect to improve the situation by rejecting these roles.

This is spiritual truth, not worldly wisdom. Christian couples will spend a lifetime trying to apply and appreciate this counsel. Their pastor (whose very call is to bring Christ and His work to

bear on their lives) will be an important aid in helping to apply this.

Also, this counsel should not be taken as requiring a spouse to keep him/herself or the children in a dangerous situation. If there are concerns about one's safety, find a place of refuge, and go to seek the counsel of

your pastor.

According to this portion of Scripture, the complementary roles—a husband's love, a wife's respect—are the chain that strengthens a marriage.

When it seems that the chain will not hold, realize that Christ is the missing link.

—Pastor Peter Reim



STEWARDS OF THE GOSPEL "MINA"

Although there are similarities to the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30), the different context, audience, and mina* distribution clearly establish it as unique.

A short time earlier, Jesus had spoken in plain language of His impending suffering, death, and resurrection, but to His disciples it was a foreign language. They had not understood (Luke 18:31-34). Thoughts of an impending earthly kingdom—reinforced in their minds by both the Jericho healing of the blind beggar and the amazing conversion of Zacchaeus—had resurfaced.

To counteract this thinking and to remind them of their calling, Jesus told this parable.

The Nobleman And His Servants

A nobleman (Jesus—after completing His saving work) went to a distant

country (returned to heaven), where He was received as King. He had promised His servants He would return (in glory). Before departing (ascending), the nobleman (Jesus) gave each of His ten servants (His Church, all believers) a mina (about three months' wages—a great treasure) to be invested in His service.

While the talents in Matthew chapter 25 point to individual gifts and blessings distributed by the Spirit to believers as He will (1 Corinthians 12:4-11), the ten minas (one to each servant) point to a great blessing given equally and fully to each Christian (the gospel in Word and Sacrament). This gift was given not only for them and their salvation, but also for others through them. "Put this money to work," the nobleman instructed. We are called to be stewards of the "mysteries of God" (1 Corinthians 4:1), caretakers

* From the Greek word "mna"

and messengers of God's saving revelation in Christ.

Sadly, this parable also reminds us of the negative reception accorded the gospel by the world. Some of the nobleman's own subjects hated and rejected Him (His Messiah claims and His message of forgiveness and salvation through His saving work alone). To this very day the vast, unbelieving world—despite its facade of love and tolerance for all—reacts no differently. "We will not have Jesus as our King and Savior! He's not the one!"

Use Or Lose Your Mina

Upon His return (on the Last Day) the exalted nobleman (Jesus) calls His servants to give an account of their mina investment (gospel stewardship). Each of the faithful servants (according to his calling and opportunity) has wisely invested his gospel mina. It has produced growth and fruit in his heart and others.

With the expression "your mina has earned (more) minas" (vv. 16,18), we are reminded that it is the gospel (and not the servants) which effects the growth of the Word (John 15:1-8). Yet to effectively "work," the gospel must live by faith in our hearts and be shared and proclaimed by our words and actions. Such faithful gospel steward

ship leads to a commendation and blessing of grace—an eternity of love and service to our Redeemer.

Such was not the case with the final servant. In doing little or nothing with or for his gospel mina, he shows the true attitude of his heart. Such a faithless and uncommitted spirit can only bring about, ultimately, the loss of the gospel in one's own heart and life together with its tragic consequences.

We have been created, redeemed, and left on earth according to God's time to be stewards and investors of the gospel mina. Every other purpose and profit (Mark 8:38) in life pales by comparison. The greatest gift we possess is not our talents, resources, or energies, but the gospel itself. Our faithful use and investment of that gift in our personal, family, church, and synodical life will effect blessed spiritual life and growth in ourselves and others.

Ever conscious of our great calling, ever moved by the forgiving love of Christ, we go forward in faith as He leads. Eagerly we await the Day of accounting when the invested gospel minas will produce an innumerable dividend of souls eternally devoted to the praise and glory of their Savior-King. May we and those we love and serve be among them.

—Pastor David Schierenbeck



In April 2001 Missionary Koenig met for preliminary doctrinal discussions with some Tanzanian Lutheran pastors. "Their church is only a couple of years old."

THE WORSHIP SERVICE

“Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.”

Psalm 95:6

Seventh in a Series—

A Section of Prayer and Praise

The Introit

There is symbolism in our liturgy. The actions and reactions of the worship leader and the worshippers are often determined by symbolic purpose. For example, when the leader in God’s stead invites the congregation to confess their sins, he faces them. When they respond with the confession, the leader joins them, indicating this by turning to the altar. When the leader proclaims the forgiving love of God, speaking for God he again turns to face the people. So also, when the congregation is invited to pray, the leader faces the people, but during the prayer he joins them and turns toward the altar.

The next part of our worship service, the Introit, is accompanied by such symbolism. Centuries ago the part of the service up to the Introit was carried on by the leader standing at the entrance to the chancel area. This was *symbolically* done to emphasize that we, as sinners, need to be cleansed of our sin before we *enter into* the presence of God. Having confessed their sins, the worshippers were assured that through God’s forgiving love in Christ they were cleansed of their sins. Now they could enter *into* His gracious presence to worship and to praise Him. The Latin word *introitus* means “a going in,

entrance.” Thus, on behalf of the people, the worship leader proceeded to *enter into* the sanctuary. As he did so, the choir sang a psalm.

As time passed, the singing of the psalm was abbreviated, and finally the singing of it was discontinued entirely. Instead, a portion of the psalm was simply read. Furthermore, as time went on, the leader no longer remained at the chancel entrance during the confession of sins and absolution, but proceeded directly into the chancel area at the beginning. Thus the symbolism—which could be very meaningful—was essentially lost. The only explanation offered for this change was that the service was too lengthy (sound familiar?). Nevertheless, the preparation for worship through the confession of sins and the absolution very properly leads us to this section of prayer and praise.

Gloria Patri

“Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.” Historically speaking, Part I of the worship service begins with the Introit. This portion of the service is devoted to prayer and praise. And so, having read the designated portion of a psalm, the congregation responds with the

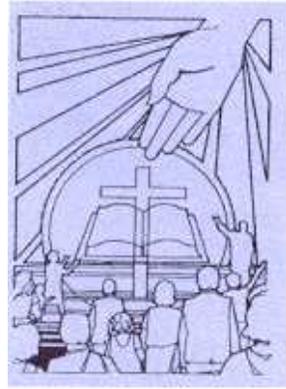
hymn of praise to the Trinity called the *Gloria Patri* (“Glory be to the Father”). This hymn is a very brief summary of such words of praise to the Holy Trinity as are found in Ephesians 3:20-21: “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”

Glory—that is, adoration and praise—is the theme song of the Church, the people of God who are His in Christ Jesus throughout all ages. And so we sing “as it was in the beginning” of His church, it “is now, and ever shall be” as long as this world stands. His people will never cease in their proclamation of praise here in time and throughout the endless ages of eternity.

Both in this Ephesians passage and in our liturgy the concluding words are “world without end.” Once again, this is an unfortunate translation and not readily understood. It would be better translated (as many translators do), “forever and ever.” Our praise will swell to a magnificent crescendo on that final Day and will echo with endless reverberation throughout the halls of eternity “forever and ever. Amen.”

The Kyrie

“*Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.*” This short musical prayer is historically known as *Kyrie Eleison* (translated “Lord, have mercy”). It is abbreviated to “*The Kyrie*” in our hymnal. It might seem strange in the progression of the liturgy to once again be addressing the Lord and pleading for mercy. After all, we have previous-



ly confessed our sins and have been assured of His merciful, forgiving love. Is this nothing more than redundancy?

Actually, this prayer is a request that the mercy of God accompany us in every situation of life. In other words, this threefold petition for mercy is a recognition that we need the Lord’s mercy every second of our lives. We need Him to mercifully strengthen, comfort, guide, help, and uphold us as we step into the unknown future. With His mercy resting upon us, we are assured that the future will be filled with His blessings.

Part I is concluded with a final hymn of praise, namely . . .

The Gloria In Excelsis

“Glory in the highest” is the translation of the title of this hymn of praise to the Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Other hymns such as 237 or 238 are often substituted for this hymn in the liturgy. Reasons for substitution include a desire for variety, as well as the fact that this hymn maintains some rather high notes which make it uncomfortable for some to sing.

More on the *Gloria* in our next article.

Pastor L. Dale Redlin

“That men live to the world”

The third man in today’s Gospel shows how this is done. He had volunteered to follow the Lord, but he said, “Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house.” How, we wonder, did he want to bid them farewell? Perhaps he wanted to gather with them and be merry with them once more, as he likely had done often before. Perhaps he merely did not want to leave them without any last word from him, so that they might not think bitterly of him and feel they had been despised. He wanted, rather, to take leave of them in the spirit of friendship, kindness, and love.

There we have a picture of many so-called Christians. They want to be Christians. That means, if they want to be in earnest about it, to forsake the world. It means to bid the non-Christians, the unbelievers, farewell, be it that we simply separate ourselves from them without any word of explanation, leaving them to think and say what they please; or be it that we tell them decisively and bluntly, “From this point on you and I part company, for I want to be a follower of Christ.” But such a firm stand does not suit many. It seems unfriendly and inconsiderate to them. They want to bid farewell to the world. The separation is to take place in a very friendly way, in a mild and gentle way.

“Why, we can have our faith all by ourselves,” they say, “and there does not, therefore, have to be enmity between others and us. We do not want

that. We do not want to conduct ourselves as Christians in such a way that others are filled with bitterness against us, as though we despised and condemned them and their life. We do not like to see unfriendliness existing between them and us.” They also want to inform the people of the world to that effect and try to explain to them that the world should not hold it against them and be angry with them because they for their part want to be Christians. Thus they bid farewell.

But this leave-taking turns out as leave-taking often does. They cannot be done with their leave-taking. If you did not finally separate them by force, there never would be a separation. But in the case of the leave that men want to take of the world as Christians there is no external force to separate them. Therefore this leave-taking goes on and on. The friendship and keeping company with the world goes on and on. They continue associating with the world on a friendly and peaceful footing. In church they sing:

“Come, follow Me, the Savior
spake,

All in My way abiding:

Deny yourselves, the world forsake,
Obey My call and guiding,”—

and in their daily life they sing the world’s praises: “It is not nearly as bad as it is often made out, and enough worldly people are much better than Christians.” They also are of the opinion that the so-called worldly ways and the worldly life are not such a great abomination as is so often pictured in

sermons. "You do not have to condemn everything," they say, "you can partake of many things with a fine clear conscience."

And not a few Christians actually bid farewell to the children of the world in this way, that they wholeheartedly enjoy their worldly pleasures with them. Thus these people never come to a real leave-taking of their worldly associates. They remain entangled in ties of friendship with the world. They do not get away from the world's way of thinking and judging. They are still filled with delight in the things that are of the world. Thus they in very fact still live to the world.

That you cannot speak of following Christ in the case of such people is stated by the Lord, when He speaks thus to those who were at his home, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." There, dear fellow-Christian, you hear the Savior saying very bluntly that such a man simply cannot be among His followers. The Lord

declares it to be impossible. He terms it "putting your hand to the plow" when you are converted out of the world and become a Christian. Then the world is to be crucified unto you, that is, in your eyes it is to be evil and accursed, so that you no longer desire any part of it. Now a man is to say, "this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before" (Php. 3:13). On the other hand, the man who still finds his delight in the world is looking back. He also is looking back who wants to maintain the friendship between the world and himself, still wants to exercise forbearance toward it, and does not want to make a clean break with it.

And this is the verdict: "He is not fit for the kingdom of God." He cannot think and do anything which pertains to the kingdom of God, nor can he be a follower of Christ, nor a Christian at all. Do not deceive yourself, you pitiable friend-of-the-world. Do not think for a moment that Christ will accept at full value your cheap and



Eau Claire Immanuel Lutheran High School graduates on their big day, May 19, 2001. See story, p. 17

empty assurance, "I think a great deal of faith and of Christianity," with which you too want to say something like this, "I will follow Thee!" He judges you according to what you are—a friend of the world. Let it fill you with alarm! The friendship of the world is enmity with God (James 4:4).

Now leave the former things behind you along with the old year and plow a better furrow. Do not live to the world,

that you may not be condemned with the world. Do not live first for your loved ones, for he that loveth father or mother more than Jesus is not worthy of Him. And do not live to yourself, for he that would save his life shall lose it. Live to the Lord. Then you live for your highest good. Then you will die to the Lord. Then you may say in joyous blessedness: Whether I live, or whether I die, I am the Lord's. Amen.



SMORGASBORD

• **YET ANOTHER CALLED HOME**
(Under this title the following was posted on synod e-mail by the Rev. Wayne Eichstadt, Associate Pastor at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Mankato, Minnesota. The message is a compelling one for current-day CLC members. The date of the writing was Tuesday, May 15, 2001.)

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

During the past six weeks you've heard (through this forum) of the deaths of two faithful servants whom the Lord used during the early days of the CLC—Roman Schreyer and Edwin Hasse. Today we add a third. In the early hours of this morning, the Lord called Albert Affolter home to eternal rest.

Aside from being the Immanuel Sunday School Superintendent for 22 years, Al (assisted by his wife, Tallie) served Immanuel High School as volunteer janitor, maintenance man, and treasurer for 27 years. But perhaps most notably, Al & Tallie were among the four families whom the Lord used to "make all things ready" when the need arose for a place to house the

Roman O. Schreyer (April 17, 1904 - April 2, 2001; funeral date: April 6, 2001) Edwin Ernest Hasse (July 10, 1906 - May 7, 2001; funeral date: May 10, 2001) Albert Walter Affolter (November 7, 1906 - May 14, 2001; funeral date: May 17, 2001)

fledgling Immanuel Lutheran High School and College in 1959. Already in January 1953 these four families purchased four adjoining lots on Harper and 3rd Street in northwestern Mankato. Not long after the purchase was made, Immanuel's pastor, G. W. Fischer, heard of a country schoolhouse that was going to be sold at auction twelve miles west of Mankato.

Again the four property owners acted. They asked Pastor Fischer to bid on the school building in their behalf. They became the owners of the building for \$700.00. With help of other volunteers the building was moved to the property. An ingenious plan to lower the roof into the building using 24 hayloft hinges saved the \$2000.00 it would have cost to have the telegraph cables lowered—it was \$2000.00 no



Last April Mankato's Immanuel High School faculty posed for us. (l-r) D. Libby, D. Roehl, K. Hulke, L. Olmanson, C. Owings, L. Fleischer, K. Fischer, K. Olmanson.

one had. Once the building arrived at the property, the four owners and Immanuel volunteers worked tirelessly to do the preparation work which they could not afford to have professionals do.

When the building renovations were complete, it was called "the North Chapel" and used in a variety of ways. People had numerous ideas as to the purpose this building might one day serve. In May 1959 the purpose the Lord had in mind became known. In a May 1959 meeting Immanuel congregation decided to open a high school, college, and seminary. The four owners offered their building for school use, rent free.

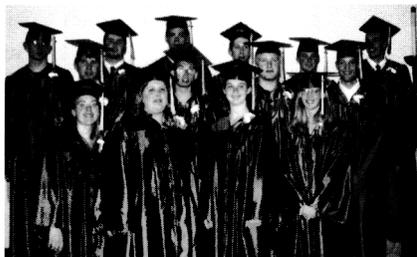
The Lord never saw fit to bless Al and his wife with children of their own; and yet He blessed them with generations of children. Many times Al & Tallie commented to their pastors of

the joy that filled their hearts to watch the church service via the TV broadcast and to see students whom they had served bringing their children to worship, Sunday School, and the Christian Day School & High School. Al didn't know the names of the children in the "next generation," but it didn't matter, for they were the Lord's and for a fellow brother in Christ that was enough. Al rejoiced to know that the Lord had used him in "at least a small way" to accomplish His will.

The service of triumph for Al Affolter will be held at Immanuel on Thursday (May 17) at 11:00 a.m.

Three of the Lord's instruments from our early synodical history have now been called home in a short span of time. Surely this gives each of us pause to consider how we are but dust, and our time on earth only fleeting. However, it also impresses on us (at least on this member of a far younger generation), how the heritage of God's Word is passed from one generation to the next; and just how important it is that we all stand as vigilant watchmen for the truth, lest our history be like that of Israel who did not know the Lord after the faithful generations were "gathered to their fathers" (Judges 2:7-10).

May the Lord always grant us



Fourteen seniors graduated June 3, 2001 from Immanuel Lutheran High School, Mankato

“first love” of the gospel and a ready eagerness to serve in His kingdom in whatever capacity He has for us and in all the opportunities He gives us.

• “**QUARTALSCHRIFT**” ARTICLE

The article “That Men Live to the World” comes to us courtesy of assistant editor Paul Koch, who explains: “In my recreational reading of old issues of the *Quartalschrift* I regularly come across Prof. Werner Franzmann’s translations of sermons by Hoenecke in a book(let?) entitled “Wenn ich nur dich habe.” They are long sermons, so I usually just skip them; however, this one caught my attention, and I read the

whole thing.”

Permission has been received to reprint this excerpt from a Hoenecke sermon on Luke 9:57-62 for the last Sunday of Trinity (no calendar date) as printed in the *Quartalschrift* (now the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*), 1943 (Vol. 40), pp. 283-285.

Under the theme “Three obstacles to following Jesus” were three sermon parts: 1) that we live to ourselves; 2) that we live first for our loved ones; 3) that we live to the world. Prof. Koch felt that the third part would be enough for one article.



Immanuel Lutheran High School, College, and Seminary, Eau Claire, Wisconsin



Prof. Steve Sippert here leads the graduates’ grand march into the Fieldhouse on Commencement Day. Following Sem grad Nathanael Mayhew are the College and High School seniors.

*ILC Graduation,
May 19, 2001*

The key word was “transitions”; the Scriptural guidance was couched in Revelation 1:8. From the back row it seemed to me that the closing concert and the commencement exercises were right on track. The ILC Fieldhouse was jam-packed, as usual; the closing con-

cert was uplifting, as customary; even the ambient heat and humidity escalated normally. Flutters of fanning programs kept time with the cadence of drum roll and soaring praises. Normal. Customary. Good. We are becoming acclimated to such blessings.

Now we ask the question posed to us in the Commencement Service by President John Pfeiffer: “Which way will we be going tomorrow?” The



High School Seniors caught in the act of throwing mortarboards

Lord's Word responded: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." As our life bounces forward minute by hour by day—always in transition from what was to what is and then onward to what shall be—our Alpha/Omega God manages. The only reason we are here today and are moving on—is Jesus. We step from past to

present into future securely because Alpha/Omega is always one step ahead of us.

That's how this spring's ILC graduates (one seminary, fourteen college, thirty-two high school) are facing their transition from ILC — to their next stage of life. That's how Mrs. Adelgunde Schaller enters full-time retirement (see accompanying article) after her long career at ILC. We expect



College "teacher graduates" (with city of their "Call" assignments); Rachel Pfeiffer (Saginaw, Mich.), Nathaniel Wales (W. Columbia, S.Car.), Neil Bernthal (Winter Haven, Flo.), Lindsay Paul (Fridley, Minn.), James Arndt (Coloma, Mich.), Joel Gullerud, Jonathan Sydow (Spokane, Wash.) Erin Libby (Watertown, S.Dak.), Ryan Libby

our Alpha/Omega God to manage for us, as He always does.

Yet we will also face the unexpected, just as surely as Easter burst all unexpectedly upon the burial brigade, the posted military, and those in hell to whom Jesus proved to be the one great Surprise. We were particularly struck—in Friday's closing choir concert—by the abrupt transition from the Good Friday chorale (lento and moderato) to the explosive "Alleluia! Christ has destroyed death!" as the Easter surprise burst upon us in the Fieldhouse "all unexpected," so to speak. Wonderful!

Let us expect the unexpected from Alpha/Omega; He has already blue-printed the transitions of our life for us, for "God's right hand and holy arm have won the victory."

Retirement of Mrs. Adelgunde Schaller

This year's commencement also marked the close of Mrs. Schaller's forty-two years of service to our Lord at Immanuel Lutheran College. As Regents' member Tom Beekman pointed out at the close of the spring concert, Mrs. Schaller was one of the first teachers when ILC began under the auspices of Immanuel congregation of



Mrs. Schaller with daughters Althea Sell (l.) and Miriam Archer



Mrs. Schaller's successor as head librarian at ILC is Mrs. Barbara Gullerud

Mankato. During her service career she taught virtually every student who ever attended the high school department, beginning in 1959 at Mankato and continuing at the Eau Claire campus from 1963 through the closing decades of the twentieth century, culminating this spring in her retirement. She enjoys the love of her associates and former students, as she is beloved of the Lord Himself.

Let it be said that we praise Alpha/Omega for allowing Mrs. Schaller to use her gifts in His service and for His people over such a lengthy career.

Our tributes to Mrs. Schaller were rounded out with a memento plaque, a money gift, and a reception in the dining hall, which many used as a photo-op to record the occasion for posterity.

Another transition has come and gone—for Mrs. Schaller as well as for her colleagues and the student body of ILC. We are getting used to such transitions; we live successfully through them all as we commit our bodies and souls and all things into the care of our capable Alpha/Omega God.

May He continue to bless our times of transition until all has transpired here below, in Jesus' name. Amen.

—Paul R. Koch, Reporter

IMMANUEL

(This stirring hymn was sung at this spring's commencement at Immanuel College in Eau Claire. The best we could determine is that the hymn is to be credited to P. E. Kretzmann, but there is no restrictive copyright. — The Editor)

1. Immanuel: God with us!
That is our humble prayer.
For sin and guilt within us
Would lead us to despair.
In us dwells naught but evil,
But Christ's victorious power
Has conquered death and Satan
And brought salvation's hour.

2. Immanuel: God with us!
That is our cheerful boast
When Satan would assail us
With all his dreadful host.
Our trust we place in Jesus,
In His atoning blood;
His righteousness will shield us,
His love guide us for good.

3. Immanuel: God with us!
That is our battle-cry
When unbelief defames us
And dares our trust deny.
'Tis then His might emboldens
And strengthens our weak heart,
'Tis then His arm protects us
From every hostile dart.

4. Immanuel: God with us!
That is our final sigh,
When our last hour comes on us,
When death's dark vale is nigh.
'Tis then His love enfolds us
And takes us by the hand
To lead us safely homeward
To our true fatherland.

Tune: Ewing - TLH 448

Please note: The lead article in our June 2001 issue entitled "Families And Forgiveness" was written by Pastor Delwyn Maas. Somehow in the transmission between editor and printer the name was inexplicably omitted. — Editor



Professors exit following the 2001 Commencement Service: Pres. John Pfeiffer, Steve Sippert, Paul Sullivan, Michael Sydow...



Professors Joseph Lau, Jeffrey Schierenbeck, David Lau, Michael Buck