



# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

November 24, 1992



**Preparing  
For  
His  
Coming**

# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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## Light on the Way

### The Sign Of A Savior

**T**here is a conflicting struggle within the heart of man to both see God and at the same time to hide from Him.

Isaiah became impatient to see God and cried out: "Oh that Thou would rend the heavens and come down," (Isaiah 64:1). We can at times identify with the prophet. There are times in our lives when we pray expecting answers, expecting God to come down and intervene.

This season of Advent is a time to prepare our hearts for the Christ. It is a time of anticipation, suspense and excitement as we await the season of Christmas.

Do we really want Jesus to come? We think we do because then all the troubles and problems in the world and our lives will be solved! It will be a time of healing as Jesus touches the problems of the world!

Jesus' coming requires a preparation of our hearts. It means examining our soul-lives. We have to deal with sin and evil. Perhaps there are some wrongs that need to be made right. It means forgiving and asking forgiveness. When Christ comes, sinful man will get more than he expected. We will see ourselves as we really are and not as we would like to think we are.

Isaiah experienced this. He was not satisfied with what he saw in his life. He confessed: "But we are all as an unclean thing and our righteousness as filthy rags," (Isaiah 64:6). Isaiah saw for the first time that he was no better than all the people around him. As he put it, he was a man of unclean lips living among a people of unclean lips. This shocked him. He did not want to

meet a righteous God! Later he experienced forgiveness, healing and renewal.

The season of Advent is just such a time. It is a time to examine our hearts in light of God's Word. It is a time to prepare to receive Immanuel, God with us!

One Advent prophecy points to the fact that God will come down someday. Today it has been fulfilled. We recall these events which took place nearly 2000 years ago. The Gospels tell the story of God being in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. God became man, was born in a manger, lived 33 years on earth, was crucified by His people, rose from the dead, ascended into heaven and waits the second Advent. He will return in glory!

In Christ, God demonstrated for all to see how He would live if He were here on earth with us. Jesus left no question as to what God is like.

The question each one of us must answer this Advent season is what are we going to do about this Jesus? Let us make preparation to receive Him into our hearts and lives. Only then can we be rightly prepared for Christmas and His second Advent.



— by Rev.  
Larry Severson

*For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10).*

One of the Bible's most familiar verses contains the basic truth of God's Good News concerning the redemption of man. John 3:16 speaks of the universal love of God and His gracious offer of eternal life for all through His Son, Jesus Christ. This verse is well-known and cherished by every true believer in Him, yet it does not stand alone. The fact of God's love and grace is repeated over and over throughout the Scriptures. A thorough and prayerful study of the Bible, leads one to the precious discovery that our redemption from sin is the central purpose of God's Word. On page 31 in Luther's Small Catechism, the question is asked: "What is the substance of all the books of the Bible?" And the answer given is: "The great truth that Jesus is the way of salvation for all who believe."

Our theme verse from Luke's Gospel, records words Jesus spoke to the publican Zaccheus, who trusted in Christ as his Savior. His declaration to him, describes His gracious will and mission for which He left heaven's splendor to enter a world of sin. Let us briefly consider three Gospel facts from these words of our Lord.

The first fact is seen in the words, "**For the Son of man is come.**" These words serve to remind us that God is faithful and always keeps His promises, though we may feel their fulfillment seems long in coming. Even our

# ADVENT FACT

title "Advent Fact: He Came," is itself a precious gem of truth, because Christ's advent was not something that just happened on the spur of the moment. Instead, it was the realization of God's prophetic promise to send the Redeemer, first given immediately after Adam's fall into sin, (Genesis 3:15). This promise was repeated many times in the Old Testament, through the inspired writings of the prophets. Believers during this time, eagerly watched and waited for the promised Messiah's appearing. Luke also tells us of the elation felt by two of them, Simeon and Anna, who held the Christ Child in their arms, and saw Him with their own eyes, (Luke 2:25-38).

Christ's coming proves the sincerity of God's glorious declaration proclaimed through His heavenly messengers saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men," (Luke 2:14). Reflecting on this astounding truth, compels us to lift our hearts in thanksgiving to God for His faithfulness to His Word. Because if the Lord Jesus had not come, there would be no cause to celebrate. Advent season would be no more than a sad and hopeless dream. But praise God, Jesus did come! That is **fact**, not fiction.

The second Gospel fact is Christ's words, tells us the reason for His coming was "**to seek and to save that which was lost.**" Scripture often pictures people as lost sheep, wandering far from the comfort and security of God's loving care. "All we like sheep have gone astray," wrote the prophet, (Isaiah 53:6). Man apart from God, is in grave and eternal danger. Unless sought and rescued from his estranged condition, he faces eternal destruction in a Christless hell.

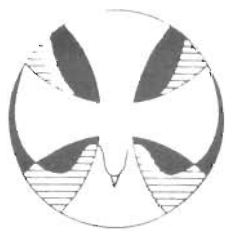
It was the shepherd heart of Jesus that made Him condescend from heaven above to seek and to save the lost multitudes of humanity who were "as sheep having no shepherd," Matthew 9:36). Dr. Hallesby said: "He could not remain in heaven while His fallen children were perishing on earth," ("God's Word for Today," p. 361). To seek and to save defines the solitary reason He came. Thank God for the Good Shepherd who came into this world on a mission of mercy to rescue God's lost sheep — you and me.

The final fact is one that makes the Gospel of Jesus Christ good news indeed. It reveals that God's gracious gift of eternal life is meant for all. Jesus says, He, the Son of man, came "to seek and to save that which was lost." The word

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# H E C O M E S



## ADVENT FAITH

**T**he students at Bible school have an opportunity to be on a Gospel team. I remember when I was at AFLBS, there was a team that had chosen the name, "Hope of Glory." At first I thought it was rather strange because I did not understand what it meant. I came to learn, not only what the name meant, but what it means to me as a child of God.

It is a simple matter of looking up the verse to see where the Gospel team got its name, but it is something else to truly understand what it means personally as a child of God. Oh, the blessed mystery of the Gospel when by grace through faith Christ **comes** to live in you!

It is tempting sometimes to think of how much better it would have been to have lived when Christ first came. It would have been thrilling to have walked and talked with Him. Yet, we as children of God have a great blessing today. The truth is that Christ Himself comes to dwell in the heart of all who are His. "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

In our study of His Word, it is important to train ourselves to look at each word in the verse. We sometimes are quick to overlook the small words, and yet it is the smallest words that often have the greatest impact. Nowhere is that more true than in this verse. It does not say Christ **with** you or **for** you, even though both these statements are true. It says so much more! As a child of God, you are not alone. You have not been left to live the best life you can. You, in fact, are not living at all. Christ comes to live in you! The forgiven sinner proclaims with the Apostle Paul: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live yet not I, but

Christ liveth in me," (Galatians 2:20).

Christ comes to live in the heart of every believer. It is by grace through faith that He enters in, and it is by faith that we are united with Him. There can be no greater comfort for the Christian than to know that they have the Son of God, who is Christ Jesus our brother, come to live **in** them!

We read in Colossians 1:27 that God has willed that we should know the riches of His glory, this mystery which is the Gospel. The Good News for all people is that Christ came and died for you that you might live. This then is truly our hope of glory. Oh what joy is ours! Jesus comes to live in us.

As we draw near to the time of Christmas, it is good to reflect on Christ's first coming as a babe in the manger. Our hearts are encouraged as we look forward to the day when He will come again to take us home. However, may our lives today be empowered as we experience the precious truth that **Christ comes immediately** into the heart of every one who through faith becomes His child!

May each of us be able to echo the words of the hymn writer: "He lives, He lives, salvation to impart! You ask me how I know He lives? He lives **within my heart.**"



— by Rev.  
Jonathan Unverzagt  
Sianhope, Iowa

### HE CAME



— by Rev. Ted Hanson  
Pine City, Minnesota

"lost" encompasses all of humanity. No one in history is exempt apart from Christ Himself, since all except Him, suffer the curse and guilt of Adam's fall. Jesus Christ, the incarnate God-man, alone is free from sin. He alone is the exception from this condition of lostness. He, and He alone is qualified to be the Savior of the world.

This word "lost" describes man who is naturally under a curse, for in view of God's law and holiness, it speaks of judgment or condemnation. It describes us all apart from a personal,

saving relationship with Jesus Christ. On the other hand, God had changed our curse into a blessing. In view of the Gospel, the word "lost" speaks of us not as objects of divine wrath, but as the objects of His saving love and grace. We who were lost are those the Savior came to seek and save. We are the ones for whom He gladly shed His precious blood at Calvary.

Yes, He came! It's true. This Advent season, may this wonderful fact that "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost," be the source of our joy and rejoicing.



# ADVENT FUTURE

# H E I S C O M I N G

I talked with my Grandma for the last time today. She is going home for Christmas; home to Wyoming where Grandpa is buried and in a very short time, home to heaven. She just found out she has cancer and the doctor says she has about two months to live. That means she could be going to be with Jesus around the same time we are celebrating when Jesus came to be with us.

As a new pastor, I have not read enough about grief and I do not know nearly enough about how to deal with death. But I do know that the sting of Grandma's impending funeral is soothed when I think of who she is with and where she will be. Then I'm reminded that Jesus is coming back for me ... and my heavy heart is lifted. "Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me" (John 14:1).

Jesus never intended there to be any doubt in our minds that He was coming back for us. The proof He gave that He would return was the very fact that He said He was going to prepare a place for us. "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again ..." (John 14:2, 3a).

How do we know we can take Jesus at His word anymore than anyone else? Unfortunately, people cannot always be trusted to abide by what they say, so we have legal documents that bind them to their word, made official with their signature. But Jesus is God and He keeps His word. "God is not a man that He should lie, nor a son of man that He should change His mind. Does He speak and then not act? Does He promise and not fulfill" (Numbers 23:19 NIV)? No, our divine Redeemer's word is good. But even so, His guarantee is written down and it was signed with His blood. He left us because He loves us. He wants to show His love by preparing a place for us that is beyond the farthest reaches of our

imagination, as a young man might fix everything up in a new house to make it just right for his bride-to-be. The proof that Jesus is coming back is that He left to prepare a place for us! And He can't wait for us to see it!

Any sane bridegroom does not prepare a place for his bride to live all by herself! That is not Jesus' purpose either. Jesus is coming back to take us to the place that He has prepared for us but it isn't just so we can live in an incredible house. He wants us to be with Him. "I will come again, and receive you to Myself: that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3).

I am excited for Grandma. Can you imagine knowing that you are just a few months away from being with Jesus? Several of her children longingly offered to trade her places ... she declined. Most certainly to be absent from the body is to be with the Lord (II Corinthians 5:8), but in these verses of John 14, Jesus is speaking about more than that. He is speaking about that final day when we will be with Him not only in spirit but with our whole resurrected body as well! And who knows, maybe He'll return by Christmas! I cannot wait for that day when I will look into Jesus' eyes of fire with my own eyes and hear His voice like rushing waters with my own ears and reach out and grasp His nail-pierced hand with my own hand.

*O hasten Thine appearing, Thou  
Bright and morning Star*

*Lord, may we soon be hearing the  
trumpet sound afar;*

*Thy people all are yearning to be Thy  
raptured bride,*

*And at Thine own returning, be  
caught up to Thy side.*

Let the fact of His imminent return shake you from your discouragement and despair. Let it raise your eyes from this trail of tears to His eyes of comfort, promise and hope.

As I talked with Grandma through the flood of my own tears, I shared with her my memories of Christmas at her house. It was tradition. I remember the sound of her deep alto voice as we sang Christmas carols, and I remember how she would laugh with delight as she opened her gifts. I am going to miss Grandma very much this Christmas. But when I think of who she is with and where she will be, I remember that someday Jesus is coming back for me. And then all those tears? Gone.



— Rev. Todd Schierkolk  
Evergreen Park, Illinois



# A Prepared Heart

I often think: "A life is like a day; it goes by so fast. If I am so careless with my days, how can I be careful with my life?" I know that somehow I have not fully come to believe that urgent things can wait while I attend to what is truly important. It finally boils down to a question of deep and strong conviction. Once I am truly convinced that preparing the heart is more important than preparing the Christmas tree, I will be a lot less frustrated at the end of a day.

— Henri J.M. Nouwen  
*New Oxford Review*  
(November 1986)



The Advent season gives us an opportunity to focus on the promise of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Certainly we wait with great expectation for Christ's return, but scripture also encourages us to watch for certain signs which will precede Christ's visible return.

There will be signs in the realm of nature. Luke 21:25 declares, "And there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon the earth dismay among nations." There will be signs in the affairs and activities of man. Matthew 24:6-7 declares, "you will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars; see that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." There will be signs in the sphere of the church, Luke 21:8 declares, "Take heed that you be not misled; for many will come in My name, saying, I am He, and, the time is at hand; do not go after them."

As we observe the signs of the times, the focus must remain on Christ and not on the signs themselves. As an illustration, if you were driving down the highway, you watch the signs for direction, but your hope is to reach your destination — not just to watch the signs! The signs of the times serve a good purpose because they remind us of the imminent return of Christ and point towards Him as the "author and perfecter of faith," (Hebrews 12:2).

In the excitement of seeing the fulfillment of the signs of the times, we must avoid the danger of interpreting them to predict the date of Christ's return. In Matthew 24:36 Jesus said, "but of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven nor the Son, but the Father alone." We should not presume to know more than Christ about the time of His return.

Pastor William Miller, founder of the Millerite Movement, said in 1818: "I am fully convinced that some time between March 21, 1843, and March 21, 1844, according to Jewish mode of computation, Christ will come and bring all His saints with Him"<sup>1</sup>

# Waiting And Watching

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*But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near (Luke 21:28).*

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It was a sad day on October 14, 1844, when another Millerite leader wrote in his journal, "It is a cloudy and dark day here — the sheep are scattered — the Lord has not come."<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, we should not allow our attitudes to become indifferent as we watch certain signs of the times take place. I believe sermons would improve dramatically if pastors preached because they were excited and expectant about Christ's Return. And our congregations would flock to the church for the weekly prayer meeting if their faith sensed the nearness of Christ's Second Coming.

Martin Luther certainly believed that the time of Christ's return was near. And his sermons reflected that expectant spirit. He wrote, "I do not wish to force any one to believe as I do; neither will I permit anyone to deny me the right to believe that the last day is at hand. These words and signs of Christ compel me to believe that such is the case."<sup>3</sup>

Scripture tells us that when Christ returns, he will "descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God." As one hymn writer wrote: "Some day we'll leave this world of sin with all its dark despair, and, like

Elijah, rise to meet our Savior in the air. We'll be caught up in a chariot of clouds! Like Elijah of old, to the mansions of gold, we'll be caught up in a chariot of clouds."<sup>4</sup>

I encourage you this Advent season to wait with joyful and expectant hearts for Christ's Second Coming. And as you wait with hope in God's promise, watch as God unfolds and fulfills His gracious signs, given to remind us that the time of the Lord's Return is at hand.



— by Rev. Joel Lohafer  
Triumph Lutheran  
Church  
Ferndale, Washington

## Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Walter Martin, *The Kingdom of the Cults*, (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, 1965), p. 361.

<sup>2</sup> IBID, p. 362.

<sup>3</sup> Editor John Lenker, *Sermons of Martin Luther*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House) p. 62.

<sup>4</sup> John Peterson, *Chariot of Clouds*, from "Praise" Hymnal.

## Plans To Purchase Bus

**W**ould you like to have the opportunity to spend two weeks serving God in a foreign mission field? What do you think about having an opportunity to live in a foreign culture for two weeks? How would you like to get you and your family away from the telephone and the television for two weeks and spend time studying and obeying God's Word?

At the AFLC annual conference this past June, a group was recognized and given the responsibility to establish a ministry that would allow and encourage lay people to have "hands on" involvement in mission work. The new organization, **Partners in Mission Outreach**, is under the direction of the AFLC World Missions Department.

The primary function of **Partners in Mission Outreach** is to come-along-side and support foreign missionaries. They will assist the missionaries on location with street evangelism, distribution of Bibles and tracts and also with physical labor for construction projects. Northern Mexico has been designated as our immediate target.

Several AFLC churches, in conjunction with an outside agency, have already taken short term mission trips to Mexico. Articles have been published in *The Lutheran Ambassador* telling of the accomplishments and life changing experiences of those groups. The formulation of **Partners in Mission Outreach** will make this experience available to the entire AFLC.

**Partners in Mission Outreach** will be operated as a self-supporting group. We do not intend to draw off monies that are so badly needed in other areas. Our long term intent is to get people really excited, very concerned and personally involved in the AFLC World Missions program and the Great Commission "go into all the world," which was given to us by Jesus Christ.

We have found that the fastest, most comfortable method of transporting people back and forth to Northern Mexico to participate in these short term outreaches is by bus. **Partners in Mission Outreach** has located a 1973 (Greyhound) MCI-7 motorcoach. The bus has a rebuilt 318 Detroit diesel with only 83,000 miles on the engine. It comes equipped with factory heating, air conditioning, bathroom, sound proofing and reclining seats. The bus appears to be mechanically sound and the service record indicates that it has been well taken care of.

The purchase price plus insurance, licensing and adding a small galley is \$20,000. Almost \$9,000 has been pledged by individuals and churches. However, we need your pledge. Please pray about how you or your church might help the AFLC to purchase this bus. It is our desire that all of the money needed would be made available so that it would not be necessary to take out a loan.

Your gift should be sent to World Missions Department, Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55441-3099. Please indicate on an attached note that your gift is for **Partners in Mission Outreach**, bus purchase.

If you are interested in participating in a short term outreach to Northern Mexico, contact Clark Berg, 705 Lost Creek Drive, Kalispell, MT 59901; or phone 406-755-4160.

The 1993 trip dates to northern Mexico are January 8-22 from the Fargo area and points south, February 12-26 from the Kalispell area, March 20-April 3 (tentative) from the West Coast area, and June 11-25 (tentative) will be a special youth outreach.

**Missionary Dan and Debbie Giles**, Aguascalientes, Gto., Mexico, now have a telephone in their home. The number is 011-52-49-173861.

Another addition to our AFLC missionary address book is the expanded zip code for Campo Mourao, Brazil. It should now be 87300-970.



Partners in Mission

## Partners In Prayer



**Praise God** for the completion of the Brazil Bus Project! The bus has already been a tremendous blessing for the children's home, schools and congregations around Campo Mourao.

**Pray** for Rev. Eugene Enderlein, World Mission Director, and Rev. Elden Nelson, Home Missions Director.

**Pray** for Pastor John Abel's evangelistic meetings and training sessions scheduled through January. The budget for evangelism is nearly depleted and we need your help so that he can complete his schedule in this vital AFLC ministry. As the Lord guides you, send your gift to the AFLC and indicate it is for evangelism. No gift is too small.

### Missionary/Pastor Opportunity Available

An opening is available for a missionary/pastor to work with the Native American populations in the communities of White Earth and Elbow Lake, Minnesota. The position requires strong biblical perspective and a commitment to an evangelical mission effort. This individual should also enjoy working with youth. The Northern Lutheran Mission Board operates this mission. For further information, please contact Jesse Finch, Route 2, Waubun, MN 56589; phone 218-734-2207 or Rev. Alvin Larson, Route 1E, Box 119A, Ogema, MN 56569; phone 218-375-4331.



## Home Missions



mission Outreach bus.

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

**Pray** for the financial needs in each of the Home Mission congregations as they are without their November subsidy.

**Praise God** for the completion of the first retreat at the ARCA with 130 Free Lutheran youth participating. On Sunday, September 6, the new camping center was dedicated with nearly 200 people present. An organ donated by a church in the U.S. had arrived safely and was used for the first time at the dedication service.

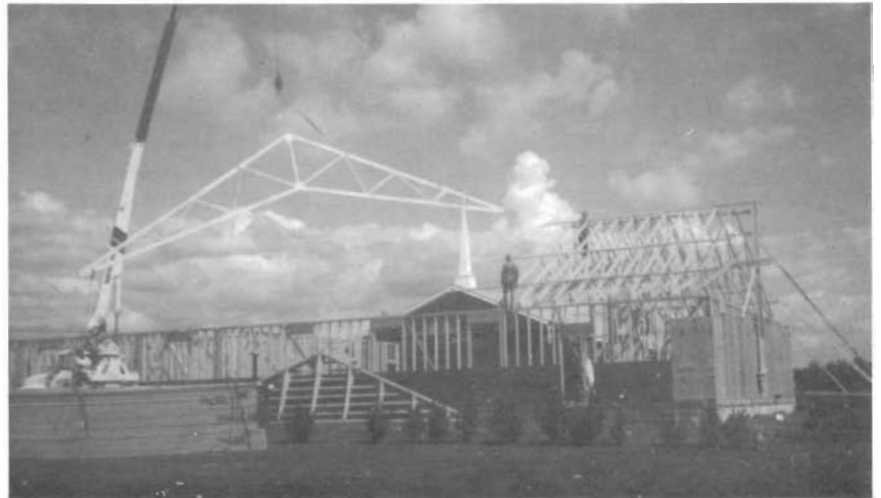
**Pray** for the pastors beginning new calls in Bismarck, North Dakota; Chilli-cothe, Illinois; and Murrieta, California.

**Praise God** for the favorable verdict in the India lawsuit.

**Pray** for the Home Mission congregations calling a pastor: Redeemer, Canton, South Dakota; Bethany, Spokane, Washington; and Warroad, Warroad, Minnesota.

**Praise God** for the mission work underway in Topeka, Kansas; Monroe, Washington; Cambridge, Minnesota; and Tucson, Arizona. **Pray** that His name might be glorified as the Word goes forth.

**Pray** for the safe return of missionary David Abel and family as they come to the States in early December for their furlough. There continues to be a housing need, preferably near the Twin Cities, as well as a transportation need. The Abels expect to be available for deputation after the new year. Please contact the AFLC World Missions office for arrangements.



### Ortonville, Minnesota

Abiding Faith Free Lutheran Church of Ortonville has begun construction of the second phase of their building program. The first phase, a 40' by 50' multipurpose building, was completed in November, 1989, and was completely paid for by October of this year. The second phase will be a 110' by 50' structure which will have a sanctuary that seats 250, twelve Sunday school rooms, an office, a library-conference room and a youth activities hall. Much of the interior work will be done by church members and it is hoped that the completion date will be around Christmas this year.



### Bismarck, North Dakota

Rev. John Mundfrom was installed as the new pastor of Calvary Free Lutheran Church, 417 S. Anderson St., Bismarck, North Dakota on Sunday, October 18, with Rev. Robert Lee, president of the AFLC, officiating. Rev. Lee spoke on the text from Galatians 6:1-5.

Special music was provided by Rev. and Mrs. John Mundfrom who sang "Savior Like A Shepherd, Lead Us." Rev. Gerald Mundfrom of Osceola, Wisconsin, father of the newly installed pastor, also participated in the installation.

Following the service, a potluck fellowship dinner was served by the ladies of the congregation.

The Mundfrom's new address is 1702 Braman Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58502; phone 701-222-0530.

## Homecoming 1992

On October 16-18, approximately 150 AFLBS alumni attended the annual Homecoming weekend festivities. Five classes were honored from the years of 1967, 1972, 1977, 1982 and 1987. The theme for the weekend was, "Arise, shine for your light has come and the glory of the Lord has come upon you," (Isaiah 60:1).

Mark Johnson led the Friday evening singing and sharing time in the campus chapel. Kari Lane, Carrie (Cornish) Larson, Wanda (Holmaas) Spading and Rev. Tonnes Pollestad, representatives from the honored classes, spoke on how the Lord has led in their lives since AFLBS days. The evening concluded with the traditional ice cream social, followed by skits, fun and fellowship.

Saturday began with a continental breakfast and business meeting. The morning Bible study was led by Eric Westlake. The afternoon was filled with relays, volleyball, football and, of course, shopping. The evening pizza party was followed by a service of singing from several Ambassador Gospel Teams and the well represented class of 1977.

Beautiful weather was an extra blessing for all those who attended, especially for those who came from Montana and the West Coast. Special thanks goes to the hard working Homecoming Committee: Brent and Carla (Bengston) Boen; Brian and Amy Pentti; Gwen Berge; Brad Jones; Mary Modean; and Vrenda Bengtson.

Photos by V. Bengtson



Alumni from the classes of '79 and '78 sang during the Saturday evening program.



Carrie (Cornish) Larson ('82) and Lisa (Eckrem) Hoyden ('81) flew from Washington state. Carol Ostrand ('87) Oregon, also attended Homecoming '92.



1990 and '92 AFLBS graduates settled down to enjoy the annual football game.

### FINANCIAL AID AWARDED

The AFLC Schools Financial Aid Committee recently awarded \$19,404 to students of the seminary and Bible school to help with their expenses.

The sources for these financial grants include Aid Association for Lutherans, Lutheran Brotherhood,

FASTEN fund, Paul Bjornstad Music Scholarship, AFLBS alumni, H. Morris Borstad Scholarship, and other interested friends.

The students are very grateful for God's provision for their school expenses through these donors.

### Impact Funds Received

The Association Free Lutheran Bible School, Minneapolis, has recently received \$1,000 from Lutheran Brotherhood's IMPACT-IMPACT PLUS Program, (Inviting Member Participation in Aiding Lutheran Colleges and Theological Seminaries).



The 1987 Ambassadors sang during the Homecoming weekend. Pictured are Todd Erickson, Annette (Fagerberg) Wire and Jane (Nelson) Severance. Naomi (Monseth) Halvorson was at the piano.

## Welcome To The AFLC Schools Annual Christmas Concert December 13, 4 p.m.



## AFLBS Basketball Season Underway

**P**ractice started Thursday, October 15, for both the men's and women's basketball teams. We are again practicing and holding home games at the King of Glory Free Lutheran Church in Eden Prairie.

This year there are nine women and 12 men on the teams. The first game for the men is against Alexandria Technical College November 13 and the women's first game is against Crown College November 17.

We are looking forward to a good season in which we can again serve the Lord and be witness for Him on and off the basketball court.

### Team members include:

#### Women's Team

Chrystal Albrecht, Northome, Minnesota  
Ruth Gunderson, Lake Stevens, Washington  
Beth Jackson, Ishpeming, Michigan  
Stephanie Johansen, Bismarck, North Dakota  
Lisa McClenehan, Hillsboro, North Dakota



The 1992-93 AFLBS Choir, Mr. Jerry Nelson, director.

Katrina Schierkolk, Prairie Farm, Wisconsin  
Kristin Schierkolk, Prairie Farm, Wisconsin  
Jennifer Onnen, Cokato, Minnesota  
Mialee Selen, Cloquet, Minnesota  
Coach — Wanda Jacobson

Assistant Coach — Wendy Qualley

#### Men's Team

Shawn Adrain, Binford, North Dakota  
Ryan Behne, Wheatland, Iowa  
Jon Dryburgh, Fordville, North Dakota  
Mark Edwards, Mt. Bethel, Pennsylvania  
~~Michael Franz, Cloquet, Minnesota~~

Brent Hartsoch, Ray, North Dakota  
Nathan Holmquist, Plymouth, Minnesota  
Jeremy Larson, Buffalo, North Dakota  
Kermit Nash, Colfax, North Dakota  
Nathaniel Olson, Valley City, North Dakota  
Daniel Pentti, Ishpeming, Michigan  
Alan Twedt, McHenry, North Dakota  
Coach — Joel Unverzagt  
Assistant Coach — John Greven

The latest payment covers ten gifts of Lutheran Brotherhood members made during the third quarter of 1992.

The IMPACT/IMPact Plus Programs match Lutheran Brotherhood members' gifts of \$25 to \$100 per year to Lutheran institutions of higher education nation wide.

Since the beginning of the program

in 1979, \$144,958 in IMPACT/IMPACT PLUS funds has been received by Association Free Lutheran Bible School. During that same period, Lutheran Brotherhood has allocated more than \$16.9 million on behalf of the 69 participating Lutheran colleges and seminaries.

# WOMEN

**Eastern Montana-Western North Dakota** — "Whoever serves Me, must follow Me," John 12:26a was the theme for the WMF Fall Rally. Our Savior's Free Lutheran Church of Stanley, North Dakota, hosted the rally on October 3. Pastor Jim Johnson of Reva, South Dakota, led a Bible study on the theme verse. Later he shared how he and his wife, Marsha, had become candidates for World Missions. He quoted II Corinthians 5:14-15 that Christ's love, not our love, compels us to serve. His was a different perspective on missions, coming from one who desires to serve on the mission field, not someone already serving on foreign ground. We became more aware of the sacrifices a missionary family must make and also the financial needs to support a missionary. Pastor Johnson encouraged us to become involved in giving to World Missions. Election of officers was held during the business meeting. Mrs. Charlotte Qualley of Brockton, Montana is the new president and Mrs. Carolyn Feldman of Stanley, North Dakota is the new treasurer and Cradle Roll secretary. Other officers are Mrs. Leota Elkins and Mrs. Jeannie Sheldon.

**Minneapolis District** — The WMF Fall Rally met October 17 at Amery Free Lutheran Church, Amery, Wisconsin. The theme "Christ's Call to Come," taken from Mark 8:34, was emphasized throughout the day. Pastor and Mrs. Paul Pillman from Zumbrota, Minnesota, now at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, had served with the World Mission Prayer League a number of years in Ecuador. They both presented the messages, morning and afternoon, via word, song and slides.

Tammy Vukonich led the hymn singing. Devotions were led by Bea Anderson in the morning and Ruth Fredrickson in the afternoon. Mrs. Gayle Kruse, president, led the testimony time which was used by God to touch hearts, encourage and comfort.

## Women's Missionary Federation Fall Rally Review



**South Dakota-Nebraska** — President Linda Buck presided at the Fall Rally held at Pukwana Lutheran Church, Pukwana, South Dakota, on September 19. Rev. Wesley Johanson, local pastor, led the morning Bible study from Nehemiah 1:1-17 on the theme, "Christian Revival In America." The business meeting was highlighted with a report on current affairs, by Beverly Nelson, Arlington, and the AFLC World Missions by Rev. Ted Berkas, Wallace. The afternoon session featured Mrs. Jeannie Brandt, Sioux Falls, who spoke on the urgent need to have humbled hearts before revival can move within us.

## Letter To Joshua

*(The following letter was sent to Joshua Pines, the infant son of Becky and the late Tim Pines, Dana Point, California, by the pastor who baptized him.)*

Dear Joshua:

The Sacrament of Baptism is a special time to see the grace of God in action. Your baptism on January 26 was a special event — one to be pondered for the rest of your life!

You have parents who looked forward with great anticipation to your entry into this world. What a great joy you have already brought to them. As parents, they feel a weighty responsibility to provide you with every benefit of home, school, hospital, and church. As an infant in a Christian home, it is appropriate to receive the blessing "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

Before your baptism you were crying, loudly; during your baptism you calmed down. Whether we are noisy or calm, we can receive our Heavenly Father's blessings, His will and His love. The baptism was good; your life with Jesus will be even better ...

Keep growing, Joshua. Physically, emotionally and spiritually you will need to be strong to stand against the pressure to give in to selfishness, evil, pain and greed. As the Lord was with you in your baptism, the Lord will be with you in every circumstance. I pray that you will continue to trust Jesus as your Lord and Savior. (It is an honor to be a Christian man of God!) Remember, God will complete what He began on January 26 ... your blessing to His glory!

With highest hopes for you,  
Your Pastor



**West Coast** — Ann Glimsdahl, Ferndale, was the morning speaker at the Fall WMF Rally in Ferndale, Washington on September 19. The theme was, "A Vessel for His Glory." Five ladies were honored in the Memorial Service. The local WMF, along with ladies from Kirkland, provided the special music for the day. Rev. Joel Lohafer, local pastor, gave the afternoon message on the theme.

**Lake Superior** — St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Finlayson, Minnesota, hosted the Fall Rally on September 19. The theme for the day was, "Servants of the Lord," based on Psalm 100:2. "O, Master Let Me Walk With Thee," was the theme song. President Beata Becker led the sessions. Darlynn and Darlene Kari provided special music. Mrs. Jan Norr, Virginia, led the morning Bible study. Afternoon devotions were led by Mrs. Nettie Illikainen and special music was provided by a ladies group from Cloquet and Joel and Audrey Rogenes. St. John's pastor, Ted Hanson brought the message on the theme.

**North Central Minnesota** — Hope Lutheran Church, Northome, was the hostess for the October 17th Fall Rally. Ephesians 5:20 and Thanksgiving was the theme. Rev. James and Linda Johnson, Fosston, spoke. Officers elected were Clellie Heicker, vice president and Clara Quam, treasurer.

## The 1993 National Luther League Convention

*Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life (Proverbs 4:23).*

As we prepare for the next Luther League Convention, note a number of similarities between the last convention and the 1993 model. Here are a few:

1. **Theme:** In 1991 we gathered under the theme "After God's Own Heart." This year's theme is "Guard Your Heart," (Proverbs 4:23).
2. **Location:** Estes Park, Colorado.
3. **Pre-registration** is required by June 1, 1993. Send to **Youth Convention**, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55441.

There are also a number of **changes** to keep in mind for the 1993 convention:

1. **Dates:** June 28-July 3. We regret the need to deviate from the traditional third week in July. However, because of a variety of problems that arose with both locations and dates, we had to alter the latter. We apologize for the inconvenience this has caused some of our District Camps and assure you of our desire that this will be a one-time alteration.
2. **Cost:** \$225 before March, 1, 1993 or \$250 after March 1. If you have received the 1993 brochure you will have noticed that the price is higher for this gathering than the last. There are chiefly two explanations: inflation and the inclusion of an additional day and night to the program.
3. **Program:** We all were incredibly blessed in 1991 with a wonderful slate of teachers. 1993 will hold the same promise with Pastor Richard Anderson as the evening speaker and Pastor Peter Amerman as the Bible Study leader. Workshops will be led by Pastor Paul Abel, "In Your Own Backyard"; Pastor Keith Quanbeck, "Dare to Discern"; Pastor Robert Lee, "New Age, Old Lie"; and Pastor Amerman with Betty Horgan each leading a workshop on sex and dating.
4. **Pastors and advisors:** We have exciting news for you too! First, we hope to have additional rooms so more of you will be able to stay on site if you desire. While we anticipate that campers and staff will reach the 1,00-1,100

mark, we have reserved 1,300 beds (more information will be forthcoming). **Secondly, we will be offering special sessions just for you** with valuable helps for your home ministries.

You are encouraged to pray for your youth and the 1993 convention! Ask the Lord to prepare the staff and speakers as well as the hearts of the youth in attendance. Also, pray that the Lord will protect that week for Himself and His glory.

Finally, if there are any questions you may have in relation to the convention, please address them to me, Pastor Terry Wold, c/o Shepherd's Church of the Valley, P.O. Box 872, Murrieta, CA 92362; phone 714-672-9624.

— Rev. Terry Wold  
Luther League President



Rev. Dennis Gray, Youth Resources Director; Mr. Bob Halvorson, Associate Director; and Rev. Joel Rolf, Youth Board Chairman, meeting in the Youth Director's office in the administration building.



## PEOPLE and PLACES

**Virginia, Minnesota** — Good Shepherd Lutheran Church hosted a praise service on Sunday, October 25. St. John's Free Lutheran Church, Duluth, led the service. Their choir, men's group and a mother-daughter duet provided the music. Mr. Cliff Eastvold shared about his past and present work on the mission field. St. John's pastor Steve Kneeland shared the Word from Genesis 16.



## letter to the editor

To the Editor:

There has been approval for calling a full-time youth worker to serve as a resource for our parents, youth advisors and youth.

Since becoming quarter-time as a youth worker for the AFLC in 1987, I want you to know that I have spent considerable time in this capacity. Almost on a daily basis, someone calls or writes. With the new youth office in the headquarters building, we are ready for a full-time youth director. There are many things that he can do.

The editor mentioned becoming a **Friend of Youth**. I would say "Amen" to this. The intention was to get at least

100 people giving \$5 per month in order to at least cover part of the youth worker's expenses.

Over 100 people voted in favor of a full-time position. May I encourage you to give \$100 per year so that we can begin to think of a full-time position. If those of us who voted "yes" would do this — earmarked for this project — we may soon see it realized.

Encourage the Youth Board and our youth. How about giving this to the Lord for a five year period?

What do you think?

*Rev. Dennis Gray  
Greenbush, Minnesota*

**Camarillo, California** — U.S. Congressman Elton Gallegly was a featured guest for Rally Day at First Lutheran Church, Camarillo, California, Pastor Walter Johnson.

Congressman Gallegly was instrumental in having a flag flown over the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., which was then presented to the First Lutheran School.

The flag, which was donated to the school by members, Richard and Helen Gulbranson, was formerly raised by Gallegly and school principal Mary Haugen, an AFLBS graduate.

After the dedication by Pastor Johnson and the singing of the Star Spangled Banner by Mrs. Marilyn Johnson, the school children led in the recitation of the pledge to the flag and in the singing of patriotic songs including: "I'm Proud to Be an American."

Other activities for the afternoon included a picnic and carnival.

Speaking to the assembled congregation and friends, Gallegly said he has a "great appreciation for the job you are doing in instilling love of flag and country in young people."

At worship services earlier in the day, 11 new members were received into the membership of First Lutheran Church.

A six-week "Spiritual Growth Experience" began at First Lutheran Church on October 4 with a week of special meetings at which Pastor Paul Nash was the guest speaker.

### Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

#### AFLC Benevolences — February 1 - October 31, 1992

FUND	TOTAL BUDGET	REC'D IN OCTOBER	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% TOTAL
General Fund . . . . .	\$295,450.00	\$19,437.86	\$143,581.43	49
Schools - (AFLTS) . .	149,535.00	8,907.51	56,946.18	38
(AFLBS) . .	208,625.00	12,415.98	87,518.65	42
Home Missions. . . . .	433,616.00	27,161.80	199,323.49	46
World Missions. . . . .	409,715.00	29,739.48	226,253.50	56
Capital Investment . .	30,000.00	1,071.90	14,303.71	48
Parish Education . . .	84,385.00	7,392.70	48,041.99	57
ARC . . . . .	20,000.00	367.54	5,385.95	27
<b>TOTALS . . . . .</b>	<b>\$1,631,326.00</b>	<b>\$106,494.77</b>	<b>\$781,354.96</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>1991 - 1992 . . . . .</b>	<b>\$1,537,681.00</b>	<b>\$114,005.61</b>	<b>\$730,702.91</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Goal 75%</b>				

## ALL CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE ADVENTISTS

All Christians? Adventists? It sounds like a startling statement on the surface, but this should not shock us into missing the meaning.

Laying all denominational labels aside, the word "adventist" can simply be defined as someone who believes in the "advent" or coming of Jesus Christ. A real adventist, therefore, rightly understood, is one who loves the Redeemer and longs for His appearing (II Timothy 4:8).

One of the many ailments that affects modern Christianity is the scarcity of this adventist spirit. The blessed hope has become merely the best alternative in the minds of too many believers. Heaven obviously sounds better than hell, and the coming of Christ for His children is certainly a more appealing option than a fearful and final judgment. Yet clearly conveyed in this earthbound perspective is the unspoken premise that the best would be for our present world to continue forever.

We frequently lament the fact that the line of separation between believers and unbelievers has become blurred. The root of this problem may be traced to the same source, for the Word of God declares that the hope of Christ's return is directly related to godly living. Peter writes in his second epistle some powerful words about the Coming of the Lord, concluding with the admonition, "Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless ..." (3:14). The same theme is sounded by John in his first epistle: "And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure," (3:1).

Christian, meditate on the Scriptures that speak of our Saviour's advent. He came, He comes. He is coming again. Our tired old world has never been more in need of the witness that a growing and glowing adventist Christian can be.

## A NEW PRESIDENT

This editorial is being prepared on the day after a new president of the United States was elected. *The Lutheran Ambassador* is read by people of different political persuasions, and so your responses to the result of this elec-

tion may range from elation to despair. Most commentators believe that a concern for economic issues convinced voters of the need to change presidents, in spite of the incumbent's attempts to focus on family values and character.

It is my observation, however, that there was little enthusiasm for either candidate of the two parties. People seem to be disillusioned with politics as usual, a condition that is not unique to the United States, according to reports of the recent Canadian referendum. A special concern, also, for Christians is the pro-abortion position of President-Elect Clinton, and what this will mean for the future of our country.

Let me suggest two important principles for us to remember and ponder. The first is a word from God: "First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity," (I Timothy 2:1-2). **Prayer** for the leaders of our country is commanded by God, whether we voted for them or not.

The second principle comes from our catechism. The explanation to the Fourth Commandment states: "We should fear and love God so that we do not despise our parents and superiors, nor provoke them to anger, but honor, serve, obey, love and esteem them." Question No. 64 amplifies it: "Whom should we honor and obey besides our parents? All those whom God has placed over us, such as guardians, employers, teachers, and the government." **Honor** as well as **obedience** to our leaders is included in God's command, too.

The United States of America, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, India, and all the other nations of the world face a spiritual crisis that makes economic concerns seem faint in comparison. Jesus Christ is the solution! May we be found faithful in the midst of political ups and downs in clearly and consistently proclaiming the Good News of salvation in Him!

**Tioga, North Dakota** — Zion Lutheran Church hosted their Fall Deeper Life meetings during November 1-5, with Rev. Robert Lee, AFLC president, as the guest speaker.

**Fargo, North Dakota** — St. Paul's Lutheran Church hosted an Evangelism Seminar along with their Fall Evangelistic Services. Rev. John Abel conducted a day-long seminar on Saturday, October 24 and concluded the training on Sunday afternoon. Monday evening, Oct. 26, was spent doing visitation work by the trainees. Special services were held the following two evenings.

**Plymouth, Minnesota** — Medicine Lake Lutheran Church has voted to sell their property on Zachary Lane and Old County 9. The Development Committee continues to pursue other possibilities for a new facility. Also, Evangelist Jonathan Maraj spoke at Medicine Lake's Life In Christ Crusade during October 18-21.

**Reva, South Dakota** — Slim Buttes Lutheran Church hosted a Spiritual Growth Conference during September 27-29. Rev. Philip Haugen of the AFLC School's faculty was the guest speaker.

**McIntosh, Minnesota** — Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church held special meetings during November 1-5. Rev. Michael Brandt, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, spoke at the nightly meetings on topics concerning the family.

**Osceola, Wisconsin** — The Association Retreat Center has purchased 15 homes. These homes are adjacent to the ARC complex. Plans are to develop a retirement community for pastors and other AFLC people. The reduced purchase price was made possible by a gift from the former owner of the ARC property.

# The Last Word

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

Second-Class

## The Last Prayer Meeting?

One day a military man came to his chaplain and asked, "Do you believe in hell?" The chaplain asked him, "Why?" "Well, you see, sir, if there is a hell, I need a chaplain who believes in one and you see, sir, if there is no hell, I don't need you!" Eternal punishment is the most unpopular subject in all of Scripture and yet because Jesus loves you, He speaks more about hell than heaven in the Bible. Yes, suppose it is true after all, what then?

In Luke 16:19-31, it seems Jesus opens the curtain that separates time and eternity and allows us to peer in.

I know some believe this is only a parable, but it is God's Word and I believe it is more than a parable for at least six reasons. There is a specific name mentioned. He can see, feel, pray and reason. Also he had five brothers.

In the face of so much scriptural evidence, why try to deny hell? Would you deny that there is a Sahara Desert because you have never been there? Whether a person believes there is a hell or not, **does not change the facts!**

This Scripture is for all man kind but it appears to be addressed especially to religious folk — notice Luke 16:15. Proverbs 16:2a states: "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes."

Sometimes we treat life as if it is only a trial basis or a scrimmage. Other times as if we are here indefinitely. Not only is life very real, **but so is eternity!**

With the numerous warnings in the Bible concerning hell, we **must** heed the warning. Likely some will say, "I have tried to do right and to follow the Golden Rule." But notice the clarity of Revelation 21:8, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death."

Four times in our text it mentions the rich man being in agony or torment. A person can be entertained into hell but never laughed out! In reality there are no atheists in hell — but then it is too late. What must a person do or

not do in order to go to hell? **Nothing!**

The wonderful "whosoever" of John 3:16 is not the only 'whosoever' in the Bible. In John 3:16 it is the marvelous grace of God in Christ Jesus. At the Great White Throne Judgment Seat of God we find another "whosoever." We read: "The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works ... and 'whosoever' was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire," (Revelation 20:14-15).

God has done a great thing (grace) that man might be saved from perishing. He could not have done more. He has given His only begotten Son for **You!** What proof of His love!

A little girl was going from door to door inviting people to Gospel Services. She was met by a rather cross lady who didn't believe in that stuff. The cross lady asked why she should attend? The child said, "So that you might be saved and not go to hell." The lady said she didn't believe there was a hell. The little girl responded, "If there isn't a hell, why do you think that Jesus died on the cross?" This profound Biblical truth went like an arrow to the heart of the lady and she was later converted.

In one sense, the rich man and multitudes like him go to hell with their sins paid for; but for one reason or another have not endorsed Calvary's check by not receiving the gift of Salvation.

You know if we do not hear the Law of God, then neither will we hear the Good News of the Gospel (Acts 4:12). The Law of God shows us who and what we are by nature and the Gospel tells us Jesus fulfilled the Law in our stead (James 2:10). God never created hell for mankind. The Bible says hell was "prepared for the devil and his angels," Matthew 25:41. The Bible states that "Hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure," (Isaiah 5:14).

The rich man in our text had no real place nor need for God here in this life, nor for the prayer meeting and yet in eternity **he prays** and wants to spend all eternity with God — **but now it's too late!**

Knowing every human being will spend all eternity somewhere; what does Jesus mean to you? Does your neighbor know that Jesus is the most important person in your life? We who are saved thus witnessing to the unregenerate need to keep in perspective that we were once on the way to hell, too.

**Friend, when will you have a missionary vision, now or in eternity?**



— By Pastor  
Rodney Stueland