



The DEAF LUTHERAN



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LET EVERY HEART PREPARE HIM ROOM

There once lived in the city of Marseilles, France, an old shoemaker. He was loved and honored by his neighbors who affectionately called him "Father Martin."

One Christmas Eve, as he sat alone in his little shop reading of the visit of the Wise Men to the Infant Jesus' and of the gifts they brought, he said to himself, "If tomorrow were the first Christmas and if this Jesus were to be born in Marseilles this night, I know what I would give Him!"

He rose from his stool and took from a shelf overhead two tiny shoes of the softest snow-white leather, with bright silver buckles. "I would give Him these, my finest work."

Replacing the shoes, he blew out the candles and retired to rest. Hardly had he

Rev. Frank Wagenknecht Accepts Call to Chart New Course in Deaf Ministry

After 17 years serving Rogate Lutheran church for the deaf in Clearwater, Fla., Rev. Frank Wagenknecht decided it was time to move on and has accepted a call from the Southeast District of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod to be "Missionary at large for North and South Carolina" and resource specialist for the deaf ministry.

The work to which he has been called is a new model ministry--something new in deaf ministry in the Lutheran church. Wagenknecht said he will be working with both pastors and the deaf while setting up the new program, one of the main duties which will be to guide pastors in the Carolinas to set up interpreting services for the deaf wherever feasible. Additionally, he will work with deaf Lutheran congregations already organized in Hickory and Greensboro, N.C., and with an attempt to be made to minister to the deaf in state and public schools.

Before coming to Rogate, he served full

REV. F. WAGENKNECHT (continue on page 2)

closed his eyes, it seemed, when he heard a voice call his name . . . "Martin' Martin!"

It seemed to him that someone was near. Then the voice spoke again . . . "Martin, you have wished to see Me. Tomorrow, I shall pass by your window. If you see Me, and bid Me enter; I shall be your guest at your table."

Father Martin did not sleep that night for joy. And before it was yet dawn he rose and swept and tidied up his little shop. He spread fresh sand upon the floor, and wreathed green boughs of fir along the rafters. On

LET EVERY HEART (continue on page 2)

Iowa/Nebraska Students Learn God's Word at Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Bethlehem Lutheran church, Omaha, is holding monthly worship for the students of the Iowa and Nebraska schools for the deaf. Led by Dorothy Sparks and Linda Desrosiers, both deaf and the church's parish worker, Karen Dammeyer, the services have proved to be an exciting and inspiring event for the youngsters.

Following worship, refreshments are served. The students have asked that the program be continued this fall.



LET EVERY HEART PREPARE HIM ROOM

(continue from page 1)

the spotless linen covered table he placed a loaf of white bread, a jar of honey and a pitcher of milk, and over the fire he hung a pot of tea.

Then he sat at the window and patiently waited and watched.

Presently, he saw an old street sweeper pass by, blowing upon his thin, gnarled hands to warm them. "Poor fellow, he must be half frozen," thought Martin. Opening the door, he called out to him, "Come in, my friend, and warm, and drink a cup of hot tea." The man gratefully accepted the invitation.

An hour passed, and Martin saw a young, miserably clothed woman carrying a baby. She paused wearily to rest in the shelter of his doorway. The heart of the old cobbler was touched. Quickly, he flung open the door.

"Come in and warm while you rest," he said to her. "You do not look well," he remarked.

"I am going to the hospital. I hope they will take me in, and my baby boy," she explained. "My husband is at sea, and I am ill, without a sou (\$)."

"Poor child!" cried Father Martin. "You must eat something while you are getting warm. No? Then let me give a cup of milk to the little one. Ah! What a bright, pretty little fellow he is! Why, you have put no shoes on him!"

"I have no shoes for him," sighed the mother sadly.

"Then he shall have this lovely pair I finished yesterday." And Father Martin took down from the shelf the soft little snow-white shoes he had admired the evening before. He slipped them on the child's feet . . . and they fit perfectly. Shortly, the poor young mother left, two sous in her hand, and tearful with gratitude.

Rev. F. Wagenknecht (continue from page 1)
time in Pittsburgh from 1960 to 1968.

The new program being undertaken by Pastor Wagenknecht is being initially funded for the first three years by the Mill Neck Foundation after which an evaluation of the entire project will be made to determine any future course of action. Mrs. Wagenknecht is leaving her position with a law firm where she has been office business manager for the past eight years to assist her husband with secretarial duties.

Their address is 8408 Potter Rd., Matthews, N.C. 28105, near Charlotte.

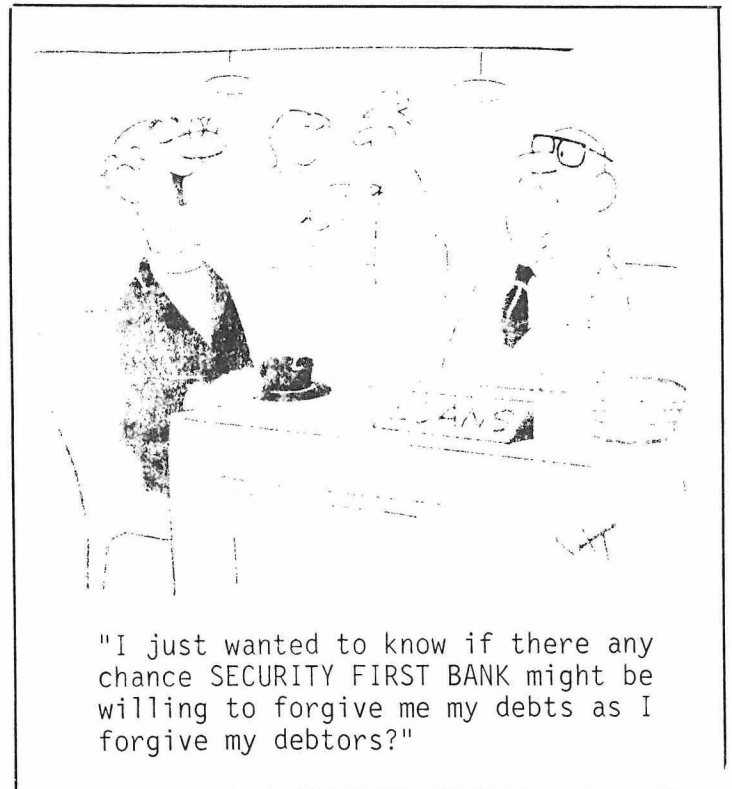
Again Father Martin sat at his post by the window. Hour after hour went by, and although many people passed his window, and many needy souls shared his hospitality, the expected guest did not appear.

"It was only a dream," he sighed, with a heavy heart. "I did hope and believe, but He has not come."

Suddenly, so it seemed to his weary eyes, the room was flooded with a strange light. And to the cobbler's astonished vision there appeared before him, one by one, the poor street sweeper, the sick mother and her child, and all the people whom he had helped during the day. Each one smiled at him and said, "Have you not seen Me? Did I not sit at your table?" Then they all vanished.

At last, out of the silence, Father Martin heard again the gentle voice repeating the old familiar words:

Whoever shall receive one such in My Name, receives Me . . . for I was hungry and you fed Me; I was thirsty and you gave Me a drink; I was a stranger and you received Me in your home. . . . I tell you, indeed, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these brothers of Mine, you did it for Me."



UNUSUAL CHRISTMAS GIFT

Soon after enjoying a traditional Christmas dinner with her family back in 1972, 13-year-old Marie suffered what was diagnosed as a severe bout of bronchitis and laryngitis. After six weeks the symptoms had gone away, except for not being able to use her voice. Doctors concluded that her voice loss was the result of a virus.



Marie then resigned herself to a life without speech and learned to cope with the loss. On a Thursday in December of last year, Marie (now Mrs. Hefferman) began a period of uncontrolled coughing, finally coughing up a black lump. She took it to a hospital for diagnosis, where it was discov-

○ Little Town of Bethlehem

O little town of Bethlehem
How still we see thee lie!

Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark street shineth
The ever-lasting Light;
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep
The angels keep their watch of wond'ring
love.

O morning stars together
Proclaim the Holy birth!
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently,
The wondrous Gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem!
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in;
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.

ered to be, not human tissue as expected, but a 1959 coin.

By then Marie recovered her voice. The delighted woman put in a phone call to her mother, who had not heard her daughter's voice for 12 years. "I thought it was my younger daughter at first," said the mother.

The mystery was quickly solved when it was recalled that the loss of voice had followed the Christmas dinner. Marie's mother had put coins in the Christmas pudding, and her daughter had swallowed one of them without realizing it.

The coin has lodged in such a way that it prevented her vocal cords from vibrating. X-rays had failed to detect the coin because it was thin and rested in a horizontal position.

Amazed doctors estimated that the chances of such an occurrence were about a million to one. They pointed out that someone who swallows a coin usually coughs it up immediately.

Whatever the odds, it happened to Marie-- and it was the best Christmas present she could have asked for!

WHICH IS THE RIGHT DATE

On which day do we celebrate Christmas? Some have worshipped on Jan. 6, Jan. 7, Jan. 1, Dec. 25, Jan. 10, and May 20. Here is how western Christians came to decide on Dec. 25.

In 274 A.D., Emperor Aurelian chose that date as the first day of a boisterous pagan festival to celebrate the winter solstice when the sun begins to show increasing light. The Philocalian Calendar, which was an almanac for early Christians, indicates that by 336 A.D., many of Rome's believers were also celebrating Jesus' birth on Dec. 25.

Then in 350 A.D., Julius I the bishop of Rome, officially proclaimed that day as the feast of the Nativity of our Lord.

You see, Rome's Christians had borrowed the date of the rowdy Saturnalia and had transformed it into a day of joyful worship. Of their decision St. Augustine said, ". . . they hold this day holy, not like the pagans because of the birth of the sun, but because of Him who made the sun."

Your worship of the birthday of our Lord is made special through your prayers and thanks to God.

BITS OF INTEREST FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY . . .

Ronald Madding, an unsuccessful candidate for president-elect of the ILDA at last summer's convention at Milwaukee, will be general chairperson of the 10th biennial convention at Portland, Ore. in 1989.

Rev. Larry Larsen, who formerly served the deaf in central Illinois (Peoria) will be happy to hear from his former flock at his new address at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran church, Box 1272, Navajo, N.M. 87328.

The Great Lakes Regional conference convened at Camp Pioneer, Angola, N.Y. the week-end of Oct. 18-20. The theme for this year's meeting was "The Gift of Life for Giving." Hosting this year's event was Alpha Lutheran church, Rochester, N.Y., of which Rev. Mark Seeger is pastor.

Dale Paden, Omaha, Neb., who is well known by many in the ILDA, was honored recently by

MIDWEST REGIONAL CONFERENCE CONVENES AT OMAHA JUNE 7-9

The Midwest Regional conference met at the Grace Conference Center, Omaha, Neb. the week-end of June 7-9 with approximately 115 registered for the three-day event.

An unusually large delegation of out-of-state visitors were noted, and was one of the better attended meetings in recent years.

A performance by the Son-Shine Signers, whose home base is Omaha, delighted the visitors Saturday evening. It was said to be their 200th presentation since the first show was given several years ago.

The 1986 meeting will be held at Estes Park, Colo.



MIDWEST CONFERENCE--Group picture taken after church services Sunday morning. (More photos on P. 5)

The Nebraska Association of the Deaf for his many years of service to the deaf community in Nebraska. We also extend sincere sympathy to him in the loss of his wife, Viola, 81, who was called home to be with the Lord on Aug. 17.

Rev. David Carstens, pastor of Hope Lutheran church, Portland, Ore., was honored Aug. 18 on the occasion of his 15th year in the ministry by members and friends. Congregation president presented him with a purse and card followed with a potluck dinner.

The home of Pastor and Mrs. Robert Rowland in Sacramento, Calif. was burglarized Sunday, June 23 while they were away at church. About \$1,900 worth of personal and church property was taken. None of their personal belongings were covered by insurance, but the church property was, the most valuable being a video tape recorder, which has been replaced by the insurance company.

Concordia special school in Porto Alegre, Brazil was the recipient of a gift of \$500 from the International Lutheran Deaf Association, made through the board for mission services. The school, begun from scratch a few years ago, has grown rapidly, with a new building in use since March, 1984. This year, a high school program was added, enabling students to go on to universities after graduation. Concordia is the first school in all of Brazil to offer a high school education to deaf students.

The 1986 Ephphatha conference will be held at Indiana Central university, Indianapolis, Ind. on the dates of July 16-20. Ephphatha is the annual meeting of Lutheran deaf pastors and professional Lutheran church workers.

A REVERSE TITHE?

I had a terrible dream. I dreamed that the Lord took my Sunday offering, multiplied it by 10, and this became my weekly income . . .

In no time, I had to give up my car, my house payments, my little luxuries and even some of my necessities.

What can a body do on 10 dollars a week? If the Lord took **your** offering, multiplied it by 10 (a reverse tithe) and made that your weekly income where would that leave you and me?

--Adapted

Congregations Recognized for Membership and Stewardship Growth at Milwaukee Convention

The following list of congregations in both the United States and Canada were recognized for having a minimum of five percent (5%) growth in either category the past two years and were presented certificates during the

convention at Milwaukee:

GROWTH IN MEMBERSHIP:

Good Shepherd of the Deaf, Toledo, Ohio
Rogate Lutheran church, Clearwater, Fla.
Alpha Lutheran church, Rochester, N.Y.
Christ Lutheran church, Cleveland, Ohio
Trinity Lutheran church, Pittsburgh, Pa.

GROWTH IN STEWARDSHIP:

St. Philip Lutheran church, Philadelphia, Pa.
Good Shepherd Lutheran church, Toledo, Ohio
Pilgrim Lutheran church, Kansas City, Mo.
Cross of Christ Lutheran church, Edmonton, Alta.
Holy Cross Lutheran church, Columbus, Ohio
Calvary Lutheran church, Des Moines, Iowa
Holy Three-In-One Lutheran church, Houston, Texas
Rogate Lutheran church, Clearwater, Fla.
Alpha Lutheran church, Rochester, N.Y.
Lutheran Deaf Mission, Jackson, Miss.
Jesus Lutheran church, Austin, Texas
Christian Deaf Centre, Calgary, Alta.
Holy Cross Lutheran church, Delavan, Wis.
Christ Lutheran church, Great Falls, Mont.
Pilgrim Lutheran church, Los Angeles, Calif.
Christ Lutheran church, Jacksonville, Ill.
Silent Lutheran church, Madison, Wis.
Emmanuel Lutheran church, Milwaukee, Wis.
Bethlehem Lutheran church, Omaha, Neb.
Valley Lutheran church, Sacramento, Calif.
Faith Lutheran church, Spokane, Wash.
Christ Lutheran church, Washington, D.C.



GUEST SPEAKER--Rev. Delbert Thies, former pastor to the deaf, is shown addressing group Saturday morning.



SON-SHINE SIGNERS--Pose for a group picture following their 200th performance June 8 at Omaha.

THE LIGHT BY THE ALTAR

Many worshippers have come to church for years and years and observed a little red light or candle burning continuously by the altar without ever considering its significance. Are you one of these people?

In the Old Testament, we find these words in Levictus 6:12-13, "The fire must always be kept burning on the altar and never be allowed to go out."

This light is a reminder of God's constant and continual presence among us. Some people call it a "Presence Candle; others call it an "Eternal Flame."

Sage advice: Don't marry for money. It's a lot cheaper to borrow it.

THANKSGIVING DAY, 1985:

THREE CENTURIES OF GOD'S UNDESERVED GRACE

In 1789, Gorge Washington issued the following proclamation setting aside Thursday, the 26th of November that year as Thanksgiving Day:

"Whereas, it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly implore His protection, aid and favors. . . .

Now, therefore, do I assign and recommend Thursday, the 26th day of November next . . . that we may then all untie in rendering unto

FIRST APARTMENTS FOR THE DEAF OPENS

CHICAGO (AP)--Betty Jo Healey can see the door bell ring in her new apartment, which features a shaking bed and lights that turn on automatically. Mrs. Healey and the other 29 people who have moved in view the silent Cooperative apartments as a godsend.

The building, which officially opened about Aug. 1, is the first for the hearing impaired in the nation, its developers says. In other apartments Mrs. Healey said she knew of deaf people trapped in elevators, and they could not call for help. But in her new apartment, which she shares with her hearing impaired husband, Russel, Mrs. Healey, 56, does not have those concerns, she said in the sign language.

The building's main fire alarm is hooked up to a special electrical outlet in each bedroom. If the alarm goes off, the outlet turns on lights or shakes a bed to awaken the occupant. When someone rings the doorbell, a light flashes in the living room.

The eight-story building was financed by a \$5.86 million loan from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Mrs. Healey says the development is helping the hearing impaired enter into the mainstream of society. "Years ago, deaf people were always being pushed aside," she said. "But now, more hearing people are helping the deaf, and we're a part of society." ciety."

(Editor's note: Mrs. Healey is the former Central Regional president and her husband, Russel was formerly the business manager of THE DEAF LUTHERAN.)

Him our sincere and humble thanks for His kind care and protection of the people of this country, and for all the great and various favors which He has been pleased to confer on us."

As Thanksgiving approaches this year, we all must confess and bow our heads in shame at the wrongs we have committed, not only individually, but as a nation. We see the sins we have done against our God in polluting the great nation He gave us; the corruption we have allowed to happen to our moral values; the loss of esteem and reverence for worship and His church. We have allowed pornography, drugs, abortion and disrespect for law to permeate our society.

Still, God pours out His blessings on us and still He preserves us.

As we once again remember the blessings that God has bestowed on us, let us pray for new reverence for worship and serving Him; for a greater measure of His spirit that we may be 'One Nation under God' and to be His people.

May God grant it. And a happy thanksgiving to all.

"It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord..."

Old Testament, Psalms, XCII, 1.



IN HIS NAME

Meta Luetzow
13454 Second S.W.
Seattle, Wash.

Each of us have a name given to us at birth. We might be named after our parents, relatives or a famous person. During Bible times the name given to a person had special meaning. Adam's name means "of the ground or taken out of the earth" (Gen. 2:7) Adam was formed out of the ground.

Abraham means "The father of a multitude," (Gen. 17:5) which came from the promise of an heir as many as the stars in the sky. (Gen. 15:5)

The names given to the Messiah describe His Person, Power and Position. Jesus, meaning "Jehovah is salvation," is the most dear. Before His birth the angel told Joseph, ". . . she will bear a Son and you shall call Him,

"Speak Up! Silence Means Agreement"

"In Germany, the Nazis first came for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Next, they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. After that, it was the Catholics, and I didn't speak up as I was Protestant. Then they came for me, and by that time, there was not one left to speak for me."

--Martin Niemoeller,
German Theologian

There is so much said by saying nothing; likewise, much is said by doing nothing! Christ Jesus did say anything in defense of Himself, but He did something! He gave His life for you and me. By not going to church, we are telling the world that Jesus' life was not worth much. By not going to church, we are telling the world, "I do not believe in God." By failing to speak up when we see someone doing something wrong, we are saying, "I agree," or "I don't care." Most of the time, our silence says it all. When Christ died for us, He was saying, "I love you."

SPEAK UP FOR JESUS!

Adapted
Christ Lutheran

Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

It is a highly exalted Name. Paul says in Philippians 1:9-11, "Therefore, God has highly exalted Him (Jesus) and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

Christ means the "anointed One." At Jesus' baptism, He was anointed with the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist said, "I saw the Spirit descend as a dove from heaven and it remaineth on Him." (John 1:32)

Christ as our prophet teaches with authority (Matthew 7:28-29); as our Priest, He offered up His life for our sins and pleads for us (Heb. 7:23-28); as King, Christ rules heaven and earth (I Tim. 6:15-16).

Emmanuel means "God with us," (Is. 7:14) God came down to earth in His Son, Jesus Christ (John 1:14). Paul states it so beautifully in Phil. 2:5-7, "Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men."

Christ the Lord expresses Jesus' sovereignty and majesty. The angel announced to the shepherds, "For to you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11)

We are to reverence Jesus as the highest ruler for in saying, "Lord Jesus Christ," we recognize Him as the Authority in all we say and do.

Even as the saints in heaven will do when they cast their crowns before the throne, singing:

"WORTHY ART THOU, OUR LORD AND GOD TO RECEIVE GLORY AND HONOR AND POWER, FOR THOU DIDST CREATE ALL THINGS AND BY THY WILL THEY EXISTED AND WERE CREATED."

Timely Truths for Our Times . . .

Whoever seeks Christ must first find the church. Now the church is not wood and stone, but the group of people who believe in Christ! Whoever seeks the church should join himself to them, and observe what they teach, pray and believe. For they certainly have Christ among them." . . . Martin Luther

LUTHER SPEAKS ON BAPTISM

The following account is based on a hypothetical interview with Dr. Martin Luther, based on excerpts from his sermons and writings.)

- Q: Dr. Luther, why is baptism important?
- A: Baptism was not devised by any human beings, but was instituted by God.
- Q: Does not Baptism employ ordinary water?
- A: When the Word of God is pronounced over it, so that Baptism is to be administered in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, it possesses the power to wash away sin and to save them from death.
- Q: Then Baptism is not just an outward observance?
- A: It does not merely mark me externally before men but makes a different person of me before God.
- Q: How is this accomplished?
- A: Whoever is baptized in Christ is bathed in the blood of Christ and is cleansed from sins.
- Q: What does this mean in a personal way?
- A: I do not have a single work which is pure; but through my baptism God, who cannot lie, has bound Himself not to count my sin against me.
- Q: Is this baptism blessing also meant for little children?
- A: In baptism, a child comes to Christ as the little children were brought to Him long ago, so that His Word and work may touch them and make them holy.
- Q: Is faith connected to the blessing of baptism?
- A: Baptism is useless without faith. It is

performed so that you may receive in the water the promised salvation. Now, neither the hand nor body can grasp salvation; the heart must believe it.

- Q: How can an infant, who cannot yet reason, have faith?
- A: When the person baptizing deals with children in Christ's stead, it is Christ who blesses them and grant them faith.
- Q: When the child comes to an age of understanding, should he be baptized again?
- A: No, but he is to be instructed in the faith. Baptism, once administered, is permanently valid. It is not to be repeated.
- Q: It's promise holds as long as we live?
- A: See what a splendid thing baptism is. It snatches us from the jaws of the devil; it makes us God's own; restrains and removes sin; and then daily strengthens the new man within us, It is and ever remains effective until we pass from this world to eternal glory.

Joy to the World, the Lord Is Come



Joy to the world, the
Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare
Him room
And heaven and nature sing
And heaven and nature sing!

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November-December, 1985

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