

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

August 9, 1988



"bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."

Eph. 6:4b

LIGHT on the WAY

meditations on God's Word

cover
Sunday School soon opens

Volume 26 Number 15

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

is published biweekly (except for the first issue of July and the second issue of August) by the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441.

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Subscriptions: \$10.00 per year.
Write to:

The Lutheran Ambassador
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

All communications concerning contents of this magazine should be addressed to: Rev. Raynard Huglen, Editor, Newfolden, Minn. 56738

Second-class postage paid at Minneapolis, Minn., and additional mailing office.

USPS 588-620 ISSN 0746-3413

Postmaster: Send address changes to The Lutheran Ambassador, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55441.

God's chastisement

Text: Isaiah 29:13-24 (esp. vs. 18-19)

God's chastisement is the subject of today's text with verses 18 and 19 dealing specifically with the truth that after chastisement the Lord is ever ready to shower His blessings upon those who repent and believe.

Why is the Lord's chastisement necessary in the first place? The answer, as given in verses 13 through 15, is essentially that people remove their hearts from God and attempt to hide their sins from Him. Oh yes, it is altogether possible that this can happen to religious folks, too. It can even happen in the church, as it did in the day of Isaiah. People draw near to God with their words, honor Him with lip service, and show Him reverence through religious traditions and rules (v. 13). Yet their hearts, or should we say more accurately, *our* hearts, are removed far from Him. No wonder the writer of the Proverbs admonishes, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." Nothing is more important than the condition of one's heart.

That it is impossible to hide one's sins from God goes without saying. Still, people attempt to do just that. Adam and Eve tried to hide their sins under fig leaves. Cain tried to hide his under the ground. David tried to hide his sins under more sins. Peter tried to hide his under curses. And these people to whom Isaiah preached tried to hide their sins under a beautiful but heartless religious system. Where are *you* trying to hide your sins?

What happens to those whose hearts are far removed from God? What happens to those who attempt to hide their sins from God? According to these verses, two things take place. The first thing that happens is that spiritual darkness and blindness set in (vs. 9-10). Spiritual illiteracy, the inability to understand the Word, especially the Gospel, develops in the heart. The Bible becomes a closed book and wisdom and discernment depart. Some of this comes as an outgrowth of the sin

itself. But it must also be recognized that some of this spiritual blindness is a condition allowed, or given, by God. "For the Lord has poured over you a deep sleep, He has shut your eyes, the prophets; And He has covered your heads, the seers" (v. 10, NASB).

The second thing that happens to those who fall into spiritual darkness is that they change the true revelation of the character of God into a false conception of God's nature and works. Isaiah says, verse 16, "You turn things around!" They say in their hearts that God is like man and that God's knowledge of things done in secret is no greater than man's ability to see the secret sins. In the final analysis, they make God as limited in understanding, power *and* holiness as man. Therefore, they wrongly conclude that God is not a holy God, will not punish sin, and certainly would not send a person to an eternity in hell.

So God chastises. Through circumstances He limits the proud pursuits of men and resists the accomplishments of the unrepentant. And through the Law He reveals sin and judgment and compels men to look to Christ. It is the Spirit of God, and only the Spirit of God, that turns man around, and through repentance brings him into a restoration of faith. Again the heart hears the Gospel, spiritual blindness is healed, and the joy of salvation fills the heart. "The needy of mankind rejoices in the Holy One of Israel" (Verse 19). And the repentant one shares His holiness (Hebrews 12:6-10 NASB).



by Pastor
Ralph Tjelta

Plan Sunday School Chapel Time to Honor God

Darcy, age 10, played "Beautiful Savior" as a piano prelude minutes before Sunday School Opening Chapel Time began. Children gathered, some early and some later, greeted by teachers and friends. Next Sunday Naomi will play the prelude hymns to prepare our hearts for worship. Candles were lit on our simple altar, a symbol of God's presence. Children placed their offerings on the altar.



"In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen," began the adult leader.

A hymn of adoration, "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty," (the same each Sunday) was followed by a memorized responsive reading:

Leader: "The Lord is in His Holy Temple;

Children: "Let all the earth keep silence before Him" (Hab. 2:20).

Leader: "I was glad when they said unto me,

Children: "Let us go into the House of the Lord" (Ps. 122:1).

Leader: "This is the day which the Lord hath made:

Children: "We will rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps. 118:24).

All: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end, Amen.

The Lord's Prayer was followed by birthday offering and birthday song, welcome to new children, announcements, and offering song. All stood for the Confession of Faith. Erica led the group in "O That the Lord Would Guide My Ways."

In our two parts of Chapel Time, worship and variable teaching time, we honor God first. Children learn to have deep respect for God, His Word, and His house.

Children sense God's love and feel secure in the familiar weekly repetition of an order of worship. Even a new student will sense confidence and security in God.

Children learn the language of reverencing and honoring God. The worship grows to be more meaningful in hearts as we repeat it and come to understand it better.

A children's order of worship prepares hearts for the class time to follow, as an order of worship prepares hearts for a sermon. It reinforces over-all curriculum. The Jesus of the day's Bible story is alive now and we honor Him today as our Savior from sin.

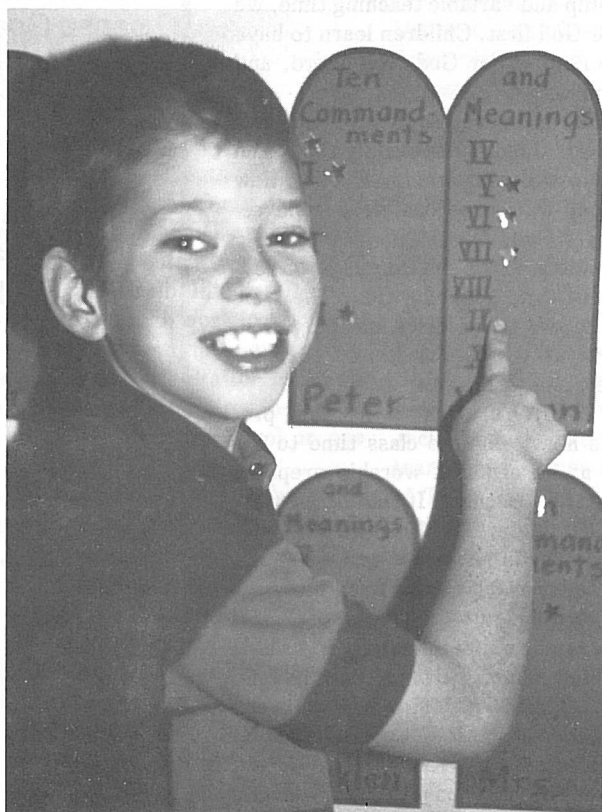
Following our worship part of Chapel Time can be our second part, a variable teaching time, perhaps just five to eight minutes in length. It, too, can bring honor to God. Special focus on Reformation, Advent, Holy Week, Pentecost, missions, at appropriate

"Children sense God's love and feel secure in the familiar weekly repetition of an order of worship."

times each year, will reinforce over-all curriculum. (See *Involving Children in 104 Sunday School Openings*, Concordia.) For non-festival Sundays a theme or focus for the year may be effectively developed. God is honored as we are better equipped to study His Word.

Listed below are some ideas to choose from for the variable teaching time. One may be just right for your Sunday School group this year. Choose another one next year. A little review and a little new each Sunday brings us to the end of the Sunday School year as a better-equipped Christian.

- Catechism Overview
- Books of the Old Testament
- Books of the New Testament
- Church Year
- Christian Symbols
- Church Architecture and Decor
- Order of Worship
- Bible History Timeline
- Bible Lands: A Study of Maps
- Bible Character Overview
- Tribes of Israel
- Disciples of Jesus
- Bible Gems: What and Where
- How our Church Body Functions



- Organization of Our Local Congregation
- Stories of Great Hymns

Creative presentation makes the chosen subject come alive. Children should be involved by flashing flashcards, reading a short text, leading a song, reading a mini-dialogue, portraying a character, working a puppet. Visuals should be posted afterward so they keep speaking to reinforce content as children come and go.

Fifteen minutes set aside for Opening Chapel Time needs planned purpose and planned content. Then one is amazed at what is accomplished in the short time.

Chapel Time need not and must not be hit or miss with a few jingly choruses to "pep up the kids." We cannot afford a shallow "play it by ear" approach. Children recognize the lack of depth and grow up looking to other sources for meaning. We need to lay a firm foundation in Jesus Christ and His Word that will prove to be an unfailing foundation on which to build for life and eternity. Sunday School Opening Chapel Time can work to that end.

Plan now for a Chapel Time that will bring honor to God in worship. Plan a Chapel Time that will honor God as it prepares children for the study of God's Word in class time. Plan Sunday School Chapel Time to honor God.

Mrs. Barbara Moland
Board of Parish Education
AFLC

Some helps may be available from the Department of Parish Education, AFLC, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minn. 55411.

A Psalm Of The Good Teacher

The Lord is my teacher:
I shall not lose the way to wisdom.

He leadeth me in the lowly paths of learning,
He prepareth a lesson for me every day;
He findeth the clear fountains of instruction,
Little by little He showeth me
the beauty of the truth.

The world is a great book that He hath written,
He turneth the leaves for me slowly;
They are all inscribed with images and letters,
His face poureth light on the pictures
and the words.

Sunday School Rally Day 1988

Following are a few suggestions for your Sunday School Rally Day.

Sing

1. Hymns and Scriptural choruses
2. Welcome song and Pledge of Allegiance
3. Theme hymn from the *Concordia* each month or to follow the church year
4. Offering song
5. The Doxology in closing

Scripture and Prayer

1. Scripture and prayer by the S.S. superintendent or pastor
2. Draw names for prayer partners.
 - a. Include name, birthday and a prayer promise.
 - b. Remember this partner at Christmas or on his birthday, revealing your identity.
(The secretary should keep a record of these.)
3. If a large Sunday School, wear name tags with a Bible verse included.
4. Include the Lord's Prayer in closing.

Get Acquainted

1. Introduction of teachers and their grade level
2. Get acquainted time in class
3. Introduce Sunday School material in a short class time.

This is centennial year for some states. Use this opportunity to praise God for our Christian foundation. Choose a patriotic hymn for each month, each quarter or year. Weave this theme in throughout the year by sharing about specific Christian leaders and applicable Scriptures.

PRAY - prepare - PRAY - prepare - PRAY!

—Mrs. Rodney Stueland

Then am I glad when I perceive His meaning,
He taketh me by the hand
to the hill-top of vision;
In the valley also He walketh beside me,
And in the dark places He whispereth
to my heart.

Yea, though my lesson be hard it is not hopeless,
For the Lord is very patient
with His slow scholar;
He will wait awhile for my weakness,
He will help me to read the truth through tears.

Surely Thou wilt enlighten me daily
by joy and by sorrow:

And lead me at last, O Lord,
to the perfect knowledge of Thee.

Henry Van Dyke

Place your order

The Sunday School year for many congregations begins early in September with a Rally Day or some other special event to encourage new and regular students to commit themselves to study the Word of God. It is not too soon for Christian Education committees, teachers and pastors to evaluate and order the materials they will be using this year for their Sunday School and confirmation classes. The Board of Parish Education encourages those responsible for choosing these materials to use the Ambassador Sunday School Series which is: 1) Biblical; 2) Lutheran; 3) Evangelical; 4) Teachable; 5) Confessional; 6) Challenging; and 7) Interesting.

Samples of the Ambassador curriculum will be sent upon request and are returnable if in salable condition. When ordering materials be sure to order extra books for visitors and unexpected new students.

The Board of Parish Education



WMF Annual Convention report

photos by S. Hjermstad



Mrs. Lyndon Korhonen, Culbertson, Montana.

One hundred and eighty-three women registered for the annual convention of the Women's Missionary Federation, June 15, hosted by Grace Lutheran Church of DeKalb, Illinois, and held at Northern Illinois University in the Holmes Student Center, which provided comfortable and convenient facilities. We sincerely appreciate the efforts of Pastor and Mrs. Dennis Gray and the members of their congregation.

The theme of our convention was "Walk in Wisdom," with Colossians 4: 5, 6 as the theme text.

Mrs. Harvey Jackson of Ishpeming, Michigan, led the prayer service which set the tone for the morning by centering our attention on prayer. She stressed its *power*, its *resources*, *answers to prayer*, and the need for us to be totally *yielded*. We prayed that God's Name would be honored and that souls would be edified.

The ladies who led in devotions were Mrs. Don Pederson of Bellingham, Washington; Mrs. Francis Monseth of Rogers, Minnesota; Mrs. Kenneth Rolf from McIntosh, Minnesota; and Mrs. Steven Lombardo of Newark, Illinois.

Mrs. Harry Halverson and Mrs. Terry Hannan, both of DeKalb, were the organist and the pianist for the day. Under the able direction of Mrs. Marlin Benrud of Goodhue, Minnesota, we sang good hymns of the faith, including our theme song, "O, Master, Let Me Walk with Thee." The music provided at the various sessions in-

cluded a trio from DeKalb; an octette from Helmer Lutheran Church, Newark, Illinois; a ladies' group from West Lisbon Lutheran Church, Newark; a bell choir from Bethlehem Lutheran Church of Morris, Illinois. The David Abel family sang several times, with Elke Thom, a young lady who accompanied them from Brazil and who plans to attend our Bible School this fall. Mr. Michael Peterson, a seminary student, beautifully played his cello for the Thursday evening festival service of fertility. All of the music was appropriate and inspiring.

Mrs. Albin Haugen of McVile, North Dakota, led the memorial service. At the close of the service, Mrs. Bruce Dalager of Grand Forks, North Dakota, sang "When Peace Like a River."

Mrs. Lyndon Korhonen of Culbertson, Montana, author of our 1988 Bible Studies, led us in a Bible study, very effectively using a condensed outline with Scriptural references and blanks to be spontaneously filled in by the audience. Her theme was "From Wandering to Wisdom." We were clearly encouraged to be discerning and keep wisdom in view.

The morning and afternoon offerings were for the My Missionary for a Day project. The Thursday evening offering was for the WMF General Fund.

The election of officers brought two new ladies on the board to replace the two whose terms had terminated; Mrs. Harold Erickson of New York Mills, Minnesota, completed two terms as first vice-president, and Mrs. Esther Larson of New Hope, Minnesota, served two terms as secretary. The two elected were: Mrs. Alvin Grothe of Astoria, Oregon, for the first vice-president position, and Mrs. Albin Haugen of McVile, North Dakota, as secretary.

The business meeting also heard the reports of the president, Mrs. Wendell Johnson of Stacy, Minnesota; the secretary and the treasurer, Mrs. Aini Myking of New Hope. The resolutions committee report was read by chairman Mrs. John Mundfrom of Eben Junction, Michigan, who served with Mrs. Bernard Nelson of Atlantic Mine, and Mrs. Kenneth Williams of Ishpeming, both in Michigan. These reports were accepted as read. The proposed budget was presented by Aini Myking and was adopted as proposed.



The ladies' chorus from Helmar Lutheran, Newark, Ill.

Pastor and Mrs. David Abel brought the afternoon message which encouraged us in revealing our practical faith in serving others with a humble spirit, and thus being a reflection of the grace of the Lord. Pastor Abel's Thursday evening message emphasized our need to reach the world with our message of salvation through Christ. He said we are ambassadors for Christ; we are cooperators and servants, meeting people's needs to the end that souls are saved and Jesus is glorified. We are indeed thankful to have the Abels on our field in Brazil. May the Lord continue to bless them with strength and with fruit for their hire.

Pastor Richard Snipstead, AFLC president, installed the two new officers on Thursday night. Mrs. Johnson presented the two outgoing officers with gifts in appreciation for their service. Life membership pins were presented to them also.

The Prayer Breakfast on Thursday morning at 7 was served at Grace Lutheran Church. This, too, was a special treat for the ladies. The program following the breakfast touched our hearts as Janet Abel shared her experience on the mission field.

Mrs. Gerald Knudsvig of Buxton, North Dakota, the executive secretary, brought gracious greetings, as well as

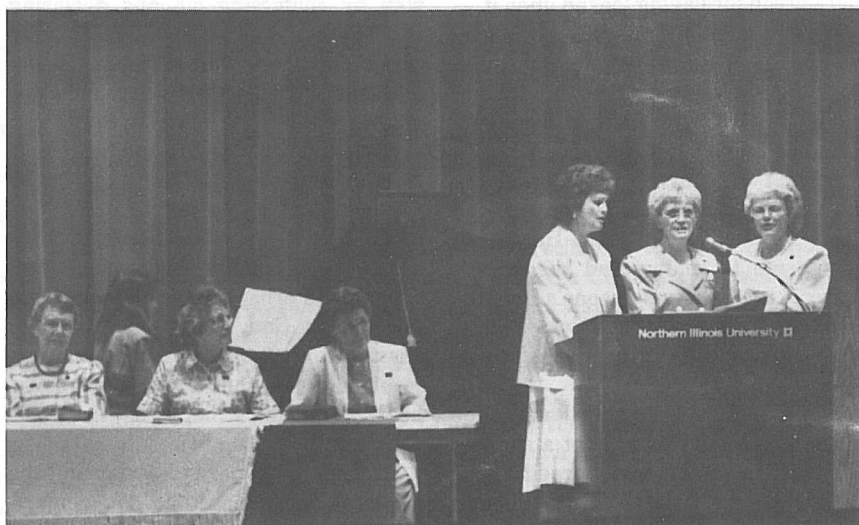
Ladies from Christian Free Lutheran, Wheatland, Iowa, a new Home Mission congregation.

Mrs. Larry Rogers of DeKalb, who welcomed us so warmly. Our president, Mrs. Johnson, conducted the meetings in such a way as to evoke a true spirit of gratitude in everyone's hearts—gratefulness, for the wonderful conference and the privilege that is ours as women of the AFLC to serve our risen Savior. We were so happy to welcome the new ladies from the congregations who so recently became members of the AFLC. It will be a joy to carry on, together, keeping our eyes on Jesus until He comes to receive us into His eternal home in heaven, prepared for all of His children.

Esther Larson
Secretary



Mrs. John Mundfrom, Eben Junction, Mich., and Mrs. Mark Antel, Columbia, S. Car.



The ladies' trio from Grace Free Lutheran, DeKalb, Ill.



Serving the Lord

by Mrs. Dennis (Ceta) Rude
Lake Alma, Sask.

The face of Jesus

The English language has been described by one writer as a well-loved garden. One word from this garden which stands out in beauty and strength is the adjective lovely. It means more than physical attractiveness, for it comes wrapped in the highest meaning of the word love and it describes that thing which makes the beholder a better and happier person for having looked upon it.

When she smiled, my mother's face was lovely. No one's smile was quite like hers, gentle, uncritical, kindly and full of love. The receiver of her smile felt totally loved and secure.

After I was married, I missed my mother acutely and I had been married three years when she died. Her death helped me to understand the importance of not taking someone's love for granted. I am glad that I was aware, while she was still living, that she was lovely.

The face of Jesus must be lovely. For in His character there is not a shadow of criticism, bitterness, greed, lust, selfishness or hatred. How blessed would be our time with Him, if we were aware of the beauty of His character and of the indescribable privilege of sitting in His presence.

If we do not enjoy our times with Him, it may be that we do not fully understand His character. Isaiah 41 describes something of God's concern for us.

"You are my servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you. Do not fear for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Behold all those who are angered at you will be ashamed and dishonored; those who contend against you will be as nothing and will perish" (Isaiah 41:9-11 NAS).

Doesn't this take all the burden out of a situation? No need to hold grudges if God will take care of it. No need to bear the burden of judging anyone. That is God's work. No need to feel

friendless and alone in any tight spot, for God is there to uphold us.

II Cor. 4:6 tells us that God shone in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus.

But sometimes we cannot experience His glory because we are looking at ourselves and our sinfulness, our unworthiness. This can be put out of the way by confessing sin and declaring that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. In understanding what Christ has done for us, we rebuke the enemy who is our accuser and come boldly and confidently into the presence of Jesus.

Sometimes we do not like to spend much time with Jesus because there are areas of our life that are not surrendered. Perhaps we even feel a little upset with God because He has not answered our prayers in the way we would like. It is the totally surrendered heart that feels happiest in God's presence.

In this area we are experiencing the severest drought people can remember. The pasture grass is brittle and bleached white. The crop is shrivelled in hot, dry winds that blow in temperatures from 96 to 108 degrees. By last fall most dugouts and sloughs had evaporated and no snow fell to replenish them. Even the groves of trees around the farms are dying. I marvel at the ingenuity of the farmers and cattlemen who plod on doggedly trying to carry on some kind of operation.

Of course, we have prayed for rain. This is a time when we must say, "Thy will be done," for we still have the promise that my God shall supply all our needs.

In Old Testament years, God used drought to get people's attention. We have also prayed often for revival. Perhaps people will not see their need for God or the beauty of God when the land is fruitful and lush. I am glad that He knows the future and that His ways are higher than ours.

We can experience someone's love for us without the sheer joy of it because we never stop to look at what we have in that person. One day a man and wife whose marriage was not going smoothly reiterated a long and detailed description of each other's faults and foolishness. It weighed me down to hear it and I would have liked to put in a word of help to them but they became so wound up in their criticism of each other that they could not hear a word from anyone else.

If they could have stopped and each made a list of the other's good points and thanked God for each one, their minds and their marriage could have received some respite from what had become an intolerable situation.

Our grumbling and complaining, the Word says, is really against God. This habit robs us of the ability to see the loveliness of His character. Thanksgiving and praise in all circumstances is the fruit of our lips. They help to bring us into His presence. They help us to appreciate who He is so that we do not take His love for granted.

"It is because parents neglect the spiritual feeding of their children that so many die in spiritual infancy. Our hearts are at times torn by the terrible accounts of starving children in stricken lands throughout the world. It is not less, but even more, terrible to think of the spiritual famine that is taking its awful toll of lives each year. There are literally millions of people baptized as children who are walking the earth spiritually dead because they have been spiritually starved."

—Martin Hegland

PARISH EDUCATION

When we stop to think about it, quite a few people in our congregations are involved in parish education. First of all there is the Sunday School. There are the superintendent, secretary and treasurer, teachers and students, both children and adults. There are the pastor's classes or confirmation classes. Daily Vacation Bible Schools can involve as many people as Sunday School, or more. Over the Sunday School and DVBS is an education committee. We could well add the midweek Bible study conducted by the pastor. In some congregations, Wednesday evening involves classes for the whole family, with numerous teachers taking part.

What about Ladies Aids circles or full group studies? And other groups, men's, women's and young people's? The pastor now and then instructs classes for new members. You may think of other education endeavors in the church. A lot of people are involved.

The greatest teaching effort of all may be the Sunday morning worship service. As sainted Prof. Lars Lillehei told us in Greek class at Augsburg College, "There should be preaching in our teaching and *teaching* in our preaching." (emphasis ours).

The AFLC has served notice that it is placing greater emphasis than ever on the teaching ministry of our congregations by providing for a full-time person in parish education work. She is Mrs. Ralph (Katha) Tjelta. Congregations should feel free to call upon her for help as they carry out their programs. Parish Ed materials in the Association are constantly being upgraded and improved. Use them.

We are glad to present several items pertaining to Parish Ed in this issue of the *Ambassador*, provided by the Parish Ed Department.

CONFERENCE COMMUNION

A lay delegate at the recent Annual Conference asked us what we thought about having Holy Communion at the opening service of each conference. (Presently, it is held at an early service on Sunday mornings.) He favored having it at the opening service and said that several others he had spoken to did also.

We responded that we were in agreement with him and them. In fact, we have written to that effect before.

Having Communion at the opening service would unite the conference in a special way. Considerably more people are present on Wednesday evening than on Sunday morning. Like it or not, quite a few people have left a conference before Sunday. There would be something nice, and more than nice, yea, beautiful, about the conference family gathered at our Lord's Table as the annual sessions are about to begin. Members would be knit in what we believe is the deepest of fellowship, a participation in the body and blood of the Lord Jesus.

Many Lutheran churches open their conferences or conventions with the Lord's Supper. The Association hasn't done so, we believe, in an attempt to not provide for the "unworthy" to take part. But would the situation be any

different than exists in any of our congregations on a Sunday morning? The exhortation is given. People are not forced to come. They are invited. The decision is up to them. It is between them and God.

We hope the time will come when Association people can begin their annual conferences with a service of Holy Communion exhibiting and sharing the oneness they have in Christ by means of the Sacrament.

SHORTENED SUNDAY

Perhaps nothing was said about it, but the Annual Conference in June was the shortest one ever held. It was so because there wasn't any afternoon service on Sunday.

We suspect this was done because the Conference was held quite a distance from where many people at the Conference lived and it was a concession to those who had miles to go before they slept that night.

This writer had to leave the Conference early this year and so is not in the best position to write on the subject, but we trust that this isn't a permanent change, omitting a Sunday afternoon service. We still miss the Sunday evening service with which Lutheran Free Church conferences used to close. They had a certain aura about them that no other conference service can have.

Granted, some Sunday afternoon attendances have been pathetic for us. But couldn't we pledge to work harder at making Sunday at Conference the "great day of the feast?" It's too bad it becomes too often a get-away day of those who haven't already made their getaway.

Some Lutheran church bodies begin and end their conventions on weekdays with the Sunday a part of the whole package. They use, perhaps, part of Sunday for regular business sessions. The AFLC wouldn't take kindly to that, we think. But then there may be a special service in the evening. Different things are tried.

But our point is, let's hold on to the Sunday afternoon service at conference.

ROBERT'S RULES

Robert's Rules of Order have become standard operating procedure in most organized groups. When in doubt, it is safest to follow *Robert's Rules*. They are set down for orderly, democratic procedure. The rights and dignity of all are safeguarded through them.

A point that may not always be recognized is that an organization may set up its own house rules and they take precedence over *Robert's Rules* at those points. For instance, the AFLC regulation that an executive officer, after having served three consecutive terms, must get a three-fourths majority vote in order to be re-elected is unusual, but perfectly legal because it was adopted by the organization. It is a rule thought to be good and duly enacted.

And there could be other examples as well.

Where there are no exceptions, modifications or stipulations, we follow *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Letter to the editor

DON'T BURDEN LADIES AIDS

I would like to make some comments on a recent editorial in the *Ambassador* entitled "Now is the Time" (June 14). What I have to say is said in love and not in criticism. There are always two sides of every coin. Do I detect some of the heart-health influence in the article? Let us be aware that vegetarians, animal welfarists (they believe that no animals should be used for food) and the eastern religions are behind much of the images given to the food we eat. Some of it is true and some not.

First of all, the cholesterol scare is a very controversial subject. Much of what we have been told on which foods are good for us and which are not has now been proven untrue. Let's take the case of chocolate. According to my Medical Encyclopedia, one two-ounce chocolate-covered candy bar gives us the following nutrients: calcium, phosphorus, iron, vitamin A, thiamine, riboflavin and niacin.

Many of us are dairy farmers and work very hard to produce a good wholesome product. Some people have the mistaken idea that butter has so many more calories than margarine. This is not true as they both have exactly the same number of calories. According to the nutritional information on the margarine box it has no food value. It provides only fat and sodium. Butter is a good source of vitamin A.

Now, as to the suggestion that we draw up guidelines in our Ladies Aids for offering alternatives for those who cannot freely eat all foods. This will create nothing but havoc. We are not dieticians or nutritionists and this would be necessary in order to fulfill that suggestion. We cannot possibly please everyone. Here again Scripture has the solution of how we are to accept the food that is served us. We find it in Luke 10:7, 8. Here Christ instructed the 70 He sent out "to eat such things as are set before you."

Let's not expect our churches to cater to everyone who chooses not to eat certain foods because of their own stay-thin diets or even to those who cannot eat certain foods because of some health problems. Certainly we all

have our own homes where we can compensate for the foods which are not offered in our churches.

After our two sons read the editorial they made this comment. "If this is the pressing issue of our church body, then we are in deep trouble. When thousands of Americans go to bed hungry every night and we are concerned about such a trifling thing."

Is it time to prayerfully consider if too much emphasis is being put on the serving of food in our churches today? When other churches in our area are concerned about gathering food for the area food pantries and we are asked to make guidelines for special attention to special diets, I am reminded that Christ said, "I was hungry and you fed me."

Mrs. Lawrence Johnson
McVile, N. Dak.
Route 1, Box A

MATERIAL CROWDED OUT

We make the yearly lament. Too much material and too little space. Skipping two issues in the summer presents a problem. Please be patient when you do not see something in print right now which you expected to be there. There will be no August 23 issue. Watch for your next *Ambassador* September 6.

The Editor

In memoriam

Key: The name of the town was the address of the deceased. Following that is listed the name of the deceased, age, date of death and the church in which he or she held membership.

MINNESOTA

Wannaska

Carl Wm. Aronson, 81, June 20, Golden Valley (Funeral at Rose, Roseau.)

WASHINGTON

Everett

Gyda M. Hilmo, 78, June 29, Calvary.
Guida Farness, 90, July 6, Calvary.

Personalities

Mr. Martin Christensen, Frontier, Sask., who studied at Association Free Lutheran Seminary last year, has accepted a call to serve the Badger, Minn., parish (Badger Creek and Oiland) as a lay pastor and will begin work there about Oct. 1. A parsonage is being built in Badger.

Rev. Terry Wold has resigned as pastor of Living Faith Lutheran Church, Tucson, Ariz., where he has served for several years, in order to accept the call to Christ the King Lutheran Church, East Grand Forks, Minn., a Home Mission congregation. He begins his work there this summer.

The address of Rev. Einar Unseth, who is now serving Faith Lutheran Church, London, Minn., is Box 249, Rt. 2, Glenville, Minn. 56036. The Unseths previously lived in Bismarck, N. Dak.

ASSOCIATION OF FREE LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

AFLC Benevolences Feb. 1 - June 30

FUND	TOTAL BUDGET	REC'D IN JUNE	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% TOTAL*
GENERAL FUND.....	\$ 178,997.00	\$ 10,555.88	\$ 72,299.54	40
SCHOOLS - (AFLTS)	99,367.00	5,359.95	32,032.66	32
(AFLBS)	156,150.00	7,703.35	45,737.29	29
HOME MISSIONS.....	317,850.00	18,031.01	86,851.91	27
WORLD MISSIONS	280,140.00	16,294.52	76,013.58	27
CAPITAL INVESTMENT.	25,000.00	1,628.19	9,337.74	37
TOTALS	\$1,057,504.00	\$ 59,572.90	\$322,272.72	30
1986-87 -	\$1,014,894.00	\$ 79,339.79	\$311,689.03	31

*GOAL 42%

11. Sometimes we feel unappreciated, over-burdened, and "taken advantage of" in our labors. What must we remember?

A. I Corinthians 15:58

B. Hebrews 6:10

*"Service is LOVE for Christ
in working clothes."*

12. Stretch your "faith muscles." Don't be satisfied to stay in the same place just because it's comfortable. Attempt a new challenge in His strength. How can we live in that exciting way?

Philippians 3:13-14

*"By and by, when I look on His face,
I'll wish I had given Him more."*

Personal Application:

(not for discussion)

1. The next time you are asked to help with something at church, don't make excuses. Respond with an enthusiastic, "Yes, with God's help, I'll do my best!" Better yet, *volunteer* for some service!

2. Do you take an active part in fellowship and group Bible study with other Christians? Your WMF group needs *you*! Don't be selfish! Be involved! Don't miss out on the blessing! Set aside prayer meeting night to be there; join the adult Sunday School class (or teach another)!

3. Does the Lord have control of your wallet, or is that "off limits" to Him? Do you pray about how you spend your money? Do you give to the Lord's work with joy?

4. Think of an act of love you have never done before, and make someone feel special this week by letting them know you care.

THE HIGHER PERSPECTIVE

WMF BIBLE STUDY #9

SEPTEMBER, 1988

FROM COMPLACENCY TO COMMITMENT

Our society today breeds a selfish "I-don't-care" attitude that has also infected Christians. How about you? Is the TV more appealing than Bible study? When there's work to be done at church, can you be counted on? Does it make any difference to you that lost souls are going to hell?

THE DANGER

1. What is the world's philosophy for living? Luke 12:19

2. *Christians, beware:*

A. What did Jesus say will happen in the end times?

Matthew 24:10-12

(1)

(2)

(3)

B. What will they love instead of the Lord?

II Timothy 3:2-4

C. What is the dangerous result of that? v. 5

3. How does the Lord feel about that condition?

Revelation 3:15-16

4. God specifically condemned complacency in women (Isaiah 32:9-11).

A. Describe what you think that kind of woman is like.

(See I Timothy 5:6 and James 5:5.)

B. Can that happen to Christian women? Philippians 2:21.

Give one practical example.

C. Does complacency fit the meaning of James 4:17?

D. If you stand guilty, what do you need to do? I John 1:9

THE COMMITMENT OF LOVE

5. What must be our first and foremost commitment? I Kings 8:61

6. Our commitment to the *Lord* will show by our love and commitment to other *people*. How does God want us to...

A. ...*function in the body of Christ*? Romans 12:5-8

(1) Why is my active involvement in the local church so important? v. 5-6

(2) Can I be committed to Jesus without being committed and accountable to other Christians? vs. 5 and 10

(3) What should be my attitude as I serve? v. 11

B. ...*help everyone around us*? Matthew 25:34-40

(1) Who actually is ministered to? v. 40

(2) Can we say we love Jesus but not care about others?
James 2:14-17

C. ...*do our daily duties*? Colossians 3:23-24

(1)

(2)

D. ...*reach the lost*? II Corinthians 5:19-20

7. A. What is the only motivation that can keep us "on fire" for the Lord? II Corinthians 5:14-15

(1)

(2)

B. What is necessary to keep that zeal burning strong?
Colossians 3:2

C. How can we *daily* keep that perspective?

8. Why is there an urgency in the work God has given us to do?
John 9:4

9. A. What is the rule of the harvest, as far as giving, whether it be money, time, love or talents? II Corinthians 9:6

B. What attitude pleases God? v. 7

C. And what will God do? v. 8

PRESSING ON

We never stay the same in our spiritual life: either we're moving backward or forward, day by day.

10. A. What is necessary to keep running? Hebrews 12:1

B. Where must we keep our focus? v. 2

C. Does opposition mean we should give up and quit? v. 3
Explain.

Greeting from Brazil

Acts 19:20: "So the word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily."

Dear Brethren,

We entreat the richest blessings of God Almighty on the 26th AFLC Annual Conference, so that the sovereign and merciful divine will shall be fulfilled through this active and important body of Christ, which is the AFLC.

We, through this letter, would like to give our thanks for the missionary vision of the AFLC, which hasn't forgotten the missionary responsibility of the church, and has sent their pastors as ambassadors of good news to distant lands that need the love of Jesus so much.

We would like to say that your efforts have not been in vain, because the message has been strictly and faithfully proclaimed from pulpits, from house to house, in retreats and camps, and other activities, always with the principle purpose of calling the lost from darkness to the marvelous light of Jesus.

We would like to manifest our desire to continue working faithfully within the biblical principles and within the spirit of the Free Lutheran heritage, so that through the ministry of the Asso-

ciacao das Igrejas Luterana Livre we may contribute to the great challenge and task that weighs on the evangelical people of Brazil to take the message of the cross to every home of this great country, which has been defeated by the consequences of remaining far from the Gospel.

We would like to confirm our desire of continuing to work in conjunction with the brethren to build a Church that is strong on Christian principles and that conserves the foundations of the Free Lutheran heritage, that has brought many blessings to places where God has permitted a ministry to be developed.

We would like to encourage all those who have contributed to the missionary effort within the AFLC to continue so doing, because the task is great. But let us remember: Our God is greater yet.

May God bless you,
Rev. Oseias Camara

*President
AILL Brazil*

P.S.: Special thanks to Rev. Eugene Enderlien, World Missions Director, to the World Missions Committee and to the missionaries serving in Brazil.

Brazil Youth Federation begins

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1).

Brazil is a young country and a great part of the members of our Free Lutheran churches are young people. Seeing the active participation of these young people in their churches, the vision was born of forming a group which could unify the youth groups, being distant from one another. This group, represented by members of the various youth groups, would be responsible for organizing programs with the objective of spiritual growth through exchange of experiences, congresses, correspondences, mini-retreats, etc.

Through prayer, God raised up young people who wanted to dedicate their lives in this work. It was with much joy that in January of this year (1988) we received confirmation at the Annual Conference of the AFLC in Brazil that this was the opportunity to initiate a work within our youth groups on a national scale. A board of directors was elected that represent the FJLLB (Federacao de Jovens Luteranos Livre do Brasil).

As our first project, we initiated a newsletter that will be edited every two months. Our first edition was sent out in May. The principle reason for the Federation is greater communion between our young people so that together we can grow in Him who has given us salvation.

There is much work to be done and we know we need wisdom from the Lord so that the results will be for His glory.

We ask your prayers for our youth groups here in Brazil, as well as the representatives of the Federation, and especially our first Congress to be held in January, 1989.

We thank God for the young people who are using their talents for His glory.

— *Celia, Carol and Zeli*



The Federation board of directors, back row, left to right, Wagner, treas.; Silvio, sec'y.; Clerio, vice-pres.; Abel, treas.; and Osnir, pres.; front row, Carol, counselor; Zeli, co-ord.; Sandra, sec'y.; and Celia, co-ord. Absent, Pr. Pedro, counselor.

Questions on Creation and evolution

by Craig Gray
DeKalb, Ill.

(This article, in several parts, was written as a class assignment in a class called Creationism at Association Free Lutheran Bible School in the recent winter quarter.)

Sure, I believe in Creation, but what can I say to someone who thinks evolution is the truth? How can I systematically disprove evolution and prove creation? This was my case, and I would venture to say it is also the case of many others. Contained in this report is what I found to answer my questions, not by deep and extensive research, but by reading several books and pamphlets on the subject.

What is the theory of evolution? "Evolution is the theory that one or a

few simple, single-celled organisms changed to give rise to all of the many complex species that have ever existed." Attention must be given here to the word *theory*. It is a hypothesis, an idea.

Who was Darwin and what did he do for the theory? Charles Darwin was a great English scientist, born in 1809. From youth he was interested in studying plants and animals. He took a scientific voyage to many Pacific Ocean islands in search of evidence to support his ideas about evolution. He wrote of his thoughts in a most famous book, *The Origin of the Species*. Some of the main aspects of his theory are as follows:

1) Natural Selection — Darwin stated that variations (in mutations, a sudden heritable change) appeared in a

species of plants or animals, and the favorable ones survived. This leads to the idea of "the survival of the fittest." Stronger species, Darwin believed, would survive and weaker species would die out.

2) Primordial Ooze — Over millions of centuries, there came to be a union of element which could reproduce itself so as to be called alive. It happened by chance...

3) Time — For Darwin's processes to take place, the earth had to be millions and billions of years old. So, he concluded, it is.

(It must be noted that Charles Darwin was not the only one with this type of evolutionary thought. Many had thought of it before, in fact, 90% of today's evolutionary thinking was written and taught before 100 B.C. Darwin simply compiled the ideas.) (To be continued.)

Opportunities available

YOUTH STAFFERS

Applications for Youth Staffers, a new program being offered youth or older people in our AFLC, are available through AFLC Youth Resources, 112 West Milner, DeKalb, Illinois 60115.

Persons wishing to work in a congregation or district can make application for becoming a Youth Staffer. Applications are received after a person has at least one year of Bible School or one year of college.

Youth Staffers may work for three months during the summer or for one year, depending upon availability. Youth Staffers would work with youth plus serving in other capacities. A district may want to "hire" a Youth Staffer to co-ordinate its district youth program.

If you are interested in becoming a Youth Staffer or if your district is interested, please contact Pastor Dennis Gray.

GOSPEL TEAM

North Dakota churches hosted the Luther League Gospel team July 16-24. Some of the team members served as counselors at the Youth Evangelism Conference July 24-27.

Congregations visited were in Stanley, Tioga, Culbertson, Montana, Williston, Dickinson, Valley City and possibly Bismarck.

Team members Steve Hanke and Dana Lanter also served in the Hatton, North Dakota, parish with the Daily Vacation Bible School.

Joining Dana and Steve for a week-long tour were Steve Dahl and Brad Jackson. They are part of the Destiny team which comes from Our Saviour's of Thief River Falls, Minnesota. It is hoped that these young people will be the first of many groups of young people who will be traveling throughout various AFLC Districts or areas in 1989.

Each team which goes out must make application with Pastor Dennis Gray, Youth Resources Director. Applications for next summer's Gospel team may be secured from Pastor Gray.

CONFERENCE TAPES

Grace Free Lutheran Luther League announces the availability of tapes for the Annual Conference in DeKalb, Ill. in June. You may order the message from each of the evening services, plus the ordination service, for \$5.00. Write to Eric Froeming, 2613 West Lincoln Highway, DeKalb, Illinois 60015. Please enclose the \$5.00 plus \$1.00 for postage.

ALTAR PAINTING WANTED

Scandia Lutheran Church, rural Sedan, Minn., is looking for an altar picture to fit in an area approximately 80 inches wide by 72 inches high. If you know of such a painting or picture, please notify the undersigned giving size and price asked. Or call collect: 612-843-2704.

Howard I. Nelson
Starbuck, Minn. 56381

More on Annual Conference report

THE PRAYER HOURS

Rev. Bruce Dalager, Grand Forks, N. Dak., led the three Annual Conference prayer hours which closed the morning business sessions each day.

On Thursday (June 16) his text was Ex. 14:10-15. We see the Savior in many Old Testament pictures, Pastor Dalager said, and this is one of them. As sons of Adam we are slaves of sin. We are by nature sinful. That is the condition we live with. It isn't an unwilling servitude, as the Confessions say. A slave may think himself free, but he is deceived.

Christ makes doors where there are none, the Grand Forks pastor declared. We can't deliver ourselves from our sin, but are invited to behold the Lamb of God. God made a door or way for Israel. He opened the waters so they could walk on dry land. It was His work. God gave the Israelites the strength to walk through the sea. Faith is God's gift. We go through our open doors only by God's leading.

An arranged prayer session followed, the group being led in prayer by previously designated persons.

Rev. John Rieth, Amery, Wis., sang the solo "That's What I'll Be Willing to Do" at the service.

On Friday Mr. Dalager considered Num. 11:4-6 in his meditation, following a solo by Mrs. John Mundfrom, Eben Jct., Mich., "I Need Thee Ev'ry Hour."

Manna is a picture of Christ, Rev. Dalager asserted. It lacked nothing; it

had all the minimum daily requirements. Israel needed nothing more to eat. So also, Jesus is adequate. In Him we are complete. You will always be corrupt, Pastor Dalager told his hearers, and have that "old rag of a nature." God will never be satisfied with you, but Jesus is well-pleasing to God and thus will the believer be well-pleasing in Him.

If one seeks sanctification apart from Christ, Mr. Dalager stated, he turns his back on what Jesus offers. How is your appetite for Jesus? he asked. Would you rather look for spice? How sad it is when people say, "We've heard enough about dying to self; we want something else." All we need is found in Christ. God is satisfied with Jesus, Pastor Dalager said. Are you?

Small group prayer closed the session.

(We regret that we have no summary of Saturday's devotional session. —Ed.)

CONFERENCE DEVOTIONAL LEADERS

The following persons led the devotions which began each Annual Conference business session in DeKalb, Ill., in June. The texts they read are also listed.

Thursday morning: Rev. Milo Gudim, Argyle, Minn. Heb. 10:19-25.

Thursday afternoon: Rev. Richard Long, Marietta, Ga., Psalm 100.

Excerpts from reports cont.

DEAN OF THE BIBLE SCHOOL

"So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing" (Acts 19:20). This descriptive statement of the early church reminds us that the written Word of God has the power to save souls and transform lives. God has given an open door to AFLBS to share that precious and powerful Word with over 1000 students who have come over the years to be firmly rooted in the Scriptures, and to be drawn to Jesus through the ministry of the Word. We thank God today for every student who has allowed the Word of the Lord to grow mightily and prevail in their hearts and lives. Thank God that the door is still open! We also express thanks to all who have recognized the open door of ministry at AFLBS and have faithfully supported our school in prayer and gifts.

Rev. Donald H. Greven

Friday morning: Rev. Russell Tessman, Northome, Minn., Joel 2:11f.

Friday afternoon: Rev. Alvin Pinno, Frontier, Sask., Matt. 4:7; 5:23, Jn. 3:10-16.

Saturday morning: Rev. Norman Dornquast, Weslaco, Tex., Jn. 1:29-34.

Saturday afternoon: Rev. Orville Hiepler, Camarillo, Calif., Heb. 11:13-16.

Mrs. Donald Pederson, Bellingham, Wash., Mrs. Jay Erickson, Plymouth, Minn. and Mrs. Del Palmer, Everett, Wash.



Delegates from First Lutheran, Camarillo, Calif.



"The Christian teacher has a great work to perform . . .
(The teacher) stands in the presence of immortal souls, bought by the precious blood of Christ, who are to be guided in the way of eternal life. He is handling the most precious thing in the world, the Word of God."

—Martin Hegland

CONFERENCE

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION DIRECTOR

"Everyone who comes to Me, and hears My words, and acts upon them, I will show you whom he is like; he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation upon the rock" (Luke 6:47-48a). These verses can be paralleled to a Bible School student. The student "comes" to AFLBS; the student "hears" God's Word taught in its truth; and the student leaves AFLBS to "act" on these teachings. The student has built on Christ — the firm foundation.

Deb Anderson

WORLD MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Because Scripture teaches that all who are without Christ are lost, therefore let us increase our efforts to bring Christ as many souls as possible. Let us pray and give so that more missionaries can bring the Gospel to more people while the door of opportunity is still open.

Rev. Einar Unseth, Chairman

WORLD MISSIONS DIRECTOR

At last year's conference the World Missions Committee was instructed to prepare a timetable for the calling of missionaries. In response to that, the World Missions Committee would present to the Conference the goal and desire of calling one missionary couple during each of the next two years as replacement missionaries and the calling of at least one additional couple in the following year to bring us up to the long established goal of six couples on the field. As a new missionary on the field cannot fully become involved in the work due to the need of language training and adaptation, therefore, it is imperative that we call as soon as possible those couples who would be needed within the next two years to fill the vacancies left by retiring field personnel.

Rev. Eugene Enderlein

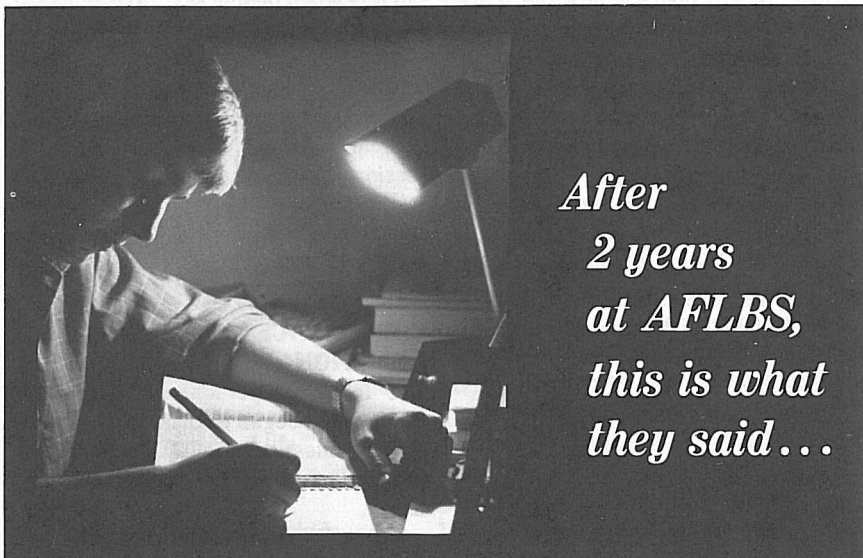
(to be concluded next time)

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.

Minneapolis, Minn. 55441

Second-class



*After
2 years
at AFLBS,
this is what
they said...*

"I came here searching, and You found me. I was hurting, and you healed me. I was thirsty for Your Word and Will, and You have now made them so clear. Thank you for AFLBS, the blessed teachers, and friends, and the many cherished memories. I will look back with a twinkle in one eye, and a tear in the other."

"AFLBS has helped to show me a new life, a new way of living."

"Thanks AFLBS for the role models, the instruction in the Word, and the neat friendships. Mostly to Jesus who sought me and saved me from a lost and hopeless condition."

Two years apart from the worries of the world just to draw near to the Lord; all the friends which are so dear; and a stability in our walk with the Lord. Oh, what a wonderful two years to prepare for a lifetime! Thanks!"

There is time for you to register!

Act quickly. Call or write:

**AFLBS
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minn. 55441
(612) 544-9501**

Fall Quarter begins Sept. 11