



# “Christmas Greetings”

December 2008

“His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor Prince of Peace...”

## THE ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS

3110 E. Medicine Lake Boulevard, Mpls. MN 55441 (P) 763-545-5631; (F) 763-545-0079; www.aflc.org info@aflc.org



A message from President Nelson

### PEACE ON EARTH

*“Glory to God in the highest,  
And on earth peace,  
goodwill toward men!”*

The greeting of the angels may sound a little over optimistic to us in these closing days of 2008.

Our world is filled with turmoil and confusion and we sometimes find ourselves fearing the future and what it will bring. Never-the-less, the Word of God still stands and the declaration of the angels is still possible; yes, it is still true.

I am sure there were many filled with fear and concern regarding the decree of Caesar Augustus. There were poor working people, such as the shepherds that had little hope for the future, but to them the message of the angels brought new hope, as they said, *“let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass.”*

Were their hopes genuinely made new? Indeed they were! When they had seen the Christ child Luke

says, *“they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child; then the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.”*

At this season of the year we as an AFLC are reminded again of that message of “Peace on earth.” We are assured that Jesus is that peace within every heart where he has been invited to take up residence. Ephesians 2:14 *“For He Himself is our peace.”*

It is my prayer that you, as brothers and sisters in Christ, are experiencing that blessed peace in your hearts and in your homes as you celebrate the birth of Christ.

It is most encouraging to know that you and I and many others are partnering to bring Peace to a troubled world. Thank you for sharing in the ministries of the AFLC. Your gifts and prayers are so important to the task. See the last page of this issue concerning the AFLC budgets for the closing weeks of 2008. Our God is ever faithful in supplying all our needs.

Thanks and praise to Him, and a blessed Christmas and New Year to each of you.

In His Service,  
Pastor Elden Nelson - AFLC President

### PERSONAL EVANGELISM



### THE HEARTBEAT OF HEAVEN

### “CHRISTMAS GREETINGS” FROM THE AFLC EVANGELISM DEPARTMENT

*“And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife, but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.” Matthew 1:24-25*

Think about Joseph, as his betrothed wife was about to have a baby. He was a man of honor and integrity who did not want to disgrace his family name by marrying a woman who had not been faithful to him. In the verses from Matthew, Joseph received a message from the angel of God. He obeyed immediately asking for no clarification, regardless of the cost or consequences.

Does this act of obedience make you think about your responsibility as a believer to tell people about Jesus? We are at a critical point in our nation’s history when we need to be vocal about God’s gift to every man, woman and child. *“...not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance” II Peter 3:9b.*

The AFLC Commission on Evangelism would love to be the catalyst to help your congregation intentionally focus on reaching the lost in and around your community. Please contact us and become intentional about growing God’s Kingdom in your neighborhood!

Thank you for your generous prayer support and financial gifts for AFLC Evangelism. **Please remember that gifts for Evangelism must be designated for the specific ministry of**

#### Evangelism.

May you be an instrument God uses to proclaim “Jesus Christ, the Savior” this Christmas.

#### AFLC Commission on Evangelism

(763) 545-5631  
evangelism@aflc.org



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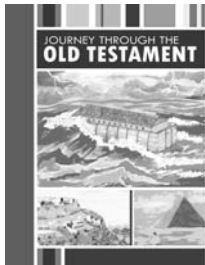
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# AMBASSADOR PUBLICATIONS

*Sending out the light and truth of God's Word*



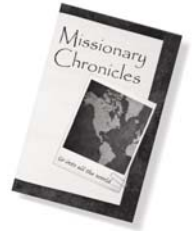
*"Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other."  
Isaiah 45:22*



NEW  
Grade 5 student book

## Completed in 2008

- **Missionary Chronicles** – a collection of short stories representing five continents, written by people of the AFLC who have served in missions. Appropriate for family devotions and opening chapel time, \$10.00 each.
- **Journey Through the Old Testament** – new Grade 5 student book in the Ambassador Sunday School Series with 36 lessons all in one book, \$16.00 each.
- **Roots of Freedom** – a full-color booklet summarizing the history, principles, and ministries of the AFLC. Appropriate for youth and adults. Includes discussion questions, \$4.00 each.



## Projects Nearing Completion

- New Ambassador Publications catalog.
- Catechism CD with an introductory study called "Know Your Catechism" and a pdf of the 2007 edition of *Luther's Small Catechism and Explanation*.
- Ambassador Bible study on Confession of Sin – the first in a two-part series called *Worship: The Secret of the Lord*.

## Prayer Needs

- Office staff, board members, and volunteers working on various projects.
- Financial needs – funding to print the Grade 5 teacher manuals in 2009.

*May the blessing of the Lord be upon you this Christmas season and in 2009!*

*"And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.'"*  
**Luke 2:8-14**



The hinge of history swings on the door of the Bethlehem stable. The night that the Lord God was born as one of us changed everything. We mark our calendars as time before and after that moment.

Why is that moment so significant? Because of our rebellion against God, we deserved and were headed to an eternity of punishment. But God had

compassion on us and came to take the punishment we deserved so we could go free. He came and saved us and exchanged our fear to joy. This good news was and is today for all people.

Your effort through World Missions brings this message to people all around the world. It is our desire that all could say with the heavenly host, "Glory to God in the highest for His peace extended to men on earth."

As you pray and give remember the following:

### Missionaries

- Jonathan, Tamba Abel and family
- Paul and Becky Abel and family
- Connely Dyrud and family
- Nate and Rhoda Jore and family
- Todd and Barb Schierkolk and family

### Missionaries on Loan

- Tomasz and Miriam Chmiel
- Tim, Renata Hinrichs and family
- Steve, Glenda Kvale and family
- Darwin, MaryAnn Jackson and family

### Developer of Distance Education

- Kevin Olson

### Office Staff

- Del Palmer – Director
- Wanda Jacobson – Office manager

### Short Term Missionary Assistants

- Danny and Marcella Giles and family
- Ingrid Giles
- Ben Jore
- Jesse Long
- Kalika Peske
- Justo Pillman

### National Leaders

- Luther Dasari – India
- Samuel Flores – Mexico
- Silvio Paes – Brazil
- David Natema – Uganda

### The National Pastors in Each Country

*We pray that you  
have a blessed  
Christmas Season.*



## Association Free Lutheran Bible School

3134 E. Medicine Lake Blvd. Plymouth, MN 55441 - AFLBS Dean - Rev. Joel Rolf

# “Have a Blessed Christmas”

Over the years I have seen the changed lives and joyful faces of countless AFLBS students. This fall it was finally my turn to attend and I began the year with high expectations. God has proven that He is more than sufficient by exceeding all of my expectations and showing me what it means to be complete in Him. One of the greatest things God has been teaching me this year is that the more I learn about Him, the more I see how little I actually know about Him. His infinitude is more than I can fathom, and I rest contently in the fact that I cannot fully understand Him while on earth. I joyfully embrace the promise of Ephesians 3:20-21: *“Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”*



- Stephanie Nelson - Newark, IL

I came to AFLBS seeking an atmosphere in which I could grow in my prayer life, associate with fellow believers, be equipped with the Word of God, and be trained to stand up for the truth once I leave AFLBS. I found all this and much, much more awaiting me here. I have been blessed beyond measure and God is revealing new and exciting things to me each day! A verse that I take comfort in is James 1:12 which states, *“Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.”*

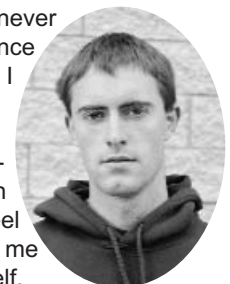


This reaffirms to me that AFLBS is where God wants me to be and that I am being equipped to handle every trial and temptation that the devil will throw my way once my time here is up.

- Travis Pflughaupt - El Camp, TX

God gave me wonderful parents, dedicated to raising us in the fear of the Lord. We read the Word as a family and were not only encouraged to read it daily, but required to.

As a child, I would pray the “Sinner’s Prayer” whenever I heard it and even on my own. But I never had lasting assurance of salvation. When I was sixteen, God impressed on me that I had been trying to produce faith inside myself, to feel saved. He brought me to give up on myself, and to look to Jesus alone. Thus I found the peace I had so long been vainly seeking.



Since then I have had ideas about ministry, some clearer than others. Part of me just wants to be a farmer, but there is something nagging me yet. That is why I am here at AFLBS, and look forward to seeing God’s plan unfold. In the meantime, I am enjoying some great training in the Word of God.

- Judah E. Finney - Arlington, WA



*“Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it.” Psalm 127:1.*

*This past year, God has again blessed us with His provisions through your prayers and gifts of support. We are continually grateful and praise His name... “Jehovah Jireh” God is our Provider!*

**HERITAGE 400:** Heritage 400 originated in June 2007 to help pay off the \$400,000 debt on Heritage Hall. The goal - find four hundred individuals to contribute \$1000.00 over 4 years, and erase the debt. Thus far \$98,759 has been pledged and \$57,654 received to reduce the debt to \$203,811. Funds are needed to make monthly payments of \$9,449.56.

**PROJECTS ON CAMPUS:** This year both dorms were painted, the floors in the laundry rooms tiled, new washers and dryers installed, bathrooms remodeled and filtered drinking fountains installed. The campus received a gift of a golf cart for maintenance use, as well as some picnic tables, ladders, platform risers and various other supplies.

**CHAPEL/ORGAN PROJECT:** The AFLC hosted a special organ concert in September to dedicate the new pipe organ to the glory of God. Funds are still in needed for the Chapel/Organ project. Gifts may be sent to AFLTS, marked, “Chapel Project” at 3120 East Medicine Lake Blvd. Plymouth, MN 55441.

**AFLC DEANS’ LUNCHEONS:** The Deans’ Luncheons are opportunities to visit campus, with tours, classes and chapel services followed by lunch and fellowship with staff and students. Luncheons are January 29, February 26, March 26, and April 30. Please call 763-544-9501 for reservations.

**GOSPEL TEAMS AT AFLBS:** Nine gospel teams began their 2008-2009 ministries. Groups include Men’s Quartet, Large Gospel Team, Puppet Ministry, Mixed Quartet, Women’s Ensemble, Urban Ministry, Women’s Trio, Worship Team, and Nursing Home. For more information, contact AFLBS staff member, Bob W. Lee at 763-544-9501, or download a form off the school’s web site [www.aflbs.org](http://www.aflbs.org).



## AFLC Home Missions IMMANUEL ~ "GOD WITH US"

"Behold the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son and they shall call his name IMMANUEL," which translated means, 'GOD WITH US'." Matthew 1:23

More than 2000 years ago, God so loved us that He sent His Son ... "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us"... so that if we believe in him, we will not perish but we can have eternal life. As 2008 comes to a close, God's gift of this Immanuel still means "God with us" today!

We are grateful for the privilege to share this Christmas message 365 days a year across America. From our new mission frontier of Alaska to the open doors on the East Coast, our desire is to establish vibrant and growing congregations where the Word of God is proclaimed and preached. Our Barnabas team members met many children this summer who did not even know who Jesus was or who had never listened to a Bible story. We continue to hear from small groups of individuals across our nation who desire a Lutheran church where God's Word is proclaimed. Please pray for our country, AFLC



Barnabas team member at VBS

Home Missions and the ministries of these Home Mission churches and pastors.

We are grateful for our growing AFLC Home Missions family: Our dedicated Home Missions pastors, wives, and families, Parish Builders,

Summer Team members, Home Missions Committee, Office Staff, Builders Fellowship Volunteers and our faithful Knee Mail Prayer Partners.

Thank you for your faithful prayers, financial provision, and support. We are grateful for each of you that have encouraged and served in the mission to reach the USA for Christ.



Future home of Living Word in Sioux Falls, SD

We are grateful for the convictions of the forefathers of our AFLC who stood firmly on the Word of God. We have been blessed because of their faithfulness and it is our prayer that God would find us faithful and pass this heritage on to the next generation.

Praise the Lord that in the uncertainty of the days in which we live, God is with us!



Rev. Brian Davidson serving as interim manager of KAKN radio in Naknek, AK

**"Merry Christmas"**  
**AFLC Home Missions**

## Free Lutheran Association of Pilot Supporters



The Lord's Air Force

*Serving the Lord  
and reaching lost souls through  
air transportation.*

We are thankful to God for His continued provision for the FLAPS ministry, and to the Lutheran Mission Society for the transfer of their Alaska aviation ministry to FLAPS. Thanks to all who support this ministry through prayer and gifts. Wishing you the joy and peace of Christ this Christmas as we celebrate His birth.



Alaska based Cessna 175 with Rev. Jeff Swanson & Jeremy Crowell

**"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" Luke 2:14**

## ASSOCIATION FREE LUTHERAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



*"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)*

Since the beginning of our seminary in 1964, students and faculty have been reminded daily of the glorious truth contained in the Scripture verse above. A beautiful plaque made by one of the early AFLC laymen and placed at the front of the classroom is inscribed with the amazing words, "the Word became flesh." This tremendous reality encapsulates the heart of the Christmas message. Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, willingly became incarnate for the purpose of providing eternal salvation at the cross for every person on the face of the globe – all by the grace of God and received through faith alone! And at Christmas, as always, we do not worship a baby still in a manger but we worship our crucified, risen, and triumphant Savior, the glorious King of kings and Lord of lords Who is coming again to welcome His believing Church "Home" forevermore!

Thank you for your prayers and support for the seminary during this past year! We are dependent upon you as our extended "family" for the maintenance of our ongoing ministry of training men for effective ministry as "servant-pastors" in our congregations and mission fields. God has given us a blessed year of study, prayer, and fellowship here on the Medicine Lake campus in answer to your prayers! We are so thankful for each of our students and their families. We believe they are men who have been "prayed into the seminary." While we want everyone to know that we have a seminary and what our convictions and purposes are, we don't believe that we should attempt to recruit men to come to the seminary. We want it to be the Lord's individual guidance that prompts each man to apply. Continue to pray that men whom the He wants to train at our seminary will be led to apply for entrance during the next academic year.

We are thankful for the opportunity afforded to each of our interns to spend their final year of seminary training in one of our AFLC parishes. We consider each of these congregations and their pastors as co-workers in the ministry of preparing men for service in our AFLC. We are looking ahead to the next internship year (June 1, 2009 – May 31, 2010) with prayerful expectation that the Lord again will graciously provide sufficient requests from our congregations so that each eligible student can be placed. Pray with us to that end. Thank you again for your partnership with us through your prayers, encouragement and financial help! Each of us as faculty and staff at AFLTS pray that you and yours will have a blessed Christmas in the joy of our Savior's first coming to bring us salvation – "the Word became flesh" – and in prospect of His return to welcome us into His glorious presence in Heaven forevermore!

Dr. Fran Monseth,  
Dean of the Seminary

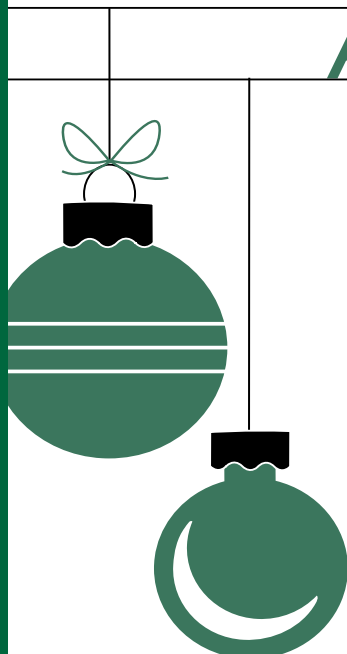


## THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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# JOY TO THE WORLD!

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.  
And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

~ Isaiah 9:6



## 2009 Prayer Pursuits

Youth Workers  
Retreat at ARC  
Jan. 23-25

SIDE by SIDE  
Feb. 6-8

Student Missions  
June 6-27

FLY Convention  
July 6-11

[youth.aflc.org](http://youth.aflc.org)

**Director of Youth Ministries:** Pr. Jason Holt

**Youth Ministries Associate:** Ms. Naomi Andrews

**AFLC Youth Board:** Pr. Mark Johnson, Mr. Dan Antal,  
Ms. Kayla Russum, Mr. Jason Norlien, Pr. Wade Mobley



*Are you looking forward to **giving** or  
**receiving** this Christmas?*

This year, I have heard people from 6 different countries say the same thing and ask for the same gift. "Pastor Kevin, can you help us grow in the Word of God?" It is a gift that we have been given and then one that we can also pass on to others.

The gift of God's Word is more than the purchase of Bibles. It is the understanding of that Word and the hearing of that message in ones heart language. It is a priceless treasure to know Jesus. It is truly the gift that keeps on giving.

This coming year we will be continuing to work with the five pastors in Uganda and teaching their students. We will also be helping the church in India with the training of their leaders. Please pray for this first trip during the month of January. Pray for the five pastors in Uganda and their family lives. Pray for people in Orissa, India who are under intense persecution.

Colossians 1:25-27 describes both the reception and the giving of Jesus;

*"I have become its servant by -*

***the commission God gave me to present to you the Word of God in its fullness,  
the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints.  
To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery,  
which is Christ in you the hope of glory."***

Pastor Kevin Olson  
Director Ambassador Institute



# Christmas Greetings

*The Women's Missionary Federation of the AFLC brings you greetings in the wonderful Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the women of our church body we want to be **Women Ministering Faithfully** in our homes, our churches, our communities, and our world. The women of the WMF are committed to prayer, giving, and sharing the love of Jesus to those around us. Our focus is that all people would come to know Jesus, the Christ, who was born that all might live.*

*AFLC women are generous in their gifts to the various ministry projects the WMF supports – Christian Education (the Schools, Parish Education, Cradle Roll), World Missions, Home Missions, and the General Fund of the WMF.*

*We are so grateful for each of you and we pray that God would become even more meaningful to you this Christmas as you consider who Jesus is – Emmanuel – God with Us!*

*Mrs. Lorilee Mundfrom - National WMF President*

## AFLC MINISTRIES ANNUAL GIFT BUDGETS THROUGH NOVEMBER 2008

	BUDGETED RECEIPTS	ACTUAL RECEIPTS	REMAINING BUDGET	% OF BUDGET RECV'D
GENERAL FUND	\$360,331	\$318,183	\$42,148	88%
EVANGELISM	\$113,084	\$77,391	\$35,693	68%
YOUTH MINISTRIES	\$71,249	\$94,076	N/A	132%
PARISH EDUCATION	\$116,771	\$88,598	\$28,173	76%
SEMINARY (AFLTS)	\$220,252	\$178,637	\$41,615	81%
BIBLE SCHOOL (AFLBS)	\$346,706	\$335,967	\$10,739	97%
HOME MISSIONS	\$332,985	\$268,223	\$64,762	81%
WORLD MISSIONS	\$288,948	\$275,391	\$13,557	95%
WM PERSONAL SUPPORT	\$457,495	\$420,627	\$36,868	92%
<b>AFLC MINISTRY TOTALS</b>	<b>\$2,307,821</b>	<b>\$2,057,093</b>		<b>89%</b>

**These figures represent the AFLC Annual Conference approved gift budgets. At this time in 2007, AFLC Ministry Totals were at 95% of budget. AFLC ministries need approximately \$275,000 to ensure all ministries meet the conference-approved totals.**

The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations  
3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard  
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