

# The Deaf Lutheran

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## Board of Missions to the Deaf.—The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

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### The Christian Church Cannot Fail

Where there have been no blessed results from the Gospel message, the fault is with men, not with the Gospel. In its present sad condition the world does not lack mechanical and scientific knowledge, but it lacks moral and spiritual power, believing that there is no higher wisdom or strength than its own. Men try to deny the truth. They follow Pilate, who found Jesus innocent but lacked the courage to acquit Him. Instead he decided: "I have found no fault in this Man. . . . I will therefore chastise Him and release Him." Luke 23: 14-16. Likewise many today do not keep Christ's teachings because they fear what people will say. They dare not despise Him for fear of God's wrath. They try to serve two masters, but fail. If you try to serve God and this world, you will be despised by both. We cannot accept both good and evil, love and hate. We must choose Christ or the world.

Where there is acceptance of the Gospel, there will be divine blessings here and in eternity. In this wicked world, wrong is often on the throne, and truth is on the scaffold, but it will not always remain so. We who follow Jesus believe in everlasting life. We know that good is better than evil and that love is better than hatred. Christ and His Gospel cannot fail. He will be triumphant throughout all eternity. You also will be victorious now and forever if you trust Him.

O. C. S.

### New Pastor to Wisconsin Field

The Rev. Robert W. Mackensen, First Lutheran Church, Missoula, Mont. (English District), has accepted the call to South Wisconsin. He will serve the Deaf of Delavan and Madison, the pupils at Wisconsin School for the Deaf, and as many other towns near by as he can. Pastor Mackensen is leaving a strong hearing congregation of over 150 members. He showed his love for the Deaf in the Missoula area, calling on the sick and also spelling and signing to Deaf when they met. We thank God that this young man has been led into our Deaf ministry; and we pray for God's blessing on his new work, even as He has blessed his hearing ministry.

### Atlantic Seaboard Pastors Meet

Pastors Gerhold (Boston), Kraus (New York), Possehl (Newark), and Westermann (Washington, D. C.) met at Nutley, N. J., April 11 and 12. Pastor Rohe (Pittsburgh) was unable to attend because of ill-

ness in the family. Tuesday morning was spent signing chapters from the Bible so that the men's signs could be discussed and improved. Hymns were also signed. Pastor Possehl spoke of a new East Coast Deaf Missionary Society, its organization, purposes, and financing. All the men approved wholeheartedly. (Ed. NOTE.— See Resolution of Dixie Conference in *Reports and Memorials to Synod, 1950.*) The following morning this discussion continued. Pastor Gerhold is to draw up plans for the Missionary Society, present it to the other pastors for approval, and then to the Deaf for action. Wednesday sessions also included more Sign Language study. Pastors reported on the work in their fields. The afternoon sessions were used to tour the new School for the Deaf at Mill Neck, Long Island, which is to open soon. On Wednesday evening 36 Deaf went to a mission service at Redeemer Church, Newark (Pastor P. F. Arndt). The New Jersey Deaf Choir signed a hymn, Pastor Gerhold preached, and the other pastors led in parts of the worship. G. K.

### Five New Workers

Our Lord Jesus, the Head of His Church, has granted us five new workers—surely an abundant blessing, for which we should render thanks unto Him.

Pastor Mackensen arrived in Delavan in April. The writer is spending a number of weeks with him in May and June. He will take over all East Wisconsin stations outside of Milwaukee, as well as Rockford, Ill. Mid-South Wisconsin and Rockford have been served during the past three years by students of our St. Louis and Springfield seminaries. For this we are deeply grateful.

Emmanuel Congregation, Milwaukee, and its pastor have asked our Board to relieve the pastor of all preaching stations so that he may, with the help of God, build up the Milwaukee congregation both spiritually and numerically. The congregation is not asking for any subsidy (help). May our dear Lord bless this new move, grant that they may grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, and fill them with more and more love and zeal for this blessed work of saving souls. At the present time they number only 102 communicant members. We hope and pray that in the course of time other congregations of our Mission will be led to do the same thing.

Then May 3 and 4 the Board of Assignments met in St. Louis to assign places to the graduates and vicars. There were 142 calls sent in, but only 107 candidates. We received two of them: Mr. Donald Simon for the

Columbus Field and Mr. Victor Misenbring for the new Des Moines Field. This relieves our overburdened Omaha man. There were 163 requests for vicars, but only 115 available; we received two: Mr. Lee Lennon for the New Orleans Field and Mr. Lawrence Stacy for the Memphis Field. Mr. Reinking, who has been in Memphis since July, 1949, will return to the seminary this fall to resume his studies there. Mr. Lennon, with Mr. Donald Boerner, from Springfield, Ill., ministered to the Deaf in Delavan, Beloit, and Rockford during the past school year.

#### The Field Today

Thus, thanks to God, we now have 32 ministers for the Deaf. We also have five part-time workers, among whom is Pastor O. C. Schroeder, who also ministers to the blind. Thirty-one of these workers (Milwaukee excepted) are on the pay roll of our Board, which must work with only \$93,000 (the sum set aside for our work during 1950 by our Synod). Let us bear this in mind when we give for the Lord's work. Contributions are taken up in every service. Our Board requests that 25 per cent of these collections be sent in to the Treasurer of each District. (This helps to spread the Gospel in our country and in other countries. It helps also for the maintenance of colleges and seminaries in which young men prepare for preaching the Gospel in all the world and from which our Deaf also get their pastors.) The remaining 75 per cent is to be used for traveling expenses and salary of the missionary. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich," 2 Cor. 8:9. Give yourself to the Lord who loved you and gave Himself for you, and you will gladly give more and more for this blessed work of bringing the Gospel to all the world. J. L. S.

#### Pastor Floyd Possehl

At Baker, Minn., on July 31, 1915, the hearts of a young couple, Mr. and Mrs. Possehl, rejoiced greatly when a son put in his appearance in their household. They named this precious little son Floyd. Whether there was any special meaning connected with this name, we do not know. However, we do know that the Lord had planned great things for this boy for the future.

The family did not remain at Baker, but later moved to Felton, Minn., and finally settled at Fergus Falls, Minn. Floyd's father was a storekeeper, and no doubt Floyd had the opportunity, as he grew older, to assist his father in the business.

Floyd Possehl attended both public and parochial schools, and after successfully passing the 8th grade he entered our Concordia College at St. Paul, Minn., in the fall of 1929. After graduating from this institution in June, 1935, he enrolled at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Mo. It was there that he became interested in the study of the sign language, and he was tutored by the sainted Pastor F. Hischke and Pastor N. P. Uhlig. In order to add to his knowledge of the signs and to receive some valuable and practical experience, he decided to spend one year as a vicar in the Deaf work,

assisting Pastor Uhlig at Holy Cross Deaf Congregation in St. Louis. This was from the fall of 1937 to the summer of 1938.

Upon graduation from the Seminary in June, 1939, Candidate Possehl accepted the call extended to him by the Board for Missions to the Deaf. He was assigned to the large Oklahoma and Texas field. He made his headquarters at Oklahoma City. After working in this field for about 18 months, Pastor Possehl was ordained and installed on January 15, 1941, at Zion Lutheran Church in Oklahoma City by the Rev. John F. Schulz, local pastor, assisted by the Rev. E. Mappes of Omaha.

Six preaching stations were on his regular itinerary, and he also held instruction classes for pupils at the Oklahoma State School at Sulphur, Okla., and at the Texas State School at Austin, Tex.

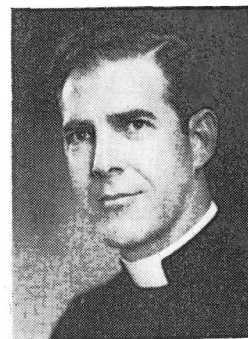
At all stations a fine increase in attendance was noted from time to time, and a steady growth in membership and in attendance at Oklahoma City showed how the Lord abundantly blessed the faithful efforts of Pastor Possehl.

In March, 1942, a call came to the missionary from St. Matthew's Deaf Congregation in New York City, and after some deliberation he accepted this call. He arrived in New York on March 22, 1942, to take up the work in this large and promising field. Here the missionary served stations and schools for the Deaf in four different States—New York, New Jersey, Maryland, and Massachusetts—and also Gallaudet College for the Deaf in Washington, D. C.

Since his heart was definitely in his work and he was laboring with love and enthusiasm to bring the saving Gospel to as many Deaf as possible, the Lord granted wonderful success to the work of Pastor Possehl in the New York area.

For a number of years St. Matthew's Deaf Congregation in New York City had been working diligently and gathering funds for a new church building of its own, and these hopes were realized when in May, 1947, ground was broken for the new edifice. The church was completed in January, 1948, and dedicatory services were held on January 11, 1948, Pastor H. A. Gamber, former chairman of the Deaf Mission Board delivering the sermon.

In February, 1949, Pastor Possehl was granted a year's leave-of-absence from the work in his field to take up the office of Executive Secretary to the Lutheran Friends of the Deaf, Inc. This group was organized for the purpose of carrying out Synod's orders to found a new Lutheran School for the Deaf in the East. The matter of publicity and the gaining of financial support for this worthy project was largely in the hands of Pastor Possehl. He and the Board of this Society labored earnestly and incessantly throughout the past year, and the reality of such a school in New York seems to be



Pastor Floyd Possehl

assured. (Detailed reports of this school have appeared in former issues of the DEAF LUTHERAN.)

After the year of leave had elapsed, Pastor Possehl was assigned to the New Jersey field, with headquarters at Nutley, N. J., near Newark. Pastor George Kraus now has charge of the New York field.

We feel confident that in the congested New Jersey area, under God's guidance, the missionary will gain many souls of the Deaf for God's kingdom in the years to come. To that end we implore Almighty God for His continued blessings.

Pastor Possehl and his wife, who were married on May 10, 1945, have one daughter, 14 months old, who is the joy and pride of their home.

As a member of Ephphatha Conference Rev. Possehl has held the office of secretary and has served on numerous important committees and has performed his duties well.

In closing, the writer wishes to say that Pastor Possehl in his 11 years as a missionary among the Deaf and member of Ephphatha Conference has won the admiration and confidence of the other missionaries and has given a good account of his ministry among the Deaf.

The Lord grant health and strength to him in the future. May our Mission be blessed with many more energetic and consecrated workers. E. M.

## The First Letter of John

(Translated by Pastor G. Kraus; edited by Prof. Martin Franzman.)

### CHAPTER II

My little children, I write these things to you so that you do not sin. And if anyone sin, we have One who pleads for us with the Father: Jesus Christ, the Holy One. And He is the Peace Offering for our sins (and not for ours only, but for the sins of all the world). (Verses 1-2.)

And by this we know that we know Him — if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments is a liar. And the truth is not in him. But anyone who keeps His Word, truly God's love is perfect in this person. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he remains in Him has the duty — exactly as He walked — also to walk the same way himself. (Verses 3-6.)

Dear friends, I write no new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the Word, which you heard. (But also as) a new commandment I write to you, which is true in Him and in you. Because the darkness is disappearing, and already the true light is shining. He who says he is in the light and hates his brother is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother remains in light; and no stumbling is in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness. And he walks in darkness. And he doesn't know where he goes. Because the darkness has blinded his eyes. (Verses 7-11.)

Little children, I write to you because you have re-

ceived forgiveness of your sins for His sake (because He lived and died). Fathers, I write to you because you have known Him who is from the beginning.

Young men, I write to you because you have overcome the sinful one.

Little children, I write to you because you have known the Father.

Fathers, I have written to you because you know Him who is from the beginning.

Young men, I have written to you because you are strong. And the Word of God remains in you. And you have overcome the sinful one. (Verses 12-14.)

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Because everything which is in the world (the sinful wishes of the sinful heart, and the sinful wishes of the eyes, and the pride of life) is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world disappears and also the sinful wishes of the world. But the man who does the command of God remains forever. (Verses 15-17.)

(To be continued)

## Studies in Luther's Catechism

### THE OFFICE (POWER) OF THE KEYS

#### Ministers of Christ Do as Christ Commands

Ministers are a gift of God. They are ministers of Christ. What a blessed work to be such a servant of Christ! Therefore Paul writes: "This is a true saying: If a man desire the office of a bishop [minister], he desireth a good work," 1 Tim. 3:1.

What does Christ command His ministers? "Preach the Word," 2 Tim. 2:4, "Preach the Gospel," Mark 16:15. Ministers of Christ are to preach not their own thoughts or ideas, not their own word and wisdom. No, they are ministers of Christ and must come to people with His Word. Therefore they must speak of sin, as Jesus and His disciples did. Indeed, often people say to a minister: "Say nothing of sin. Such preaching will drive people away from church." But ministers of Christ cannot, and must not, keep silence, but must also speak Christ's Word about sin. They also must preach of God's wrath and damnation. They must not listen when people ask them not to do this. And then they come to poor sinners with the sweet Gospel of Jesus Christ, invite them to come to this only Savior, and say: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," Acts 16:31. As ministers of Christ they will speak only of Him who died for all and arose again. Again, they must not pay any attention to them that say: "You preach too much about Jesus, always the same." A minister never can preach too much of Jesus. Then they also baptize as Jesus commands and give the Holy Supper according to Christ's own words. These are true ministers of Christ.

#### Many are Not True Ministers of Christ

So many seek to please people and not the Lord Jesus. They come with their own word and wisdom and say nothing of sin and damnation in hell, say nothing

of the blood which cleanses from sin. They say: "Do good, and you will go to heaven." This is not the Word of Jesus. They also preach Jesus, but not the crucified and risen Lord, but a Jesus that is only a good man and a wonderful teacher. They tell people: "Follow Jesus, and you will live with Him in heaven." This again is not the Word of Jesus. St. Paul says: "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God," Eph. 2:8. Nothing of sin and damnation, nothing of Jesus and His precious blood, shed for the forgiveness of sin! Woe to such a minister! Paul says: "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel!" 1 Cor. 9:16.

#### Thank God for a True Minister of Christ

True ministers of Christ speak as Jesus commands. Therefore our Catechism says: "They deal with us by His divine command." They come to us in Jesus' name. Let us remember this, and then we shall not criticize them if they come to us with the Word about sin and damnation and that of forgiveness of all sin through faith in Christ's blood; then we shall not become angry if they show us our sin from the Word of God and always point to Christ Crucified. Oh, no, let us thank God for such preaching and give a hearty welcome to such a minister of Christ.

J. L. S.

### FIELD GLEANINGS

*Great Falls, Mont.*—Eight days we spent with our Montana missionary and visited Billings, Park City, Bozeman, Great Falls, the State School for the Deaf, Missoula, and also Spokane, Wash. We preached to the Deaf and held an informal meeting with each group, always starting out with this startling word: "You are rich," which was greeted with surprised looks on every face. In one city one member immediately asked: "How do you know?" Of course we meant *spiritual riches* in Christ: The sweet Gospel of forgiveness, remission of all sins, peace with God and joy in the Holy Spirit, the hope of everlasting life. Surely, Christians are rich. For these riches we surely ought to be very, very grateful. Gladly and regularly we go to church in order to learn more of these riches. Often we go to the Lord's Supper and let Jesus seal these riches to us with His body and blood and then we gladly give for the support of the pastor who comes to us with these rich blessings. The attendance in all places is very good, in several places 100 per cent, the Communion record also shows up well, many going as often as 6, 7, and 8 times during the year. This is all in monthly services. And they also contribute more and more for the Lord's work of saving souls. In one city the average contribution per communicant member is above \$41 for the year. God is richly blessing the preaching of His Word also in that area. Thanks and praise be unto Him!

J. L. S.

*Jacksonville, Ill.*—January 24, Walter Kaiser of Quincy died after a lingering illness. Two days before, a group of Deaf joined us at his bedside for a prayer service for his deliverance.—At the end of March

death came to Everett Snyder of Decatur, a faithful Christian and attendant of our services. He was suffering from a number of ailments and had been tenderly cared for by his sorrowing wife. May the Lord give comfort to the mourners, as He has given rest to the departed friends.

Seventy-five children at the Illinois School for the Deaf were in attendance at our classes this year. A number of these were confirmed May 21 at Salem Lutheran Church. We received wonderful help in our work from the Springfield Seminary students every Thursday and Sunday, when members of the Ephphatha Society came to Jacksonville to help by teaching classes and chaperoning the group from and to the dormitories.

Ephphatha Society is a group of Seminary students studying the language of signs and doing practical mission work among the Deaf in Springfield and vicinity. About twenty students made up the group this year. The society donated thirty Bibles to the advanced children at I. S. D. Mr. Lawrence Stacy captained the work at I. S. D., while Students Lennon and Boerner supplied the Wisconsin School for the Deaf at Delavan, Wis., every week end and preached at Delavan, Beloit, and Rockford. The interest at the Seminary for the work among the Deaf is very pronounced. May God bless these fine young men for their spirit.

Mr. Delbert Thies of the Ephphatha group will take over the Central Illinois field during June, July, and August, completely relieving Pastor Uhlig, who plans then to contact the Lutheran congregations in Illinois in the interest of the Jacksonville chapel project.

Plans have been drawn for an L-shaped chapel and residence to be erected opposite the I. S. D. chapel. The lot adjoins the campus on the north. The cost is to be held to \$47,000. \$20,000 is available now, and work on the chapel wing is to start, as is hoped for, this fall.

N. P. U.

### Wanted

Back numbers of the DEAF LUTHERAN to complete the files of the Library at Concordia Seminary. Needed are: Vols. 1 to 18; Vol. 19, No. 4; Vol. 22, No. 10; Vols. 25 to 30; and Vol. 35, No. 4. Extra copies would also be appreciated. Write to Prof. E. C. Zimmermann, Concordia Seminary, 801 De Mun Ave., St. Louis 5, Mo.

#### Our Ministers are Ready to Serve You

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