

HELPING HAND

NEWSLETTER



WINTER/SPRING 2021

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Looking for a program idea?
Need information on the
Missionaries?
Starting a new Bible study
and need material? Check
the **WMF Resource Manual**.
Check your copy or see it at
aflc.org/women/resources/

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Confident Humility

BY LAVONNE WEST,

Life's hardships often feel like someone has turned up the heat. The cashew has a caustic oil between the nut's inner and outer shells. Before we enjoy them; they've been through the fire to burn off the outer shell. Then the nut is boiled or roasted again to remove the inner shell.

In II Corinthians 4:7-9 NASB Paul writes, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;"

Cancelled. The Home Mission Retreat was cancelled. As many of you know this is the third "trip" that I have unpacked. It is a lesson in confident humility. Trusting in the One who opens doors and closes them. He must increase and I must decrease. That's my story and I'm sticking to it. The theme was "Feels Like Home" well it feels like we are all staying home this time. And I am praying for God's will to be done and kingdom come. I must have important tasks here at home to fulfill. Starting with prayer for each of you dear women across the AFLC.

Thank you to those who have been praying for our friends hit hard by this virus. Especially those in the "host" church for the mission conference Calvary in Mesa, AZ.

I trust you will be encouraged as you read this issue of our Helping Hand. **Guard what has been entrusted to you...** you will see how some of our missionaries and friends in Parish Ed. and FLBS are seizing these moments during COVID to do just that!



WMF Day 2021

Wednesday, June 16, 2021
Association Free Lutheran Schools, Plymouth MN

Guard what has been entrusted to you!

1 Timothy 6:20-21 NASB



Pass it on

By Tamba Abel

Guard what has been entrusted to you | Timothy 6:20

II Timothy 1:5 - "I am reminded **of your** sincere faith, **a** faith that dwelt first in **your grandmother** Lois and **your mother** Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well." (ESV). Having been born on the mission field, I can say that like Timothy, I was taught to have faith from an early age, watching firsthand the faith lived out in my parents' lives. Their love for God and His Word, its teachings, the prayers answered by their strong faith ... all contributed to molding my personal belief and faith in God and His Word.

By His grace I grew up following their footsteps, desiring to serve Him, seeking to learn more of His Word - getting training in Bible school and eventually meeting a person who shared the same love for serving God, to share my life with.

We embarked on the same journey as our parents, of being missionaries to the country where we both grew up in (Brazil) and were blessed with 3 children, of which we also have taught to love God and His Word. What was entrusted to us, we have entrusted to them - and pray that they will do the same with their children.

It was important in Paul's days to emphasize to Timothy to guard what had been entrusted to him, so as to not be led astray even by those who called themselves "Christian" but were teaching error. Now, more than ever, "there's a lot of empty talk that passes for God's Word in these days when many churches are looking for ways to make people feel good about themselves instead of teaching the truths of God's Word and letting it do its work." (*) The enemy is distorting God's Word, blinding people, causing them to believe in a delusion. Like Timothy's grandmother Lois, his mother Eunice, we must embrace a faith that guards the sole truth of God's Word and entrust it to those who God places in our lives. (*) Kevin Pierpont

Waiting with Hope

Todd and Barb Schierkolk, Jerez, Zacatecas, Mexico

I am writing this during Advent a week before Christmas. Our town in Mexico has had a major spike in COVID cases and we are in lock-down again, and we are waiting again. This time is different, though, because there is news of a vaccine on the horizon and that has given many people here hope. We Christians have always been waiting and it has always been different for us because we have a promise written in God's Word that Jesus is coming again. We have always been waiting with hope because we trust what our King and Savior tells us in His Word completely. Not one of His promises has failed; not one single word. (Joshua 21:45 and I Kings 8:56)

Over the twenty-five years that Barb and I have served in Mexico as missionaries with the AFLC we have waited a lot. We have waited, and prayed, and hoped. We have done so because we know with certainty that God loves the people we have been trying to reach. We know with certainty that the Holy Spirit is at work in their lives, and is trying to draw them into relationship with Jesus. What we don't know is if they will ever open their hearts to Him, but even if they do, we don't know when that will be. Just maybe it will be this time. Maybe the devotion I send out on this day will ring true for them. Maybe it will be what I say at this visit that will finally break through. Maybe this act of kindness will finally overcome their spiritual stubbornness. So we wait, and we pray, and we hope. Waiting can be hard, and it has been such a tremendous help over these years to have so many in the WMF's around the country helping us with their prayers. Thank you so much. And may God bless you, too, as you wait, and pray, and hope.



Serving with Amazing Love

By Jonni Sliver



I have recently been thinking about the terms God uses, in referring to us, and how they reflect His love for us. He calls us friends, He calls us sons and daughters, He even calls us Bride. All of those sound warm and loving. Then we come to "servant". That doesn't sound quite as loving, does it? But that is because the world around us tell us that serving is menial, 2nd class and of little value. But in the Kingdom of God, serving is an expression of amazing love. Jesus washed feet, fed the hungry, touched the sick, and left us an example to follow. It isn't that God NEEDS our service. Our God, who created all that is and sustains all creation by His Word, doesn't need anything, but out of His love He allows us to take part in His work!

Here in the Miriam Home Children's Home, we have the great pleasure of literally embracing the trust God has given us! Young lives who have been exposed to an excess of babble, who have never had the opportunity to actually see what "reverent" looks like. We have the responsibility of making sure they are clean and fed and safe; but we have the honor of doing more! We are able to introduce each child to their heavenly Father; of speaking truth about their value before God; of helping them understand what is right and wrong in light of God's Word, and how to deal with the wrong they find in their own hearts and minds.



The youngest children come to us just days old. Their little minds don't understand the words of blessing prayed over them, but their spirits receive the ministry of the Holy Spirit! The oldest children are teen-age girls, who think they know - what is true, what is good for them, what kind of future awaits them. We have the privilege of bringing light to their darkness. Most of these precious girls have learned to survive, where God desires for them to live lives of abundance! I think of Paola, who came to us at 12 years old, and left at 15, when she was adopted. She has grown into a lovely servant of the Lord and just last week we had the joy of seeing her on youtube, performing a beautiful worship song.

All of the children hear; but we don't always see immediate fruit - sometimes it seems like ears and eyes and hearts are firmly closed. But the seed is sown, and we have seen girls, years after they leave the Miriam Home, letting the seed sprout! A few months ago, we got to see Greicy baptized - she had made many bad decisions, until she made the only right one - letting Jesus lead her life!

However, the children and their families respond in the moment we will continue to offer them the Word and love of God, because we have been given the honor of serving them in Jesus' name!

Remember all of our AFLC Missionaries

Brazil: Paul and Becky Abel, Jonathan and Tamba Abel, Jonni Sliver, John and Hannah Lee

Mexico: Todd and Barb Schierkolk

Uganda: Nate and Rhoda Jore, Brent and Emily Raan, Michael Rokenbrodt (seasonal)

Please note: **Micah and Famke Berger completed their service with AFLC World Missions at the end of 2020. We invite you to continue to pray for the Bergers as they move to MN and seek the Lord's will for their future.** AFLC World Missions will continue to receive gifts that are designated for the Bergers to help replenish funds that were used to keep the Berger family on the field.

Paraguay: Matthew and Ednay Abel

Missionaries on loan: Wycliffe Bible Translators: Steve and Glenda Kvale

Lutheran Bible Translators: Josh and Ruth Wagner, Andrew and Alexis Olson

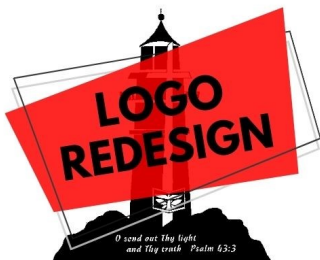
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: Parish Ed



The Work of Parish Ed

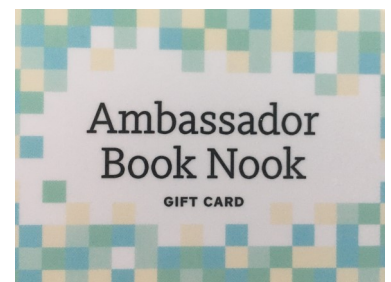
How many of you know what the Parish Education Board does? This is the board that is responsible for the AFLC Sunday school material, among other things. They spend many hours and work diligently updating, rewriting, and editing the material that is prepared to make sure that it is solid biblical Lutheran material to encourage the students using it to grow in their faith.

When you look for Sunday school material or a Bible study or devotional what do you look for? Flashy pictures and pizzazz? Or is your attention focused on the study material itself? What is more important: the study content or the pictures? AFLC Parish Education produces solid biblical Lutheran material! As God's children our main focus should be on the biblical content that we take in, not just the pretty pictures. The Parish Ed Board does both well—the solid biblical Lutheran-based material, as well as the artwork and creativity. The teacher's manuals they prepare are immensely helpful to the teacher, not only with ideas for the class time but also to encourage teachers in their faith as they prepare the lessons for their students.



A variety of materials are available to purchase in the bookstore on campus and through their online store or catalog: Ambassador Sunday School Curriculum, Confirmation Materials, Teen & Adult Studies, Books, Devotional Books, AFLC Heritage Series, Bibles, Bible Commentaries, as well as other topics such as Music, History & Geography, Maps & Charts, Luther's Catechism Illustrated, Missions for Children, Children's Books, Miscellaneous Sunday School Resources, Attendance Charts, Bible Poster Sets, Seasons of the Church Year, Pamphlets & Tracts, Baptism, Cults & World Religions, DVDs, Church Supplies, and Certificates for Baptism, Confirmation, and Church Membership.

Purchasing materials through Ambassador Publications helps to support the ministry of Parish Education as they serve AFLC congregations. Contributions also help cover costs for printing materials and operating expenses. Some of the projects expected to be completed in 2021 include new Ten Commandments curriculum for children, a new book in the AFLC Heritage Series (*One Thing I Seek: Selected Writings of Francis W. Monseth*), and a new daily devotional book (*Luther for the Busy Man*).



Visit the website at www.ambassadorpublications.org.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: Free Lutheran Bible College



TRAINING STUDENTS

Pastor Adam Osier,
Dean of the Free Lutheran Bible College

Guard the deposit entrusted to you. Paul's command to the young pastor, Timothy, echoes through the annals of time to all those seeking to rightly handle God's Word of truth. These are important words. These are purposeful words. They are missional words. They focus us on that which so much in our world today would have us forget. They remind us that there is such a thing as truth, and that it is the responsibility of God's people to guard that truth.

What is this deposit? The deposit entrusted to Timothy was his call to proclaim God's Word of law and gospel in the congregation. There is a very clear sense in which guarding this deposit has been the ministry of the Free Lutheran Bible College since her founding. Our mission is to train students to know and be able to communicate God's Word in service within their local congregation.

Truth is an elusive thing in this world. Despite all the uncertainties of recent months, despite the collapsing cultural institutions and the rejection of truths long held, our mission and purpose stand. In fact, the need for grounding young adults in God's truth is all the greater. If anything, all that transpired in this last year is evidence that our ministry is more critical now than before.

As such, we value your prayers for our ministry as we seek to guard this deposit entrusted to us. We've been entrusted with nearly 100 students who see the value of deepening their foundations in God's Word. Despite the virus-dampened student experience, the attitude and atmosphere on campus has been positive. We are getting to see students grow in confidence in the work that Christ has done for them and see their heart to bring news of that work to the lost. Their passion for Jesus is evident. This reminds us all the more of the need to guard that good deposit. It changes lives!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: Free Lutheran Seminary

SUPPORT YOUR SEMINARIANS

We have 5 men finishing internship and open to call this spring. We have 5 men entering their Senior year of seminary and 2 who are starting internship this year. Please pray for more men to listen to the call of God to prepare to study for ministry.

The WMF supports the seminary students with gifts of \$100 twice a year to help with their book expenses (Book Fund), a subscription for the Lutheran Ambassador for each student and funds that come in over this goes towards the updating of a nursery area in the middler classroom. We have received thank you's and appreciations from the students for this helpful gift.





Possible Change

Lavonne West, WMF National President

When it was time to print the pages for our resource manual; Bonnie asked me “what zone are we in again?” She didn’t have our resource manual at home to look this up.

We have three zones for our “giving calendar.” This was set in place to spread out the lean months across the USA. It gave those projects a better chance at being funded as well as the general fund which always needs support.

As our officers looked this over the question came up as to a possible change. I know it’s difficult to see that word. We brought it to the district presidents and representatives. Some voiced their opinion. At the time of this writing; we are funding missions at three times that of our parish ed. Well, we are the Women’s MISSIONARY Federation. Missions is our heart cry. One of my board members mentioned that parish ed. is missions, too. Discipleship in our homes and churches with solid materials from the Ambassador Publications. Training our young adults and future pastors at our Bible School and Seminary is fulfilling our commission from Mark 16:15.

Hence a possible giving calendar... similar to that of our AFLC was born. Unifying and simplifying for 2022 and beyond. You will have your chance to weigh in on this when we see you in Minneapolis on June 16th. Keep it on your prayer radar, though. We are seeking God’s will in this matter.

We will be voting on the recommended amendment of Article V Section 5 of our constitution ... “Officers shall be elected for a term of three years. All officers may be eligible for re-election, but no officers shall hold the same office for more than two successive terms. The President and Communications Secretary shall be elected one year; the First Vice-President and Recording Secretary the following year; the Second Vice-President and the Treasurer the third year. Newly elected officers shall officially assume their duties at the September meeting following their election.” We will also be voting on a By-Laws correction Article 1 Section 1 to update the schools names from AFLBS to Free Lutheran Bible College (FLBC) and AFLTS to Free Lutheran Seminary (FLS).

Mission House at the ARC

This house is used by the missionary families when they are home on furlough. The WMF works together with the World Missions to supply this home for the missionaries. There are needs that arise from time to time with the upkeep of the property and furnishings. The following areas are needing attention:

The countertop is delaminating on both sides of the corner sink at the seams. The World Mission Committee believes that a single-slab quartz countertop will solve the problem. We have a bid for the quartz countertop and sink of \$4,181.60. This bid does not include the faucet.

The Amery congregation is raising funds for kitchen appliances.

A couple of other needs are central air (someone has to install the three window units each year) and a new washer and dryer.

If you are interested in helping out with these projects contact the World Mission Department.

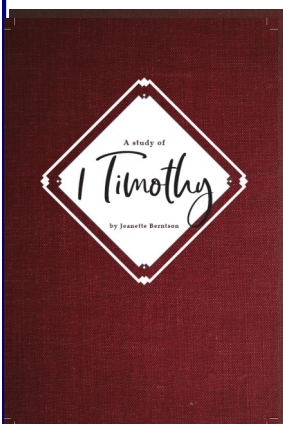
TREASURER'S REPORT JANUARY-DECEMBER 2020

PROJECTS	INCOME	EXPENSES	BUDGET
World Missions	\$27,215.94	\$27,717.94	\$45,000.00
Home Missions	\$12,980.55	\$12,980.55	\$22,650.00
Christian Education	\$15,334.21	\$16,838.63	\$24,000.00
WMF General Fund	\$51,336.44	\$47,229.00	\$65,200.00
Special Gifts	\$15,569.00	\$15,569.00	
Convention Offering	\$10,621.50	\$10,621.50	
TOTALS	\$133,057.64	\$130,957.13	\$156,850.00

WMF MEMORIALS

Tim Westby
Bruce Kjelvik
Corrine Kjelvik
Jayne Hayes
Beverly Johnson
Donald Schroeder
Dolores Rishovd
Ellen Fox
Althea Miller

Not one project is more important than the other—it is all the work of God!



2021 Bible study
1 Timothy
by Jeanette Berntson
\$12 each

Available to order from the Executive Secretary (contact information on the front page.)

Bible studies available

Ephesians, Following Christ, Pearls for a Princess, Joseph, Gift of Grace, Sweet Freedom's Song, Living Water, Image of Christ in Women and Freedom's Holy Light are all \$3 each.

Colossians, Acts, Hope, God's Servants Teach us Life lessons \$5 each,
Don't Follow your Feelings and A study on 1 Timothy \$12 each.

2021 WMF Theme





WOMEN'S MISSIONARY FEDERATION OF THE AFLC
3110 E MEDICINE LAKE BLVD
MINNEAPOLIS MN 55441-3008

To save on expenses for our National WMF GENERAL FUND we send a copy of this Helping Hand Newsletter to the WMF PRESIDENT and the PASTOR'S WIFE. Please make copies and share them with the ladies of your Congregation.

Mark Your Calendar

- ♦ Watch for news on your district spring rally!
- ♦ **WMF Day 2021**
June 16th
AFLC Schools, Plymouth MN
All registration will be done through headquarters.

REMEMBER

Please be sure to update your Women's groups information with the Executive Secretary. The Officer update form is in the WMF Resource Manual. If you don't have an organized group then please send a contact person for your church.

If your WMF has had members pass away this past year, please email the funeral bulletin to the Executive Secretary and they will be included in the memorial service at WMF Day 2020.



ARC WOMEN'S RETREAT **APRIL 23 - 25, 2021**

Proverbs 31 Woman and Living in the AND

Speakers: Pam Olson, Naomi Paige and Emily Olson
Music by Yvonne Blake

We will have a night of hors d'oeuvre Friday night with a round table discussion with the speakers and give away of 25 of Ruth's Favorite things, Saturday will be a day of learning together with break out sessions on crafting, household organization, meal prep, writing and so much more. There will be fellowship time with ladies, time to talk, walk and relax!

For more information and to register go to:
<https://www.arc-aflc.org/womens-retreat>.