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MensingOPENING SERMON

President

34th Annual Convention
June 21, 1985John 1: 41-42a

"One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus."

In the Name of Jesus Christ, the only Savior of men, my dear fellow Christians and fellow missionaries:

I have just called you not only "my dear fellow Christians" but also "fellow missionaries" because there is no such thing as a Christian who is not a missionary. Christian mission work, spreading the Gospel of salvation, is not left to our choice to do or not to do. For Christ our Savior has given to us and to all who know Him the solemn command: **"Ye shall be witnesses unto Me,"** which is the motto of our present convention. (Acts 1:8).

The question might, however, come to mind as to what kind of mission work we should be doing. Should it be home or personal mission work, mission work in other parts of our country, or foreign mission work? The answer to this is of course given us by God's own word, which says: **"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men,"** (Gal. 1, 10) and especially in the command which Jesus spoke to His disciples when He prepared to ascend to heaven and entrusted to them His work on earth: **"Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both to Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."** (Acts 1:8) Jerusalem was their home town, Judaea their state, Samaria a neighboring state; and then Jesus added: **"unto the utter most part of the earth."** They were to start at home and then branch out as far as they could, even unto all the world. And we marvel with praise to God, but sometimes to our own shame, that those early disciples, with their limited communications, transportation, and money, surely made a lot out of their opportunities. For they truly spread the Gospel into all the world.

In our own particular time and circumstances, which truly place in the way many hindrances to our spreading of the Gospel far and wide, there are nevertheless many wonderful opportunities afforded us day by day to be actively engaged in personal mission work, that is, each Christian's own testimony concerning Christ, the Savior. A very challenging example of such mission work is given us in the text just read, which tells us about Andrew bringing his own brother to Jesus, and which sets before us this mission theme, all-inclusive in its instruction, and yet short and simple enough for us all to take with us and remember for a long time to come:

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He brought him to Jesus!

It is a very important Christian principle, indeed the very foundation of our whole Christian faith and life, that not only the general thoughts but even every single Word of the Bible is God's inspired Word, to make us wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus and to furnish us unto every good work. Therefore let us carefully take apart these words words of our text and theme and see what each of them tells us about personal mission work for Jesus.

I.

Our first emphasis is on the words "to Jesus." In the words just before our text we read that John the Baptist was preaching the Gospel in the region of the Jordan River. He pointed the people to Christ and told them, "**Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.**" And this preaching immediately bore some fruit. For the text tells us that Andrew and another of John's disciples believed in Jesus as their Savior and followed Him. Right away then, as soon as Andrew had come to faith in Jesus, he thought of his brother, Simon, who did not yet know that Jesus was the Messiah, the promised Savior of the world. And, the text tells us: "**He brought him to Jesus.**"

"To Jesus." What an important lesson there is in these two words; for they tell us what mission work really is, - bringing people to Jesus, their Savior; they explain the basic purpose for which the Christian church exists here on earth, the purpose around which all its activities must be centered. And yet there are many people within the Christian churches today who either have not yet grasped this lesson at all or who have not taken it to heart.

There are those who seem to think and who act as though their church existed only for them, themselves. They are glad that someone once brought them to Jesus, but they make no effort to bring others to Him. They may even come to church themselves quite regularly, knowing that "**faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God,**" (Romans 10:17) but they don't seem to care at all whether others are brought to the saving faith by that same Gospel. They can't be enlisted to help the Church with any personal mission project, and they don't ever sit down and talk with others about Jesus either. yet it is such who easily complain that the church doesn't grow. They are not mission-minded Christians. They simply do not recognize and accept the duty which Jesus placed upon them when He made them Christians and told them: "**Ye shall be witnesses unto Me!**"

Then there are many in the churches today who want to be active Christians, but who have a mistaken idea of what the work of the Christian Church really is. They think that a church is then really active when it engages in all kinds of worldly activities such as fairs, bazaars, carnivals, entertainments, sports programs, and what not, which they then work at, not for

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the purpose of bringing precious souls to Jesus but for the purpose of making money, which the loveless, selfish, stingy Christians are not willing to give for the Lord's treasury. Now, we all know of course that Christian friendliness and sociability such as our meals and visiting together at this Convention surely have their place in the Church, where we are to love one another and share with one another. But the running of earthly businesses such as those mentioned belongs not in the Church, that is, in the congregation of the Lord, but in the restaurant, the fair grounds, and in the market-place. The business of Christians and of the Christian Church is to bring people "to Jesus."

And there are also still others who really want to take part in the actual work of the Church. They are truly mission-minded Christians, and they want to do also personal Christian mission work for the Savior. But they make the mistake of imagining that this is very difficult work. They think that they must right away be able, like a trained and called pastor, efficiently and effectively to discuss with their neighbor all the doctrines of Holy Scripture. Now, my fellow Christians, and missionaries, all of these things have their proper place and time. It is true that everyone who has become a Christian must continue to grow in grace; he must continue studying the Lord's Word, so that at length he learns, as Christ teaches, to observe all things that He commands, including the refutation of error. But first, before all this, a man must become a Christian by a simple, childlike faith in Jesus as his dear Savior from sin, death, and hell. And for this reason you must first guide and hold your mission prospect to the simple fundamental truths of the saving Gospel. You must point out to him Jesus, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, so that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. In short, and in all simplicity, you must bring him "to Jesus" both by your own testimony and then by inviting him to come with you to the House of God where the Gospel of Christ, like the rain and snow from heaven, is regularly and consistently proclaimed in its truth and purity. For that, and that alone, is Christian mission work - bringing people "to Jesus."

II.

Now, our text says furthermore: "**He brought him to Jesus.**" Here the emphasis is on the word "him", that is, Andrew's brother. From this we learn that mission work truly begins at home. As soon as Andrew had been awakened to faith in the Savior, there arose within his heart and mind the desire to bring his brother, his family at home, to Jesus. There was there at home his brother Simon, who did not yet know that Jesus was the long-promised Savior of the world. And so, without any hesitation or delay, he hurried to his brother and told him: "**We have found the Messiah.**" He brought him to Jesus.

Yes, indeed; Andrew first of all brought his own brother to Jesus. And that, dear brethren, like all the Scriptures, is written for our learning. As also before-mentioned we should of

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course also strive to help, in our mission work, those who are far away and even extend the Gospel, if opportunity permits, into far away foreign lands. Yet we should never think that we are fulfilling our whole mission obligation just because we are giving well to help support, or subsidize, mission work in other places, or because we are praying also for this work. We have also a great mission task here at home; and this we dare never forget or neglect. But tell me, my fellow Christian, have you already brought your own family, your relatives, your friends and acquaintances, your neighbors, and your fellow workers day by day, - have you brought them to Jesus?

"If you cannot cross the ocean,
And the heathen lands explore
You can find the heathen nearer;
You can help them at your door.
If you cannot rouse the wicked
With the judgment's dread alarms,
You can lead the little children
To the Savior's waiting arms."

III.

In the third place, our text also tells us: "He brought him to Jesus". Who did this? Why, Andrew himself. He was not the kind of fellow who simply says: "Aw, let George do it," or "Let the Pastors do it." No, he himself felt answerable for his brother, and so he could not with a good conscience simply shove this duty off to someone else. He went personally to his brother and brought him to Jesus. That was personal mission work. And should not we Christians also take to heart this wonderful example? If we are really honest with our own heart, is it not true that you and I have already, in our lifetime neglected many an opportunity for personal mission work? Tell me, my fellow Christian, what have you personally done each year to help your Pastor get up a new adult class to instruct, and what have you personally done to help teach the little lambs in Sunday School about Jesus their Savior? And just how many people, throughout your life-time, have you brought to Jesus and His Church? Well then, in a truly penitent and Christian spirit, let us see what we can do about this from here on out! In the short time we still have here on earth, let's get busy, every one of us, personally bringing people to Jesus. And let's not bring up that old, worn-out excuse of Moses: "I can't talk very well." Oh, we can talk very well about all kinds of other things; so we can talk about Jesus too, - unless perhaps we're ashamed of Him.

"I talk about my business, my bonds and stocks of gold,
And in all earthly matters I am so brave and bold;
But why am I so silent about salvation's plan?
Why don't I speak for Jesus, and speak out like a man?"

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I talk about the weather, and the crops of corn and wheat;
I speak of friends and neighbors who pass along the street;
I call myself a Christian, and I love the Gospel plan;
Then why not speak for Jesus, and speak out like a man?

Am I ashamed of Jesus and the story of the cross
That I lower His pure banner and let it suffer loss?
Do I forget His sufferings, His cross and bitter pain?
No, I will speak for Jesus; there's someone I may gain!"

IV.

But in the fourth place, now hear this from our text: "**He brought him to Jesus.**" This means that Andrew did not just invite his brother; nor did he let him come alone. But he accompanied him; he went with him to Jesus, or as the Greek word of the text indicates, he led him to Jesus.

From this we learn how we can work more effectively, for better success, in our personal mission work. This does not mean that by our own wisdom and skill we can add to the power of the Gospel, nor that we can ourselves make the work of the Holy Spirit more effective, no more than a pastor can add to these things by careful preparation of his preaching. Yet we sinners can detract from the power of the Gospel and from the effectiveness of the Holy Spirit by our carelessness and unwise approaches. Many Christians who really want to win their fellow men for Jesus make the mistake of merely inviting and sending them instead of bringing or leading them to Jesus. Some parents, for instance, think that they can get their children gladly to hear and learn the Word of God by sending them to church and Sunday-school while they themselves stay at home, not attending Bible Class and sometimes not even the church service. My brethren, the learning processes of life do not work that way. Children are smarter and more observing than we sometimes think. And so, what they learn from their parents' words is often just as quickly unlearned by their parents' example.

Thus it is also in winning adults. It is much more effective in winning a husband or wife, a friend or neighbor for Jesus, His Word, His Church, and for heaven if we personally bring them to Jesus, if we come with them, than if we merely invite or send them. Andrew was successful in his mission endeavor; he really won his brother for Jesus. And of him we read simply: "**He brought him to Jesus.**"

See then, my beloved brethren, we have a very important and solemn duty through our mission work at home and at large, to share with our fellow men the forgiveness of sins, the peace and joy and the everlasting heavenly blessedness which we have in Christ Jesus our Savior and the only Savior of mankind, of whom it is written, "**There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.**" (Acts 4:12) And our dear Savior Himself has told and commanded us: "**Ye shall be witnesses unto**

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Me." Think it through, my fellow Christians and fellow missionaries.

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

AMEN

S. D. G.

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SERMON DELIVERED AT THE SUNDAY DIVINE SERVICE

by the Rev. David T. Mensing

Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

John 4:3-30 and 39-42

In the Name of Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Head of His Church, dearly-beloved brethren and hearers of His precious Word:

How appropriate and timely, yes, how crucially important it has been for our Conference to devote special attention this year at its convention to the subject of personal Christian missionwork -- not merely the organized efforts of a church-body such as ours by the authority and with the support of the various congregations which comprise it, but the mission endeavours of individual Christians to win others for Jesus! The words of the Saviour in Acts chapter one verse eight, **"Ye shall be witnesses unto Me,"** have served us well as our convention motto, because they focused our attention on the Lord's will that every single Christian be a witness for Him, a confessor of His blessed truth, and a reaper in His harvest of precious souls.

Sad to say, many well-intentioned Christians have the mistaken idea that missionwork is exclusively the responsibility of pastors since they were specially trained for that work, are by and large better equipped to speak to others than the average layman, and have been called into the ministry specifically to carry out that responsibility. The layman's role, they say, is merely to support mission endeavors with his gifts, sacrifices and prayers. But Jesus says: **"Whosoever...shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven."** That makes the confession of the Saviour before men by every individual Christian a matter of utmost importance; for no one whose heart confides in the merits of Jesus and is full of gratitude to God for His free salvation can sit quietly, yes, idly by, while others speak up for the Saviour and His precious Word, **"for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,"** He tells us in Matthew 12.

Some, however, do not readily speak up for the Saviour, not because they are ashamed of Him, not because they are not truly grateful for His blessings of forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, but simply because they feel inadequate as missionaries. To be sure, not one of us, pastor or layman, is sufficient of himself, for the Bible tells us: **"Our sufficiency is of God", for it is God which worketh in [us] both to will and to do of His good pleasure.** And, when the Lord in His Word tells you and me what His good pleasure is, namely, **Ye shall be witnesses unto Me,"** we pray that He will then make us individually not only willing but also able to carry out that most pleasurable work of sharing the precious Gospel of salvation with many others!

As to our own preparedness to undertake personal missionwork for our Savior, the text of God's Word before us this morning is a

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veritable textbook of information and instruction in just how to set about being a witness for Jesus. For we have in this story of Jesus' encounter with the woman of Samaria

"Two Challenging Examples of Personal Christian Missionwork."

The first is the perfect example of the Lord Jesus, who engaged this Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well; and the second is the example of the woman herself, who, immediately after her conversion, became a missionary for her Saviour.

I.

Now, many people try to excuse their lack of activity in personal missionwork by claiming that virtually no opportunities present themselves during their day-to-day routine of living. And yet, the Bible tells us that the band of true believers in Jesus is "a little flock" in contrast to the "many" who walk the broad and easy road to destruction. (Matt. 7) Oh, the mission prospects are there all right, teeming millions of them all around us! And all we're looking for in personal missionwork is one -- one at a time, one precious soul to win for Jesus, one lost sheep brought to repentance over whom the angels of God will rejoice! And so the Saviour's example shows us first of all just how to seize upon each of our many mission opportunities.

We read in our text: "He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee. And He must needs go through Samaria. Then cometh He to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar...Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well; and it was about the sixth hour." The Lord Jesus was not just "sitting around", waiting for people to come to Him --no, He was "on the road", as we commonly say, seeking the lost. We too travel quite a bit nowadays from place to place, to and from work, to the store to do our shopping, and so on. Jesus in His state of humiliation became tired on this particular journey and stopped to rest. Since it was about noontime, His disciples went off into town to buy some lunch, and Jesus sat down on the edge of the well. ---This is an everyday occurrence for us who take a lunch-break or even a coffee-break in the middle of the day; and yet we don't seem to be conscious of the fact that most, if not all, of the people sitting round about us at such a time are "lost sheep" for whom the Saviour died. And we look at them, and then go away from them, and, much like that Levite in Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, "**pass on the other side**" (Luke 10), leaving them just as we found them! Oh, the opportunities are there -- all the time, but we all too often simply ignore them! Let me ask you, dear brother and sister in Christ: How would you feel if, on the Last Day of judgment, you saw a workmate or acquaintance standing with the condemned on the left side of Jesus-- a person with whom you had often spent your lunch hour or coffee-break, and to whom you never once spoke about your Saviour? Think about that tragic picture, and fewer mission opportunities will escape your attention.

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But now the Lord Jesus shows us how to "break the ice" and get a mission target interested in our message. We read on that a woman came along to draw water at the well, and Jesus asked her if she would give Him a drink. Simple enough, wasn't it? You see, it really doesn't take much effort to engage a person in conversation if we truly want to. ---But what if the other person is shy, shocked, or even somewhat taken aback by our approach? Notice how Jesus, our perfect example, handled that problem: The woman said unto Him: **"How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans."** Social, historical and racial bigotry is nothing new, is it? And, even though the Jews avoided the Samaritans originally for very good reason, namely, to stay clear of their mixed and false religion, nevertheless over the years that aloofness developed into a mean and vicious attitude of blind social prejudice, so that, although the Jews dealt with other Gentiles in a civil manner and even proselytized them, they would have nothing whatever to do with a Samaritan, as our text tells us. My friends, **"Christ died for ALL, and we dare never let personal feelings of bigotry and prejudice overtake us and stand in the way of our being witnesses unto Jesus, for "(God) will have ALL men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."**

But now notice in our text how the Lord Jesus got the woman's attention and stimulated her curiosity about His message: **"Jesus answered and said unto her, 'If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water.'" Although her interest at first was purely carnal, and she envisioned the possibility of never again having to haul water home from Jacob's Well, Jesus had succeeded in stimulating her interest. He had "broken the ice", as we commonly say, so that she herself started to ask Him questions: **"From whence hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us this well?"** Sometimes just by our behaviour as Christians -- not just what we say or profess, but our "walk in the Spirit", the inner peace and contentment that shows on the outside as we let our light shine before men -- people's curiosity is stirred, and they may ask us too: "From whence do you get such a happy and peaceful outlook on life?" Or, even in a somewhat proud and haughty tone at first: "You think you're better than other people, don't you?!" And that, beloved brethren, is the **OPEN DOOR**, albeit only a crack in width, through which we must witness unto the Saviour. Remember that it is the Holy Spirit of God who opens those doors to us, not the mission prospects themselves; and so it is a real sacred trust we have as Christian witnesses to make the most of those God-given opportunities, to testify as to why we are so happy and peaceful, namely, because we are justified by faith in the blood of Jesus; and as to why we Christians are "better than others" -- certainly not of ourselves; but we, by God's grace, are clothed in Jesus' righteousness which covers all our sins; yes, **"[we] are washed...sanctified...justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God!"** (I Cor. 6)**

This woman of Samaria, however, was still not thirsting for

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the right water -- her thirst was only physical; and so the Saviour had to create in her a real spiritual thirst for the Water of Life, His precious Gospel. And in doing so, He left us His example of how to bring a person to an understanding of his sins and the desperate need for God's mercy and forgiveness. Jesus told her to go and call her husband, knowing full well that the woman had lived off and on with five different men, and that the man with whom she was presently living was not truly her husband. In other words, Jesus preached to her God's Law to sear her conscience, to convict her of her sins, and to parch her spiritual throat with the enormity of her guilt before God. It is that preparatory work of the preaching of the Law which readies the soul to hear the Gospel: It attacks self-righteousness and pride, and sweepingly indicts the sinner, screaming into his vanity-clogged ears: **"There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not!"** (Eccl. 7:20) **"They are all gone aside; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no not one!"** (Ps. 14:3) **"The wages of sin is death!"** (Rom. 6:23).

Ah, then the sinner's throat begins to sting, to dry out, and to crack, parched with guilt and the fear of punishment; and he cries out with the jailer at Philippi: **"What must I do to be saved??"** It is only then that draughts of living water are poured to his lips, the sweet, quenching Gospel of salvation: forgiveness great and free, without money and without price, purchased and won for all men by the blood of Jesus, so that God for Christ's sake has already declared the whole world righteous in His holy sight. That is the living water of the Gospel!

Now you and I do not have the Saviour's omniscience, to see the inner heart of man and to convict him of even his most secret sins. But we must nevertheless use the Law of God to bring our mission prospects to an understanding of their sins and guilt and unworthiness in the sight of God. Where we know of some manifest sin to which we address ourselves in this effort, we should do so and not merely let it go uncorrected. But pin-pointing one particular sin is not essential; for God's holy Law speaks out so clearly and indictingly against the whole perverted nature, life and conduct of the natural man, the unconverted sinner, in contrast to the perfection demanded by God, that even one sin makes him guilty of all!!

A word of caution is in order here, however, brethren: Never fail to bring the thirst-quenching water of life to the lips of the penitent sinner, for you will leave him in utter despair and on the road to hell! For the Apostle tells us: **"The letter (i.e. the Law) killeth, but the Spirit (i.e. the Gospel) giveth life."** (II Cor. 3:6) Jesus, our perfect example, gave this penitent woman in our text a generous draught of His quenching Gospel, as we shall presently see; but first let us examine yet one other example He gives us for our work as missionaries:

In verses 20-24, Jesus makes use of an opportunity to refute a false position -- to show the error in a false doctrine and to set the record straight with a clear statement of the truth. The

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woman said to Him: **"Our fathers worshipped in this mountain (namely, in the Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim), and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship."** She wanted to know where the true God was to be found and where He should be worshipped. Jesus first pointed out to her that, although the Samaritans believed that they were worshipping Jehovah, the true God, their religion had become so mixed up with heathenism over the years that their Jehovah was nothing more than a figment of their imagination, much like the god of the lodges and similar anti-trinitarian organizations today. But He then showed her that the hour was coming (and was even then at hand) in which the Old Testament formalism would be put aside and that true worship of the Father would have to be "in spirit and in truth." The sinner would no longer have to approach Him through a priest and by means of sacrifices and outward observances at specified places and times, but through the one Mediator between God and men, the Man, Christ Jesus. For by faith in His substitutionary fulfillment of the Law in our stead and His perfect sacrifice for our sins, we have peace with God (Rom.5:1). Our spirit is right with Him by His grace, and His truth makes us free -- free from false and pernicious doctrine, free from the claim of Satan, and free from the curse of the Law!

We too, brethren, should be ready in our personal missionwork to distinguish between true and false doctrine, to answer such questions as the one addressed to Jesus in our text, and to give account of our faith. For the Apostle Peter says in his first epistle, chapter three: **"Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."** That refers first of all to our being able to testify as to the way to heaven and the hope we have by faith in Jesus. But these words also exhort us to readiness to answer any question that may be directed to us concerning what we believe and teach. And that is a particular challenge for all Christians, for sad-to-say there are few professing Christians who can really give account of their faith as they should be able to -- as they once were able to on the day of their confirmation. Why is that? Oh, it is because people by and large are too busy with the things of this world to take time to grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour. Again, they leave doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness to their pastors to handle for them, while the Holy Scriptures, which are profitable for all those things, are for the laymen as well, personally, so that they as the children of God may be complete, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (II Tim. 3:15-17) -- in this case the good work of witnessing a good profession before men! Yes, **"be ready,"** the Apostle exhorts us, lest we lose a precious opportunity to witness for our Saviour!

When Jesus finished His discourse with the woman in our text and had positively identified Himself as **"Messias, which is called Christ,"** the very Source of heavenly, living water for which she was now thirsting, the Fountainhead of all spiritual wisdom and truth which is able to save the soul, she had then and there by faith in Him a whole **"well of water springing up into everlasting**

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life." Her parched throat was quenched with His soothing Gospel, and she had for herself the peace with God that flows from sins forgiven, the peace which passeth all understanding! What a blessed end to the Saviour's personal missionwork!

II.

But the end proved to be but a beginning, the beginning of new fruit in this happy convert. For she herself launched forth on a mission endeavor of her own! We read in our text: **"The woman then left her waterpot and went her way into the city."** Notice the example she sets for us, first of all in making her own personal missionwork a high priority in her life. Her big concern previously had been to draw water for her physical needs; but now that her spiritual thirst had been quenched, her priorities changed. She became a missionary for her Saviour, and that work came first out of gratitude for her own salvation! Considering the wonderful advantages we have had all our lives, having been nurtured and bought up, most of us since early childhood already, in the Lord's precious Word, how we should even exceed this example of missionary zeal and start setting down our waterpots of material concerns to work cheerfully for Jesus!

"She went into the city," our text tells us, **"and saith unto the men, 'Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?'"** What a bold and forthright confession of the Saviour. Yes, what a humble admission of her past life of sin and the difference that Jesus had made in it! She was so thankful that she wanted to share her new-found joy with others! Is that how you feel about Jesus? Are you so thrilled with the peace and joy and hope you have in Him that your mouth simply must speak about it? --We pray the Lord to forgive us our gross ingratitude of the past for His precious water of life so freely poured out upon us; and we beseech Him to renew our zeal to be up and doing as witnesses unto Him, to **"show forth the praises of Him, who hath called (also) us out of darkness into his marvelous light!"**

But this woman left us yet one last example in our personal missionwork: She did not just testify of her "experience with Jesus" (as the enthusiasts commonly do), but she brought the men of the city to the Saviour Himself, so that they could hear His own Word, the power of God unto salvation, the power of the Gospel through which the Holy Spirit works saving faith in the hearts of men. For when they had heard Him and learned of His grace, they too had the firm conviction she had, namely, the simple but unshakable certainty of Christian faith, that Jesus **"is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."**

Oh, review this wonderful narrative text often, dear brethren, and learn from the example of your Saviour, as well as from that of the Samaritan woman, to be ever better witnesses unto Him! Do not let an opportunity pass you by to tell others of Jesus, lest you thereby deprive them of the joy and peace and hope you have by His grace in believing!--

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"Let none hear you idly saying,
'There is nothing I can do,
While the souls of men are dying,
And the master calls for you!"

Take the task he give you gladly;
Let His work your pleasure be!
Answer quickly when He calleth,
'Here am I, send me, send me!' " (L.H. 496, v.
4)

Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!

PERSONAL MISSION WORK

1. Introduction

Much of what is done in the name of mission work is nothing more than a zealous application of the natural religion of man which is man-centered and not God-centered. The social gospel which is disseminated by the modernists is a by-product of this natural religion of man. We hear today of what seems to many a new and exciting religious philosophy, called "Liberation Theology". It is really nothing new, for it is none other than the social gospel under a new name. One thing the advocates of the social gospel have in common is that man's spiritual welfare is not as important as his temporal welfare. Man's freedom from social injustice and material needs is the key message of these perverters of Christ's Gospel. But, as church history shows us, the activities or practices of a church always reflect the theology of the church. The former is the fruit of the latter. Permit me to cite a recent example: a lengthy article appeared in the pages of the "Lutheran Witness", the official organ of the Missouri Synod, concerning "mission work in Nigeria". Not a word did it contain about bringing the saving Word of God to the spiritually dead or starving natives of that country, but rather a detailed presentation of how new vaccines are provided for the cattle and new or better sources of physical health benefits are provided for the people by the "missionaries" and the church they represent. And this amongst a people who sorely and mainly are in need of owning and enjoying the benefits of Christ's work of redemption, offered and sealed in the God-appointed Means of Grace, the Word and Sacraments, namely, the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, which is the main purpose of all true Christian mission work, whether it is carried out in the foreign fields or here at home. What is mission work? What is its purpose? What is its message? These are questions for which we need to find the answers from God's Word in order that, as a conference of orthodox Lutherans and as individual Christians, we may be more zealous and effective workers in and for the kingdom of God.

2. Definition and Purpose of Mission Work

The word "missions" comes from a Latin word meaning "to send". Our Lord Jesus said to His disciples: **"As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you,"** John 20:21. Mission work is that activity whereby we, as those sent or commissioned by Christ, go at His command. To do what? The answer to this important question we learn from the Lord's own words of the Great Commission which appears five times in the Bible, though not always in the same form and in the same connections and relations. It was spoken to the disciples in Jerusalem on the evening of the first glorious Easter Day and repeated and reaffirmed in Galilee and on Mount Olivet, just previous to the Ascension. It is both interesting and profitable to make a careful study of each one of these records, to compare and combine them, and thus form a concise answer to the question: What has the Lord commanded us to do as

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those sent by Him?

Mark has recorded the Lord's command in this form: **"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned,"** Mark 16:15,16.

According to Luke's account, the two disciples had returned from Emmaus and **"found the eleven gathered together and them that were with them."** While they were rehearsing the wonderful experiences of the day, the Lord appeared among them with His words of peace. The thoughts included in the missionary command are given in this amplified form: **"Thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem: and ye are witnesses of these things,"** Luke 24:46-48.

John has given this illuminating record of the Lord's words: **"Peace be unto you! As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, He breathed on them and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained,"** John 20:21-23.

Matthew incorporates the words of the Great Commission in his account of an assembly of disciples, after the resurrection, in Galilee, on **"a mountain where Jesus had appointed them"**. The eleven disciples were there and probably also those disciples to whom Paul refers in I Cor. 15, when he states that Christ **"was seen of above five hundred brethren at once"**. The wording of the Commission here is the fullest of all, closing as it does, with the promise that has sustained the missionary host of all ages in its triumphs and conflicts: **"All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world,"** Matt. 28:18-20.

Clearly, then, the means whereby the Great Commission is to be executed, are unambiguously prescribed by the Sender Himself. They are: the Word of God, consisting of the Law ("repentance," "retain") and the Gospel ("remission of sins," "remit"), and Holy Baptism. The purpose is clearly indicated: **"Make disciples of all nations."** This purpose is even more clearly stated in such passages as Acts 26:18, where Paul, who only moments ago, had become a disciple of Christ by faith in Christ's Word, repeats His Lord's command to him: **"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me."** That purpose of every form of mission work has remained and will remain unchanged until the final advent of Christ when all our missionary activities shall be terminated.

3. The Necessity of Mission Work

The foregoing words of Christ to Paul express succinctly the purpose of all forms of mission work. They also spell out the urgent necessity of all forms of mission work. Some years ago, your essayist attended a national convention of the Red Cross. The keynote speaker, a famous columnist, spoke of the necessity of that organization's work. One statement particularly impressed me as I thought its truth could be applied to mission work. It was: "The reason why so many are opposed or indifferent to the work of this organization is that they do not understand or appreciate the necessity of its work." How do most of the churches today fare in their attitude toward mission work? As we said before, the practices of a church reflect the theology of the church. The late Theodore Engelder wrote the following in an article which appeared in the Dec., 1945, issue of the "CTM", p. 824: "Nor is it surprising that the liberal Protestants teach that the heathen can save themselves with the help of God. The liberals are blood brothers of the Catholics, of the race of Pelagius. The Unitarians, for instance, hold that 'all truth is God's truth, whether Pagan or Christian origin', that 'Christian or pagan, theist or atheist, may follow truth to the uttermost bounds and speak the truth as he finds it - - and is responsible only to his own conscience', and that idolatrous devotion of the savage, flowing from a sincere impulse is a quest after the infinite good - - leading to eternal salvation. The liberal Protestants are following the lead of Zwingli, who was sure that Socrates, Aristides, Cato, and other 'pious and wise heathen' had entered heaven with David, Paul, and Peter." Such an attitude as this has prompted many to ask the question which was voiced about five years ago in an official denominational organ of the Episcopalian Church: "Why should Christians send missionaries to people who already have a religion of their own?"

But do we not at times reflect a similar attitude when we have the opportunity to witness God's saving truths to relatives, friends, or neighbors, who seemingly have a satisfactory religion, though not Scriptural, as long as they give evidence of being morally and socially good. We ask in our minds, if not with our lips: "Why bother them with my witnessing?"

What often lies beneath such an attitude and opinion as this? Is it not either ignorance or denial of what the Scriptures teach regarding the state of every man by nature and until his conversion? What do the Scriptures teach regarding man in his unconverted state? They teach that all, both Jews and Gentiles alike, are "under sin", Rom. 3:9; all are "guilty before God," Rom. 3:19; "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God", Rom. 3:20; and therefore, are "by nature the children of wrath," Eph. 2:3. Now it is at this point where depraved reason immediately exerts its opposition. All rationalists, be they theologians or simple laymen, oppose any and all concepts of a God who has man as an object of His wrath or hatred. Pieper, speaking of such opponents, writes: "They object that it is a disparagement

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of the Divine Being to predicate of Him divine wrath, anger, enmity, as if nothing less than Christ's substitutional death could reconcile Him to man", Chr. Dog. II, p 352. The modernists of today, as of other ages, would that the soft generation of our day be spared the stern preaching of the wrath of God against sinful mankind. To a certain degree they would agree that God hates sin. But they become more vehement in opposing the truth that God hates, not only sin, but also the sinner. Here I would share with you a rather lengthy quotation from an orthodox essay, presented in 1953 by the late Prof. Walter Albrecht to the Springfield Circuit Pastors' and Professors' Conference:

"This Ritschlian idea of a God without wrath who is all love has permeated not only sectarian circles here in the United States. In the Lutheran Standard of the ALC of Feb. 21, 1953, we are told that the imprecatory Psalms are 'out of line with the spirit of Christ.' We quote: 'The believers of the Old Testament had only a limited revelation of God...This also made for a limited morality, both in terms of knowledge and of motivation...Further, it is often characteristic of the Old Testament to identify evil with the person who committed it. In the New Testament a sharp distinction is made between sin and the sinner. The New Testament, too, hates sin and damns sin. But it distinguishes it from the sinner, and it loves and seeks to redeem that sinner. To us, children of the New Testament, they (these imprecatory Psalms) must remain foreign in spirit. Here Jesus is our pattern.'"

What is our reply to such theological nonsense? No better reply can be given than that of Pieper:

"Only Scripture can tell us what conceptions of God are worthy or unworthy of Him, and Scripture tells us that according to His righteousness God is angry with sinful men. Rom. 1:18: **'The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men'**: Gal. 3:10: **'Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them'** Rom. 5:10: **'When we were enemies, echtroi ontos.'** Chr. Dog. II, p. 352.

Regarding the latter passage, Albrecht writes in his mentioned essay: "Echtroi ontos expresses not our enmity for God, but God's enmity toward us...In Eph. 2:3 Paul says: **'And were by nature the children of wrath.'** As we come into the world, before ever we had committed a sin in desires, thoughts, words, and deeds, were we hated, detested, abhorred by God." In summation, Pieper states: "Rom. 5:10: All men are echtroi, hated by God, under His wrath." Therefore, we conclude with Luther: "This wrath is not a trivial thing, but it is so great that no man can bear it, but sink to the ground...For it condemns all to death, that they be eternally separated from God." St. Louis ed., Vol. XI, 1666.

Unlike the rationalists and universalists, do we see in every

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unconverted person a soul under God's wrath, outside of God's kingdom, trapped in the fetters of Satan, and one who is every moment racing toward eternal separation from God, in hell? If not, we will not understand nor appreciate the necessity of mission work anywhere. Witnessing for Christ has then become a superfluous activity for the individual Christian and the purpose of the Church has become no more than a race to build the Church numerically without any concern for the eternal welfare of its members. But once we realize from God's Word the relation of the unconverted man to God and the reasons for it, we will not hesitate to use God's appointed means to show him his miserable state and the way of salvation.

4. The Role of the Law in Mission Work

In stating the purpose of mission work to Paul in Acts 26:18, the Lord makes it plain that the eyes of the unbelievers must be opened to see their miserable state. We are reminded of another similar statement which the Lord made, this time to the Church at Laodicea: **"Anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see"**, Rev. 3:17,18. This congregation no longer saw that they were spiritually wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. No longer did it see its sins. No longer did it see the need for repentance. No longer, as a consequence, did it see any need for remission of sins. Therefore, they needed to have their eyes opened. We are also reminded of Christ's words in Matt. 9:12: **"They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick"**. Most pitiable is a person who doesn't see his sin-sick and lost condition. Would true pity and love motivate us to tell him: there's something wrong with you, and any feelings of guilt and punishment due to your sins are imagined and, therefore, should be suppressed. To all who are blind to their sinful and lost condition, we are to preach and teach the Law of God, for **"by the Law is the knowledge of sin,"** Rom. 3:20. By the Law they are to see that they are under God's wrath, outside His kingdom, and on their way to eternal death. It is at this point where the Antinomians of every shade and color, under the guise of being "evangelical", vehemently protest, arguing as did John Agricola of Luther's day: "The Law belongs only in the courthouse." But here we are to remember that Christ, in His Great Commission, has commanded us to teach **"all things whatsoever"** He has commanded, i.e., all of His Word, which includes also the Law. Not only the remission of sins, but also repentance (as Christ said), is to be preached and taught in His name, to the end that whoever is the object of our ministrations may with open eyes see their true condition on account of which they would seek that which would make them rich before God and that righteousness which would cover their spiritual nakedness before God. This only the Law can do. Walther says: "The Law must precede the preaching of the Gospel, otherwise the latter will have no effect. First comes Moses, then Christ; or, first, John the Baptist, the forerunner, then Christ. At first the people will exclaim, How terrible is all this! But presently the preacher, with shining eyes passes over to the Gospel, and then the hearts of the people are cheered. They see the object of the preacher's preceding remarks: he wanted to make

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them see how awfully contaminated with sins they were and how sorely they needed the Gospel," Law and Gospel, p. 83. And what must be said of those who would dilute the Law for fear that it might offend? Walther says: they are "like a sick-nurse, who fetches sugar to sweeten the bitter, which the patient dislikes. What is the result? Why, the medicine does not take effect, and the patient remains feverish. In order that it might retain its strength, the medicine should not have been sweetened. A preacher must proclaim the Law in such a manner that there remains in it nothing pleasant to lost and condemned sinners. Every sweet ingredient injected into the Law is poison; it renders this heavenly medicine ineffective." Law and Gospel, p. 80. Here we have important instruction, not only for pastors, but for all who are involved in the glorious work of gaining souls for Christ. Indeed, man by nature hates the Law, for he would only hear nice things said about himself, by himself and others. But, here again, the Law serves an important purpose in that it shuts the ever chattering mouths of the self-righteous, as Paul writes in Rom. 3:19. The main object in applying the Law in mission work is to produce contrition, sorrow over sin and one's lost condition, to create hunger and thirst for that righteousness which covers all sins and the craving for that medicine which heals all spiritual ailments, namely, the Gospel. Of course, we dare not prescribe the grade and depth of contrition, as do the Pietists. Such motions or movements which may result from contrition do not constitute contrition or repentance itself. Tears and all other signs of contrition may be genuinely produced in a person, as a result of conviction by the Law, but in themselves they are of no value or merit, as we see from the case of Judas. As is also plainly learned from his case, the Law does not effect conversion by which man is personally delivered from his miserable state into the kingdom of God. This leads us to the next and most important part of this presentation.

5. The Role of the Gospel in Mission Work

To the Corinthians Paul wrote: **"In Christ I have begotten you through the Gospel,"** I Cor. 4:15. And to the Romans he wrote of the Gospel: **"It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth,"** Rom. 1:16. Peter calls the Gospel the **"incorruptible seed"** (I Pet. 1:23) which gives birth to that spiritual life which is owned and enjoyed only in communion with God, through faith in Christ. Only God can convert the sinner. Man is by nature spiritually blind, dead, and an enemy of God. Therefore, as Luther states in the meaning of the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed, "I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept in in the true faith." This statement is totally Scriptural, for we read in it: **"No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost,"** I Cor. 12:3. Man, in his unconverted state, may, with his lips, utter that precious name, but not from a believing heart, a heart that has been brought to faith by the Holy Ghost, through the Gospel. That he may utter that name from a believing heart, we, as God's emissaries must bring him the

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Gospel.

What is that Gospel? Is there need to discuss such a question? Can we take for granted that every professing Christian knows the answer to that question? Indeed, not. The term Gospel, like the precious name of Jesus, may be on the lips of most religious people, but, either because of ignorance or rejection thereof, their hearts are void of the meaning and benefits which it offers and appropriates. Until their eyes are opened to a right understanding of it, they remain oblivious to what is the basis and means for entering a right relationship with God and, therefore, render themselves ineffective missionaries and witnesses for Christ. Of such the Lord says: **"They be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch"** (Matt. 15:14), i.e., they both shall perish with their sins. What an awesome responsibility we have, as Christians, to know what the Gospel is that we are to bring to the unbelievers so that they may be led into a right relationship with God through faith in Christ Jesus.

What this Gospel is, God has clearly revealed in His holy Word. Briefly, but correctly, our Catechism defines the Gospel as "that doctrine of the Bible in which God tells us the good news of our salvation in Christ Jesus." Indeed, it is good news. In fact, it is the best news which God has for the sinner, for its message is, not what the sinner can or must do, but what God has done to bring sinful man into a right relationship with Himself. It answers the most important question that can confront man, namely, how is the sinner justified before God, i.e., on what basis alone does God declare the sinner forgiven and righteous in His sight? How does God's Word answer this question? Negatively, it states: **"No man is justified by the Law in the sight of God,"** Gal. 3:11; **"By the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God,"** Rom. 3:20. Positively, it states: **"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them,"** II Cor. 5:19. Here, as elsewhere in God's Word, nothing is mentioned of man's efforts or deeds where justification of the sinner before God is concerned. It says that God alone was active. Motivated by His undeserved love alone, without, however, relinquishing His justice, He sent His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into the world. While in this world, in accordance with God's eternal plan, Christ brought about the reconciliation between God and man. In and through Christ's work alone God reconciled the world unto Himself, not by simply overlooking the sins of men and receiving them back into a right relationship with Himself without full atonement or satisfaction being made for the sins of the world. This full atonement or satisfaction for the whole world's sins, Christ, the sinless Son of God, accomplished once and for all by His passive obedience, His innocent suffering and death, and that as the whole world's Substitute. **"When we were enemies (objects of God's wrath), we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son,"** Rom. 5:10. That this wrath of God was fully appeased by Christ for the whole world, is clearly shown in such passages as I John 2:2, where we read: **"He (Christ) is the propitiation for our sins; and not for**

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ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." (Note: the Greek word, hilasmos, means to appease wrath, to conciliate).

But not only Christ's passive obedience was necessary for the world's justification. God is just and holy. He demanded perfect obedience to His Law. In Lev. 19:2 He says: **"I, the Lord, your God, am holy."** In Matt. 5:48 we read: **"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."** And in James 2:10 we read: **"Whosoever shall keep the whole Law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."** Already because of the disobedience of Adam, did the whole world become disobedient, a mass of Law-breakers, in God's sight. God could not overlook this fact and justify the world. That Law of God had to be obeyed, kept perfectly, or everyone of the Law-breakers would have to eternally perish. Since no man was able to keep it perfectly (**"They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no not one,"** Ps. 14:3; **"There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not,"** Eccl. 7:20; **"The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be,"** Rom. 8:7), Christ, in the place of the whole world, took it upon Himself to obey every whit of God's Law, (Gal. 4:4). To John the Baptist Jesus made it clear that He had come to **"fulfill all righteousness"**, Matt. 3:15. Not for Himself, for He is true God, but for the entire world He obeyed every demand of the Law. And the result? Paul writes in Rom. 5:19: **"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made (counted) righteous."** This active obedience of Christ was also necessary for the justification of the world. This doctrine of Scripture is of great practical importance. Luther illustrates this truth as he writes: "He (Christ) satisfied the Law; He fulfilled the Law perfectly, for He loved God with all His heart, and with all His soul, and with all His strength, and with all His mind, and He loved His neighbor as Himself. Therefore, when the Law comes and accuses you of not having kept it, bid it go to Christ. Say: There is the Man who has kept it; to Him I cling; He fulfilled it for me and gave His fulfillment to me. Thus the Law is silenced." Erl. XV, 61, 63, quoted in Pieper's Chr. Dog., II, p. 375. And our Lutheran Confessions state regarding this doctrine: "Since Christ is not man alone, but God and man in one undivided person, He was as little subject to the Law" (i.e. obliged to keep the Law), "because He is the Lord of the Law, as He had to suffer and die, as far as His person is concerned. For this reason, then, His obedience, not only in suffering and dying, but also in this, that He in our stead was voluntarily made under the Law and fulfilled it by His obedience, not only in suffering and dying, but also in this, that He in our stead was voluntarily made under the Law and fulfilled it by His obedience, is imputed to us for righteousness, so that on account of this complete obedience, which He rendered His heavenly Father for us, by doing and suffering, in living and dying, God forgives our sins, regards us as godly and righteous, and eternally saves us." (Trig. 919, Sol. Decl., III, 15.) Although Gal. 4:4 is not specifically considered here, yet this quote can be considered as an excellent commentary on that passage.

To sum up the Scriptural definition of the Gospel, we state that it is the good news that God, prompted by His grace alone, and solely on the basis of His Son's passive obedience (His substitutionary suffering and death) and active obedience (His substitutionary fulfilling of the Law), has declared the entire world forgiven and righteous. Nothing else dare be regarded as the Gospel. Nothing else has the power to convert sinful man, i.e., to bring him to that faith whereby he appropriates this objective justification to himself for his own subjective or personal justification. Pieper states: "An essential prerequisite of justification by faith, or of subjective justification, is the objective justification of all mankind...All those who deny the objective justification will, if they would be consistent, also deny that subjective justification is brought about by faith." Pieper, *Chr. Dog., II*, p. 508. Our mission to the world, to those to whom we witness, is to invite all to believe this proclamation of the Gospel, to accept what God has already done for them that they may spend eternity in heaven with Him. What a glorious mission we have!

6. Some Practical Lessons Regarding Personal Witnessing

A. It may seem to many who have heard or read this essay that only such as have received a thorough theological training can qualify to be a witness for Christ. While it is true that especially pastors must be **"apt to teach"**, receive such a training which would enable them to be capable and faithful teachers of the Christian religion, nevertheless, every layman, in order to be a more knowledgeable and effective witness for Christ, needs to be an ardent student of God's Word and its doctrines. Therefore, as Christ said: **"Search the Scriptures,"** John 5:39, not only for your own spiritual edification and strength, but also for that of others. As an emissary for Christ, you want to be sure that what you speak in His name, is what He teaches in His Word. To this end, make use of every opportunity in your congregation to study, not only Bible history, but especially the doctrines of Holy Scriptures. You must be able to make Scriptural judgments in doctrine and practice. Recall the example of the Bereans of whom we are told: **"They received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so,"** Acts 17:11.

B. May your witnessing for Christ and His saving truths be done with sincere Christian humility, not with a better-than-thou attitude, haughtiness, or an offensive and argumentative spirit; always bearing in mind your goal: to win the soul for Christ. Here the example of Paul applies, not only to pastors, but also to laymen: **"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I may gain the more,"** I Cor. 9:19. This leads us to the next lesson.

C. When confronting a person whose spiritual condition you have not as yet ascertained, be more ready and willing to listen. Make him "feel at home" and as one who has found a trusted friend

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who is ready and willing to help, so that he may more readily "open up" and divulge his problems. Do not "hog" the conversation, speaking only about your own problems and experiences, for he may deem them totally irrelevant to his own problems and experiences. Once he has "opened up", then you may choose to relate some of your own experiences, provided there is time and you sense that he is interested in them.

D. Where should you witness for Christ and His truth? The Lord may lead us to find opportunities to do this most noble work very often in the most unusual and unexpected places and under equally unusual and unexpected circumstances. Such opportunities may arise in commercial passenger vehicles, airports, depots, doctors' offices, hospitals, schools, places of work, at club meetings, sports events, on visits to homes of friends, relatives, business associates, etc. However, it is not always advisable to carry on lengthy witnessing in places which lack privacy. Good Christian common sense should tell you what places are most appropriate for most effective witnessing. Correspondence can serve as a limited means of witnessing.

E. Seriously take into consideration the physical, mental, and intelligence limits of the prospect. E.g., he may have a serious cardiac or cancer condition which would cause him to tire easily. Or, he may be suffering from an impaired mental condition, or a lower than average intelligence level. You need not be a physician or a psychologist to ascertain the amount of time you should spend and the level at which you should carry on discussion with such prospects. However, idiosyncrasies which the prospect possesses should not deter us from presenting to him the saving truths of God's Word, whether by steps or degrees, as the individual case may require.

F. Let us avoid uncalled-for discrimination. Indeed, we are required by God's Word to practice discrimination, e.g., when choosing our future spouse, close friends, those with whom we are to practice church fellowship, etc. However, to discriminate, to avoid witnessing to a person because of his sex, color, religious, or ethnic background, is totally uncalled-for as long as the possibilities for witnessing exist.

G. It is a futile venture to continue any discussion on religion with a person who stubbornly refuses to bow to the authority of God's Word. Once the prospect indicates submission to that divine authority, even then proceed to discuss initially those doctrines which are directly related to the salvation of man. E.g., most often it is fruitless to discuss immediately the doctrine of the Antichrist with a Catholic, woman suffrage and ordination with a member of the ALC, or the millenium with a Pentecostal, etc.

H. If at any time or under any circumstances you feel incompetent or are confronted by any difficulties in witnessing to anyone, do not "freeze" and give up. Seek assistance from your pastor or another knowledgeable person from your church. Better

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still, invite the prospect to your church services, Sunday School, doctrinal studies, or instruction classes.

Conclusion

More could be said on this glorious subject of gaining souls for Christ. But may we be reminded that personal witnessing by lay-Christians, has been and still is the most effective way of winning souls for Christ and His kingdom. That this is true, we need only to look at a few of the many examples in the New Testament, for proof: the shepherds at Bethlehem, who **"made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child,"** Luke 2:17; Anna, the prophetess, who **"spoke of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem,"** Luke 2:38; the two of the first five disciples who at once became missionaries and informed the others of their happiness in having found the Messiah, John 1:41-45; the Samaritan woman, who ran to the cities with her eager announcement: **"Come, see a man which told me all things which ever I did: is not this the Christ?"** John 4:29; the consecrated pair, Aquila and Priscilla, who **"expounded unto him (Apollos) the way of God more perfectly,"** Acts 18:26; and we could go on and on with such examples from Holy Writ. But let this short list suffice for now.

May we all, both pastors and laymen, pray that the Lord would fill our hearts with such a burning love and zeal to carry out His Great Commission, so that, constrained by our love for Him who first loved us, we may resolutely respond to this call of the Lord in the same way that Paul did when the Lord called him, which response he expressed with the words: **"I was not disobedient,"** Acts 26:19. Amen.

Pastor Erick E. Erickson

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Brethren:

It is one of your President's duties, as specified in the Constitution, Article VIII, 1, "to report ... especially at the regular conventions, the administration of his office." This I shall now do, I trust, without any unnecessary lengthiness, but yet with all matters which it seems to me must be brought to your attention at this time.

To begin with, much time and effort has been expended in consultation with our brethren throughout the conference-year requested of me or suggested by me in order to guard the confessional position of the Conference, including the stemming of public offense. I rejoice that no major difficulties ensued in this respect. The Lord has graciously preserved among us "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:3)

The work of our Conference this year has, however, not been anything that we might call "spectacular." We have, in fact, experienced a number of things which are disappointing and far from reaching the objects of our Conference according to Article III, which you may refer to in our Constitution. The three most prominent of these is "joint effort toward God-pleasing union with other Lutherans," "joint extension of the Kingdom of God through cooperative mission work," and "the adequate training of pastors for the work of the ministry."

As to the Lutheran union, your chairman of the CLU, together with Pastor David T. Mensing and me, met with Rev. Randall L. Moll of Marshalltown, Iowa on August 20 and with a close friend of his, Rev. Gary Frost of Cheyenne, Wyoming on August 22. (Professor Schaefer, a member of this committee, could not attend, being on vacation.) These were rather brief, preliminary meetings, in which we discussed a possible colloquy on the 8th and 9th of January, 1985. Pastors Moll and Frost were Missourians, who were in the process of leaving that Synod. In the meantime they conferred with the CLU Chairman, Pastor Bloedel, from time to time regarding doctrinal matters and their own situation. Pastor Bloedel kept your President informed. On December 26, however, I received a letter from Pastor Moll, speaking also for Pastor Frost, saying they would prefer a later date for a colloquy and adding that they would like to confer with the LCR before deciding which way to go. Since then I have heard nothing from them personally. Perhaps Pastor Bloedel can give yet further details in his CLU report.

As to the CLU, many of you will recall that, for some years, we were also in close touch with two conservatives, Pastor K. K. Miller of Ft. Wayne, Indiana and Pastor Robert Netznick formerly of Roselle, Illinois. We, that is, the Chairman of the CLU, Professor Schaefer, Pastor David T. Mensing, and your President, met also with them on August 28, and we had some very encouraging discussions. (Pastor Netznick was later deposed from his

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

pastorate without Scriptural cause.) However, on Feb. 1, 1985, Pastor Miller informed me by phone that he and Netznick, as reported in the two previous issues of "One Accord", the LCR publication, were applying for membership in the LCR, with which they had formerly been affiliated. Their decision seems to be influenced by the Midland, Michigan case, in which Pastor Erickson had been unscripturally deposed, but which case, they now claim, he lost "by default," not attending the 1983 LCR convention to defend his position even after he had applied to them Romans 16:17. Hence we have also not been able to gain Pastors Miller and Netznick for membership in our Conference.

At various times during the year I have also received letters from a layman, Mr. Lyle A. Jones, of North Adams, Michigan; from a WELS pastor, Pastor Plagenz of Kokomo, Indiana; and from the librarian of the WELS seminary in Mequon, Wisconsin; all inquiring about our Conference position in doctrine, and the latter two in order to prepare conference papers on the various Lutheran church-bodies. These, of course, I promptly and carefully answered, enclosing a selection of our various documents on these subjects for their careful study. We have no further knowledge of these men at present.

Now there remains two very serious, but difficult and often perplexing problems to solve at this convention. These are our Australian Mission, Zion Congregation of Brisbane, who have professed their fellowship with us and whom we promised to stand behind for support at our 1983 convention; and the continuance of our Seminary, which we started in 1969 with four students, but for which we now have no students or prospective students at all. This entails the problem of some adequate plan to train a future ministry, if not the problem of what to do with our present institution. Much consideration for the seminary work was mutually given in a two-day meeting between your faculty and the CTE Chairman, Pastor Erick E. Erickson, on February 6 and 7 of this year.

As your President, I do not deem it wise, in this report, to express any of my personal opinions about these matters. I prefer to have the matters come before you in the various Missions and Seminary reports. For this reason, I have placed them both as early as possible on your Agenda. Please hear the reports very carefully. Then take time. Then come to conclusions and decisions that are arrived at in a truly Scriptural manner, prayerfully, and with a good deal of really practical wisdom given you from on High. The Budget, in turn, will depend to a great extent on these decisions.

Let each of us, with no discouragement at all, but with true thankfulness for the past, and with joyful hope for the future, sing and pray:

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS PRESIDENT'S REPORT

"The Lord hath helped me hitherto
By His surpassing favor;
His mercies ev'ry morn were new,
His kindness did not waver.
God hitherto hath been my Guide,
Hath pleasures hitherto supplied,
And hitherto hath helped me.

I praise and thank Thee, Lord, my God,
For Thine abundant blessing
Which heretofore Thou hast bestowed
And I am still possessing.
Inscribe this on my memory:
The Lord hath done great things for me
And graciously hath helped me.

Help me henceforth, O God of grace,
Help me on each occasion,
Help me in each and ev'ry place,
Help me thro' Jesus' Passion;
Help me in life and death, O God,
Help me thro' Jesus' dying blood;
Help me as Thou has helped me!" AMEN.

Respectfully submitted,

H. David Mensing, President

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We have reviewed the Annual Report of the Conference President, and have found it to be factual, complete and encouraging.

We commend him for his diligence in guarding the Scriptural position of our Conference, for his faithful and untiring efforts in promoting Lutheran union, for his patient, yet firm dealing with Conference problems, and in general, for his devoted service on behalf of our Conference to all matters entrusted to his charge.

We give thanks and praise to God for sustaining our President during the trials of the past year as well as for the happy experiences which brought him and all of us much joy.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. E. R. Stallings, Jr., Chairman

Rev. E. E. Erickson

Stephen P. Bloedel

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

REGISTRATION & EXCUSES

INITIAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES

<u>CONGREGATION</u>	<u>PASTORAL DELEGATE</u>	<u>LAY DELEGATE</u>	<u>ALTERNATES</u>
Peace	H. D. Mensing	Lloyd D. Martin P. Martin	R. Rechala
Holy Scripture	E. R. Stallings (2)		
St. John's	M. L. Natterer (2)		
Concordia	E. E. Erickson	Al Linton (2)	
Zion	D. T. Mensing	J. Oberhardt (2)	
St. Luke's	P. R. Bloedel	S. Bloedel R. Bloedel	R. Kusumi D. Ellis
St. Stephen's	M. W. Dierking	Rod Reyelts Carl Palmquist	Clay Palmquist C. Reyelts R. Jurgens

Number of Delegates; 7

8

6

The above named are hereby seated and represent a total of 19 votes.

The FINAL Report of the Committee on Registration and Excuses

Registered attendance at this convention was as follows:

7 Pastoral Delegates
8 Lay Delegates
6 Alternate Delegates
63 Visitors

84

Attendance at Divine Service was as follows; 105 souls

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. E. E. Erickson, Chairman
Mr. John Oberhardt
Mr. Albert Linton

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

It is alone by the grace of God that your Editorial Committee has during the past year produced and published six bi-monthly issues of the Concordia Lutheran. Our one aim, as always, was to show that God's pure Word is the only reliable guide for our faith and life. We have endeavored to present edifying material both of a doctrinal and a practical nature together with some articles of special interest. Because of unavoidable delays encountered by our pastors, the printer, and your editor, our periodical did not always reach our readers on time, but we trust that they were understanding of the situation and in Christian love bore with us under the circumstances. Our heartfelt thanks to our Publishing House staff for its assistance and cooperation during the past year!

Once again our pastors were most cooperative in writing articles solicited from them by the Editorial staff, and for this commendable help we are deeply grateful. Our thanks go also to the lay member of the Editorial Committee, Mr. Lloyd E. Martin of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Tinley Park, IL, who wrote a most interesting and informative article on Johann Sebastian Bach and submitted it through his pastor.

In addition to articles which appear on a regular basis in each issue there were articles featured which dealt with various phases of Luther's life and work, with festive days on the church calendar, with the Lenten season and Holy Week, with 'he Ministry, with Christian congregations and their relation to one another, and with our present convention.

There is nothing further to report on the writing of tracts by our pastors nor on the revision of Sunday School materials by your Editor and Pastor David T. Mensing. As soon as these matters have been taken care of and are ready for presentation and action, your Committee will give a report.

As we look over the past year, we realize that without God's help and blessing all our efforts would be in vain, and where we fell short in this important work, we ask the Lord's pardon and praise Him for His wonderful guidance and benediction in the past.

May our good and gracious Lord continue to bless our periodical so that it will always hold up and defend the truth of His Word and help spread the message of salvation through Him alone far and wide!

Respectfully submitted,

O. W. Schaefer, Editor

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

SCRIPTURAL PUBS BOARD OF CONTROL

REPORT OF SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS BOARD OF CONTROL

Dear Brethren:

During the past year, Scriptural Publications has endeavored to do its part, under the auspices of our Conference, to carry out the motto selected for this year's convention: "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me!" Acts 1:8. The official organ of our Conference, The Concordia Lutheran, has been printed every two months and Sunday School leaflets and worksheets also have been printed and made available for use in our congregations. Some congregations outside our fellowship are also purchasing our Sunday School materials for their use.

Last year, in our post-convention Board of Director's meeting, it was resolved to sell the letterpress equipment to the Bloedel Print Shop at the price of \$350.00 inasmuch as this equipment had not been used by our Conference for several years because of the inoperable and irreparable condition of the old Model 5 Linotype. After the Linotype broke down, a Verityper was purchased by Mr. Victor K. Bloedel, Mr. Julius A. Schmitt, and Rev. Paul R. Bloedel at the cost of \$975.00 so that the publication of our Conference periodical would not have to be discontinued. Mr. Julius Schmitt put in many, many hours of hard work endeavoring to become skillful in the use of the Varityper, but he was not able to acquire the expertise which he had developed on the Linotype. The Verityper method of composition and printing on the 1250 Multilith therefore did not meet the quality standards of the old Linotype and letterpress method.

As our last convention it was decided to use a computer printer for the composition and reproduction proofs of the Concordia Lutheran. The computer-printer, owned by Mr. Raymond Kusumi and Mr. Daniel Bloedel, was rented by the Conference at \$50.00 per issue of the Concordia Lutheran. Although this was considerably better in quality and more facile production-wise than that produced by the Varityper, the end-product still fell far short of our former Linotype and letterpress printing.

Shortly before the material came to us from our editor, Rev. O. W. Schaefer, for the May/June issue of the Concordia Lutheran, another Linotype was located and purchased by the Bloedel Print Shop. After spending weeks getting this machine into shape, this last issue of the Concordia Lutheran was finally composed on this old Model 18 Linotype and printed on the letterpress. You may want to compare the quality of the printing in this May/June issue with that of previous issues during the past 3 years. At present we feel that this is the way we will try to have our periodical printed for the coming year -- since this method is somewhat less costly and our printer is able to do a considerably better job on it. The cost of printing the 500 copies of the Concordia Lutheran will be \$132.00 for Mr. Julius Schmitt, our printer, and \$50.00 for the rent of the printing equipment from Bloedel Print Shop -- plus the necessary printing supplies of ink, lead, and paper.

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

SCRIPTURAL PUBLS BOARD OF CONTROL

During the past year, certain issues of the Concordia Lutheran may have been late in reaching you. There have been one, two, three or more reasons for this delay: The material may have reached us a little later than usual (which has not been too often this past year); or Scriptural Publications may have been late in getting the material composed, proofread, and printed due to scheduling or equipment problems, or sickness; or the cause of delay may be in the postal system. At least, it is certainly not intentional. One reminder, however, that if it happens inadvertently that you receive a Christmas article in Epiphany, or an Epiphany article in Lent, or an Easter article after Pentecost -- do not fret but rejoice that the Word of God in its full truth and purity is getting out into the world by our mutual efforts through the printed word and that, although the Christian calendar serves a good and useful purpose, we must never permit ourselves to be bound by it so that we are upset when we read a portion of Scripture or a Scriptural article which does not fit the season of the Church Year.

In conclusion, we wish to commend the Editorial Staff of the Concordia Lutheran for the outstandingly fine selection of articles which our periodical carried for the year 1984-'85. The May/June issue is especially outstanding with its fine articles on the ministry, on the local congregation with regard to its independence and its relationship with other congregations, remembering the work of the Lord also in our will, and a fine President's column. May the Lord continue to bless our witness to the pure teachings of Scripture by means of the printed word, for His love's sake.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Paul R. Bloedel, Chairman
Rev. M. L. Natterer
Mr. Victor K. Bloedel, Business Mgr.
Mr. Paul F. Luedtke
Mr. Raymond Kusumi

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

SCRIPTURAL PUBS FINANCIAL REPORT

FINANCIAL REPORT OF SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS6/1/84 - 5/31/85

Cash Balance, June 1, 1984		\$ 479.54
<u>Add Cash Receipts:</u>		
Sunday School Lessons	\$ 352.07	
Concordia Lutheran Subscriptions	244.50	
Conference Subsidy	2000.00	
Books and Tracts	39.86	
Sales of Proceedings	174.00	
Sale of Letter Press Shop (Partial Payment)	300.00	
Total Receipts		3110.43
Total Cash Available		\$ 3589.97
<u>Less Disbursements:</u>		
Gas and Electricity	\$.00	
Rent (P. F. Luedtke Building)	600.00	
Material and Labor Costs:		
Sunday School Lessons (Material Only)	226.21	
Concordia Lutheran (Material and Labor)	1390.54	
Proceedings (Material Only)	48.42	
Mailing Costs:		
Sunday School Lessons	.00	
Concordia Lutheran	212.56	
Baptismal Certificates (Purchase)	153.00	
Supplies	36.89	
Equipment Repairs	.00	
Property Tax	.00	
Total Expenditures		2667.62
Cash Balance, May 31, 1985		\$ 922.35

V. K. Bloedel, Business Manager

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

One of the main reasons for which the member congregations of the Concordia Lutheran Conference have banded together is to train Christian men for the office of the public ministry. This fact is stipulated by the Constitution of this Conference. Needless to say, there is an urgent need for such training to continue. Although the immediate need for additional pastors may not be apparent, yet we would not be overly optimistic in stating that in five years we may see a most critical need for theologically trained men to serve either as pastors or missionaries. Bear in mind that it takes five or six years to train men for this work.

Let's face it: we are faced with a dilemma. We have no students enrolled in our seminary and we have no knowledge of prospective students. The CTE, for which I report, could not reach any consensus regarding possible solutions to this dilemma. The majority of its members are, nevertheless, agreed on this that the seminary must be kept open. But it cannot operate unless there are students enrolled in it. What can be done, or, rather, what must be done, in order that students may be gained for our well-equipped and excellently-staffed seminary, is a matter which should have high priority on the agenda in this convention.

May everyone here at this convention bring this matter before the throne of grace in prayer, seeking the guidance and direction of the Lord of the Church, our Savior Jesus Christ, so that the decisions made pertaining to this matter may redound to the glory of His Holy Name, for the extension of His Kingdom and the eternal welfare of all those who are now members and who will be members of our Conference.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Erick E. Erickson, Chairman

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

REPORT OF THE SEMINARY PRESIDENT

REPORT OF THE SEMINARY PRESIDENT

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

During the past year there were no classes at our beloved Seminary because there were no students, and therefore this Report will be somewhat briefer than usual. Last year's convention considered the status of our Seminary very carefully and after much discussion resolved to keep it open and available for any prospective students. However, because of the financial condition of our Conference at that time and the fact that no students were enrolled, it also resolved to reduce the salaries of the professors and place them on a semi-retired basis, this action with the approval of the Faculty. We are grateful that the delegates decided to keep our Seminary open and thus indicated their concern for providing for a future ministry in our midst.

During the past year there was only one inquiry from our fellowship concerning our institution and its requirements. It came in early July, 1984, from a young man who is a member of one of our Conference congregations. However, since he was not academically qualified at the time and also needed to maintain a home and support of a family, it was not possible to accept him as a Seminary student. He was, however, encouraged by both professors to consult further with his pastor, and a letter from the pastor at the end of July informed us that this young man will take doctrinal studies under the supervision of his pastor and consider enrolling in a local college to further his education. We wished this interested young man the Lord's blessing in all his efforts.

August, 1984, marked the 15th anniversary of our Seminary. Looking back over the decade and a half, we cannot help but note how the Lord blessed our humble efforts - all due to His wondrous grace and mercy. For such grace and goodness we thank Him and bless His holy name.

At last year's convention our Committee on Theological Education was instructed by the Board of Directors to give serious consideration to the future of our Seminary. It was to examine very carefully the current Seminary plan, and if needed, suggest any improvements for its functioning. Should the present system of theological training become unworkable because of the lack of students, it was also to suggest one or more alternatives to be followed. This task would not be an easy one, and our prayers ascended to the throne of God that He would bless these deliberations. As always, a report of the activity of this Committee with any recommendations is presented to this convention.

Speaking of this Committee, its chairman, Pastor Erickson of Midland, Michigan, met with your professors on February 6 and 7, 1985, at Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Tinley Park, Illinois, to discuss and consider various matters pertaining to our Seminary. It was a profitable two-day session in which such items were

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

REPORT OF THE SEMINARY PRESIDENT

discussed as the revision of the Seminary catalog, the current curriculum, the serious need for students, and ways to gain more young men for the work of the ministry in our midst. While there were varying views on the topics and issues treated, the meeting was worthwhile and laid the groundwork for the report of the Committee to the delegates here assembled. There are also two Memorials from a sister congregation on this subject which will require thorough consideration and appropriate action.

With regard to the Seminary catalog, which your professors had revised and which had been submitted to the chairman of the Committee on Theological Education for further study and eventual approval by the entire Committee, the Faculty and the chairman of the C.T.E. deemed it wise to postpone further action on the printing of a new Catalog until a decision has been reached at this convention concerning the future of our institution.

At this writing there are no prospects for our Seminary. The paramount question before us is: what shall we do about our theological school? Do we feel the dire need of providing for a future ministry? Have we exhausted all efforts to recruit new students? Do we want the Seminary to continue? If so, under what conditions shall its purpose and goal of preparing faithful ministers for the future be continued? And what about the professors, who have a call to instruct in theological subjects but have no students to teach? Your faculty does not have the answer to all the questions and problems involved in this serious matter, nor does it offer any recommendation. But you delegates, representing all our congregations, need to find a solution, under God, that is pleasing to Him and redounds to the welfare of this vital work in His kingdom. May God give you the vision, the wisdom, and the strength to reach such a decision at this convention.

Our thanks to all our Conference members for their prayers and their moral and financial support in the past!

Respectfully submitted,

O.W. Schaefer, President

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS

Dear Brethren in Christ Jesus:

"Ye shall be witnesses unto Me" is not only the theme or motto of this convention, but also Christ's charge to His Church on earth. Our Conference, committed by God's grace to this principle, has included in its constitution as one of its chief purposes for existence the extension of God's Kingdom through joint mission work.

At last year's convention, a stop-gap measure was approved which enabled the pastor of Zion to continue to serve his congregation "in absentia" with the understanding that such a situation could not continue on any lasting basis that the Scriptural principles of the Office of the Ministry be not violated.

After considering proposals submitted by Zion itself and others, and weighing the responsibilities and abilities of the Conference at this time, the Committee on Missions unanimously recommends the following:

1. That the congregations of the conference call a pastor or pastoral candidate of its fellowship to serve as a full-time missionary-at-large under the direction of the Committee on Missions.

2. His duties shall be:

- a. to give spiritual care to any vacant mission congregation or mission station of our fellowship that has requested such care;
- b. as directed by the Committee on Missions, to pursue and follow through on mission opportunities wherever they may occur;
- c. to seek and to contact pastors he may be aware of or as directed by the Committee on Missions who may potentially be in doctrinal unity with our Conference;
- d. to submit a written report bi-monthly to the Committee on Missions or as per instructions of the Committee;
- e. to keep the Conference as a whole apprized of his activities through regular interest reports published in the Concordia Lutheran.
- f. to carry out other pertinent duties as may be specified by the Committee on Missions.

The Conference would hereby obligate itself to support the work of the missionary with:

1. prayers and financial support;
2. more specifically in regard to the financial support, to provide an adequate salary, to wit, a (suggested) minimum of

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS

\$12,500 per annum;

3. in addition, to supply or reimburse the missionary with travel funds; such travel funds to be budgeted for 1985-86 fiscal year at \$2500.00, additional funds if needed to be approved by the Board of Directors.

Those mission congregation(s) being served would be expected to share in the expenses of the missionary to the extent of their God-given ability (e.g. assuming the expenses involved in personal visits, postage, tapes, phone, car rental, etc.)

With these recommendations in mind, may God our Savior guide and direct us as we consider these very important matters, and may He bless our efforts to extend His Kingdom for Jesus' sake, Amen.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Mark W. Dierking, Chairman
Rev. E. R. Stallings, Jr.
Mr. Lloyd D. Martin
Mr. Raymond S. Kusumi
Mr. Larry Turner



Zion Ev. Lutheran Church

(CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE)

BRISBANE, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

Rev. David T. Mensing, Pastor

REPORT TO THE CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE IN CONVENTION ASSEMBLED

Wilmot, South Dakota, June 21, 1985

Dear Brethren in Christ Jesus, our blessed Redeemer:

In this brief interest report to the 1985 Convention we will attempt to give a concise chronological summary of our congregation's activities during the past fiscal year. We will focus our attention particularly upon the innumerable blessings which the Lord graciously poured out upon us in abundance, the various special responsibilities committed to us by the Conference through its Board of Directors, and also some of the great difficulties which the Lord has seen fit to lay upon our shoulders as loving chastisements to try our faith, to teach us patience in tribulation, to assure us of our sonship with the Father, and to yield in us all, by His neverfailing grace, the peaceable fruit of righteousness as we were exercised thereby. Although there may be some information included here which the Committee on Missions has already brought to your attention, we will try not to duplicate material already communicated to the delegates.

My mid-winter pastoral visit to the congregation began on July 22 with the flight to Brisbane. I arrived at about noon on July 24 and immediately set to work according to a rigorous schedule I had devised beforehand to use the time of approximately one month in residence in the wisest possible manner. No time was planned for recreation in spite of the inviting weather; and, although one of the families did succeed in taking me to a wildlife sanctuary on the way home from divine service one Sunday, my hours were given wholly to sermon preparation, confirmation instruction of two adults and the careful preparation of their lessons, pastoral visits and counseling in the homes of my members, voters meetings, and considerable research into the history and background of my congregation and its people. During the first half of my stay, I enjoyed the loving hospitality of the Oberhardt family in Redbank Plains, and the last half was spent in Capalaba as the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Mirtschin.

Holy Communion was celebrated twice during the visit, and the infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mirtschin was received into the kingdom of God's grace in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Our Bible Classes concentrated on an in-depth study of the doctrine of the Church and Ministry, using our Conference "Theses" as a study-guide and searching the Scriptures, whether those things

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

INTEREST REPORT/AUSTRALIA

were so (Acts 17:11). We also examined the false position of the WELS/COLC/ELS in the light of God's clear and certain Word. I am happy to report with praise to the Holy Spirit for His guidance into all truth, that my people unanimously agree with our Conference's Scriptural position and unanimously reject the position of the other church bodies as not in conformity with the perfect norm of God's Word. Every other afternoon and evening was given to instruction of two adults in preparation for reception into communicant membership. The instruction of the one adult was subsequently completed during following months by tape recorded lessons; the other has still quite a bit to cover. These lessons dare not be hurried through at the risk of losing the prospect in his own dust, as it were; nor dare the substance be "watered down" just to finish him up earlier. May the Lord graciously continue to bless our patient and careful instruction of this dear sheep!

Two meetings of the Voters' Assembly were held during my winter pastoral visit. The primary purpose of this meeting was to hear and discuss the Pastor's report and summary of the 1984 Convention of our Conference; and the remainder of the meeting was given to strictly local matters. The second voters' meeting was taken up with discussion and action of the four recommendations of the Board of Directors, as contained in Pastor Dierking's letter to the congregation dated July 18. The basic substance of our decision on each recommendation now follows for the information of the Board and of the convention:

Recommendation #1 encouraged the congregation to conduct a canvass of the Brisbane area to determine in sample at least the general interest in the community. It was decided that, although the congregation was reticent to invest a great deal of time in a "door knock" which in its experience was not very profitable, we should show our sincere desire to cooperate with the Conference brethren in their reasonable requests. Therefore it was unanimously resolved to conduct a survey in a specific residential area over the coming months with mission materials provided by the Pastor, and to report the findings to the Pastor via our secretary as soon as the canvass was completed. Unfortunately, local problems of a serious nature prevented the carrying out of this resolve, although one of the men did go out on his own in an effort to do personal mission work.

Recommendation #2 encouraged the congregation to endeavor to contact other pastors in the area of a conservative bent to determine any interest on their part in our Conference. It was decided that, as time would not permit extensive personal visits of our Pastor, at least on this trip, we explore the following two avenues for the present: a) That a list be compiled of recent personal contacts of our members with so-called conservative acquaintances, so that the Pastor can then follow these up with a contact of his own, with sample issues of the CL, invitations to visit our

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS INTEREST REPORT/AUSTRALIA

services, and the like -- bearing in mind that if these be laymen, we guard against any effort at sheepstealing. b) That we request the Conference through the publishing house chairman to include Australian pastors in its "special distribution" of the CL as a way of introducing them to our church body.

Recommendation #3 suggested that our congregation find a central and a neutral place for public worship. Two separate decisions were made on this recommendation: a) It was unanimously decided to eliminate the city of Toowoomba (about 160 km. west of Brisbane) as a location for our services, to do this as soon as possible, and to encourage our family in Jandowae to come down to Brisbane for services. The congregation offered this family financial assistance with the extra travel if needed. b) In order to avoid from now on using the 7th Day Adventist buildings for worship, it was decided to try to find a non-church affiliated hall in the Mt. Gravatt area. Due to the cost of renting such a hall and the brotherly offer of one of our members to have a portion of his home remodeled into a chapel, this decision was later altered to establish our temporary worship quarters beneath the home of this family; and a very churchly set-up has been maintained there since that time, at a location quite central as far as the homes of our members are concerned.

Recommendation #4 encouraged us, if at all possible, to find an interested Australian student to enroll and study for the ministry at our Seminary. It was determined that our congregation itself has at the present time no qualified prospective student in its own midst, and it was unanimously agreed that further consideration of this matter now would be premature efforts, until at least some result of our contacts with "conservatives" begin to appear. Those individuals themselves might know of a qualified and interested potential student.

We trust that the above information sufficiently addresses the recommendations of the Board of Directors. In case the Board was interested in having these responses before this present convention, we forwarded them already in the fall of 1984 to Pastor Dierking, chairman of the Mission Committee and our congregation's official link with the Board.

As to our difficulty in relocating our Pastor to our shores and supporting him according to God's ordinance, the voters unanimously recognized that, barring any sudden change in our situation due to the Lord's gracious interference, the following possibilities are open to us as legitimate according to the Word of God: Depending on the ability with which the Lord blesses us and our Conference brethren and the willingness He works in us to do of His good pleasure, we must either a) Maintain our own

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congregation in a truly God-pleasing manner, providing for our Pastor's full support in residence among us and relieving him both of secular work and of the burden of having to give account for our souls from so great a distance; b) dissolve our congregation out of necessity and join a sister congregation whose pastor is already fully supported and reasonably able with a clear conscience to serve us as members from afar; or c) dissolve our congregation out of necessity and return to "mission station" status, begging our brethren in the Conference to help us to the best of their ability with taped services, taped instruction in the Word of God, and brotherly counsel on the basis of Scriptural doctrine and practice, so that we continue to hear the preaching of the Word in its truth and purity and receive on a regular basis orthodox instruction, admonition, reproof and exhortation from Holy Scripture and thereby grow in grace and in Christian knowledge. In exploration of the second possibility, namely that of being absorbed into a stateside congregation, we resolved to send out a "feeler" to two of the Conference pastors and their congregations to determine the feasibility of such an arrangement, and we hoped to have responses from them by the time of my summer pastoral visit at Christmas-time.

Owing to a variety of circumstances, that next visit was somewhat shorter than I would have preferred; but the gracious Lord of the Church, without whom we can do nothing, richly blessed the ministration of His precious Word and Sacrament with abundant fruit in both me and my members, so that much was accomplished in relatively little time. It was necessary for me to negotiate several days of personal leave from my secular employer with a waiver from my contract, but the Lord saw to it that the leave was granted. Also, my dear wife, Alison, was due just then to deliver our third child; and arrangements had to be made to care for her and the children in my absence. This was a great test for all of us, but the Lord's strength was made perfect in our weakness as we, by His grace, relied solely upon Him to sustain us and to work all things together for our good and for the welfare of His dear Church.

The day after my arrival in Brisbane, the voters and I conducted a thorough three-hour interview with Mrs. Paul Mirtschin, who had just completed her adult course in Christian doctrine. By God's wonderful grace, she had been a most interested, diligent, and faithful student of the Lord's Word and a real joy for her Pastor to teach. Our interview lasted so long--not because the time was necessary for us to verify her preparation and her ability to examine herself for the Sacrament, but rather because she herself was eager to discuss what she had learned and to give account of her faith and of her complete unity with us on the basis of God's Word. This was an exhilarating experience for all of us; and all credit is due to the unfathomable, matchless grace of our God, who alone works in us by His Holy Spirit through the Means of Grace, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. It was therefore with great joy in the Lord that we received this dear sheep of the Saviour into the communicant membership of our congregation on the 4th Sunday in

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Advent, and she was then able to partake of the Holy Sacrament with us on Christmas Day. And to top off the joy of that festive day, I found out by telephone that the Lord had blessed us with yet another precious soul on Christmas Day in the birth of my infant daughter. By authorization of the congregation, she was received into our baptized membership as a lamb of her Saviour on Epiphany Day in the divine service of our sister congregation in Tinley Park.

Aside from purely local business, our voters' meeting on Thursday, December 27, devoted most of its agenda to arrangements for the future: Our brother and chairman of the congregation, Mr. John Oberhardt, was elected to serve as our lay delegate to this present convention, as he was planning a trip to the states to visit his daughter and hoped to take in the convention as well. I trust that all the brethren present have had a chance to get to know this dear and faithful Christian friend and brother. The "feelers" sent out by our congregation to two Conference pastors regarding assimilation into their flocks were unsuccessful, a development we had more-or-less expected; for both pastors saw in such an arrangement the same problems, unworkable conditions, and pangs of conscience both my predecessor, Pastor Dierking, and I have experienced in being pastors "in absentia". Both brethren were very sympathetic and quite willing to be of assistance in any truly legitimate way, but they respectfully declined our proposal. The congregation then spent several hours in hammering out the proposal which our Committee on Missions just laid before you, namely, that upon the adoption of this or a similarly acceptable proposal, Zion dissolve as an autonomous local Christian congregation, that the constituent membership reorganize itself as a mission-station of the Conference, that the Conference congregations through the Committee on Missions call at least a part-time missionary with the qualifications and training of a pastor and preferably with pastoral experience to serve the mission-station with the precious Means of Grace from afar. Holding an auxiliary office instead of the full pastoral office, this missionary would have only limited responsibility for the souls of our people, and would serve them under the auspices and by the authority of the congregations of the Conference in concert. His duties would be limited as well to those things which he could reasonably be expected to do on a part-time basis -- Bible Class instruction; confirmation instruction; correspondence with members of the mission to instruct and exhort, to admonish and reprove, to counsel and comfort with the Word of God; liason with the Committee on Missions regarding their needs and special conditions; and at least one pastoral visit per year to Australia for personal work with the brethren, missionwork in the community, follow-ups on members' contacts, and perhaps some Lutheran union work. The missionary's salary would be paid by the Conference, and his expenses, including travel to and from Australia, would be borne by the mission-station. That proposal is before you brethren, together with the final recommendaion of the Committee on Missions. We earnestly beg your help under the Lord's continued blessing to preserve among us the faithful preaching and teaching of His Word in its truth and purity, which

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alone is able to save our souls, until we, by His grace, are enabled to shoulder the entire responsibility of calling and maintaining our own pastor, at which time God-willing we can reestablish a congregation in our midst to His praise and glory!

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David T. Mensing,
Pastor
ZION EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

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LUTHERAN UNION COMMITTEE

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION

Dear brethren, .

Your Committee on Lutheran Union has been somewhat inactive during the past year -- helping the President of our Conference only in the area of reaching out to individual pastors whom we may find to be one in faith with us. President Mensing has already informed you, in his Annual Report, with regard to some of these meetings. Your chairman has endeavored to keep in touch and to make new acquaintances by telephone with various conservative pastors who may be in the process of leaving the heterodox Missouri Synod and to offer them encouragement and compassion.

According to our Conference Constitution, it is the specific duty of the Committee on Lutheran Union to meet with similar committees of other Lutheran church bodies, as occasion arises, with the view to establishing a more far-reaching union and to keep informed regarding the doctrine and practice and the intersynodical relations of other Lutheran bodies.

The conservative Lutheran church bodies which are of concern to this committee are the Evangelical Lutheran Federation (ELF), the Illinois Lutheran Conference (ILC), the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation (LCR), and the Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations (FLC).

The ELF is a very small Lutheran body which has been in existence for the past 8 years. Its President is Rev. E. C. Dobberstein of Kingston, Washington. This body springs from the Lutherans Alert organization in the ALC. It is unionistically inclined, had been seeking fellowship with the LC-MS, and is presently making use of the Missouri Synod seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Our committee has had no meetings with this body and there is not likely to be any in the foreseeable future.

The ILC is another small conservative Lutheran church body whose President is Rev. R. W. Shekner of Tinley Park, Illinois. This body has, in time past, put undue emphasis on the King James Version of the Bible as though it were an inspired translation. They also stretch the prohibition of Scripture with regard to the sin of unionism so as to include being merely a visitor in the worship service of a heterodox congregation, and they are not in agreement with us on the nature of a Scriptural "state of confession." The President of this church body has also received into membership in his congregation people who had been excommunicated from Peace Ev. Lutheran Church in Tinley Park without so much as discussing their excommunication with Pastor H. David Mensing.

As far as the LCR (President: Rev. Koch of Wantah, Ind.) is concerned, this conservative Lutheran church body has continued to drive a wedge between us and them by persistently upholding Cross of Christ congregation of Midland, Michigan, in the dismissal of

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LUTHERAN UNION COMMITTEE

their pastor, Rev. Erick E. Erickson, without any Scriptural reason. We also recognize in this body doctrinal unsoundness in the area of Old Testament political and ceremonial laws and a disagreement among themselves on the matter of Status Confessionis. Free Conference discussion may be worthwhile in the future with this body, but no meeting with their Committee on Doctrine is planned at this time because we are not able to determine whether their doctrinal committee is speaking the same language and holding the same position as the other pastors and congregations in their fellowship.

The FLC (Rev. Robert Lietz of Oak Park, Illinois, president) is made up of several congregation which left the LCR in 1975. We find the members of this body to be more concerned than the others about true Scriptural doctrine and practice and, to this end, to be united in their position. Some laxness had been observed and had been called to their attention relative to addressing the ELF convention on the topic of mission work and receiving into their membership a pastor whom, for Scriptural reasons, our own Conference refused to colloquize. The largest area of doctrinal difference between our Conference and the FLC is with regard to the 3rd step in Church Discipline--their position having no foundation in Scripture but having developed essentially from cases of excommunication which involved a split in Trinity congregation at Oak Park. Our Committee is at present evaluating a document entitled, "Eighty-five Questions: A Response from the Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations." This document sheds some light on the split in the LCR over the Oak Park case and, at a cursory reading, seems to indicate grave errors on both sides. This document should be thoroughly examined and evaluated by this Committee prior to any meetings to be held with this body or with the LCR.

We must bear in mind that in the bodies listed above, there are only two pastors who were trained, educated, and served congregations in the Missouri Synod prior to the adoption of the Common Confession and, therefore, were acquainted first hand with the doctrine and practice of Old Missouri--and one of these men is retired. We, by God's grace, still have 5 such men who are able to help us avoid the by-ways of error and fanaticism into which these other conservative church bodies have fallen, and our Conference, therefore, stands ready and eager to reach out to these church bodies and to meet with them if they earnestly desire to know our position in doctrine and practice as opposed to what we heard and know of them, and, all of this toward a union which is based solidly on God's Word alone; toward **"being perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment,"** I Cor. 1:10. May the Lord Jesus bless the work of this Committee to this end.

"Ye shall be witnesses unto Me!" Acts 1:8.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. P. R. Bloedel
Rev. M.L. Natterer
Prof. O. W. Schaefer
Mr. Victor K. Bloedel

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FISCAL 1985-'86 BUDGET

BUDGET
Fiscal 1985-1986

Receipts and Pledges

<u>Congregation</u>	<u>1984-85 Receipts</u>	<u>1985-86 Pledges</u>
Concordia, Midland	\$ 122.00	\$ 122.00
Holy Scripture, San Antonio	945.00	1740.00
Peace, Tinley Park	5970.00	5760.00
St. John, Lebanon	4154.00	4150.00
St. Luke, Seattle	5502.05	3600.00
St. Stephen, Wilmot	450.00	600.00
Zion, Brisbane	741.58	300.00
Interest (Estimated)	1837.37	2000.00
Other	248.50	0.00
Convention Offering (Est)	286.80	300.00
SUB-TOTAL:	20257.30	18572.00
CASH BALANCE:		34308.75
TOTAL		\$52880.75

On-Going Expense Items

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>1984-85 Expenses</u>	<u>Suggested</u>
Scriptural Pubs Subsidy	\$ 2000.00	\$ 2000.00
Telephone	801.83	2000.00
Convention Expense	266.00	300.00
General Travel Expense	1002.00	4000.00
Misc. Expense	168.09	500.00
Professor's Salary/Housing	7200.00	4800.00
Assoc. Professor's Salary	1500.00	1000.00
Periodicals	75.00	75.00
Books and Supplies	0.00	50.00
Zion Subsidy	3500.00	0.00
Missionary-at-Large Salary		12500.00
TOTALS:	16512.92	27225.00

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AUDIT REPORTS

INITIAL AUDIT OF THE CONFERENCE TREASURER'S BOOKS

To Whom It May Concern:

We the undersigned constitute the committee which was given the responsibility by Saint Luke's Lutheran Church, in behalf of the Concordia Lutheran Conference, to initially audit the Conference Treasurer's books.

A thorough check of the source records in reconciliation with the Cash Journal, Ledger, deposit slips and bank statements, reveals the books to be in good order and the ending cash figure to be accurate.

Respectfully submitted,

Raymond S. Kusumi
Julius A. Schmitt

THE REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE

A. We have examined the books of the Conference Treasurer and have found them to be in good order.

We commend our Treasurer for his well-kept records and thank him to his faithful service during the past year.

B. We have also examined the books of the Business Manager of Scriptural Publications and have found them in good order. Our thanks to him for his accurate and diligent record-keeping.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. O. W. Schaefer
Rodney Reyelts

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

MEMORIALS

MEMORIALS REGARDING THE TRAINING OF PASTORS FOR THE WORK OF THE
MINISTRY

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the Concordia Lutheran Conference states as one of its objects "the training of pastors for the work of the ministry in our midst," Art. III, par.5; and,

WHEREAS, our Conference possesses the facilities and staff for the training of pastors; and,

WHEREAS, there exists at present, and especially, in the near future the urgent need for pastors in our midst; and,

WHEREAS, at present no students are enrolled in the seminary; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that no decision be made by our Conference to close the seminary and to terminate the services of its staff until every effort has been made to gain students.

WHEREAS, the Concordia Lutheran Conference Seminary Catalog states: "Upon graduation from high school, a prospective student shall take at least two years of study in a college or university of his own choice in subjects of a nature prerequisite to theological training," and continues to list 10 subjects, all secular such as Physical Science, General Biology, Sociology, Psychology, etc.; and,

WHEREAS, most of the secular subjects which may be considered prerequisite to theological training, could be better taught, from the Biblical point of view, at our seminary; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED:

1st., that these necessary secular subjects, along with a number of necessary theological subjects, be included in the curriculum of a pre-seminary department of our seminary, thus allowing a high school graduate to enter directly into our theological training program; and,

2nd., that as many theological subjects as possible from the present first year seminary curriculum be transferred to the pre-seminary department, thus shortening the present four-year seminary training to three years, preceded by a two-year pre-seminary course; and,

3rd., that immediate steps be taken to have the faculty arrange contacts, through congregations and their pastors, with such young men who are about to graduate from high school or have already graduated and are interested in training for the Holy Ministry.

for Concordia Lutheran Church,
Midland Michigan

Rev. Erick E. Erickson, Pastor
Albert W. Linton, Secretary

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

MEMORIALS

MEMORIAL REGARDING CONFERENCE FUNDS

WHEREAS The 1983 Convention of the Concordia Lutheran Conference very hastily resolved to consolidate all existing funds into ONE Fund, except for the Retirement and Tuition funds, because of the chaotic financial conditions created by the then treasurer, Jeffery Styx, in leaving the Conference precipitously with no financial record; and

WHEREAS The past two years have demonstrated that this arrangement did NOT give a true and realistic picture of the financial status of our Conference, as it pertained to the General, Seminary, and Missions Funds individually; and

WHEREAS This single Fund does not encourage our conference members, while making their regular offerings, to bring special gifts for a particular cause in our midst, if they desire to do so, even as gifts were brought for the building of the Temple (2 Chron. 3ff.) and offerings were given for the poor at Jerusalem (1 Cor. 16); and,

WHEREAS Scripture does not bind us to a specific financial plan for our Conference, but leaves such arrangements to the Christian liberty of all our congregations as they carry out the joint work of the Lord; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED That the Conference in convention assembled reverse its 1983 decision and return to its former system of having three separate funds: General, Seminary, and Mission, while maintaining as always the Retirement and Tuition funds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That this financial arrangement begin with the new fiscal year for the purpose of giving a clear and realistic picture not only of receipts and disbursements, but also of particular needs of our various Conference endeavors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That the pastors of our Conference apprise their members of this change and the reasons for it, while at the same time encouraging them to support generously all phases of our Conference work and to bring special gifts for a particular Fund as the Lord moves them to do so.

Peace Ev. Lutheran Church,
Tinley Park, Illinois

Rev. H. David Mensing, Pastor
John P. Mensing, Secretary

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MINUTES

**MINUTES OF THE 34TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE CONCORDIA LUTHERAN
CONFERENCE**

**Wilmot, South Dakota
June 21-23, 1985**

The Thirty-fourth Annual Convention of the Concordia Lutheran Conference was opened at 9:30 a.m. with a Divine Service in which the local pastor, Rev. Mark W. Dierking, served as the liturgist and the President of our Conference, Rev. H. David Mensing, preached an instructive sermon on the basis of John 1:40-42a. The offerings received in the service will be placed into the General Fund of the Conference Treasury.

FRIDAY MORNING

President Mensing officially opened the Convention at 11:15 a.m. with the reading of Hebrews 10:19-25 and a prayer, followed by a declaration that the Convention was now open.

Upon the recommendation of their respective pastors, President Mensing announced the appointment of the elected delegates to the various committees:

Auditing Committee: Rodney Reyelts, Rev. O. W. Schaefer, Chairman

Committee on Registration and Excuses: John Oberhardt, Albert Linton, Rev. E. E. Erickson, Chairman

Nominating and Elections Committee: Robert Bloedel, Phillip Martin, Rev. E. R. Stallings, Jr., Chairman

Resolutions Committee: Stephen Bloedel, Lloyd D. Martin, Rev. David T. Mensing, Chairman

The initial report of the Committee on Registration and Excuses stated that there were 6 pastors, 8 lay delegates, and 6 alternate delegates present. A total of 18 votes. Pastor Paul R. Bloedel was not able to be in attendance because of a funeral in his congregation. The Lord willing, however, Pastor Bloedel plans to be in attendance on Saturday morning. Moved and seconded to accept this report. **Carried.**

It was suggested that since the vice-president (Rev. P. R. Bloedel) was absent, the secretary take the chair during the reading of the President's report and in appointing a committee to review the President's report. This met with the approval of the Convention.

President Mensing then proceeded to read his report in which he reviewed his work in behalf of our Conference during the past year.

At the conclusion of President Mensing's report the secretary

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appointed Pastor E. Erickson and Pastor E. R. Stallings and Mr. Stephen Bloedel to review the President's report and submit their findings to the present Convention. It was moved and seconded to accept the report of the President subject, as is our usual practice, to review by the committee appointed by the secretary.

Moved and seconded to accept the agenda for the Convention as presented by President Mensing. **Carried.**

The report of the Press Committee as given by the local pastor, Rev. M. W. Dierking, was adopted by the Convention.

LUNCH HOUR

The afternoon session was opened at 1:15 p.m. with a devotion led by Pastor Natterer. He read Matthew 24:22-35 and then brought out needs before the Throne of Grace in prayer. Hymn 427 was sung.

Pastor Erickson then began the reading of his essay: **PERSONAL MISSION WORK.** In this part of his essay he, first of all, showed that the "activities or practices of a church always reflect the theology of the church." He proceeded to explain the "definition and purpose of mission work," concluding with the "necessity of mission work."

The motion to hear the report of the Finance Committee was carried.

It was announced that Calvin Reyelts would take the place of Carl Palmquist as a delegate from St. Stephen's for the afternoon session.

RECESS

The Election of Officers and Committees was begun:

Nominated for President: Pastors H. David Mensing, P. R. Bloedel, E. R. Stallings, M. L. Natterer

ELECTED: H. David Mensing

Nominated for Vice-President: Pastors E. R. Stallings, E. E. Erickson, D. T. Mensing, M. L. Natterer

ELECTED: M. L. Natterer

Nominated for Secretary: Pastors M. W. Dierking, O. W. Schaefer, E. R. Stallings, E. E. Erickson, D. T. Mensing

ELECTED: Mark W. Dierking

Nominated for Treasurer: Messrs. Victor K. Bloedel, Phillip Martin, Robert Bloedel, Lloyd D. Martin

ELECTED: Victor K. Bloedel

Nominated for Board Member-at-Large from the Mid-west: Messrs.

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Albert Linton, Lloyd D. Martin, Calvin Reyelts, Phillip Martin,
Rodney Reyelts, Lloyd E. Martin

ELECTED: Lloyd D. Martin

Nominated for Board Member-at-Large from the Far-west: Messrs.
Stephen Bloedel, Ray Kusumi, John Oberhardt, Robert Bloedel

ELECTED: Robert Bloedel

Nominated for the Editorial Committee:

Slate A

Rev. O. W. Schaefer
Rev. M. L. Natterer
Lloyd E. Martin

Slate B

Rev. O. W. Schaefer
Rev. E. Erickson
Lloyd E. Martin

ELECTED: SLATE A

Nominated for the Committee on Theological Education:

Slate A

Rev. P. R. Bloedel
Rev. E. R. Stallings
Robert Bloedel
Phillip Martin

Slate B

Rev. E. R. Stallings
Rev. P. R. Bloedel
Julius Schmitt
Lloyd E. Martin

ELECTED: SLATE A

Nominated for the Committee on Missions:

Slate A

Rev. M. Dierking
Rev. E. R. Stallings
Lloyd D. Martin
Ray Kusumi
Larry Turner

Slate B

Rev. E. Erickson
Rev. M. Dierking
Dan Bloedel
Lloyd D. Martin
Edward Johnson

Slate C

Rev. P. Bloedel
Rev. E. Erickson
Dan Bloedel
Lloyd D. Martin
Ray Kusumi

ELECTED: SLATE B

Nominated for the Committee on Lutheran Union:

Slate A

Rev. M. L. Natterer
Rev. Mark W. Dierking
Rev. O. W. Schaefer
Victor K. Bloedel

Slate B

Rev. M. L. Natterer
Rev. O. W. Schaefer
Rev. Mark W. Dierking
Lloyd D. Martin

ELECTED: SLATE A

Nominated for the Finance Committee:

Slate A

Victor Bloedel
Lloyd E. Martin
Robert Steinke
Robert Kofoid

Slate B

Victor Bloedel
Rodney Reyelts
Phillip Martin
Albert Linton

ELECTED: SLATE B

Nominated for the Publishing House Board of Control:

Slate ASlate B

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Rev. P. R. Bloedel	Rev. P. R. Bloedel
Rev. M. L. Natterer	Rev. D. T. Mensing
Victor Bloedel	Stephen Bloedel
Paul Luedtke	Herman Mayrhofer

ELECTED: SLATE B

It was moved and seconded to make all elections unanimous.
Carried.

The Report of the Committee on Missions was given by Rev. Mark Dierking. A motion was made and seconded to receive this report at this time and to consider it later on in the Convention.
Carried.

That Convention then heard an interest report from Rev. David T. Mensing, the pastor of Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. Moved and seconded to receive this report and to leave it open for discussion later on in the Convention.
Carried.

The afternoon session was concluded with the Blessing at 6:15 p.m.

SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 1985**Morning Session**

The Saturday morning session was opened with a devotion led by the Rev. E. R. Stallings. Hymn 245 was sung, John 3:1-17 was read, followed by prayer.

It was moved and seconded to accept the Minutes of Friday, June 21st, as read by the secretary. **Carried.**

Pastor Erickson continued the reading of his essay: **PERSONAL MISSION WORK.** This section of his essay centered on the "role of the Law in mission work," and the "role of the Gospel in mission work."

RECESS

Pastor E. Erickson, chairman of our Committee on Theological Education, presented his report to the Convention. In conjunction with this report the Convention also heard the report of our Seminary President, Rev. O. W. Schaefer.

Moved and seconded to accept these reports. **Carried.**

The delegates now directed their attention to a discussion of Memorial #1 from Concordia Lutheran Church, Midland, Michigan, regarding the training of pastors for the work of the ministry. Moved and seconded to table the vote on this memorial to a later time in the Convention. **Carried.** (Note: Since there were questions raised as to what the terms "close" and "terminate" actually indicate in the first Midland memorial, the Chairman was

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asked to suggest an interpretation satisfactory to all. He then offered the explanation that the seminary as an institution not be closed down, but that its work be considered "deactivated" for the present. A show of hands indicated that all the delegates agreed to this. See motion near the close of minutes.)

The memorial from Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Tinley Park, Illinois, regarding the bookkeeping methods for Conference funds, was presented for discussion to the Convention. The motion to hear this Memorial was second and carried.

The following amendment was moved: "Be it further resolved: That it be understood among us that all monies contributed to our Conference are given first and foremost for all the areas of the Lord's work for which our Conference is constituted, and secondarily, to the specific endeavor for which they are designated; that these monies, therefore, are the property of the Conference which has the supreme authority over how they are used through the administration of its duly-elected Treasurer, the Praesidium, the Board of Directors, and the determination of its congregations in convention assembled.

LUNCH HOUR

The opening devotion was conducted by Rev. E. E. Erickson with the singing of Hymn 269, the reading of Ephesians 4:11-20, followed by prayer.

Discussion continued on the amendment to the Tinley Park Memorial. It was finally moved and seconded to submit this matter to the Resolution's Committee. **Carried.**

It was moved and seconded to remove from the table the consideration of Memorial #1 submitted by Concordia Lutheran Church, Midland, Michigan. **Carried.**

It was further moved and seconded that we receive this memorial as submitted and printed. **Carried.**

The amendment was made, seconded, and carried to revise the "BE IT RESOLVED" of Memorial #1 to read as follows: "that no decision be made by our Conference at this time to close the seminary and to terminate the services of its staff but continue every effort to gain students."

Motion made and seconded that Memorial #2 from Midland, Michigan, be committed to the Committee on Theological Education for study and evaluation and that it submit any new possibilities for a new seminary plan to the next Convention. **Carried.**

Motion was made and seconded that the matter of memorials be handed to the Resolutions Committee regarding the procedure in dealing with them at future conventions. **Carried.**

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The report of the Committee on Lutheran Union was given by Rev. P. R. Bloedel, the chairman of this committee. Moved and seconded to accept this report. **Carried.**

The committee appointed by the secretary to review the President's report presented its report at this time. The motion made and seconded to receive this report was **carried.**

The Convention then heard the report of the Auditing Committee given by Rodney Reyelts. Motion made and seconded to receive this report. **Carried.**

RECESS

Rev. Mark W. Dierking, the chairman of the Committee on Missions, read his report. In this report a recommendation was presented. It was moved and seconded to accept this report and take up the recommendation separately. **Carried.**

Moved and seconded to accept the recommendation of the Mission Committee "that the Mission Committee in the name of the congregations of the Conference and with the approval of the Board of Directors call a pastor or pastoral candidate of its fellowship to serve as a full-time missionary-at-large under the direction of the Committee on Missions." It was **carried unanimously.**

The Convention then heard the report of the Editorial Committee by Rev. O. W. Schaefer, the chairman. Moved and seconded to accept this report. **Carried.**

Mr. Victor Bloedel, the manager of Scriptural Publications gave the financial report stating that there was a cash balance of \$922.35. Moved and seconded to accept this report. **Carried.**

The Convention then listened as Pastor P. R. Bloedel, the chairman of the Scriptural Publications Board of Control, explained the work of this committee during the past year. Motion made and seconded to accept this report. **Carried.**

At this time President Mensing asked the chairman of the Committee on Theological Education, Pastor E. Erickson, to lead a discussion in which various ideas might be suggested to serve as directives for our professors in occupying their time while the seminary remains inactive. It was suggested that the Committee on Theological Education provide some directions for our professors.

The Resolution's Committee presented Resolution #1, dealing with the memorial from Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Tinley Park, Illinois, regarding the bookkeeping method of Conference funds.

NOTE: A minority report was then submitted by a member of the Seattle, Washington congregation (St. Luke's), serving on the committee, but no action was taken on the minority report.

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In order to bring a stop to this lengthy debating about an adiaphoron, President Mensing, asking the Vice-President to take the chair, made a motion that we grant the congregation in Seattle (St. Luke's) their own preference in this matter. This motion was seconded.

At this point Pastor P. R. Bloedel asked to present the position of St. Luke's to the Convention before we vote. He was then given the floor to present their position.

WHEREAS all of our congregations belong to the Concordia Lutheran Conference and as members of the Concordia Lutheran Conference subscribe to its Scriptural activities and objectives, namely, the work of Christian missions, the work of training a future ministry, the work of publishing orthodox Lutheran literature, and the work of reaching out to other pastors and church bodies who may be one in faith with us, and

WHEREAS our Conference is small and the amount of monies available for the work of the Lord in all areas of Conference work is limited, and

WHEREAS funds are greatly needed for ALL endeavors which our Conference, in convention assembled, determines to further in the cause of Christ, and His Kingdom, and

WHEREAS the fragmentation of monies into various funds makes the monetary business of our Conference difficult to carry out - so that it may even involve (and has involved in the past) a borrowing from one fund or a paying back to another fund because of insufficient monies in one or the other fund, and

WHEREAS the Conference itself made up of the various congregations determines the use of its monies by its annual budget, and

WHEREAS anything over and above the general objectives of our Conference should be looked upon as special needs - similar to the needs of the famine-stricken congregation in Jerusalem, and

WHEREAS it is incumbent upon our congregations to underwrite whatever budget is adopted by our convention assembled, and

WHEREAS the rights of individuals in our congregations to specify their gifts for particular funds must not be denied,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that our limited money and contributions from our congregations for the general objectives of our Conference should not be fragmented into various funds, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any money contributed by individuals to the general budgeted objectives of our Conference be added to the budgeted amount for such endeavors, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED to encourage our people, first and foremost, to give willingly, cheerfully, and

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sacrificially for the work of the Lord - having first given their own hearts to God in Christ Jesus their Savior.

No action was taken on this since it was considered as part of the lengthy discussion referred to in the previous motion.

The previous motion of President Mensing was then voted upon and **unanimously carried.**

The Resolution's Committee presented Resolution #2, dealing with memorials received from congregations of our Conference. The motion made and seconded to adopt this resolution was **unanimously carried.**

The Saturday afternoon session was closed with the Lord's Prayer and the Blessing at 6:10 p.m.

SUNDAY, JUNE 27, 1985

The Sunday morning service was conducted at 10 a.m. in which the Lord's Supper was observed. The host pastor, Rev. Mark W. Dierking, served as liturgist and Rev. David T. Mensing preached the sermon based on John 4:3-30,39-42 in which he urged us to be more faithful in witnessing for Jesus our dear Savior and His Word. The offering from this service went to the local congregation to help defray the expenses of hosting the Convention.

Rev. O. W. Schaefer conducted the opening devotion in which Hymn 494 was sung, Psalm 96 read, followed by prayer.

It was moved and seconded to adopt the minutes of the Saturday morning and afternoon sessions as read by the secretary. **Carried.**

Pastor E. Erickson continued with his essay: PERSONAL MISSION WORK. The final section of this essay dealing with "some practical lessons regarding personal witnessing."

Motion made and carried to accept with thanks to the essayist his edifying essay. **Carried.**

RECESS

Our Conference Treasurer, Victor Bloedel, presented the Report of the Finance Committee.

Motion made and seconded that \$7200.00 and \$1500.00 for the Professor's and the Associate Professor's salaries respectively be placed on the suggested budget. **Carried.**

Motion made and seconded that our Committee on Theological Education, before the submission of the final budget, re-evaluate

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the expenditure of funds in our present seminary situation and possibly develop a new contingency plan for the training of a future ministry in our midst as the need arises. This motion failed with 7 voting "for" and 9 voting "against".

Motion made and seconded that the Committee on Theological Education re-evaluate the financial aspect of our seminary program and submit to the Finance Committee its recommendation of a compromise lower figure. **Carried.**

Motion made and seconded to reconvene at 7:15 p.m. **Carried.**

SUPPER HOUR

Victor Bloedel continued with the report of the Finance Committee.

Moved and seconded that the Associate Professor's salary be \$1000.00 on the suggested budget. **Carried.**

It was moved and seconded that the Convention adopt the proposed budget from the Finance Committee as the Conference budget for the fiscal year 1985-1986. **Carried.**

Discussion centered on the duties of the missionary-at-large dealing with the contacts to be made. The following motion was then made:

WHEREAS, the duties of the missionary-at-large, as specified by the Committee on Missions, are sufficiently arduous and involved without obligating him to carry out the added work of contacting pastors who "may potentially be in doctrinal unity with our Conference," (which he, of course, may do anyhow as the opportunity presents itself during his regular labors), and

WHEREAS, the responsibilities of our President have especially also to do with contacts with those pastors elsewhere who may be one in faith with us, and

WHEREAS the vice-president's duties are not nearly as involved as those of our missionary-at-large and his work for the Conference already includes Lutheran Union work,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the obligation "to seek and to contact pastors he may be aware of or as designated by the Committee on Missions who may potentially be in doctrinal unity with our Conference" be deleted from the specified duties of our Missionary-at-Large, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED to make the responsibility of our Vice-President in coordination with the President the special duty of personally contacting with those pastors elsewhere who may be one in faith with us.

Motion made and seconded that we divide the questions on this motion, eliminating the "WHEREAS" from consideration and

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considering the two (2) "RESOLVES" separately. **Carried.**

The motion to adopt the 1st "RESOLVE" was **NOT** carried.

The motion to adopt the 2nd "RESOLVE" and striking the word "personally" and substituting the word "officially" was **seconded and carried.**

The Resolution's Committee presented:

Resolution #3 - dealing with sermon, essay, devotions, etc. **Carried.**

Resolution #4 - concerning the use of the facilities made available to the Convention. **Carried.**

Resolution #5 - pertaining to the officers, committees, etc. **Carried.**

Resolution #6 - thanks to the host congregation, etc. **Carried.**

The final report of the Registration and Excuses Committee was given stating that there were 15 delegates, 7 pastoral, 8 lay delegates, and 6 alternate delegates present.

Moved and seconded that the Praesidium insert into the Minutes at the point where Midland's (Concordia Lutheran Church) Memorial was first discussed the unanimous common understanding of that Memorial as reiterated by the chairman and that this had been indicated by a show of hands. **Carried.**

The Statistical Report by Rev. David T. Mensing was read to the Convention. The motion to adopt this report was **carried.**

An invitation to host the 1986 Convention (June 20-22) of the Conference at Lebanon, Oregon, was extended by St. John's Lutheran Church. Motion was made and seconded to accept this invitation with thanks. **Carried.**

Moved and seconded that, as usual, the Praesidium check over and approve the minutes of the Sunday sessions. **Carried.**

The motion was made and seconded to adjourn. **Carried.**

The Convention was then brought to a close with an appropriate devotion. Hymn 53 was sung a capella by the assembly with the concluding prayer and blessing given by President H. David Mensing.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. M. L. Natterer, Secretary ,

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED TO THE CONVENTION ASSEMBLEDRESOLUTION #1

BE IT RESOLVED that the Conference in convention assembled authorize the maintenance of three operational funds in addition to the two escrow accounts known as the Retirement Fund and the Tuition Fund. These operation funds shall be:

- a. the GENERAL FUND to defray all expenses of our Conference projects not specifically restricted to the other funds;
- b. the SEMINARY FUND to defray all operational expenses of our seminary program including professorial salaries; and
- c. the MISSION FUND to defray all operational expenses of the mission program, including salaries and travel costs of missionaries, as well as subsidies to mission congregations.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that contributions designated for individual funds be credited to those specific funds, and that undesignated contributions to the Conference be credited to the various funds at the discretion of the Conference treasurer according to need.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this financial arrangement begin with the new fiscal year, and that the pastors of the Conference apprise their congregations of this change and encourage them to support generously all phases of our Conference, as the Lord moves them to do so.

RESOLUTION #2

BE IT RESOLVED that, in dealing with memorials received from congregations of our Conference, the following order be observed:

- 1) The Conference in convention assembled shall make no change in a congregation's memorial as it is presented. Rather, it must be acknowledged and received as printed in the convention PROSPECTUS or, if an unprinted memorial, as proposed on the floor.
- 2) Once a memorial has been received by resolution of the convention, it becomes the property of the Conference in convention assembled to adopt, to revise, or to reject at its own pleasure.

1985 CONVENTION PROCEEDINGS

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #3

WHEREAS the sermon delivered by our President at the opening service of this convention, as well as that delivered in the Sunday Divine Service by Rev. David T. Mensing, were found to be especially edifying to the delegates, guests and visitors in attendance; and

WHEREAS the delegates and guests at this convention received also special encouragement and strength from the various opening devotions conducted by our pastors during the sessions; and

WHEREAS we were particularly edified by the doctrinal essay presented during this convention by the Rev. Erick. E. Erickson;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the convention especially thank Pastors H. David Mensing and David T. Mensing for their edifying messages, and Pastor Erickson for his thorough and timely essay, and that we express our gratitude also to those pastors who conducted the special devotions at this convention.

RESOLUTION #4

WHEREAS a convention of this nature requires that its various officers and committees have readily available for their use a variety of business machines, as well as office space for meetings and for the preparation of reports and resolutions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we express special thanks to the pastor of St. Stephen's Ev. Lutheran Church, the Rev. Mark W. Dierking, for placing a variety of business machines at the disposal of convention committees and for permitting them to use his private study as a meeting place, as well as the mother's room off the church narthex for the typing of reports and resolutions and for other necessary activities at this convention.

RESOLUTION #5

WHEREAS the officers, standing committees and appointed committees have served our beloved Conference faithfully during the past fiscal year under the continued blessing of the Lord of the Church;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we express our sincere gratitude for all that these brethren have wrought in their dedicated Christian service to our Conference during the past year of grace; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon the Holy Spirit to grant a rich measure of His grace to those brethren who have been elected to positions of leadership in our midst for the coming fiscal year, so that all they think, say and do may be in accordance with God's Holy Word, to His glory alone.

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RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #6

WHEREAS St. Stephen's Ev. Lutheran Church of Wilmot, South Dakota, has shown itself once again to be a most gracious host to the 1985 Convention of the Concordia Lutheran Conference by extending to delegates and guests loving Christian hospitality in its church building and in the homes of its members; and

WHEREAS the devotions and divine services conducted during the convention were beautified by special organ music to the praise of our Lord and Savior, the Head of His Church;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Concordia Lutheran Conference express its whole-hearted gratitude to the pastor and members of this congregation for their most loving and liberal hospitality and Christian fellowship which contributed to the general success of the Convention, to our spiritual edification and to our physical comfort; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference especially thank Mrs. H. David Mensing and Mr. Stephen Bloedel for serving as organists at this Convention, and that we express our gratitude to those ladies who prepared and served the lovely meals we enjoyed together; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, above all others, we praise and magnify the Lord of the Church, our loving Savior, for the gracious blessings He has continued to bestow upon us in great abundance, and that we herewith express our special gratitude for these many bounties by especially rededicating ourselves as witnesses unto Him and His saving Gospel.

Concordia Lutheran Conference
Statistical Report

(by Congregations)

Fiscal Year: 1984-85

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David T. Mensing,
 Statistician

HOLY SCRIPTURE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH
 San Antonio, Texas
 Rev. E. R. Stallings, Jr., Pastor

PEACE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH
 Tinley Park, Illinois
 Rev. H. David Mensing, Pastor

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
 Lebanon, Oregon
 Rev. M. L. Natterer, Pastor

ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
 Seattle, Washington
 Rev. P. R. Bloedel, Pastor

ST. STEPHEN'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH
 Willmet, South Dakota
 Rev. Mark W. Dierking, Pastor

ZION EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH
 Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
 Rev. David T. Mensing, Pastor

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CHURCH
 Midland, Michigan
 Rev. Erick E. Erickson, Pastor

Membership	Baptized Members	45	78	87	99	48	19	25
	Communicant Members	30	55	61	35	25	10	21
	Voting Members	12	16	14	11	15	4	9
	Children in Sunday School	19	14	20	26	20	0	3
	Adults in the Bible Class	20	31	25	39	14	9	17
	Received by Transfer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Received by Confirmation	0	4	5	2	0	1	0
	Lost by Transfer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Lost by other circumstance	1	1	12	1	0	0	1
Official Acts	Infant Baptisms	1	5	0	12	1	3	0
	Adult Baptisms	0	1	3	3	0	0	0
	Confirmations of Children	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
	Confirmations of Adults	0	4	2	0	0	1	0
	Marriages Solemnized	0	1	1	2	0	0	0
	Funerals and/or Burials	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Auxiliary Staff	Sunday School Teachers	3	4	2	7	5	0	1
	Elected Church Officers	9	13	9	8	8	3	8
	Organists	3	2	2	1	2	0	1
	Choir Members	16	8	6	20	0	0	0
Property	Church Facilities Owned?	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
	Church Facilities Rented?	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
	Acreage (w. or w/o buildings)	--	7.63	.355	.67	2.25	--	--