

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

October 1, 1991



AFLBS 25 YEARS



THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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The Association Free Lutheran Bible School 25th Anniversary Issue

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Living In your Baptism

It rhymes better in Norwegian, but a free translation of the old hymn verse might be: "Of baptized people teems country and city, but where is the flame of the Spirit?"

Much is said about baptism in the church of today. Sometimes it appears to be made an automatic pilot into heaven. Have our people come any further spiritually than the disciples the Apostle Paul found at Corinth (Acts 19:1ff.) of whom he asked: "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They had to confess: "No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." So Paul asked, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered: "Into John's baptism." Paul informed them: "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe on the One who was to come after him, that is, Jesus ..." and {they were baptized into the name of Jesus."

If baptism, as a means of grace is so effective, why do we not see more of the flame of the spirit resulting? Peter told the people at Pentecost, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). The result: those baptized "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42). There was new life and power to witness. Is this the church we see today when baptism is so magnified? Perhaps we are magnifying the mere outward rite and man must say, "We have never heard that there is a Holy Spirit." Perhaps with the mere outward ceremony there may not even be a baptism of repentance and turning to Jesus! How would you answer Paul's question: "Into what were you baptized?"

Baptism, as a means of grace for salvation, is not to be minimized. It is the means God ordained to impart the benefits of the salvation wrought on the cross of Calvary. Might an over-emphasis on the mere outward rite become a means for the devil to hide

Light on the Way

the cross and its regenerating power from the eyes of church members, lest they be saved? Without the cross, baptism is an empty rite. If our people are led to trust only in the rites of baptism and confirmation, they are sold a false bill of goods; cheap grace indeed, ineffective for salvation.

Many baptized people live in the pattern of the world and in its sins. Their life gives no evidence of a difference between baptized and unbaptized. However, in Romans 6, the Apostle outlines the true meaning of baptism, beginning with the question: "Are we to continue in sin?" to which he gives the answer: "By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?" He then asks: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" Paul continues to teach, "We are buried, therefore, with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk with him in a resurrection life like his" (v. 6:4).

Paul explains further, (v.6) "We know that our old self was crucified with him so the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For he who has died is freed from sin." In the Small Catechism, Martin Luther puts it this way, "(the water) signified that the Old Adam in us should by daily sorrow and repentance be drowned and die, with all sins and evil lusts; and again a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever." Is this your baptism?

With such a baptism the Holy Spirit can work power in the resulting life. My friends, have you recently and seriously considered your baptism in this light? Is yours a mere empty rite bringing no salvation, or have you been really baptized into the death and newness of life in Jesus? Is your fellowship with the Holy Spirit?

—Rev. Kermitt C. Grundahl



25 Years

June 1965 — A young AFLC pastor sat in the new chapel a few hundred yards up from Medicine Lake in a Minneapolis suburb. Around him were a few hundred people who, a couple of years earlier, had accomplished The Improbable: they started — and sustained — a new fellowship of Lutheran congregations and founded a seminary. Now it was time for an additional founding block. And the young pastor was watching it happen at the AFLC's annual conference meeting that June.

"It was one of the old Hauge laymen," remembered the young pastor, Richard Snipstead, now more than 25 years later, the president of the AFLC. "I remember him standing up and saying, 'We need a Bible school for our young people!'"

A Bible school?

How could they? There were so many roadblocks:

- For one: there were no buildings — except for a chapel. The seminary and AFLC officers were already using that.

- Moreover, there was no money. Starting a new fellowship of congregations had cost the AFLC. They would need thousands. Tens of thousands.

- Third, there were no teachers. The seminary had Dr. Iver Olson, but the new association lacked pastors — let alone teachers — for a Bible school.

- And that's not to mention a fourth: there were no students. With six other major Lutheran Bible schools already going strong in Minneapolis, Seattle, Los Angeles, New Jersey, Fergus Falls, Minnesota, and another in Canada, what kind of chance did a little Bible institute in Plymouth, Minnesota, stand?

But for the young pastor, the AFLC conference, and the people like the old Hauge layman in 1965, there was no doubt: "It was a foregone conclusion." Pastor Snipstead remembered. "We were going to have a Bible school."

He smiled.

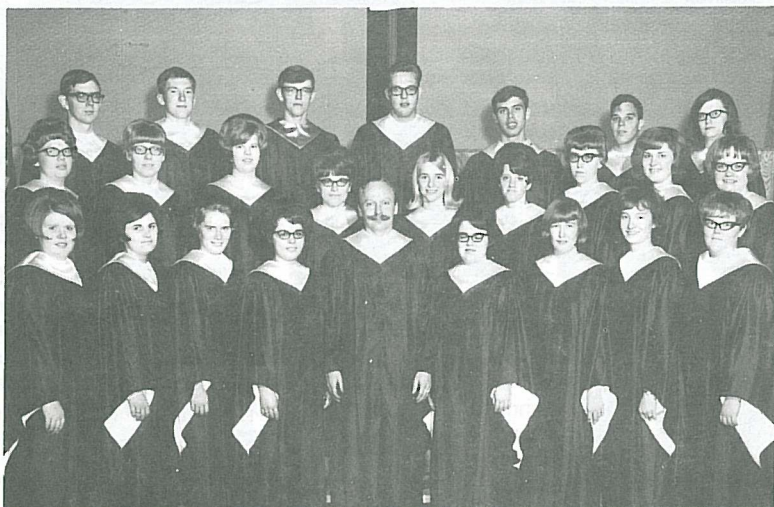
Out the window of the AFLC president's office, you notice two big reasons for happiness around the AFLC headquarters: twin brick buildings, home to AFLBS offices, classrooms and women's and men's residences. ◇



The first student body.



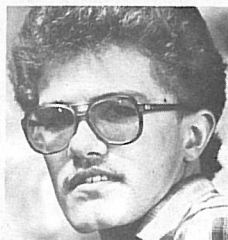
The first summer Gospel Team.



The 1967-68 choir.



The campus after the men's dorm was built in 1974.



On the main floor of one of the buildings, Pastor Don Greven, dean of the Association Free Lutheran Bible School, is administering the details of the largest two-year Lutheran Bible school in the nation. Several letters of application came across his desk a week before students would move in. On the second floor of the other, the resident head tries to figure a way to squeeze two more students in the men's dorm. All the rooms are full. "It looks like I'll go without an office," he says.

Happy Anniversary.

AFLBS is 25 years old.

Which brings to mind Psalm 119:73 and 74: "Give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments. May those who fear Thee see me and be glad, because I wait for Thy word."

That's an AFLBS-type prayer. A Bible student comes to learn the ways of the Lord. He comes out of high school and sets aside college, or career, or marriage — he "waits" — so that he can "learn" to know the Lord. And people who fear God "see" such a student. And they're glad. We're glad. Because a student is waiting, is hoping, in the Word — not the world.

Yes, we're glad. After a quarter of a century, AFLBS and the AFLC have so much to celebrate.

No. 1: More than 1,300 students have studied at AFLBS. Back in 1966, the fall when AFLBS opened — with a classroom in the chapel and dorm space in the basement and in a home on the lake — it was just 13. And when the young pastor was called from Ferndale, Washington, to become AFLBS Dean, the school included 35 students and one brand new beautiful brick building.

No. 2: Of those 1,300, about 30 have returned to the AFLC seminary and become pastors of the AFLC's growing number of congregations or missionaries. A handful have become lay pastors. And hundreds of others have become workers and witnesses, fathers and mothers — doctors, lawyers, carpenters, dentists, school teachers, coaches, homemakers, managers — helping to make the kingdom of God flourish.

No. 3: Though it's a long way from the \$900 it cost to attend Bible school (room, board and tuition) in 1966, the \$3,200 it costs now still stands among the least expensive educational fees around — with about one-third of the total costs coming from the AFLC and other supporters. For example, total costs at Christian colleges around the Minneapolis-St. Paul area this year range from \$10,000 to \$12,500. (Two such schools accept nearly all of AFLBS' credits.)

And No. 4: After all these years, the word AFLBS uses to describe the Bible remains the same as the one used in 1966: "Inerrant." And so it's not strange that when that emphasis waned at other Bible institutes, so did their enrollment. And now, AFLBS, the smallest of six Lutheran Bible schools in 1966, becomes the largest by 1990. This fall, the school that believes that every last word in the Bible came from God — and every word is true — expects about 110 students.

Oh, sure, some things have changed. In 1966, the AFLBS faculty, headed by AFLC President John Strand, consisted of two other men, Iver Olson and Arnold Stone, and five women who taught part-time. In 1991, AFLBS has eight teachers: Pastors Phil Haugen, Ralph Tjelta and Don Greven, Christian education instructor Bev Enderlein, music director Marian Christopherson, as well as Doctors Fran Monseth, Steve Lombardo and Craig Jennings. Some area pastors also teach part-time.

Students look different — but not much. The landscape is beautiful. The campus grounds are no longer just a bare hill. And the neighborhood has changed. Suburban homes — some ranging in the \$400,000 to \$500,000 range — have popped up all around our 20 acres.

But other things have not changed.

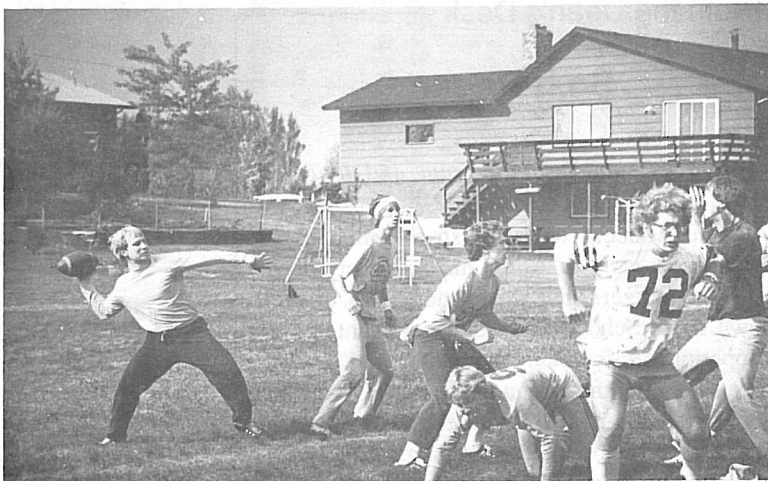
Like a curriculum that centers on Bible study. And teachers who not only believe the Bible is inerrant, but who use it for daily devotions and for witnessing to their neighbor across the street. And a focus on leading students not just to higher GPAs, but to a closer relationship to Jesus Christ.

And like a group of praying and concerned supporters, who say, as an old Hauge layman said in 1965, "We need a Bible school for our young people."

— by James L.
Johnson



James L. Johnson, an AFLBS graduate in 1982, is a senior at the AFLC seminary. After Bible School, James graduated from the University of Minnesota with a B.A. from the School of Journalism in 1987. He and his wife, Linda (Jackson), an AFLBS graduate of 1984, have two children, Elizabeth, 3, and Hannah 1, and expect another in November. The couple serves as head residents in the men's dorm at AFLBS while attending seminary.



We invite all friends of the school to join us in praise at the 25th anniversary banquet celebration on Saturday, October 12, at 6 p.m., at Emmaus Lutheran Church in Bloomington, and for the Praise Service on campus Sunday, October 13, at 11 a.m. Reservations for the banquet must be made by October 4, at the AFLBS office (612) 544-9501.

So It Began

And you shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free (John 8:32).

The concern to establish a Bible School came early in AFLC history. Many of the organizers had warm memories of their own Bible School days, and they wanted such opportunities for their own children. So it was not surprising that at the first annual conference held in Fargo in 1963, a resolution was passed calling for the possible establishment of a Bible School. This concern was voiced at each succeeding conference.

The lay people of the Association were the driving force in the promotion of Bible School. During the 1966 conference, informal groups were meeting, praying that God would lead, and a Bible School be opened. The conference concurred with the Board that a Bible School be opened that fall. There were to be no excuses.

But there was nothing human to start with; no faculty, no students, no facilities, little time, and very little money.

I recall going to visit Mr. and Mrs. Ray Jacobson on their beautiful dairy farm near Sebeca, Minnesota, appealing to them to come to Minneapolis to help get a school going. Thankfully, they agreed. And how they worked — planning, remodeling, building, cleaning, and praying. Both classroom and dormitory space had to be arranged in the headquarters building. Amazingly, preparations were somewhat complete when the 13 students began their Bible School training in September, 1966.

It was apparent that another building was needed for classrooms, offices, and dormitory. The 1967 conference made the decision to erect the needed building. But where was the money to come from? Lending agencies, even Lutheran ones, would not loan the Association any money. Later this was seen as a blessing. The money would have to come from our own people.

Pastor Trygve Dahle and Pastor George Soberg promoted a "One Grand Fellowship," people who would give at least one thousand dollars for the building program. Many joined this "Fellowship." We recall the words of a Dakota rancher, "That is one Fellowship I want to be in." Those who could not give that much gave as they could. And many loaned money to the building program so the building could be built. When the building was completed, it was free of debt except to our people. It was so

Bible School Graduates Remember and Reflect

It is hard to imagine what our lives would be like if we had **not** attended Bible School, but without question they would be much different. To begin with, we probably would not even know each other, much less be husband and wife. It was during our two years together at AFLBS that we became acquainted, shared our mutual faith in Jesus Christ, and then began to grow closer together.

Besides this obvious impact on our lives, our time at AFLBS is also one of the major influences upon our personal faith in Jesus. Although we were both Christians when we enrolled in Bible School, there was a deepening and maturing of our relationship with the Lord that took place as we read and studied God's Word and allowed it to



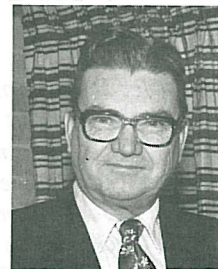
The 1970-71 AFLBS Men's Quartet.

apparent that the people throughout the congregations wanted that building, that Bible School.

Bible School students come with various needs. Not all are Christians, but all need edification in the Scriptures. We recall late one evening while working in the office, hearing a timid knock at the back door. There stood a teary-eyed student desiring spiritual help. How good to point such to Jesus, and kneel in prayer with a sincere soul as God gives assurance of His grace.

Where there are people, even Christian people, at times there are problems and difficulties. Such was the case with the Bible School. But these are minor in comparison with the joys and victories.

"The highest aim in life is Truth," Sverdrup, one of the fathers of The Lutheran Free Church taught. Jesus told His disciples, "Every plant which My Father did not plant shall be rooted up." In the eyes of God, only that which is of the Truth is worthy. Before Him the Bible School, yes, all must stand.



—Rev. John P. Strand
AFLBS Acting Dean,
1966-68

grow within our hearts. Without question, it was this firm foundation that enabled us to endure the testings and trials God has permitted us to experience during the following years, and to be certain of His continued presence until the day when Jesus returns to take us home.

Finally, we could not evaluate the influence of AFLBS upon us without mentioning the deep friendships which resulted from those months spent living, studying and praying with other Christian young people. During the 21 years since we graduated, we have gotten to know many other people all over the Midwest, but nearly all of our deepest and closest friends still are the ones who were classmates from Bible School.

— *Pastor John and
Lorilee Mundrom
AFLBS Class of 1970
Eben Junction, Michigan*

After graduation from AFLBS, I traveled to Norway for six weeks on the 1971 Bible School Choir Tour. I then got married a month later to a classmate, a dairy farmer's daughter from Wisconsin named Mary Ellen Nyhus.

My wife and I had a son, Justin Lee, in August, 1972. We also had two more children, Cybil Marie in April, 1975, and Jeremiah Tyler in December, 1989.

Justin is currently attending AFLBS and really appreciates his time there. Cybil is active in basketball and enjoys music. Jeremiah is an active toddler and is a lot of fun to have around. Mary Ellen is the organist at our church, as well as a full-time homemaker.

We have lived on this farm ever since our marriage, raising corn, soybeans, and sunflowers, as well as hogs. We love and thank God for our family and His goodness to us. Christ is the center of our home and without Him

we would not be where we are today.

Mary Ellen and I are thankful that we both attended AFLBS, and feel our time there has helped equip us to be more effective witnesses in our home and community, and for me to be a more knowledgeable deacon in our church.

"O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; For His loving kindness is everlasting" (I Chronicles 16:34).

— *Tim Jones
AF LBS Class of 1971
Wyndmere, North Dakota*



*Cindy
Schlenk,
First Alumni
Director*

From the Dean's Desk

The Twenty-Five Years of AFLBS

The early years of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations were exciting ones. The organizational conference in October of 1962 was followed by a series of major decisions and developments.

The headquarters building and a president's residence were purchased in 1964. The seminary also began in the fall of 1964.

There was much expression in our AFLC on the need of a Bible School where our youth could be grounded in the Word. Elderly lay people and parents with teenagers were the chief proponents.

The 1965 Annual Conference recognized the need of a Bible School but cautioned that first a full-time dean must be secured. Discussion of the Bible School continued throughout the congregations of the AFLC that next year. The 1966 Annual Conference in June gave the "green-light" to a Bible School starting by September. It was truly a venture of faith for the Seminary Board. It was a start from scratch. A faculty, classrooms, housing and dean of women were among the most urgent needs. Pastor John Strand, president of the AFLC, served as the acting dean. September came, and AFLBS opened its doors to 13 students. How God blessed to make it all possible!

Interest on the part of AFLC youth in the Bible School grew rapidly. The enrollment by the second year was 35 students. It prompted the conference in June, 1967, to move for the calling of a full-time dean and the construction of a dormitory-classroom building.

It was this writer's privilege to accept the call to become the first full-time dean. We moved into a new home, which the Association had provided.

The new dormitory made it possible for the Bible School to conduct the school activities as a school family. This was a tremendous blessing to the students. The 46 students and the new dean were almost in awe of the wonderful facilities that had been provided. I believe that group of students more than any other have really appreciated what the Association was doing for the Bible School.

This is not the end of the story. AFLBS continued to grow, reaching an enrollment of 122 students in 1972. To help meet the needs of the growing school, a boys' dormitory was authorized by the conference in June, 1973.

We have not yet come to the end of the story. The true story of AFLBS continues in the people whose lives have been indelibly inscribed with the great truths of the Word of God. Our whole AFLC is the benefactor of the resulting blessing.

The story of AFLBS will continue until the Lord comes as long as there continues to be a firm commitment to the teaching of the inerrant Word of God as the only source and norm for faith and life.



— *Rev. Richard Snipstead
AFLBS Dean, 1968-1975*

GRADUATES

When I think back on why I went to Bible School, I never thought about how it would affect or assist me in my career or how I would use the things I learned as a wife and a mother of three children.

But now, close to 20 years later, I see how God had it planned how He would use two years of Bible School to prepare me for my work in a nursing home. I share the gift of salvation, lead Bible studies and pray with the residents when they are scared about the future. In Sunday School, my AFLBS training is helpful in teaching classes and new songs to the children and assisting them in the importance of memorizing Bible verses. My greatest tasks are teaching my own children to spend time daily in God's Word so He can guide them through their school

I am thankful for the opportunity I had to spend two years at AFLBS. I still recall those years with fondness. Besides the obvious, Debbie (Wire), who said "I do" 15 years ago, there are many reasons why I value my years studying at Bible School.

It is a joy to be able to identify with a school that seeks by God's grace to uphold the saving truth of the Gospel as found only in the Bible.

I pray that young people will continue to come to AFLBS, not only for two years, but for a lifetime of surren-

days, and to spend time together as a family in devotions and prayer.

Lord willing, some day I pray that I too may be able to send my children to our Bible School — AFLBS

— Kathi (Jones) Anderson
AFLBS Class of 1974
Lisbon, North Dakota

dered service to our Lord and Savior.

We acknowledge that numbers are not everything, but we eagerly welcome the time when our present facilities are outgrown. Is it too much to think that in the near future a library that would serve both of the schools could be built? A multi-purpose auditorium could be erected on campus to serve both the recreational and physical needs of the students. This also could be used as a large meeting place.

It is good to dream. However, it is more important to be faithful with what has been entrusted to us by God as He leads us. We thank God for the past 25 years and pray He will find us faithful in the future.

— Arne Berge
AFLBS Class of 1976
Binford, North Dakota
Member Board of Trustees

From the Dean's Desk

Faithfulness

I have many reasons to rejoice as I reflect on the years I spent as Dean of AFLBS. As we celebrate 25 years of God's faithfulness to His Word, I want to warmly greet the whole AFLBS family and publicly give thanks to God for all of you. The Lord of the Church has chosen in His mercy to bless us together.

I thank God for what He taught me during my nine years on campus. For me, it was certainly true that the teacher learned more than the student. Just as a choir director is to have ten times the enthusiasm he expects his choir to project, so also a teacher needs to have ten times the amount of knowledge he expects his students to absorb. I also learned from the lives of others. It is wonderful to be in fellowship with those who are reflecting God's grace and His glory.

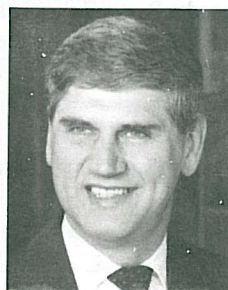
I also thank God for faithful and loyal colleagues who selflessly shared the load and divided the burden. For example, I fondly recall the times in Pastor Amos Dyrud's office when he would begin his prayer, "Dear God, thank you that this is your work ..." and the burdens of the day were lifted as together we turned them over to our loving Father in Heaven. I also recall walking down the hill toward our home after an evening meeting in one of the dorms and thanking God that there were those whom God called to serve as deans of men and women so that I could go home and get a good night's rest. I could go on with many other examples of how God has blessed AFLBS with faithful workers.

Another striking remembrance is the abundance of God's grace, sufficient to cover all our sins and shortcomings. I often failed, students often failed, faculty and staff often

failed, but God's grace was and is greater than all our sins. Occasionally now as I meet former students, I see or hear a lingering sense of guilt over past failures. Let's remember that we are forgiven! God is faithful! And for those of you who might still wonder if I have forgiven you, be assured that you are forgiven, and I think that I have also forgotten most of what you did!

Finally, with great joy I remember the working power of God's Word. Again and again the truth of Hebrews 4:12, 13 was demonstrated in the lives of those who heard and studied the Scriptures. Recently a former student asked me, "Did you know that a friend of mine at AFLBS came to the assurance of salvation while sitting in your Romans class one day?" I was reminded afresh of the power of the Gospel in which the righteousness of God is revealed unto salvation and unto Christian living. In this unique setting, which we call Bible School, God uses His Word to miraculously generate and sustain life by His grace.

Let us thank God together for these 25 years which have confirmed to us, "God's Word is our great heritage, and shall be ours forever."



— Rev. Kenneth Moland
AFLBS Dean, 1976-1984

My time at AFLBS affects my life today not only by what I learned there, but by how I learned it. I learned to look deeper into God's Word and appreciate the nearly infinite number of truths, promises, and helps that are contained there. I saw the study of God's Word presented, not only with conviction, but also with enthusiasm. God certainly used that time to mold my attitude toward Bible study. Even today that time affects how I approach the study of God's Word.

— Arden Jacobson
AFLBS Class of 1979
Champlin, Minnesota

Greetings from Idaho, world of famous potatoes! Eighteen months ago we were making wedding plans, concluding our last year of Bible School and having no idea where the Lord would lead us. In July, 1990, we were married in my home town of Vernon, British Columbia. Through the help of an uncle, Bill found a job framing homes in Idaho. I am currently working in sales for a major department store.

Moving to Idaho has separated us from close Christian friends. Sometimes it is easy to long for those days at AFLBS and move back to the Minneapolis area. But the Lord is gracious. He reminds us that we are here for a reason and gives us a thankful heart. During those two years at Bible School, we were grounded in God's Word, convictions were developed and life-changing decisions were made. We thank God for all our teachers who are also our friends.

Only recently did we begin attending Bethany Free Lutheran Church, Spokane, Washington. Once again, God has blessed us with young adults our age to encourage one another in Christian fellowship.

My parents always said that going to Bible School is something that you'll treasure as the best years of your life. They were right! Thank you for helping to make our memories everlasting and our faith stronger.

— Pam (Lyseng) Momerak
AFLBS Class of 1990
Post Falls, Idaho

Reflections

This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes" (Psalm 118:23).

We look back with praise and thanksgiving to God for our Bible School and for the many students whose lives have been changed and enriched through the study of God's Word.

The dream of having our own Bible School was always there during those infant years of the AFLC. Many of our people had attended the Lutheran Bible Institute in Minneapolis and were willing supporters of the AFLC beginning a Bible School of their own.

In the book, "The AFLC, Twenty Years of Beginnings and Blessings," we read: "The purpose of the Bible School is to bring youth into and establish them in the assurance of personal salvation in Christ Jesus through the study of God's Word. To assist youth to embrace the truth as found in the Bible and to reject the theological errors so prevalent today." Our Bible School continues to prepare young men for the pastoral ministry and to equip lay men and women to serve as lights in a dark world.

May God help us to preserve this heritage until He comes again!

— Rev. Ernest Langness
Member of the first Board of Trustees
Ishpeming, Michigan

From the Alumni Director

For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. And I will be found by you, declares the Lord ... (Jeremiah 29:11-13).

God's promise and protection is not only for the exiles to whom Jeremiah wrote, but for you and me — alumni, new students, friends, and family. I have realized this in a new way as I recently graduated from college, moved to the Twin Cities, and started this position as Alumni Executive Director. It has been hard, at times, to believe that the promises He made many, many years ago are just as true for us today. I have found myself calling upon Him, going to Him in prayer, seeking Him, hoping to find Him, as He promised.

It is at this point in my life, as the new Executive Director, that I would like to greet you all on behalf of the Alumni Association. In preparation for this role, I found the significance of the AFLBS Alumni Association Logo helpful in reminding me of God's love and faithfulness. "The rainbow of God's promise and protection points to you and me — the alumni. It is a rainbow, and not a closed circle, symbolizing the unending growth of our group and unlimited potential. The logo of the AFLC is included out of gratitude for providing our Bible School, giving us the living Word of God as the heart of our education. AFLBS is nestled close to the circle. She is covered by God's protection, is close to each alumnus, and is the object of our Alumni Association's prayers and projects."

God's faithfulness and love have been demonstrated over and over again. I am very grateful to God that when we call upon Him, pray to Him, and seek Him with all our heart, we will find Him.

— Kari Lane
Minneapolis, Minnesota



What Lies Ahead

In light of the 25th anniversary of AFLBS, I have been asked to share my thoughts on the future of our Bible School. Here are my five concerns and desires for the ministry the Lord has given us at AFLBS.

1. It is vital that we keep our uniqueness as a Bible School. There is a growing need in our society for a time of concentrated study of God's Word, and the application of that Word to the personal life. It is critical that young people set aside quality time to deepen their relationship to Christ, and to build the principles of His infallible Word into their lives. This can best be done at Bible School, where one is free for a time from other academic or vocational pursuits. Jesus said, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these (other) things will be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). We also must continue to consistently bear witness in doctrine and in life that the Bible in all its parts is the inerrant and infallible Word of God. This is the foundation and very cornerstone of our Bible School.

2. In the last few years, four-year Bible colleges in our area have recognized the value of our Bible School program. Through co-operative programs, it is now possible to attend AFLBS for two years, transfer to either Northwestern or St. Paul Bible College, and receive a Bachelor's Degree in about two more years. Also, a sizeable number were accepted recently at two Lutheran colleges: Christ College, Irvine, California and Concordia, St. Paul, Minnesota.

A student takes all the Bible courses at AFLBS, and then focuses on his academic major at the colleges. Our students get all the benefits of Bible School and can concentrate only on God's Word and their personal relationship to Christ. Then a student may go on to be trained for vocation without "losing" time because of Bible School.

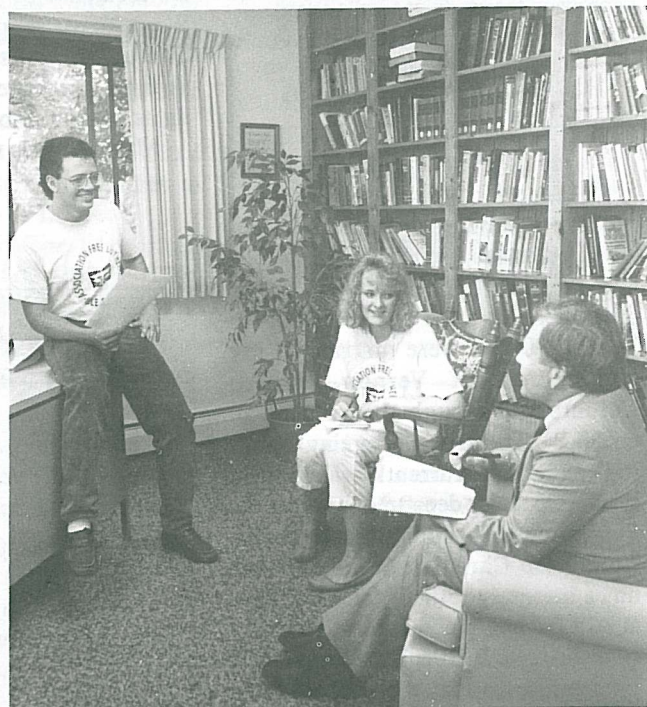
3. Another major factor in attending AFLBS is cost. Because of the generous gifts of God's people, the cost per year at AFLBS has been held down to about \$3,500. Besides that, we schedule all classes in the morning so students are able to work part-time. When one considers the cost at many colleges is now over \$10,000 per year, our co-operative program becomes even more attractive. I thank God for each one who faithfully supports AFLBS in prayer and gifts to make all this possible.

4. A further benefit of AFLBS is our international community of Christians on campus. In just the last two years, we have had students from Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Tanzania, Liberia, Ethiopia, Sudan, China, Russia and Norway. What a help this is for our students to personally identify with Christ's command to bring the Gospel to every nation! Only eternity will reveal all the lives touched with the Gospel through our students and alumni.

5. In closing, my thoughts turn to facilities. For the last three years, our men's dorm and classrooms have been near their capacity. Further, we have no indoor facilities on campus for physical exercise. My prayer is that God will, in His time



Board of Trustees, 1991.



In Dr. Steven Lombardo's office.

and perfect way, allow a complex to be built with a gymnasium/auditorium, student lounge and classrooms. A few gifts have already been given for a building fund. We ask all our alumni and other partners in this ministry to pray with us for God's specific guidance, direction and supply, that such a building could be erected debt-free to the glory of God.

God has blessed AFLBS richly in many ways. We thank God that He has raised up a school such as this in during those critical times. Pray with us that we might be faithful in this ministry of the Word until the very day when Christ returns for His own.



— Rev. Donald Greven
AFLBS Dean, 1984-present

Faithful and Watchful Servants

22. What was the unfaithful servant called? Matthew 24:51; Luke 12:46

23. What prophecy concerning the last days is found in II Peter 3:3, 4?

24. What will the unbelieving world be like? II Timothy 3:1-5

25. What words of commendation will the unfaithful servant never hear?
Matthew 25:21

26. On what does the believer base his or her hope at the Master's return?
What is your favorite scripture verse (or verses) of hope and promise?

How wonderful that Christ came that we might have life and have it abundantly. This abundant life is for the last days also. Christ comes to us today in Word and Sacrament. If we do not receive Him through the means He has given, we will not be ready to receive Him when He returns in bodily form.

HYMN SUGGESTION: "WHEN JESUS COMES IN GLORY"
(Concordia #429)

THE PARABLES OF JESUS

We are approaching the Advent season. While we are preparing to celebrate the birth of our Savior, our thoughts are also focused on how He comes to us today in Word and Sacrament, and how He will one day return to earth in bodily form as King of kings, and Lord of lords.

In this parable, Jesus tells the story of a man who went on a journey, leaving his servant in charge. Masters and servants were common feature of every-day life in Palestine, and Jesus used the master-servant picture in many parables.

As we interpret the parable, bear in mind that these words were spoken by Jesus to His disciples shortly before His crucifixion. They are recorded in Matthew 24:45-51 and Luke 12:42-48. Similar parables are found in Mark 13:32-37 and Luke 12:35-40.

THE HOPE OF THE MASTER'S RETURN

1. Who does the master of the house symbolize?

The servant(s)?

2. What knowledge did the servant have of the time of the master's return?

3. Jesus tells His disciples that He is going away, but that He will come again. (John 14:3, 28a) What do we know about the specific time of His return? Matthew 24:36

4. In view of this, what is His admonition to us in Luke 12:40?

5. How prominent was the hope of the Lord's return in the early church? I Corinthians 1:7; James 5:7, 8

6. Why is the Lord's return a "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13) for some? I Thessalonians 4:16-17

7. Why will Christ's return be tragic for others? II Thessalonians 1:7b-9

8. II Peter 3:10 warns that Jesus will come like a thief in the night. To whom is this warning given? I Thessalonians 5:4

THE FAITHFUL SERVANT

9. What is the work of God? John 6:28-29

10. What should motivate us as God's servants to a compelling desire to please Him? John 3:16; I Peter 1:18, 19; I John 4:19; I John 5:3

11. We have a great God who is worthy of our obedience. In Psalm 103, David reminds us to "forget not all His benefits". List a few of these.

12. In the parable, the master instructed his servant to give to those in his household their food at the proper time. How might this apply to Christians today? I Peter 4:10; I Thessalonians 5:11; Titus 1:9

13. What reminder concerning "works" is found in Ephesians 2:8, 9?

14. What were Jesus' final Words of instruction to His disciples? Matthew 28:18-20

For many women, this most urgent command is first of all fulfilled as we bring our own children to the Lord in baptism, and faithfully teach them God's Word.

15. Believing in Christ's return, we live accordingly. What kind of people ought we to be? II Peter 3:11, 12a, 14

We cannot be this in our own efforts. What words of assurance are found in Isaiah 41:9b, 10?

16. How was the faithful servant in the Matthew account rewarded for his obedience?

17. In the parable of the talents, what was the master's commendation? Matthew 25:21

What does the last phrase of verse 21 indicate?

18. What reward is in store for the faithful in God's household? II Timothy 4:8

19. What words of promise and encouragement are found in Titus 2:11-14

THE UNFAITHFUL SERVANT

20. What does the wicked servant say to himself?

Satan seeks to crush our spirit by getting us to bear tomorrow's burdens with only today's grace!



Bruce South Dakota Grace Lutheran WMF enrolled six babies. Pictured are: Ashley Stahl, Kyle Heylens and Andrew Lohafer. Not pictured are : Nicole Dinger, Marinda Ulvestad and Matthew Anderson. Two of the four graduates are pictured: Amanda Heylens and Thomas Hill. Not pictured are: Michael Bauman and Elicia Anderson.



Salmon Arm, British Columbia Pictured are the women who attended the Salmon Arm-Vernon area retreat last June at Garden Lake.



Janesville, Wisconsin Trinity Free Lutheran WMF selected Mrs. Ed (Clara) Babler to receive their first Honorary Membership Pin. Clara's willingness, enthusiasm and joyful spirit has been a great asset to the new congregation.

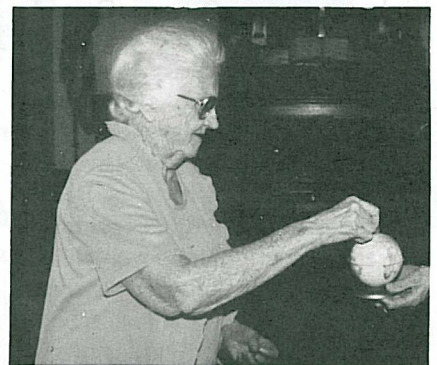
Women's Missionary Federation In Memoriams

Mrs. Emilie Ostby, Argyle, Minnesota
Gladys Bayers, Argyle, Minnesota
Robert Gunderson, Sunburg, Minnesota
Leslie Olson, Alexandria, Minnesota
Dale Akerman, Ashby, Minnesota
Philip Sletten, Winthrop, Minnesota
Ragna Hovde, Aneta, North Dakota
Ralph Stockman, Tioga, North Dakota
Fred Heifort, Valley City, North Dakota
Edna Johnson, Valley City, North Dakota
Palmer Harpestad, Bruce, South Dakota
Ray Krogh, Brookings, South Dakota
Vernon Modahl, Bakersfield, California
Loretta Chally, Morris, Illinois
Julia Hanson, Erskine, Minnesota
Orrin Luhman, Cottage Grove, Minnesota
Manda Johnson, McIntosh, Minnesota
Harlen Voxland, McIntosh, Minnesota
Helen Monson, Minneapolis, Minnesota
Selma Gustafson, Shevlin, Minnesota
Joseph Senger, Choteau, Montana
Helen Neidlinger, Hampden, North Dakota
Mrs. Robert Lofthus, McVile, North Dakota
Irene Christensen, Tioga, North Dakota
Gladys Miller, Ortle, South Dakota
Selma Grinde, Ortle, South Dakota
Rev. Ernest Kasin, Wallace, South Dakota
Alice Christensen, Ferndale, Washington



Parana, Brazil

On December 25, 1990, Timoteo and Maria Vieira celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. Pastor Connely J. Dyrud gave the message at a church service during the celebration. They have eight living children, 36 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. From 1988-1990, there were five living generations in the congregations. Timoteo is 73 years old and Maria is 70. Timoteo has been a Christian for 53 years and also a church board member for most of this time. He has helped establish two congregations over the years. The latest was the AFLC congregation in Poema, Parana in 1969. He has also been president of the Brazil AFLC. This couple loves to sing God's praise whenever the opportunity is presented. They also praise God for the 50 years of married life. This is a rarity for Brazilians!



Wadena, Minnesota Mabel Peterson, Bethany Free Lutheran Church, is pictured giving a mission offering on her 90th birthday. Bethany's oldest member, Helmi Rastikka, is 91 and resides at a nursing home.



DeKalb, Illinois Grace Free Lutheran church received Pat and Kristi Larabee into membership. Far left, Pastor Harry Gimberg and far right, Deacon Cliff Jerde.

Milford, Illinois St. John's Lutheran Church of Schwer conducted its annual mission festival on Sunday, September 15, with services in the morning, afternoon and evening. speaker for the day was Pastor Les Galland, Eden Prairie, Minnesota, and the offering was divided equally between the World and Home Mission projects of the AFLC.

Bloomington, Minnesota Bud Hinkson, former Campus Crusade Director of Affairs for Eastern Europe, will be the keynote speaker for the fall missions conference at Emmaus Lutheran Church, October 6-8.

Badger, Minnesota Plans have been finalized for an addition to the Badger Creek Lutheran Church, providing a new entrance at ground level with all steps enclosed, an enlarged sanctuary and basement, and additional Sunday School classrooms. A grant of five thousand dollars has been approved by

the Hartz Foundation, Thief River Falls, and added to the building fund will provide the funds necessary to enclose and finish the outside of the addition before winter sets in.

The new address for **Rev. Yeddo Gottel** is: 7700 Winsdale St. N., Golden Valley, Minnesota 55427. He continues to serve as pastor of Morgan Avenue Lutheran Church, Minneapolis.

A FRAGILE FUTURE FOR BIBLE SCHOOLS?

Most of our institutions are in a very fragile condition, declared the director of the American Association of Bible Colleges in a recent interview. The size of classes has dropped fifteen percent from the enrollment of the 1970s, a dramatic decline that is due in part to the shrinking number of college-age students nationally.

Some of the schools have closed their doors; others have changed their focus, trying to attract more students by broadening their appeal with more liberal arts courses. The financial condition of the schools continues to be a special concern, even more so than for most private colleges, suggest several analysts, because of the lack of wealthy alumni.

The Lutheran Bible School movement has also suffered during the past decade or so. Minneapolis LBI is no more, a casualty in spite of the change to a junior college; the same is true of the New Jersey school. Sister institutions in

letters

To the Editor:

I was looking in my chest of drawers full of *Ambassadors* from the 1960s to the present for something on missions for our fair booth this month. (I) started reading different ones, and it brought back memories of very cold Bible conferences at Grafton and Dalton ... many, many good times and good speakers at Lake Geneva Bible Camp and annual conferences my husband and I attended ... Michigan, Montana, headquarters and others (Ferndale, Washington, too).

One article told how the Lord helped them design and build their church. As we bought land and will eventually build near Detroit Lakes, the ideas were good.

I am glad I saved all those *Ambassadors*. They are a wealth of many people and times since the beginning of the AFLC ... am blessed with these magazines. God willing, this winter I can pour over them many an evening.

*Mrs. Sylvia Dahlgren
Lake Park, Minnesota*

Deputation Schedules

Missionary Connely Dyrud

October 27, a.m. — Trinity, Grand Forks, North Dakota
October 27, p.m. — Living Faith, Larimore, North Dakota
November 2 — Eastern ND Men's meeting, Victory, Park River, ND
November 3-6 — Grace, Edinburg, North Dakota
November 10, a.m. — Bethany, Abercrombie, North Dakota
November 17, a.m. — Minnesota Valley, Lakeville, Minnesota
November 17, p.m. — Living Word, Eagan, Minnesota

Missionary Dan Giles

October 13 — Our Saviour's, Thief River Falls, Minnesota
October 13 — Reiner, Thief River Falls, Minnesota
October 14 — Our Saviour's, Argyle, Minnesota
October 15 — Redeemer, Ontonagon, Michigan
October 16 — United, Greenbush, Minnesota
October 17 — Westaker, Newfolden, Minnesota
October 19 — Mpls. District WMF Rally, Minnesota Valley, Lakeville, Minnesota
October 25-27 — Good Shepherd, Cokato, Minnesota
November 3, a.m. — Faith, Shakopee, Minnesota
November 10 — Jevnaker, Borup, Minnesota
November 17, a.m. — Faith, London, Minnesota

Seattle and Los Angeles struggle with debt and declining enrollment, while they seek to broaden their focus in order to survive in the face of a changing constituency. The Lutheran Brethren Bible School has condensed its program to a creative one-year course, while offering a M.A.R. degree through the seminary for those who desire additional studies, but these two approaches have yet to attract a significant number of new students.

The AFLC can only look with amazement at what the Lord continues to accomplish through our Bible School. AFLBS is a surprising exception to the trends of our time for the Bible school movement, and we give thanks to God alone. Class registration still has not returned to its 1972 record high, but a consistent enrollment in the 90-100 range earns for us a ranking as the largest Lutheran Bible school in North America. The 110 students on campus this fall confirm earlier forecasts of the sizeable number of youth in our congregations who will soon be entering college years.

It would not be correct to contend on the eve of this silver anniversary that AFLBS stands untouched and unchanged by the trends of our time. Courses come and go, as well as faculty and staff, and one can detect from a survey of catalogues a decline in the number of electives offered. A careful observer might also see a growing emphasis on the opportunities to transfer credits to cooperating colleges.

But the changes could almost escape unnoticed in comparison to what continues unchanged. AFLBS is still a Bible school, not a junior college, and all who attend will discover that the study of Scripture itself still dominates the curriculum. Preparation for life, not for vocation, is a concern that continues to shape the philosophy of the school, in spite of any possible college credits. God's inerrant Word is still confidently proclaimed, with the prayerful goal that it might produce within each student the abundant life that Christ promises.

The Association Free Lutheran Bible School is one of God's choicest gifts to our church body. It is a witness of our concern for strengthening the priesthood of all believers through the equipping of lay Christians. It is a witness of our commitment to the principle that the congregation is the right form of the kingdom of God on earth.

The future of all human institutions is fragile, and history suggests that the decline or death of an organization does not necessarily spell failure when weighed in the light of eternity. God is sovereign, and He will prosper in His time and according to His purposes. But we praise Him that in this new day He continues to prosper our Bible School as it continues to serve Him and His people in the old way that He has blessed in the past.

A LIFE OF LEISURE

Leisure is one of the most treasured resources of modern Americans. Studies show that we spend less time working than we did 25 years ago, a change that will expand into a 10-15 percent increase of leisure time by the end of the century. This free time will not be empty hours, but filled to overflowing with recreational activities.

George Barna, in "The Frog in the Kettle," writes: "You can take away our jobs, you can close down the churches, you may tear apart our families — but don't ever try to restrict the play time of Americans." Barna also includes the amazing statistic that the average household spends more money on entertainment than it does on clothing, health care, furniture, or gasoline!

Our leisure lives come to mind especially at the end of the summer months. A pastor once remarked that his church attendance was "up and down" during the summer ... "up at the lakes and down at the river!" Current trends accentuate the problem for our churches, since people today are prone to take their vacations in bits and bytes — several long weekends instead of the traditional two weeks at the same time. It is not uncommon for some to be missing from worship for most of the summer.

Christians whose lives have been captured by the spirit of leisure are urged to consider their priorities. A week without worship makes us weak, and vacationers are encouraged at least to seek a church home away from home during their travels. Also, church attendance is not a public performance for which we pay admission only when we are present; regular financial commitment to our local congregations must continue even in our absence.

But the problem persists, and it is easy for pastor and congregation to become discouraged in the presence of empty pews during the summer months. Do the times dictate a change in schedule? Have some of our congregations found that a Friday or Saturday evening service can be an effective means of reaching this leisure generation? Perhaps our retreats and family Bible camps might be viewed as a response to the need of finding creative, Christ-centered vacation alternatives.

Every challenge is also an opportunity. Our clocks cannot be turned backwards, as much as we wish they could be. Let us leave the harping to the angels and meet people where they are, as we seek for open doors to proclaim the changeless Christ in a changing world!

IN SPITE OF DROUGHT

This summer has seen a record dry spell in my corner of northern Illinois. It is sad to watch the results of the farmers' labors wither up in the fields as the hope for a fruitful harvest fades.

Christians experience spiritual drought, too, at times. But the Lord recently led me to these words of encouragement:

Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord and whose trust is the Lord. For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought nor cease to yield fruit. Jeremiah 17:7-8.

Orlando, Florida Delegates to the national convention of the nation's largest Lutheran body rejected a pro-life resolution during deliberations on Labor Day. Members of the 5.2 million member Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) refused to declare that life begins at conception, and condemn all abortions except those needed to save the mother's life.

Instead, delegates approved a resolution which called abortion "an option of last resort," and condoned abortion in cases of rape, incest, risk to the life of the mother, and in cases where the fetus is so abnormal it would soon die.

In other convention news, the Rev. Herbert Chilstrom was overwhelmingly re-elected bishop. His August 30 re-election came on the second ballot, when he won the necessary 75 percent of ballots cast.

Delegates adopted a resolution asking the ELCA to declare 1992 a year of "remembrance, repentance and renewal in relationships with American Indian people;" 1992 is the 500th anniversary of Columbus' arrival in America. Delegates also spoke out against the death penalty, passing a resolution saying capital punishment "fails to make society better or safer."

Minot, North Dakota The theme, "Let the Earth Hear His Voice," sounded the keynote for the 91st Annual convention of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren, hosted by Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church, Minot, June 9-12.

Although the contribution income during the 1990-91 fiscal year fell behind expenditures, an encouraging report was given, pointing to a decline in liabilities and a 6.9% increase in income over the same date a year ago. One explanation for the fiscal shortfall was the Capital Fund Campaign, which raised \$625,000.

One new congregation, Living Word Church-CLB, Joshua, Texas, was admitted to the synod, and plans for beginning work in Chanhasen, Minnesota, and Sioux Falls, South Dakota, were also announced.

Rev. David Rinden, Fergus Falls, Minnesota, the editor of *Faith and Fellowship*, was elected vice president for a three-year term.

Vancouver, British Columbia A Canadian school district, which oversees 48 elementary schools near Vancouver, recently voted to bar the Gideons from offering New Testaments in the schools.

The Coquitlam School District voted 7-1 on June 25 against Gideon International's request to distribute consent forms to fifth grade students for parents to sign for a free copy of the New Testament. Two years ago Vancouver Schools District made a similar decision.

More than 50 supporters of the Gideon organization attended a school board meeting to debate the request. Trustee Ron Parks said he opposed the measure because the moral and ethical foundations of Canada have been shaped by those of different religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds. "We constantly pride ourselves on our tolerance and commitment to freedom of religion and speech," he told NOW, a community newspaper.

However, this is not "freedom of religion," said Debra Fieguth, editor of *Christian Info News*. "This is freedom from religion."

Coquitlam trustee Maxine Wilson, who cast the single vote in favor of the Gideon's request, said she once accompanied her daughter on a school field trip to a Sikh temple. If the children can learn about the Sikh religion, she reasoned, they should also be given the opportunity to learn about the Christian religion.

"Almost all our literature is influenced by Christianity, and has references to the Bible," said Wilson, a former English teacher. With no understanding of the Bible, students will miss much of the significance in literature. "I think it's denying our whole heritage and culture," she added. "What we've notice is an erosion in the tolerance towards Christianity and increased intolerance to anything else."

Richard Dodding, a former teacher and Coquitlam resident for 18 years, compared the action of the school board to the attitude of teachers in the Soviet Union, where he recently visited. "After seventy years of banning the Bible in Russia, the school administrators are now asking for help in order to provide their youth with a moral framework for living," Dodding wrote in a letter to the school trustees. He added, "Now here we are asking if we should even allow our parents the choice of asking for a New Testament."