

# The Assistant Pastor

*The Wedding Month*  
1937

## Marriage

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Man was created for domestic life. "The Lord said, it is not good that man should be alone: I will make him an helpmeet for him" (Gen. 2:18). "Thus it was that when God created man, he created them male and female" (Gen. 1:27). "And when God had made the woman, He brought her unto the man (Gen. 2:22), and Adam received her, consenting to cleave to her and be one flesh with her" (Gen. 2:23-24). And God blessed them and said unto them, "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:28). Thus was the domestic state established and sanctified in Paradise.

One man and one woman were, with their mutual consent, united in wedlock, to cleave to each other in perpetual union, to be one flesh, and thus to become father and mother, to be fruitful and multiply, bringing forth children, who should be members of the common household, until they too, leaving father and mother, should establish households of their own, the man cleaving unto his wife and being one flesh with her. And thus should the earth be replenished (Gen. 1:28). In that way the family relations were determined, the relations of husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters, and all this according to the plan of creation and under the blessing of God, for the welfare of mankind.

One of the chief purposes of marriage is the procreation of children. According to the plan of creation and the order established by the moral law, it is in wedlock that children should be conceived. Maternity outside of marriage is a perversion of nature and a moral enormity. And, likewise, the prevention of offsprings in wedlock is a wilful frustration of a divinely ordained purpose of marriage and an offense against the moral law. "Children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is His reward" (Ps. 127:3). When Rachel "said unto Jacob, give me children," Jacob answered, "Am I in God's stead?" (Gen. 30:1-2). God can give and withhold children, and He has reserved to Himself the execution and fulfillment of His blessing. It is, therefore, meet and right that parents should pray to God for the fruit of the womb (1 Sam. 1-11 ff.) and it is supreme arrogance to interfere with God's dispensation of His blessing.



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### The Assistant Pastor

Published and edited by the pastor of the Jerico and Saude Lutheran churches, affiliated with the Norwegian Synod of the Synodical Conference.

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### Church Directory

H. M. Tjernagel, Pastor

#### SAUDE CONGREGATION

Trustees: Chris Treider, John Borlaug, E. Firkingsstad.  
Treasurer: Oscar Natvig.  
Secretary: Ole N. Anderson.  
Cemetery Committee: Martin Borlaug, Chris Treider, Mrs. Andrina Munson, Mrs. C. O. Natvig, Miss J. Ellingson.  
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Omar Miller, president; Mrs. Chris. Treider, secretary; Miss Martha Munson, treasurer.

#### JERICO CONGREGATION

Trustees: Geo. N. Anderson, Ole C. Johnson, J. A. Knutson.  
Secretary: A. N. Anderson.  
Treasurer: J. A. Robinson.  
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. A. N. Anderson, president; Mrs. Herman Ronnfeldt, secretary; Mrs. Henry Robinson, treasurer.

### Standing Services

#### JERICO

First Sunday, Norwegian, October-April, 10:30 a. m.  
Third Sunday, English, October-April, 10:30 a. m.  
Saturday School every Saturday, 10 a. m.  
Confirmation class, Fridays, 2 p. m.

#### SAUDE

Second Sunday, bilingual service, Oct.-April, 10:45 a. m.  
Fourth Sunday, English, October-April, 10:45 a. m.  
Saturday School, 2 p. m.  
Confirmation class, Fridays, 9:30 a. m.  
Fifth Sunday by special announcement.

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The Assistant Pastor wishes every reader a pleasant and blessed summer season. For the present, we say good bye. God willing we will be back in September.

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**Baptisms:** Orin Alfred, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred T. Johnson, born April 15, baptized May 2. Sponsors: Mr. and Mrs. Fred Amman, Mr. and Mrs. H. Ronnfeldt.

**David Larry**, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Geo. N. Anderson, born April 3, baptized May 2. Sponsors: Mr. and Mrs. Nels Ellingson, Cletus and Edith Anderson.

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The Jerico Aid was entertained by Mrs. Tom Thompson April 15, by Mrs. Olaf Knutson April 28, and by Mrs. Otto Tjernagel May 12.

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The interior decorating of the Jerico church is postponed and will not be commenced until after June 6.

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Our Saturday Schools closed May 15. The attendance throughout the school year has been fairly good, speaking in general. In the case of some few children, it has been very poor; it has amounted to almost nothing. If such children be asked to attend confirmation class two years, we presume the pastor will be pronounced unreasonable and unfair. The vacation will last till September 4.

The Saude Aid which has hibernated since last October came out in full force to the home of Mrs. Elmer Natvig May 6.

May 13 was spring cleaning day at the Saude cemetery and church. Mrs. Enos Firkenstad served lunch to the laborers at the parsonage after the work was completed.

The Saude Aid is determined on making an effort to get the basement of the church fixed up so that it can be used for Aid meetings and other gatherings. The Aid has appointed a committee of five to study the problem from every phase and angle and report back to the Aid. Martin Borlaug, Andrew Vaala, Ole Anderson, Mrs. Nels Ellingson, and Mrs. Chris Treider were appointed. The success or failure of the movement will depend to a great extent on the work of this committee. We look for success because the committee is a good one.

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Confirmation exercises at Saude May 13 and at Jerico June 6. The custom of taking up an offering at the confirmation services is an old one and has been practiced as long as we have had confirmations.

A convention offering has become a custom among us in later years, and has proved a great help to our synodical work. Formerly only those who were present at the Synod meeting took part in the offering on Synod Sunday. Now opportunity is given all members of Synod to bring an offering on that Sunday by means of envelopes which are distributed to every member and when collected are by our delegates placed on the altar as our congregations offering on Synod Sunday.

Due to the fact that our confirmations and our annual Synod convention are so close together this year, we propose that the convention offering envelopes be brought in and placed on the altar on confirmation Sunday thus combining the two offerings in one. If, for this reason, you wish to increase the amount you place in your envelope, good and well. Should there be loose change in the offering, that will not be added to the convention offering but will be sent to the Nigeria Mission, a negro mission lately started by the Synodical Conference in Africa.

May God bless the coming events, our confirmations and our Synod convention, also the Y. P. convention to be held in Northwood the latter part of June.

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### BETROTHAL

While Mary was espoused—engaged—to Joseph she was, by the angel of the Lord called his *wife* (Mat. 1:20) and he was by the Holy Spirit called her *husband* (Mat. 1:19). In Deuteronomy we read: "If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and he lie with her, then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of the city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel because she cried not, being in the city, and the man because he has humbled his neighbor's *wife* (Deut. 22:23-24). Here the man who has lain with a virgin who was betrothed unto an husband, is said to have humbled his neighbor's *wife*. And the penalty is the same as that imposed upon an adulterer who has been found lying with a woman married to an husband in consummated marriage (Deut. 22:22).

The difference, then, between betrothal and consummated marriage is, in the forum of the church,



not in the *essence* of marriage, but in its *use*; not in the possession, but in the enjoyment of the specific rights of husband and wife. The betrothed are, consequently, in fact a married couple who have agreed to *defer*, for a time, cohabitation and conjugal intercourse, to enjoy each other's society under restrictions imposed by time-honored traditional customs with which they are expected to comply and to which they have tacitly consented to conform their conduct during this first stage of their married life.

While the engaged are looked upon as belonging to each other, and may, without giving offense, betoken their intimate and exclusive relation to each other in various ways not to be tolerated in persons not thus related, they are at the same time looked upon as recognizing and respecting those restrictions which by common usage and decency such couples take upon themselves and permit to be imposed upon them by their friends and by society at large. This being the general supposition, it is a breach of confidence and an offense of decency when, during their betrothal and before their "wedding" they, for lack of continence, and deceiving their friends and society, enjoy what they have agreed to defer, namely intercourse whereby they become one flesh.

A valid betrothal is one entered into freely, honestly, unconditionally and with parental consent, and cannot be rightfully dissolved by the will of the parties, but is subject to the injunction: "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Anyone inclined to hold that this applies only to such as are legally married and not to betrothed must disprove what is taught in the first paragraph about betrothal.

The breaking of an engagement by mutual agreement is of frequent occurrence. A and B are engaged in valid betrothal. On better acquaintance with each other they learn to understand that they have made a mistake, that they are ill mated, that their dispositions and tastes are in painful disagreement. For a while, perhaps, quarrels are followed by reconciliations. But finally the time comes when all concerned are agreed that this unfortunate engagement should be cancelled. "Better now than later" is considered the course of wisdom. Such a conclusion, however, is contrary to the rulings of Him who has instituted marriage and who pronounces the betrothed husband and wife from the moment of their betrothal. The breaking of a valid engagement is divorce before God as well as the breaking of consummated marriage. Let the period of courtship be taken seriously and prayerfully and broken engagements and broken homes will be averted.

Where the marriage bond is held sacred not only in consummated wedlock, but also in the form of valid betrothal, a host of evils and heartsores are avoided, while on the contrary breach of betrothal is not only wrong in its nature, but also an evil in its consequences. The sacredness of marriage, if set aside in one form or stage of married life, is held of little consequence in any form or stage. Divorces would be of comparatively rare occurrence if the nature and significance, the dignity and obligation of betrothal or marriage engagements were properly understood and duly respected. The wanton disregard of marriage in its initiatory stage results in

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a low estimate of the entire institution. When the sacredness of the marriage bond is no longer a matter of conscience, the natural tendency is toward an increase of matrimonial cases in the courts which must interfere where the functions of conscience have failed of their proper effect or have been altogether suppressed. And a breach of betrothal is a sin which brings down upon the sinner and his accomplices and abettors the displeasure of a righteous God, and should expose the offender to the well regulated and energetic discipline of the church.

What you have here read on marriage and betrothal has been copied almost word for word from the writings of the sainted Prof. A. L. Graebner of our St. Louis Seminary. Prof. Graebner was an unusually brilliant scholar and a humble bible student and teacher. May the sound instruction he here has given us prove a blessing to many.

While on this subject, we urge parents who have the welfare of their children truly at heart not only to read but study Prof. W. A. Maier's "For Better Not for Worse." This book is found in a number of our homes. Use it, then loan it to others. Let it be at work somewhere all the time. It is a well of crystal clear Christian instruction regarding marriage and the many, many related subjects. The price of the book is \$2.00 at our Synod book store, Mankato.

Finally, a statement regarding our future practice as to officiating at marriages. We have no ambition to be "a marrying parson" to whom couples come from far and wide to be married. However, we do consider it a "red letter day" when we join in holy wedlock couples from our own flocks, and especially when the ceremony takes place in church before assembled friends and relatives who join in the prayers for God's blessing upon the bride and groom.

Couples coming to us from other communities or congregations than our own will be met with coldness and suspicion that all is not as it should be. They will in all likelihood be told to go back to where they came from and be married there. We are not at all interested, even for a liberal fee, in being party to a marriage planned as a surprise to relatives and friends.

If a member of ours has chosen a mate from a neighbor congregation not of our Synod and desires us to officiate at the marriage, we will ask the question: "Have you definitely agreed upon which church you will attend and belong to?" If the answer is, "No, not exactly; we have not spoken much about that," then our position will be that we cannot consider officiating until that question is settled. If the answer should be, "Yes, we expect to belong to the other church," then we will say, "You should be married by the pastor of the church you expect to belong to."

We are aware of the fact that this practice has not been strictly followed in the past. We are now convinced that it ought to have been followed and shall, therefore, do so in the future. We feel assured that all who consider the question seriously will arrive at a conclusion in agreement with ours.

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