

The Assistant Pastor

October, 1943

Always A Priority



The Church

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.

Church Directory

N. S. Tjernagel, Pastor
R. L. Wiechmann, Assistant

SAUDE CONGREGATION

Trustees: Carl Miller, John Natvig, Martin Borlaug.
Treasurer: Milton Boleng.
Secretary: Fred Steensland.
Cemetery Committee: Oscar Natvig, Henry Borlaug, N. S. Tjernagel.
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Arthur Anderson, president; Mrs. Omer Ellingson, secretary; Miss Adelia Natvig, treasurer.

JERICO CONGREGATION

Trustees: J. N. Anderson, Tom Roberson, C. O. Vigdal.
Secretary: Alfred N. Anderson.
Treasurer: Jeff A. Knutson.
Ladies' Aid: Mrs. Gilman Robinson, president; Mrs. Cletus Anderson, secretary; Mrs. C. Cutsforth, treasurer.
Cemetery Committee: Mrs. Carl A. Knutson, Mrs. M. A. Robinson, Mrs. C. O. Vigdal.

CAUSE FOR REJOICING

Soon after your pastor began his work in these congregations he was requested to arrange so that there could be services regularly every Sunday in the Saude and Jerico churches. He was very glad that he had the health and strength necessary to do that. Accordingly a schedule has prevailed where services were alternated between the two churches at 9 and 10:30 A. M. respectively. That arrangement has served a very good purpose as the attendance records verify. The church attendance during the past two years has actually increased by 24% as a result of the new schedule. That means, in simpler terms, that where three people used to go to church under the old schedule, another person has been added so that there are four people in church now, where there were only three before.

That a pastor and congregation has been enabled to increase attendance by that much is cause for rejoicing indeed, because that is a remarkable increase. But when we recall that the average attendance of the Saude congregation last year was only 44%, and that of Jerico 32% we can scarcely be satisfied.

Even under the present schedule the congregations have suffered the inconvenience of having services at different times on alternating Sundays, and we still have the winter months when the 9 o'clock service is cancelled. Small congregations are often obliged to make the best of such inconveniences, but it is a pity that two of the larger congregations in the Synod must be content with such poor service. We are well aware of the fact that it is difficult for farmers to get their work done in time to get to a nine o'clock service, and it has been noticeable that these early services have not been as well attended as the 10:30 service.

Because of these inconveniences which the congregations were suffering under, your pastor was overjoyed when he was enabled to secure a teacher

for Saude Lutheran School who was also a graduate of a Theological Seminary.

Now, with Mr. Wiechmann here, it will be possible for us to open our church doors at the same time every Sunday morning. No one will be obliged to wonder whether there is a service or not on any given Sunday, or what time the service will be. We shall ask the congregations to continue this schedule through the winter months, December to April, in which we had been having services only every other Sunday, and we take it for granted the congregations will be very grateful for the benefits that they will reap from receiving better service.

This new schedule will bring the congregations to the point where they are actually receiving full time service, and there is certain to be an increase in attendance because of it. This is cause for rejoicing in the hearts of all who appreciate progress.

STATE AND CHURCH

Among our most precious possessions as citizens of the United States is the right, guaranteed us by the Constitution, to worship according to the dictates of our own conscience. We frequently speak gratefully of this right when we speak of the relation between Church and State. But there is another point in the matter of the relation between Church and State that we may also remember.

The State does not merely tolerate the church; it appreciates the value of the church. Our leaders in government regard the Church as the very backbone and foundation of society. The State realizes that freedom and liberty is soon lost to that nation that loses religion.

The State acknowledges the Church to be an educational institution. That is true, for the principal function of the church is to teach. It teaches Law and Gospel. It teaches men to know their sins, to repent of them, and to accept Jesus Christ as their only Savior. Thus, while the church is serving its own interests by its instruction in the way to salvation, it is also serving the interests of the State. As has so often been said, "Whatever makes a good Christian of a man, that also makes him a good citizen." The State is fully aware that its educational institutions are inadequate to develop good character and citizenship in its people, and that it needs the Church to supply the need that secular education is unable completely to fulfill.

How important the State regards the Church as an educational institution is proved by the fact that in time of war the Selective Service Act exempts only one occupation from the draft, namely church workers; pastors and parochial school teachers. It would not do this if it did not regard the Church as a vital influence in our national life.

Whatever we can do now to make our own congregations stronger, more active, more progressive, is a service also to the State. If the State respects the Church as the foundation stone of good citizenship, then it is obvious that a strong, and active congregation is worth more to the State than a weak and inactive congregation.

A GREATER CRIME

Since the Scriptures teach that in God's sight all sins are alike and equally offensive to Him, it may be profitless to make comparisons between sins. We see all about us sins of violence, greed, and lust. We see sinners bringing their own souls to destruction by their rejection of Christ and their continuance in sin. But the sins that sadden us the most are the sins of parents who by their failure to be **good** parents bring not only their own souls, but also the souls of the children whom they love down to the pit of destruction.

Parents must not expect their children to be any different than they themselves have been. It is not likely that your child will live a Christian life if you have not done so yourself. It is not likely that your child will turn out to be a faithful church-goer if you have not attended worship regularly with your children while they were growing up.

No parent who permits his child to go where it pleases or associate with whom it pleases should expect that child to escape unharmed by evil places and uninfluenced by bad company. It is true that in the past some of our young people have been subjected to the dangers of the dance halls that are so popular in our communities and the added danger of strong drink that makes those dance halls so deadly, and have escaped unharmed. But it is also true that very many have not escaped unharmed, and their whole life has been made wretched by the sins of their youth.

The Scriptures demand that you bring your children up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." If you fail your child in this, then you must expect your child to bring grief to you and tragedy to itself. You are warned not only by your church, but by the law enforcement agencies of your country of the gravity of your responsibilities as parents. On this subject we quote from the Northwestern Lutheran the following words of J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the F. B. I.:

"Unless we meet and conquer it, crime among our teen-age youth will stain our cause and shadow our victory. We can win this war, and still lose freedom for all America. For a creeping rot of moral disintegration is eating into our nation. The arrests of teen-age boys and girls, all over the country, are staggering. Some of the crimes youngsters are committing are almost unspeakable. Prostitution, murder, rape. These are ugly words. But it is an ugly situation. If we are to correct it, we must face it.

"The other day a friend of mine, who is a police chief, saw a fifteen-year-old girl coming out of a tavern. She had obviously been drinking. The chief knew her, and knew her family — respectable, serious-minded people. Shocked, he took the girl home to her mother. He told me about it as an example of how even the best homes are being hit. But to me, the rest of the story was even more significant. He had expected the child's mother to be upset, and she was — but not in the way he had expected. She was upset by the indignity he had inflicted on the girl by bringing her home. Of

course the girl had done wrong, she admitted; but she could have been allowed to look after herself. That, the mother insisted, was the way to develop a child's character.

"**And that, I insist, is the kind of crackpot theory which has laid the groundwork for our present surge of teen-age trouble.** Every new case that comes to my desk adds to the overwhelming evidence that when youth commits crime, **a greater crime** has already been committed in the home by failure to instill, by precept and example, the fundamentals of common decency."

ONE CALLING

Let us ever bear in mind that the Christian has but ONE calling on earth — to glorify God by telling others the glad news of the kingdom, by proclaiming to sinners the mercy, grace and faithfulness to God to forgive sin, iniquity and transgressions. To be ambassadors for Christ, to spread abroad such a message of love, is indeed an honor — it is for this the Christian actually lives. He can conceive of no greater privilege. And it is the love of Christ that constrains him to be about the Father's business.

We call this **mission work**. The church, the church body, the synod that is not fired with the spirit for mission work, — that is not interested or only mildly interested in this work, has death gnawing at its vitals. Its days are numbered. It is dying because it has forsaken the element in which it is to live. This is equally true of an individual church or congregation that thinks only of itself and its needs and contributes little or nothing toward the mission treasury of its synod — that church has no future. It is stagnant and is being suffocated by its own selfishness. At the same time it is tying the hands of synod. Synod can only support missions if its members supply it with the means. So then, a church body or synod is as alive or diligent as its constituent congregations or members are alive and diligent, and that life will express itself by diligently doing mission work.

W. J. S. in "Northwestern Lutheran."

A **special service** was held at Saude Lutheran Church on Sunday September 5. The occasion was one of Thanksgiving for the Lord's blessing in enabling the congregation to improve its property by adding a fine basement to its church. The guest speaker was the Rev. Martin Galstad of Northwood, Iowa. The ladies of the congregation served a fine dinner after the service. The guests of honor at the dinner were Mr. Martin Borlaug, who was responsible for the construction work, and the members of the building committee, A. G. Vaala, Nels Ellingson, and Carl Miller. At the conclusion of the dinner the pastor thanked the members of the building committee for their efforts, and for the good judgment they used throughout on the project. The very special thanks of the congregation was extended to Mr. Martin Borlaug for his faithfulness in his work, and for his per-

sistence in meeting and overcoming all the obstacles that faced him in the actual construction. A word of thanks was also offered to the donors whose contributions made the project possible.

The Mission Festivals will be held on the following dates this year. The mission service at Jerico will be held on October 17, and at Saude on November 7. The respective Ladies Aids will serve dinners on both occasions. Please use the Mission Envelope dated October for the offerings on these occasions. You all have, in your packets of envelopes, one colored envelope for each month to be used for your contributions for the work of the church which your congregation is doing in the world at large in cooperation with the other congregations of the Synod. We shall not presume to say how much any individual ought to place in his Mission Envelope, or in any one of the other eleven envelopes. But we can say that we feel that **everyone** should place **something** in each of the twelve envelopes. We may also take for granted that your contributions will be in keeping with the present state of your prosperity. If you were in the habit of placing one dollar in your offering envelopes a few years ago, then surely you will gratefully give more now "as the Lord hath prospered you." Many of you who were unable to give as much as a dollar before will be able to do more now. But I wish to say less about the amounts that you should give, than to urge you all to use each one of your twelve Synod Offering envelopes. The War Bond drives have taught us all that we can give more than we have been in the habit of thinking we can. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

"Grace For Grace" The Synod's Anniversary volume was mailed out to 134 homes in the congregations. It was our intention to mail it to everyone. If anyone was missed it was an oversight, and if you will inform us we shall order a copy for you. We wish to thank all those who have sent us their remittance of one dollar for the book, and shall appreciate a remittance in the near future from the rest. As was stated before, if you do not wish to keep the book, you may return it. But I know you will profit greatly from reading it carefully. One man said "I never understood and appreciated the Synod as I do now after reading "Grace For Grace." It has been a great help to me to read it."

The Lutheran Sentinel, the official church paper of the Norwegian Synod, is being sent to every home in the Saude and Jerico Congregations. However, it may be that there are errors in the addresses and that you are not receiving your copy. If that is the case please let me know so that I can send to the publishers a correction of your address. If you wish to receive the Norwegian "Tidende" it will be sent to you on request. Please inform me, however, and not the publishers, of changes of address or a desire to receive "Tidende."

The Assistant Pastor has on its mailing list a number of persons outside the congregation who have sent in their subscription to us. We are glad to send it out thus to anyone who desires it. If

you wish to send it to friends or relatives residing elsewhere, we shall be glad to receive your request.

"ALWAYS A PRIORITY: The Church." The American Lutheran Publicity is sponsoring a series of full-size billboard posters bearing the above motto, in the larger cities of the country. The motto appealed to us so much that we have used it on the cover-page of this issue of the Assistant Pastor. We have always known that the church is and must always be first in our thoughts. Modern use of the word "Priority" emphasizes the thought for us. The Church has priority in all things, for all things on this earth the church is most important. The photograph used to illustrate the motto is the little church at Jostedalen in Norway, in which many of the pioneers of the Jerico Community were baptized and confirmed.

All our service men are receiving the Assistant Pastor and the Lutheran Sentinel. Once each six weeks they receive a booklet containing daily devotionals. Once each month they receive a leaflet containing a printed service, including a sermon. Once a month they also receive an informal leaflet "At Ease" containing matter of particular interest to them. We said that they are receiving this helpful literature, but we must qualify that statement. They receive it only if you keep your pastor informed of their addresses. Let me entreat you all not to become weary of this task for your boys. The best way to do this is to send me their changes of address as soon as you get them. In order to make it convenient for you I am sending you two form cards. Please fill one of them out and mail to me regardless of how recently you may have sent me an address. Keep the other card and send it to me next time your son or brother changes his address. When that second card comes to me I shall send you another blank one to have on hand until the next change of address occurs.

Connie Fae Grimstad, daughter of Pvt. John G. Grimstad and his wife Virginia Mae (Knutson) Grimstad received Christian Baptism in the Jerico church on Sunday June 27, 1943. Sponsors were Mr. and Mrs. Thom Thompson, and Mr. and Mrs. Andrew J. Johnson. The child's birthdate is April 19, 1943.

Sara Kristine Steensland, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Steensland of the Saude congregation, born on August 7, 1943, received Christian Baptism at the Saude Lutheran Church on September 5, 1943. The sponsors were Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Natvig, and Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Roberson.

Saude Lutheran School patrons held an informal meeting at the school on the evening of Tuesday September 28. The following School Board was elected. Carlyle Natvig, Chairman; Enus Ferkingstad, Secretary; T. G. Vaala, Treasurer. After the meeting lunch was served by Mrs. Ole N. Anderson, Mrs. Geo. N. Anderson, and Mrs. N. S. Tjernagel. The teacher, Mr. R. L. Wiechmann, spoke briefly to the parents expressing his pleasure over the very satisfactory progress of the children so far.