

The Assistant Pastor

November, 1927

"O give thanks unto the Lord;
for he is good: for his mercy
endureth forever."



THE ASSISTANT PASTOR.

Published monthly by the pastor of the Jerico and Saude Lutheran Churches affiliated with the Norwegian Synod of the Synodical Conference.

H. M. Tjernagel, Pastor.
Subscription price, 50 cents.

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CHURCH SERVICES.

Saude—Second and fourth Sundays, 10:45 a. m.; Saturday School every Saturday, 10 a. m.; confirmation class, 9:30 a. m. Fridays.

Jerico—First and third Sundays, 11 a. m.; Saturday School, 2 p. m.; confirmation class, 2 p. m. Fridays.
Fifth Sundays by special announcement.

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For the first time the names RONALD NORMAN and MAVIS ADELINE appear in print. The first named, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred N. Anderson, born June 24 and baptized July 31, the other a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew J. Johnson, born September 7, baptized October 2.

Will their names appear in print often throughout their lives in newspapers, local, state and national? Or will, perhaps, printer's ink not be used again to print their names until their death is recorded? It is of little consequence what happens in this respect. The only true greatness is to have one's name entered and kept in the book of God as one of His children.

Yet how pitifully many parents there are who sell their children's souls to gain for them the empty bubbles of earthly success, riches and honor!

Do you object, perhaps to the terrible expression, "sell their children's souls?" Be that as it may, no words more fitly express the crime of parents who neglect to bring up their children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord," but by precept and example lead them to seek the vanities of the world. If you would come out from in under the awful crushing weight of those terrible words, then by the grace of God so live, act, do and rear your children that they may abide in Christ, even as, through Baptism, they have been grafted into Him.

* * *

IN THE THIRD ARTICLE we confess our faith in the "Holy Christian Church." "Why" to use the words of our explanation, "do you say that you believe the Holy Christian Church?" Answer: "I believe the Holy Christian Church, because the true Church is invisible, and because I know from God's

Word that this true Church shall always continue on earth."

The true Church of God on earth is the communion, or congregation, or the whole number of all those who truly believe in the God-man Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world and, consequently, one's own personal Savior and Redeemer. But we cannot diagnose the hearts of men and determine infallibly who are true believers and who are hypocrites, merely "having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." It is as Luke 17, 20 says: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," that is, we cannot observe it, see it. The true Church of God on earth is, consequently, invisible, can not be seen by the eyes of men.

But in spite of that, we believe that it exists, because "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His." 2 Tim. 2, 19. And we furthermore know that it shall continue to exist, let the devil and his henchmen, modernists, evolutionists and all other infidels rave as they may, for "The gates of hell shall not prevail against my Church." Math. 16, 18.

* * *

Now these true believers and members of the invisible Church who have "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all," naturally have an affinity for each other, are drawn together wherever possible. And, what is more, the Father desires His children to assemble themselves together—Heb. 10, 25—to break bread and hear the preaching of the Word—Acts 20, 7.—The work of St. Paul and other Apostles in the organizing of congregations gives evidence sufficient that it is the will of God that the believers shall come together locally thus forming what we know as congregations.

When people thus come together in a certain place to worship, to hear the Word of God, to pray, praise and give thanks, they can be seen by the human eye. This gives rise to the expression "the visible Church." "By the visible Church we mean the whole number of those who profess the Christian faith and use the sacred means of grace, but among them there also are hypocrites."

* * *

It is surely clear to all that the visible Church is a God pleasing manifestation of the invisible Church. Now if the believers in a given locality are to "assemble themselves together," they must have a place to assemble. This need has brought about the erection of buildings which we call churches.

If a church building is to be erected in a certain place so as to provide a place for "assembling together" of those who desire to worship according to God's plan, it becomes necessary that they meet to talk the matter over. It will be necessary to agree upon who shall haul the lumber, who shall do the carpenter work, the plastering, etc., etc. If all this is to be decided upon in an orderly and proper manner, some one must be chosen to preside at the meeting. If money is to be handled, received and paid out, a certain one to do that must be picked out, a treasurer must be elected. It would be very unwise and fruitful of misunderstanding and disagreements not to write down the matters decided upon. A secretary will, therefore, be elected for that work.

But if no one came to such a meeting, each one with as much right as the other depended on the

rest to attend to the building of the church, then no church would be built, there would be no place for "assembling together," there would be no breaking of bread, no public worship. The children of God in that locality would disobey their Father and would starve to death spiritually, all for the want of a properly attended business meeting just as the proverbial battle was lost for the want of a mere horse-shoe nail.

* * *

Or let us suppose that the call to the first meeting is answered by all. The meeting is organized properly. Constitution and By-Laws are adopted, officers elected and a pastor called. Soon also a church building is erected. All is done with enthusiasm and joy. Every Sunday the church is filled with worshippers. Time goes on and soon the annual business meeting is announced. The date arrives but no one is present. No business is transacted not even a janitor appointed. The next Sunday people come as usual to church but the church is not opened and it is cold inside as well as outside. No services can be held, all for the want of a properly attended business meeting.

* * *

By this time some are perhaps saying: "Our preacher is stretching things now." Am I stretching things? Now look here, and answer my questions truthfully. Were you at the annual meeting last year?

Ans. No, I wasn't.

Q. Did you have valid reasons for not being there?

Ans. I was pretty busy, but I suppose I could have been there.

Q. Who would have been appointed janitor last fall if all had stayed away from the meeting as you did?

Ans. I suppose, nobody.

Q. Do you think the church would have been heated by spontaneous combustion of the ashes in the furnaces?

Ans. Hardly.

Q. Would you sit through services in a temperature of 10 to 20 below?

Ans. No, I wouldn't.

Well, there you are. No business meeting, no janitor; no janitor, no heated church; no heated church no services. I am not stretching things. If all did as you do, who do not attend the business meetings of our congregation, we would very soon not have public worship in our midst and very soon thereafter little or no private worship either.

* * *

Dear member, it is a very serious matter that our annual meetings are so poorly attended. Perhaps it is true that there is little business to transact, but, that little must be done or our congregation with its soul-saving work can not continue to exist, and there is no one that has one whit more of a duty to attend to it than you have.

Every voting member should be present at the business meetings of the congregation unless prevented by good and sufficient causes. Neglect to do so is a neglect of duty.

The annual meeting of the Saude church will be held on the third Wednesday, the 16th of November, one o'clock p. m. and Jerico the third Friday, the 18th of this month, ten o'clock a. m.

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SPIRITISM.

"The theory that spirits of the dead could converse by raps, etc., with certain living persons known as 'mediums,' was not new. But it remained for the Fox sisters to revive that belief, and to start in America (March 31, 1848) a wave of spiritistic belief that quickly spread over the whole world, and found thousands of converts."

"After Rochester came Albany and Troy"—"Next came New York. Here, it seems, there were great demonstrations, the manifestations having been witnessed for nearly three years. Noted men, among them William Cullen Bryant, and other literary celebrities, attended seances and were puzzled. Finally they were given 'messages' that made them believers."

Soon after, the sisters visited Europe. The cleverest men and women of the day flocked to their seances. Thackeray, Browning, the Czar of Russia—thronged of geniuses, celebrities, kings and queens—took eager interest in the mystery. Scientists set clever traps to expose the girls' possible trickery. But from each test the sisters emerged triumphant. At last even those who refused to believe in Spiritism confessed that they could not explain how the thing was done, nor discover the faintest trace of fraud. Countless people were certain that these uneducated girls had in some supernatural way the means of forming the connecting link between this world and the unknown. Other mediums followed in their footsteps. Spiritism became a fad—almost a religion. In America and Europe alike it was practiced."

"At the Academy of Music, in New York, October 1888, Margaretta Fox made public confession of the fraud, showing also the way she had produced the mystic rappings by snapping her toe joints, and revealing other secrets of the fake". . . .

"Not all phenomena of Spiritism are to be explained as so much deception. Many bear an undeniably supernatural character, which, however, must not be referred to the spirits of the departed, but to the obsession of demons, and as such belong to the lying wonders of the latter days expressly foretold in Scripture (Math. 24, 24.) Spiritism has assumed the habiliments of ancient sorcery. When pianos suddenly rise in air or commence to play without contact, when books are brought through locked doors into the room, and human beings float out at one window and in at the other, there is a supernatural agency at work. The spirit which through the mediums conveys information based upon superhuman knowledge; foretells future events; reveals that which is hidden in the human heart and soul; imitates the handwriting of persons long dead, and confers supernatural knowledge—is the same infernal spirit which made the demoniacs clairvoyant in the days of Christ and prophesied through the woman of Endor."

These quotations are all from a book entitled SPIRITISM. A Study of Its Phenomenon and Religious Teaching, by Th. Graebner.

Any one wishing to know all that is worth while knowing about Spiritism or Spiritualism, mediums, talking to the dead will act wisely if he secures and reads this 128-page book by Prof. Graebner. The price is 60 cents in paper binding, 90 cents in cloth binding. Order from Luth. Synod Book Co., 1101 14th Ave., S. E., Minneapolis.

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