



THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF LUTHERAN CHURCHES

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

"113 x 26"

The figures above look like a puzzle or a set of magic numbers. They are both. They represent one of the great puzzles of history. They have worked real magic.

Not to be too mysterious about it, those figures represent the dimensions, length and breadth, of the Mayflower, the ship which brought the Pilgrims to America in 1620. The measurements in feet look pitifully small. How could a crate like that amount to anything? If we could see it, or a half-sized model of it, we would wonder if such a rowboat could sail around Manhattan Island. But it did sail into history!

This little ship emphasizes the point powerfully that size ought never to be confused with significance. It is not the size of anything which makes it important, but the use to which it is put. Measured by horsepower, the Queen Elizabeth is a much greater ship than the Mayflower. Beside the Queen Elizabeth with her hundreds of passengers, many of them famous, the strange little Mayflower, with its prosaic company of middle class tradesman makes a poor showing. The Mayflower could be carried on the deck of the Queen Elizabeth without displacing even a shuffleboard game. There was very little show about the Mayflower. But there was power! In the spiritual ideal and iron will of men and women in the little company, there was power enough to create a new civilization - a new community - a new world.

Such a remembrance should bring hope and a new morale to a person who thinks he is placed in a 2 x 4 situation. One might think, "I could do something if I had a real opportunity, but what can be done in this dump? Remember that something else was small, a little ship 113 x 26!"

We may be a little ship, but we have a big God. He multiplies our resources. He enlarges our tents. He stills the storms. He is "large and in charge."

Collegially yours,

Rev. Franklin E. Hays
Presiding Pastor, TAALC