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LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR



LIGHTS
IN A
DARK
WORLD



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INTERCEDING FOR THE LOST

BY KIRSTIE SKOGERBOE

Each night, my husband and I pray for people we love who are far from God. A few have blatantly rejected Him. Others have drifted or stumbled away. We've written all their names in a notebook, hoping that one day we can cross out each one as an answered prayer.

It can be hard to keep hoping, though. Some of the names in our notebook belong to people entrenched in atheism or bound up in toxic sins. Some have deserted the Church in pain, anger, or apathy; some weren't even raised in it. Though I've seen God answer prayers for repentance, many identical prayers seem to have no perceivable effect. *Will my prayer change anything? I wonder, sometimes, even as I pray. Is it likely he will come to faith? What will it take? Of all the people who refuse God, why would she be one who repents? Will God respond?*

To most of these questions, I have no answer—all but the last. Scripture not only tells us that God hears our prayers, but also that He seeks the salvation of those who are perishing. Jesus told His followers that He “came to seek and save the lost,” and to be a doctor to the sick (Luke 19:10; Matthew 9:12). Nor has He chosen an arbitrary day to return; He waits for the purpose of salvation. The Apostle Peter writes, “The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count

slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance” (II Peter 3:9). How many had hope for the man on the cross at Jesus’ side? Yet not even a dying, crucified sinner was beyond His reach (Luke 23:42-43).

These truths comfort me as I pray. They calm my questions, even if they don’t answer them directly. Since God has said He longs to save all, I know Christ intercedes with me—and this keeps me interceding (Hebrews 7:25).

We don’t know the future of those for whom we pray, but we know the heart of the One who does. Dane Ortlund quotes the theologian Richard Sibbes: “When [Christ] saw the people in misery, his bowels yearned within him; the works of grace and mercy in Christ, they come from his bowels first” (*Gentle and Lowly*, 27). Jesus’ innermost being is not tepid toward sinners. No, as the psalmist reminds us, He is “merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love” (103:8).

May that mercy, patience, and love strengthen our own hearts to pray.

Skogerboe, a 2018 graduate of the Free Lutheran Bible College, Plymouth, Minn., lives in Orange, Calif.

Christianity is not conforming outwardly to certain rules; neither is it knowing about Christ; it is knowing a person—the Lord Jesus.

—A.W. Knock

Faith is not merely thinking, “I believe.” Your whole heart must be seized by the gospel and come to rest in it. When that happens, you are transformed and cannot help but love and serve God.

—C.F.W. Walther

I believe this faulty understanding (modern optimism concerning human nature) is the most profound obstacle to biblical evangelism ...

—Carl F. Wisløff

If we understand what lies ahead for those who do not know Christ, there will be a sense of urgency in our witness.

—David Jeremiah

Any method of evangelism will work if God is in it.

—Leonard Ravenhill

EVANGELISM IN A CAUSTIC CULTURE

Lessons from Paul's discourse in Athens

By Pastor Randy Nelson



Just before Christmas this past year, I was saddened to hear of the tragic death of seven family members in Moorhead, Minn., apparently due to carbon monoxide poisoning. Without a working carbon monoxide detector in their home, the family was unaware of the deadly gas circulating throughout their home that authorities believe took their lives.¹

In reflecting on this avoidable tragedy, I couldn't help but be reminded of how our nation has continued to move away from God and has entered a post-Christian era in which we no longer have the benefits of working

spiritual "detectors" available to previous generations. We are surrounded by a world that is unaware of the eternally deadly sin that circulates throughout our culture and threatens our lives.

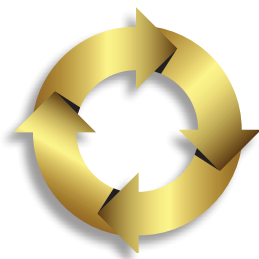
For many of us, these changes have occurred slowly. But the real benchmark, according to researchers, began with those born between 1995 and 2010, sometimes referred to as Gen Z. This generation and those who have come after them have grown up in a world where the biblical values that have served as the cultural guide for our nation are no longer the norm.² Instead, those values have been challenged and ridiculed. Those who profess faith in Jesus Christ are seen as naive and uneducated. Calling sin wrong is now hateful and calling people to repentance and peace with God is considered intolerant and fanatical, which leaves our world without the detectors needed to warn them of spiritual dangers.

The good news is that Christianity still has merit and power to minister in pluralistic and atheistic cultures like ours. In fact, the Book of Acts gives us insights into how Paul effectively brought the gospel message to a hostile world. Looking to the Apostle Paul's example in Acts 17, we see him in Athens, surrounded by statues and altars to many idols and by people who valued reason and logic, yet were thirsty for truth. Beginning in verse 22, he stands in the Areopagus, the gathering place for discourse, and speaks, giving us insights into how we might also be effective in reaching this post-Christian world.

First, Paul shows respect for the Athenians and what they believe (v. 16-22). Author Tim Keller posted a quote on Facebook that I appreciate: "Bad evangelism is saying, 'I'm right, you are wrong, let me show you why ...'" In contrast, the Apostle Paul approached the people of Athens with respect,



simple
explanations



commitment to
the process



valuing them and what they believe, and taking the time to reason with them, not as one who thinks he is smarter than them, but as one who sincerely wants to help them understand the truth. Arrogance and reaching people for Christ do not go together. An evangelist must demonstrate care for the unbeliever, which often begins with respect and compassion.

Next, Paul simply and relevantly explains the good news (v. 23-31). Paul tactfully introduces them to “the unknown god” (v. 23), who created all things, but who is also alive and real and knowable, unlike their gods. He also makes clear that the one true God requires their repentance as there is a day coming when He will judge this

world “by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead” (v. 31).

Paul speaks plainly, explaining what God has done and what He requires, and he does it in a way that is easy for them to grasp, even if they don’t fully agree with it. The seed of the gospel has been planted in a way that it will have opportunity to grow.

Finally, Paul recognizes that evangelizing the lost is a process that will take time, but he is committed to following it through to its conclusion (v. 32-34). Paul knew from the outset of his speech that he would only have a short opportunity to state his case, and that it would be the beginning of a process that would take time and follow-through. He knew he would need to be available for further discussions, allowing the Athenians time to wrestle with these truths and, ultimately, for the seeds of faith to take root. In our text God, through Paul, brought some to faith, “But some men joined him and believed ...” (v. 34), and for others He opened a door that would lead to a process that would give them

further opportunities to come to faith. “Some heard and dismissed him, but others said, ‘We will hear you again about this’” (v. 32).

We may live in a culture that lacks spiritual detectors, but we still have the means to effectively sound the alarm. May we recognize the times in which we are living. May God give us a love for those who are different from us and far from Him. And may He lead us to opportunities to share the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ in this post-Christian world.

Nelson, the director of AFLC Evangelism and Discipleship, is a member of Grace Free Lutheran, Maple Grove, Minn.

¹ inforum.com/news/moorhead/police-carbon-monoxide-poisoning-caused-7-deaths-in-moorhead-home

² barna.com/research/atheism-doubles-among-generation-z



By David Graves

LEAVING THE COMFORT OF OUR CHURCH WALLS

God is concerned with the vulnerable and the defenseless

The warmth of the sunshine on my face filled my heart with gratitude to God. It was a welcome confirmation that He has faithfully kept His promise since the days of Noah, fulfilled in the annual rebirth of life—the miracle that is spring. The sunshine and steadfast love of God warmed me all the more because of where I stood—in front of Planned Parenthood. The sidewalks and streets were strangely empty, devoid of the usual hustle and bustle downtown at midday. And so, as a young lady turned the corner and walked directly toward me, it seemed to complete the metaphor in my mind, as if she had freshly sprung up from the earth.

I greeted her with a smile saying, “How can I bless you today?”

After a brief, puzzled pause, she replied, “Can I ask you a question?”

“Of course,” I answered.

“What is wrong with abortion?” she asked.

I have been asked this or a similar question many times. It is seldom asked with sincerity. Yet something—perhaps it was the tone of her voice or the faint weariness in her eyes—assured me that her question was genuine. I introduced myself as David and she said her name was Ravon. I told her that I could explain two of the many things that are wrong with abortion but that the first and primary one she could likely tell me herself by simply answering a few questions.

I asked, “Were you *you* yesterday?”

She looked a little puzzled but answered, “Yes.”

“Were you *you* ten years ago?” I continued.

“Yes,” she replied.

“How about the day you were born? Were you *you*?”

“Yes,” came her answer.

“How about the day before you were born?” I asked, smiling.

She smiled back and said, “Yes.” Ravon understood where this was going.

I asked her if there was a time when she didn’t exist and she agreed that it was before conception. I then asked her if she knew of any other context where the word “abort” was used. We spoke of the military “aborting” a mission and NASA “aborting” a rocket launch. I explained that the simple meaning of the word is “to end something that is in progress” and, in the case of abortion, that something is a life.

“That is the primary thing that is wrong with abortion—it ends the life of an innocent child.”

At this point Ravon confessed that she had aborted her child when she was only 16 and that she was haunted by it. She went on to share how she had worked for five years in a daycare to try and ease her regret.

I told her, “That is the second thing that is wrong with abortion: it wounds mothers and fathers, enslaving them in guilt for committing an unthinkable sin.”

We spoke for a long while and in great depth about the most personal and yet universal things: the deception and consequences of sin and the deliverance, redemption, and healing we all need in Christ.

As she turned to go, she said, “Thanks for not thumping me with the Bible like some other people I have talked to.”

I replied, “Wait!” Reaching into my bag, I pulled out a copy of the Gospel of John and “thumped” her on the shoulder a few times with it. She took it, with a laugh, and walked away into the beautiful spring day, leaving me standing alone again, overwhelmed with gratitude for God’s steadfast love.

This is one of perhaps a hundred similar encounters that I have had on the streets over the years. They usually start with a simple question like, “Is there any way I can pray for you?” It is surprising how open people can be when they know you care.

I remember one young lady instantly bursting into tears as she sobbed, “My dad just died!”

In moments like these we have the great privilege to give the comfort and hope in Christ that we have received.

Though most of my ministry is in the context of rescuing lives from abortion, there are many opportunities to witness to whoever I meet on the streets. The truth of James 1:27 should compel us to leave the comfort of the church and rescue the perishing in this sin-wrecked world. It states, “Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world.” The word translated “visit” implies more than just a passive visitation. It means “to go, to inspect, with intent to relieve.”

While orphans and widows are singled out, a clear principle is laid down: God is concerned for the vulnerable, the defenseless, those without father or husband. This is why Jesus came: to reunite us, His children orphaned by sin, to the Father, and to faithfully betroth us to Himself forever.

This is the work of Christ. This is the work of all who would follow Him. In short, where the greatest need is, there the Christian should be. What a privilege to manifest the otherworldly and dangerous beauty of Christ’s redeeming love to the world.

Graves is a member of Atonement Free Lutheran, Arlington, Wash. He attended the Free Lutheran Seminary in the fall of 2021.



Outreach that starts with programs aimed at serving the local community

Telling others about the good news of the gospel is a commission set forth for God's people in both the Old and New Testaments. From the words of the Psalmist, "Tell of His glory among the nations, His wonderful deeds among all the peoples" (Psalm 96:3), to the exhortation of Jesus, "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation' (Mark 16:15), we have our marching orders for evangelism. This commission to proclaim the gospel takes place in two great spheres for a church: those efforts focused beyond the church walls and those efforts focused within the church walls. My intent is to look at how this may be done within the church walls.

I am blessed to serve a congregation that holds proclaiming the gospel in high regard. For members of Abiding Savior, evangelism worked out inside the church has been particularly effective. This begins, of course, with our Sunday gathering. As a pastor, I have come to appreciate the art of invitation. Our periods of greatest growth and vibrancy in congregational life have come as the result of people inviting people to church. Surprisingly simple, yet surprisingly effective, one's best evangelists are your own members, inspired by the Holy Spirit to invite others to join them on a Sunday morning. Therefore, on a Sunday, every effort is made to speak both of sin and of the Savior and to declare the invitation of Jesus to come and receive rest (Matthew 11:28) and eternal life (John 11:25-26) in Him. This emphasis also permeates our children's and adult educational offerings in the form of Sunday school, VBS, confirmation, and equipping classes in which the presentation of the gospel is an absolute priority.

A unique circumstance of our church family that has been the most fruitful field for evangelism within our walls is that of our school and childcare ministry, which includes a K-12 classical Christian academy (Abiding Academy), and a daycare, aftercare, and summer care ministry. Monday through Friday, in any given week, these ministries impact a combined 350 or more children as well as their families. While many from our own congregation partake in these ministries, a majority of our students and

families are not church members. Over the years, these ministries have been instrumental in both introducing and leading many children and families to Christ.

For example, over the past several years we have been in partnership with the Hope Coalition, which is a community effort to place children who would not normally be afforded the opportunity for preschool. Through this partnership, we have enrolled 40 children (of 120 total) each year in our preschool ministry, the vast majority from diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Each of these students hear the good news of the gospel daily and are shown love by adults who love Jesus. Many testimonies have been received from parents who report that their preschoolers are now insisting they pray in the home and are speaking of Jesus to their family members. What a blessing!

To meet the prevalent need for childcare in our community, we also host a daycare, aftercare, and summer care ministry. From day one it was determined that this effort be gospel-focused over merely providing a place for children to go. Admittedly, it would have been easier to just let the kids run in the gym and keep feeding them



OPPORTUNITIES INSIDE OUR CHURCH WALLS

By Pastor Kirk Flaa




snacks, but we knew God had called us to something more. As a result, we have witnessed incredible blessings along the way. In our 3-year-olds room, reading and discussing a Psalm every day is our regular practice and one the kids look forward to. Our 4-year-olds room has a designated daily prayer partner who prays over our snack and mealtimes, and often offers to pray for other children throughout the day. In the aftercare program, the children are memorizing the books of the Bible as well as a significant theme or event from each book, and often partake in prayer walks throughout our church praying for staff, classroom activities, and our church family. Chapel

times, skits, and singing along with biblical instruction are all intentional ways by which we are able to incorporate the gospel (evangelism) into all that we undertake.

Evangelism is vital, both within the church and outside of it. For our congregation, God has used the opportunity within our walls to impact and draw many families to our church fellowship and, more importantly, to draw them closer to the Savior. How we praise God for such opportunity!

Pastor Flaa serves Abiding Savior Free Lutheran, Sioux Falls, S.D.



Ministry in remote
Alaska isn't easy, but
worth every effort

MEETING NEEDS

By Heather Hansen

Summer ministry for kids in Naknek, Alaska, is not primarily composed of vacation Bible school. You might think that's strange and weird, and I would agree with you. But I have learned that it is in the times we spend together outside of VBS when we are able to further friendships with kids, learn their stories, and show them the love and compassion that they might never know otherwise. Spending time with them shows them that we are all in for friendship with them. It shows them that we love them enough to spend time with them outside of our normal ministry time. It's an approach to ministry we take all year round.

There is nothing like a Bristol Bay summer. The sun stays up like a comforting friend. People come back to work like the salmon coming down the river. The anticipation of the harvest of fish hangs in the fresh summer breeze right next to the buzzing mosquitoes. It is a time when the Net ministry shines in hospitality. A time when the kids in the villages get to have VBS. A time when the planes get the most hours in. A time when the radio station adds the fishing reports to its regular schedule. It is a time when we get to come alongside the nations, the kids, and community.

I've joked that the Net stands for "never ending treats." It is a treat for cannery workers and fisherman to come to a place that has free Wi-Fi. Internet access is limited up here, so many people who come here for the summer don't have access to it. By offering Wi-Fi, we give them the opportunity to connect with family and friends back home. It's a treat for them to have unlimited free coffee, cookies, and cupcakes, too. Having something to keep you going when you work 16-hour shifts at the height of the season is important. It is also a treat to have people ready to listen to their stories, love them, and lead them to Christ. The volunteers at the Net do a wonderful job of making the place warm and welcoming even for those who have had hard pasts and are currently in difficult places. The Net is a place where you are valued and loved with a Christ-like love.

Our station, KAKN radio, is where the truth comes in waves. It is up and running 24/7, and the broadcasting can be heard in 12 villages. In the summer it airs vital fishing reports, letting people know when and how long they can fish for the commercial industry. Throughout the year the station provides information about weather, assembly meetings, basketball games, and other community announcements. The programs played on the radio reach out to a variety of ages and backgrounds. Not a day goes by





when a single person couldn't benefit from at least one program on our station. It can encourage and uplift people even in the cold, windy, winter days.

Aviation is vital to evangelism up here, too. We couldn't get to the villages without planes and our missionary pilots/mechanics. They fly us to Sunday services when weather permits. There are times when we fly 30 minutes to go preach at a church in a bright yellow parka because the heat hasn't been turned on until 15 minutes before service. There are times when we bring groceries with us because the people can't get groceries across the river. In the summer kids are brought to and from Bible camp via air transport. A couple times throughout the year they will be used to transport people to a funeral in a nearby village. We couldn't go into all the world and come alongside people without disciples.

In winter, wind gusts of up to 65 mph can cause power to go out in -20 degree wind-chill weather. We are thankful for the blankets that people have sent here, and we give them to many people. Having a backup generator means we're also available to host many people if the need arises. In the back of the church basement we have tables

filled with food for people, as well. There are times when someone needs a place to stay, and the Sunday school room becomes a bedroom for a couple of days. Our church is a place where you can both feed and warm your body and soul.

We see people's needs and meet them where they are in that need. We pray that they will see our own need for a Savior daily and in every moment. We want them to see how Jesus has fulfilled that need in our lives and He can fill it in their lives, too.

I treasure the simple moments of sitting down with people to get to know them like Jesus knows them. It's not convenient to wake up at midnight some nights to keep the station going. It's not relaxing to teach kids. It's not easy making sure the airplanes and vehicles are working. It's not comfortable sleeping in 10 different beds in six weeks in the summer when we host VBS. But these sacrifices are worth it for others to have the opportunity to see and hear about Jesus. It's worth it.

Hansen is an AFLC Home Missions church planting assistant with the Alaska Mission in Naknek, Alaska.

IT STARTS IN THE HOME

By Pastor Robert Buechler

A common theme that I see in both I Corinthians 7:16 and I Peter 3:1-7 is that of living out our faith, letting the life of Christ live in us and through us, and in so doing affecting others and winning people to salvation. Interestingly, in both Scriptures, the husband and wife are reminded that by their holy conduct toward the other, they may lead their spouse to salvation.

This is the key. Husbands and wives must live out their faith, and in so doing, will bring all the blessings of salvation for marriage, for their children, and even for other family members who are in relationship with them.

After all, where does evangelism start? Where does sharing the gospel of the kingdom of Jesus Christ begin? It starts with what each believer has. We cannot give out what we do not have. If someone asks me for a million dollars, they are *not* going to get it. Why? I don't have that kind of money. In the same way, if you have the Holy Spirit within you, you have a relationship with Jesus Christ. You have a new life, a new creation to share with those around you.

Do you have a relationship with Jesus Christ? There are a lot of people who have religion, but they don't have a relationship with Jesus. That is a problem because religion without relationship is dead faith.

For example, I met with a woman who was having many troubles; chiefly, she was angry at the church and angry at God. Why? She was assaulted at an early age by her parents and relatives and even the pastor. All of them were church goers. All of them did Sunday school work. All of them claimed to be Christians. But if we look at their spiritual fruit, *none* of them had a relationship with Jesus. What they shared was their religion, but religion doesn't change anyone on the inside. Religion is about regulations, orders, and external things like church membership.

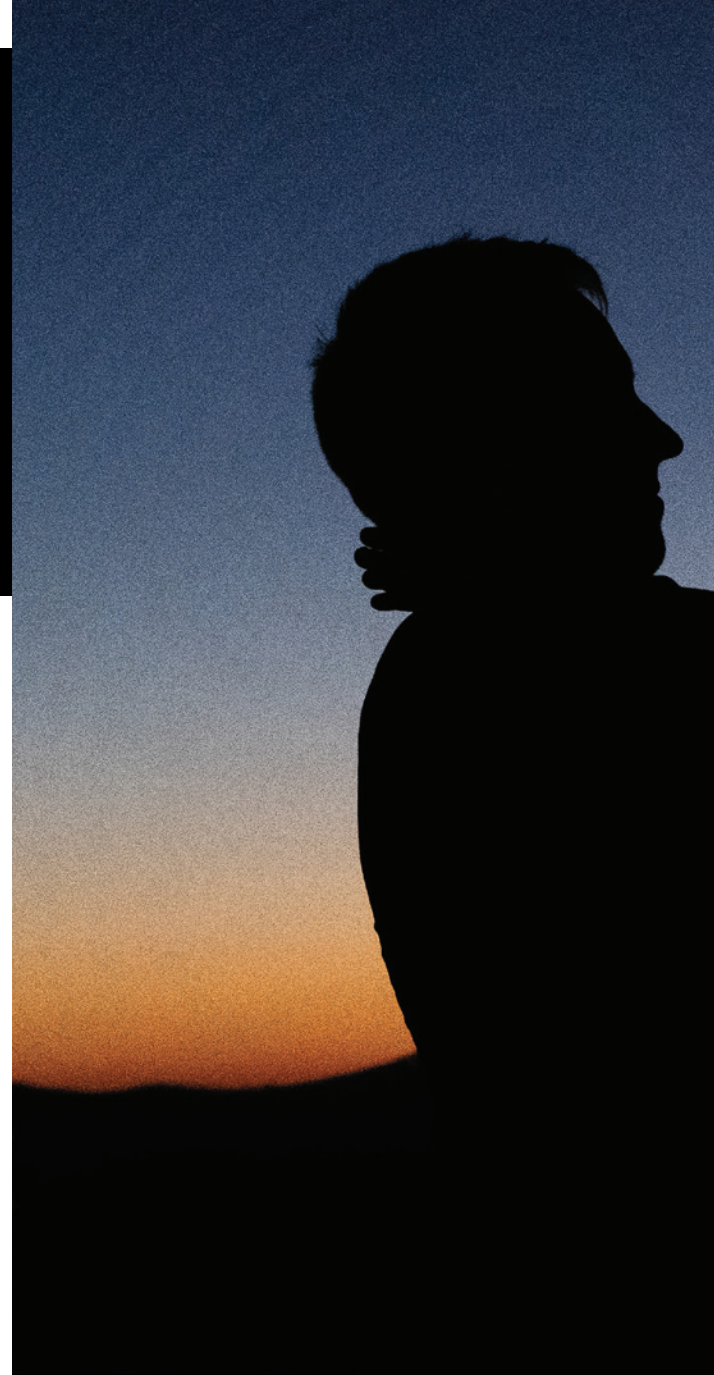
We need to have order, but that by itself doesn't restore our souls. Our Lord Jesus reminds us that external religion without inner cleansing (the new birth) is worthless. We are unclean without that inner change.

If we are to share the gospel of salvation with our families, we must have something to share. We must have an intimate, personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Do

you have it? If not, everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. If you want Jesus, then repent and put your trust in Him. He will send you the Holy Spirit and will cause you to know God in a personal way that will bring you into eternal life. Then, you can help lead others into that glory as well.

How we share our relationship with Jesus is crucial, and I have learned that while teaching the facts about sin, death, the devil, the cross, the resurrection, and the Bible are all super important, the primary way that our children and others will know that these facts are true is when you and I live them out.

One of the practices I have is getting up early every morning to read the Word. I spend time reading and praying. This was not something I taught my daughter. But one day when I was getting up from my morning prayer time, I looked in to see my daughter getting ready for school. She was dressed and laying on her bed reading her Bible and getting ready to pray. She has been doing this





now for many years. She saw it was important to me, and as she saw the fruit of it, she began the practice herself.

Living out faith also means being ready to ask for forgiveness when we are wrong. This is especially important in family life. I remember reading I Peter 3 one evening. I realized by the Holy Spirit that I had neglected to be the spiritual head of our family. I had not treated my wife like the precious vessel that she is and protected her through prayer. So, I apologized to her for not treating her as I ought. I should be the first to pray for her, the first to forgive, the first to ask forgiveness, the first to practice humility, and I hadn't done any of that. I told her that I repented, and things would change from that time on.

I was surprised to hear her tell me, "Thank you!"

That moment changed our marriage around. It changed how we love and give love. Not long after the Lord met my wife in a powerful way and changed her.

It is crucial that we who know Jesus Christ show His love with those in our family. Devotional time, praying

Sharing the gospel of Jesus begins with a life of faith empowered by the Holy Spirit

together, going to church as a family is all so important, but the most important area of evangelism is living out the love that Jesus Christ by the new birth has poured into our hearts. If we will live like we know Jesus and love Jesus, then our families will see Jesus and meet Him.

Buechler serves Trinity Bergen Lutheran, Starkweather, N.D., and Lakeview Lutheran, Egeland, N.D.

THE SPIRITUAL CONVERSATION CURVE

By Pastor Jim Ritter

I was just 15 when I got my first taste of engaging in conversation with someone about my Christian faith. He was someone who was completely different from me, one who did not embrace biblical truths or Jesus Christ's claim of being a personal Savior.

Since then, I looked for opportunities to engage with people who are different from me and pray for God to open doors. Perhaps you, too, long to have a conversation with a friend, co-worker, or fellow student about Jesus and the gospel. I am far from being an expert on the subject but allow me to pass on a couple of things that have helped me with spiritual conversations and have led many to hear the gospel and find a new and living hope in Jesus Christ.

The first tool for engaging in spiritual conversations with an unbelieving friend is listening. Sharing one's faith is better received if we listen first before we talk. Use your ears 90 percent of the time and your mouth 10 percent of the time. If you must talk, save most of your words for praying. In prayer, ask God to help you to love, listen, and respect your friend who is far from God.

Approach your conversations initially with broad and leading questions designed to get your friend to open up and share what they believe or don't believe about the world we live in. Tell them that you are interested in what they believe about God, the Bible, and religion. Try to understand their view of the world first and why they believe what they believe. Tell them you are interested in their thoughts about what is happening in our world today.

Equally important is to ask follow-up questions. For example, do not simply ask for their opinion about our world, religion, the Bible, or Jesus. Use follow-up questions. For example, "Why do you believe the Bible is outdated, irrelevant, or contradictory?" Or, "Why is Jesus just one of many ways to God?" Ask questions in non-threatening ways to help you understand their beliefs.

Ask them open-ended questions like, "Who has made the greatest influence on your life and why?" Ask them for their views on controversial subjects and then ask them why they believe that.

In no way are your conversations meant to be one-sided, with you as the interviewer and your friend as the interviewee. Feel free to share your thoughts *if* they invite you to share your opinion.

The best way to approach spiritual conversations is to

value and love the person with whom you hope to share the gospel. This can only happen if your friend sees that you are truly interested in them by hearing and respecting their beliefs.

What has helped me is remembering I Corinthians 2:14, where Paul writes, "But a natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned."

How can your friend—or anyone—understand, accept, and believe what you believe about the gospel or biblical truths without the help of the Holy Spirit? Truthfully, the entire chapter of I Corinthians 2 is a great resource on this subject.

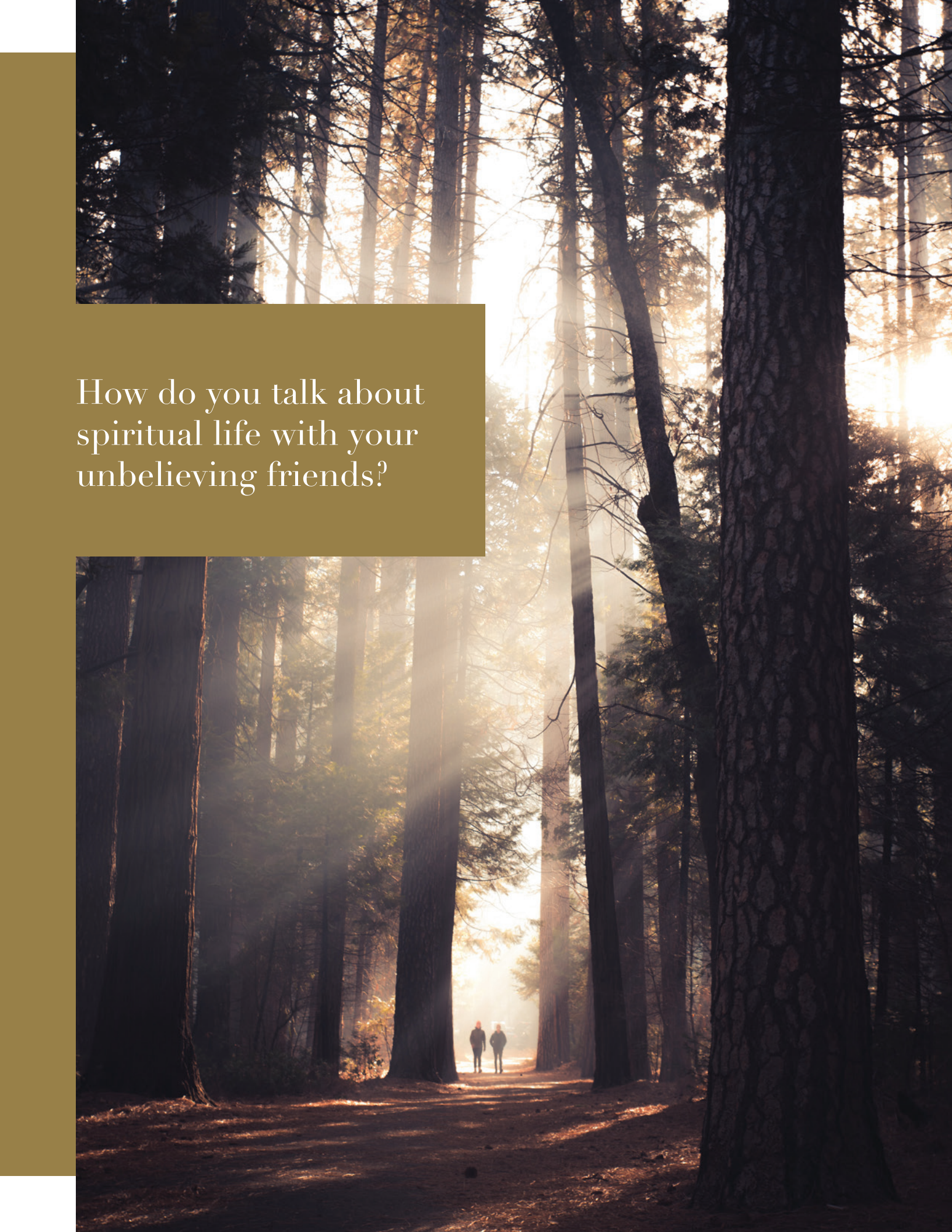
Eventually, through prayer, listening, loving, and respecting your friend, God will often open a door for you to share your beliefs about Jesus Christ and biblical truth. And when this happens, it is because your friend desires, at a minimum, to hear you out in response to your example.

The second and most important tool for engaging in spiritual conversations with a now interested, but still unbelieving, friend is the Word of God. There are two important reasons for this. First, the Bible tells us that God combines the power of His Word with the power of the Holy Spirit to enlighten and penetrate the heart of an unbelieving person. Second, our desire is that our unbelieving friends would engage with God directly through His Word. This is best accomplished when they read the Word of God themselves as opposed to you reading God's Word for them.

The less controversial and combative you are with them over a particular belief of theirs, the better. I simply say, "I'm not telling you this, God's Word is telling you this."

There are many good ways to explain the truths of the gospel that are helpful to people who truly want to learn and know about God. For example, I have found a helpful little tool, "The Bridge Illustration" in explaining our need for Jesus due to our sinful and fallen nature. If you would like more information and training on how to use this tool, please reach out to someone, like your pastor, for help, or please contact me.

Ritter serves Faith Lutheran, Shakopee, Minn. He can be reached at jimritter1@mac.com.

A photograph of a forest with tall, slender trees. Sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a warm, golden glow. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking down a path that leads into the distance. Two small figures of people are visible in the distance, standing on the path. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

How do you talk about
spiritual life with your
unbelieving friends?



AFLC Youth Worker Weekend aims to refresh, recalibrate

AFLC Youth Ministries hosted a weekend seminar (Youth Workers Weekend) Jan. 14-16 at the Association Retreat Center, near Osceola, Wis. With time for worship, teaching, games, and mentoring sessions, the annual weekend of events aims to serve those who work with AFLC youth. Featured speakers this year included Pastor Micah Hjermstad, Fargo, N.D., Pastor Matthew Nelson of Radcliffe, Iowa, and Jim Bjork, a veteran youth worker and trainer with YoungLife who used his skills with pottery to teach life lessons. A team from Faith Free Lutheran, Kalispell, Mont., led worship.



Jim Bjork (above) uses a pottery wheel to illustrate a lesson. Pastor Matthew Nelson (near right) and Pastor Micah Hjermstad (center right) led evening sessions. A team from Kalispell (far right) led worship. Saturday afternoon included one-on-one coaching sessions with veteran youth workers (far right, top and middle).



T

he Eastern
North Dakota
District Women's
Missionary
Federation fall

rally was held Sept. 25, 2021, at West Prairie Free Lutheran Church in Kindred, N.D. The theme for the day was "Abound in Hope" from Romans 15:13. June Thompson opened the day by giving the definition of hope, and she shared Bible verses showing how hope in God does not disappoint and reminding us of our blessed hope in living with Him in glory.

Heidi Larsen and Stephanie Patenaude sang special music.

Vice President Alyson Olson introduced our speakers for the day. Glenda and Steve Kvale shared about their experiences as missionaries with Wycliff Bible Translators. With the demonstration of beads in a jar, they showed us how many people are left in the world who have no access to the Word of God in their language. Steve works in business intelligence reporting with data evaluations for Wycliff. He shared from Luke 10:1-12 about turning our world right side up and how God uses ordinary people to do extra ordinary things. His message focused on three points: having a heart, a message, and a mission.

President Debby Strand led

ABOUNDING IN HOPE

BY ROSELYN HUBER

the business meeting, in which Jodi Lloyd was elected as vice president and Becky Schroeder was elected as secretary. President Strand shared financial needs throughout the AFLC. A motion passed to give one-third of the offering to the Kvaless, one-third to support the Chinese church plant in St. Paul, and one-third to be split between Ambassador Publications in Brazil and our headquarters.

Pastor Ryan Patenaude, a member of the AFLC Board of Publications and Parish Education, gave an update of the work of Ambassador Publications. They are continuing to work on Sunday school curriculum, Bible studies, and publications on the history and heritage of the AFLC and other books by gifted authors. We can look for book five of AFLC Heritage Series, which is a collection of the writings of Dr. Francis Monseth, now in print. Also, a devotional titled "Luther for the Busy Man" is now in print. And a history of the AFLC by Pastor Robert Lee will be published soon.

Linda Fugleberg led us in prayer for our missionaries. We sang the table prayer and dismissed for lunch. In the afternoon session we were led again with praise hymns by Heidi Larsen. Scripture and prayer were given by Linda Hensrud, who shared her testimony of the hope

God has given her.

The Kvaless spoke again, giving their background and personal testimonies. Wycliffe headquarters are in Orlando, Fla., where they meet once a year. Many of us were surprised by the idea of Bible translation for the deaf, which seems to be the final frontier of Bible translation. Steve shared how the last three years before a language is finished, translation projects experience increased opposition by Satan. He expressed the importance of prayer and the presence of persecution in our world. Several short videos were presented. We then broke in groups for discussion questions and a time of prayer.

Steve shared a quote, "The goal of missions is the gladness of the people in the greatness of God."

Jan Vangness reported 29 registrants with 8 guests. The offering for the day was \$1,758.

Pastor Patenaude installed Becky Schroeder as secretary and Jodi Lloyd as vice president. He then closed us in prayer and benediction.

Huber, Grace Free Lutheran, Valley City, N.D., served as the secretary for the Eastern North Dakota district of the Women's Missionary Federation.

Seminary hosts 2022 Sverdrup Forum

Focus is on life in the congregation



Members and friends of the Georg Sverdrup Society participated in a forum on Jan. 14, featuring presentations on the theme, “Life in the Congregation.” Larry Walker (top left) presented a new translation of Sverdrup’s paper, “The Significance of the Deaconess Movement in the Ministries of Mercy.” Pastor Brian Lunn (top right) presented his paper on “The Liturgy Committee of the LFC.” Dr. Martin Horn (right), also presented a paper he had written on “Sverdrup on the Sacraments.” The final session of the day included a panel discussion (above) on “The Servant Pastor and the Congregation,” with Pastor Terry Olson, Dr. James Molstre, Loiell Dyrud, and Dr. Horn leading the discussion and answering questions from audience members.





W

ith the recent retirements of Marlin Harris as director of Institutional

Chaplaincy (hospital, nursing home, and hospice) and Craig Benson as director of Military Chaplaincy, the AFLC Department of Chaplaincy found itself in the midst of a transition in leadership.

Therefore, members of the Co-ordinating Committee, who have the responsibility of providing oversight for and appointing the directors of the various divisions of chaplaincy, requested President Lyndon Korhonen's office to send an email to the pastors on our clergy roster with a request for information so that we could update our roster of chaplains in the AFLC and find out what areas of chaplain ministry are currently being served.

A chaplain is a pastor who serves as a spiritual representative attached to a secular institution. Secular institutions where chaplains currently serve or have served in the past in our AFLC include hospitals, nursing homes, hospice, military, police/fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and jail/prisons.

Twenty pastors replied to

SURVEY OF AFLC CHAPLAINS

BY PASTOR JON BENSON

the email. Five reported that although they have previously been on our roster of chaplains, they are no longer serving as a chaplain.

Two of our pastors replied that they are serving full-time as chaplains: one in a nursing home, and one in hospice. In addition, one pastor responded that he is serving in a part-time paid position as a hospice chaplain. Another pastor volunteers his time as a hospice chaplain for a local hospital, and two pastors are volunteering their time to provide chaplain ministry to nursing homes, and/or assisted living centers.

No one responded that they are currently employed as a hospital chaplain, in either full- or part-time paid positions. One pastor reported that he is called upon to provide chaplain services in his local hospital as a volunteer.

There is only one member of our clergy roster currently serving in the military with chaplain responsibilities. In the past we have had pastors serving as military chaplains in full-time, active-duty ministry and part-time with reserve units.

None of the respondents indicated that they are involved in jail/prison ministry.

Nine pastors responded that their role as a chaplain involves ministry to police, fire, or EMS (volunteer first responders in a fire department

or professional paramedics/ambulance crews). Some of these chaplains serve in multiple roles, serving a local police department and a sheriff's department or serving both the police and fire departments in their local community.

I am thankful for each one of these men who are willing to extend the love of Christ by carrying the title of chaplain. As our society becomes more and more secularized in its outlook, the scope of chaplain ministry has been affected. The title of chaplain is increasingly being given to individuals who have little to no spiritual insight to share.

The AFLC Department of Chaplaincy seeks to encourage and equip men to carry on the true sense of a chaplain: to be a spiritual representative attached to a secular institution.

While the position of director of Institutional Chaplains is currently vacant, John Eidsmoe was recently appointed director of Military Chaplaincy, and I still serve as director of Police/Fire/EMS Chaplaincy. Contact us if you have any questions about serving as a chaplain.

Benson, a member of the AFLC Co-ordinating Committee, serves Newark Lutheran, Newark, Ill.

Annual Conference

June 15-18 • Association Retreat Center

The AFLC's 60th anniversary Annual Conference will be held June 15-18 at the Association Retreat Center, near Osceola, Wis. The conference theme, "God Rewards the Faithful," comes from Hebrews 11:6.

Registration for the conference will be available beginning Feb. 1. To register, please visit aflc.org/about-us/conferences. To register over the phone, call Chanel Nelson in the AFLC president's office at (763) 412-2001. Registration will close on June 6. Walk-up registration will be available for late registrants.

As you register, please refer to our conference schedule (subject to change). A full version of this schedule will be available on the conference web page on Feb. 1.

Reservations for housing and meals are available through the ARC (arc-aflc.org/2022-annual-conference), or by calling the ARC at (715) 294-2877.

WMF Day will be held on Wednesday, June 15. Registration will be handled by the WMF. Visit their website for details (aflc.org/women/wmf-day).

2022 Annual Conference schedule

Wednesday, June 15

- 9 a.m. Conference committees meet
- 7:30 p.m. Ordination service

Thursday, June 16–Saturday, June 18

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:30 a.m. Devotions
- 8:45 a.m. Business session
- 10:25 a.m. Break
- 10:50 a.m. Business session
- 11:40 a.m. Prayer
- Noon Lunch
- 1:15 p.m. AFLC Department Electives
 - Thursday and Saturday
- 1:15 p.m. Corporation Meetings and Lecture Series
 - Friday
- 2:15 p.m. AFLC Department Electives
 - Thursday and Saturday
- 3 p.m. Break
- 3:30 p.m. Worship and devotions
- 3:50 p.m. Business session
- 5:30 p.m. Dinner (Thursday and Friday)
- 7:30 p.m. Evening service
 - Thursday Mission Festival service
 - Friday 60th anniversary celebration communion service
 - Saturday Testimony service (4:30 p.m.)



FLY Convention releases logo

The 2023 FLY Convention logo was revealed in late January. Focused on the theme, "Restored," from Revelation 21:5-7, the logo envisions the restoration available to all who call on Christ. The dates for the convention were also published. FLY 2023 will be held July 3-8 at the YMCA of the Rockies, Estes Park, Colo.

To accommodate district representatives and keep costs down, a one-hour FLY Federation council meeting will be held online at 9 a.m. Feb. 26. Districts are asked to appoint a representative who can attend the meeting and submit ideas to the FLY Committee. For more information, contact Pastor Gideon Johnson, FLY Committee president, at fly@aflc.org.



Pastor Mark Richardson was installed Dec. 12 at Calvary Free Lutheran, Fosston, Minn. Pictured (from left) are Tim Dettwiler, Harlan Haroldson, Greg Bruce, David Landsverk, Pastor Lyndon Korhonen (AFLC president), Don Brickman, Pastor Richardson, David Olson, Steve Schmidt, Lowell Hamrum, and Mike Wedin. (Submitted photo)



Recently, I sat down with a pastor here in Gulu, Uganda, who asked me, “Is your curriculum as good as it looks?”

I simply responded, “Come and see. We are about to have a class.”

He was not able to come at that point, but later attended an Ambassador Institute class where we covered the story of Joseph being sold into Egypt from Genesis 37:3-11, 18-34; 39:1-6. The pastor sat through the lesson and when it was over, he exclaimed, “Wow.”

I responded by telling him that the Ambassador Institute raises high the Word of God and we believe that many problems are solved within the believer and within the churches if we spend time in His Word.

He told me that he had searched for and had never found a curriculum that is so faithful to God’s Word and at the same time has no educational or financial requirements of students.

“How do you accommodate a student who can’t read or write?” he asked.

WE ARE WORD BEARERS

BY PASTOR BRENT RAAN

“Simple,” I answered, and then told him that our instructors teach in a way that emphasizes memorization right within the class and encourages groups to review the stories. By the time they graduate, our students largely have 2,200 Bible verses memorized. We also have audio versions of the story available. Then, for exams, we can give them orally, one-on-one.

The pastor then shifted his questions and asked, “Are you ready for 100-150 students?”

My family has only been in Gulu for nine months, during which we have been busy trying to learn Acholi (the local language), settling down as a family, and starting to translate the Ambassador Institute lessons into Acholi. Our only helper, Michael Rokenbrodt, splits his time between Gulu and the work in Jinja, about 240 miles south.

I told this pastor that God cares more about His Word and the proper teaching of it than we ever can. Then we prayed that God would raise up laborers to go out into this field.

Later, I met with a class in Nakasongala that has graduated from Ambassador Institute. They

are located about 140 miles south of Gulu, about a four-hour trip. I brought up this opportunity with them and they unanimously responded that they were ready to find within their group one who would be willing to travel to Gulu for one week every month to hold the training. Even our leadership team, which is largely located in the Jinja area (seven hours away), stated that if someone can’t come from Nakasongala, then one of them would be eager to come. This is servant leadership.

I praise God for what He is doing here in northern Uganda and throughout the entire country through the Ambassador Institute. Please praise God for the reformation that we have seen within many of the churches where the Ambassador Institute has held classes. And praise Him that God has chosen us as the AFLC to be bearers of His Word.

Raan is an AFLC missionary serving in Gulu, Uganda.

PEOPLE & PLACES

Pastor Patrick VandenBos was installed Jan. 9 at St. Ansgar's Lutheran, Salinas, Calif., with Pastor Lyndon Korhonen, AFLC president, officiating.

Pastor Blake Kilbourne was installed Jan. 2 at Our Savior's Lutheran, Dickinson, N.D., with Pastor Korhonen officiating.

The Free Lutheran Bible College will host **Campus Days** April 22-24. Dr. Nathan Olson will speak on theme, "The Body of Christ" from Romans 12. A registration form will be made available soon at flbc.edu.

The Free Lutheran Seminary will host the **Summer Institute of Theology** Aug. 1-5 on the Plymouth, Minn., campus. SIT exists to provide continuing education to lay people, pastors, and friends of the AFLC. Courses will include "Salvation History," by Dr. Brent Olson, "Christian Ethics" by Dr. Nathan Olson, "Adult Catechesis" by Dr. Jason Gudim, and a confirmation workshop by Pastor J. Christian Andrews. For more information, visit flbc.edu/events.



Vincent Larson

Vincent Larson, 76, of Fargo, N.D., passed away on Jan. 11 at his home. Born May 8, 1945, in Valley City, N.D., he was the son of Floyd and Gladys (Hogen) Larson. He married Grace Berge on June 27, 1970, in Binford, N.D.

He graduated from Buffalo High School, Buffalo, N.D., in 1963 and attended North Dakota State University, Fargo, for one year before joining the Army National Guard as a member of the 188th Army Band. He served from 1965-1971. After marriage, he farmed with his father and brother David in Buffalo until retiring to Fargo in 2017. He was a member of the AFLC Co-ordinating Committee and served several terms on the AFLC Nominating Committee and Missions Corporation. He also served as a deacon and Sunday school teacher at Grace Free Lutheran, Valley City. He enjoyed serving as a Gideon by leading Bible studies in jail ministries, placing Bibles in hotels, and distributing God's Word to schools and colleges. He served the Buffalo community as president of the community club, township officer, Buffalo Development Corporation, and the Maple Valley School Board. He earned a pilot's license in 1969 and was a charter member of the Buffalo Flying Club.

Surviving are his wife; one daughter, SueAnn (Tim) Berntson, Buffalo; one son Jeremy (Rachel) Larson, Moorhead, Minn., nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild; seven brothers, Orvin (Mallory) Larson, Ben (Pat) Larson, Stan (Kathy) Larson, Pastor Doug (Barbara) Larson, David (Lonnie) Larson, Rick (Carol) Larson, and Roger (Mary) Larson; and one sister, Joyce Spitzer.

The service was held Jan. 18 at Grace Free Lutheran, Valley City, N.D., with Pastor Dennis Norby and Levi Berntson officiating. Burial was in Buffalo Cemetery. Memorials are preferred to the Gideons, Grace Free Lutheran, or Ethos Hospice.

NOVEMBER MEMORIALS

AED

Donald Norberg
Pastor Irvin Schmitke

Alaska Mission

Pastor Paul Nash

Bible College

Erich Engelbrecht
Mary Johnson
Lois Myhre
Mary Nash
Pastor Paul Nash
Ralph Peterson
Tom Fugleberg
Ruth Claus
Steve Holland
Steven Lau

FLAPS

Pastor Paul Nash
Pastor Irvin Schmitke
Janice Schmitke

Home Missions

Pastor Walter Johnson
Pastor Irvin Schmitke

KAKN Radio

Pastor Paul Nash

Parish Education

Ralph Peterson

Seminary

Ralph Peterson
David Salvhus
Pastor Walter Johnson

Vision

Mildred Strand
Sherman Benson

WMF

Dennis Groven
Ella Strahan
Alice Sathre
Deb Benson
Althea Miller

World Missions

Pastor Walter Johnson
Valborg Huglen
LeRoy Schierkolk
Gordon Twedt
Pastor Irvin Schmitke
Deb Benson

... in honor of

General Fund

Pastor Lyndon and
Linda Korhonen

Transition to free subscriptions

The Lutheran Ambassador is now free of charge to subscribers. If you wish to begin receiving our monthly publication, please contact Liz McCarlson (lasubscriptions@aflc.org). You may also subscribe online at aflc.org/lutheran-ambassador. Our print version can be mailed to your home address or to your local congregation in bulk. We also offer a digital version which can be found on the Issuu app, available in the Apple store and Google Play. Both the app and the magazine are free. Check our website for giving opportunities. We appreciate your support as we work to serve our AFLC congregations.

AFLC BENEVOLENCES January 1-December 31, 2021

FUND	REC'D IN DECEMBER	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	PRIOR YEAR-TO-DATE
General Fund	\$47,267	\$413,860	\$394,302
Evangelism	12,503	131,760	128,173
Youth Ministries	15,603	198,960	141,275
Parish Education	25,091	201,864	161,551
Seminary	47,303	324,068	282,582
Bible College	67,592	470,867	369,252
Home Missions	38,317	663,809	381,806
World Missions	61,661	479,830	401,711
Personal Support	125,353	871,159	913,120
TOTALS	\$440,690	\$3,756,178	\$3,173,772

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

LUTHERAN EVANGELISM: TRUTH IN BALANCE

Dr. Carl Wisløff, in his introductory comments in the first chapter of his book, *Do the Work of an Evangelist* (1990), quotes from a letter written to him by the late Dr. Francis Monseth:

There are not many who understand and appreciate the great heritage we have in Scandinavian and German Pietism. The emphasis on “experienced salvation” is difficult to balance for many with our Lutheran understanding of the means of grace. (p. 1)

Two graduate classes in which your editor was a student were in different



Pastor Robert Lee

Lutheran contexts, yet both illustrate that there is a problem. In the first, a student used the phrase, “evangelization of the baptized,” and another student (a pastor) became a bit unglued. He said that it makes him so angry when people undermine baptism, and concluded his angry outburst by declaring, “To be baptized is to be evangelized. To be evangelized is to be baptized. That’s it. There is nothing more.”

No one in the second class seemed to have a problem with the phrase, “evangelization of the baptized,” and the instructor even stated that it sounded like a proper division of law and gospel. Yet there was a lack of clarity in how we should go about evangelizing the baptized with a correct theological balance. There were cautions against using active verbs, like “accepting” or “receiving” Christ, since they implied human effort or cooperation on our part. (When someone pointed out that John 1:12 uses the verb “receive,” the theological concern still remained for some of the students.)

So how do we do it then? What should we say? There was a recognition that there are baptized people who are lost, yet there seemed to also be a conviction that there

was “something” still there. The author of one of the class texts took a very subjective approach and suggested that we look for evidence of sincerity in facial expressions and body language, and if we conclude that there is “something” there, then the Spirit is at work. If the Spirit is at work in someone’s life then the person is already a Christian. Now it is appropriate to invite that person to “commit his/her life to Christ.”

Are we confused yet? Here may be some thoughts to ponder while seeking a firm place to stand.

A part of our problem is that we expect biblical teachings to be logical, yet one of the great insights of Reformation teaching is the paradox. This means that two seemingly contrary statements can both be true. Here’s an example: “When I am weak, then I am strong” (II Corinthians 12:10b). Or we are taught that our salvation is “not of works” (Ephesians 2:8-9), yet there is also a call to “work out your own salvation” (Philippians 2:12). And another: “For freedom Christ has set us free” (Galatians 5:1a), yet Scripture also describes us as “God’s slaves” (I Peter 2:16). Yes, some may be already coming up with answers to harmonize these truths ... or we may simply accept and rest in them even when they defy our logical minds.

There’s an old, little-known hymn that captures in part the paradox of our salvation:

I sought the Lord, and afterward I knew
He moved my soul to seek Him,
seeking me;
It was not I that found, O Savior true,
No, I was found of Thee.

—Anon.

We are invited to come to Jesus (John 6:37), which may imply action on our part, yet the Apostle Paul gives us a glimpse beyond ourselves when He tells us that

Jesus chose us in Him before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4).

Let these statements provide us with material for respectful and prayerful discussion, hopefully leading to a more balanced Lutheran understanding of evangelism:

- Baptism is a means of grace. If you doubt that, simply look up all of the New Testament references that mention it ... and don’t try to make a case for a difference between “water baptism” and “Spirit baptism” when the Bible says that there is only one baptism (Ephesians 4:5).

A part of our problem is that we expect biblical teachings to be logical, yet one of the great insights of Reformation teaching is the paradox.

- Baptism is for children, too, if we believe what the Bible teaches about the sinful nature of a newborn baby (Psalm 51:5). The promise is to you and your children (Acts 2:39), and there are those among us who do not remember a time when they did not love Jesus.

- This is not true for most people. There is no eternal security in baptism, and there are those who were baptized who do not believe and are lost. There may be a parallel to circumcision (Romans 2:25). No one is saved without faith in Christ.

- The content of our witness is the gospel, the suffering and death of Jesus Christ for our sins ... for me. People need the Lord, and it is our privilege to simply invite them to come to Him, standing ready to pray with them a sinner’s prayer, not to correct their verbs. Proper instruction, if needed, can come later.

building the base

WE ARE AN ASSOCIATION

BY PASTOR JON LANGNESS

Through the fourth largest Lutheran body in the USA at one point, the AFLC has remained relatively small with fewer than 300 congregations throughout its history. All that to say, when you leave the Midwest, and even within the Midwest, it's common to run into people who have no idea what the AFLC is. Unfortunately, that confusion exists not only outside the AFLC, but it also exists within. We know the acronym, but what do those words mean? Throughout this year, this column will seek to "build the base" of the AFLC, so that we can easily articulate who we are.

We begin with A, which stands for "Association." An association exists for the purpose of accomplishing something greater than any individuals can themselves. The NBA is an association, as is AARP. The NBA gathers people around basketball; AARP exists for ... aging well.

What differentiates our association? What greater purpose are we seeking to accomplish? Who are the "we" seeking to accomplish this task?

We are an association of Christians gathered around a common confession and mission, it's in our name, Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. Our confession is Free Lutheran (more on those terms in the months to come). Our direction is summarized for us in 12 principles referred to as the Fundamental Principles.* Our mission is to build the kingdom of God in its localized form, the congregation, as directed by the Word of God (FP 1).

These principles inform us: We exist to "seek salvation and eternal blessedness for [ourselves] and [our] fellow men" (FP 2). In pursuit of this task, we seek to use the gifts that God has given us (FP 6), accepting "the mutual assistance which congregations can give one another in the work of furthering the kingdom of God" (FP 7), while seeking to edify one another in the process (FP 8).

As an association, we freely associate as the Spirit leads, without the coercion of a synod or any other organization (FP 11). The final principle keeps our mission before us, "Every free congregation, as well as every individual believer, is constrained

by the Spirit of God and by the privileges of Christian love to do good and to work for the salvation of souls and the quickening of spiritual life, as far as its abilities and power permit. Such free spiritual activity is limited neither by parish nor by synodical boundaries" (FP 12).

It is ultimately a congregation's decision to determine whether to associate. There is no coercion; there are no dues. We are not a synod, but rather than being identified by what we aren't, let's be known for what we are. We are an association united in a common confession and mission: seeking salvation for ourselves and our fellow men. This is done primarily on a congregational level, however, when the tasks exceed the abilities of our individual congregations, we freely and gladly associate with one another, seeking to build the kingdom of God.

[*aflc.org/about-us/what-we-believe/](http://aflc.org/about-us/what-we-believe/)

*Langness serves Abiding Word Lutheran,
Deshler, Neb.*