

THE 

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LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

FLY BEYOND 2020

MYSTERIOUS
HOPE





THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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FINDING REST IN HIM

BY ELIZABETH NEUFELD

1

f you look at the world, you'll be distressed. If you look within, you'll be depressed. If you look at God, you'll be at rest."

This quote by Corrie Ten Boom lingered in my mind as I awoke one morning, having made a gargantuan realization about myself the night before: I had not been seeking the Lord. I had been in complete turmoil, confused as to why my own actions weren't producing anything very gracious or joyful. It disturbed me that the silent, constant pep talks of "just be like Jesus" weren't all that fruitful by themselves.

While being held in a concentration camp during WWII, Corrie Ten Boom lived life under the control of the vilest people, yet she rested in God. When her world was turned upside down, she looked to God, the Rock of her Salvation. Corrie wrote, "You can never learn that Christ is all you need, until Christ is all you have." Along with her sister Betsy, she had managed to sneak a Bible into the camp, and they led worship services together. They knew that they couldn't trust in anything to sustain them other than the Lord's strength.

Even when everything in our lives is fine and the craziness of our circumstances has taken a breather, even when we are just going about our day as usual, our sin is still one step away, ready to ensnare us at any point. Even so, we cannot lean on ourselves for strength, and the world is far too unstable to find sure solace there. The only way

we grow is through God, and though we stumble and fall, the Lord through His grace restores us to Himself. I am thankful for His faithfulness and grace while I learn to walk in Him instead of walking in the world.

That morning, the wonderful, faithful, and new mercies of Jesus met me as I lay in bed, and there reminded me of the gospel—that incredible truth that I will not live up to those perfect standards on my own. But as I turn my eyes upon Jesus, as I deliberately dive into His Word, He gives grace and rest no matter how I fall.

It was good for me to realize how unproductive and damaging my thoughts had been because this brought me to my knees and humbled me; only then was I willing to return to the restorative grace that teaches, fulfills, and produces growth in me. I needed to be at rest in God again, not seeking that rest through the tactics the world recommends or the things I think I know how to do on my own.

This realization also opened my eyes to understand a life without the knowledge of the gospel. How hopeless and insecure life becomes! I truly cannot do it on my own. "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9, ESV).

Neufeld is a Home Missions parish builder serving at Calvary Free Lutheran, Mesa, Ariz.

When I was young, I was sure of many things; now there are only two things of which I am sure: one is that I am a miserable sinner; and the other, that Christ is an all-sufficient Savior. He is well-taught who learns these two lessons.

—John Newton

If you young fellows were wise, the devil couldn't do anything to you, but since you aren't wise, you need us who are old.

—Martin Luther

Paul connects faith and hope. Rather than saying young people have faith if they believe without doubt, it might be better to say they have faith if, up against doubt, fear, and struggle, they hope.

—Andrew Root

A young man who wishes to remain a sound Atheist cannot be too careful of his reading. There are traps everywhere—'Bibles laid open, millions of surprises,' as Herbert says, 'fine nets and stratagems.' God is, if I may say it, very unscrupulous.

—C.S. Lewis

But the more you make the choice to live above your feelings, to trust God instead of what you may feel like doing, the stronger your faith becomes. It's not about being perfect. We will always be on a journey of growing closer to God.

—Tim Tebow

MYSTERIOUS

HOPE

BY RACHEL WOODWORTH

Every other summer in July, my favorite week of the year happens.

FLY Beyond is the AFLC Youth Ministries national equipping week for youth, and it is held every off year of the FLY Convention. While at FLY Beyond, teens spend a week digging into the Word and being built up to know and understand why we believe what we believe and how we minister to our neighbors and our congregations. This year, FLY Beyond was held July 19-23 at the Association Retreat Center, near Osceola, Wis. Our theme was “Mysterious Hope,” based on Colossians 1:27-29. Our evening speakers focused their messages on this passage, and the mysterious hope we have in Christ.

Woodworth, Plymouth, Minn., was the chairman of the FLY Beyond Planning Committee.

19

SUNDAY

On Sunday night Pastor Matthew Quanbeck introduced us to the concept of hope in Christ, and why this hope is mysterious. As believers, we have the hope that the gospel brings. Unbelievers do not have this hope, but they are looking everywhere for it. Understanding this should change how we interact with our culture. As Pastor Matt said so clearly in his session, “As Christians who have the mysterious hope of Christ, as we interact with a complex culture, a culture that goes against God in so many ways, may we have a compassion for people who are desperately searching for hope, when really they need the same hope that you and I have, which is the hope of Jesus Christ.”

20

MONDAY

Monday night Pastor Scott Stroud spoke on life in the Spirit. He talked to us about how placing our trust in Christ gives us a new heart, and how we need that new heart to grow and mature in Christ. He encouraged us in the importance of being mentored in the faith by a more mature believer. He also reminded us that we will have many battles throughout our lives, but that it's not our job to “work hard enough” to fight these battles. Instead, we need to allow the Lord to fight our battles. He spoke about this “great mystery” and explained how Paul's description in Ephesians 2:6 of being seated with Christ in heaven is actually a “now event.” He said, “You are seated with Christ in the heavenly realms. But at the same time, you are here on earth. What that means is God, when He sees you, sees you as holy and sanctified in Christ. But at the same time, you are being sanctified.”





21 **TUESDAY**

Tuesday night Pastor Ryan Tonneson talked about how Jesus alone is our satisfaction. All the “highs” we experience in life leave us, he said, and we end up feeling empty and dissatisfied. He spent some time in Ecclesiastes, explaining how this book is a record of King Solomon wrestling with the vanity and dissatisfaction of life. He reminded us that our lives are short, like a vapor as Ecclesiastes explains. “In order to find true, lasting, ultimate satisfaction, we must look outside of ourselves, we must look even outside of the pleasures of life the accomplishments and achievements of life,” he said. “True, and lasting satisfaction can only come from Jesus Christ and from knowing him. He is our hope. He is our identity. Jesus is also our satisfaction.”

22 **WEDNESDAY**

On the final night, Pastor Josh Skogerboe finished out our week by making sure that we know and understand that God gives us a life of purpose. He unpacked our theme verse, Colossians 1:27. God is a personal God, and that gives us value and purpose in our lives. “It is the personal nature of God’s love for us that proves our worth and gives us our purpose,” he said. The reminder to believers that God loves us personally, and the invitation to know God’s love for us, was a wonderful way to end our week of equipping.

I am thanking God for the wonderful week of equipping and growing that we had.

DIGITAL CAMP

A new layer to the national youth equipping conference this year was Digital Camp. The FLY Beyond planning team responded to the COVID-19 crisis by launching an avenue for congregations to view recordings of the 15 training sessions for one subscription rate. Nine congregations, from California to South Dakota, enrolled in FLY Beyond Digital Camp to view the content as a youth group. In addition, the 34 congregations represented at the ARC for physical camp were also given access to the password-protected training video menu.

“We are very pleased with the results of FLY Beyond Digital Camp and we’re hopeful to build off this year’s first effort in the future,” explained Pastor Jason Holt, director of AFLC Youth Ministries.

CHRIST IN YOU

HOPE OF GLORY

BY PASTOR PHIL HAUGEN

The theme of FLY Beyond 2020 was taken primarily from Colossians 1:27.

Paul is writing to “the saints and faithful brethren in Christ” (Colossians 1:2),

and in verse 27 Paul declares that to the saints “God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of *this mystery* among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, *the hope* of glory.” This is the basis of the theme, “Mysterious Hope.”

Paul defines in verse 27 what the mystery is. The mystery is “Christ in you” and the mystery is “the hope of glory.” Paul here is not speaking of two different things, but gives two descriptions of the same mystery. “Christ in you” is “the hope of glory” and both are the mystery. They are two aspects of the same thing.

Paul describes the mystery further in Colossians 1:26. He says

the mystery “has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints.” This description agrees with what Paul says in Ephesians 3:5, where the mystery is that “which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit” (see also Romans 16:25-26). Notice that the mystery is something that was hidden in the past, but has now been manifested to the apostles and prophets. This mystery, hidden previously but now revealed, is “Christ in you” (Colossians 1:27), “Christ himself” (Colossians 2:2), “Christ” (Colossians 4:3, the “mystery of Christ” in 4:3 is not so much the mystery about Christ, but the mystery which is Christ. “Of Christ” is a genitive of apposition.* This is also

the case in Ephesians 3:4, where Paul speaks of “the mystery of Christ”). In Ephesians 3:6, Paul declares the mystery, hidden but now revealed, is “that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.”

The varied descriptions of “mystery” are all aspects of the same thing: God’s plan of redemption in Christ. This was hidden from past generations (Old Testament) because it wasn’t revealed in the Old Testament as clearly as in the New Testament revelation by the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ. The Old Testament prophets anticipated the Christ event and spoke and wrote about it, but the event was not realized until it actually happened in history. Christ came, and in His coming the mystery was made known.





In Colossians 1:27, Paul calls the mystery “the hope of glory.” A hope is something concerning the future that is not yet seen or fully experienced; hope is “faith concerning the future.” The biblical word “hope” refers to an absolute certainty because God is faithful to His Word of promise, but it is a certainty yet to come. The hope is “laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard in the word of truth, the gospel” (Colossians 1:5). The certain hope is that the Father “has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light” (Colossians 1:13). He qualified us through what Christ did in His life, death, and resurrection.

When the believer in Christ enters eternity either at death or at the second coming of Christ, then faith becomes sight and the mystery, which is the hope of glory, will be

fully experienced. Salvation for us is already, but not yet. Even though the mystery of redemption has been revealed in the first coming of Christ, there is an aspect to the mystery of redemption which has not yet been fully experienced; thus it is described as “the hope of glory.” The believer in Christ has eternal life now, but does not experience that life fully until eternity. The believer in Christ is declared by God to be a saint now, but won’t experience the perfection of a saint until eternity. The believer in Christ is granted victory over sin and death now, but yet in this life struggles with both sin and the threat of death. Victory is already given, but not yet fully experienced: a hope. John speaks of this “hope of glory” in I John 3:2, “Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He

appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.” Thus, the hope continues to be mysterious until the day we see Him face to face.

Christ is the mystery revealed; He is our sure and certain hope.

Haugen, Crystal, Minn., was the morning Bible study teacher at FLY Beyond.

**Genitive refers to the relationship of one noun to another. In this case, “of” is used to define the noun “Christ.” Apposition is a description of the positioning of two words next to each other so that one describes or defines the other. “Of Christ,” then, is a genitive of apposition in which “of Christ” defines “mystery.” Thus, Christ is defined as the mystery,*



BY NATE CRELLIN

If there was ever an event that I wish I had attended more it is FLY Beyond. This year I was a panel moderator,

which meant that each evening I asked various thematic questions of a panel of staff volunteers. I accepted this call back in January, not knowing all of the world turmoil that would result over the next few months. But that gave me a time of reflection on these topics that I may not have had otherwise. Panel topics included: social justice, sexuality and relationships, social media, and anxiety. There are copious amounts of truth in God's Word about topics such as these, and earnestly seeking for these truths in our lives today is of utmost importance. We do this not just for our benefit—although we aim to be like Jesus every day—but for the sake of those who are lost and to serve the One who created us.

Working through these broad topics with a group of Bible-affirming peers was an opportunity for which only He alone can be responsible. I spent time with camp teens throughout the day during discussion groups, while eating meals, as the men's dorm room leader, and in worship. We have some amazing leaders and a well-rounded group of youths in our midst who are eager to spread His truth. I was reminded so often of God's faithfulness as I heard many testimonies throughout the week as these youths shared examples of His shepherd-like pursuit of His lost sheep.

Initially was very nervous about what I should say and how the week would go, and I nearly lost sight of these truths. Pastor Ryan Tonneson presented a message on Ecclesiastes, and he reminded us that everything under the sun has no meaning apart from God. To continue on that theme of Solomon's writings, I thought I would share an excerpt from Proverbs 2:6-7, "For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding; he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk in integrity ..." May we ever seek His wisdom and find our source of strength in His name alone.

Crellin, a 2020 graduate of FLBC, is a member of Grace Free Lutheran, Maple Grove, Minn.



BY CHLOE CARR

Religion, race, and age all fall under the spectrum of social injustice, but why? Social injustice is defined as unfair practices that are carried out in society. We talked about this at FLY Beyond and were able to

dig deeper into how to deal with social injustice in today's world as we have seen so much of it recently.

After the panel discussion we dug deeper into the topic in our small groups. This gave us time to share our personal experiences with our team members and to openly talk about the struggles we have been facing in this area of our lives and what we have been seeing



around us. We see many people claiming social injustice, but have we stopped to look in the Bible to see what God has to say about this matter? Galatians 3:28 says, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you belong to Christ." We also talked about the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20), as these are all good instructions that God has given to us to follow. We are sinners

by nature, so we will not always do what is right. But we also need to realize that not everyone has received the free gift of grace from God. As this world turns on each other, we must go back to God's Word to have the wisdom to teach others these truths. As believers we are God's children. We must hold fast to His love and mercy. Why are we pointing fingers due to religion, race, or age when we are all part of the same family? We have all been called to serve Him for His glory.

These were just some of the things brought up that were eye openers for me. How often do we go back into Scripture to see what God has to say? Often, we just jump right into what we think we should do. Next time you get into a conversation on a topic like this, stop and look at Scripture to see what the Bible has to say. James 1:19-20 says, "My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires." The things of this world may become aggravating, but we must take a deep breath and look at what God has to say.

Carr is a member of Zion Lutheran, Tioga, N.D.



RACIAL INJUSTICE

BY JORDAN LANGNESS

Racial tensions are being manifested in protests and riots across the country, videos are surfacing of multiple unlawful and ungodly acts of aggression, and politicians are

stirring up the people for another election that they say will once again determine the fate of our nation. There is simply no way to touch on all that is being said about racism; and yet here we are.

I am not a good authority on this subject, I am simply a follower of Jesus who is being challenged to examine how He is calling me to wrestle with His truth and how it speaks to the unrest around me. I need to confess that for much of my life, I lived as if racism was a non-issue: that it had been laid to rest after the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement. Sure, you could find people who still believed that they were superior just because of the amount of pigmentation in their skin, but that spoke more of their ignorance and sin than it did of our culture, I thought. And then this year happened.

Several events have challenged my ideas about racism. First, there were the videos of Philando Castile and George Floyd, both black men who were unjustly killed. These men were not perfect, but they were precious souls made in God's image, and what I saw happening to them did not reflect that reality. I was also struck by a comment that my brother Kazmine made: as a black man, he feels uncomfortable doing something as simple as using a bathroom at a home that he is working at as a landscaper; he fears that someone may perceive him to be a thief or assume that he has ill-intent. Next came the videos, such as Phil Vischer's, titled "Race in America," which revealed that this issue has not actually been laid to rest, but has been a festering wound that was, once again, exposed and reopened. Finally, there have been the ongoing conversations I have had with people who have seen and experienced realities that I was never exposed to.

As followers of Christ, we need to get beyond the slogans that we hide behind. Instead, we need to step into this brokenness, take the time to truly listen and hear instead of assume, mourn with those who mourn, and bring the hope of restoration, redemption, and reconciliation that Christ offers. The wounds of our nation show that we are in desperate need of the gospel. Yes, the primary role of the gospel is to reconcile us with Christ, but it is also meant to reconcile us to one another. May the world know that Christ is real by our unity and love for one another (John 17:21, 13:35).

Langness, youth and family ministry director at Hope Free Lutheran, Ishpeming, Mich., serves as AFLC Youth Ministries training coordinator.



GENDER & SEXUALITY

BY PASTOR MATTHEW QUANBECK

For the gender and sexuality panel discussion at FLY Beyond, one of the students submitted a question about ministering to friends who are struggling with same-sex attraction.

Too often the Church has oversimplified the answers to questions like this. Our answers must include both truth and compassion.

When people are genuinely hurting and confused, coldly throwing a Bible verse truth bomb at them will not bring the healing they need. Our goal cannot be to win an argument or to shame people into obedience. Instead, we must compassionately desire to point hurting souls to the “mysterious hope” of Christ.

We should realize that people who are questioning their gender identity or their sexual orientation have good reason to be confused. Our world celebrates the questioning of these things. Our world tells us that who we are is defined by the feelings we experience. So, you are not being true to yourself if you ignore feelings of a same sex attraction; you will never be happy if you ignore your desire to be somewhere else on the “gender spectrum.”

Even Christian kids who know the biblical basis of sexuality are bound to have questions as they hear a constant stream of these messages. Christian kids are also not immune from the temptation of same-sex attraction. For them, these questions and feelings can result in great shame and isolation. The Church must nurture a culture where hard questions about sexuality are welcomed and openness about sexual temptation is encouraged. In this kind of compassionate culture, the truth of God’s Word will effectively give answers and bring healing.

The same is true for responding to these issues outside of the church. We must stop viewing people in the LGBTQ community as enemies with whom we do battle. Instead, they are broken people searching in the wrong places for hope. With compassionate hearts, we love them by sharing God’s truth with them. Truth says that their sexual orientation is an empty place to find their identity. Truth says that they will never find hope by embracing sin which separates them from God. Truth says that they can leave the identity of their sexual orientation behind through faith in Christ. He provides an identity that is not based on feelings they are experiencing. Instead, it is an identity that comes from outside of themselves. It comes from a compassionate Savior who died to pay the price for their sin and to bring healing to their brokenness.

Quanbeck serves United Lutheran, Laurel, Neb.





BY LUKE DRYBURGH

This summer I attended Fly Beyond at the ARC. Each night there was a session on a topic relevant to the times followed by a panel discussion to answer questions about that topic.

Pastor Scott Stroud spoke on how Jesus is our identity in response to the topic of gender and sexuality.

In Pastor Stroud's session I learned that without Christ everything seems empty and worthless. As humans, we try to fill that emptiness with many different things as a way to try to give ourselves purpose. We all turn away from God, we all look for our identities in other things—but God gives us the true purpose we look for. I learned that our identity is only in Jesus. Jesus took our sin and gave us righteousness when He died on the cross. When God looks at you and me, He no longer sees the wretched sinners we are but Jesus and His righteousness. Jesus is our identity! Not our girlfriends or boyfriends, not what we identify ourselves as, and not anything else. We are known by God, and when things get hard, He will get us through.



In the panel discussion, there were many questions. How should we deal with the LGBTQ community? What are the roles of males and females according to God's design? What does seeking a Christ-centered relationship look like? And many more.

God created males and females with different roles but having equal importance. One is not any more important than the other. Both are called to serve one another in love. They are also meant to be male or female and to join together as one flesh. As Christians, it can be very easy for us to become frustrated with the way people have distorted God's plan, but they are still people created in the image of God. We are called by Jesus to love all people. However, loving does not mean that we just let these things happen. We love ourselves, but when we make a mistake, we try to get better. That is the same way we are to love our neighbors. Help them back to Christ, show them love, share the gospel with them. It is not how they are, but who they are.

God will give you identity as you live by faith in Jesus Christ, and as we walk through this world we are to treat people with love, sharing the good news with all.

Dryburgh, from Hillsboro, N.D., is a member of Trinity Free Lutheran, Grand Forks, N.D.





THE MEDIA

BY BRIA LARSON



Media in itself is not bad or sinful. This was something that was established early on in the panel discussion on our third night at FLY Beyond.

So often we tend to focus on things like media and only see them as an evil to overcome. While media can be a stumbling block in many ways, it can also be a tremendous tool to use for Christ. However, we humans tend to twist good things into not-so-good things, and of course, this has happened to media in certain ways.

The tricky part of this topic is discerning what is or isn't okay to take in. The panelists said is that it's not really the Church's job to specifically decide this. Each person should look to God and be convinced in his or her own mind (Romans 14:5). It's

important to ask yourself: Is this movie/website/music/app helpful or beneficial to me? Is this something I want to influence my life?

Another verse we found useful is Philippians 4:8, "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." Let God's Word lead you to what you should or shouldn't take in and to guide how you spend your time.

In my small group we asked the question: At what point are you addicted? One answer we came up with was that addiction is something that fills a need. It can be where we go for comfort or something we use as a

distraction from real life. Addiction is idolatry because we look to that thing before we look to Christ. My group leader said that she notices if something has become an addiction when it pushes her devotions out of her day. This can be one helpful measuring tool to know when something has become too important to you.

FLY Beyond has always been my favorite camp because of topics like this. All of the sessions dig deep, and I always learn so much when I come. I truly feel more equipped every time I leave FLY Beyond. I thank God for the time I've had at there and for the impact it has had throughout my life.

Larson is a member of St. Paul's Free Lutheran, Fargo, N.D.



**Media is everywhere. It's in our cars,
our homes, and in the palm of our hands.
Being subjected to media can feel
overwhelming and inescapable.**

We are continually hounded by stories of fear and pain, while stories of hope and the glory found in Jesus are so rare we oftentimes despair of ever coming across one.

Our current times especially threaten to crush us under despair and isolation, while media sources talk of bringing us closer together than ever through technology. Yet now, many of us only view our relationships at arm's length, hidden behind a keyboard and a camera.

Our “social” media has trained us that looks are everything, and if you can't look the part, then you can't *be* the part.

Our games and movies are desensitizing us to believe that violence, rape, and godlessness are unavoidable, and acceptable.

Our news outlets are training us to believe in science and man's intelligence above God, and that our eternal hope lies with them.

Our hope doesn't lie with man, with media that gratifies our flesh, or with apps that addict us and distort our view of the world, and more importantly, our view of His Word.

Romans 12:2 says, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

How many times have we heard this passage? What, in our present time of darkness and fear, more accurately represents the world than the media and the content we consume every day?

We are not to conform to this world, to be twisted by the words of “social media influencers,” or to be captivated by the words of the latest funny meme, or to hang—devoted—

on the words of our local news anchor. We are to be transformed by the Word of God! We are to dwell in Him, so that when we are exposed to the worldly thoughts and ideals in our media, we can discern them for the worthlessness that they are, and focus instead on the things that are of God.

The media that is most dangerous to those of us who should be living lives transformed by Jesus is the media that we are addicted to and is capturing our attention before our attention can be held by the Word of God.

Media shouldn't be the source of our hope, the Bible should be. Understanding comes from there. Victory comes from there. Freedom from fear comes from those blessed words. Listen to them first. Our hope is found in those pages.

Ocker is a member of Dell Lutheran, Frost, Minn.





ANXIETY

BY JENNIFER HOLT

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) records some sobering statistics regarding depression and any anxiety

disorder, which itself encompasses generalized anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, phobias, and obsessive-compulsive disorder. It is estimated that 7 percent of adults have experienced a major depressive episode, and 19 percent of adults have had an anxiety disorder. The statistics for teens are even more harrowing. An estimated 13 percent of adolescents (ages 12-17) have experienced a major depressive episode, and 31 percent of adolescents have had an anxiety disorder.

Certainly, those of us who struggle with these issues are not alone, but due to the stigma which surrounds mental illness, we tend to feel alone. The first time my dad

attempted suicide, we found out that his family was riddled with mental illness, but it was never spoken of before that. When I have mentioned my own struggles with depression and anxiety, on occasion I have met with blank stares and awkward silence. For my children who deal with these issues, we've tried to be open about it, but I know they haven't felt comfortable sharing with people outside of our family. So, how can we work toward a more healthy approach to those around us?

First, we can recognize that mental illness is not someone's fault. The source of their struggles is complex. Mental illness can be caused by a genetic predisposition, a chemical imbalance, a trauma experienced, or a combination of these factors, but it is not something that someone chose.

Second, we can encourage seeking help. Whether it is therapy or medication or more commonly both, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) estimates that only half of people who suffer from a mental illness seek professional help, and the average delay between symptom onset and treatment is 11 years. Therapy and medication make a difference, and the sooner they are pursued, the faster they are effective.

Third, we can listen. We don't have to have all the answers in order to engage in the topic with someone who struggles with mental illness. In fact, fixing the problem isn't necessarily what is desired. Instead, if someone is brave enough to share that they struggle with anxiety or depression, please support them by being available and present—whether it is listening, giving a hug, offering a

Every day is a battle. The internal dialogue that takes place in our minds can sometimes lead us to troubling places,

both mentally and spiritually. These thoughts aren't uncommon. In unique ways, we all deal with them at one time or another. As a recent high school graduate I can safely say that students in the halls of schools everywhere deal with these issues on a daily basis. Whether they stem from schoolwork stresses, domestic problems, or relationships, these negative thoughts affect everybody, and can be very difficult to understand and deal with.

Many topics were covered during this year's FLY Beyond youth conference in Osceola, Wis., but the Wednesday night panel discussion focused on the subject of anxiety and depression. Hearing the questions my peers had about these problems was

an eye-opener, shedding light on the fact that everybody deals with these near-taboo problems, and that we can all help each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. In John 15, we are called to love one another as Christ has loved us. The body of believers is definitely something we can be grateful for.

During the panel discussion there were a couple of things that stuck out to me. Cortney Quanbeck, one of the panelists, pointed out that anxiety and depression don't show themselves in predictable, cookie-cutter ways. Instead, they manifest in a variety of unique ways. Cortney's husband, Pastor Matthew Quanbeck, pointed out that when we are anxious or depressed, it is often the result of or in conjunction with the things we care about. Whether we mean them to or not, the things that cause us anxiety are probably a good indicator

of where our priorities lie.

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:19-21).

Second Corinthians 12:10 has been a comfort to me lately: "For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

"Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God" (Psalm 42:11).

Kneeland is a member of Solid Rock Free Lutheran, Anoka, Minn.



& DEPRESSION

distraction, encouraging the pursuit of professional help, or simply asking how you can walk alongside them in this valley. Loneliness compounds the effects of mental illness, while friendship can ease it.

Finally, God can miraculously heal us of these afflictions, but if He does not, that doesn't make Him any less God, nor does it make us any less of believers. As Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego observed in Daniel 3, God is able to save us, but He may allow this trial. Like David and Habakkuk, we can bring our pain to God and find daily strength from Him. And like Paul, we can rejoice that God's strength is made perfect in our weakness.

Holt is a member of Living Hope Church, Rogers, Minn.





FELLOWSHIP

BY ISAIAH QUANBECK

In describing my experience at FLY Beyond, the cliché, “You had to be there,” proves true.

It is hard to explain the personal interactions and fellowship to one who didn’t have this experience. Though you can watch the highlights video of FLY Beyond, you can’t fully comprehend the time without seeing it firsthand.

I will admit I was a little nervous before going to FLY Beyond in July. Though I wasn’t scared or anxious, I was concerned I wouldn’t enjoy it. I wasn’t sure how many people I knew would be there, and so I thought I might be bored or that it would be an uncomfortable experience. At the end, I found myself disappointed. My disappointment wasn’t from an unsatisfactory week, but because it wasn’t longer.

The official day started at 7 a.m. and ended at 11 p.m. In the morning after breakfast we attended Dr. Phil Haugen’s Bible study, Tim Barnett’s apologetics session, and discussion teams. In the afternoon/evening were team challenges and discussion times, open recreation, an evening session, and panels on varying subjects. Though I enjoyed the many sessions of teaching and study, some of the best memories I have are outside of those. I loved the time spent with others during recreation, meals, and teams.

I have only been to the FLY Convention as a child. What I have heard from some who have gone to both events is that they greatly appreciated their FLY Beyond experiences. Though the location and scenery aren’t as stunning as the convention, held in Estes Park, Colo., the

extent and depth of study and teaching are greater at Beyond. I think this is partly due to the smaller attendance numbers and campus. My favorite part was the general fellowship and openness/candidness among each other in discussion.

I felt very comfortable at FLY Beyond in general and in my small group because of the friends I knew and made and, more than that, because I had something in common with them. The *Concordia Lutheran Study Bible* says this in a study note for 1 John 1:3, “Fellowship. More than friendship; a common share in something (or in this case, someone). Since we are all members of one Body of Christ, we share in fellowship with all other Christians through Jesus.” Though many of the Christian friends I have come from different types of

homes, locations, and ages, we have our faith and values in common. I now miss that experience of fellowship I had at FLY Beyond and I look forward to the next time I can attend.

The word “fellowship” can easily be overlooked in the Bible, and many verses describe it using different words. For instance, Romans 1:12 says, “That is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer described fellowship in his book, *Life Together*, as “The physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer.” FLY Beyond is full of that presence.

Quanbeck is a member of Maranatha Free Lutheran, Glyndon, Minn.



FLY

FREE
LUTHERAN
YOUTH

Restored

2021 FLY CONVENTION

HE IS MAKING ALL THINGS NEW

BY AARON ARNESON

"So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate" (Genesis 3:6).

This moment brought the problem of sin into the world not just for Adam and Eve, but for all of mankind. The following verses describe the first time when there was a need for restoration. We see the guilt of Adam and Eve and the consequences of their action. However, we also see the first promise of a Savior, "He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15b). Just like Adam and Eve, we

have a problem with sin in ourselves and in the world. The devil is actively present in our world today seeking to undermine God's Word just like he was in Genesis 3. You and I regularly fall into temptation just like Adam and Eve. The sin that so easily entangles us can be a great discouragement. Thankfully, God's Word reminds us of the many promises of Christ our Savior and the restoration we have through Him.

Adam and Eve and countless others in the Old Testament looked forward to the Savior who was going to bring restoration. We are to do the same, except we now look back to the Savior who has already come to restore our souls. We are blessed to have both the Old Testament and the New Testament before us, where we have an abundance of promises in which our souls can find rest. Verses like Galatians 2:20 come to mind, "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

There are other aspects of restoration that shouldn't go unmentioned. God is restoring relationships with people as they reconcile with one another. Parents and children, brothers and

sisters, and supervisors and coworkers are just a handful of examples of where God is doing His restorative work. Believers in Jesus already get to experience this restoration through Christ but haven't yet experienced the complete restoration that God is going to accomplish when He comes again. Revelation 21:5 says, "And he who was seated on the throne said, 'Behold, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.'"

As you try to navigate life in these uncertain times, take comfort and believe in God's promises of restoration through Christ! On behalf of the FLY Committee, I invite you to come join us on July 5-10 for the 2021 FLY Convention at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colo. We'll explore the theme "Restored" and learn about God's work of restoration in our lives and in the world. Please pray for us as we continue to plan for the convention. We hope to see you there.

Arneson, a member of St. Paul's Free Lutheran, Fargo, N.D., is the first vice president of the 2021 FLY Committee.



Student Life Center update

Progress continues on the construction of the Student Life Center at the Free Lutheran Bible College, Plymouth, Minn. Crews installed the roof (top) during the last week of July and a storm water drainage system (right) was completed in the first week of August. Floors were poured in the first floor during the third week of August, including the gym (above) and locker rooms. The building is slated to be enclosed and landscaping brought to final grade before the school year begins following Labor Day.

THE 2021 BIBLE STUDY

BY JEANETTE BERNTSON

WMF

WOMEN'S
MISSIONARY
FEDERATION

You are invited to study I Timothy along with members of our local and district Women's Missionary Federation groups.

Why is what you believe important? Does it matter what we do in church? Does it matter how we live? Should we have requirements for our pastors? Does it matter whom we listen to or where we go to church? The 2021 WMF study, which is focused on I Timothy, will endeavor to answer these questions.

What our churches teach and what we listen to is of crucial importance. Is Jesus the center of the teaching you hear? The Apostle Paul wrote to his young friend, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (I Timothy 1:15).

As followers of Jesus, we must watch out for teaching that makes us sick and leads to eternal death. The sound doctrine from the Bible gives us spiritual health leading to eternal life. All people need to hear the Bible's teaching on law and gospel. God uses His Word to bring us daily to repentance and forgiveness. Again, Paul wrote to Timothy, "God ... desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time" (2:4-6).

God has given us clear teaching on the role of the church. He wants us to hear His Word. He wants the teaching found in our congregations, and our beliefs, to be the same doctrine found in the Bible, because only the teaching from



God's Word has the power to create repentance, faith, and love.

We are, as the Apostle Paul wrote, "... the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth" (3:15).

Jesus came to save sinners and He brings His salvation to the world through His Word, believed and preached by

the Church. May God bless you as you study I Timothy. To order the 2021 WMF Bible study, please fill out the form below and send to Dawn Johnson, executive secretary of the WMF.

Berntson, Northome, Minn., is the author of the 2021 WMF Bible study.

2021 WMF Bible Study • I Timothy

Please use this form to order the 2021 WMF Bible Study. The cost per copy is \$12, which includes shipping.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Church name: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Number of copies: _____

Make checks payable to "WMF of AFLC" and mail to: WMF Executive Secretary, Dawn Johnson, 2991 30th Ave., Wilson, WI 54027.

Hauge chapel floors replaced



The floors of the Hans Nielsen Hauge Memorial Chapel on the campus of the Free Lutheran Schools, Plymouth, Minn., were replaced in mid-August. The project included removing the wooden pews, repairing the floor where the original tiles had warped or cracked (right), and tiling over the original tiles with vinyl flooring. The pews, which were given away on a first-come, first-served basis, will be replaced with padded chairs.



Missions update: Berger family

AFLC missionaries Micah and Famke Berger and their daughter Naomi have left Uganda where they have worked with AFLC World Missions and taught Ambassador Institute classes since 2014. They are currently residing with family in Famke's homeland of the Netherlands as they await the necessary documentation to return to the United States. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, the applications for U.S. citizenship for both Famke and Naomi have been delayed.

Members of the World Missions Committee reported at the Annual Conference in August that the Bergers received half of their required funding in 2019, falling short by \$31,604. Projected support shortfalls in 2020, as well as the need to find medical help, led the Committee members to recall the Bergers to the United States. Committee members are still considering decisions regarding the Berger's on-field mission work.

The Berger family shared a hearty thank you to our congregations via video at the Annual Conference. They continue to need monthly financial help, and there will also be considerable expenses for the family as they relocate to the United States. They will continue to receive AFLC missionary support as it is received. We ask for your continued prayer for both Micah's and Famke's health concerns and for the entire family in this time of transition.

~Submitted by the World Mission Committee

Connecting with missionaries


The beauty of AFLC World Missions is the collective opportunity to be involved with ministries all across the globe. What a privilege to be a part of an association of churches that values missionaries and the calling they have to share the good news of Jesus Christ. Even though the congregations may be thousands of miles apart, we diligently keep our connection with missionaries: praying earnestly for them, sending letters of encouragement, and faithfully giving them our support.

AFLC World Missions desires to do everything we can to connect your congregations to the stories of your missionaries. Often, it just takes one individual with a heart for missions to bring that connection to the church. You can lead in that partnership with Christ's work abroad. Information

is available in a wide variety of printable resources, including the world missions map, bookmarks, bulletin inserts, and newsletters. Our materials can be downloaded at aflcworldmissions.org/promotions.

The best way to connect to Christ's work around the globe is to have missionaries visit your congregation. Due to closed borders across the world, many of our missionaries are in the United States on furlough. They are excited to have this unique opportunity to share the power of the gospel in their ministries with your congregations. Missionaries currently on furlough include Michael Rokenbrodt, Brent and Emily Raan, Matthew and Ednay Abel, and John and Hannah Lee. Contact us (worldmis@aflc.org) to request a missionary visit.

~Madison Greven



"We will not conceal them from their children, But tell to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, And His strength and His wondrous works that He has done" (Psalm 78:4).

W

hat a privilege it is to be a part of what God is doing for this next generation

in Brazil and to share with our youth His strength and wondrous works. During the last 50 years, our annual Free Lutheran Youth camp in Brazil has been a major driver of spiritual life for each new generation.

On February 20 of this year, the congregation at Campo Largo Free Lutheran packed three families, two unchurched women, and a seminarian into three vehicles for a six-hour drive to Campo Mourão, where we met up with big commercial buses coming from many of our congregations scattered across southern Brazil.

Our family had an extra spot in our vehicle for our congregation's seminarian, Jackson, and I intended to make use of the six-hour

ENCOURAGING FUTURE LEADERS

BY PASTOR JOHN LEE

drive. Jackson is a 20-something who has grown up in our congregation, and he's had a rough background. During last year's camp, Jackson sensed a call to missions and was challenged to go to seminary. Thanks to a number of supporters, it was a challenge he was able to accept. Jackson spent the whole trip, there and back, asking about missions and trying to figure out his call. Curious about the seminary, I asked him about it. He didn't realize I was probably going to be his seminary professor starting in March 2021. We stopped for a quick bite to eat before I dropped him off and prayed for his call—a hard one considering there is no organized Brazilian missions corporation or supported missionaries sent from Brazil.

Later at camp, I prayed with another seminarian in Jackson's class—one who grew up on the streets of São Paulo and is determined to plant a congregation there—an equally difficult call. I've prayed for him many times before. Mario is different because, unlike Jackson, he sought me out and cornered me before I knew anything

about him, and he has been hounding me ever since to partner with him. I sense a great need to nurture and confirm these callings whenever possible and encourage our local congregations not only to support and equip these men, but to organize so that we can keep growing.

As I get to know these seminarians, I'm reminded of my seminary days, my professors at the Free Lutheran Seminary and the many hours they spent personally with me in the Bible and on their knees in prayer, not only with me, but with all of us, shaping our hearts into that of servant-leader pastors, planters, and missionaries. This same work that they modeled in my life I hope to do likewise for our future Brazilian pastors, planters, and missionaries. It's the reason I joined the AFLC—to be pastoral rather than professorial. Please join me in praying for the Lord to send the next generation into His harvest.

Lee is an AFLC missionary serving in Campo Largo, Brazil.

PEOPLE & PLACES

Members of **Christ Lutheran**, Stover, Mo., will celebrate the congregation's 150th anniversary on Oct. 25 with a special celebration service. Founded in 1870 under the Iowa Synod, the congregation installed its first pastor on Nov. 12, 1871, in a newly constructed building south of Stover. In 1905 the congregation built a new sanctuary in Stover, complete with a schoolhouse and parsonage. The church and much of Stover was destroyed on April 19, 1916, by a tornado. The congregation rebuilt the present brick sanctuary in 1917. The education, kitchen, and fellowship hall was added in 1964, and a portico in 2007. The congregation has been served by Pastor Tom Tuura since 2012.

Pastor Seth Moan, a 2020 graduate of the Free Lutheran Seminary, will be installed Aug. 30 at Emmanuel Free Lutheran, Williston, N.D., with Pastor Lyndon Korhonen, AFLC president, officiating.

Pastor Micah Klemme, a 2020 graduate of the Free Lutheran Seminary, will be installed Sept. 13 at St. Peter's Lutheran, Melvin, Ill., with Pastor Lyndon Korhonen officiating.



Handsaker ordained, installed at Cloquet church

David Handsaker, a 2020 graduate of the Free Lutheran Seminary, was ordained July 26 and installed at St. Paul's Lutheran, Cloquet, Minn. Pictured are (from left) Pastor Lyndon Korhonen (AFLC president), David Handsaker, Paul Handsaker (his father), and Pastor Peter Franz (former pastor of St. Paul's and Handsaker's father-in-law).

Youth Ministries launches new app

AFLC Youth Ministries launched an app in August, giving youth leaders and youth a tool to connect with ministry resources. The app, launched through Subsplash, offers information about teen and leader events, a tool for tracking daily Scripture reading, an opportunity

to connect in a nation-wide conversation, and tools for connecting with teens in local conversations.

To download the app, visit iTunes, Google Play, or Amazon app stores and search for "AFLC Youth Min." The app is free to anyone.

JULY MEMORIALS

AED

Sherman McCarlson
Sharon Holmquist
Pastor Ken Thoreson

Bible College

Ruth Claus
Amanda Breden
Sherman McCarlson
Sharon Holmquist
Dennis Winkelmann
Dorothy Russum

General Fund

Beatrice Anderson

Home Missions

Beatrice Anderson

Journey Missions

Dorothy Russum
Vernon Russum

Parish Education

Beatrice Anderson

Seminary

Sharon Holmquist
Dennis Winkelmann

Maxine Varness
Sherman McCarlson

Vision

Beatrice Anderson
Vernon & Dorothy
Russum

World Missions

Vernon & Dorothy
Russum
Dorothy Russum
Donna Ranger
Vernon Russum
Pastor John Abel
Pastor Ken Thoreson

WMF

Dorothy Russum
Gerda Nylander
Ardis Zurich

... in honor of

Parish Education

Pastor Ron Knutson

AFLC BENEVOLENCES January 1-July 31, 2020

FUND	REC'D IN JULY	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	PRIOR YEAR-TO-DATE
General Fund	\$38,337	\$245,005	\$251,102
Evangelism	7,533	57,029	70,259
Youth Ministries	8,605	65,199	69,190
Parish Education	8,577	77,291	99,455
Seminary	25,697	171,884	151,732
Bible College	24,623	229,907	334,423
Home Missions	42,625	219,050	221,180
World Missions	36,461	224,233	259,039
Personal Support	62,189	447,854	361,644
TOTALS	\$254,648	\$1,737,452	\$1,818,025

For additional financial information for each department, go to www.aflc.org/giving

THE NEED FOR YOUTH EVANGELISM

More than 35 years have passed since Dr. Merton Strommen authored a book entitled *The Five Cries of Youth*. Drawing from his years of youth ministry and a massive study of the attitudes of church youth, he concluded that those whose “joy is in a sense of identity and



Pastor Robert Lee

mission that centers in the person of Jesus Christ” is a minority group, about only one third of our church youth (p. 119). Even earlier, Rev. Jacob Andreason, an ELC/ALC pastor, conducted an informal survey in the 1950s

which indicated that a majority of youths believed that they had fallen away from baptismal grace. In his book *Lutherans and Conversion*, he quoted Dr. J.N. Kildahl, who wrote: “There are some who can say it, but they seem to be very few. Most people, however, fall away from their baptismal covenant” (p. 84).

Most of mainline Lutheranism today seems to believe that once baptized, forever saved. The founders of the AFLC affirmed the saving work of God in baptism, but also believed that not all remained in that covenant, and there was a fear of a “sacramentalist” spirit in the merging Lutheran churches that taught eternal security on the basis of baptism. In one of my graduate classes several years ago I used the term “evangelization of the baptized.” One member of the class strongly objected, saying that he got upset when people undermined baptism. The instructor said that Luther would have agreed with me.

There is certainly a need to maintain a balance in youth evangelism, encouraging young believers that they do not need a dramatic conversion experience as the basis of their assurance, while at the same time

calling the lost to salvation. Four examples:

(1) A dear elderly Christian lady told me that she had always loved Jesus but was afraid that this was not a good testimony. I assured her that this was a testimony that many needed to hear.

(2) I was a guest in a home where a young man said that he had returned to the Lord after turning his back on Him for several years. His mother objected and said that that was not true, that he never lost his faith.

(3) There was a youth speaker in western North Dakota whose claim to fame was that prior to his conversion he had burned down a school and served a prison term. One mother was concerned about the popularity of those with the most sensational testimonies and told me that she did not want her son to think that he had to do something terrible in order to really be a Christian.

(4) A father told of a youth worker who reported that his son had prayed to receive Christ but was disappointed that the father did not seem more excited about it. The father replied, “We are Lutheran Christians, and so we expect things like this to happen.”

So, what do we do? It is our calling to teach and preach the law of God which convicts of sin and the gospel good news which assures us that Jesus Christ has paid the full price for our salvation. And don’t be afraid to use scriptural terms like “come to Christ” and “receive Him.” It is also our calling to teach and preach the saving work of God in baptism. How do we maintain a balance between the two?

Dr. Carl F. Wisløff suggests the following: (1) One’s emphasis should always be: Don’t take for granted that you are a Christian. (2) Caution our hearers that one’s assurance of salvation cannot be received from performing good works. (3) The need for conversion should be preached for all; all who listen should hear the serious word: Repent! ... There is a daily conversion which consists in repentance, acknowledgment of sins, confession of them to God, and faith in Christ for forgiveness. ... (7) When you talk about baptism ... as indeed you ought to do, don’t omit the necessity of faith. ... My trust is not in the certificate of baptism ... rather, my trust is in Christ, in Whose Name I am baptized! (*Do the Work of an Evangelist*, pp. 30-32).

*Most mainline
Lutheranism today seems
to believe that once
baptize, forever saved.*

Fathers and mothers (and grandparents) are the front line of family evangelists, and today we are blessed with many youth workers and youth pastors in our congregations who see this area of ministry as a special calling. Family members, pastors, youth workers, Sunday school teachers, concerned older Christians—we prayerfully stand together to seek to win the lost among our church youth and others and to strengthen them in their assurance of salvation and walk with the Lord. May God prosper our labors to His glory!

something to share

KINGDOMS AND CONFLICT

BY ANGELA LOMBARDO

Sometimes the best talks between a husband and wife occur just before bedtime. Pillow talk. Nothing like it except ...

It had been a busy day. The Husband and I dropped into bed exhausted, but my mind still raced. I had many things to share. I rambled on and on, bearing my heart and soul when I was interrupted by a loud noise that sounded like a buzz saw. The Husband was sound asleep. I was talking in his sleep! So much for pillow talk.

In Mark 9 Jesus pours out His heart to the disciples, explaining how He must suffer many things and be killed. The tortuous cross looms before Him but the disciples don't get it. It's like they were in a stupor. A short time later the disciples argue among themselves as to who was the greatest in the kingdom. Jesus asks them a simple, straightforward question: What were you arguing about? An embarrassing silence ensues. They are tongue-tied. Jesus'

question reveals their ambitious hearts. Each wants to be first, to be above the other, to be a big shot and rule in his own mini kingdom.

To further expose their selfish ways, we are told in Matthew 20 that James and John solicited their mama to ask Jesus for a favor. What was the favor? That her two sons would each sit in positions of authority with Jesus in the kingdom, one at His right and the other on His left. When the ten disciples hear this, they are incensed.

Donald Grey Barnhouse wrote, "Wanting one's own way is the worst of sins because it is the first of sins. It leads to all others." The disciples' selfish desires put them asleep spiritually. Their ears are deaf to the reality of what the kingdom of God really is. But Jesus doesn't scold them. Rather, He tenderly says, "If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all." Then Jesus points to a little child before them as a stunning illustration of humility.

There's nothing new under the sun. There are times when we resemble the disciples. We want to be in control of our lives, to be our own boss. We've erected a kingdom of *me*. It's sweet getting acclaim. People should know how much I've given up and sacrificed for the kingdom. (Drum roll, please.)

But be encouraged. If you seek His kingdom and not your own, God does something amazing. Jesus says, "... your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32). Nations war for control of earthly kingdoms while the great God of the universe shares His everlasting kingdom with His little flock.

Which kingdom will it be? The kingdom of me, myself, and I? Or, the kingdom of grace where Jesus rules?

Lombardo is a member of Helmar Lutheran, Newark, Ill.