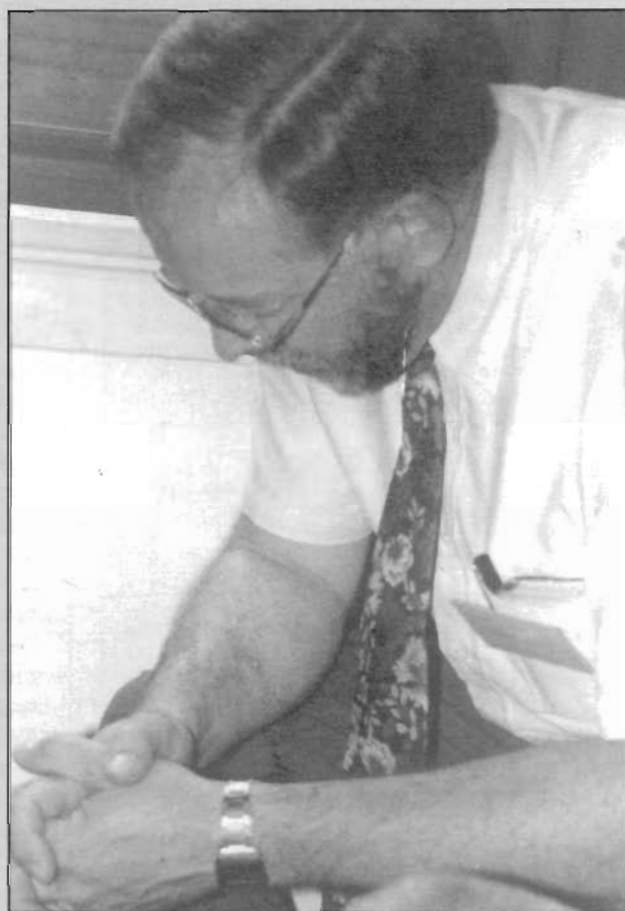




THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

July 26, 1994



Standing Firm Moving Forward

32nd Annual Conference Report



THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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COVER PHOTOS: (top left) missionary candidate David Nelson; (middle) Mr. and Mrs. Farrell Erickson, Badger, Minnesota, purchased a new AMBASSADOR hymnal from Pastors Tom Olson and Brian Davidson; (lower left) Vangstad Auditorium at Valley City State University where sessions were held; (right) Rev. Dale Mellgren, McIntosh, Minnesota.

Photos by S. Hjermstad

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Rev. Craig Johnson, Editor
Mrs. Wayne Hjermstad, Assistant to
the Editor

Editorial Board:

Rev. John Mundfrom
Dr. Craig Jennings
Mrs. Oryen Benrud

Light on the Way

Unity

Unity can also be used synonymously with oneness, harmony, togetherness, fellowship and concord. The psalmist in chapter 133 declares, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!" (NAS).

Unity! Behold, take a good look. It really is something to see! Look at those brothers over there. How beautifully they get along; how they love one another!

It should not surprise us that unity is something to behold for it does not come naturally nor easily. Sin has been around for a long time. Sin separates us from God and from one another. Think about the first family — two brothers, Cain and Abel. Certainly there was no unity there.

Consider Noah's family together in the ark, but it was not long before there was division. Abraham and his two boys, Ishmael and Isaac, were divided. Then there were Isaac's twin sons, Esau and Jacob, together in their mother's womb, yet even there they began to scrap. As they grew older, what intrigue, bitterness and enmity we see in that household! Only until a renewed Jacob chooses to work at it and God brings it about, do we see reconciliation occur.

Jacob's family included two wives, two concubines, 12 sons and a daughter. But life was not a pleasant picnic. See those brothers out in the pastures plotting, conniving, then selling their kid brother, Joseph, as a slave to Egypt. Then the story becomes wonderful. Hardship and the

blessed grace and providence of God brought them back together in Egypt. They sat down and ate together as Joseph's love and forgiveness made it possible.

We could continue reflecting on other families, tribes and congregations and think of David's and Solomon's families and the split forming the northern and southern kingdoms. All this should help us realize how difficult it is to maintain unity in the bond of peace. Yes, even us Christians, who have the same Father in heaven, the same Lord and Savior and the Holy Spirit who has called us to repentance and faith by the Word, struggle at times in getting along with one another on our journey to our heavenly home.

Therefore, since we are who we are, Christians, or little Christs, we are to make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. May we speak the truth in love as we grow in the love of Christ. May our kindness and compassion to one another, forgiving each other as Christ forgives us, shine for all to see.

How is it in our Christian homes? In our congregations and our broader associations? We know Who holds us together, but do others see Christ reflected by our love for one another? Thank God for the great Reconciler, Jesus Christ! And blessed are the peacemakers, too. May each of us meditate on John 17, Ephesians and all of Psalm 133.

— by Odell Kittleson

They came to receive challenge and encouragement to "stand firm in the faith." They came to pray and worship. They came to hold elections, discuss and vote on resolutions, and be informed about the work of the church. They were 636 people gathering in Valley City, North Dakota, on the campus of Valley City State University, June 15-19 for the 32nd Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (AFLC).

The conference was hosted by the two AFLC congregations in Valley City, Grace Free and Zion Free Lutheran Churches, pastored by Rev. Terry Olson. Over a year of work and planning was coming together on June 14 as people were busy taking care of the last-minute details. Packets were being filled, registration tables were being set up, rooms were being checked, music was being practiced. All this was taking place in anticipation of the next morning's activities.

Wednesday, June 15

Conference committees met at 9 a.m. for devotions, instructions and room assignments. These committees included one that had the task of nominating people for the various positions that needed to be filled. Five other committees met to consider various aspects of the work of the Association and then write resolutions to encourage discussion and action by the conference.

The first meeting of the AFLC Annual Conference was a concert of prayer led by Rev. Don Richman of Bloomington, Minnesota. Going along with the conference theme "Stand Firm in the Faith," people at the concert of prayer were reminded that "only in kneeling (in prayer) can we stand firm in the faith." An hour was spent praying, sometimes individually and other times as small groups or as an assembly. Announcement was made at the concert of the prayer vigil that would be held

Standing firm and moving forward

Report of the 32nd AFLC Annual Conference



Tellers included Intern Bruce Peterson; seminary seniors Randy Nelson, Kevin Olson and Earl Korhonen.

during the conference. People were encouraged to sign up and go to the room designated for prayer with the goal to have someone praying at all times during the conference sessions.

The opening service of the conference was led by Rev. James Fugleberg of Fargo, North Dakota.

Rev. Gary Jorgenson of Ottawa, Illinois gave the sermon based on the conference theme text of Ephesians 6:10-20. He encouraged his listeners to remember: "We are in the army of God and we need to join our shields together. When we put on the full armor of God we can stand fearlessly."



The mass choir directed by Ann Presteng, Grafton, North Dakota, sang at the opening service.

REPORT

Thursday, June 16

The business sessions of the conference began with the reading of reports from various committees. In his report, AFLC President Robert Lee spoke of the absolute necessity of "a spiritual perspective concerning issues and answers, problems and solutions." He said, "Clothed in Christ's righteousness and bound by His truth, shielded by faith and armed with His Word, the Christian soldier battles on his knees against a foe whose defeat was both finalized and foreshadowed at Calvary." An area in which he sees the battle being fiercely waged is in the enemy's attempts to attack and shipwreck pastors. Rev. Lee is more convinced than ever of the importance of the role of the AFLC president to be a pastor to the pastors.

In the resolutions that dealt with the area of administration, discussion arose concerning the on-going deficit of *The Lutheran Ambassador*. It was resolved to publish the magazine 16 times a year at an increased size in contrast to the current 24 issues of 16 pages each.

Thanks were given to God for Ken and Bev Hokkanen and other staff members in their service to the Association Retreat Center (ARC). Prayer was requested as



AFLC President Robert Lee.



Rev. Mauritz Lundeen, Brandon, Minnesota; Mr. Reuben Emberson and Mr. Eldwyn Van Bruggen, both of Valley City, North Dakota, and AFLC Secretary Bruce Dalager, Gand Forks, North Dakota.

the ARC Board seeks to hire a new director.

The motion was made and passed to add \$12,000 to the General Fund budget so that a full-time Youth Ministries Director could be hired. This money will be added to that raised by the Free Lutheran Youth and the Friends of Youth program. The Youth Board will begin seeking to call someone to that position.

Each day, before the noon lunch break, the business was set aside in order to spend time in God's Word and in prayer. These times were led by Rev. Phil Haugen of Culbertson, Montana.

Thursday evening was the time for the Mission Festival Service, conducted by the Women's Missionary Federation. Army Chaplain Timothy Skramstad brought the message and also shared about his work as Christ's ambassador to the military. Missionaries to Brazil, David Abel and Connely Dyrud and their families, were in attendance and brought greetings as did Dr. Francis Monseth, Dean of the Free Lutheran Theological Seminary, who spent the previous school year on sabbatical, teaching in Eastern Europe and Russia,

particularly Latvia and Estonia. Rev. David Nelson and his family, who are preparing to go to Brazil in the next year to serve as missionaries, also shared prayer needs and reasons for praise and thanksgiving.

Friday, June 17

The major focus of the sessions was shifted to issues concerning the Association Free Lutheran Bible School and Seminary. Much of the day's discussion was related to the recent dismissal of a member of the schools' faculty, Rev.



Dr. Francis Monseth, AFLTS dean.

Ralph Tjelta. The Chairman of the Schools' Board of Trustees, Rev. Lyndon Korhonen of Cokato, Minnesota, shared some of the reasons why the board felt the action they took was necessary. Much speaking ensued on the various aspects of the issues with many stating their disagreement with the board's action. Others expressed support for the board and concern over the response of some of the faculty.

Past papers written by Dr. Monseth and previous conference resolutions related to them were one of the topics of discussion. Dr. Monseth told the conference he "did not see his paper as the definitive statement on the issue." He expressed his hope that we would not needlessly wrangle about words.

A resolution was proposed and passed to "recommend that the Schools' Board of Trustees reinstate Rev. Ralph Tjelta." Further discussion concerned the degree of authority the AFLC Rules of Work give to the general conference to overturn decisions made by the Associations' boards and corporations.

Friday evening was the time of the pastors' banquet with Rev. David Rinden, editor of the magazine of the Church of the Luther-



Committee #2 members: Mr. Junell Remme, Pipestone, Minnesota; Rev. Harvey Jackson, Ishpeming, Michigan; Pastor Ken Thompson, Nogales, Arizona; Pastor Mark Olson, Ottawa, Illinois, and Mr. Arden Jacobson, Champlin, Minnesota.

an Brethren, *Faith and Fellowship*, speaking. Leading that evening's laymen's service was Ralph Peterson from Portland, North Dakota. Bringing the message was Will Olson of Kirkland, Washington.

Saturday, June 18

The work of missions became the first topic of discussion for the day. Thanks were expressed to God for the surpassing of the budget needs of the World Missions Department for the past year as well as the

retirement of the department's debt to the Church Extension Fund. The conference was told of requests for literature and missionaries received by the AFLC in Brazil from Vicente Caucha of Mozambique. It was resolved to continue to pray and encourage the AFLC in Brazil to pursue the possibilities of missionary outreach in Mozambique and Paraguay.

Information was given regarding the plans for language training to begin within the next year

◇



Valley City State University provided a lovely facility for the conference. Pictured are Missionary Connely Dyrud, Brazil, and Rev. Raynard Huglen, Newfolden, Minnesota.



After the Thursday evening service, the Chaplain Tim Skramstad family visited with Rev. Paul Jecklin, Savannah, Georgia.



Rev. Dan Klug, East Grand Forks, Minnesota, and Rev. Tim Hinrichs, St. Paul, Minnesota.



Missionaries Dick and Clara Gunderson, Mexico.

REPORT

for the Rev. David Nelson family as they prepare to serve as missionaries in Brazil and the Rev. Todd Schierkolk family as they prepare to serve as missionaries in Mexico. Also recently receiving calls from the AFLC World Missions Department are Tim Hinrichs, who will be on loan to the East European Missions Network to serve as an overseas missionary, and Rev. Dick and Clara Gunderson, who will be on loan to the World Mission Prayer League, serving as missionaries in Mexico.

In the area of Home Missions

the work that is going on in 36 different areas in the United States was discussed. It was also announced that the Director of Home Missions, Rev. Elden Nelson, after 17 years of service, has informed the Home Missions Committee of his desire to return to the parish ministry and their need to begin searching during the next year for a new individual to fill his position.

When the topic of discussion became evangelism many expressed their desire to see a full-time evangelist called. The Coordinating Committee informed

the conference of some possibilities regarding the filling of such a position. They hope to be able to announce more definite details soon.

The conference resolved to encourage the use of the teaching resource developed by the Parish Education Department *Martin Luther's Small Catechism in Illustration*. The needs of the department in the areas of finances, equipment and volunteer help were also shared. Work on revising and producing Sunday School materials goes on, along with efforts to provide other edu-



Mrs. Dagne Faust, Valley City, North Dakota; Mrs. Mary Nash, Colfax, North Dakota, and Mrs. Ellen Monseth, Rogers, Minnesota.



Rev. Jerome Nikunen, Chillicothe, Illinois, and AFLC-Canada President Gene Sundby, Outlook, Sask.

cational materials for congregations.

The Christian Academic Education Board has been inactive of late. Discussion was held as to whether or not the board continues to be needed. It was resolved and passed that the board remain in existence and be encouraged to become active once again.

The Chairman of the Youth Board, the President of the Free Lutheran Youth and the Youth Ministries Director reminded the conference of the needs of youth as well as some of the many ministries to youth going on in the AFLC.

The Stewardship Board's report encouraged the conference to resolve to "rejoice in the increased giving to the various ministries of the AFLC." The ongoing promotion of the AFLC-2000 Vision was recommended in the efforts at debt retirement and the establishing of funds for new ministries.

Much gratefulness was expressed by the Pension Board for the results of the first year of the partially self-funded health plan. They were encouraged by the conference to continue to investigate the possibility of dental and disability insurance.

The focus of the evening service was youth. Jon Dryburgh, youth worker in the AFLC parish in Valley City led the service. The Bible School Ambassador team shared in music and testimony and Rev. James L. Johnson of Fosston, Minnesota, the president of the Free Lutheran Youth, shared the message.

Sunday, June 19

The Sunday morning services were the time of a long-awaited and anticipated event. They were the first services at which the new *Ambassador Hymnal* was used. The chairman of the hymnal project, Rev. Tom Olson of Cumberland, Wisconsin, and the editor of the hymnal, Rev. Brian Davidson of Rice Lake, Wisconsin, were encouraged by the enthusiastic



Mrs. Cindy Johnson and Kristin Onnen of the 1994 AFLBS Ambassador team joined the VBS staff of Grace Lutheran of Valley City for the week of conference. Over 100 children participated in the program held from 9 a. m. - 3 p. m. daily.



Rev. Robert Lee, with newly ordained Rev. James Olson, Erskine, Minnesota, and his father Rev. Orville Olson, Fergus Falls, Minnesota. Four other men have been ordained in their home congregations.

reception the hymnal had received. Over 9,000 of the hymnals had been pre-purchased. Some were available for purchase at the conference and others were picked up by congregations during the week. The rest were being prepared for shipment. Rev. Olson and Rev. Davidson were presented with leather-bound editions of the hymnal by Rev. Lee during the morning ordination service.

Rev. David Hinrichs of Everett, Washington brought the message during the morning communion service which was led by Rev. Olson of Valley City. Rev. Hinrichs encouraged the congregation that they could return to the fray because God was ready. Rev. Raymond Klug of Fairbury, Nebraska led the worship service with ordination and

Dr. Steven Lombardo preached from God's Word on "The Marks of the True Spiritual Leader."

James Olson was ordained into the Christian ministry. He has and will continue to serve as the director of Pastoral Care at the Pioneer Memorial Care Center in Erskine, Minnesota. Other recent ordinations in the AFLC include: Victor Young on June 12 at Faith Lutheran Church in London, Minnesota; Tim Hinrichs (commissioned for missionary service as well) on June 26 at Calvary Lutheran Church in Everett, Washington; Dan Klug on July 10 at Faith Lutheran Church in Fairbury, Nebraska; and Michael Peterson on July 17 at Chippewa Lutheran Church in Brandon, Minnesota.

1994 Conference elections

Vice President — Rev. Kenneth Moland, Kirkland, Washington

Secretary — Rev. Bruce Dalager, Grand Forks, North Dakota

Coordinating Committee — Layman (2 year term) Mr. Marlin Benrud, Goodhue, Minnesota; Pastor (5 year term) Rev. Les Galland, Eden Prairie, Minnesota

Board of Publications and Parish Education — Mrs. Barb Stueland, Kenyon, Minnesota (5 year term); Mrs. Charlotte Qualley, Brockton, Montana, (4 year term); Rev. James Molstre, Zumbrota, Minnesota, (2 year term)

Christian Academic Education Board — Mrs. Gayle Kruse, Mankato, Minnesota (5 year term)

Youth Board — Mr. Marshall Nessa, Cloquet, Minnesota, (5 year term)

Commission on Evangelism — Mr. Clifford Johnson, Esko, Minnesota, (5 year term)

Stewardship Board — Mr. LaVern Thompson, Fergus Falls, Minnesota, (5 year term); Mr. Victor Parsons, St. Paul, Minnesota, (2 year term)

Pension Board — Mr. Tony Onnen, Cokato, Minnesota, (5 year term)

Colloquy Committee — Rev. Phil Haugen, Culbertson, Montana; Rev. Mark Molstre, Tioga, North Dakota; Rev. Reuben Unseth, Roseau, Minnesota; Rev. Peter Franz, Cloquet, Minnesota; Rev. Paul Nash, Wichita Falls, Texas

School Corporation

(5 year term) Mr. Wayne Floan, Fertile, Minnesota; Mr. Emory Flaten, Newfolden, Minnesota; Mr. Randy Pederson, Tioga, North Dakota; Mr. Joel Erickson, Huron, South Dakota; Mr. David Fugleberg, St. Paul, Minnesota; Rev. Les Galland, Eden Prairie, Minnesota; Mr. Paul Strand, Kenyon, Minnesota; Rev. Jerry Holmaas, Chassell, Michigan; Mr. Bruce

Wolla, Minot, North Dakota; Mr. Roger Johnson, Britton, South Dakota

(1 year term) Don Hansen, Bloomington, Minnesota

Elected by the corporation to the Board of Trustees — Mr. David Borg, Cokato, Minnesota, (5 year term)

Mission Corporation

(5 year term) Rev. Alvin Grothe, Astoria, Oregon; Rev. John Skeie, New Hope, Minnesota; Rev. Ted Berkas, Wallace, South Dakota; Rev. Jeff Swanson, Newark, Illinois; Mr. Kermit Berge, Larimore, North Dakota; Mr. Lester Hinderaker, Story City, Iowa; Mrs. Karen Knudsvig, Buxton, North Dakota; Mr. Jerry Olson, Newfolden, Minnesota; Mr. Arden Jacobson, Champlin, Minnesota; Mr. Phil Jenson, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

(fills unexpired position) Mr. Clifford Nelson, Cannon Falls, Minnesota

Elected by the corporation to the World Mission Committee — (5 year terms) Rev. Ted Kennedy, Nogales, Arizona; Mr. Ken Williams, Ishpeming, Michigan

Elected by the corporation to the Home Mission Committee — (5 year terms) Rev. Tony Stockman, Brandon, Minnesota; Mr. Robert Dietsche, Osceola, Wisconsin

ARC Corporation

(5 year term) Mr. Allen Anderson, Clear Lake, Wisconsin; Mr.



Vivian Wall, St. James, Minnesota, and grandson, Seth Moan, Minot, North Dakota.

Brian Rice, Balsam Lake, Wisconsin; Mr. Martin Johnson, Badger, Minnesota; Rev. Roy Johnson, Ortonville, Minnesota; Rev. Robert Koepp, Colfax, Wisconsin; Mr. David Jacobson, Binford, North Dakota; Pastor Paul Pillman, Menomonie, Wisconsin; Rev. Alvin Pinno, Eagan, Minnesota; Rev. Rodney Johnson, Stanley, North Dakota; Mr. Ellis Olson, Eden Prairie, Minnesota

(fills unexpired term) Rev. Todd Klemme, Wadena, Minnesota
Elected by the corporation to the ARC Board — Mr. Allen Anderson, Clear Lake, Wisconsin

Budget Analysis Committee

Pastor Dale Finstrom, Glyndon, Minnesota, (3 year term); Mr. Richard Rasmussen, Monticello, Minnesota, (3 year term)



Retiring ARC directors Mr. and Mrs. Robert Dietsche, Osceola, Wisconsin, were honored at a reception Thursday evening. They are shown with ARC Board Chairman Cliff Seldal.

Elections to 1995 Conference Committees

1995 Nominating Committee

Eastern North Dakota — Mr. Robert Knutson, McVille

Western North Dakota/Eastern Montana — Mr. Arley Hartsoch, Ray, North Dakota

South Dakota — Rev. Wayne Hjermstad, Faith

Lake Superior — Mr. Emery Risdall, Cloquet, Minnesota

Northwestern Minnesota — Mr. Farrell Erickson, Badger

Northcentral Minnesota — Mr. Darrel Johnson, Erskine

Southwest Central Minnesota — Mr. Norman Haugen, Murdock

Nebraska/Kansas — Mr. Ken Wycolt, Fairbury, Nebraska

Minneapolis — Rev. Robert Koepp, Colfax, Wisconsin

Central Tri-State — Mr. Paul Peterson, Kenyon, Minnesota

Northern Michigan — Mr. John Knuuttila, Pelkie

South Central — Rev. Clyde Grier, El Campo, Texas

Southwestern — Mr. Dean Crouthers, Nogales, Arizona

West Coast — Mr. Bud Haugen, Snohomish, Washington

Eastern — Mr. Robert Lawson, Massapequa, New York

Illinois — Mr. Howard Johnson, Yorkville, Illinois

Committee #1 Administration

Rev. Richard Long, Arlington, Washington; Rev. Brian Davidson, Rice Lake, Wisconsin; Mr. Loiell Dyrud, Thief River Falls, Minnesota; Mr. Rodney Kjersten, Roseau, Minnesota; Mr. Roland Meyer, Paxton, Illinois

Committee #2 Schools

Rev. Roy Johnson, Ortonville, Minnesota; Rev. Ted Berkas, Wallace, South Dakota; Mr. Harold Erickson, New York Mills, Minnesota; Mr. Arne Berge, Binford, North Dakota; Mr. John Presteng, Grafton, North Dakota

Committee #3 Missions and Evangelism

Rev. Harvey Jackson, Ishpeming, Michigan; Rev. Alan Arneson,

Badger, Minnesota; Mr. Lester Mickleson, Tioga, North Dakota; Mr. Ted Clark, Kalispell, Montana; Mr. Jerry Keenan, Astoria, Oregon

Committee #4 Publications and Parish Education, Youth

Rev. Jon Benson, Ortley, South Dakota; Rev. James Molstre, Zumbrota, Minnesota; Mr. Martin Johnson, Badger, Minnesota; Mr. John Kyrola, Forest Lake, Minnesota; Mr. Bob West, Kalispell, Montana

Committee #5 Stewardship and Pensions

Rev. Michael Klenner, Freeman, South Dakota; Pastor Rodney Stueland, Kenyon, Minnesota; Mr. Gerald Knudsvig, Buxton, North Dakota; Mr. Wilmar Olson, Bothell, Washington

Greetings from India

The following greeting arrived too late to be read at the recent annual conference:

"I, on behalf of our gospel workers and believers in all congregations, wish you much success and happiness during the annual conference of 1994. I pray that our Lord will enable you to dedicate yourselves to reach whatever goals you aim for. May God help you to welcome every challenge as an opportunity."

D. Martin Luther Sastri

Upcoming AFLC Conference Sites

1995 - Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wisconsin.

1996 - Warm Beach Conference Center, Stanwood, Washington.

1997 - Thief River Falls, Minnesota.



The Thursday WMF Breakfast.



Fellowship times are always special at conference.



The Bethel Bell Choir, Grafton, North Dakota, performed Thursday evening. There were 295 women registered, making it one of the largest conventions.



WMF Executive Secretary, Karen Knudsvig and President Dee Berkas.

Rejoicing in a purpose to life

The 32nd Convention of the Women's Missionary Federation is past, but the memories and blessings of our time together will linger.

Our chosen theme was "Life with a Purpose" with the text from Philippians 2:13, "For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose."

During our morning session we had three speakers:

1. Mrs. Don Richman spoke on "Sitting at His Feet." She shared how God is a heavenly Father who will never be content with a distant or casual relationship, with only an occasional conversation. God wants intimacy and intimacy takes time.

2. Mrs. Dennis Torkenson spoke on "Walking in His Will." Her son had given her a list of the practical items she took care of as a mother and farm wife — things for which he was particularly thankful. In a day when wives are being degraded, we are to feel good about the job we have to do and the purpose that the Lord has called us to.

3. Mrs. Roger Hoikkala spoke on "Standing Against the Adversary." She shared about putting on the full armor of God. We are in a battle against wickedness — not

people, and we need to walk in the Spirit and know God's Word in order to stand firm in the faith.

As each spoke, one could see the interdependence of these three areas of spiritual life.

In the afternoon we saw slides of Brazil by missionary candidates Pastor David and Sarah Nelson, followed by an inspiring message by Pastor David Abel. His impetus came from I Corinthians 9:19ff, we are bought with a price to be slaves of Christ. We need to share the blessing and recognize that there are many ways to worship, many ways to minister to the Lord. Ask yourself as a local WMF, "What can we do in order to help other ladies enjoy the blessings we're experiencing? Are there different times of meeting or programs that will relate to and fit into the time schedules of young mothers? Are we really trying all means available to us to reach people with the gospel?" Mrs. Roger Hoikkala closed the day with an informative workshop on our need to be aware of secular humanistic ways of teaching which are infiltrating some Christian curriculum.

At our Wednesday Women's Breakfast, Janet Abel quoted the words of the song, "May We Be Found Faithful." She reminded us from Hebrews 11 of the many people who were faithful to the end

and encouraged us to firmly persevere with our eyes on Jesus. Janet told us of a new World Missions project whereby people could sponsor a child who is in the home for street children in Vitoria for \$20 a month. The people who sponsor would get a photo of the child and a letter from time to time.

At the Thursday night Mission Festival, Chaplain Timothy Skramstad read from Acts 4, "... cannot help speaking of what we have seen and heard." Chaplain Skramstad does not just have a "ministry of presence" in the army. He has a vision to bring all that he has to Jesus Christ and to win souls for Him. People are lost without Jesus Christ and they want to know, "is there any hope?"

During our convention, a budget of \$100,000 was approved and Mrs. Bob (Bonnie) West and Mrs. David (Cheryl) Skordahl were re-elected to the National WMF Board. All offerings will be distributed to Home Missions, World Missions and the General Fund. Thank you to everyone who participated in our program including musicians, devotional leaders and the local WMF workers from Valley City. We praise the Lord for the challenges, encouragement and helpful information received.

— Mrs. David (Cheryl) Skordahl
WMF National Secretary

b. Oil (anointed)

II Corinthians 1:21-22

c. Frankincense (sweet-smelling aroma)

(1) to God:

(2) to others:

d. Salt (preserver)

(1) Matthew 5:13

What does this mean to you?

(2) Colossians 4:5-6

How can our speech be seasoned with salt?

8. a. In what different ways could the Israelites bring this grain offering?
Leviticus 2:2-7

(1) (3)

(2) (4)

b. What does this illustrate about offering ourselves in service to the Lord? Romans 12:1-2, 4-8

"Thank You, Lord, for the privilege of serving You. Show us the way You have chosen for us. Help us to be in such a close relationship with You that our service is never works but the outpouring of a grateful heart."

Making it personal:

Take this month to search your heart, life, and motives to see if they are a pleasing aroma to God and to those around you.

THE GRAIN (MEAL) OFFERING

When a person has come into a right relationship with God through Jesus Christ, there is peace and fellowship. Now there is a desire and a need within us to serve Him because of Who He is and what He has done for us. The Grain Offering reminds us of that.

1. When an individual brought this offering, what did it include? Leviticus 2:1, 13

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

Notice this is the only offering where there is no shedding of blood.

Let's look at each ingredient separately:

2. **Fine flour** (finely ground wheat)

a. What comes to your mind when you think of fine flour?

b. How did they produce fine flour in those days? (Think of all the steps:) cultivate the ground, _____

c. What had to happen to that seed before it could produce a crop? John 12:23-24 _____

List some of the different uses for these things:

3. **Oil** (a liquid extracted from olives)

a. Numbers 11:8 _____

b. I Samuel 10:1 _____

c. Exodus 25:6 _____

4. **Frankincense** (a fragrant gum of a tree)

a. Exodus 30:34-35 _____

b. Leviticus 24:7 _____

c. Matthew 2:11 _____

5. **Salt** (a compound that gives flavor and preserves)

a. Job 6:6 _____

b. Leviticus 2:13 _____

c. II Chronicles 13:5 _____

Now we shall look at these four ingredients and compare them to Christ's life and ours.

CHRIST

6. What do we notice about Christ's life?

a. **Fine flour** (life)

(1) John 1:1,4 _____

(2) II Corinthians 5:21 _____

(3) Isaiah 53:5 _____

Jesus Christ left the glory of heaven to be born a baby. He lived the perfect,

sinless life in our place and paid for our sins on the cross. All this was done so that we can have eternal life!

b. **Oil** (anointing)

(1) Luke 3:22 _____

(2) Luke 4:18a _____

c. **Frankincense** (sweet-smelling aroma)

Ephesians 5:2 _____

d. **Salt** (preserver)

Jude 1 _____

BELIEVERS

7. How do these things apply to our lives?

a. **Fine flour** (life)

(1) I Thessalonians 4:7 _____

(2) Ephesians 2:10 _____

(3) What are these "good works" that God wants **me** to do?

(4) John 12:23-26 _____

Obituaries

Arthur Arneson

Arthur Arneson, 59, Spicer, Minnesota, passed away on May 27, 1994, in Reno, Nevada, where he was receiving medical treatment.

He was born on August 11, 1934, in Kirkhoven, Minnesota. On November 10, 1956, he married LaVonne Rodi. After completion of his military service, Art was employed by Unisys Corporation for over 30 years. Over 20 years ago the Arneson family moved from Minneapolis to the Spicer community where he was an active member of Green Lake Lutheran Church. For many years the Arnesons were registrars at the Lake Bronson Bible Camp. Art was a faithful delegate at the AFLC Annual Conferences.

Besides his wife, LaVonne, he leaves two sons, Rev. Alan (Lisa

and Brady) of Badger, Minnesota, and Bradley (Nancy and Hana) of New London, Minnesota. He is also survived by his father, Alfred, of New London and one sister, Grace Thorslan of Richfield, Minnesota.

Funeral services were held on June 1, at Green Lake Lutheran with Rev. Les Galland officiating.

Blessed be his memory.

Anna Ronholm

Mrs. Anna Ronholm, 94, widow of a former pastor of Westaker and Bethania Lutheran Churches, Newfolden, Minnesota, passed away on May 17 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where she had lived since 1961.

A native of Donnelly, Minnesota, Anna Berg was married to Rev. G.P. Ronholm in 1924. They lived in Newfolden from 1927-45. Following that they resided at Thief River Falls and Brainerd, Minnesota, where they managed rest homes.

She is survived by three sons and four daughters. She was predeceased by a brother, Sigurd, a Lutheran pastor.

Editor's note: Rev. G.P. Ronholm's obituary was included in the very first *Lutheran Ambassador*, dated February 12, 1963.

Rev. Terry Olson, Valley City, North Dakota, accepted a call to serve Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Dickenson, North Dakota. He has been the pastor of the Grace and Zion congregations of Valley City since 1986. He plans to move to his new parish in the fall.

Pastor Wayne Hanson, Apple Valley, Minnesota, is serving Lamb of God Lutheran, Topeka, Kansas, as an interim pastor. Lamb of God is a new Home Mission congregation seeking to call their first full-time pastor.

On May 10, fire swept through Potharlanka, a village in the Guntur District of India. The entire village of 500 houses and one church was nearly destroyed. A four-month-old infant died in its crib and was the only fatality.

The only church in the village is a part of the Bible Faith Lutheran Church, affiliated with the AFLC. Being the only Christian organization in the community, the congregation is being looked to for assistance.

The AFLC World Missions office immediately sent \$1,500 for food, blankets and temporary shelter relief. Simple, temporary group shelters have been set up to provide protection from the intense summer sun. Local officials say that it will be months before adequate funds are available to rebuild the village. Many of the victims are small farmers who lost everything but the clothes on their backs.

An urgent need for funds and clothing continues, especially for

AFLC aids village destroyed by fire



children from infant through 15 years of age. Financial gifts should be identified as *India Fire Relief* and sent to the AFLC World Missions Department, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis,

MN 55441. Identify boxes as containing clothing for fire victims and ship to D. Martin Luther, George Pet (Near Pattabhipuram Main Gate), Guntur - 522 006, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Two congregations join the AFLC

The AFLC grew by two new member churches on Sunday, June 26, when votes for affiliation were overwhelmingly approved by congregations in Pennsylvania and Michigan.

Ruthfred Lutheran Church of Bethel Park, Pennsylvania, a growing suburban community south of Pittsburgh, voted by almost 90% to leave the ELCA and join the AFLC. The congregation is pastored by Rev. John H. Dennis, who has served there since his ordination in 1950.

The second congregation, **St. Peter Lutheran Church** of Metz, Michigan, unanimously approved AFLC affiliation one week after its final vote to leave the ELCA. Located in the north-east corner of Michigan's lower peninsula, the church is currently in the process of calling a new pastor.



Faith, South Dakota — Bethel Lutheran dedicated their church addition on June 5. Former pastor Edwin Kjos, Fergus Falls, Minnesota, preached at the morning service and AFLC President Robert Lee spoke during the afternoon dedication service. Pictured is the Building Committee (back row) with Pastors Edwin Kjos, Robert Lee and Wayne Hjerstad, Bethel's present pastor.

Rev. James Johnson, Reva, South Dakota, resigned as pastor of Slim Buttes Lutheran Church in order to accept the call from Solid Rock Free Lutheran, Osseo, Minnesota. Pastor Johnson has served Slim Buttes for nine years. He expects to begin his new ministry in the northern Minneapolis suburb in August.

Rev. Terry Wold, Murrieta, California, has resigned from Shepherd's Church of the Valley, effective immediately. His future plans are indefinite.

In a June 23 conference call meeting the AFLC Schools' Board of Trustees voted to reinstate **Rev. Ralph Tjelta** as a faculty member on probationary status through August 30, 1994, for the purpose of further discussion on issues surrounding his dismissal. He will not be teaching at the schools this summer or fall.

Rev. Roy Warwick, Lindenhurst, New York, has resigned as pastor of Unity Lutheran in nearby Massapequa where he has served since 1991. His future plans are indefinite.

Rev. Tim Hinrichs, who has accepted a call from the AFLC World Missions Committee for ministry in Eastern Europe through EEMN, is serving during July and August with Rev.



Rugby, North Dakota — New members at Hope Free Lutheran are Arlys and Marissa Rude and Mr. and Mrs. Jim Smith. Henry Mohagen is the pastor.



Ray, North Dakota — Pictured is Robert Sheldon (center) with the officers of Beaver Creek Lutheran and Pastor Stephen Odegaard (right). Mr. Sheldon recently joined the Beaver Creek congregation.

John Dennis at Ruthfred Lutheran Church, Bethel Park, Pennsylvania.

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

AFLC Benevolences — January 1 - June 30, 1994

FUND	TOTAL Subsidy	REC'D IN APRIL	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% TOTAL
General Fund	\$256,591.00	\$50,218.97	\$104,435.61	41
Seminary	148,000.00	5,209.35	42,889.94	29
Bible School	232,562.00	11,336.05	71,419.12	31
Home Missions.	319,086.00	17,863.57	111,561.77	35
World Missions.	342,788.00	24,696.51	154,508.27	45
Capital Investment . .	37,395.00	5,497.60	13,135.11	35
Parish Education . . .	67,868.00	4,381.38	18,430.09	27
ARC	8,600.00	1,338.31	3,319.10	39
Church Extension . . .	10,000.00	1,940.66	5,972.17	60
TOTALS	\$1,422,890.00	\$92,482.40	\$525,671.18	37
1993 Goal 50%	\$1,347,747.00	\$87,557.09	\$542,505.42	40
1994 Goal 50%				

Don't shoot the Fruit Loops box

They did not know what was inside the Fruit Loops cereal box. As soon as the package arrived at the California State Automobile Association claims office the workers became suspicious. The media had been full of stories of terrorist bombings. The police were called and about 400 people were evacuated from the building. The bomb squad soon arrived. They "neutralized" the cereal box with a small cannon, and its contents were blasted into the air. Dangerous explosives were not found within the suspicious package, however. Instead, the squad had effectively disarmed bundles of \$20 bills totaling \$24,000 in cash.

At times we encounter things, ideas and people who appear suspicious and dangerous. We worry about what may happen. Instead of investigating, we want to do some blasting. The result is something of great value gets destroyed.

During our recent annual conference, Dr. Francis Monseth spoke of our need to communicate with each other in our congregations and our church body. By doing so, he believes we will discover the differences between us are not as vast as some may believe. He said, "We have given way to fear. God is not the author of fear but of power, love and a sound mind."

It is easy and tempting to give way to fear. It is a temptation we must strive by God's power to resist. Differences in a congregation and a church body are inevitable. Some may have a different manner of dress and talk. They may not emphasize the same things. Certain secondary issues that matter a great deal to us, are not of the same importance to them. On passages where the Bible is unclear, they may see things a little differently. But they love Jesus. They believe the Bible is the authoritative Word of God without mistakes. They believe people need to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. We agree on what matters. Let us not be so afraid of the differences.

The workers looked at the Fruit Loops box and saw a potential bomb. Some may look at another member of the congregation or Association and wonder if within that person is a truly evangelistic heart. "Are they really interested in saving souls?" Instead of investigating and finding out what they really believe, it is thought better to shoot down their ideas and prevent them from being in any positions of influence. On the other hand, some may see one who doesn't appear to be truly Lutheran. Their orthodoxy is questioned and little attempt is made to communicate and seek understanding. Instead of being listened to, they are labeled.

I do not believe the greatest danger to our con-

gregations and our AFLC comes from those who are supposedly not evangelistic enough or from those who are supposedly not Lutheran enough. The greatest present danger is a spirit that attempts to invade each of us. It is a spirit that attempts to divide people into separate sides instead of asking, "how can we together face the challenges before us?" It is a spirit that seeks uniformity on all issues, instead of striving for the unity Jesus so fervently desires (cf. John 17). It is a spirit that comes to meetings plotting strategy and searching for ways to bring "victory" to one side instead of searching for ways to build up all the members of the body of Christ.

Let us not be controlled by the spirit of suspicion and fear. God says, "Do not fear, for I am with you" (Isaiah 41:10). Let us investigate and communicate before blasting away. Let us be controlled by the Spirit of God who says, "Encourage one another and build each other up" (1 Thessalonians 5:11). We will be surprised to find the extraordinary value God has placed within each member of the body of Christ.

Independence: A Virtue When in Balance

We are reminded in the month of July that America was born out of a rebellion. Fierce independence remains an integral part of the American spirit. It can be a virtue, but it must be kept in proper balance.

In congregations and associations, various types of leaders are elected. We may not agree with the election results. We will not always agree with what is done. We must always treat our leaders with respect. Part of this respect involves accepting that times will come when they do things we do not understand. These praying people, respected enough by the church to be elected, have dealt with the issues much longer than we have. They have more information than we do. They should be trusted, even if they are not understood. God says, "Respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other" (1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13).

This is most definitely not a call to compromise on the Word of God. It is a call to "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21). Independence is a wonderful thing to have politically. Humble dependence on God and on our brothers and sisters in Christ is a necessary attribute spiritually.

The Wrong Question

Back to Square One

This subheading is the title of a book written about 15 years ago. I like the title. It reminds me of the importance of always keeping things simple. A little over two years ago I made my first trip to Estonia, the newly independent republic of the former Soviet Union. As I visited a small, rural community called Palamuse I was impressed with how simple life was. The people were not caught up in the hustle and bustle of life but maintained a simple and basic lifestyle. Quite frankly it was very refreshing. In these busy days we often complicate that which was never meant to be complicated. This complexity often spills over into our understanding of what it means to become a believer in God's Son, Jesus Christ. I want to take us back to square one and remind us of its simplicity.

Ask the Right Question

In the learning process it is not so important that I know all of the answers, as it is that I am able to ask the right questions. And if I am asking the "right questions" most often I will find the "right answers." Many people who are seeking after spiritual truth will ask "Why?" God works in a certain way or allows certain events to take place when in fact we do not know, nor will we ever know the mind of God. Therefore, the more important question is "What?" What is God wanting to teach me through this event?

An Ancient Yuppie Seeks Eternal Life

In Mark 10:17-31 we read about an encounter that a rich, young ruler had with Jesus Christ. This man was intelligent, sincere, wealthy and a seeker of the true meaning of life. As the two men met, the young man asked Jesus the question, "What must I **do** to inherit eternal life?"

(Emphasis mine). The story goes on to explain how Jesus was able to cut through the outer facade and encounter the man with his real issues. The man clearly had two problems.

First, he was asking the wrong question. He was asking what he should **do** to inherit eternal life when he should have been asking **how** can I receive eternal life. Before Jesus personally meets this man He makes it clear to the whole crowd of listeners, "I tell you the truth, anyone who will not **receive** the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." (Verse 15, emphasis mine.)

The second problem he had was an even bigger problem because it revealed the true desire of his heart. His riches were more important to him than receiving eternal life. When Jesus told him to remove this barrier to eternal life, his countenance fell and he went away sad.

What About You?

This young man had all that this world has to offer and yet there was an emptiness deep down in his heart. Right now as you read this article, do you find yourself searching for true meaning and fulfillment and not finding it? Please ask the right question: **How** can I receive eternal life?

Respond to the Right Question

The Bible tells us that there is nothing we can do to inherit eter-

nal life. In fact, many people today are running through life thinking that it is the good they have done that qualifies them for heaven. Being good or producing more good than evil in your life will **never** secure a place for you in heaven. Sitting in church will **never** make you a Christian any more than sitting in a garage will make you a car. Giving of your money to the church, charities and the poor will **never** be the determining factor for your earthly fulfillment or eternal destiny.

Invite Jesus Christ into Your Heart

The answer to the question, "**How** can I receive eternal life?" is very simple. God the Father has done for you that which He never intended for you to do for yourself — He gave His Son on the cross for you! In response you must admit that you are an imperfect person — a sinner. Like a little child you must ask Jesus to forgive you of your sins. Finally, you must surrender the control of your life to Jesus Christ and receive Him into your heart. It does not matter how long you have been in the church. If you know today that you have never consciously made Him your personal Savior then do it right now. Let go of that which you are clinging to and by faith consciously receive that which is totally free. The Bible says "... now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation." Invite Jesus Christ into your heart!

— by Rev. Todd Olson