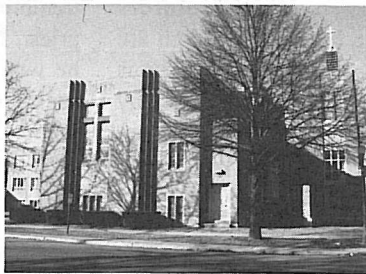
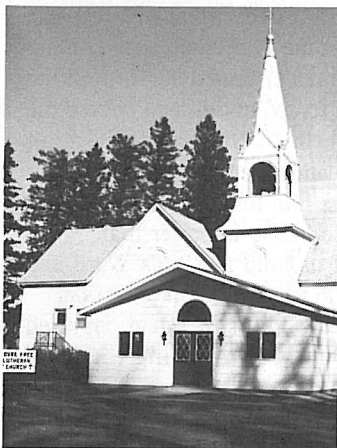




**THE ASSOCIATION  
OF FREE LUTHERAN  
CONGREGATIONS**

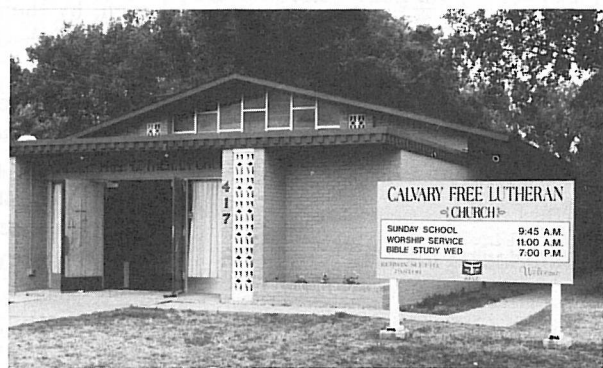


**Knit Together in Love**

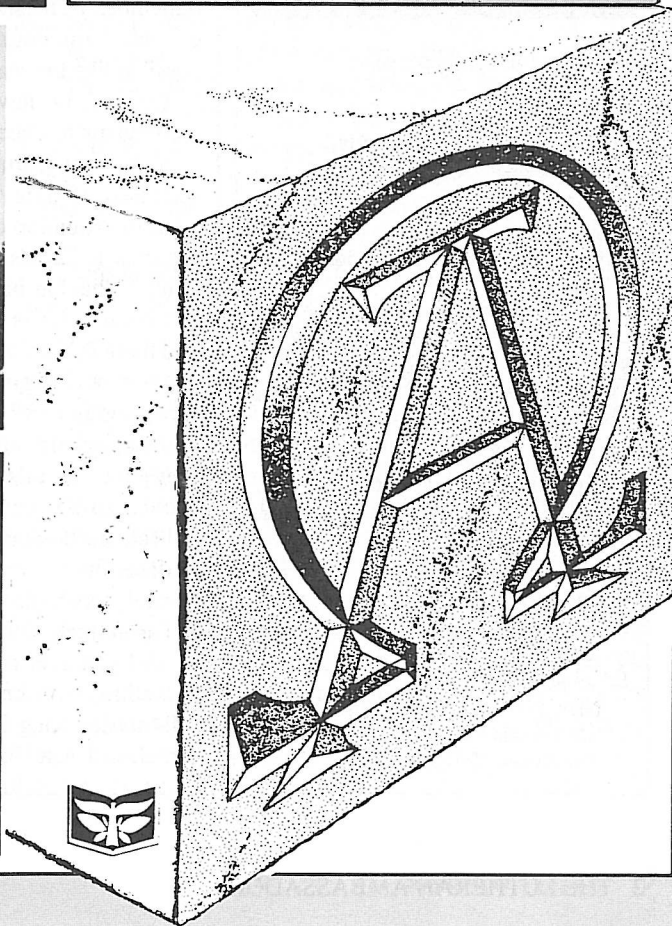


**THE LUTHERAN  
AMBASSADOR**

September 17, 1991



**Building Together in Christ**



# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

September 17, 1991 • Vol. 29, No. 17

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## Situational Ethics

Children and young people are attracted to anything new and different. Toy manufacturers exploit this trait. Spiritual children are attracted to new and different religious teachings. Their cravings are met by preachers seeking popularity and theologians straying from the Word. Paul warned Timothy of people with itching ears who will not endure sound teaching (II Timothy 4:3-4), and pleads that we "no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful wiles" (Ephesians 4:14).

In spite of Jesus' warnings of false teachers in the days before His coming, there seems to be a fierce fascination among many church people in our day for new and strange teachings (June 4). Teachers arise, forsaking the solid rock of biblical truth, to mingle the Word with heathen and Satanic wisdom and humanistic philosophy, producing something new and fascinating to lure those who do not read the Word of God regularly. It appears like the truth, but remember: "The successful counterfeit makes his counterfeit as much as possible like the real thing."

One of the new "toys" of liberal theologians has been "situation ethics." That is to say, there are no absolute standards of right, but what is right is what the situation demands. New? The preacher in Ecclesiastes shares his wisdom: "What has been will be, and what has been done is what will be done; and there is nothing new under the sun. Is there a thing of which it is said, 'See, this is new?' It has been already in the ages before us." Let us test situation ethics on this word. It has always proven to be the playground for the willful, sinful heart of man: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately corrupt, who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9-10).

Did you ever convince yourself that something you knew was wrong was right to do? King Saul, the first king of Israel, did just that. He and his army

faced a tremendous force of Philistines (I Samuel 13:5). All Saul's army was trembling and hiding. Old Samuel, the priest, had appointed seven days when he would come and offer sacrifices to seek God's help. But Samuel did not come and Saul's army was scattering. The situation seemed to demand that God's Word, which forbid kings to offer the sacrifice, needed to be bent. Saul commanded: "Bring the burnt offering to me, and the peace offerings." And he offered the burnt offering. When Samuel came he rebuked the king for breaking God's command. Saul offered the excuse that the Philistines were coming and "I had not entreated the favor of the Lord: so I forced myself and offered the burnt offering." But Samuel did not accept situational ethics and told Saul it would cost him his kingdom. It is still true. "Obedience is better than sacrifice." Let us hold to God's Word and trust Him to take care of the situation.

Later, the Philistines had captured the ark but were returning it. David wanted to return it to Jerusalem from the house of Abinadab where the Philistines had left it. "And Uzzah and Ahio the sons of Abinadab were driving the new cart with the ark of God. And David with all the house of Israel were making merry before the Lord" (II Samuel 6). But something happened. The oxen pulling the cart stumbled, and it seemed as if the ark would fall off the cart. God had forbidden anyone to lay a hand on the ark. Surely the situation called for a bending of that order! Uzzah put forth his hand to steady the ark to keep it from falling. Seemingly it was a pious worthy purpose, but "God smote him there because he put forth his hand to the ark!" Evidently God does not understand situational ethics! Even King David was angry with God, but David had erred. The ark, as ordered by God, was to have been carried by the priests, not hauled on a cart. Man's error gave rise to the situation. God does not bend His laws to fit man's errors.

—Rev. Kermit C. Grundahl



*I love Thy kingdom, Lord;  
The house of Thine abode,  
The Church our blest Redeemer saved  
With His own precious blood,*

*I love Thy Church, O God!  
Her walls before Thee stand,  
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,  
And graven on Thy hand.*

*For her my tears shall fall;  
For her my pray'r's ascend;  
To her my cares and toils be giv'n,  
Till toils and cares shall end.*

*Beyond my highest joy  
I prize her heav'nly ways,  
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,  
Her hymns of love and praise.*

*Sure as Thy truth shall last,  
To Zion shall be giv'n.  
The brightest glories earth can yield,  
And brighter bliss of heav'n.*

The words of this beautiful hymn were written by Timothy Dwight, grandson of Jonathan Edwards. It is the oldest surviving American hymn. The words were inspired by Psalm 137:6-6; "If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her skill! If I do not remember you, let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth, if I do not exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy." I am also reminded of the words in I Corinthians 3:11: "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

God is the builder of His Church. God himself, without the aid of man, redeemed this fallen world by His Son. God selected us to be the beneficiary of His mercy, to be the messenger of His grace to a fallen world. It is God's will that we who have been called to be His workmen by the grace that is given us in Christ Jesus, should invite others to be workmen in the vineyard of the Lord. How wonderful to be part of the Lord's kingdom, where Christ is present. We praise God we have been saved with His precious blood and can be part of the heaven God has prepared for us.

Any building needs a good foundation. This is essential if the building is to endure. If we build on any other foundation the house will sooner or later collapse. The same is true of the work in the kingdom of God. The only foundation on which the Church of God will stand firmly and endure is none other than Jesus Christ.

As we think of Jesus Christ as the Church, we remember what Scripture has to say about

# *I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord*

who He is and what man says about Him. He is the true God and Eternal Life. He came into the world to save sinners. He is the Cornerstone. Through Jesus we can receive remission of sins. There is one God. We are justified by faith in Him. We receive the free gift of salvation. The apostles built the Church on the great foundation of Jesus Christ.

The chief task of the workmen in building God's Church on earth is to lay the same foundation that the apostles laid. We know no other Jesus Christ than they knew. With this firm foundation, we as workmen of God have the task in our time to declare the good news that God has had mercy on sinners, for He gave His only-begotten Son to redeem the world from the curse of sin. As workmen of God, we are to confess freely and boldly that the enemies of the soul of man, God's wrath, sin, death, the devil and hell have been vanquished; that God's grace has been secured by all, without any distinction of any kind, the remission of sins, righteousness and eternal life. We cannot work for these gifts in order to be part of the kingdom. They are freely given to everyone who believes. The gifts God offers to us are in His Word and the Sacraments. "He that cometh unto Me," says Jesus, "I will in no wise cast out."

This is the only Gospel that can do man any good. Without it we can never be part of God's kingdom. God's Word can take away the darkness of doubt and hopelessness. It supplies the Water of Salvation that can revive and refresh sinners dying of thirst in the spiritual wilderness of the world. When we as workmen of God lay this firm foundation of the Church of God, we may be sure that the words of our Lord apply when He says: "Upon this rock I will build My Church."

May the Holy Spirit inspire us for the salvation of souls that our world might be part of this great kingdom. May we be firmly grounded on the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. May our hearts be filled with gratitude for all the Lord has given to us. Psalm 90:17 says: "And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands for us, yes, establish the work of our hands."

"The chief task ... is to lay the same foundation that the apostles laid."



—Rev. Les Galland  
Eden Prairie,  
Minnesota

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Escanaba, Escanaba  
Pastor: Jerome Nikunen  
Ishpeming, Hope  
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Ontonagon, Redeemer  
Pastor: Herbert Franz (Interim)  
Pelkie, Grace  
Pastor: Herbert Franz

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Bagley (Zerkel), Rice (R)  
Shevlin (Alida), Alida (R)  
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Brooten, Crow Lake (R)  
Sunburg, Sunburg (R)  
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Tamarack, Tamarack  
Pastors: Peter Franz and  
Emerson Anderson  
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Pastor: Lyndon Korhonen

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New London, Gausdal (R)  
Pastor:  
Glyndon, Maranatha  
Pastor: Dale Finstrom  
Greenbush, United  
Pastor: Dennis Gray  
Greenbush, Bethlehem (R)  
Pastor: Alvin Gjerde  
Kasson, Mt. Sion  
Dexter, Zion (R)  
Pastor: Gordon Grage  
Kenyon, Hauge  
Kenyon, Emmanuel (R)  
Pastor: Rodney Stueland  
Lakeville, Minnesota Valley  
Pastor: Richard Anderson  
Mankato, Word of Life  
Pastor:  
McIntosh, Mt. Carmel  
McIntosh, Trinity (R)  
Pastor: Thomas Tuura  
Mentor, Maple Bay  
Pastor: Lynn Kinneberg  
Middle River (Holt), Emmanuel (R)  
Pastor: Todd Peterson



Minneapolis, Faith  
 Pastor: Ralph Rokke  
 Minneapolis, Morgan Avenue  
 Pastor: Yeddo Gottel  
 Newfolden, Westaker  
 Newfolden, Bethania (R)  
 Pastor: LeRoy Flickinger  
 Northhome, Hope  
 Mizpah, Bethesda  
 Pastor: Lloyd Quanbeck  
 Ortonville, Abiding Faith  
 Pastor: Roy Johnson  
 Osakis, Elim (Independent) (R)  
 Pastor: Gary Skramstad  
 Pine City, Abiding in the Vine  
 Pastor: Ralph Tjelta (Interim)  
 Pipestone, Christ the King  
 Pastor: Todd Olson  
 Plymouth, Medicine Lake  
 Pastor: John Skeie  
 Roseau, Roseau  
 Salol, Norland, (R)  
 Pastor: Reuben Unseth  
 Roseau, Rose (R)  
 Roseau, Spruce (R)  
 Pastor: Larry Severson  
 St. Cloud, Granite  
 Pastor:

St. James, Hosanna  
 Pastor:  
 St. Paul (Maplewood), Victory in Christ  
 Pastor: Seminarian Greg Smith  
 Sebekka (Blue Grass), Bethany  
 Pastor: Stephen Mundfrom  
 Shakopee, Faith  
 Pastor: Curtis Emerson  
 Shevlin, Landstad  
 Shevlin, Sell Lake (R)  
 Wilton, Trinity (R)  
 Pastor: William Goodman  
 Spicer, Green Lake (R)  
 Pastor: Wendell Johnson  
 Stacy, Sunnyside  
 Pastor: Peter Bergstadt  
 Strandquist, Hegland (R)  
 Pastor: David Grothe  
 Strathcona, Poplar Grove (R)  
 Pastor:  
 Thief River Falls, Our Saviour's  
 Goodridge, Reiner (R)  
 Pastor: Del Palmer  
 Thief River Falls, Telemarken (Independent) (R)  
 Pastor: Raynard Huglen  
 Upsala, Word of Life  
 Pastor: Lyle Aadahl  
 Virginia, Good Shepherd

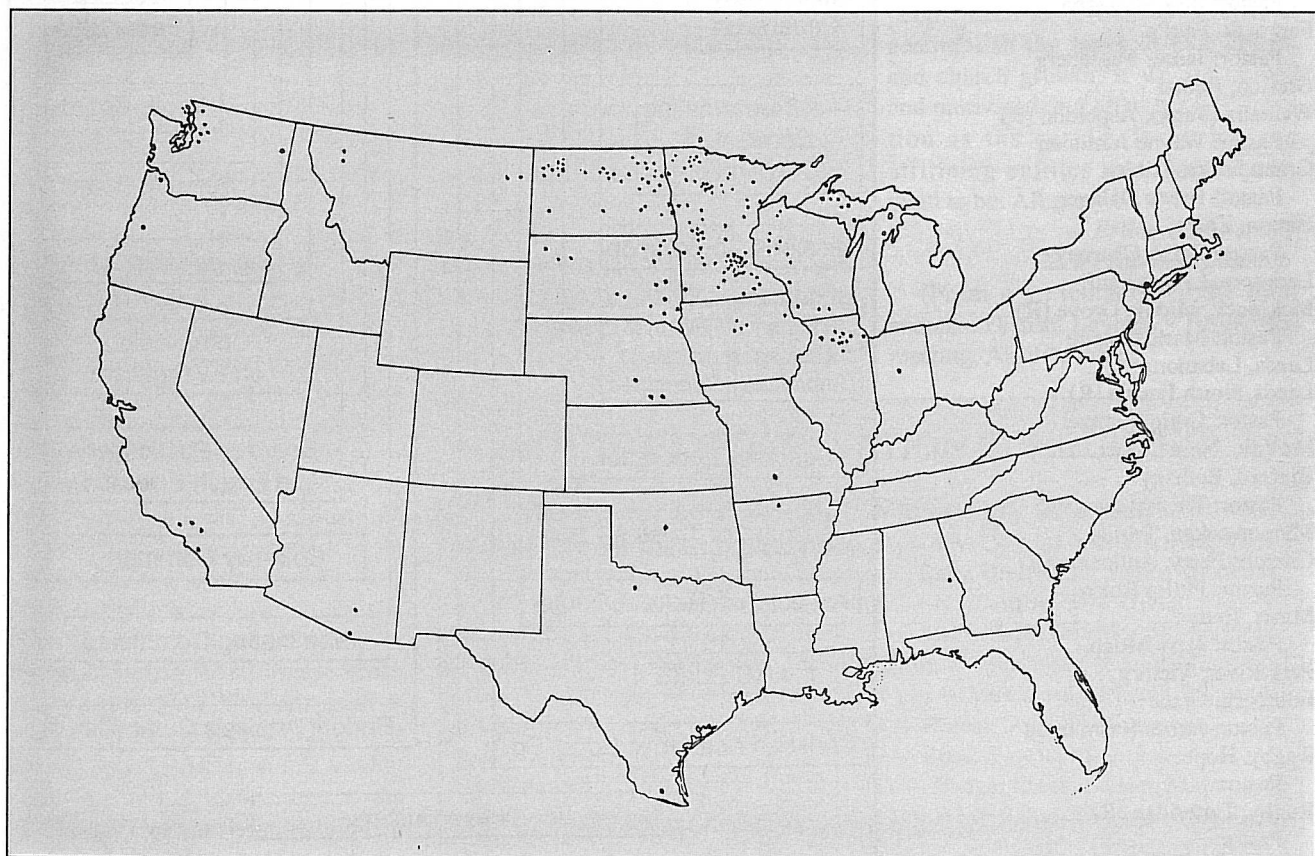
Pastor: Donald Norr  
 Wadena, Zion  
 Pastor: Todd Klemme  
 Warroad, Warroad  
 Pastor: Paul Nash  
 Willmar, Zion  
 Pastor: Henry Johansen  
 Winger, Dovre  
 Winger, Union Lake (R)  
 Erskine, Saron (R)  
 Pastor: Lloyd Bjornlie  
 Wyoming, Hope  
 Pastor: Jay Eberth  
 Zumbrota, Our Saviour's  
 Pastor: Paul Pillman

## MISSOURI

Springfield, Immanuel  
 Pastor: Vincent Will

## MONTANA

Culbertson, Bethel  
 Brockton, Faith (R)  
 Pastor:  
 Kalispell, Faith  
 Pastor: Steven Snipstead  
 Kalispell, Stillwater (R)  
 Pastor: Jeff Swanson



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### NEBRASKA

Fairbury, Faith  
 Deshler, Abiding Word  
 Pastors: Raymond Klug and  
 Howard Franzen  
 Dannebrog (Nystad), St. Peder's  
 Pastor: Bryan Galloway

### NEW YORK

Massapequa, Unity  
 Pastor:

### NORTH DAKOTA

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 McLeod, United (R)  
 Pastor: Richard Larson  
 Bismarck, Calvary  
 Pastor:  
 Buxton, Ny Stavanger  
 Portland, Valley  
 Pastor: Larry Haagenon  
 Dickinson, Our Saviour's  
 Pastor: Allen Monson  
 Devils Lake, Christ  
 Pastor: Philip Rokke (Interim)  
 Edmore, Living Word  
 Hampden, Zoar  
 Pastor: Walter Beaman  
 Fairdale, Aadalen (R)  
 Pastor: Roy Mohagen  
 Fargo, St. Paul's  
 Pastor: James Fugleberg  
 Grafton, Bethel  
 Walhalla (Vang), Aspelund (R)  
 Pastor: Wayne Juntunen  
 Grand Forks, Trinity  
 Pastor: Bruce Dalager  
 Hatton, Zoar  
 Pastor: Frank Cherney  
 Larimore, Living Faith  
 Mekinock, Middle Grove (R)  
 Pastor: Mark Molstre  
 Leeds, Lebanon  
 Leeds, North Prairie (R)  
 Pastor: Craig Wentzel  
 McVile, New Luther Valley  
 Binford, Bethany  
 Pastor: Wesley Langaas  
 Minnewauken, Trinity  
 Churchs Ferry, Antiochia (R)  
 Pastor: Philip Rokke  
 Minot, Bethel  
 Pastor: Jerry Moan  
 Park River, Victory  
 Edinburg, Grace  
 Pastor: James Rasmussen  
 Rugby, Hope  
 Pastor:  
 Rugby, Tunbridge (R)  
 Pastor:

Stanley, Our Saviour's  
 Lostwood, First English (R)  
 Stanley, Scandia (Independent) (R)  
 Pastor: Rodney Johnson  
 Tioga, Zion  
 Pastor: Dale Mellgren  
 Tioga, Norman (R)  
 Ray, Beaver Creek (R)  
 Pastor: Stephen Odegaard  
 Valley, City, Grace  
 Valley City, Zion (R)  
 Pastor: Terry Olson  
 Williston, Emmanuel  
 Pastor: Jon Wellumson

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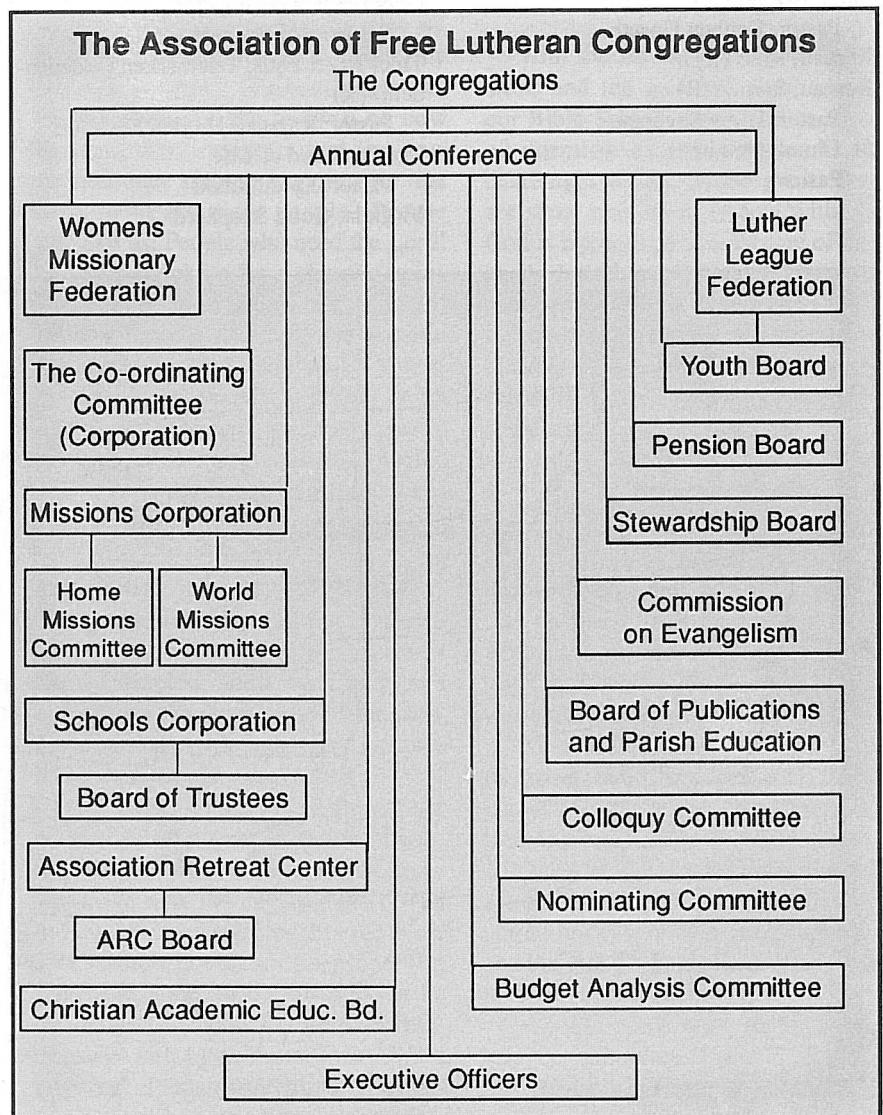
Oklahoma City, First  
 Pastor: Gerald Peterson

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 Pastor: Martin Horn  
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 Pastor:  
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 Centerville, Immanuel (R)  
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 Pastor: Richard Gunderson  
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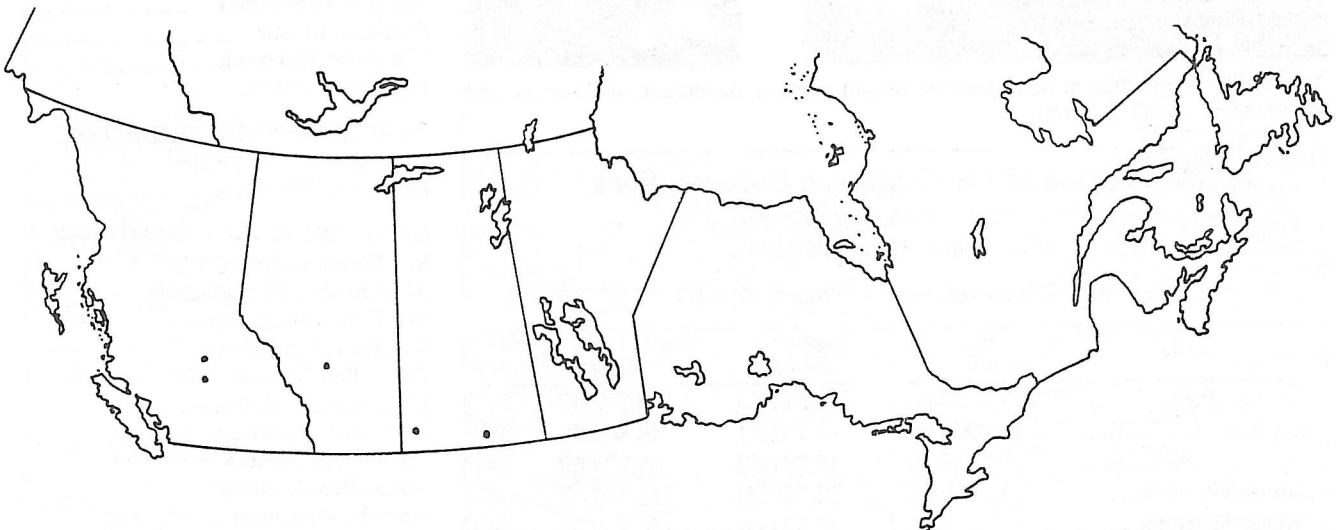
Amery, Amery  
 Pastor: John Rieth  
 Boscobel, Trinity  
 Pastor: Merle Knutson  
 Brodhead, Bethany (R)  
 Janesville, Trinity  
 Pastor: Kenneth Thoreson  
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 Pastor: Harry Bodsberg  
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Barronett, Timberland-Ringebu (R)  
 Pastor: Thomas Olson  
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 Menominee, Good Shepherd  
 Pastor: Steven Lombardo (Interim)  
 Rice Lake, Good Shepherd  
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**R=Rural**



The AFLC office-receptionist is Mrs. Bea Anderson, who also serves as the president's secretary.



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 Vernon, Living Word  
 Pastor: Gerald Gettis

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 Lake Alma, Faith  
 Pastor: Leslie Johnson



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New Hope, Minnesota



The bookkeeping office at headquarters. (Right) Marlene Unverzagt, bookkeeper and her assistant, Pam Halvorson.

## Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

### AFLC Benevolences - August 31, 1991

FUND	TOTAL BUDGET	REC'D IN AUGUST	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	%* TOTAL
General Fund . . . . .	\$ 276,830.00	\$13,575.60	\$105,275.07	38
Schools - (AFLTS) . .	151,900.00	9,782.54	46,803.26	31
(AFLBS) . .	193,950.00	10,331.63	65,724.60	34
Home Missions. . . . .	433,616.00	14,509.70	146,775.52	34
World Missions. . . . .	373,715.00	20,527.65	140,959.97	38
Capital Investment . .	25,000.00	711.66	13,792.53	55
Parish Education . . .	62,670.00	3,060.47	17,108.17	27
ARC . . . . .	20,000.00	931.63	4,757.03	24
TOTALS . . . . .	\$1,537,681.00	\$73,430.88	\$541,196.15	35
1990 - 1991 . . . . .	\$1,441,565.00	\$80,297.56	\$523,727.15	36

\*Goal 58%

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**T**he AFLC has been accurately defined as a fellowship of free and living congregations, working together in love and concern in common endeavors and evangelical outreach.

I am reminded of the liberality of the churches of Macedonia, as Paul writes about them in II Corinthians 8. We read in verses 3-5: "For I testify that according to their ability and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord, begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints, and this, not as we have expected, but first gave themselves to the Lord and to us by the will of God."

Such generosity comes first of all from the hearts of those who have experienced God's saving grace in Christ. They know the freedom that is in Christ. That freedom includes freedom from sin's penalty. It provides deliverance from sin's power in daily living. It is our freedom in Christ that provides our hope for eternity. The Christian who lives in the daily reality of all of that responds with a heart full of gratitude and a generosity that causes one to marvel.

It comes also from the opportunity of fellowship with other believers in congregations that are also "free." How important that fellowship is today. The congregation provides that place where we can reach out to others, even as they are open and sensitive to our needs.

When the Word and Spirit of God are directing the congregation, there will be the joy of having a part in the most important task in the world, that of helping to reach souls and building God's Kingdom

I thank God for our AFLC. I thank God for the devoted faithful people who helped to bring it into being 29 years ago. I thank God for the many faithful believers who, having experienced God's riches in Christ, continue to be excited about how God is blessing our AFLC. I thank God for the faithful pastors He has given to our congregations. I thank God for each congregation He has brought into our fellowship, for they are the AFLC.

— Rev. Richard Snipstead



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## MISSIONS

### WORLD

bringing the Gospel of Christ to Brazil, Mexico and India.

### HOME

establishing free, living Lutheran congregations.

The AFLC  
a FELLOWSHIP of  
FREE and LIVING  
LUTHERAN  
CONGREGATIONS.



Building together  
in Christ.

## SCHOOLS

### AFLTS

providing biblical teaching and training for seminarians preparing for service.

### AFLBS

nearly 1300 men and women have experienced our two-year Bible school.

### World Missions Director



Rev. Eugene Enderlein

### Home Missions Director



Rev. Elden Nelson

## PARISH EDUCATION

resource library, teacher training, printing books and Sunday School curriculum.

## YOUTH WORK

Luther League Federation and Youth Board encourage growth among youth.

## WOMEN'S MISSIONARY FEDERATION

women reaching out to women.

### AFLTS Dean



Dr. Francis Monseth

### AFLBS Dean



Rev. Donald Greven

**CAPITAL INVESTMENTS**  
property debt retirement.  
**STEWARDSHIP**  
Stewardship Board seeks ways to encourage wise and scriptural giving.  
**PENSION**  
safe retirement program and special assistance.

## GENERAL FUND

maintains AFLC central office and subsidizes The Lutheran Ambassador and non-budgeted boards.

## ARC

Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wisconsin, accommodates camps, retreats and conventions.

## EVANGELISM

bringing the Gospel to our neighbors, a vital ministry of each congregation.

## CHURCH EXTENSION

enabling Home Mission congregations to borrow money for new buildings.



## The Laymen's Role Within the Church

**T**hank you for giving me this opportunity to share with you my findings on the laymen's role within the church. I have done a lot of reading and made several inquiries in the process of developing these thoughts. Much of what I am going to say have been gleaned from the opinions and writings of others with whom I agree.

When we speak of lay involvement, we begin by asking several questions. Lay people, have you invited a person who does not belong to any church to visit your congregation? Have you talked to a co-worker about what it means to be a Christian? Have you encouraged an inactive member of your congregation to become active? Have you participated in an organized Bible study? Have you told someone about God's gift of grace through Jesus Christ?

My brother Bruce, who is the ELCA Social Services Director for five south central states, said that there are five major steps to take to have a growing church:

1. Visiting
2. Visiting
3. Visiting
4. Preaching
5. Teaching

Churches and leaders who do not visit will not see the kind of growth that they desire. Pastors today need to be motivated to take care of these obligations. If pastors aren't motivated to do so, lay people won't be, either. Furthermore, lay people need to be trained. Unless they are trained, they won't be motivated. Consequently, if the pastor isn't trained at seminary or else through personal experience to accomplish these tasks, then where do we start?

What I have observed in the AFLC from the churches we have visited and from the interns to whom we have been privileged to listen, I sense a lack of understanding, training, and spirit of evangelism. The most important barometer of a congregation's vitality is the worship attendance. It is at the worship service that we, as laymen, need to be motivated, encouraged and

challenged in our spiritual lives to do the work that God has called us to do.

Most churches involve lay people in various activities: communion helpers, ushers, Sunday School teachers, youth leaders, musicians, etc. But are we really trained on how to accomplish these various activities? For example, have the ushers and the greeters been trained in hospitality? How welcome do we make our visitors feel when they come to church on Sunday morning? I feel that the training of our lay people is one of the most important tasks that our pastors need to take on.

How do we motivate church members in kingdom work? we all know what the mission of the church is. It is to preach, teach, and reach out in evangelism. But how do we motivate our lay people? It must be done by preaching that nourishes the spirit, inspires the emotions, and stimulates the mind. Teaching must be Biblically sound and creatively presented so as to relate to life in the here and now. In order to be motivated to reach out, people must sense the love that God has for them (I Corinthians 13).

We lay people need to be encouraged, strengthened, but most of all loved and affirmed. Why do people join a church, rotary club or lodge? Because they have needs that are looking for fulfillment. Most of us have a need to belong, a need for identity, and a need for a sense of value and importance. Most of us are looking for direction in our lives, for fellowship in wor-

ship, and for a place to be a helping resource to others. I believe that the church has an obligation to meet these needs through reaching, preaching and teaching.

People who are not loved cannot love. People who are not fed cannot feed others. People who are not served in some way will find it difficult to serve others.

Church members today must be challenged in a meaningful and realistic way. The challenge of Christian service must be rewarding. Without a sense of reward, accomplishment of purpose, lay people within the church will feel hopeless and defeated. They will give up on the church, doubting the importance of their relationship to God. This eventually turns to apathy. Apathy is a form of self-protection which says: "What difference does it make?" "I couldn't care less." "Just leave me alone!" There is a lot of apathy to be found in churches run by a small clique or by a dictatorial pastor.

My friends in the AFLC, we lay people need to be trained in order to accomplish the tasks of evangelism and church growth. If we are trained and motivated, our churches will function as the caring, forgiving and affirming entities that God expects them to be. All glory be to our God!

— *Erling O. Emerson*

*Eden Prairie, Minnesota*

(From a presentation to the Minneapolis District Laymen's Fellowship meeting, April 3, 1991.)

## OCTOBER DEPUTATION SCHEDULES

### Missionary Connely Dyrud

- 6, p. m. — Faith, Colfax, Wisconsin
- 9 — Drummond/Our Savior's Parish, Mason, Wisconsin
- 11 — Escanaba, Escanaba, Michigan
- 13, a.m. — Hope, Ishpeming, Michigan
- 13, p.m. — Maranatha, Chassell, Michigan
- 15 — Redeemer, Ontonagon, Michigan
- 16 — Grace, Pelkie, Michigan

### Missionary Dan Giles

- 1 — SW Central MN District WMF Rally, Green Lake, Spicer, Minnesota
- 5 — N. Central MN District WMF Rally, Maple Bay, Mentor, Minnesota
- 6, a.m. — Maple Bay, Mentor, Minnesota
- 6, p.m. — Mt. Carmel, McIntosh, Minnesota
- 8 — Roseau, Roseau, Minnesota
- 9 — Rose, Roseau, Minnesota
- 11 — Badger Creek, Badger, Minnesota
- 12 — WMF Rally, Greenbush Minnesota

## LETTERS

### About Priorities

This past weekend, August 9-10, I received three items concerning AFLC happenings. One was the *Lutheran Ambassador*, announcing that ground breaking ceremonies had been held for a new administration building. Then a Home Missions newsletter confronted us with the sobering news that due to budget shortfalls, the AFLC Home Mission congregations will not be receiving any subsidy for the month of October, and possibly for the month of January. Next came a letter introducing us to our newest missionaries to Brazil, Jonathan and Tamba Abel, both answering God's call to "go back home" to Brazil to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the vehicle of AFLC World Missions. But then we read that because there is no money available to send them, they must travel around seeking support so they can go, hopefully in five or six months. I feel angry and sad, afraid and concerned. I am writing this letter to question the priorities of the AFLC, an association of which I am part. I am questioning our heart — our vision!

Are these three issues related? Is the shortfall in our budget related to the extensive promotion of the administration building project? I am inclined to think there is a connection. Some have said, "The money is out there!" I have yet to see where it is! Most of our AFLC people are conservative, hard-working middle-class families who are about one paycheck away from financial chaos. If this assessment is correct, then maybe now is not the right time to be building office buildings. It just doesn't look right! With the Home Mission offices home occupying the offices formerly occupied by Medicine Lake Lutheran Church, and the World Missions office certainly adequate, where is the pressing need to undertake a project that will drain funds from areas of greatest opportunity and need at this time? How can we sit by and watch bricks put in place to house offices when we have to say to several world.

mission candidates, "Sorry, we can't afford to send you!" Or to our fledgling home mission congregations, "We can't help you. There's no money!"

Even the AFLC Schools payment of \$100,000 to "purchase" the headquarters building is misleading. For at least \$50,000 of that payment will be withdrawn from AFLC Church Extension funds, causing greater stress to an already hurting situation.

My wife and I spent the month of June ministering in one of our newest home mission congregations in Ocean-side, California. What wonderful people! What a fine spirit we witnessed there! It is almost impossible to envision the tremendous opportunities we have before us in southern California without seeing it firsthand. One can hardly imagine the growth of new housing developments and the new communities springing up all over that area. Who are these people? People just like us. People who need the Lord! Christians looking for a church family. Thousands upon thousands of them! Believe me, the Mormons are there in full force to minister to them! We must not ignore the opportunities before us that a few years ago we only dared to dream about! After throwing out the life-line, we dare not let go of the rope!

### Grateful

Our family attended the National Luther League convention in Estes Park, Colorado, and I want to extend our sincere thanks for one of the most inspirational youth gatherings we have had the privilege of attending.

Our oldest daughter and five of her cousins joined almost 900 teens in worship, praise, laughter, and training in the word. We were thoroughly pleased with the solid Biblical teaching they received.

Pastor Mike Brandt's preaching gave everyone an opportunity to be challenged with his or her own relationship with God. Pastor Terry Wold gave excellent leadership at the services, as well as directing the organiza-

## Update on India Lawsuits

A judge has dismissed significant portions of a lawsuit against the AFLC by Bible Faith Lutheran Church of India, Inc., whose director is Bhushana Rao Dasari.

On August 1, 1991, U.S. District Court Judge Harry H. MacLaughlin dismissed four of the six claims asserted by the BFLC. At the request of the AFLC, the judge dismissed the BFLC's allegations of international interference with business relationships, defamation, self-publication of defamation, and misrepresentation.

The court did not dismiss the

With the shortage of funds for missions and the growing enrollment of our Bible School, causing over-crowded dormitories and classrooms, the challenges before us are great. There are some real needs to deal with! Our God is big enough to take care of those needs, but I have found that He usually uses people. Where is our heart? What is our vision? If God is going to use the AFLC, then we must commit ourselves to some serious soul searching and prayer!

—Pastor Rodger D. Olson  
Fergus Falls, Minnesota

tion of the convention.

The good Gospel music of the Ambassadors, Morning Star with Pastor Tim Carlson, and several others was a tremendous inspiration.

We also heard good reports of the morning Bible studies with Pastor David Molstre and each of the workshop leaders.

The AFLC has a bright future with the many fine leaders who devoted untold hours in prayer and preparation and the many who dedicated their lives to Christ at this gathering.

—Timothy K. Skramstad  
Chaplain (Major) U.S. Army  
Director of Family Life Ministries  
Ft. Carson, Colorado

BFLC's claims for trademark infringement and interference with prospective advantage. Those claims will be tried before a jury in October.

In dismissing the claims, the court relied primarily on the AFLC's rights under the First Amendment. The court also dismissed some of the AFLC's counterclaims on First Amendment grounds.

Judge MacLaughlin left standing the AFLC's contention that it has the right to claim affiliation with the Moriah Children's Home in Guntur, India. The AFLC can also pursue its claim for fraud based upon Pastor Dasari's representation that the BFLC held good title to the Indian church properties in the name of the BFLC.

In a related decision, the federal court has ruled that the AFLC is not required to disclose the names of members and donors. The BFLC, under Pastor Dasari's direction, had demanded the names of persons whose contributions were sent to India from 1980 to the present. The BFLC contended that it could not prove the full extent of its alleged losses without interviewing the donors. The AFLC opposed this demand and asked the court to protect the privacy of its members and contributors.

U.S. Magistrate Franklin Noel issued an order on August 15, determining that the First Amendment's freedom of association gives the AFLC the right to protect the identity of its donors. The magistrate ruled that the AFLC cannot be compelled to disclose the names of any members or donors.

In addition to the AFLC, the BFLC has sued the AFLC Mission Corporation, the Co-ordinating Committee, Rev. Eugene Enderlein, and Rev. Robert Lee.

Bhushana Rao Dasari has personally filed defamation claims against the AFLC and three pastors. Those claims are pending in state court.

**COMING NEXT ISSUE:  
AFLBS Commemorates  
25 Years**

## Introducing the New Associate Youth Resource Director

**Bob Halvorson, Bloomington, Minnesota**

*And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:15).*

**W**hen I was about ten years old, someone shared this verse with me and I remember thinking that it would be terrible for someone not to have their name written in God's book of life. I was fortunate to grow up in a Christian home where my parents instructed me in the faith and I had consciously accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior at a very young age. I remember being concerned for the spiritual lives of my neighborhood friends and so I asked my mom if I could start a neighborhood Bible study, she would provide the refreshments and I would take care of the study. It was a good idea, but I think we spent more time eating than studying.

When I entered senior high, my relationship with the Lord began to drift apart. There were many things that became more important to me than God — sports, friends, money, etc. Like so many relationships, communication was the problem. I no longer was taking the time to communicate with God through prayer and I did not allow Him to communicate with me through the reading and studying of His Word. For about seven years I continued to drift farther away from the Lord and deeper into sin. On the outside I acted as though I was thoroughly enjoying life, but on the inside I was frustrated and unfulfilled. But God was faithful and by His loving grace brought me back to Him.

God used the sudden death of my father to cause me to start thinking about spiritual matters in my life again. He brought back to my memory the verse from Revelation 30:15 and this time I was afraid because I no longer had the assurance that my name was written in the book of life. He brought a youth worker into my life who I opened up to and was able to share how frustrated I was with my life and that I was unhappy with the way I was living my life. I still remember the words this youth worker shared with me. He said, "Bob, you will never be totally satisfied unless you give your life to Jesus Christ." Those words continued to ring in my mind for a few days and then one day I asked my mom if she would pray with me to rededicate my life to the Lord. There was nothing flashy or dramatic about it, just a lost son who prayed with his mother to have his name written in the book of life.

Since that day, the Lord has continued to be faithful in drawing me near to Him. I attended a year and a quarter at AFLBS where God revealed to me the importance of His Word in my life on a daily basis. God brought into my life a beautiful Christian woman (Naomi Monseth) whom I would marry in 1987, and we have been blessed with three lovely children and one on the way!

In October of 1988, my wife and I were called to my home congregation, Emmaus Lutheran Church, Bloomington, to direct their youth ministries. This has been a very special time for me to witness God's work in the lives of so many young people. I have had the opportunity to pray with students who have indicated that they would like to have a relationship with God and have their names written in the book of life.

On September 1, 1991, I joined Pastor Dennis Gray as a quarter-time youth worker for the AFLC. It is a great privilege to be working with the Youth Board and Pastor Gray in this vital ministry. Please pray for us!



## AFLC Adds Chicago Area Church

**E**benezer Lutheran Church, in the south Chicago suburb of Evergreen Park, voted unanimously to affiliate with the AFLC at a special voters' meeting on August 18.

The congregation, which was organized in 1900 as a member of the Hauge Synod, withdrew from The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) merger and remained independent while investigating alternatives.

Situated in southeast Chicago and faced with a declining membership, Ebenezer made the difficult decision several years ago to re-locate, selling their old facilities and securing the Evergreen Park property, a former Presbyterian church and parsonage.

Rev. Henry O. Rowoldt, a retired pastor, currently provides the congregation with limited service, but plans will be considered to call a full-time pastor now that an affiliation has been adopted.

The congregation has a long and consistent heritage of evangelical Lutheranism with a low-church emphasis. A plaque on the wall near the church entrance lists many former members who entered full-time Christian service. Some of the names would be familiar ones to many in the AFLC, including the late Pastor Jacob Andeason and the late Sidney Swenson, which indicates that there is even more reason to believe that they have chosen the right church fellowship.

The address of Ebenezer Lutheran Church is 9544 St. Louis Avenue South, Chicago, IL 60642.

**Mark and Janine Johnson** were commissioned for missionary service on Sunday, August 11, during the morning worship hour at West Lisbon Church, rural Newark, Illinois, their home congregation. The couple, and their three children, left the next week for language school in Costa Rica, and plan to serve in Paraguay under SIM, International.



**Everett, Washington** Calvary Lutheran Church celebrated ninety years of ministry on August 10-11. The theme was from Ephesians 3:21: "To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations." Guest speakers were former pastors, Les Galland and Del Palmer. AFLBS' majesty Team sang.

The congregation was first named Zion Lutheran Free Church. Later the church was reorganized under the name Norwegian Lutheran Free Church. Then in 1938, the name was changed to Calvary. Rev. David Hinrichs is the current pastor.

Calvary has been moved by a vision for missions in the past. In 1931, the congregation established Bethany Nursing Home, now known as Bethany of the Northwest. In 1970, under the leadership of Pastor Francis Monseth, a church was planted in Lake Stevens, Elim Lutheran, which in turn began a new work in Arlington, Atonement Lutheran. Calvary also sponsors a missionary in the Philippines, Vivian Forsberg, who serves with Wycliff Bible Translators. Their vision for the future includes the establishment of a day-care center for homeless children in September and plans to plant another new church somewhere in the area. Thanks be to God for His grace in the past and for His grace in the future to continue the work of winning souls for Christ!

**Rev. Richard Bartholomew**, Glenwood, Minnesota, resigned as the pastor of Scandia, Sedan, and Gausdal, New London, where he has served since 1988.

Former pastors who attended the anniversary at Calvary Lutheran, (L. to R.): Gerald Sundby; Les Galland; David Hinrichs, current pastor; Marvin Unseth; and Del Palmer.

**Lake Alma, Saskatchewan** Faith Free Lutheran Church will host evangelistic meetings on October 27-31. Mr. Olaf Frigstad, Frontier, Saskatchewan, will be the speaker.

**Fargo, North Dakota** Special meetings with Rev. David Barnhart, Eagan, Minnesota, will be held at St. Paul's Free Lutheran on October 18-20, at 7 p.m. Rev. Barnhart will also preach at the 8:30 and 11 a.m. services on Sunday. Saturday evening service will have a special emphasis on youth.

**Rev. Erwin and Lorraine Brandt**, Garreston, South Dakota, celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on August 17, at Beaver Valley Lutheran Church, Beaver Creek, South Dakota.

**Greenbush, Minnesota** The United Free Lutheran Sunday School planted Colorado Blue Spruce trees for Arbor Day. Each class through the Confirmation class planted a tree. VBS at United concluded its week at Galilee Bible Camp, Lake Bronson. Nearly 60 children, pre-school through grade six, attended. The youth met with the Badger Creek and Oiland congregations during the evening, and the Luther League Gospel Team, Cornerstone, led the Bible studies, which emphasized fellowship and planning.

**Thief River Falls, Minnesota** Our Saviour's Christian Academy held its first all-school reunion during the afternoon of July 7. The Academy began in 1976.

## THE ASSOCIATION

**T**he Association of Free Lutheran Congregations is the full name of our fellowship. But the length lends itself to abbreviations, so we usually address ourselves as the AFLC or the Association. The latter word in reference to a church body has come into style somewhat in recent years, as several Lutheran groups have selected it instead of the time worn title, "synod." It is not clear if the reasons for their choice are the same as ours.

We are an association. Often this is approached negatively, perhaps by adding the phrase, "and not a synod." This emphasizes the autonomy of each local congregation and the freedom from hierarchical control.

But the fact that we are an association also needs to be approached positively, with a focus on what this word purposes. Our congregations have freely chosen to "associate" so that they might accomplish for Christ and His kingdom what one congregation cannot do alone. Association is not a step away from autonomy, but a step toward maturity. Association is the product of a realization that one congregation cannot stand alone, but requires accountability and responsibility within a broader church body.

No Christian can be an island, and no congregation can be, either. The cost of association is commitment, and all AFLC congregations are called to commit themselves to the service of one another through our common ministries.

It is a prayerful concern that this issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador* might serve to bind us closer together in true association.

## A LITTLE LEAVEN

**I**t sounded like a sensational idea ... every home in the United States receiving a pamphlet by mail outlining the way of salvation. The funds were raised by a church in Tennessee for printing and postage, resulting in a finished product that has probably already been received by most of us.

The potential of the project was great, and there are many positive aspects of the presentation to which one can point. Perhaps this is why the disappointment was great, too, when it became clear that a peculiar doctrinal deviation of the sponsoring church had been inserted in the pamphlet.

The way of salvation is presented in five steps, and one

of them is baptism by immersion. In other words, the pamphlet teaches that we are not born again until we have been baptized by immersion. Lutheran Christians can find lots of room for discussion and disagreement when we look at the doctrine of baptism held by most other evangelicals, but it must be emphasized that the above position divides those who endorse it from all of us, even our baptistic brethren.

A little leaven leavens the whole loaf. We are justified by faith in Christ alone, and the Letter to the Galatians makes it fearfully plain that adding to the grace of God at all puts us in peril of losing all.

Perhaps some will be led to seek the Savior through this massive mailing outreach. We would pray that none might be led to seek something more than the Savior as necessary for their soul's salvation.

## AN INTRODUCTION AND INVITATION

**T**his issue introduces our readers to a new/renewed feature in *The Lutheran Ambassador*. Once it was called the "Opinion Page," but now we have named it *The Forum*.

A forum is a place for the discussion of public matters or current questions, according to one dictionary. It will provide a platform for you to address our concerns as a church, not necessarily in a controversial spirit, but in an attempt to stimulate prayerful consideration, at a length that exceeds the size of a letter to the editor.

The article by Mr. Emerson, an active layman at King of Glory Church, Eden Prairie, Minnesota, is a good introduction to this feature. May it also serve as an invitation to others to accept this opportunity to address our fellowship. We continue to reserve the right to exercise editorial discretion concerning what will be included.

\*\*\*\*\*

There is still time to plan for the Stewardship Seminar at the ARC, September 20-21, with Dr. Waldo Werning.

**Larimore, North Dakota** The Eastern North Dakota District Fall Rally will be held as Living Faith Free Lutheran on September 28. "Serve the Lord" is the theme from Deuteronomy 13:4. Missionaries Connely and Carolyn Dyrud are the special speakers. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m.

**Northwest Minnesota District** The district women held their annual overnight retreat at Galilee Bible Camp on August 2-3. Friday's session began with a potluck salad supper. Barb Johnson, Badger, led the singspi-

ration and Carolyn Dyrud shared about the work in Brazil. United Free Lutheran Church, Greenbush, provided the hostesses for the retreat. Mrs. Alvin Grothe, Astoria, Oregon, led the Saturday prayer time. Missionary Connely Dyrud spoke during two of the day's sessions. Betty Mohrbacher, Warroad, gave a flower arranging demonstration during the afternoon.

On October 12, Oiland Free Lutheran, rural Greenbush, will host the annual Fall Rally. Missionaries Dan and Debbie Giles will be the speakers.

**Brooklyn Park, Minnesota** Solid Rock Lutheran Church moved to a new home in June, at the Riverview Elementary School, located on the corner of Highway 252 and 93rd Avenue North.

**Todd Peterson**, Thief River Falls, Minnesota, presently conducts Sunday services at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, rural Holt, Minnesota. The congregation has been served by laymen from Our Saviour's, Thief River Falls, for several years.

# The Last Word

## The Evangelism Priority

*All authority is given to Me in heaven and on earth: Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:18-19).*

**T**he basis of evangelism is the authority of Jesus Christ, not the lost condition of people nor the needs of the unsaved. It is sad to say, but for many Christians (pastors and churches) reaching out to the unsaved, or evangelism, is on the back burner with the heat turned down.

I read of a nation-wide survey taken among five thousand pastors a few years ago by Larry Richards, who asked the question: "How would you prioritize the greatest needs in strengthening the life and program of your church?" He was surprised to report that less than half the pastors gave a high priority to planning and implementing church growth. Rather, their priorities were centered on maintenance.

Most pastors know that having a growing church means more work, more people to care for, more discipling to do, more decisions and planning. Many pastors are not willing to pay the price.

What are the priorities of many churches? It was found that some have program maintenance and building maintenance as their main objectives. Others replace disciple-making priorities with fellowship or education or social services. In the above verses, and in several other portions of God's Word, Jesus makes it clear that we are saved to spread the Good News, so that people might hear, believe, repent and be saved.

Oswald Chambers comments on Acts 1:8 as follows: "Go ye therefore ... This go simply means live, it is a description of how to go. Jesus did not say to go into Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria, but 'Ye shall be witnesses unto Me' in all these places." The point is that as we live — as we go — we are to be witnesses.

If maintenance, fellowship, education or social services take priority over disciple-making (evangelism), the

### THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

Second-Class

The Association Free Lutheran Bible School began the 1991 Fall Quarter on September 8. Enrollment of 110 students came from the U. S. and six other nations, including Russia and mainland China.

church stops growing. No new disciples are being won to Christ.

Usually new Christians are zealous about reaching out to their unsaved friends, but if this is not encouraged, they soon become involved in the fellowship of the church, drop their old friends, and soon lose their burden and vision for the salvation of the lost. Fellowship becomes more of a priority than evangelism, and as far as the Gospel is concerned, they are not going anywhere.

Jesus said "Go" to all His followers, and this command has never changed. The citizens of heaven (angels) are excited when one soul comes to repentance. God wants the lost to be found. I believe that one of the greatest areas of weakness in the church today is evangelism. God wants His people to make disciple-making a priority.

Studies show that one common reason why people don't come to church is that they've never been invited. Will you be an inviter? Will you make evangelism a priority in your church and in your life?

— Missionary-Evangelist  
John H. Abel

## *All friends of AFLBS are invited to the 25th Anniversary weekend, October 11-13*

### Friday

8 p.m. — Homecoming night fellowship in the campus church basement.

### Saturday

8:30 a.m. — Alumni Business meeting.

10-12 noon — Seminar led by Rev. R. Anderson.

1 p.m. — Football, volleyball, family games.

6 p.m. — 25th Anniversary banquet celebration at Emmaus Lutheran Church. Rev. Ken Moland, speaker. Reservations by October 4, call (612) 544-9501.

### Sunday

11 a.m. — 25th Anniversary Praise Service on the campus. Rev. Richard Snipstead, speaker.