

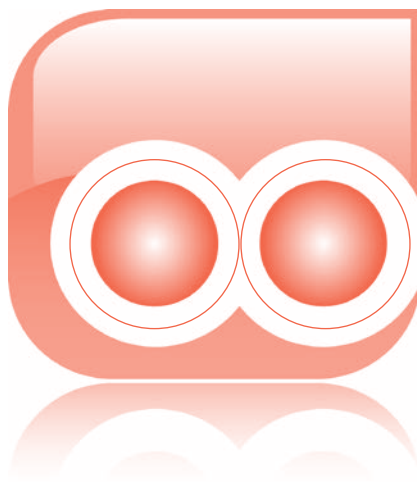
THE LUTHERAN 

APRIL 2010

AMBASSADOR

Mission
 **minded**

Looking



for you

BY SARAH VANCE

Do you feel far from God? Are you searching for Him, longing to hear His voice? Take heart, God is searching for you.

In Luke 15:4-7, we read about the shepherd who leaves His ninety-nine sheep to go searching for just one who was missing. Jesus said, "What man among you, if he has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the pasture and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance."

It may have seemed foolish to us, yet the shepherd knew the ninety-nine sheep would be safe in the pasture while the one lost sheep was in grave danger. Every individual sheep is precious and of highest value to the shepherd, which motivates His diligent search for the lost.

It is one thing for God to forgive a sinner who humbly comes to Him for mercy. Yet what an exceptional love God must have that He would tenderly search for sinners and then joyfully forgive them. Jesus came to earth to search for lost, sinful people and to save us in the same way as the shepherd saves his lost sheep. We all can identify ourselves as the one helpless, lost, wayward sheep. We are so unworthy to have the perfect, all-powerful, all-knowing

God search for us. Have you wandered away from the Shepherd? God grieves when one of His children wanders away from Him. He also rejoices when one of His children is found and brought back into His presence. He is searching for you.

You are so valuable that God sent His only Son to die for you (John 3:16). God's love for you is so great that He *personally* sought you out and rejoiced when you were found. The almighty God of the universe still considers *you* worthwhile for His pursuit and His passionate love. His love for you is constant, patient, and welcoming. He is searching for you and waiting for you to respond. God's great love reaches out to each of us as sinners, no matter why or how we became lost. No one is beyond hope in His eyes. He can still make all things new in your life, no matter what you have done. When we respond to His searching and repent of our sinful wandering, He rejoices in forgiving us and celebrates the new life He freely gives us in Jesus.

God loves you with an indescribable love. You are precious and of utmost importance to Him. No one can take the place that you have in God's heart.

God is searching for you. Go to Him today.

Vance is a registered nurse in an intensive care unit in Staples, Minn. Her husband, Pastor Jeremy Vance, serves Zion Free Lutheran in Wadena, Minn., and Bethany Free Lutheran Church of Bluegrass, Sebeka, Minn.

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Editor Pastor Craig Johnson
craigj@teleport.com

Managing Editor Ruth Gunderson
ruthg@aflc.org

Editorial Board Oryen Benrud
Pastor Jerry Moan
Pastor James L. Johnson

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I have but one candle of life to burn, and I would rather burn it out in a land filled with darkness than in a land flooded with light.

—John Keith Falconer

God's work done in God's way will never lack God's supply.

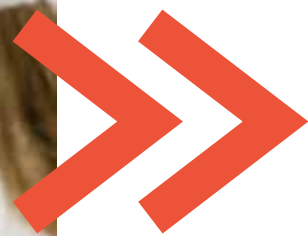
— Hudson Taylor

[If a commission by an earthly king is considered an honor, how can a commission by a Heavenly King be considered a sacrifice?]

— David Livingstone

The mark of a great church is not its seating capacity, but its sending capacity.

— Mike Stachura



By Glenda Kvale

An 8-year-old South Minneapolis girl eager to know God better felt censored in her own Sunday school class. She raised her hand, receiving a response that no questions were welcome. I was that girl.

When I was afraid at night, Dad would say, "Jesus is with you," while tucking me back into bed. I remember Mom teaching me the Lord's Prayer. This made me hungry for more of God. God rescued me through the invitation of a neighbor friend to come to Sunday school at Faith Free Lutheran in Minneapolis. I'm grateful my parents let me go.

That morning set the course for the rest of my life. The teacher promptly told me what it meant to have a relationship with Jesus. Her zeal made it feel like someone had turned on an electric switch. She closed

of future Christian parents, ministers, teachers and missionaries.

I didn't sense at any certain age God calling me specifically to be a missionary, but I could list a whole lifetime of events that have equipped me for His service at any age. Through God's constant preparation, He orchestrates things throughout our lives to prepare us for each endeavor.

Here are some things that helped create an interest in my life for missions and could help build a vision for missions in your church.

First, bring missions back home to eliminate the idea that missions is something "out there." Include missions in Bible studies, Sunday school and worship. Recognize the traits of a missionary in Scripture, discussing how they apply to

cerning spiritual warfare, for this intensifies in the life of an individual considering ministry or missions.

Fourth, implement a short-term mission trip for youth and adults annually if possible. This is key to living out missions in your heart.

Lastly, encourage all ages to pray and send notes of encouragement reminding a missionary that you are praying for them. Without this, missionaries feel alone, wondering who else has a vision for missions. Stress and burnout begin. To a missionary, opening a note of encouragement is like fuel to an automobile; both are raring to travel more rewarding miles. Pray that your church is a sending church that will raise up individuals in the next generation to replace those retired and with the Lord.

Raising a missionary

class time by asking me, "Any questions, Glenda?" I was encouraged to ask my parents for a Bible, so I did. They gave me one on Valentine's Day when I was 9 years old. I was given the greatest love letter, directly from God, meant for the whole world. My heart grieves to think of the more than 2,200 language groups yet without God's Word, so I serve to make it available to all today.

My journey continued through the ministry of various families as I grew up going to Faith. By a simple greeting or someone who sat and dug into God's Word with me, important seeds were planted into my life. We often think of ministry as the job of the pastor, Sunday school teacher or missionary. But you never know when your greeting, help, prayers, testimony or life example is going to change a life for the Lord. Your presence at church is valuable. Though rarely thanked, you have a role in the lives

daily life.

Second, keep missionaries off pedestals and speak of them as regular people. Place their pictures in Sunday school class; pray for them regularly; invite them to your church, into your home, out to eat or for a game. Cultivate the thinking that being a missionary is a lifestyle to eliminate the fear individuals may have of one day becoming a full-time missionary.

Third, keep missions-oriented resources in your church library; include missions-based curriculum in Sunday school; have a bulletin board that includes missionaries as part of your church family; pilot a personal home Bible study on missions and the believer; pray that some church members might be led to keep the passion for missions in the foreground by serving the church body in this way; teach and equip children, youths and adults con-

The Lord told Paul in Acts 26:18 (NASB), "I am sending you, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me."

God sends us to be a light shining in a dark place. Plant seeds by shining for Jesus as His missionary any place you are. Seek His will through Scripture. Invite God to show you a new opportunity to be His ambassador in 2010.

Kvale and her husband, Steve, are AFLC missionaries on loan to Wycliffe Bible Translators, serving stateside from Balaton, Minn., and currently members of Christ the King Free Lutheran of Pipestone, Minn. Their Web site is www.TranslateTheWord.org.

The road to missions

By Kirsten Paccha

A As I look back, I see the little ways through which God was working in my life and the ways I tried to say no because of my rebellious, sinful heart. However, because of God's grace and mercy, He continued to work on my stubborn heart until I completely obeyed His call. Though now I am a missionary in Ecuador, daily dying to self and following His call, my life story is a long road filled with decisions to either follow God or my own path.

I was so blessed to have grown up in a Christian home. My parents and grandparents placed a great emphasis on helping others through supporting missionaries, sponsoring children overseas, serving others in the church, and simply helping a neighbor. While God was showing me His work and how He wanted me to be involved in ministry, I still had many excuses.

1a God's work

In elementary school I had a missionary pen pal who lived in Ecuador. The country of Ecuador and Spanish language soon became of interest to me through this relationship. During elementary school, I did a country report on Ecuador and wrote an essay about what I would be doing 10 to 15 years later in my life. My essay talked about how I would be a teacher and missionary in Ecuador with my husband and children.

2a God's work

In high school, I became less of a homebody. During this time of my life, I was also challenged by Christian leaders to make personal devotions a regular part of my life. I grew more in my faith through my devotions and times in church, Sunday school, youth group, and by simply being surrounded by Christian friends and mentors.

My excuse 1b

I would never have dreamed of actually leaving the United States. In fact, I was a little apprehensive toward a simple two-week family vacation that my family took in a car.

I preferred to remain in my comfort zone with my own house, my friends, my things, and my wants. I did not recognize it at the time, but now I can see the self-centered attitude that was creeping through.

My excuse 2b

Some of the same Christian leaders and examples in my life told me that I should consider doing something with missions because they could see me helping others and working on a mission field. Being a sinful human and rebellious in nature, I decided I was not going to do what everyone thought I should do. No sir! I was going to do what I wanted. Therefore, I was not going to be a missionary.



3a

God's work

After high school, God led me to the Association Free Lutheran Bible School. During the first semester, the school held its annual Revival Conference. While missionary Dan Giles was speaking at an evening session, God was working on my heart. I knew the Lord was calling me to the mission field. I did not know where or how or when, but I knew it was time to surrender and let God completely lead my life. At the time, surrender seemed overwhelming and scary, but after spending time in prayer with my Lord, I was comforted with a wonderful peace.

Surrender

After that night, I had to continually leave behind my will and surrender to God's will. While in Bible school, I experienced two wonderful summers on the Majesty team with four other classmates. We traveled to the West Coast working in vacation Bible schools and ministering through music. Through these times, I received so many blessings. I loved serving and praying for and with the people we met. Before these trips, I had never personally led anyone to the Lord and prayed with them. I was so excited and grateful to the Lord when I was able to pray with several 8 and 9 year old children to receive Jesus. Praise the Lord!



God's continued work

Each day is a challenge. I continue to find excuses: "I can't speak Spanish well." "I'm not as good as the other person." "I don't have enough Bible training to answer all the questions." "I am not doing enough to reach out." The list goes on. However, God is faithful. I have seen Him work through my faults and excuses. I have learned to not put anything out of the reach of God's work despite my struggles with Spanish, cultural differences, or insecurities. He is infinitely more powerful than any roadblocks we might see. We must daily surrender to the Lord and trust in Him to take care of the outcomes. He is able.

"Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen" (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Paccha and her husband, Darwin, a 2009 graduate of AFLTS, live in Cuenca, Ecuador, where they work at a Christian school.

3b

>> Have Bible,



“And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted

will travel

By Pastor Mark Antal

On Jan. 17 I returned home from a 14-day trip to India. Dr. Francis Monseth of the Free Lutheran Seminary, Pastor Kevin Olson of the AFLC Ambassador Institute and I traveled together to teach and preach in India. The mission: bring seminary training to AFLC India pastors and Bible women. Dr. Monseth taught for ten hours on the doctrine of grace. Pastor Olson taught for ten hours on congregational life. My subject was discipleship, also a ten-hour course of instruction.

Our method of instruction utilized a technique called orality training. Instead of using a pure lecture method, we were asked to teaching by using stories to convey our material.

During the past 27 years I have been a parish minister and chaplain in the U.S. Army. My platform for teaching has been a pulpit on Sunday mornings or a folding chair for small group Bible studies. My mode of operation has always been, "If someone wants me to teach or preach, say no more. Have Bible, will travel."

After receiving my subject matter of discipleship I began to pray and seek the Lord. Discipleship is a broad topic and can cover any area of Christian living including prayer, personal devotions, Bible study, witnessing, Bible memorization, home life, and church life, to name a few. After receiving consent from my congregations to go to India, my biggest prayer need was simply, "Lord, help me prepare material that will apply directly to brothers and sisters in India."

God's reply was not immediate. I continued to search for books on discipleship. I sought prayer from family and friends. One morning as I was having my personal devotions from I Thessalonians I began to see subjects that could directly apply to Christian living and it quickly became my text on the subject of discipleship.

God's Word penetrates any cultural, generational, or congregational barrier. As I spent hours studying the five chapters of I Thessalonians God blessed my heart with His rich, unchangeable, inerrant and inspiring Word.

When I left my home in North Dakota for India I was ready for the task ahead. Brothers and sisters from my church and area had provided funds for travel and in-country expenses. Many people

covered me daily with their prayers. The prayers of God's people prepared my heart for the task and joy ahead. In India, the students came to class each day with textbook in hand. What a thrill to see brothers and sisters in Christ quickly turn to the Scriptures and seek the living God. I spoke through an interpreter, who was very fluid and readily accepted by the pastors and Bible women.

Almost 500 digital pictures and videos document our brief stay in India. In my sleep I see the faces of dear friends halfway around the world. As a simple country preacher, my life has been changed forever because of the experience of sharing the Word of God. I was humbled and truly honored to serve the Church. Much can be said about the beautiful country of India and its endearing inhabitants. The Church of Jesus Christ is alive and growing in India. But much still needs to be done to help our brothers and sisters of AFLC India.

One message rings in my heart from this trip: any of our pastors could have done what I did. To hear God's call to go, equipped by the Savior, remains at the heart of every pastor. "Have Bible, will travel" to Park River or Edinburg, N.D., or wherever the Lord will lead. Is God calling you? Are you ready to go wherever He may lead? He will equip you. He will bring prayer warriors into your life to provide courage and strength for the task at hand. For every believer, we must listen to the voice of God as recorded in sacred Scripture. God will speak to us from every verse of Scripture. What a joy it is to hear God's Word and follow where He leads.

Antal serves Victory Free Lutheran, Park River, N.D., and Grace Free Lutheran, Edinburg, N.D.

it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe" (I Thessalonians 2:13).



Making new

At the Home Missions Retreat

By Pastor Rich Carr

A couple of months ago I decided against going to the pastor's conference this year. I had faithfully attended them since I became a pastor. But now that I am serving a Home Missions church in Maryland it was no longer easy and cheap for me to attend. Besides, my wife had her hands full homeschooling our three oldest, and frankly, Wisconsin in January just doesn't appeal to my flesh!

After speaking to Pastor Paul Nash (director of Home Missions) a scant few days before the Home Missions Retreat was to start, I was informed that money was made available to cover the transportation cost for my wife, Brenda, and I to attend. While I was still hesitant on committing the time, energy, and money to attend, I felt like perhaps God really wanted me to go. Unfortunately, I never prayed about whether or not to go in the first place and felt that if I had *first* sought God's desire for me in this matter I wouldn't be running like mad at the last minute for our trip.

Brenda dutifully began a marathon packing event that lasted up until the very minute before we left. Not only was she packing for a family of seven, but she had to arrange for who would watch which children. With some family sick, and another recovering from a minor surgery this was no easy event. But after making two sepa-

rate "kid drops" in Pennsylvania, and then in Indiana, Brenda and I were now childless for our drive to Minneapolis, and then to the ARC in Wisconsin.

All of the speakers shared encouraging messages, yet the one that stood out the most for me was Tom Krauter speaking about the need for biblically based worship. Krauter made the point that churches have allowed their culture, tradition, and personal tastes to greatly influence their worship. Biblical worship as illustrated heavily in the Psalms and elsewhere throughout the Bible is neither American or, dare I say, strictly Lutheran! I personally was challenged to reevaluate my congregation's corporate worship practices.

As wonderful as the retreat was, what meant the most to me was reconnecting with people who have impacted me. From seminarians finishing up their schooling to some of the godly old timers, the people are

what made the week special.

The day before we left on our long drive home through an ice storm, countless miles of road noise, tolls, and a stop at urgent care, we stopped for a quick visit with my last congregation, Hope Lutheran in Minneapolis. Hope's community outreach dinner and evening programs were in high gear when we arrived. When a neighborhood woman—first reached by the church through Operation Angel Tree—hugged us, and prayed for us, I felt like the trip was worth all the blood, sweat, and tears. Helping people experience God is what our ministry is about. Jesus died for our chance to have a relationship with Him. And people are dying needing this relationship. What a blessing it is for us to be able to share in this ministry with our brothers-in-arms.

Carr serves Christ Community Church, Hagerstown, Md.

connections

? What was the most meaningful session at the retreat? Why?

The 2010 Home Missions Retreat was a powerful personal blessing. Aside from the benefit of great fellowship and spiritual encouragement, the retreat sessions were both challenging and inspiring. There were many good speakers: Pastors Bob Lee, Jim Johnson, Ollie Olson, and Al Monson. My favorite session was the one Pastor John Eidsmoe did under the topic, “My Country ’Tis of Thee.” Pastor Eidsmoe reminded us of our rich heritage as a country and our deep spiritual roots. He reminded us of the great gift that was given to us in the Pilgrims who settled our land, in our Founding Fathers, in the Declaration of Independence, and in our Constitution. These were not historical accidents, but by the design of Almighty God in answer to prayer.

Pastor Eidsmoe challenged the absurd notion that our great nation was fashioned by a horde of Deists. He reminded us of the quote from Benjamin Franklin, the secularists’ poster boy for Deism, who said to the

Constitutional Convention: “I’ve lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing Proofs I see of this Truth—*That God governs in the Affairs of Men*. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his Notice, is it probable that an Empire can rise without his Aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings, that except the Lord build the House they labor in vain who build it. I firmly believe this,—and I also believe that without his concurring Aid, we shall succeed in this political Building no better than the Builders of Babel.” If Benjamin Franklin is the hallmark founder of secularism in early America, I say bring on more of them today. I thank God for our spiritual heritage as a nation. I thank Pastor Eidsmoe for reminding me of that! And I thank AFLC Home Missions for offering his session at the Home Missions Retreat, which so blessed me!

Pastor Ray Ballmann serves Word of Truth Lutheran, Glen Rose, Texas.

? Was there anything from the retreat that resonated in your life?

There are a couple of things that resonated with me at the Home Missions conference. Pastor Ollie Olson reminded me of things that I have seen during the last 10 years outside of the AFLC. I believe, as he said, that we spend too much time in the churches of America today preparing people for life and not for eternity. As a result, we have a nation of biblically illiterate congregations.

It was so refreshing to be with and hear pastors and lay people give our Holy God and His Word the position He deserves. We have become a people too focused on the “social gospel.” But if we faithfully preach the true gospel of Jesus Christ—His life, death and resurrection—the social aspect will be taken care of. It has been so long since I have seen and heard people profess just Jesus. Not parenting, marriage, prayer, relationships and everything else—just Jesus. I have so missed this kind of preaching and teaching, and it is a blessing to still hear it here in the AFLC. Thanks for a great weekend. It was good to be home.

Wendy Kupser and her husband, Brad, live in Hastings, Minn., where they are in the process of organizing a Home Missions congregation.

? What will you take back with you to your congregation?

Attending the Home Missions Retreat was a privilege for this layman. To see the fine leaders and pastors in our Association encouraged me to tell our congregation that we do not stand alone in the battle. We have brothers and sisters to join in lifting high the banner for Jesus. Pastor [Al] Monson’s talk and no-nonsense approach to relationship was a call to all of us to grow up and not allow discord in our congregations to divert our attention from the Lord’s work.

Chris Bunn is a member of St. Ansgar’s Lutheran, Salinas, Calif.

The body of Ch

By Stephanie Nelson

As a member of the 2009 North Barnabas summer team, I was able to experience the supernatural unity of the body of Christ firsthand as I traveled with three other students from the Association Free Lutheran Bible School (AFLBS). We spent the entire summer leading vacation Bible school and camp ministry for a week at a time in various AFLC congregations.

One of the most memorable events of the summer occurred less than three weeks into our travels. We were driving to our host families after attending an evening Bible study in Milford, Ill., when our van's transmission died. As we slowly nursed the van back to the girls' host family, we prayed. There we were, in the middle of a bunch of cornfields without a vehicle, and we needed to travel more than 900 miles to Greenbush, Minn., a few days later. The rest of that week turned into a tremendous "faith builder" of constant prayer, recognizing our complete dependence on God. It would be a lie to say that we weren't getting a little anxious as our scheduled Saturday morning departure drew near with no apparent answer to our prayers.

Soon we saw that God had the whole situation under control from the beginning, just like it says in Proverbs 16:9, "The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps." Our team was gathered after VBS on Thursday when a family from the church announced that they had a minivan they wanted to donate to Home Missions for our team to use! To say that we were in shock would be an understatement. It still seems unreal that this family was willing to give a van to a group of college-age students whom they had only known for a few days! What an amazing testimony to the way God desires His body to function! They saw a need and filled it, receiving nothing in return. This incredible act of self-sacrificial love was a great encouragement and challenge to our team.

Our team spent lots of time in unique churches and communities, but regardless of where we went, one thing was always the same: a passion for spreading the Word about salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. We were welcomed into the lives and homes of countless people as if we were their own family. Before we even left the first church, our van was overflowing with enough food to last the entire summer! Our churches and host families for the summer took us swimming, golfing, fishing, trap shooting, tubing, sightseeing, and of course to all sorts of wonderful restaurants.

It was remarkable to see these strangers treating us like family. I couldn't help but think, "This really is how the family of God is supposed to function."

Colossians 3:14 says, "And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity." We often fail to love our brothers with the self-sacrificial, intentional love to which we are called. When we see the love God had for us in sending Jesus to die on the cross for our sins, we should overflow with love for Him and for the people whom He passionately loves. It is easy to see the faults in others or to dwell on personality conflicts, but God's love transcends all those things. As I struggled with this during the summer, a friend of mine shared with me that being united as Christians does not mean becoming best friends. Rather, a group of believers is unified when they are working together with the common goal of spreading the gospel. This is why Paul speaks so strongly in I Corinthians 12 of the unified diversity within the body of Christ. We do not have to be best friends with the people around us in order to show them God's love because our bond with believers is not based on how much we like other people or how well we get along; our bond is rooted in our common faith in Christ.

As I prepare for another summer of serving on a Home Missions Barnabas team, traveling with new teammates, and visiting new congregations, I cannot wait to see all that God has planned for us. What a freeing truth to know that God is the one who can destroy the things that divide His people and strengthen the bonds of love that unite us. Psalm 133:1 says, "Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity"—unity that is not dependent on us but entirely based on the love of Christ. Praise the Lord!

Nelson, a senior at the Association Free Lutheran Bible School, Plymouth, Minn., is a member of Lisbon Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran, Newark, Ill.

"The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its

rist



parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:12).

Housing options for 2010 annual conference

The 2010 annual conference will be held June 15-18 on the campus of the AFLC Schools in Plymouth, Minn. The conference committee has gathered information on available housing for conference attendees. The options range from on-campus dorm housing to hotels and campgrounds. The map at right shows the approximate location of the campus (noted by star) and the housing options (A-G).

★ Campus dorms will be available to rent for the week. Options include \$25/night for a two-person room or \$35/night for three to four people. There is a one-time charge of \$10 for bedding per person. A limited number of air conditioning units are also available for \$10/day. Call (763) 544-9501 to reserve a room.

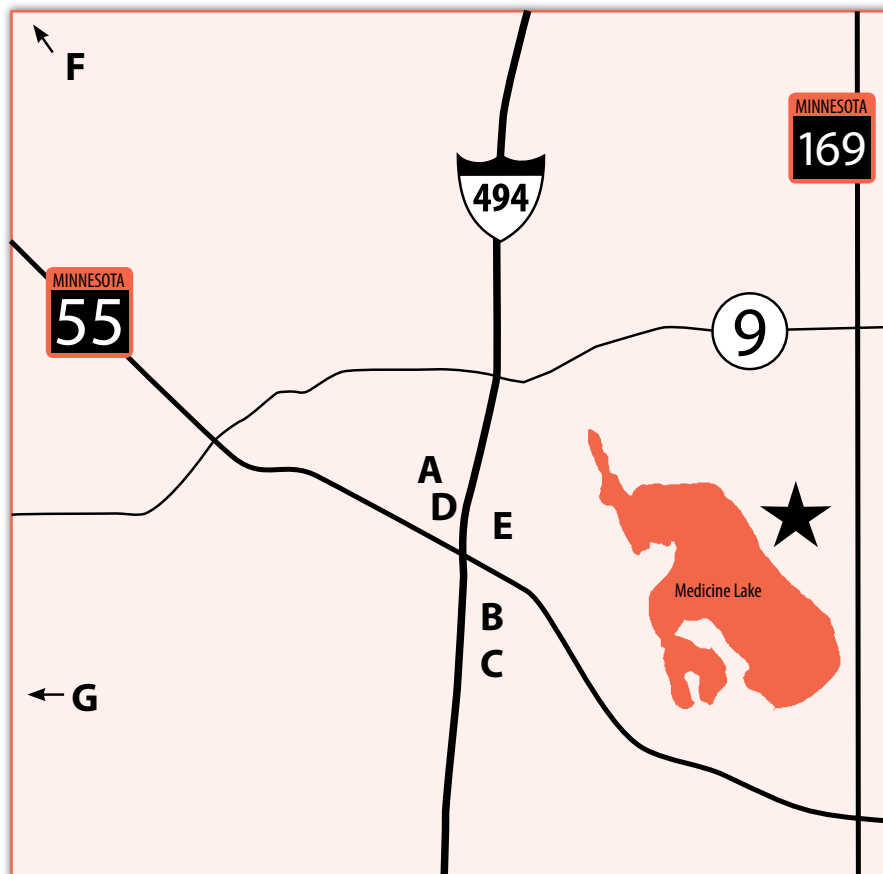
A: Comfort Inn, 3000 Harbor Lane, Plymouth. One king or two double beds for \$75/night. Call (763) 559-1222 or visit www.comfortinn.com.

B: Best Western, 2705 North Annapolis Lane, Plymouth. One king or queen, two queens or two doubles for \$75/night. Call (800) 528-1234 or visit www.bestwesternplymouth.com.

C: Red Roof Inn, 2600 Annapolis Lane, Plymouth. One king for \$55/night; two doubles for \$60/night; one king with microwave and refrigerator for \$65/night. Call (763) 553-1751 or visit www.redroof.com.

D: Days Inn, 2955 Empire Lane, Plymouth. Any room for \$47/night with AFLC rate. Must make reservations 30 days in advance. Call (763) 559-2400.

E: Radisson Hotel, 3131 Campus Drive, Plymouth. One king or two doubles for \$109/night. Call (763) 559-6600.



F: KOA campground, Maple Grove. Call (763) 420-2255.

G: Baker Campground, 2309 Baker Park Road, Maple Plain. Call (763) 559-6700 or visit www.threeriversparks.org.

Registration forms for children, youth online

Special programs will be available for children and youths during the AFLC annual conference June 15-18 on the campus of the AFLC Schools, Plymouth, Minn.

Activities for youths in grades 7 through 12 will include Bible studies, recreation and service projects. A complete list of activities and a registration form is available online at www.aflc.org. Click on "conferences," then on "2010."

A VBS and daycamp enrollment form for children ages 5 through those in 6th grade is also available on the Web site. The VBS program will be held at Grace Free Lutheran, Maple Grove.

Finally, a nursery registration form is available for children ages 4 and younger. The nursery will be available June 15-18.

Free worship seminar after conference

The AFLC will sponsor a free seminar on worship June 19 on the campus of the AFLC Schools in Plymouth, Minn.

The seminar, which will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Heritage Hall, will feature nationally known author and speaker Tom Krauter.



Krauter

The seminar is a practical, biblical forum focusing on the heart and substance of worship. Far from a typical seminar setting, Tom's engaging style and practical

teaching will keep you involved and interested throughout the day.

"I have attended five of these seminars and each one gets better. ... I have seen Tom's passion for Christ grow and intensify over the years ... He is driven by an overwhelming desire to see others experience the same in their everyday lives. I know this seminar will challenge and encourage all who long to experience Christ," said Pastor David Johnson, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Cloquet, Minn.

This seminar will be offered at no cost for AFLC Conference attendees, but you must register in advance. Please call Karen Floan at (763) 545-5631 to register, or register online at www.training-resources.org/wsem_aflc.html.

annual conference REGISTRATION

June 15-18 at the AFLC Schools, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Plymouth, Minn.

For a downloadable form, and for more information, visit www.aflc.org and click on "conferences"

First name: _____ Spouse (if attending): _____

Last name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

AFLC Congregation: _____

Other Congregation: _____

Membership (Check one)

You: _____ Rostered AFLC Pastor or serving AFLC church _____ Visiting Pastor _____ Lay Member _____ Lay Visitor

Spouse: _____ Rostered AFLC Pastor or serving AFLC church _____ Visiting Pastor _____ Lay Member _____ Lay Visitor

Name of person attending WMF Convention on June 15: _____

Please indicate the number of children attending: _____ 5 and younger _____ 6-12 _____ 13-17

Meals and banquets: Children ages 5 and younger eat free. Board and committee members must register for applicable meals. When two options are available, please check which meal(s) you will be attending by marking the number of those attending in box(es) before meal. **Meal registration must be received by May 31.**

Meal	Ages 13-Adult	#	Ages 6-12	#	Total
Tuesday Conference breakfast	\$5.50		\$2.75		\$
Tuesday Conference Committee lunch	\$7		N/A		\$
Tuesday WMF luncheon	\$7		N/A		\$
Tuesday WMF banquet	\$8.50		N/A		\$
Wednesday breakfast: <input type="checkbox"/> WMF advisory board <input type="checkbox"/> Conference	\$5.50		\$2.75		\$
Wednesday lunch: <input type="checkbox"/> Builder's Fellowship <input type="checkbox"/> Conference	\$8.50		\$4.25		\$
Wednesday dinner: <input type="checkbox"/> School's Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Conference	\$8.50		\$4.25		\$
Thursday breakfast: <input type="checkbox"/> Mission Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Conference	\$5.50		\$2.75		\$
Thursday lunch: <input type="checkbox"/> ARC Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Conference	\$8.50		\$4.25		\$
Thursday Conference dinner	\$8.50		\$4.25		\$
Thursday Pastors and Wives banquet	\$15		N/A		\$
Friday breakfast: <input type="checkbox"/> FLAPS <input type="checkbox"/> Conference	\$5.50		\$2.75		\$
Friday Conference lunch	\$8.50		\$4.25		\$
Friday Conference dinner	\$8.50		\$4.25		\$
Total meals					\$
Conference registration fee (\$30 single/\$40 couple)					\$
WMF convention registration fee (\$7)					\$
Total registration and meals					\$

Make checks payable to "AFLC Schools" and mail to: AFLC, c/o Conference Registration, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Plymouth, MN 55441.

Do you need encouragement?

Register now for the WMF Convention set for June 15 on the AFLC Campus, Plymouth, Minn.

BY MARY ANN WARD
& DAWN JOHNSON

Greetings ladies from the members of your National WMF Board. We are busy making plans for our annual

WMF Day, which begins at 9 a.m. Tuesday, June 15, under the theme of encouragement. We have a very special day planned for you, which will begin in the chapel with beautiful music by Marian Christopherson on the pipe organ. We are pleased to have the 2010 AFLBS Ambassador team, who will lead a time of praise and worship with us. The Bible study will be led by Mary Christenson, our 2010 Bible study writer. As usual, we will take time to remember our dear sisters in Christ who have gone on to be with the Lord this past year. Please come prepared with the names from your congregation so that we do not forget anyone. The morning will conclude with the business meeting.

During the business meeting we will again be dealing with a constitutional amendment that was presented at the 2009 WMF Day to reduce the size of the board. After several changes, the amendment now reads:

Section 2: Officers in the WMF shall be a President, a first Vice President, a Second Vice President, a Communication Secretary, a Recording Secretary and a Treasurer.

Section 5: Officers shall be elected for a term of three years. All officers may be eligible for re-election but no officer shall hold the same office for more than two successive terms. The President and the Communication Secretary shall be elected one year; the First Vice President and the Recording Secretary the following year; the Second Vice President and the Treasurer the third year. Newly elected officers shall officially assume their duties at the first regular National Board meeting following their election.

This amendment passed by a ballot vote of 174 to 17. If this is approved by two-thirds of those present and voting at WMF Day in 2010, it will become part of the constitution.



Karen Knudsvig and Rose Finstrom, both of Ny Stavanger Free Lutheran, Buxton, N.D., attended the 2009 WMF Day in Fergus Falls, Minn.

Following the business meeting, we will gather for lunch in Heritage Hall. In order to allow more time for fellowship, there will not be a luncheon speaker this year. After lunch we'll move on to our workshops, which will also be held in Heritage Hall. We are delighted that the following ladies will share with us:

- Ellen Monseth—"Persevering through Forgiveness"
- Beth Talley—"Remembering God's Faithfulness"
- Beverly Enderlein—"Encouragement to Persevere"
- DaNeil Olson—to be determined

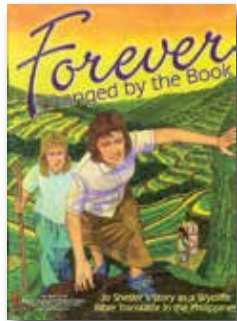
Our day will conclude with a banquet at 5 p.m. AFLC missionary Becky Abel will speak. The WMF Leadership Breakfast will be held Wednesday morning for those who are interested in ideas for women's ministry. The Mission Festival service will be held in the evening, with special speaker Darwin Jackson, a missionary with World Mission Prayer League in Mexico (on loan from the AFLC).

Please use the AFLC registration form (on page 15) to register for the WMF convention, the WMF luncheon, the WMF banquet, and the leadership breakfast.

Please pray for those who have committed to sharing with us. We look forward to seeing our old friends and making new friends as we gather together.

Ward, Ottawa, Ill., is the communication secretary of the WMF. Johnson, Wilson, Wis., is the executive secretary of the WMF.

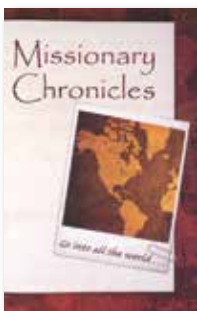
AFLC Parish Education has a lending library of DVDs and visualized mission stories. These resources and more are available from Ambassador Publications. Visit their Web site at www.aflc.org/publications or contact Parish Education at (763) 545-5631 or parished@aflc.org for more information.



Forever Changed by the Book

A compelling missionary biography about Wycliffe Bible Translator, Jo Shetler, who worked among the Balangao in the northern Philippines, translating the New Testament into their language. As a result of this translation, more than half of the 20,000 Balangao turned to Christ. Four chapters with illustrations and extra activities. \$14.95

Also available by special order: CD ROM with visuals and activities \$11.95; Visual Story and CD ROM \$19.95



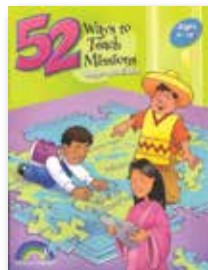
Missionary Chronicles

Follow the lives of Christian missionaries around the world through 43 short stories written by people of the AFLC. Includes discussion questions, maps, mission hymns, and creative ideas for teaching missions to children. A helpful resource for family devotions, opening chapel time, and Sunday school classrooms. \$10



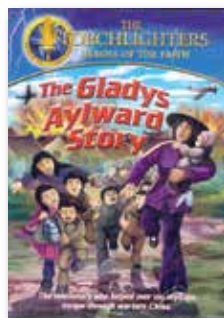
Ian and the Gigantic Leafy Obstacle

A fallen tree, a missing elephant, and a prayer of faith. Set in Thailand, this true story booklet for children demonstrates how God works to answer prayer. \$4



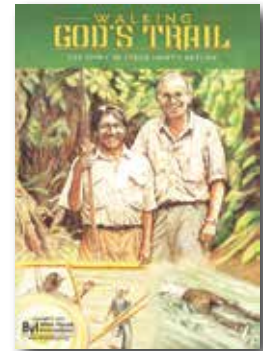
52 Ways to Teach Missions

Crafts, games, outreach ideas, and more teach children and adults to be missionaries in their own neighborhoods plus help get them involved personally with missionaries serving in other countries. \$9.50



Torchlighters: Gladys Aylward Story

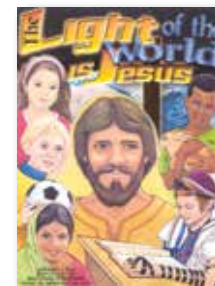
With war raging about her and soldiers closing in, the wounded missionary Gladys Aylward sets out on the most difficult journey of her life, a 100-mile trek over the mountains with 100 orphaned children. Ages 8-12, 30 minutes, includes English and Spanish; downloadable leader guide and student activity pages. DVD \$14.95
Other titles are also available.



Walking God's Trail

Steve Saint returns to the jungles of Ecuador after the death of his father, Nate Saint. Children will see how the love of God forever bonded Steve with his father's killers, how Steve Saint's "modern" family became a "jungle" family living in harmony with the Waoroni people of his boyhood, and the Waorani's potential in Christ to one day share the gospel cross-culturally. Three chapters with illustrations and extra activities. \$14.95

Many other visual stories are also available; call for a complete list.



Visual Songs

- The Light of the World Is Jesus
 - I Love to Tell the Story
 - Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus
- \$9 each

2010 SEMINARY GRADUATES

Jeremy Crowell

I was born on Nov. 21, 1980, to Michael and Lori Crowell in Alexandria, Minn.



Shortly thereafter, I was baptized and was raised in a Christian home. I remember reaffirming my faith in prayer with my parents when I was about 7 years old. My family moved around a lot as my father was in the U.S. Army and then later became

an AFLC pastor. My home congregation is Atonement Free Lutheran Church in Arlington, Wash.

After graduating from high school in 1999, I went to aircraft mechanic's school at Everett Community College, Everett, Wash. At the same time, I was pursuing advanced flight training from Mission Aviation Training Academy (MATA), a school that trains missionary pilots started by my father, Michael Crowell. I graduated from both schools and continued at MATA as a flight instructor and mechanic until God led me to AFLBS in 2004, where I completed one year of biblical studies. I went back to MATA and continued on as a flight instructor and mechanic until the fall of 2006, when the Lord called me to attend AFLTS.

While teaching at MATA, I met my beautiful wife, Lacey (Gee), through our home congregation. We were married during the summer of 2007 and she is such a loving and supporting wife.

Our seminary internship has taken us to Naknek, Alaska, and Loveland, Colo. We have enjoyed developing relationships with the people at both locations and have been richly blessed serving there. One thing that the Lord has been teaching me throughout seminary and my life is to be utterly dependent upon Him and to rely upon Him for the strength to do what He has called us to do (I Peter 4:10-11). To God be the glory!

Michael Johnson

I was born Jan. 27, 1980, in Minneapolis to Pastor Dave and Cindi Johnson and was baptized soon after.



In 1989, my parents, brother, and I started attending Emmaus Lutheran Church in Bloomington, Minn. In the summer of 1990, I committed my life to Christ at our church family camp. I was so blessed to have a

Christian family and to be plugged in at Emmaus, where I had opportunities to grow and serve in Christ.

After graduating from high school and Bible school, I attended Crown College in St. Bonifacius, Minn., graduating in 2003 with a bachelor's degree and a minor in history and Bible. After working for Target for seven years, I realized that it was time for me to leave, but I wasn't sure what to do. In time and with much prayer, I sensed the Lord's calling to attend seminary. I applied in the summer of 2006 and began classes that fall.

The Lord has taught me a lot while in seminary. He has helped me financially and provided me with a job when I needed one. There were times when I was helpless, but God was faithful and He provided for me. During that time, I was blessed by Faith Free Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, whose members encouraged me with their prayers and support. I am currently interning at Emmanuel Free Lutheran Church in Williston, N.D., and preaching at Beaver Creek Free Lutheran Church, Ray, N.D. It's a privilege to be here and I look forward to what God has in store for me.

Micah Hjermstad

I was born on June 15, 1982, to two wonderful parents, Pastor Wayne and



Solveig Hjermstad. I am forever grateful to them for their Christian testimony and influence in my life. I was baptized as an infant, and I praise God that He has kept His baptismal promise to me. There are many times when my faith is tested and

when I fall short of God's glory, but I am so thankful to Him for His patience and His mercies that are new every morning.

My home congregation is Grace Lutheran in Bruce, S.D., where my dad serves as pastor. After high school, I attended AFLBS and graduated from there in 2002. I then went to North Dakota State University for two years, and then to Minnesota State University-Moorhead and graduated in 2006 with a degree in physical education. In my last year of college, I sensed a call into the ministry and I began studying at AFLTS in the fall of 2006. Seminary has been challenging in many ways, but again God sustained me and gave me a love for His Word.

For the last year, I have been interning at Ruthfred Lutheran Church in Bethel Park, Pa., under the supervision of Pastor James Molstre. This has been a wonderful year, and I am so thankful for Pastor Molstre, Pastor Steve Carlson, and the entire church body here. When I think about what God has been teaching me this year, John 15:9 comes to mind, "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love." It is such a blessing to be a child of God and to live in His love, and I pray that the message of God's grace and His ultimate act of love on the cross may be the theme of my life and ministry wherever God calls me.

Bob Lee

I was brought to the Lord in baptism by my parents, the late Aubrey and Effie Lee, shortly after my birth on Sept. 22, 1952, and was confirmed at First Presbyterian Church, Redlands, Calif. I came to conscious faith in 1977 while working as a deputy probation officer. After graduating from Omaha Lutheran Bible School in 1978, I



married Margaret Ottesen in 1979. We were blessed with four children: Mary (Pastor Joseph) Dapelo, Esther Lee, Ruth (Joshua) Wagner, and John; and three grandchildren.

I graduated from POST (Peace Officer's Standard and Training) Academy in 1972; and from California State University, Fresno, in 1974. I attended Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in 1978, the Fuller School of World Mission in 1987; and the International School of Theology in 2000. We served under World Mission Prayer League (1981-1997) and the Norwegian Santal Mission (1989-1997) in Bangladesh. In 1997 we joined Campus Crusade for Christ, where I served as regional consultant, responsible for the distribution of the JESUS Film in Southeast Asia. In 2007 we moved to Plymouth, Minn., where I attended AFLTS and served as director of student support at AFLBS. We are currently members of Hope Lutheran, Minneapolis.

My seminary training at AFLTS has grounded and strengthened me in a living faith with a fuller personal understanding and application of law and gospel and appreciation for building free and living congregations. It has been a joy and privilege to sit under men who are committed to the infallible and inerrant Word of God, who are committed to living a pious life, and who carefully expound the Scriptures to their students. I was privileged to serve my internship under Pastor Herb Hoff at St. Ansgar's Lutheran Church, Salinas, Calif.

Brett Boe

I was born Dec. 4, 1983, to Brad and Pamela Boe, was baptized shortly after, and spent most of my growing up years in Newark, Ill. During my fifth grade Sunday school class at Helmar Lutheran Church, my home congregation, we were given the assignment of memorizing Romans 10:9. The Lord revealed to me that



I am a sinner and need a Savior. I believe that was the point in my life when the Lord turned my life toward Him. I began feeding on the Word through youth group meetings and the preaching of Pastor Jeff Swanson.

At one junior high overnighter, one of my youth leaders told me that I would be a good pastor some day. I was totally taken aback by that but could not get it out of my mind. Though struggling with doubts, I began right away seeking the Lord's direction and have continued in that calling. When I gave my testimony on Confirmation Sunday, I told the people of Helmar that I sensed a calling to be a pastor.

After high school, the next step in following that calling was to go to AFLBS. There the Lord blessed me in many ways, including introducing me to my future wife, Theresa Welsch. We were married in 2006 after I completed a degree in history at Northwestern College. We have two children, Gideon (2), and Bridia (newborn).

The Lord has blessed me richly in seminary by teaching me about being a servant pastor, free and living congregations, and the proper distinction between law and gospel. This education has continued as I have been blessed to serve as an intern at Bethel Free Lutheran Church in Grafton, N.D. Our family looks forward to His continued leading.

Thomas Olson

I was born March 4, 1972, to Wayne and Linda Olson. My home congregation is Grace Free Lutheran Church of Edinburg, N.D.



Through baptism God began His good work in me. My dedicated parents and a variety of faithful pastors continued to nourish the gift of salvation in my life. When

I was in fourth grade I recognized God working personally in my life. After high school I wanted to go to the Bible school to learn more about Jesus my Savior. I grew so much in my faith in Jesus during my two years at AFLBS. After graduating in 1992, I wanted to serve God and He sent me back to Edinburg to be a farmer.

I was farming with my parents until God called my dad into the ministry. They moved to South Dakota, which meant I lived in this big farm house all by myself for five lonely days before it dawned on me that it is not good for man to be alone. In 1999 I asked Beth Jackson if she would be interested in marrying me. We have five children and one coming in March: Isak (9), Kelvin (7), Kiana (5), Josiah (3), and Karina (2).

The Lord called me to ministry early in 2005. I struggled greatly because I couldn't understand why God would call me away from farming, something I loved doing. God didn't ask me to understand, only to trust. So on Sept. 9, 2005 with tears streaming down my face, I watched the cattle trailers haul our cattle to the sale barn.

I began seminary classes in 2006. The opportunity to study the precious Word of God for three years has been such an incredible blessing to me. II Corinthians 4:16 has carried me through my seminary time: "Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day." This is what God's Word does for me each day.

My internship has taken us to Prince of Peace Lutheran, Beulah, N.D., under the supervision of Pastor Kris Nyman. The Trinity Lutheran Parish of Dodge, Golden Valley, and Zap were also part of my internship. Their pastor is Richard Melchert.

New beginnings

For living congregations

BY THE HOME MISSIONS DEPARTMENT

While writing to the Colossae Church, the Apostle Paul shared insights, as a way of encouragement, to this new and earnest congregation. These insights are as relevant today as they were then—lighthouse principles for a Christ-centered congregation. AFLC Home Missions seeks, through the message of Jesus Christ, to bring three themes into our culture. They are based on one word—FORGIVE. This word's effectiveness is totally based on the redemptive work of Jesus Christ—completed on Mount Calvary. These principles are essential for the beginnings (and continuation) of living, vibrant congregations.

Be **FORGIVEN** of Personal Sins

Every person needs forgiveness from their sin. This forgiveness is found through the atoning work of Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:13-14).

FORGIVE Others

As a result of Christ's atoning work on the cross, changes in attitudes and lifestyles need to take place in the lives of Christians. Living proof that a person is "in Christ" is demonstrated by their God-given ability to forgive others (Colossians 3:12-14).

GIVE Yourself to the Lord's Service

Christ must take the throne of our lives and become the Lord of every area in our being. The mind, under the control of the Holy Spirit, submits to the Lord's will and desires to serve the King of kings and Lord of lords. The highest calling to men is surrender to the Lordship of Christ (Colossians 3:23-24).

A Passion for Transformation

Colossians also describes passions that characterize a mature and living congregation. This is the driving purpose of AFLC Home Missions, facilitating heart transformation, one person at a time.

- Passion for Jesus—Must have a living relationship with Christ (Colossians 1:16-19 and 3:1-3).
- Passion for the Word—The foundation of our lives must be centered around the Bible (Colossians 1:25-29 and 2:8-9).
- Passion for prayer—The prayer meetings are the powerhouse (Colossians 4:2-4).
- Passion to reach the lost—Must have a true love for those who don't know Christ and be active in sharing their faith (Colossians 1:28, 2:1-2, and 4:3-6).
- Passion to be Lutheran in doctrine and sacraments—Must support the AFLC's Fundamental Principles and Declaration of Faith (Colossians 2:12-15).



- Passion for holy (pietistic) living—Must be devoted to daily living the Christian life (Colossians 1:10, 1:21-22, 2:20, 3:5-8).
- Passion to be involved in building up the Kingdom of God—Must have a desire to serve and share the Gospel at all times (Colossians 3:23-24).
- Passion for spiritual life in the Church—The Body of Christ is to care for its own (Colossians 1:4, 2:2-4, and 3:12-16).
- Passion for God's order in marriage, family, and congregation—According to God's design, men are to be the spiritual leaders (Colossians 2:8-10 and 3:18-21).
- Passion for the Priesthood of Believers—Everyone contributes in service to the Lord (Colossians 4:7-17).
- Passion for God's righteousness regardless of suffering—We are not called to political correctness, but rather to faithfulness (Colossians 1:24-29).
- Passion for God-centered worship—Worship is a celebration to honor and exalt God's name (Colossians 2:18-19 and 3:16-17).
- Passion for Christ-centered victorious living—Evidence of Christ's indwelling is freedom to say "no" to fleshly desires (Colossians 2:13-15).
- Passion for teaching God's order and design in creation (Colossians 1:15-17).



Redeemer Free Lutheran Church of Canton, S.D., has been blessed with much growth in the past several months. The congregation has welcomed 22 families (61 individuals) as new members since December 2009. The congregation, which was established in 1983, is currently served by Pastor Perry Bauer. Pictured are new members received on Feb. 21.

AFLBS announces 2010 summer teams

Eight summer ministry teams from the Association Free Lutheran Bible School will travel across the United States this summer giving concerts, working at camps and teaching vacation Bible school. The teams include:

Ambassadors (music ministry): Paul Berge, Erin Olson, Jessica McCarlson, Michael Osthus, and Andrew Olson.

Majesty (music and VBS): David Olson, Kathryn Norris, Laura Meline, Andrew Jore, and Adam Voth.

Cornerstone (camps and VBS): Josiah Rolf, Shane Remington, Laura Westlake, and Lydia Berger.

Foundation (camps and VBS): Tim Larson, Stephen Quanbeck, Kayla Paige, and Anna Benbo.

Joshua (camps and VBS): Phil Nash, Andrew Hoffman, Bethanie Rice, and Ashley Hurner.

Timothy (camps and VBS): Caleb Fugleberg, Ben Dahl, Audrey Nash, and Erin Harris.

South Barnabas (Home Missions): Hans Tanner, Nick Almanza, Stephanie Nelson, and Hannah Johnson.

North Barnabas (Home Missions):



Members of 2009 Southern Barnabas team.

Matt Quanbeck, Josiah Nelson, Julia Prichard, and Jana Fugleberg.

Please be in prayer for these teams as they prepare to minister in AFLC congregations and camps this summer.

AFLC, Parish Ed plan anniversary book

Members of the AFLC Coordinating Committee and the Board of Publications and Parish Education are beginning work on publication of a book to commemorate the upcoming 50th anniversary of the AFLC set to be celebrated in 2012.

Their vision is for a book of personal stories, testimonies and anecdotes focusing on how God has used His Word in the lives of congregations and individuals within the AFLC during these past 50 years. The initial focus will be on the formative years of the 1960s, but will also include contemporary accounts and testimonies of lives impacted for Christ through our current ministries.

Pastor John Mundfrom, Eugene, Ore., has been commissioned to oversee this anniversary project, working with a five-member committee, including Pastors Raynard Huglen, Bob Lee and Ken Moland along with Solveig Hjerstad and Marian Christopherson.

Any individuals or congregations desiring to help with the production and publication costs of this commemorative book may send their contributions to the AFLC, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Plymouth MN 55441, earmarked for the "50th Anniversary Book Project."

Evangelism to host Rekindle the Fire

In conjunction with the AFLC annual conference, the AFLC Commission on Evangelism will host Rekindle the Fire, a annual retreat for AFLC pastors and their wives. The event will be held June 14 at Vision of Glory Lutheran, Plymouth, Minn.

Featured at this year's event is speaker Jeff Siemon, a former Minnesota Viking and now the director of Search Ministries Minnesota, a ministry which helps people connect with God, develop spiritually and live out their faith in the marketplace.

Rekindle the Fire begins at 2:30 p.m. and also includes dinner and an evening program.

Registration, though free, is limited. Visit www.aflc.org for more information.

AFLC memorials: February

- AFLBS**
Don Mathison
Lois Johnson (4)
David Jentz
- Home Missions**
Lois Johnson
Florence Myhre
Ron Dietsche
- AFLTS**
Lois Johnson
- Parish Education**
Margory Bischoff
- All Departments**
Pastor Don Duff
- Vision**
Alfred Sundeen
- Ambassador Institute**
Earl Hartsoch
- World Missions**
Florence Myhre
Evelyn Heeren
Don Wisnefske
- Evangelism**
Ethel Mohagen
- FLAPS**
Palmer Brelie

ARC hosts upcoming retreats

A look at upcoming retreats and camps at the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis.

- **AFLC Men’s Retreat**
Dates: April 23-24 (option of extra night)
Cost: \$65 (\$20 for extra night/breakfast)
Special speaker Pastor Phil Hooper, who serves St. John’s Lutheran in Duluth, Minn., will speak on the theme: “FEARLESS because of Christ,” based on Psalm 27:1a: “The Lord is my Light and my Salvation, whom shall I fear?” Session topics will interact with some of the key fears that men face. They will also look at who men in Christ are called to be, and how that gets lived out in everyday life.
Note: There is no minimum age requirement for someone to be eligible to attend. However, the sessions and materials to be discussed will be presented on an adult level; teen-aged young men of sufficient maturity are welcome to attend. All underage attendees must be accompanied by a parent or other adult legally authorized to be responsible for them.

- **Fire Up Camp**
Grades 4-7
Date: June 20-25
Cost: \$190
- **Kids’ Camp**
Grades 1-3
Dates: June 25-27
Cost: \$75
- **Family Camp**
Dates: July 25-31
Cost: Vary according to family size, accommodations

For more information on these retreats and future camps, contact the ARC by e-mail at arcregistration@centurytel.net or call 800-294-2877. You can also visit the ARC Web site at www.arc-aflc.org for more information.

People and Places

The **mortgage debt on Heritage Hall**, totalling nearly \$3.5 million, has been paid in full. The building, which houses classrooms, administrative offices, a library and cafeteria, is located on the campus of the AFLC Schools, Plymouth, Minn. Plans are currently being made for a special celebration to take place during the annual conference, which will be held on campus June 15-18.

Patricia Ballmann has been appointed to the national board of Lutherans for Life and will serve on the youth committee. Ballmann, who is a member of Word of Truth Lutheran, Glen Rose, Texas, is a volunteer counselor at her local crisis pregnancy center.

Internship assignments have been given to two senior students at AFLTS. **Jason Gudim** will serve his internship year at St. Ansgar’s Lutheran, Salinas, Calif., under the direction of Pastor Herb Hoff. **David Franz** will serve his internship year at Emmanuel Free Lutheran, Williston, N.D., under the direction of Pastor Jon Wellumson.

Subscription rates for *The Lutheran Ambassador* magazine have been increased by \$2, effective March 1. Individual subscriptions are now \$20/year. Group subscriptions are \$19/year per subscription. Bulk rates are now \$17/year per subscription. And international subscriptions are now \$22/year.

Format changes made in benevolence reporting

In order to more clearly report budget numbers, those voting at the 2009 annual conference approved a motion to change the AFLC benevolences reporting in *The Lutheran Ambassador*. Here is the conference resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED, in order to present a quick snapshot of the financial condition of each ministry, that *The Lutheran Ambassador* eliminate the percentage of total subsidy, and only display the previous month’s subsidy, year-to-date receipts, and previous year’s year-to-date total.

Those changes have been implemented, as seen below.

AFLC BENEVOLENCES Feb. 1- 28, 2010			
FUND	REC'D IN JANUARY	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	PRIOR YEAR-TO-DATE
General Fund	\$26,530	\$53,530	50,504
Evangelism	5,227	39,829	12,590
Youth Ministries	6,732	47,626	10,367
Parish Education	6,499	14,061	17,495
Seminary	19,552	38,667	32,144
Bible School	22,529	92,071	45,839
Home Missions	17,205	113,564	44,749
World Missions	22,792	53,473	37,126
Personal Support	22,075	48,307	65,835
TOTALS	\$149,141	\$501,128	316,650
Contact the individual departments for further information about specific financial needs.			

The work of restoration

Jim Bakker was a prominent evangelist on television with a big following. And then came the fall. He was convicted of fraud, sent away to prison and served five years. On the first Sunday after his release, Ruth (Mrs. Billy) Graham called the halfway house where Bakker was staying and asked permission for him to go to church with her that morning. When Bakker arrived he was welcomed and seated with the Graham family. Soon after that Ruth entered the sanctuary, walked down the aisle

and sat right next to him. Bakker writes, “I had only been out of prison 48 hours, but she told the world that morning that Jim Bakker was her friend.”

What do we do when a brother

or sister in Christ falls? We wish we never had to wrestle with the topic, but we are weak, sinful human beings who stumble and fall. “Even youths grow tired and weary and young men stumble and fall” (Isaiah 40:30, NIV).

In its inception, the New Testament Church was led by someone who had a terrible fall. The apostle Peter denied three times that he knew Jesus. He failed miserably at a crucial time. But after His resurrection, Jesus made clear He still wanted Peter in His service, calling him to “Take care of my sheep” (John 21:16).

Restoration doesn’t always mean restoring people to the same place of service they were in before. We can forgive a person but still have reservations as to

whether they are ready to handle certain responsibilities. Restoration can take time and a lot of hard work. It involves friends who are willing to be honest and committed for the long haul. It involves patience and confidence that God can heal broken hearts and battered souls and transform lives.

Sometimes those in need of restoration have not suffered a great moral failure. Some are suffering from the failure of a dream. Maybe they tried to start a new ministry in the congregation and it just didn’t work. Some have tried to start a new congregation, but even after a lot of prayer, a lot of inviting and a lot of hard work, a new congregation does not come to life. I know from experience how painful and discouraging that can be.

Those who have suffered the failure of a dream should not be treated as quitters who did not try hard enough or ones who are incapable or didn’t do it right. It maybe just wasn’t God’s plan for a congregation to be planted in that city at that time. The apostle Paul seemed to have one failure after another—he was expelled from the region of Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:50); he fled persecution in Iconium (Acts 14:6); he was stoned and dragged out of the city of Lystra (Acts 14:19). But he had friends who stuck with him and encouraged him to go elsewhere and keep preaching the gospel.

Sometimes a congregation isn’t planted because an attempt is made to start one with an unhealthy core group.

The bulk of Jesus’ three years of public ministry was training the core group of the New Testament Church. When Paul wrote to the young pastors Timothy and Titus, he emphasized the importance of having the right type of people in leadership in their congregations.

A core group that knows what they are against but not what they are for is not going to give birth to a healthy congregation. The core group needs to have a love

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for Jesus and people and a commitment to the authority of Scripture. It is not a good use of resources or people to encourage pastors to start churches with unhealthy core groups.

Those who have fallen either due to moral failure or the failure of a dream need the encouragement of a phone call or a visit or an e-mail. They need to be reminded they are not forgotten. God forgives and God restores. No matter the nature of our past there is hope for the future because of the Lord.



Pastor Craig Johnson

the association retreat center

Fearless future

BY BOB DIETSCH

Back in the 1960s my family attended the Gideon International conventions. During one trip to Florida we took a high school friend of our youngest daughter along. We were friends of her parents and the girls had a great time in the car as we traveled. Among other things she began to predict where a motel would be when it was time to stop for the night, or where a gas station was when we needed fuel or a restaurant, over the next hill or just around the corner. It turned out that she was surprisingly accurate. We began thinking, wouldn't it be nice to be able to have a device in the car to show where things were up ahead wherever we traveled.

Well, of course now we have a GPS that shows even more information and is already becoming common equipment in an auto. Now, wouldn't it be nice to develop something that could predict the future. And if possible, it would be even better if it could be selective, like just predicting the good things, your health, job, family, or maybe

finances or political outcomes. Well, maybe not. I think the Good Lord knew what He was doing, as He always does, when He created us without the ability to tell the future. Besides, He did leave us with a leader and guide, Jesus. The song, "God Leads Us Along," by G.A. Young (Ambassador Hymnal 479) comes to mind.

Sometimes on the mount where the sun shines so bright, God leads His dear children along; Sometimes in the valley, in the darkest of night, God leads His dear children along.

Some thru the waters, some thru the flood, some thru the fire, but all thru the blood; Some thru great sorrow, but God gives a song, In the night season and all the day long.

Tho sorrows befall us and Satan oppose, God leads His dear children along; Thru grace we can conquer, defeat all our foes, God leads His dear children along.

Some thru the waters, some thru the flood, some thru the fire, but all thru the blood; Some thru great sorrow, but God gives a song, In the night season and all the day long.

When we think of all the things that have been invented and the technology that has developed since the "bride of my youth" and I were married (1950), it makes you wonder what might be coming in the future. In fact it's a little scary. But isn't it good to know that God is still God?

We live in troubled times. It makes the ARC theme for 2010, taken from Psalm 27:1, "Fearless because of Christ," very appropriate. Isn't it great that we can be fearless because we know who holds the future? No matter what may happen, Jesus is always with us.

Bob Dietsche, Amery Free Lutheran, Amery, Wis., is the former director of the ARC, located in Osceola, Wis.