

# The Assistant Pastor

*April 1939*

## HE BORE THE CROSS FOR ME

Shall we forget  
Our Savior's plea,  
"Could ye not watch  
One hour with Me?"

How can we take our rest and sleep  
When we behold our Savior weep?  
His very hands and face are wet  
With drops of blood on Olivet.  
And when His eyes with tears are dim,  
An angel comes to strengthen Him.

For me He drank  
The cup of woe,  
Then calmly went  
To face the foe.  
And while He spake,  
Lo, Judas came  
And kissed Him with  
The kiss of shame.  
And when they laid  
On Him their hands  
And bound Him with  
Their cruel bands,  
It came to pass  
As Jesus said:  
They all forsook  
Their Lord and fled.

But He, my Savior, bore the cross for me  
From Pilate's hall and on to bitter Calvary.

Luth. Witness.

W. M. Czamanske.



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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, Ned Borlaug, E. Firkingstad.  
Treasurer: Nels Ellingson.  
Secretary: G. G. Vaala.  
Cemetery Committee: Olis Borlaug, Juel Natvig, Miss Carrie Natvig, Mrs. J. Natvig, Mrs. Otto Hanson.  
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Otto Hanson, president; Mrs. Carl Miller, secretary; Mrs. Oscar Natvig, treasurer.

### JERICO CONGREGATION

Trustees: C. Cutsforth, Ole C. Johnson, Olaf Roberson.  
Secretary: A. N. Anderson.  
Treasurer: J. A. Robinson.  
Cemetery Committee: Mrs. Fred Amman, Mrs. L. A. Robinson, Mrs. S. T. Roberson.  
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. M. A. Robinson, president; Mrs. Lloyd Roberson, secretary; Mrs. Harvey Roberson, treasurer.

## Standing Services

### JERICO

First Sunday, Norwegian, October-May, 10:30 a. m.  
Third Sunday, English, October-May, 10:30 a. m.  
Saturday school every Saturday, 10:00 a. m.  
Confirmation class, Fridays, 2:00 p. m.

### SAUDE

Second Sunday, bilingual service, October-May, 10:45 a. m.  
Fourth Sunday, English, October-May, 10:45 a. m.  
Saturday school, 2:00 p. m.  
Confirmation class, Fridays, 9:30 a. m.  
Fifth Sunday by special announcement.

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**Maundy Thursday:** Communion services in the Norwegian language 10:30 a. m.; Communion services in the English language in the evening at 8 o'clock. Both services at Jerico.

**Good Friday,** at Saude, same as above.

**Easter Day services:** Saude, 10:45 a. m.; Jerico, 2 o'clock p. m.

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**Anna Mathilda,** a child of Fred Steensland and wife Martha, née Munson, was born February 16th and baptized March 12th. Sponsors: Mr. and Mrs. Iver Natvig, Mr. and Mrs. Ned Borlaug.

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**Mrs. Andrew J. Johnson** entertained the Jerico Aid in the church parlor on the first day of March.

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**Mrs. Enus Firkingstad and Mrs. Martin Borlaug** entertained the Saude Aid at the latter's home March 23rd.

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**The Jerico Y. P.** met in the church parlor for Bible study Sunday evening, March 19th. The class is making use of the Study Topics as outlined in the Sentinel. There are many who have not yet attended the class. Why don't you come?

## OBITUARY

Alna Carlott Johnson was born January 1, 1928. Shortly before last Christmas she was taken sick with inflammatory rheumatism and suffered much until death came the 22nd of March. The funeral was held Saturday the 25th. She is deeply mourned

by her parents, Mr. and Mrs. K. C. Johnson, and by three brothers, Charles, Walter, and Marland.

## The Funeral Sermon.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." Psalm 116:15.

Every family knows something of the joy of the precious hour when an absent member of the family returns home. The happiness of the home is great; the day is precious indeed. This is especially true if the absence has been fraught with danger to the absent one.

When we think of such an occurrence, we understand the significance, the meaning of the word "precious" as used in our Bible verse, somewhat better. It says: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

The three significant words in this verse are: *Precious, death and saints.* Let us first try to get a clear understanding of who the saints are. If the question were asked, some would perhaps answer: They are the great men of God who now are in Heaven, such as St. Matthew, St. John, St. Peter, St. Paul, etc. Others might say: All who have died in the Lord and are saved, are saints. Such answer would be correct as far as it goes, but it is only a part of the answer.

All who have died in the Lord are saved and are now saints before the throne of God whether they were great or whether they were unknown men, women, or children here on earth. Your child, your parent, your friend who "died in the Lord" and you laid them away in the grave, are as truly saints as St. Paul, St. Peter, or St. Mary, the mother of our Savior. One may shine brighter in the kingdom of glory than the other, but no one is more perfectly holy or more perfectly happy than the other.

The saints in Heaven can not die, they have entered upon life eternal. This being true, the saints of our Bible verse can not be the saints of Heaven, for it says: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the *death* of His saints." This forces us to the conclusion that there are saints on earth, for in no other place do people die.

And this is true. There are saints not only in Heaven but also on earth. The saints at Lydda, at Ephesus, at Achaia, at Phillipi and other places are spoken of. Paul says: "Many of the saints did I shut up in prison." The same Apostle also speaks of himself as a saint when he says: "Who am less than the least of the saints."

From this we see that Paul did not have to die in order to become a saint. He was a saint while yet in the flesh here on earth.

If he had not been a saint here on earth he would not now be a saint in Heaven. No one who is not a saint here on earth will ever be a saint in the life to come.

So far our discourse has seemed quite impersonal, but this last statement makes it decidedly personal and every soul who hopes to be a saint in the life to come will anxiously ask: "How can I become a saint in this life?" Lodge religion will answer: "Develop a good, noble character." Other religions will say: "Lead a decent life and do good."

The Bible answers: "You must be cleansed of all sin," there must not be one sin left. Every sin in word, thought, desire, and deed must be removed from you, washed away. Saint is a Latin word and



means a holy one. Every one knows that to be holy is to be free from sin as God is free from sin.

How then can a sinner hope to become a saint, a holy one, in life or in eternity, on earth or in Heaven? Then it is impossible. Dear anxious soul, it seems impossible, indeed, but do not despair, it is not impossible. A way has been found but not by philosophers, thinkers, or scholars. The intelligence, reason, and ingenuity of men has had no part in its discovery or invention.

The way that a sinner may become a saint was conceived and planned in the councils of our Most High God. In the councils of the Blessed Trinity it was decreed that God Himself should come to earth in the likeness of sinful flesh. He did come in the fulness of time, born of a woman. He who knew no sin was made to be sin for us; all of the sin of all the world was laid upon Him. All of the righteous wrath of a holy God against sin was focused, centered, upon him. All of the punishment for all sin was visited upon Him. The God-man Jesus Christ was made a curse for all. Through His riven side flowed the blood that cleanseth from all sin.

When the sin of a sinner is washed away, then he is free from sin, is he not? If he is free from sin he is holy, and if holy he is a saint. "He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." All of the righteousness, all of the holiness of Jesus Christ is imputed, accounted to — tilregnet — all who believe the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

"The faithful in Christ," the true believers in Jesus, are saints, and their death is a return home to their Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier after a dangerous absence in a sinful world full of deadly enemies. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

Dear mourners, you have the blessed and certain hope that she who has been taken away from you has been received into the company of the saints before the throne of God, high above the turmoil of a wicked world, and out of reach of sin and wickedness, of pain and sorrow. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

### THE STORY OF THE EMPTY PEW

"I am just a pew. Being located near the front of your church, I do not see many people. But I have discussed the matter with the other pews, and we all agree that even though we are not called upon for frequent service, we prefer being pews rather than polished tavern bars or waxed dance floors. Some of the trees we knew in the forest were drafted into service for such bars and floors. But although they see more people than we do, we are proud to be in God's house and serving people who worship God.

"But there is the rub. Being located near the front of the church, I do not serve many people. . . . There are usually a number of us pews who have nothing to do during the regular hour for worship. Fairness makes us admit that for a few special occasions like Christmas, Easter, and funerals we see a host of unfamiliar visitors, and we are

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all given a chance to serve. But usually some of us are left alone.

"Then we empty pews make ourselves heard. The people that come to church are always sitting behind us, so we can easily attract their attention. We tell them: 'You faithful few! You would like to belong to an active Christian congregation. But you know well enough that a congregation is only as active, progressive, and faithful as its individual members. We empty pews are solemn reminders of many persons and families that could be here today. And where were you last Sunday? If you and all your fellow members would be here each Sunday, we pews would all be occupied. Your church is not as progressive and beneficial as it could be, because you people do not all make use of it as you ought to. If you do come regularly yourself, what effort do you make to have others fill these extra seats? How much better it would be if you would insist that your children would sit here. And how about this relative of yours — and that friend?'"

"But we empty pews speak our loudest to the pastor when he steps before the congregation. To be sure he does as well as he can, even though his sermons may not always find the same response in the hearts of the members. He tries to speak to the members present, and we can see that he makes a bold attempt to ignore us empty seats. But we get him. Many's the time we have cried out to him:

"'Pastor, don't make believe you do not see us empty pews. We're here and you know it. And we represent all those persons who for some reason think that they can get along without God's Word today. The person missing from this particular seat and that one over there are sick, and we hope that they will recover speedily. But for most of the rest we can only say that they are growing indifferent. If they stay away often enough, perhaps you may never see them here again.'"

"He hears us, and we can see that it saddens him. His voice does not ring out with the same joy that is evident when our places are all filled. He is thinking about those absent members. Will he see them next Sunday — or the Sunday after? More than that, will the Lord see them again? For how can those people expect to associate with God forever in His heavenly home if they do not associate with Him in His house of worship where He reveals Himself? . . .

"Yes, not all the inspiration comes from the pulpit. Much of it comes from the pews — the pews that are filled with attentive men and women, boys and girls, thirsty for the Water of Life. As an empty pew I cannot give any inspiration whatever. But I can testify to you folks that you can add much to the service by a faithful attendance every Sunday. The best part of it is that you derive the direct benefit. Do you usually refuse gifts? The best gift you could ever hope for is from God, and is given only through His Word.

"So I leave it to you. Will you do your part in filling these empty pews? You will experience that such efforts will not only prove beneficial for those additional people attending services, but you yourself will derive added joy and blessing."

—Melvin Croll in Northwestern Lutheran.

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