

The Assistant Pastor

January, 1944

Wise Men still seek the Savior!

Legendary accounts tell us that there were three wise men who came to Bethlehem at the time of the Savior's birth, and that their names were Caspar, Balthasar, and Melchior. Caspar is said to have been a ruddy and beardless youth, Balthasar swarthy and in the prime of life, and Melchior an old man with long hair and a white beard. It is said that they were descendants of the three sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japhet. Thus the wise men are made representatives of the three ages of life: youth, middle age, and old age, and also representatives of the three original races of the earth. These legends may make interesting reading, but such speculations are both useless and unnecessary. The Scriptures tell us the important things about them, the things we need to know.

Scripture characterizes these men as wise, calling them wise men. We may ask what their wisdom consisted in. Were they known as philosophers or doctors in their homeland? Were they scientists or astrologers? Were they historians, soothsayers, or even magicians? We do not know. But of this we may be certain, Scripture does not call them wise men because of any of those things. The holy writer calls them wise men because they sought and worshipped the Christ-child.

They came simply to find Him of whom God had spoken, and by so doing they became worthy to be called wise men. They who had been wise in accepting God's invitation to go and see the Savior, were now filled with wisdom as they learned to know Him, the world's Redeemer. What they learned to know at Bethlehem was to be from thenceforth their crowning wisdom, overshadowing any wisdom they may have had before.

When, after a long journey, these men finally found the Savior, they exhibited further evidence of their wisdom as they fell down on their knees and worshipped Him and presented unto Him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. As soon as they found Him, their knowing resulted in doing, their wisdom bore its fruit in their worship and in the homage they paid with their gifts. They had found the Savior and, mindful of their sins, they fell down on their knees before Him who had saved them from everlasting death.

Today, **wise men still seek the Savior.** There may be much wisdom and learning in the world, but no wisdom able to prevent crime, to put an end to warfare, or to save men's souls from eternal damnation. That wisdom is to be found only in the Holy Scriptures. Therefore we may truthfully say that only those are truly wise who, like the wise men, seek their Savior. Theirs is wisdom possessed not exclusively by the great and mighty, but by the humble in spirit, regardless of their station in life. This is a wisdom, as

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. E. 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. J. C. Johnson, secretary; Mrs. C. Cutsforth, treasurer.
Cemetery Committee: Mrs. Carl A. Knutson, Mrs. M. A. Robinson, Mrs. C. O. Vigdal.

Christ himself says, which is possessed in the greatest degree by little children who accept Him in their simple trustful way.

The wise men had a brilliant star to direct them to the manger at Bethlehem. They were in no danger of losing their way on the long journey they undertook, for God caused that star to lead them unerringly. We who are seeking the Savior now have an equally clear light to guide us to Jesus. The Lord has said, "Seek and ye shall find," and we, seeking Him in His word, the Bible, can not fail to find Him. Nor, finding Him, can we fail to fall down and worship Him as the wise men did, paying our homage through our gifts. We shall be wise, knowing that **Wise men still seek the Savior!**

"THESE THINGS SHALL BE ADDED UNTO YOU"

The Holy Scriptures hold a wonderful promise before us in the words, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Though we can scarcely presume to say that we have sought the kingdom of God, and Christ's righteousness as we should have, we can say that during 1943 God "added" a great many things unto us. He has given our armed forces a measure of progress against the enemy, so that we are able to look confidently forward to victory in the future. He watched carefully over our men at arms, so that from these congregations not one, at this time, has been killed or wounded. In this year when we so sorely needed it, He gave us a bountiful harvest. These, and many other things He gave us during the past year.

What may we look forward to in the coming year? Only God knows what the actual events of the year will be. But of one thing we may be sure: God will continue to keep His promises! As we pray for our country, for our sons, and for ourselves let us remember the promise He gave in

Matthew 6:33, because He will keep that promise too. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

A YEAR OF SORROW

It may be, as many have said, that our country will be victorious over at least some of its enemies in the year 1944. That may or may not prove true. But even if it should be true, 1944 will be a very sorrowful year for this country, because this will be the last year of life for many American boys. Every one of them that falls will leave a saddened family and a grief-stricken group of friends.

How can we comfort and encourage those who now are concerned about the welfare of their husbands, sons, and brothers in the danger zones? How will we comfort them when the time comes when we may have to gather to hold a memorial service?

To say that it is glorious to die for one's country will be a rather empty comfort when death comes to one that is near and dear to you. But there are two things that will comfort every Christian. The first of these is that Jesus Christ died to forgive the sins of all men, and to assure salvation for all believers. If you brought your son up in the knowledge of his Savior, then his death on the battle-field will be the beginning of eternal peace, and in Christ, an everlasting victory. The second thing that will comfort and encourage every Christian is the fact that your boy, in bearing arms for his country is doing what is right, right in the sight of his country, and right in the sight of God, for God has ordained governments, and they call men into service by divine right. There is no Christian who would not rather have his son fall in battle than fail to do what is right, to fail to do his duty. We want our boys to come back safe and sound, but much more we want them to do what is right. We want our boys to return to their homes, but much more we want them to reach their heavenly home.

"PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE"

In His last conversation with the eleven disciples, as it is recorded in the last chapter of Mark, Jesus commanded them, saying: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." And so that there might be no doubt what He meant by the Gospel that He wanted them to preach He summarized it in the words: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

We have always accepted those words as showing us also what we are to do, and as showing what the work of the church is to be. Namely that the gospel is to be preached so that **souls** may be saved.

More and more we find that the modern church of today is departing from the commission that Christ gave it and all Christians and is turning

toward other endeavors. An example of this tendency was made manifest in the Christmas editorial of the Christmas issue of a weekly magazine of national circulation. The editorial spoke of the "modern" meaning of Christmas, and of tendencies in the Protestant Church of today. In summing up it said:

"The accent (in the modern church) has shifted from the problem of saving the individual soul to the problem of establishing upon the earth a real brotherhood of man."

Perhaps you are shocked, as your pastor was, to find that anyone could write a statement of that kind. What is still more shocking is the fact that it is true. That is the tendency in the modern Protestant Church, including the liberal branches of the Lutheran church.

Just think of it, the church turning its accent **away from** the problem of saving the individual soul. Christ died to save souls. He did not hang on the cross to make the world a better place to live in. His agony did not lessen the agony of the thief on the cross, but it did save that criminal's soul. In none of His conversations did He tell the disciples how to improve living conditions among people; He only told them what to preach so the souls of people might be saved. Christ was never concerned about "social" problems, only about spiritual problems. When He performed miracles it was almost always in behalf of those who had already come to faith in Him.

If Christ had come to earth merely to establish a brotherhood among men, then it would have been better that He had come in the form in which the Jews had expected their Messiah to come, namely as a mighty prince who would rule the world with a strong hand. If He came for the purpose of establishing a great brotherhood among men, then we must say, in view of the present world war, that He was a great failure. If the establishment of a brotherhood of men is the fundamental function of the church today, we must say that **it is** a failure, for there is a minimum of real brotherhood in the world today.

But we must face the fact. The largest part of the church **has** ceased to be concerned primarily with the salvation of the individual soul. We who still cling to Christ's command to preach the Gospel, rather than social reforms, are in a minority. The larger bodies will try to swallow us up in unholy unions, saying that the larger we are, as a church body, the greater our influence on the world will be. No matter how few we may be, we shall have to gird ourselves for future conflict with any and all denominations whose accent has shifted away from the problem of saving the individual soul.

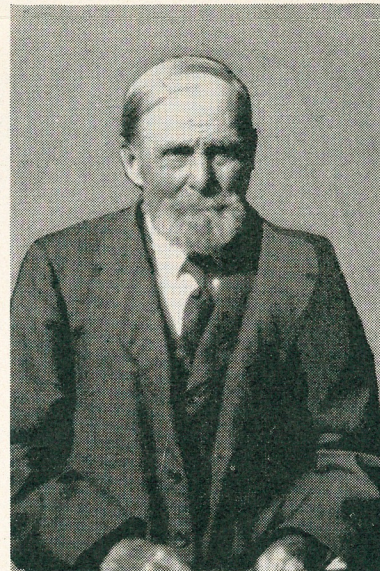
A church with any other "accent" is simply another political body which sooner or later will come into grips with the state and its proper functions. A church with any other "accent" is no longer a church, and has no reason for existence.

Let our accent and motto be, "Bringing Christ To The Sinner"; any other is unworthy of the Christian Church.

OBITUARY

Nels Paulson was born on November 11, 1851, at Østre Toten, in Norway. He was the eldest of six children of Paul and Kari Nelson. He was baptized and confirmed in Norway and immigrated to the United States when he was twenty years old. He arrived in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1871 and found work as a farm hand near Milwaukee. After working one year he had saved sufficient money to send passage for his parents and his four sisters and one brother to come to Milwaukee from Norway.

He continued to work in Milwaukee until 1886 when his father died. He felt then that it would be best for his mother and younger sister to live in the city, so with them he moved to Chicago, Ill. where he established a home for them. After the death of his mother in 1890, he continued working



Nels Paulson

in Chicago until 1901, when he moved to Iowa where he established the home in which he was to live until his death. His brother and sisters all married and continued to live in Chicago where they all now are buried.

On June 22, 1895, he married Mary Bjondahlen. Two children were born to this union, Martin who died at the age of sixteen years on March 5, 1913, and a daughter, Pearl, who so faithfully cared for her parents in their old age. Mrs. Paulson died on March 19, 1933.

On August 25, 1935, Mr. Paulson became ill of cardiac asthma. He remained confined to his bed from February 18, 1937, until his death on November 18, 1943. During that time his daughter was constantly at his bedside to care for him in a manner that has been the admiration of all her friends. The deceased had reached the age of 92 years and 7 days.

The best epitaph that we can place over his grave is the word that "He Died in Faith." Patiently he had awaited the time when the Lord might take him to eternity, and in His time the Lord graciously gave him a peaceful and blessed

death from which he shall arise on the great day of Judgment. Blessed be the memory of this pious patriarch among us.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Annual Meetings will be held as follows: Saude, January 19, and Jerico, January 21. Both meetings will begin at 1:30 in the afternoon. I wish I could think of some really forceful and effective way of impressing on the voters of both congregations the importance of these meetings which we hold once each year. It is so easy to think that others can take care of the things that come up at the annual meetings. Others say, "The congregation is run by just a few anyway, what's the use for me to come." To that we must say that if it were not for that faithful "few" who have been attending the annual meetings, the congregations would have been dead long ago. It may be that you come to the annual meeting and do not speak a single word. In spite of that your presence has been a great help, because you have cast your vote, and your moral support has been added to the management of the affairs of your congregation. The things that are brought before the annual meetings are important, vital indeed, to the life and welfare of the church. For you to be absent without good cause is to be guilty of a grievous shirking of a God-given duty. Your pastor and your congregation request most urgently that you be there.

The Christmas Season, with all its festivities, was most pleasant this year. Good weather made a fine attendance possible at all the services and gatherings. The Saude Ladies' Aid Christmas Party was held in the basement of the Saude Church on December 9, with the collection designated for the Army-Navy Fund. The Jerico Ladies' Aid held its party on Sunday, December 19, with offerings brought to the Army-Navy Fund and the Deaf Mute Institute. The Redeemer Ladies' Aid Christmas party was held in New Hampton on December 15, the proceeds going to the Army-Navy Fund. The Christmas program in the Saude Church, given by Saude Lutheran School and the children of the Saturday School, conducted by Mr. Wiechmann, was on the evening of December 22, with a collection taken up for Hans Bleken. The program of the Saturday School was given at Jerico on the evening of December 23, with a collection for the Deaf Mute Institute, and Hans Bleken. For all these gifts, and for your generous support of the sale of Christmas Seals for the Lutheran Sanatorium at Wheat Ridge, your pastor wishes to thank you. In this giving is a true reflection of the spirit of Christmas.

Doris Ellingson and John Anderson, both members of the Saude Congregation were united in Holy Matrimony at the home of the bride on December 11, 1943. Oren Anderson and Arlene Natvig were attendants. After the ceremony, a wedding reception was given by the parents of the bride with many friends and relatives present. God bless and keep this bride and groom.

Diane Marlene, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey Natvig was baptized in the Saude Church on Christmas day, 1943. Her birthdate was November 19, 1943. Sponsors were Mr. and Mrs. T. O. Knutson and Mr. and Mrs. Chris Treider.

Jerry Allan, son of Mr. and Mrs. Virgil Anderson, born December 11, 1943, received Christian baptism in the Jerico Church on January 2, 1944. Mr. and Mrs. Tollef Knutson, La Von Knutson, and Spencer Johnson were sponsors.

Helen Joan, born December 3, 1943, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Douglas, was baptized at the same service. Sponsors were Mr. and Mrs. Louis Douglas, and Mr. and Mrs. Pete Ronnie.

Collection Envelopes for the coming year have been distributed to you by this time. We hope you will place 15 cents in the first yellow envelope to pay the cost of your package of envelopes. Then we hope that you filled out the pledge card. Many hesitated to do so, but you should not be reticent about that. When you buy something from a merchant, he tells you what to pay. In the case of your pledge, your church is merely asking you what you will pay toward its support. Surely that is not an unreasonable request. Your weekly envelopes are the same as last year. The monthly envelopes for your contributions to the Synod have been changed to conform with a request made by the Synod at its last convention. It requested congregations to send in its remittances without a designation as to what fund the money is to be placed in. This was done so as to avoid the inconvenience which results when some funds receive more money than they need, and other funds receive less than they need. Now the treasurer of the Synod will allocate the money sent to him according as it is needed. Further, the treasurers of the congregations will be spared a great deal of work which resulted in keeping books for all the funds of the Synod to which they sent remittances. However, if you as an individual contributor wish, you may write on your envelope what specific Fund you wish that particular contribution to go to, and the treasurer of your congregation will designate your gift according to your expressed wish. But above all, we wish to say that we hope none of you will let a single month go by during the coming year in which you do not make a contribution toward the work of your Synod. That work, as you know, is the saving of souls.

If you are ill, or for any other reason cannot attend public worship on Sunday morning, we would recommend highly the radio service called "The Lighted Lantern" which is broadcast by the Missouri Synod from radio station WMT on Sunday evenings at 7 o'clock. You will appreciate the quiet devotional nature of this service.

We should also like to recommend for those of you who enjoy reading, the "Northwestern Lutheran," published by the Wisconsin Synod as their official organ. It is a bi-weekly periodical, much like our own Sentinel in character. The price is \$1.25 per year. Order from the Northwestern Publishing House, 935-937 North Fourth St., Milwaukee (3), Wisconsin. You will appreciate the fine Christian dignity of this soundly Lutheran publication.