

30th Annual Conference Review



THE LUTHERAN
AMBASSADOR

August 4, 1992



Rev. Robert L. Lee,
third president
of the AFLC.

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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Dr. Francis Monseth, Secretary
Mr. Robert Knutson

Light on the Way

In Jesus' Name We Press On

In Habakkuk 1:2 the prophet prayed: "How long, O Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you 'violence' but you do not save?"

"One in Spirit and Purpose" from Philippians 2:1-2, was the theme for our recent 30th Annual Conference of our Association of Free Lutheran Congregations!

It was good to attend the conference and sense a unity of spirit in the midst of these troubled days in our AFLC. We were reminded by our president that we are a spiritual movement. So then what do we do in troubled times?

The prophet Habakkuk lived in troubled times and wrote of his struggles of faith and life. He watched everything sacred to God and of importance to the believers of his day crack and crumble. And in some cases, the troubles came from God's chosen people themselves.

The crisis prompted Habakkuk to cry out. It is interesting to note that he cried to God in the form of a prayer. He called on the one true God, the Lord of Israel.

Could it be that as is often true today, the people thought Habakkuk was wasting time by "just" praying? Worldly wisdom has always suggested that one must be aggressive and take strong action if we are to see change. The thing to do would be to make a lot of noise and campaign for action. Worldly wisdom would demand one rally support. But pray?

Have you ever wondered whether you have been asked to waste your time when missionaries and boards of our AFLC asked for financial support but "most of all, prayer for the suc-

cess of the work"?

Could the people of Habakkuk's day not have felt frustration when he suggested prayer?

Yet that is just what he did. He prayed!

Psalm 50:15 reads: "Call upon me in a day of trouble, and I will deliver you and you will honor me." Habakkuk was a living example of what the Lord had encouraged his people to do.

In light of this, prayer for our leaders, pastors, missionaries and boards is certainly not a waste of time. In James, the Lord reminds us: "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective."

There are times when we all doubt the power of our effectiveness in prayer because we doubt our righteousness before the Lord. It is in times such as this, that we need to remember our righteousness comes from the perfect work and righteousness of Jesus Christ! We need to simply rely on what Jesus has done for us on the cross. It remains for us to live a life of faith in His resurrection power.

As members and friends in a spiritual movement such as our AFLC, let us then live our faith and show it by lives of prayer as well as action. In Jesus' Name we press on, especially in prayer.



— by Rev.
Larry Severson



The 30th Annual Conference elected Rev. Robert L. Lee, Newark, Illinois, to serve as the AFLC's third president. The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations convened its conference at the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wisconsin, on June 17-21.

The 582 delegates elected Rev. Lee on the second ballot with 66% of the votes. Lee had been acting president since March 31, 1992, when he filled the vacancy resulting from the resignation of Rev. Richard Snipstead. His three-year term will begin on October 1, 1992.

The ecclesiastical method of balloting was also used for the offices of vice president and secretary. Rev. Kenneth Moland, Kirkland, Washington, was elected vice president in a process that required seven ballots. On the second ballot, Rev. Ronald Knutson, Canton, South Dakota, was elected to the one-year term of secretary.

"One In Spirit And Purpose," from Philippians 2:1-2, served as the theme, and Rev. Lee gave the opening address on Wednesday evening. The morning Prayer Hours were led by Rev. Dale Mellgren, Tioga, North Dakota. His first meditation called for each delegate to let God be who He is and not to erroneously make Him be what we want Him to be.



Rev. Robert Lee



Rev. Kenneth Moland



Rev. Ronald Knutson

Considerable discussion came on resolutions under Committee #1 (Administration), Fiscal concerns were evident. Delegates approved a five percent reduction in the subsidy for pastor's health care premiums. The question of pursuing membership in the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability was discussed at length. A committee was given the authority to study the issue further with recommendations to be given at next year's conference. Non-elective positions and their length of service were also discussed. The approved General Fund budget was \$34,000 less than last year's. This lean fiscal mood was reflected throughout the conference. The total approved 1993 budget was nearly 14% less than the 1992 amount.

The Hymnal Committee headed by Rev. Tom Olson, Cumberland, Wisconsin, gave a progress report. It is hoped that the New Ambassador Hymnal could be ready in one or two years. The conference turned down a proposal to borrow money in order to quickly finish the project. Rather, a resolution was passed to encourage individuals and congregations to continue to make contributions so that the hymnals might be completed.

A resolution to encourage assistance to L.E.A.F. (Lutheran Estonian American Friends) came as a result of



Some of the 1992 Nominating Committee (L. to R.): Merv Mathison, DeKalb, Illinois; Daryl (Bud) Nillson, Sioux Falls, South Dakota; Dale Smith, Lake Stevens, Washington; Walter Peterson, Ishpeming, Michigan; and Ernest Schneider, Wichita Falls, Texas.



The tellers working on the 5th ballot for vice president.



Rev. James Johnson, Reva, South Dakota.

REPORT

a trip by four AFLC pastors to that Eastern European nation earlier last spring.

Seven congregations were added to the AFLC during the last year. They are: Abiding Word, Deshler, Nebraska; Christ Evangelical, Tulia, Texas; Ebenezer, Evergreen Park, Illinois; Telemarken, Goodridge, Minnesota; Solid Rock, Camrose, Alberta; Hauge,

Goldfield, Iowa; and Good Shepherd, Menomonie, Wisconsin.

Six pastors were added to the Clergy Roster: Rev. Raymond Klug, Rev. William Goodman, Rev. Gerald Peterson, Rev. Vincent Will, Rev. Craig Jennings and Rev. Wayne Juntunen. Three pastors were called home to be with the Lord since the last conference: Rev. Willard Conradson, Rev. Milo Gudim and Pastor Burton Rygh.

With the near completion of the Administration Building, the schools will take over the chapel and office building on the campus. The future needs of the schools were discussed. A multi-purpose gymnasium-auditorium has been considered by the Board of Trustees, but no action was taken. A standing ovation was given in support of Dr. Francis Monseth, Dean of AFLTS, after an open discussion on a resolution given in appreciation of his leadership in the seminary.

Missionaries John and Ruby Abel were honored for their nearly 30 years of ministry in Brazil. They were the



Rev. John and Ruby Abel.



Mr. Cliff Seldal, ARC Board Chairman, collected Pastors' Banquet tickets from Rev. Vince Will, Springfield, Missouri.

AFLC's first missionary couple. For 40 years, the Abels have been involved in mission work. They were honored with a special cake after the Thursday evening service. Pastor Abel continues to serve the AFLC as a part-time evangelist in the United States. 1 1

Other World Mission resolutions referred to the return of the Tom Baker family from Brazil and the sending of the Jonathan Abel family to Brazil. It was also noted the Minnesota State Court charges concerning the work in India were completely dismissed. Thanksgiving to the Lord was given. The delegates were encouraged to pray that the one remaining federal charge will also be dismissed.

A new Mission Support Plan that the World Mission Committee has announced was referred to the 1993 Annual Conference with further study and explanation. A resolution proposing a limitation of years a department director may serve was not passed after a long discussion. A grateful acknowledgement of the three prospective missionary families were noted with anticipation of their being sent to the mission fields as funds become available.

The Home Mission "Partners in Planting" plan was supported with further information to come in *The Lutheran Ambassador*.

Both Home and World Mission budgets were approved at a 25% reduction from the previous year.

The Evangelism Committee again went on record in support of seeking methods of funding a full-time AFLC evangelist. No specific action was taken.

The Christian Academic Education Board evoked the most animated discussion under the resolutions offered by Committee #4. The relative strength and weaknesses of public and private education brought a prolonged discussion as it related to the function of the Christian Academic Board. A resolution was passed in support of and appreciation for Christian public school teachers. The one-year-old board was also granted its request for a \$4,000 budget.

The long-standing request of the Youth Board for a full-time youth worker was again debated. This decision was delayed by the action under the General Fund budget which deleted

the extra monies for such a position. Rev. Dennis Gray and Mr. Bob Halvorson continue to serve as part-time youth workers.

One resolution under Committee #5 (Stewardship and Pensions) reflected the fiscal attitude of the delegate: "WHEREAS ... we commit ourselves at present to exceed our goals rather than increasing them."

The final report of the Credentials Committee showed that 582 delegates registered for the conference. This included 147 pastors, 426 lay people and nine graduating seminary seniors and visiting pastors.

Last year the sessions were also at the ARC with 490 registered delegates. It was five years ago at the 25th Anniversary Conference in Thief River Falls, Minnesota, that delegates gathered for a record high of 674. This year's conference is the second largest in the 30-year history of the AFLC.

The 1993 Annual Conference has been invited to meet on the Northern Illinois University campus by Grace Free Lutheran Church of DeKalb.

—Rev. Laurel M. Udden
and Solveig Hjermstad



Mrs. Lois Kankelfritz, St. Cloud, Minnesota, greeted Rev. and Mrs. James L. Johnson after the Ordination Service.

Four Men Ordained

The Ordination Service for four men was held on Sunday, June 21, at the conclusion of the 30th Annual Conference. The morning service was led by Dr. Francis Monseth, dean of the Free Lutheran Theological Seminary, and the message was given by Dr. Craig Jennings, professor at the AFLC Schools. Rev. and Mrs. David Nelson, Tucson, Arizona, and Mrs. Angie Lombardo, Maple Grove, Minnesota, provided special music.

The new pastors are Scott Gray, called to Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Morris, Illinois; Ted Hanson, called to Abiding In The Vine Free Lutheran



Committee #1 members: Mr. Oliver Landsverk, Fosston, Minnesota; Rev. Lynn Wilson, Roslyn, South Dakota; Mr. Rick Rasmussen, Monticello, Minnesota, and Rev. John Mundfrom, Eben Junction, Michigan. Not pictured is Mr. Clarence Quanbeck, McVile, North Dakota.

1992 Conference Election Results

PRESIDENT:

Rev. Robert L. Lee, Newark, Illinois (3 years)

VICE PRESIDENT:

Rev. Kenneth Moland, Kirkland, Washington (1 year)

SECRETARY:

Rev. Ronald Knutson, Canton, South Dakota (1 year)

CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE:

Mr. James Boe, Ottawa, Illinois (5 years)
Mr. Ralph Peterson, Portland, North Dakota (5 years)

AFLC SCHOOLS BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Mr. Tim Jones, Wyndmere, North Dakota (5 years)

HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE:

Mr. Robert Christian, Newark, Illinois (5 years)

WORLD MISSIONS COMMITTEE:

Rev. Ted Berkas, Wallace, South Dakota (5 years)

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE:

Mr. Joel Rogenes, Ely, Minnesota (5 years)
Mr. Ralph Johnson, Upsala, Minnesota (4 years)
Rev. Robert Lewis, Newark, Illinois (1 year)

YOUTH BOARD:

Pastor Keith Quanbeck, Champlin, Minnesota (5 years)
Mr. Paul Kneeland, Murieta, California (1 year)

BOARD OF PUBLICATIONS AND PARISH EDUCATION:

Mrs. Linda Mohagen, Towner, North Dakota (5 years)

PENSION BOARD:

Mr. Eugene Nesland, Thief River Falls, Minnesota (5 years)

COMMISSION ON EVANGELISM:

Mr. Irvin Schmitke, Fargo, North Dakota (5 years)

ARC BOARD:

Rev. John Rieth, Amery, Wisconsin (5 years)

CHRISTIAN ACADEMIC EDUCATION BOARD:

Rev. Brian Davidson, Rice Lake, Wisconsin (5 years)
Mrs. LaVonne Arneson, Spicer, Minnesota (5 years)

COLLOQUY COMMITTEE:

Rev. Martin Horn, Astoria, Oregon
Rev. Robert Lewis, Newark, Illinois
Rev. Terry Olson, Valley City, North Dakota
Rev. Einar Unseth, Glenville, Minnesota
Rev. James Ritter, Bloomington, Minnesota



Fellowship, Pine City, Minnesota; James L. Johnson, called to Calvary Free Lutheran Church, Fosston, Minnesota; and Todd Schierkolk, called to Ebenezer Lutheran Church, Evergreen Park, Illinois.

The other 1992 seminary graduate, Jonathan Unverzagt, was ordained August 2, 1992, at Mt. Sion Lutheran Church, Kasson, Minnesota. He accepted the call to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Jewell, Iowa.

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

AFLC Benevolences - February 1 - June 30, 1992

FUND	TOTAL BUDGET	REC'D IN JUNE	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	%* TOTAL
General Fund	\$295,450.00	\$15,881.72	\$72,045.14	24
Schools - (AFLTS) . .	149,535.00	7,331.06	32,065.24	21
(AFLBS) . .	208,625.00	13,668.90	48,839.58	23
Home Missions.	433,616.00	21,695.84	102,630.95	24
World Missions.	409,715.00	24,707.22	126,003.31	31
Capital Investment . .	30,000.00	5,841.19	11,115.15	37
Parish Education . . .	84,385.00	4,387.37	28,670.36	34
ARC	20,000.00	984.51	2,604.32	13
TOTALS	\$1,631,326.00	*\$94,497.81	\$423,974.05	26
1991 - 1992.	\$1,537,681.00	\$82,277.04	\$386,002.39	25
Goal 42%				

*The above figures do not include any of the offerings taken at conference which will be included in July in the different funds.

BUDGET ANALYSIS COMMITTEE:

Mr. Reuben Quanbeck, Grand Forks, North Dakota

Mr. John Schlenk, Minneapolis, Minnesota

1993 NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Mr. Clarence Quanbeck, McVie, North Dakota

Mr. Jerome Rice, Tioga, North Dakota

Dr. Wayne Sletten, Faith, South Dakota

Mr. Roger Peterson, Thief River Falls, Minnesota

Mr. Anders Macy, Fertile, Minnesota

Rev. Todd Olson, Pipestone, Minnesota

Rev. Brian Davidson, Rice Lake, Wisconsin

Mr. Eldon Kinnunen, Hancock, Michigan

Rev. David Nelson, Tucson, Arizona

Mr. Clark Berg, Kalispell, Montana

Rev. Roy Warwick, Massapequa, New York

Mr. Robert Christian, Newark, Illinois

Mr. Clifford Johnson, Esko, Minnesota



Mrs. Virginia Mercado, Obregon, Mexico (left), had the conference translated into Spanish by Mrs. Mae Swanson, Nogales, Arizona.

MISSIONS CORPORATION — (5 YEAR TERM):

Rev. Herbert Franz, Dollar Bay, Michigan

Rev. Tony Stockman, Brandon, Minnesota

Pastor Henry Mohagen, Towner, North Dakota

Mr. Vernon Russum, Grafton, North Dakota

Rev. Richard Gunderson, Lake Stevens, Washington

Mr. Kenneth Nash, Colfax, North Dakota

Mr. Mark Knutson, Newfolden, Minnesota

Dr. Wayne Sletten, Faith, South Dakota

Mr. Timothy Rolf, McIntosh, Minnesota

Miss Judith Wold, Thief River Falls, Minnesota

SCHOOLS CORPORATION — (5 YEAR TERM):

Mr. Kent Quanbeck, McVie, North Dakota

Mr. Clifford Dyrud, Moorhead, Minnesota

Rev. Dennis Gray, Greenbush, Minnesota

Rev. Martin Horn, Astoria, Oregon

Mr. Clifford Johnson, Esko, Minnesota

Mr. Farrell Erickson, Badger, Minnesota

Rev. Paul Nash, Wichita Falls, Texas

Mr. James Rolf, Brandon, Minnesota

Pastor Rodney Stueland, Kenyon, Minnesota

Mr. Dean Franz, Cloquet, Minnesota

ARC CORPORATION — (5 YEAR TERM):

Rev. John Rieth, Amery, Wisconsin

Rev. Brian Davidson, Rice Lake, Wisconsin

Mr. Glen Hodnefield, Radcliffe, Iowa

Mr. Dennis Jacobson, Burlington, North Dakota

Mr. Clifford Holm, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Mr. Arden Jacobson, Champlin, Minnesota

Mr. Larry Johnson, Amery, Wisconsin

Mr. Lloyd Carlson, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Mr. Dave Osland, DeKalb, Illinois

Mr. Victor Parsons, St. Paul, Minnesota

Administration Building Dedicated

On Sunday afternoon, June 21, the Administration Building of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations was dedicated. A large group of conference delegates drove from the ARC in western Wisconsin to join many metropolitan area people in the festive service led by Rev. Wendell Johnson. Mr. Jack Ovick the architect, and Mr. Lloyd Carlson, Building Chairman, brought greetings. Rev. David Barnhart presented the message. Rev. Les Galland led in Scripture and prayer and a vocal solo was provided by Dr. Francis Monseth. Rev. Robert Lee presided in the service of dedication.

The congregation then toured the spacious building which will house the offices of the AFLC. Coffee and cake was served at the campus cafeteria by ladies from Medicine Lake Lutheran Church.



At the dedication service, Rev. John Benson, Ortle, South Dakota, presented a picture for the Administration Building, to Mr. Lloyd Carlson. The picture is in memory of the late Rev. Morris Eggen, grandfather of Pastor Benson.

Conference Tape Available

Rev. Robert Lee's sermon on the opening evening of the conference is available on audio tape for \$3 plus postage. Order from:

The ARC
Rt. 1, Box 92
Osceola, WI 54020

Heritage

The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and my cup; Thou dost support my lot. The boundary lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me (Psalm 16:5-6).

The year was 1960, and the topic was a potential Lutheran union practically forgotten today outside of the AFLC. A high school senior, young in Christ and critical of the church was asked by his pastor to present the anti-merger position during a Luther League debate.

"Are there any reasons to be against the merger?" the young man asked, and he was directed to old issues of *The Lutheran Messenger* where he could research the matter.

For the first time in his life he came into contact with the heritage of his denomination, the Lutheran Free Church, and its idealistic vision for building free and living congregations. He devoured articles by concerned pastors and lay people, warning against dangerous trends in the church, and calling for congregations to turn from the principles of big business to the pattern of the New Testament.

Suddenly the preparations were no longer academic. The vision captured the young man's heart, and his life would never be the same. The dream for free and living Lutheran congregations was too compelling to die.

College years led to fellowship with like-minded Christian friends who shared the same vision. The sad news that the merger referendum had been approved was accompanied by an exciting report that a remnant would remain faithful to their heritage, and the 1962 conference in Thief River Falls, Minnesota, marked a new beginning for both the vision and the life of the young man.

Newfolden, Karlstad, Grand Forks, Hatton, Portland, Ferndale, Austin, Bagley, Fosston ... even college students were needed to fill the pulpits during those early days of the AFLC. Free Lutheran Seminary opened its doors in 1964, and the young man became a member of the second class to receive his theological training there. The vision found needed nourishment during these formative years.

Parish ministry in Tioga, North Dakota, began with long weekend train rides during his second semester of studies and continued after graduation. He returned for his second summer of internship with a lovely wife at his side, and two children were added to the family during those years on the prairie. When a call came from Valley City, North Dakota, it was hard to even consider leaving, but there was a sense of the Lord's leading that demanded a response, and the result was seven wonderful years serving Grace and Zion congregations.

Each of these parishes provided a unique test for the vision, and important lessons were learned. The pastor began to understand that free and living were not synonymous, for it was clearly possible in practice to have freedom in an organizational sense without spiritual life. But the dream was not dampened by

Partners In Prayer



"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6).

PRAISE for the safe arrival of Missionaries Connely and Carolyn Dyrud in Campo Mourao, Brazil, and Missionaries Dan and Debbie Giles and family in Aguascalientes, Mexico.

PRAY for Rev. Jerome Nikunen, Chillicothe, Illinois, and Rev. Paul Nash, Wichita Falls, Texas, as they began serving home mission congregations in these communities.

the imperfections that were evident in the attempts to translate it into reality, and he remained committed to the principle that spiritual life can best be nurtured and nourished in a free congregation.

A door opened for the vision to be multiplied when a call came from the AFLC Schools, and over ten years were devoted to a ministry of teaching. A growing unrest combined with frequent weekend preaching opportunities ... Zumbrota, Canton, Cokato, Park River, Larimore, East Grand Forks, Ottawa ..., however, to direct the pastor-teacher back to ministry in a local congregation, and a call from the Helmar Lutheran Church of Newark, Illinois, was gratefully accepted in 1989. The past few years of service there have been filled with a strong and healing sense of contentment for him, not only in the fellowship of some very special brothers and sisters in Christ, but also in a renewed realization that the vision burns brightest in the life of a local congregation.

Now the Lord has opened a new door. It is a fearful one, taking the pastor away from his parish and putting him behind a desk. But it is also another door of opportunity to both preserve and promote the heritage to which he has been committed for over 30 years, and therefore he will enter the door with confidence in the Heavenly Father who has so lovingly laid out the boundary lines of his life.

The vision lives ... imperfectly ... in the heart and mind of the new pastor-president of the AFLC. He is convinced that a commitment to free and living congregations is not merely a slogan but a goal, not a description of the present as much as a destination for the future. Realism helps him face the fact that perfect fulfillment will only occur in the presence of the Lord, but idealism forces him to press on towards present fulfillment even if it is only partial.

The president is still a pastor, and will seek for ways to serve in this capacity, especially among his fellow pastors. The vision for free and living congregations that once claimed his allegiance is still critical of churches that function like secular corporations, and still convinced that the congregation — not the denomination — is the right form of the kingdom of God on earth. He is still committed to building congregations that are both free and living, whose people become alive in Christ by grace alone through faith, under the authority of the inerrant Word of God alone in the Spirit.

The new president calls upon his friends in Christ within the AFLC to stand with him in prayer and in faithfulness to God, that the heritage committed to us might thrive in the midst of a troubled and confused world still desperately needing to lift up our eyes to the clear picture of the congregation that we find in the pages of the New Testament, and survive for future generations before the Lord returns.

To this end may God our Father grant us His grace.

Amen.

— Rev. Robert L. Lee

PRAY for the Home Mission congregation at Spokane, Washington, seeking a pastor.

PRAY for the three congregations whose buildings were damaged or destroyed this summer: Good Shepherd, Cokato, and Zion, Dexter, Minnesota; and St. Petrie, Leland, Illinois. PRAISE the Lord that He can turn times of testing into times of blessing.

PRAY for Rev. Chris Oswood as he waits for a heart transplant.

PRAY for the people of Estonia and other nations of the former Soviet Union.

PRAISE God for those who were elected to office at the annual conference, and PRAY that He would work through them to His glory.

A News Analysis As Leaders Fail, Is God Speaking To The Church?

— by Doug Trouten

Minneapolis, Minnesota (EP) — Mike Warnke, the satanic high priest turned Christian comedian, has been exposed as a fraud by *Cornerstone* magazine. As it turns out, Warnke, whose purported autobiography "Satan Seller" taught Christians to see a satanic conspiracy behind every darkened window, has indeed been selling something all these years — mostly himself.

Warnke was exposed by Christian investigative journalists who contacted friends and relatives who knew Warnke during the years he claimed to be the drug-crazed satanic high priest of a 1,500 member coven. His fiancée at the time, who saw him daily, says she saw nothing that would indicate drug use. And his friends are sure they'd remember seeing his 1,500 member coven if it had shown up while they were hanging out.

The *Cornerstone* investigation also pulls together the various claims Warnke has made about his life and demonstrates that they can't possibly fit into the same time line. The heavily-documented article, combined with the stonewalling from the Warnke camp, leads to an inescapable conclusion: Warnke is a fraud.

This will be devastating for the many thousands who have been touched by Warnke's books, tapes and live performances, just as followers of Jim Bakker, Jimmy Swaggart, Peter Popoff, Robert Tilton, and others have been disappointed to learn that their idols have feet of clay.

Do you suppose God is trying to teach us something?

When we let Him, God gives us what we need. When we stand in the way of this process, He often gives us what we want instead.

The model for this was set in the Old Testament. In the eighth chapter of (continued on page 13)



Mrs. Angie Lombardo, the morning Bible study leader.

Summary of the WMF Convention



The memorial service.

The convention was held at the ARC, Osceola, Wisconsin, on June 17-18, with approximately 270 registered.

The theme was "A Vessel for His Glory," theme text was II Corinthians 4:5-7 and the theme song was "A Vessel of Honor for God."

Mrs. Lyndon Korhonen, WMF president, presided.

Pianist was Mrs. Elden Nelson and the song leader was Mrs. Curt Emerson.

Devotions was given by Mrs. Wayne Hjermstad and Mrs. Don Pederson.

Special music was provided by a ladies group from Kenyon, Zumbrota and Kasson, Minnesota; a duet by Mrs. Cliff Seldal and Mrs. Merv Mathison; and a vocal solo by Mrs. John Abel.

The morning offering was given to Home Missions and the offertory by Rachel Fugleberg was played on the violin. The afternoon offering was

taken for the WMF General Fund and the offertory was a flute solo, played by Mrs. Mark Johnson.

The Prayer Service was led by Mrs. Jim Fugleberg and the Memorial Service leader was Mrs. Lyle Aadahl. Mrs. Steve Lombardo presented the Bible Study, "God Calls You to be a Vessel for His Glory."

The afternoon speaker was Rev. Elden Nelson, Director of Home Missions. He challenged the ladies to consider: "A vessel is a receptacle for something. God puts the vessel (us) to good use. God fills us for praying and witnessing. We pray 'let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me' and this is only possible as the glory of God lives in me. Are you a vessel for His glory?"

A budget of \$96,000 was approved.

Mrs. Bob West, Kalispell, Montana, was elected first vice president and Mrs. David Skordahl, Dalton, Minnesota, elected secretary.

Many attended the Women's Break-

fast on Thursday morning. Mrs. Todd Schierkolk shared about their internship in Brazil. Many others shared and choruses were sung.

The Mission Festival Service, held on Thursday evening began with devotions by Mrs. Eugene Enderlein. Special music was a vocal duet by Rev. and Mrs. Rodger Olson, and two songs by the AFLTS Seminary Chorus. The offering was for My Missionary for a Day.

Rev. Robert Lee, AFLC President, installed the new officers.

Honorary membership pins were presented to Mrs. Steve Lombardo and Mrs. Albin Haugen.

Gifts were given to the out-going officers, Mrs. Alvin Grothe and Mrs. Albin Haugen.

Rev. John Abel, Brazil, challenged us with the mission message "God so loved the world" and the good news message "whosoever believeth in Him should not perish." God waits for us to love and to go. We are to reach out, go out and send out.

After the service, missionaries John and Ruby Abel were honored at a reception commemorating their 40 years of missionary service.

We give thanks to everyone who participated in our program or helped with registration, ushering, serving coffee, or decorations and flowers.

II Corinthians 4:7: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us."

— Carol Haugen, Secretary



Mrs. Linda Korhonen, president, and Mrs. Carol Dietsche giving the welcome on behalf of the ARC.

Women of Wisdom and The Word

The Women of the Early Church

“So important were women in the infant churches, that we are driven to the conclusion that, without their assistance, survival would not have occurred ... Women were in the total ministry, because all were needed. Otherwise survival was not possible.” So write Dr. Elton Trueblood, author and founder of Yokefellow International. (Quarterly Yoke Letter, June, 1976.)

Who were these women of the early church? What were they like? What roles did they fill? In this study, we will look at the lives of several New Testament women. Just as there “are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit ... to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” I Corinthians 12:4,7 (NASB) so, too, every woman in the church today has a gift to use within the church. Yes, it is for the good of all that God has made each woman unique, interesting, and gifted for service in God’s church and for God’s glory!

Priscilla — Acts 18:2, 3, 26

Read Acts 18:1-3

Priscilla and her husband, Aquilla, are mentioned six times in the New Testament, always together. After being expelled from Rome by the Emperor Claudius, they were living and working in Corinth as tent-makers (or leather workers). It is in Corinth that they met Paul. In fact, since Paul, too, was a tent-maker, he stayed with them in their home. (The workshop was downstairs and the living quarters, upstairs.)

1. Where next do you encounter this couple? verses 18, 19
2. Who was Apollos and what was he doing? verses 24-26
3. List some character qualities of Apollos.
4. Priscilla and Aquilla discerned something amiss in Apollos’ preaching. What was it? verse 25b

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

16. What is the reason for this exemplary behavior in the older and younger women? verse 5b

Life Response

Do you think this kind of behavior is practical with today’s life styles? What can happen if a person (particularly a woman who has no children or whose children are grown) has too much time on her hands? (See Timothy 5:13) How would you define “gossip”? Why is gossip so deadly? Are you aware of the fact that speaking of people’s “needs” could possibly be gossip?

5. What did Priscilla and Aquila do? verse 26b

6. Where do you think they obtained their knowledge? 18:3, 4

It is interesting to note that in four of the six references to this couple (including verse 26) Priscilla is named first. There seems to be significance in the order of their names. Some commentators suggest that Priscilla was a more able and competent teacher of the Word of God. Others suggest that she was more intelligent and devoted of the two. Still others say that perhaps she came from a more prominent family. In any case, it is clear that Priscilla was an equal partner with her husband, using the gift of expounding God's Word to Apollos (Apollos being a brilliant preacher in his own right).

7. How did they correct Apollos? verse 26

Life Response

Do you know any women who are gifted teachers of God's Word? (Perhaps yourself?) How can you encourage her? Don't forget that Sunday School teachers, VBS teachers, etc. teach the Word of God. (You don't have to be a pastor to know and expound God's Word.) How might you become a better student of God's Word?

— An interesting footnote —

In Romans 16, Paul listed many people that he wanted to greet. Read verses 3, 4. What is Paul's comment about Prisca and Aquila? (Paul used the proper form of the name, Prisca, whereas Luke used the diminutive Priscilla. They, of course, are the same person.)

Besides risking their lives for the Gospel, how else did they serve the church? Romans 16:5a; 1 Corinthians 16:19

Dorcas — Acts 9:36-42

Have you ever wondered why some WMF circles are called the "Dorcas Circle"? Well, wonder no more! All should endeavor to be a "Dorcas."

8. What happened to Dorcas? 36, 37

9. Name some of her qualities. verse 36

10. What qualities should you cultivate (as Dorcas did)? 1 Timothy 2:9, 10

11. There must have been many people that died during this period of time. Why do you think Dorcas' death was especially tragic? verse 36, 39

Peter was in the city of Lydda only 12 miles away from Joppa. Even though no one had been raised from the dead in the early church, two men were sent to Lydda to get Peter. (This was a great witness to their faith.)

12. What did Peter do? verses 39-41

13. What was the result of that miracle? verse 42

Life Response

How can we be giving and helpful to others? Does giving only include monetary gifts? What does giving to others do for yourself? Think of one way in which you can be a "Dorcas" to someone this month.

Older and Younger Women — Titus 2:3-5

Paul wrote this letter to Titus in order to instruct him as to what to teach to the Cretan churches. The letter is practical in nature and its truths can be applied to our lives.

14. List the behavior traits the older women were to display. Comment on each trait.

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

15. List the traits the younger women were to exhibit. Comment on each trait. verses 4 and 5

Ken and Bev Hokkanen, Cokato, Minnesota, will be commissioned as assistant directors of the Association Retreat Center (ARC) on Friday, August 7, during the Family Bible Camp evening service. The ARC Board hired them to begin work on September 1, 1992, assisting Bob and Carol Dietsche in the daily operation of the center.

The new address for **Rev. Dennis O'Neil** is: P. O. Box 445, Cooperstown, North Dakota 58425.

Tucson, Arizona — Members of Living Faith Free Lutheran Church, which is located on the southwestern side of the city, met with an interested group of people from the city's east side on July 9th to acquaint them with the AFLC. Rev. David Nelson, pastor of Living Faith, reports that he and some of his laymen will be conducting Sunday evening services in this area as they seek God's will together concerning the formation of a new congregation.

Cokato, Minnesota — The Good Shepherd Lutheran Church building, heavily damaged by a tornado that swept through the community on June 16 (see the July 7th issue of the *Lutheran Ambassador*), will be torn down to make room for a new and larger church, to better meet the needs of the growing congregation, which is grateful to God for good insurance coverage.

Leland, Illinois — St. Petrie Lutheran Church, located near the rural community of Baker, became the third AFLC congregation to suffer damage to their sanctuary during this summer, when lightning struck the steeple of the structure on July 2. Pastor Mark Olson, who was in the church at the time, called the local fire department, and their efficient response saved most of the building.

Rev. Kerwin Sletto, Bismarck, North Dakota, has been accepted by the chaplaincy program at Jamestown State Hospital for a one-year residency. He and his family will continue to maintain their home in Bismarck during this time of training.

Rev. Paul Zietlow, Berlin, Wisconsin, has been removed from the Fellowship Roster of the AFLC at his own request. He served the St. John's Lutheran Church of Schwer, Milford, Illinois, until August, 1991, and has applied for a colloquy program with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Rev. Terry Wold, East Grand Forks, Minnesota, has accepted a home mission call from Shepherd's Church of the Valley, Murrietta, California, beginning in late September. He has served as pastor of Christ the King Church in East Grand Forks since 1988. **Rev. James Asp**, Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, is currently interim pastor of the congregation.

Dexter, Minnesota — Zion Lutheran Church, which celebrated its 100th Anniversary on June 21, 1992 (see the June 23rd issue of the *Lutheran Ambassador*), was shocked and saddened by the loss of their sanctuary to an early morning fire on June 26. The destruction of a neighboring church under almost identical circumstances has led state fire marshals to conclude that arson may be the cause. Members of the congregation have already committed themselves to a rebuilding project, expecting their insurance to pay between \$80,000 and \$100,000 as a settlement. The cross that crowned the steeple of the structure was found in the midst of the charred remains, and plans are to repair it and make it a part of the new building.

Elaine Klug, wife of Rev. Raymond Klug, Fairbury, Nebraska, received a liver transplant at the University Medical Center, Omaha, in late July. Donations to a special fund for their expenses can be designated as follows: Deposit to Raymond F. Klug, Norwest Bank, 524 Center Street, Moorhead, Minnesota 56560.

Rev. Jay G. Erickson, Plymouth, Minnesota, passed away on July 21, 1992. Funeral services were held on July 24th at Medicine Lake Lutheran Church. An obituary will be included in the next issue.

ANALYSIS

I Samuel we see the people of Israel crying out for a king. "All the other countries' gods let them have kings," they whined to God. "All our friends have kings." What parent hasn't been in that situation? God probably felt tempted to say, "If all the other countries jumped off a bridge, would you jump, too?" Except, being God, He already knew the answer. If you read the Old Testament, you can see that the answer, in Israel's case, was "yes."

So God gave them a king. And what a king they got. They got the kind of king that teaches the whole country a

lesson. The lesson is found in Samuel's farewell speech (I Samuel 12:20-21): "You have done all this evil, yet do not turn away from the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart. Do not turn away after useless idols. They can do you no good, nor can they rescue you, because they are useless."

Today's church is learning this same lesson.

"Give us celebrity leaders," we cried, and the Lord heard our cry and gave us our celebrity leaders, complete with celebrity life-styles and celebrity failings. ...

And in our hunger for titillation,

we've made debauchery a virtual prerequisite for ministry. ...

In the last five years, the Christian community has seen a lot of idols fall. One by one, the personality cults we've built up around dazzling speakers are falling apart. God is speaking to us. He's saying, "You shall have no other gods before Me." He's saying, "I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God." He's saying, "Don't put your trust in men, put your faith in Me."

Perhaps God is preparing to raise up "a faceless church," one that will be known by its love, not its leaders.

God is talking. Are we listening?

AFLBS HOMECOMING, 1992

October 16-18

THEME:

Isaiah 60:1 "Arise, shine; for your light has come, And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you."

HONORING CLASSES OF:

'67, '72, '77, '82, '87

Alumni singing groups will be participating—plan to get a group together ... watch for your letter in the mail!

The International Lutheran Bible School Movement

Only nine years ago it was a vision. Six years ago 60 Lutheran Bible schools and institutes were known and on an international mailing list. Four years later, that number more than doubled. Today there are over 140 known Lutheran schools throughout the world whose primary emphasis is to teach the inspired and inerrant Word of God. Thus began the International Lutheran Bible Institute Movement.

It began insignificantly. In 1983, J. Orville Mosbo, then a teacher at Lutheran Bible Institute, California, took a sabbatical and toured 26 Lutheran Bible



Donald Greven, J. Orville Mosbo and Raimo Mäkelä.

AFLBS Hosts Conference



Under the theme "Recovering Our Priorities: The Word and Prayer" (Acts 6:4), representatives from Lutheran Bible Institutes/Schools in North America met for the first time on June 21-25, 1992 in Minneapolis. Schools from as far away as Mexico and the West Coast of the United States were represented. The Association Free Lutheran Bible School, Rev. Don Greven, dean, hosted this four-day meeting.

A special guest was the Rev. Raimo Mäkelä, director of the Finnish Lutheran Bible Institute Foundation located in Kauniainen, Finland, a suburb of Helsinki. He presented a lecture entitled: "The Use of the Word of God in Nordic Piety, Especially From the Bible School Point Of View." In addition, Dr. Raymond Rosales from the Lutheran Bible Institute in California presented a paper on cross-cultural training: "Teaching the Nations." Dr. Craig Jennings of the AFLC Seminary and Bible School presented two papers on Luther: "Luther, Preacher of the Word" and "Luther, Man of Prayer."

A banquet, followed by a concert given by the AFL Bible School traveling team "The Ambassadors," was featured. The Conference concluded with a presentation on the third International Lutheran Bible Institute Conference to be held in July, 1994, at this same school.

schools in northern Europe. He spent two to three days at each institution visiting with faculty and students. They discussed the value of organizing an international Bible institute conference. Mosbo discovered an overwhelming, positive response. While visiting the Finnish Lutheran Bible Institute Foundation near Helsinki, Director Raimo Mäkelä asked Mosbo to begin to organize a conference.

The word began to spread. Questionnaires were mailed. At the end of June, 1986, in Oslo, Norway, the first International Conference of Lutheran Bible Schools was held. Twenty schools from 15 nations gathered under the theme: "Jesus Christ, Our Message, Mission, Motive." "And," added a smiling Mosbo, "We became

aware of each other."

The loosely organized group acknowledged Mosbo as the General Secretary. He, along with three other men, were elected to form a Steering Committee and plan for another conference to be held in four years. Rev. Mäkelä and the school in Kauniainen, Finland, hosted the 1990 conference which focused on the nature and authority of the Word. Representatives from schools in the Third World, Russian and Estonia joined the growing fellowship.

The 1990 conference elected a new Steering Committee: Mosbo, Mäkelä and Rev. Donald Greven. During the week of July 7, 1994, the Association of Free Lutheran Bible School, Minneapolis, will host the third interna-

CONFERENCE COMMENTS

The 30th Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations was a pivotal Conference in the life of our Association. Leadership is very important in any organization. Qualifications for leadership are somewhat different for a Christian organization than that of a secular one. This has been clear in the events of the last couple of months in the AFLC.

The Ecclesiastical Ballot is as fair and free from politicking as any method can be. It gives many the opportunity to put their "favorite son candidate" or themselves on the nominating ballot. Considering this, the 66% vote for Rev. Robert Lee for president on the second ballot was a clear vote of the majority. We can only say congratulations and offer him our prayers and support in the important task he has been given by the conference.

The discussion of the terms of those in non-elected offices (that is by the conference itself) was quite thorough. Many good questions were asked and many were clarified. A desire for a closer review of the work was expressed. The annual conference is the place for such questions to be asked and discussed. When this is done in a spirit of concern yet with love for those involved it is a healthy thing in the life of our Association. We should never be afraid of differences of opinion in itself. The real concern is the spirit in which differences are voiced and the willingness to continue to be a loving part of the fellowship after decisions of the conference are made. This is what the theme of the conference, "One in Spirit and in Purpose" conveys.

The vote and standing ovation on the resolution that gave support of Dr. Monseth as dean of the Seminary was a clear vote of the love and appreciation for his ministry in this vital task.

Five men graduated from our Seminary. Looking at the needs of our Association itself and even more as we "look unto the fields white unto harvest," we need to continue to pray "the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest." Our prayers are with these men entering into ministry in the Association.

One of the other issues greatly discussed was in the area of public and private education and the role of the

Christian Academic Education Board. This issue can elicit very strong feelings on both sides. When we view this in the light of "both and" rather than "either or" we can believe that good results can come on both sides of the issue as we learn from one another. Having had children in both public and private schools, one can see good from both. We need to pray for the administrators and teachers in both systems so our children can get a good education and that the child's relationship to God can be strengthened in the process.

The annual conference is a rich time for fellowship with those in other congregations in the AFLC besides one's own congregation. The messages and prayer times give food for the soul along with the business that is taken care of during the week. Attendance at the annual conference can give a very good perspective on the work of the local congregation as we see it in the light of the total work of the Association.

The new Administration Building was involved in several reports during the conference. This is a much needed building and will greatly facilitate the work of the Association. It also frees up the main building on campus for more effective use by the schools.

May our prayers and support of the total work of the Association be ever increasing as we face the challenges that lie ahead.

—Rev. Laurel M. Udden

LEE TO COMPLETE EDITOR'S TERM

Rev. Robert L. Lee, Newark, Illinois, and Crystal, Minnesota, reassumed his position as editor of *The Lutheran Ambassador*, beginning July 1, 1992. He will complete the one year that remains of his term, working together with Mrs. Wayne Hjermstad, in order to give ample time to the Co-ordinating Committee and the annual conference to consider a successor.

A special word of thanks is extended to Rev. Laurel Udden for his service as acting editor.

Please address all editorial correspondence to 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55441.

tional conference. The theme will be: "We Have This Ministry By The Grace Of God" from I Corinthians 4:16. Sixteen workshops and nine papers are scheduled to be presented by Bible institute personnel from around the world. The Steering Committee is working to find ways to subsidize representatives from Third World schools in order that more may participate.

As for J. Orville Mosbo, now retired and living in Bend, Oregon, he is delighted with the growth of this fellowship of Lutheran Bible schools. "I enjoy it. We sense a widespread ministry to encourage schools that are largely ignored by the established churches." Mosbo continued, "Though we operate with volunteer time and a shoestring budget, we have a definite

effect on church life. We do not lack in spiritual resources." Nor does Mosbo lack in energy and enthusiasm. He is already dreaming of the 1998 conference to be held in an old German monastery where Martin Luther wrestled with the Truth of God's Word and eventually was set free by faith in Christ the Savior.

— Solveig Hjermstad

RUSSIAN CHURCH LEADERS: STOP SENDING ROCK MUSIC

Moscow, Russia (EP) — The head of the Unregistered Union of Churches in Russia and an elder of the same group have sent an "Urgent Message to the Churches of America from ... the Persecuted Church in Russia."

The letter, from Peter Peters and Vasilij Ryzhuk, was printed in *Christian Info News*, a monthly Christian newspaper from British Columbia, Canada.

"For 30 years we have suffered intense persecution, and now freedom is bringing another great harm to our churches. This damage is coming from the Christians in America who are sending rock music and evangelists accompanied by rock bands.

"This is a great burden on our hearts. Many come with Bible in hand and rock music. We are embarrassed by this image of Christianity. We do not know what words to use in urging that this be stopped. We abhor all Christian rock music coming to our country.

"Rock music has nothing in common with ministry or service to God. We are very, very against Christian Americans bringing to our country this false image of 'ministry' to God. We need spiritual bread; please give us true bread, not false cakes. It is true that rock music attracts people to the church, but not to Godly living.

"We were in prison for 15 years and 11 years for Christ's sake. We were not allowed to have Christian music, but rock music was used as weapon against us day and night to destroy our souls. We could only resist with much prayer and fasting.

"Now, we have a time of more openness, and we are no longer taken to prison. However, now it is Christians from America who damage our souls. We do not allow this music in our church, but they rent big stadiums and infect teenagers and adults with their rock music.

"Do not desecrate our teenagers with it. Even the unbelievers recognize it is unholy music and they cannot understand how American Christians can be so much like the world. We can give

you the conclusion that after Russians unbelievers have attended the rock concerts where Christ's Word was preached, the people were very disappointed and disillusioned with Christianity.

"We call this music from hell. We urge all Americans to stop giving money for the organization of such concerts in Russia. We want only traditional Christian music in our churches. This is the unanimous decision of all our leaders."

ACLU LOSES BID TO BAN PAINTINGS

Chicago, Illinois (EP) — In a unanimous decision, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit overturned on May 15 a lower court ruling which banned the display of religious paintings in a public park.

The case arose when the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a lawsuit on behalf of an anonymous woman, who objected to the display of 16 paintings depicting various scenes from the life of Jesus Christ. The paintings were traditionally displayed during the Christmas season in Washington Park, Ottawa, Illinois, sponsored by the Ottawa jaycees, a private civic group, and carried a disclaimer saying it was not sponsored by the city.

The suit argued that displaying religious paintings even temporarily in a city-owned park violated the "separation of church and state."

In 1989, Federal District Judge Mil-

ton Shadur banned the display of religious symbols in the public park. On rehearing, the 11 judges of the Appeals Court overruled Shadur, asserting that the lower court's action had "placed an impermissible burden on free speech, which must be removed."

The National Legal Foundation (NLF) intervened in the case in defense of the holiday display. Executive Director Robert Skolrood said, "This ruling underscores the fact that religious speech may not be subjected to unique disabilities. This is a powerful pronouncement based squarely upon the First Amendment. The court has affirmed the rightful place of religious expression in the public square. The decision sends a loud message to those who, in the name of 'separation of church and state,' would try to stifle religious speech and ideas."

In defending the display, the NLF worked with Joel Chefitz and Cynthia Abbott of the Chicago law firm of Katten, Muchin and Zavis, along with Ottawa attorney George Hupp Jr.

"All groups, whether religious or political, have a right of free expression. This case preserves that right," said Hupp, attorney for the Ottawa Freedom Association, which now owns the paintings. Hupp said the holiday display will appear in Washington Park this winter for the first time in three years.

(George "Skip" Hupp is a member of Faith Lutheran Church, Ottawa.)