

Lutheran Tidings

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A NEW BEGINNING

By Rev. P. Rasmussen, Dalum, Alta.

"And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign, which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; and she was a widow of about four score and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spoke of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom and the grace of God upon him." (Luke 2, 33-40).

Christmas is a new beginning.

We read in the letter to the Hebrews that God who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers hath in these last days spoken unto us by his son.

It was a new beginning and yet it was the fulfillment of a promise given at the very earliest period of the generation of men. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Genesis 3, 15) We read in the good book not only of the promise given at the fall but also: . . . "When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of Sons."

In one way it was a very plain beginning: a young mother with her little boy. And yet, how beautiful a beginning, how wonderful a boy. People had been longing for the fulfillment of God's promise, preparations had been made throughout the different lands and countries by the rulers of the world; but the very best preparation had been made by God himself in selecting the virgin Mary to be the mother of the child; Joseph, the noblest of men, David's son, had been chosen as protector for mother and child. Angels partook in the preparations and fulfillment, shepherds were busy bringing the good news to dear friends.

About the child many, many things could be said. I shall only call attention to a peculiar picture found in the art gallery at Dresden, Germany. L. Brun, from whom I have my knowledge, tells us that it is the eyes of the child Jesus which draws our attention. If we look at the picture and have caught sight of the eyes, we will linger, and think and look at them again and try to grasp the meaning or the innermost, the soul of those eyes. Something deep and unexplainable.

Such was the beginning of Christmas.

And now the question will come forth: What came out of this new beginning?

In the gospel of Luke some answers are given to the question. Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And not only his parents at the time; but people even to this day have marvelled at the things spoken of him and by him. You tell his story to children and they will wonder, to sinners and they will listen with greatest interest, to Gentiles and they will beg you to go on with the story.

But there is another thing also. Simeon blessed them; and today there are people like Simeon who will bless those that bring child Jesus to them. On the other hand, Simeon spoke the truth when he said to Mary: Behold this child is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel. Again we ask the question: What came out of that new beginning? The fall and rise of many not only in Israel but throughout all generations and peoples. Read the history of Christianity, it is the story of rise and fall. He is a sign which is spoken of and against that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. Simeon blessed his parents. Anna brought the message of his birth to all them that longed and looked for redemption in Jerusalem, but Herod tried to kill the child. And the child grew and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him. The child grew; Christianity has grown from the new beginning in Bethlehem to every land in the world, "from Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand" — In the 11th chapter of the Acts, beginning with verse 20, we read of another new beginning. We are told that the Christians were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only. And then something happened. Some of them were men of Cyprus, Cyrene, which, when they had come to Antioch, spoke unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. They had only preached to the Jews, and now they also preach-



ed to the Grecians. That was a new beginning. We ask about the result. "And the hand of the Lord was with them and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord."

This year I am planning for the first time to have an English service during Christmas for those in our community who do not understand Danish; and I do sincerely hope that the hand of the Lord may be with us, that men may believe and turn unto the Lord.

What a blessing it can be with a new beginning, when we think of the individual also. Jesus was called to the house of Jair to help their only child, a twelve year old girl. On the way he met a woman who had been ill for twelve years. She stretched out her hands to touch his garments, he called her forth and blessed her, so she could begin a new life. He took the little girl by the hand and said unto her: Damsel, I say unto you: Arise. He came nigh to the gate of Nain. A young man, his mother's only son, was carried out to the grave. Jesus touched the bier and said: Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. A new beginning. He met the publican Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him: Follow me. He gave him a new name, Mathew, and a new vocation. When Peter had been tempted and had denied his master, the master met him on Easter morning and gave him new hope. We could continue with examples, but will only mention one other thing. What a blessing, if you have been sick, to be well again; if we have been tempted, to be forgiven all of our trespasses; if we have failed in our achievements, to begin again; if we have lived a sinful life, to live a holy life. There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over a sinner that repenteth.

We have had failures this year and other years, but we begin the new year with new hope. Even this is a blessing, to wake up in the morning with a new day before us. Let us also remember what is said of the new heaven and the new earth. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride for the husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying: Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, not crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said: Behold I make all things new.

That must be Christmas in heaven.



Christmas Greetings

"O strange indifference low and high —
Drowed over common joys and cares:
The earth was still but knew not why;
The world was listening unawares.
How calm a moment may precede
One that shall thrill the world forever!
To that still moment none would heed
Man's doom was linked, no more to sever,
In the solemn midnight centuries ago.

"It is the calm and solemn night!
A thousand bells ring out and throw
Their joyous peal abroad and smite
The darkness charmed and holy now.
The night that erst no name had worn,
To it a happy name is given:
For in that stable lay new born
The peaceful Prince of earth and heaven
In the solemn midnight centuries ago."

Though the Christmas season falls within the bleak and dreary days of late December, when the old year is about to pass away and the new year about to begin, it is nevertheless the most joyous of festivals. Why? Is it because of the many presents, the many family gatherings or the customary number of parties? Undoubtedly they all lend color to the occasion. But behind our unconscious joy there is something deeper which permeates our better selves and our surroundings. Undoubtedly that something is the everywhere present spirit of those messengers who first sang "Peace on earth, good will toward men."

Human nature is like the soil that feeds us. It needs a fresh start every season. Springtime is the new start in nature and Christmas is the new start in life.

When the first Christmas message was sounded over the fields of Bethlehem, the life of a race which was nearer God than any race at that time was at low ebb. God, the creator and renewer of life, was far from them. The birth of a child, who later should tell mankind what God is, was the springtime in the history of mankind. It was the reassurance that God would use all possible means to bring man back to the fellowship for which he was once created.

It is this feeling that brings us our true joy. It was this feeling that made men of old sing praise to the ruler of the universe. It is because of this renewal of God's promise that we stop in our toil and listen to the old message of good will.

But our joy will never be complete unless we give our part—our heart—to the will of him who desires to make all things well. Give him a humble word of thanksgiving from our inner joy, make "Glory to God in the Highest" our own words.

"Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift!"

"Christmas is here with Joy untold,
Now young and old are rejoicing.
What angels made known to men of old
The lips of all babes are voicing;
Branches from Eden's tree stands bright
With lights that point to the Giver.
All children whose joy is pure and right
May harbor that joy forever."

L. C. Bundgaard.



Into the Depths!

Into the depths came Jesus from His glorious home when he was born, into the depths of sorrow and suffering. We all know that the deepest depths are not those we experience by the want of the things this world has to give. Yet who can measure what anguish material poverty and want can heap upon a human soul! And who can calculate to what deeper depths such anguish may cause the soul to slip.

We have people in our church who have not what they need to live a normal life. Some of our people at Dagmar, Mont., and at Dalum, Alta., Canada, are in actual need. Rev. Alfred Jensen, our synodical president, writes a touching article in "Dannevirke" about the conditions in these places and begs our people to come to their assistance as best we can.

At Dagmar there are several homes that feel the pinch of poverty. They have all had to borrow money to get feed for a couple of cows. They do get government aid, but that is hardly enough barely to exist on. And when sickness comes, their trouble is deep. Rev. Mikkelsen mentions a woman whose husband died last summer. She has a little girl who must have a necessary operation. A collection—mostly of half dollars—was made up to help

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A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

By Rev. Alfred Jensen, Kimballton, Iowa

Countless Christmas messages are sent and received every Christmas season. None of them approach in beauty and meaning the first Angelic Christmas Message. I shall not here attempt to improve upon the message. I wish only to reiterate its purpose and vision.

All honest, right-thinking persons deplore the conditions in the world today, which flout the Christmas message of peace and salvation in Christ. No one dares to point the finger accusingly at any one person or nation or set of circumstances as being responsible for this sad situation. Our vision of responsibility is far too comprehensive to do that. We must share a common burden of guilt.

But while being conscious of this load of guilt, this sense of shame that so little of the angelic vision has been realized, our task is to maintain the purpose of God in giving us His Son.

The joy of Christmas "shall be to all the people". There seems to be no exceptions, no "sanctions" are being held ready in the background. There is no "Devil's Island" or "Alcatraz Prison" awaiting the especially recalcitrant. There is no "most favored nations clause" in this new covenant treaty of God. Color and race seem to have been overwhelmed by God's abundant and unbounded love. "All God's Chillun got wings" seems to have been the theme song of the angels. The shepherds, Joseph and Mary, were poor peasant folks. They belonged only historically to a favored class. The purpose of spreading joy at Christmas time should consequently forget the ordinary boundaries of class and clan. Salvation should seek its goal, not at the shrine of civilization and culture, but in the everlasting habitations of God, in the mansions prepared for His children. The Prince of Peace does not seek to govern nations but to establish peace of heart and mind that good will may reign among all people pleasing to God. The purpose and meaning of the first Christmas message should not be measured in terms of human intelligence and endeavor. It should be kept free from all entanglements of our utilitarian philosophy. If they be partitioned among our sectarian churches and our capitalistic peace societies they will get stuck in the mud of human sin and sorrow. Our well meaning intentions will hopelessly ensnarl them in the ebb and tide of depression-recovery-recession movements.

I plead for the loftiness and sublimity of the first Christmas message. It was celestial music, the singing of the spheres, as the poet says. We should not drag it down to earth and hitch it to our own train loads of troubles. Let the ways of God remain as they have always been, far above our ways, and let His thoughts continue to move in orbits we do not as yet comprehend.

For people everywhere will listen to the song of the angels. They may not want to listen to the rant of those of us that mistakenly try our hand at improving upon that first message. All such attempts should be scornfully rejected. People are not looking for Christmas joy and peace and good will merely as so much cash and coin, comfort and luxury. They would far rather lift up their faces to the sky whence cometh that inspiring symphony, unfolding the theme of God's heart and mind. The portals of heaven were opened for the first time fully that first Christmas night. The harmony that floated to earth like all good music engulfs humanity. It can only feebly yield to explanation. It must be heard and reheard. In

time it will melt the unconverted mind, it will make glad the saddened hearts and convict the guilty conscience. it will heal the world, sick of soul.

Some will object to this. You are merely trying to forget this terrible mess our world is in today. You are trying to build an escape mechanism out of your attitude to the Christmas message.

I maintain that on the contrary I am trying to save the Christmas message from defeat by its purported friends and defenders. The prostitution of the Christmas message has gone far enough. Before long it will find its way into textbooks, history, sociology, civics. It has no meaning there, no good purpose can be served by making it part of this or that system or philosophy. I shall believe in it as the revelation of God. I shall regard it as such and keep it apart from the changing ideas and concepts of men. I do not care here and now to admit the dogmatic cleavage so important to many between the word of God and the word of man. Some of the Bible, all of the Bible may or may not be the Word of God. This is not the point. But I do believe that God revealed Himself to us in the Christmas message and similarly in His Son.

This is a blow to our pride. We would like to master the text, the word, the message. Why not forget our eagerness to make it serve in order to let it rule? Perhaps we need a ruler and a master more than a host of servants. The world and its resources have been made to serve us in various ways and not formerly dreamed of during the last century. However much we may pride ourselves in this illustrious conquest, we fear and tremble at the prospect of what these newly acquired servants may do to us. Is it possible that we have a master, a king? Anyone at all adept at interpreting scripture can easily master the Christmas message. I pity such a person. Let the text master him. It was not given to serve our purpose, but God's. There can be no assurance of this without complete surrender to the message.

In writing as I have done, I have in mind, that particularly at Christmas time people are called upon to give, serve, share, until at last they may be brought to believe that the purpose and meaning of the Christmas message was this hurried round of buying and giving.

That will inevitably incorporate the Christmas message as a part of a gospel of human getting better and better every day in every way by constantly practicing what is called good will, neighborliness, golden rule, etc. It is of fundamental importance that we do not become confused on this point. The matter of giving and spreading joy at Christmas time has only a very dim and distant connection with the birth of Jesus, the sacrifice on his part cannot be adopted by us as giving a proper explanation of our good will. We act from force of circumstance, habit, expecting return favors, etc. And in order not to despair or triumph too easily and quickly we should not gauge the behavior of the world by reasoning that very much of the good will it shows or very little of the ill will it emanates is caused by any direct recourse to the birth and sacrifice or the repudiation of Christ.

I would not in any way discourage anybody from giving or sharing or practicing any and all forms of good will and kindness. I believe that in spite of ourselves we may yet see the day when the spirit abroad at Christmas time may have a profound influence upon our social life.

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Glory to God

Christmas is for everybody. The good news of the angels was for all people.

Only those who are in need, however, get the real meaning of Christmas. Jesus did not come to satisfy all our wants or to take away the harshness of this life, though He did satisfy wants and alleviate hardships. He did go about doing good, make the blind to see and the deaf to hear and raise up the dead; He came to bring a new hope into a hopeless world.

And that is the way it still is. His coming does not take on its full meaning except to those who are in the grip of a deep, unspeakable woe. To those hearts that are most oppressed His coming gives the greatest joy.

It is strange. We are wont to call Christmas the children's festival. It may be so, but it is only true in an outward sense and then perhaps because children are not yet conversant with the sins of the world and the woes of man. Theirs is the joy of the carefree innocent who does not know the world in which he lives.

But the real joy of Christmas, which is consistent with the situation in which our Lord Jesus found Himself at His birth and all through his life, takes on the more somber hue of the fulfilment of a poignant longing, a relief from a deep soul burden, a hope against hope that there is a way to the heart of God.

We must remember that the birth of Jesus is not an isolated incident. It is only one of a long series of incidents which ends in His resurrection and ascension to heaven. So Christmas really includes in its meaning the significance of Good Friday and Easter Morn also. When Jesus was born, He took upon Himself all the woe that flesh is heir to. He took upon Himself His many sufferings, His criminal death, His burial.

The only reason why Jesus was born was to clear a way for us to God our Father. Christmas was a sombre fact for Him. Let us not forget that when we are so light-hearted in our happy celebration of the day.

But then let us also remember that God has given us this life, first of all that we should live it happily. We are His children, and nothing is more pleasing to Him than the joy of His children, a joy to His glory. There can be no Christmas joy except to the Glory of God, as the angels sang: "Glory to God in the highest!"

C. A. Stub.

Open Letter to the Churches

In October two important letters were mailed by "Lutheran Tidings" to every congregation within the synod: one to the Church Boards, the other to the pastors. It was an appeal to come to the financial aid of the paper. It is still too early to form any judgment as to the positive results which we hoped to realize from these letters. Yet, there may be those readers who would welcome a report of the results to date.

Generally speaking, the letters have been well received, especially those that were mailed to the congregations. We sincerely hope that every congregation will take definite action upon this matter, and our subscribers may render an effective help by calling attention to this letter at the quarterly business meeting of their congregations and urge strongly that immediate steps be taken.

Here, we wish to acknowledge the following receipts and also indicate whether other plans were made. Hartford Ladies' Aid contributed five dollars to the paper, Trinity Lutheran Church in Chicago sent twenty-five dollars and arrangements are being made to have the paper sent for a period of three months to those that do not already subscribe to "Lutheran Tidings." Detroit came to our assistance with a check for ten dollars, for which we shall send the paper to every member in the congregation to the end of the year, and the Rev. Ottar Jorgensen, Cedar Falls, Iowa, mailed a list with forty-three three months subscriptions for which payment will be made upon receipt of bill. Indeed, we look forward to securing a substantial part of these new readers as regular subscribers to "Lutheran Tidings." We welcome them into our circle of readers and express sincere thanks to these congregations for their splendid cooperation.

Several other congregations have notified us of the appointment of representatives to the paper, and have indicated that we may look forward to their assistance. We kindly urge those congregations that have not replied by letter to do so in order to save further correspondence. Many of our congregations hold their annual congregational meeting during the month of January where this matter no doubt will be presented. Here our subscribers can help by speaking in behalf of "Lutheran Tidings." We need financial assistance as well as an increased circulation. Many of our Ladies Aids are accustomed to make donations at Christmas time to various worthy causes of the synod, may we be permitted to direct their attention to "Lutheran Tidings" as worthy of their gifts.

Acknowledgment of receipt from the pastors will be found elsewhere, but we are happy to announce that several of the pastors have sent encouraging letters together with their contributions. We realize fully that innumerable demands are made upon the pastors from every quarter of the church; we turn to them to interest our people in the work of the synod at home and abroad; we look to them to speak an encouraging word on behalf of our folk schools and college to our young people, etc. There is absolutely no doubt as to its fatiguing effect, but after all to whom shall we go if not to the pastors. Hence, we hope that we may hear from them as many as possible; we know that we shall not receive reply from all of them. To every pastor who has contributed to the paper through direct contribution, articles, and subscriptions we express our gratitude and debt.

Ernest D. Nielsen, Bus. Mgr.
Muskegon, Mich., November 29, 1937.

Echoes from the Preaching Missions

The National Preaching Mission has come and gone. But in its wake many of us have been left upon a higher spiritual plane. Troy, Albany, and Schenectady, the three cities within a radius of 17 miles and comprising about 400,000 people, sponsored this preaching mission, Oct. 24-27. In each city meetings were held at 10-12 a. m. for women; 3:30 p. m. for youth, and at 8 p. m. mass meetings for the general public. Furthermore, each forenoon, 10-12:15, a meeting for ministers only was held at Trinity M. E. church, Albany, followed by a luncheon where a speaker also spoke. Each afternoon, 2:30-4:30, six seminars were conducted at Trinity church, Albany, on: The Christian Message, Using the Bible, Personal Evangelism, Christianity and Social Problems, Christianity and World Problems.

Personally, I got most out of the ministers' meetings. It was a glorious inspiration to be with 300 clergymen from all denominations. The meetings began with devotions followed by the speakers of the day.

Dr. George A. Buttrick of New York spoke to us in his masterly way on: This Great Business of Preaching. You have to hear Dr. Buttrick; you can't relay his message. It was an inspiration never to be forgotten.

It was a grand privilege to hear Dr. Adolph Keller of Switzerland carry us through the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences and emphasize the three spiritual impulses that emerged from these conferences: 1) Jesus as the center; 2) A Church of Faith; 3) A new emphasis on the Holy Spirit.

Then there was Dr. J. V. Moldenhauer of New York. He is one of our own, for he is Danish. He spoke on: The New Preaching for a New Day. His talk was a humble confession completely repudiating liberal theology and a humble (I have never witnessed more sincere humility) creeping back to the "faith of our fathers." We felt that it was the Spirit saying to the churches, hold fast to what you have, lest you lose your crown.

Of special interest to me was Dr. Carl C. Rasmussen, pastor of Luther Place Lutheran Church, Washington, D. C., because he is one of our Danish boys from Troy, whose aunt goes to my church here. Yes, he is *another* one who should have been in our synod!

He presented a scholarly thesis on the two sources of religious thought prevailing throughout church history. The one is from Greece propounded by Aristotle with his theory of the perfect man; the other issues from Jerusalem, God, with the teaching that man is a sinner to be redeemed. Throughout church history there has been a shifting from one to the other. Some exponents of these thoughts are: Origenes for Greece; Augustine for Jerusalem; Thomas Aquinas for Greece; the Reformers for Jerusalem. During prosperity the Grecian thought prevails, while during depressions Jerusalem prevails. We are now experiencing the swing back to Jerusalem.

Then there was Channing Tobias of New York. He had a Christlike face. Though black, the light of his countenance was a reflection of a holy light. Indeed, he stood as a living example that Christ transcends all racial boundaries.

Also Miss Muriel Lester of London, Founder of Kingsley Hall, a Christian social settlement on London's East side, was there. She held her audience on a high spiritual plane.

Bishop V. S. Azariah of Dornakul, India, got lost somewhere between Detroit and Albany. It was a great disappointment to us all not to get to hear him.

The preaching mission was not just another evangelistic meeting. During my 7½ years here in Troy I have attended many meetings of all types. Most of them were definitely of human ingenuity. This preaching mission was different! We felt that it was not men who spoke, but that it was the Holy Spirit, and that it was the Holy Spirit who spoke because men gave Him a chance to speak. Quite definitely we felt the speakers realized that man with all his ingenuity is bankrupt. Only Christ and the Holy Spirit can save us. Renewed emphasis on the fact that we ministers are the *ambassadors* of Christ. As such we must go out, and in no other way. We are to go out with the Gospel, and not with learned exhortations on pet theories. Something of Pentecost was present at those meetings.

As Dr. Rasmussen said: you can have two views of the preaching mission. (1) It is the last struggle by a few in a church that is being ushered out. (2) The rallying of the faithful to a new dedication, because God has heard the cry of the blasphemers as in Hezekiah's day.

In the light of the result of the preaching mission, I am convinced that the latter view is the right one. Indeed, the church is not being ushered out. The Holy Spirit still speaks. He is still as rich and full as on the first Pentecost. We felt that in Troy, Albany, and Schenectady Oct. 24-27.

Holger P. Jorgensen,
Troy, N. Y.

Books

"WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?"

By Sverre Norborg, Ph.D.

Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, \$1.00

This book is an able and clear translation from the Norwegian. It is tempting to ask the question, when we think of all the religious books given to America by writers in Norway, why there are so few Danish religious books translated into the English language. We certainly have many books that would be salt in too sweet pietistic flood of literature from other Lutheran bodies. Of course, there is the other side to the story that perhaps very little religious literature is read among our constituency.

Is an answer to the questioning title needed in our day? Yes, for our American church situation has become as confusing as some systems of government. Christianity is no religion, and whether there had lived a Luther, a Grundtvig or a Karl Barth before this day, does not seem to make much difference; for to the average American every "good fellow" is a Christian. Against such a concept, a sentence like the following cuts straight across: "The gospel is a greeting from the other side, where we humans have nothing to say." There are many such striking sentences and because of these the reader will forget the not always smooth transitions in Dr. Norborg's thinking. After all there is sometimes a smoothness that makes reading of books like this one boring. A fertile spirit cannot always think of what some people call logic, life is larger than all of that.

It is remarkable how conventional the author can be when touching upon doctrinal questions. In spite of that there is a captivating something that makes one read on. We have perhaps read enough of abstract religious philosophy for a while and we are ready again to meet a reassured simple freshness.

There is evidence of Karl Barth on several pages. This is somewhat plain in a sentence like this one: "We
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How the First Colonists Went to Church

In a history of the Danish Church in America, published in 1921, Mr. P. A. Miller of West Denmark wrote an article with the above heading. It is reproduced here to give the younger generation a chance to compare church going seventy-five years ago with the present day way of doing it. Translated by O. W. Lund.

As a rule we did not say "go to church," because we had no church building, but gathered in a little school house. Therefore we usually said "go to meeting." Very few of the settlers owned vehicles, so we had to walk, carrying the smaller children in our arms. When the trails were not flooded, everything went smoothly, but at times it was difficult to navigate around the potholes in the woods. In the winter the owners of sleighs were commandeered. Often one would see a couple of small steers come, straining themselves to haul a sleigh loaded with as many people as could possibly find room on it. Yes, a sleigh was the first "farm implement" we acquired, and use it we did, both winter and summer. Rev. Adam Dan experienced a sleigh ride in the summer time when he visited us in 1873. He desired to call on several of the families and was taken around in a sleigh—in spite of no snow.

At times steer driving could cause some excitement; for instance, when Soren Pedersen, the blacksmith, drove his steers for the first time. He only had a small sleigh on which he had nailed a big dry goods box. In this his wife was to sit, while he stood behind. When they came to a down grade, the sleigh struck the hind legs of the steers and frightened them so that they started to run,—and they did run, faster and faster. Ane Marie, his wife, screamed: "This will end badly, Soren." ("Dette her gaar galt, Soren.") "That's allright," said Soren, "They will soon get tired of running." Tired they got, and man and wife, whole and hearty, arrived in time to take part in the service.

Whenever we drove out, it was necessary to take an ax along, because the roads were not always passable. Often a tree had fallen across our path and had to be removed. There were enough difficulties to overcome, but we always got there, in fact, it would take a lot of obstructions to keep us away from the meetings. Day after day we did not see other people, and there was enjoyment in coming together. It was, however, not always a pleasant experience to sit in a little school house for several hours especially (in the winter time) for those who had seats close to the big box stove. When people are out in the fresh air all week, it is a strenuous job to keep their eyes open in a warm room filled with people,—but nobody took offense.

To get to the meeting in time was often a problem, as we only had the sun to go by in regulating our watches. We tried to line up our houses with the sun in order to have the right direction at high noon, but we did not always succeed. After we all arrived at the meeting place and the conversation was in full swing, it would require a strong voice to get everybody's attention for the service.

Once I was asked if we could maintain the necessary gravity and solemnity in this kind of a building, especially at baptisms and the Lord's Supper. I dare say that, even though we were longing for a church with altar and bell, we had many solemn hours in the school house.

Our go-to-meeting clothes—well most of us were still wearing our good, solid, home-

made clothes from Denmark, which for years served as our dress suits on Sundays. It might happen that someone would appear in overalls. Once I met a man to whom I said: "Why is it, Laust, that you have overalls on today?" "I will tell you," he said, "I will have to be saving, because my good wool suit is getting threadbare, but then, I have worn it for more than twenty years." The best part of it was that we were always warm and well dressed, thanks to the women who would both card, spin, sew, and knit—and at that time there were no stylish people to criticize us.

Every little improvement was hailed with admiration. One day a woman called out: "Look, little children, Poulsen has gotten a spring seat now." Yes, in those times joy and thankfulness prevailed whenever a little progress was made. In spite of troubles and hardships most of us will remember with gratitude those solemn Sunday hours in the old school house. One old "Sjællander" (from Zealand, Denmark) said to me once: "Often it looks pretty difficult, but we are always happy."

In 1874 we called a Danish minister; up to that time we were served by Norwegian preachers. One Norwegian professor also wanted to visit a settlement of Norwegians living southwest of West Denmark; there were no roads leading to it, but M. C. Pedersen offered to be his guide. He took his compass along and found the place. M. C. Pedersen was not in a hurry to return; it became dark before he started for home, and the compass was of no avail. He walked and walked, at last beginning to doubt that he was headed in the right direction. All at once he heard the croaking of frogs near the lake, and then he knew where he was.

This is a short description of church going in the beginning of this settlement. Now, when we have more pleasant means of transportation and better living conditions, we should not scorn those early days, because they were not bad days.

OUR CHURCH

Hospital Reopened. The „Eben-Ezer“ Hospital, Brush, Colo., has again resumed operation after having been closed for several months, due to misunderstanding between the management and doctors and nurses.

Mrs. Rev. Skovgaard, Los Angeles, Cal., recently submitted to an operation on her eyes at the Los Angeles Lutheran hospital. Mrs. Skovgaard is getting along quite well after the operation.

Newlywed. Mr. Jens Chr. Jensen, a graduate of our seminary at Grand View College, Des Moines, Iowa, and Miss Margrethe Nielsen of Los Angeles were married on Nov. 21 at Los Angeles, Calif. Rev. C. C. Rasmussen, pastor of our church there, performed the ceremony. Congratulations!

Five New Missionaries from Norway were sent to our mission among the Santals in India this fall.

New District Board. At its annual meeting the ninth district of our synod elected the following district board: president, Rev. Alfred E. Sorensen; vice-president and secretary, Rev. H. O. Nielsen; and treasurer, Mr. Hans Eskesen.

Synodical Cooperation. Rev. Johs. Pedersen, Portland, Me., writes a long article in "Dannevirke" in which he advocates that the Danish Church and the United Danish Church should cooperate in our educational endeavors. He throws out the suggestion that our two synods could very well conduct a theological seminary at Grand View College and a college at Dana College in common with teachers from both synods at each school. He calls the article thoughts for consideration.

Golden Wedding Anniversary. Mr. and Mrs. Hans Madsen, Solvang, Calif., formerly of Kimballton and Cedar Falls, Iowa, celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on Nov. 27. The day was celebrated in their home, where many relatives and friends paid their respects to the venerable couple. Mr. and Mrs. Madsen are well known in our synod, in whose work they have been active throughout their married life.

Mr. Peder Back, Racine, Wis., is broadcasting a two hour Danish Christmas program on Christmas morning. The broadcast will be over station WTMJ, Milwaukee, Wis., 620 kilocycles, from 4:30 to 6:30 a. m., Central Standard time. It is an excellent electrically transcribed program from Denmark and consists chiefly of Danish Christmas music and singing.

Rev. Marius Krog, while en route with his family from Solvang, Calif., to Marquette, Neb., is reported to have had an accident with his automobile. The car ran into a ditch and was badly damaged. The occupants were badly shaken up and received minor injuries, but no one was seriously hurt.

Rev. and Mrs. J. J. Lerager, Cordova, Neb., celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary at the West Danish Church, Saturday, Dec. 4. Dinner was served by the congregation. In the afternoon a program was given. Friends and relatives from Hutchinson, Minn., Bancroft, Iowa, Chillicothe, Mo., Denmark, Kansas, and Rosenberg, Marquette, Davey, Exeter, and Elba, Neb., were present. Rev. and Mrs. Lerager received many beautiful gifts.

Rev. Alfred E. Sorensen, Seattle, Wash., was presented with a brand new Pontiac car on Thanksgiving day right after the service in the church. He writes in his parish bulletin that he does not know who all the givers are, but that they are members of the churches at Wilbur, St. Andrews, Mansfield, and Seattle, Wash.

A Rally Session was held by the young people's Junior League of Enumclaw, Tacoma, and Seattle, Wash., on Dec. 12 at Enumclaw.

"The Mikado," the Gilbert and Sullivan operetta, was recently performed by the choir of our Trinity Church of Chicago, Ill., under the leadership of Mr. George Dupont Hansen.

Danish Christmas Broadcast. Rev. Alfred E. Sorensen, Seattle, Wash., will broadcast also this year a Danish Christmas program over station KJR, Seattle, Wash., 970 kilocycles, on Thursday, Dec. 23, at 10 p. m. Pacific time—two hours later than Central time.

Magazine Agency. Rev. A. C. Kildegaard, Clinton, Iowa, has established a

magazine agency through which his people can subscribe to their magazine. The profits of this enterprise go to pay for the publication of his local parish bulletin.

* * *

The American Club is the name of a new organization being formed in the Juhl and Germania churches at Juhl, Mich., for the purpose of bringing the people of the community together to read good literature, sing good songs, and discuss personal, social and civic problems. They will meet once a month. They also have a Danish Club.

* * *

Mr. Arthur Jensen, Hartford, Conn., who is president of the young people's organization of the Eastern District, was invited to speak to the young people at Bridgeport, Conn., on Dec. 2.

* * *

Imposing Lecture Course. Our Trinity Church, Chicago, Ill., has arranged what appears to be an imposing course of lectures to be held in the church during the 1937-38 season. It is as follows: Nov. 19, Prof. Alfred C. Nielsen, "A Dream of Man;" Dec. 15, Prof. Albert W. Palmer, "The Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences;" Jan. 20, Rev. F. W. Otterbein, "The Present Time and the Church;" Feb. 18, Prof. Christian Th. Andersen, "Modern Psychology and Teaching;" March 17, Prof. William Eckert, "The Oxford Movement and the Church;" April 21, Curator Paul Miller, "Paleontology, Life in Past Geological Periods;" and May 19, Prof. C. Arild Olsen, "The Cooperative Movement."

* * *

New Year's Midnight Service will be held by St. Stephan's Church, Chicago, Ill., at their parish hall, beginning at 11 p. m., New Year's Eve.

* * *

Concert at Racine. Dec. 14 our Bethania Church at Racine, Wis., sponsored a concert by the American Brass Company Male Chorus for the benefit of a fund for having their pipe organ repaired and their church redecorated inside and outside

* * *

Joint Christmas Concert. The choirs of our St. John's Church and St. Paul's Church of the United Danish Church at Ringsted, Iowa, have been working together for some time on a Christmas cantata, "Carols from the Skies," which was presented at St. John's Church on Sunday evening, Dec. 19. Rev. C. S. Kloth is the pastor of St. Paul's Church.

* * *

The U. S. Census of Religious Bodies cannot be completed until all churches have supplied the bureau with the necessary reports. A number of second requests have been sent to congregations and responsible persons of the churches for action. This matter should have the attention immediately of all who have not complied with the government's request.

* * *

A Danish Christmas Eve Service will be broadcast by Rev. J. C. Kjer from our Bethania Church, Racine, Wis., over station WRJN, 1370 kilocycles, Friday, Dec. 24, 3:30 to 4:30 p. m., Central Standard time.

* * *

A New Baptismal Font was dedicated at the morning worship of our new Emanuel

Church at Los Angeles, Calif., on Dec. 12. This font is a gift of Mr. and Mrs. S. Mogensen in memory of their daughter; it was made by Mr. Mogensen himself according to sketches drawn by Miss Edith Northmann. The silver bowl for the font was given by the Danish jeweler, Mr. Philip Paval.

* * *

A Church Concert is being prepared by the choir of St. Peder's Church, Minneapolis, Minn. The plan is to give the concert Jan. 16, 1938.



Contributions to the Santal Mission

General Budget

Mrs. Hanne Christensen, Seattle, Wash.	\$ 5.00
Bethania Ladies Aid, Ringsted, Ia.	10.00
Ladies Aid, Withee, Wis.	5.00
Sunday School, Ruthton, Minn.	6.13
H. C. Hansen, Withee, Wis.	1.00
Sunday School, Marinette, Wis.	2.00
Trine M. Olsen, Fresno, Calif.	1.00
Sobie Olesen, Cedar Falls, Iowa	15.00
From Children's Picnic, Dagmar, Mont.	8.70
Mrs. J. Jäger, Junction City, Ore.	1.20
Mrs. A. Winther, Kimballton, Ia.	5.00
Mrs. Bennedsen, Kimballton, Ia.	1.00
Mrs. Jens Andersen, Kimballton, Ia.	2.00
J. Johnson, Cedar Falls, Ia.	5.00
Mrs. Hans Madsen, Solvang, Calif.	2.00
Mrs. Jacob Rasmussen, Withee, Wis.	2.00
Ladies Aid Mission boxes, Diamond Lake, Minn.	11.41
Ladies Aid, Mission boxes, Grayling, Mich.	18.10
Junior Aid, Grayling, Mich.	2.65
Sunday School, Grayling, Mich.	1.00
Mrs. P. Jorgensen, Grayling, Mich.50
St. Peder's Church, Mpls., Minn.	13.00
Danish Women's Mission Fund	70.00
Missionary Society, Muskegon, Mich.	20.00
H. P. Rasmussen, Wheaton, Ill.	5.00
Brayton (Ia.) Union Sunday School	5.00
Congregation, Withee, Wis.	34.26
St. John's Church, Hampton, Ia.	61.43
Annex Club, Seattle, Wash.	5.00
Ladies Aid, Kimballton, Ia.	15.00
Y. P. S., "Magneten," Davey, Neb.	5.00
Sunday School, Diamond Lake, Minn.	8.34
Mrs. Chris J. Nielsen, Ringsted, Ia.	1.75
Danish Women's Mission Circle, Manistee, Mich.	30.00
Congregation, Tyler, Minn.	27.44
Ladies Aid, Portland, Me.	10.00
English Ladies Aid, Askov, Minn.	3.81
Mr. and Mrs. Jens Christiansen, Minden, Neb.	5.00
Sunday School, Oak Hill, Ia.	6.16
Mr. and Mrs. Theo. Verm. Oakhill, Minn.	3.25
Mr. and Mrs. Rasmus Madsen, Oakhill, Ia.	1.48
Mrs. P. P. Nielsen, Oak Hill, Ia.	1.25
Mr. and Mrs. Chr. Hansen, Oak Hill, Ia.	1.00
Mr. and Mrs. Jens Christoffersen, Oak Hill, Ia.	1.00
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Hansen, Oak Hill, Ia.50
Mr. and Mrs. Chr. Petersen, Oak Hill, Ia.50
Mildred, Norma and Louise Due, Exeter, Neb.	3.00
Mrs. A. J. Andersen, Dwight, Ill.	5.00
Mrs. N. C. Johnson, Sulphur Springs, Ia.	2.00

Lake Amelia Ladies Aid, Minneapolis, Minn.	10.00
Mr. and Mrs. Jas. J. Haue, Minneapolis, Minn.	10.00
Danish Ladies Aid, Gardner, Ill.	25.00
Mrs. Clara Hornslyd, Solvang, Calif.	5.00
Mrs. L. C. Sorensen, Marquette, Neb.	2.00
Marie Olsen, Ruthton, Minn.	5.00

To Dagmar Miller's Work

Ladies Aid, Exira, Ia.	5.00
Members of St. John's Church, Exira, Ia.	2.75
A. Ingeborg Hanson, Grayling, Mich.	2.50
Mr. and Mrs. S. H. Sorensen, Santa Barbara, Calif.	5.00
Sunday School, Hampton, Ia.	2.30

To Dr. E. Ostergaard's Work

K. M. Kr., Bridgeport, Conn.	4.30
Alfred Nissen, Marquette, Neb.	1.00
Mr. and Mrs. M. P. Nielsen, Manistee, Mich.	5.00
A. Ingeborg Hansen, Grayling, Mich.	2.50
Mr. and Mrs. S. H. Sorensen, Santa Barbara, Calif.	5.00

To Care of Children

Ladies Aid, Withee, Wis.	20.00
Mr. and Mrs. A. Henrichsen, Askov, Minn.	25.00

To Christmas Gifts

Sunday School, Manistee, Mich.	5.00
Helen, Carl and Glenn Nielsen, Des Moines, Ia.	1.50
Johanne M. Schmidt, Des Moines, Ia.	1.50
Ladies Aid, Victory, Mich.	5.00
Ladies Aid, Oak Hill, Ia.	10.00

Total	\$611.21
Previously acknowledged since January 1, 1937	2,256.87
Total	\$2868.08

Gratefully,
Sigrød Ostergaard,
1110 5th St. S. E., Minneapolis, Minn.



Gifts for Our Church Work at Dalum, Alta.

Congregation, Tyler, Minn.	\$48.00
Axel Thomsen	10.00
John Johnson	5.00
Thora Strandkov	1.00
Oscar W. Lund	5.00
W. P. Schmidt	50.00
From Ferndale, Calif.	22.00
Ladies Aid, Omaha, Neb.	5.00
Ladies Aid, Des Moines, Ia.	5.00
M. P. Nielsen	5.00
District 5	75.00
Ladies Aid, Ruthton, Minn.	15.00
District 4	40.00
Ladies Aid, North Sidney, Mich.	10.00
Many thanks.	

P. Rasmussen.



A Christmas Message

(Continued from col. 150)

But I would like to make the Christmas message one of transcendent importance, the despair of all social reformers, the joy of all prophets. It was not the proclamation of a new Utopia, neither did it usher in any sort of higher standard of living, any prosperity and plenty for all. I believe

we should refrain from making it intelligible to the carnal mind. If proclaimed in childlike faith, its wonderful strains will some day resound in the hearts of sinners and create a response that shall become a worthy Amen to the Angelic Chorus.

O let us go with quiet mind
The gentle Babe with shepherds find,
To gaze on Him who gladdens them,
The loveliest flower on Jesse's stem.

Books

(Continued from col. 154)

have much religion but little Gospel." Also "a monopoly-Christianity destroys missionary zeal as well as the urge to testify."

Though there are many pearls in these serial addresses, there is also an unfortunate Lutheran conventionality which at times resembles "skimmed milk." As oratory it may be effective in certain groups, but to others it seems an unwarranted review of Luther's Catechism.

A sentence stating that "There is no one like God" borders on the naive; children might open their ears and eyes wide, but hardly the adult for whom the book was intended. Such an exclamation might better have been used about Christ, for any comparison with what no one has seen is beyond the description of language.

Though there are so many good things that can be said for this book, I cannot help feeling that a good many well meaning Lutherans, though burning with their message, are afraid to use words that are beyond the approved dogmatics of their own church. We fear to be exiled as heretics if we should say the old truths without backing them up with scripture passages.

After having spoken in one chapter of the exuberant joy of being a Christian, we naturally expect some kind of demonstration of this contention. The answer is not altogether satisfactory; it even savors of "Buchmanism," which to some would be obnoxious; yet there are many good suggestions. The problem of replacement is always a most difficult one. We can easily tell people what devils they should get rid of, but it is hard to find enough angels to take their places. The problem is so difficult that we must hesitate in our answer where an individual asks for our help.

In spite of my occasional revolt against the author's dogmatic implications, I must say that its spirit captivated me. I had to read every word in it. The question in the title is answered, though I do not find enough of an approach to the present complexity of life. I believe Dr. Nordborg is capable of giving us that; perhaps his present work in the United States will give us that in another book. I cannot believe that the solution is entirely subjective.

Under an important title one may easily expect too much; on the other hand, we need to be reminded that Christianity is not as difficult as many philosophical books have made it. Those who are longing for a reassurance of a living faith in Christ as the source of life will get help in reading this book. Its sixth edition is something unusual.

L. C. Bundgaard.

CHRISTMAS CHIMES

The Young People's Luther League of the United Danish Lutheran Church has just published its 17th edition of "Christ-

mas Chimes." It is edited by Rev. Harold C. Jorgensen of Coulter, Iowa.

All the contributions are in the English language. It is the Christmas book of the United Danish Church, as we have "Julegranen." There are many good things in "Christmas Chimes," therefore I gladly recommend it, especially because so many young people in our church can not read the Danish language.

There is first a story: "Not a Christmas Hymn" by Rev. Paul Geo. Rasmussen, which brings us in contact with the rescue work done in the slum districts of Chicago. It is a powerful testimony to what the love of Christ can do.

Joseph M. Girtz, the Danish American missionary in the Santal Mission tells of a Christmas party he and his wife gave for their Christian Santal friends. We are especially touched by the power which the Negro spirituals may have over these primitive people. They "carried back" even Rev. Girtz.

Then there are two translations of Danish stories by Rev. Olfert Ricard. The one about "Vexation and Benediction" is both humorous and inspiring. There is also a translation of a chapter of Ingeborg Marie Sick's book about Mathilda Wrede. There may be a true Christmas even in a prison, when the love of Jesus Christ is a living reality in a human heart.

The editor has included also two short stories, one by Henry van Dyke, and one by James M. Farrar. I like especially "A Handful of Clay" by van Dyke. Through pain and sorrow a beautiful change may take place as well in a handful of clay as in a human heart.

Karen Vibeke Barley tells of Danish Christmas traditions as they may be carried out in the city of London, England.

There are three devotional contributions written by C. B. Larsen, Bernhard M. Christensen, and H. Irving Petersen, and a very interesting biography of Dwight L. Moody by Rev. Einer Romer. It is really inspiring to read how God used Mr. Moody in His service. We who attended the convention at Askov, Minn., will remember that Rev. Alfred Sorensen spoke about Mr. Moody at the Sunday afternoon meeting.

For the first time "Christmas Chimes" contains a play. It is called "The Eye of God" and is written by Mr. J. P. Jorgensen. It is in four scenes and depicts the night of the nativity and the changes which were wrought by the birth of the Christ Child in human hearts.

At last I may mention a little bouquet of Christmas poems. So it is evident there is a real Christmas treat for every one who read "Christmas Chimes."

Henrik Plambeck.

INTO THE DEPTHS

(Continued from col. 148)

them. It gave \$75. The ladies Aid added \$25. "Oh, how we do learn to help each other under the conditions here!" writes Mikkelsen.

From a letter from Dalum, Rev. Jensen cites the following: "We have a neighbor family who have not had a crop since they established their home. Now they are a family of four. The children are undernourished, the mother is toothless, and the father without hope. We have four neighbors who have not raised enough to keep a cow through the winter. Last year we could

still take it with good humor and often entertained each other by telling about the tricks we had used to pull us through; but this year we are silent. When we have to go out to cut Russian thistles for our cattle where we have sown good seed in well tilled fields, our smile vanishes...."

Good people, send your help to Rev. M. Mikkelsen, Reserve, Mont., and to Mrs. Ada Steenberg-Petersen, Box 119, Rosedale Sta., Alta., Canada.

C. A. Stub.

CARD OF THANKS

We want to express our appreciation for the kindness shown, the help extended, and also the gifts presented to us on our Silver Wedding day.

Anna and Jens J. Lerager.

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